

Future activities of FESTMIH

March 2005

Introduction

It was already concluded at the council meeting in Lisbon (2002): “when originally set-up, the Federation had much wider ambitions”. In spite of these aspirations, it was also noted that the implementation of activities is dependent on available resources. Furthermore it was confirmed that the Federation should not overlap with what is being done by national societies or other European organisations.

Within the context of this last conclusion it is important to distinguish between what is the focus of the national societies and what is the domain of the Federation.

FESTMIH’s mission statement is clear on the main areas:

- To promote the harmonisation of health strategies and recommendations related to developing countries;
- to organise conferences on tropical medicine and international health;
- to foster the formation of new (scientific) societies dealing with health sciences and to encourage European harmonisation of training in Tropical Medicine.

Future activities

At the board meeting in Nijmegen, June 2004, possible (new) activities were mentioned, including the expanding on the role as an European platform; increased promotion of FESTMIH’s work; respond to specific requests from members; and agenda setting. In order to continue this discussion, in the following a range of (potential) activities is structured around:

- (I) focus of national societies
- (II) focus FESTMIH – specific (short term)
- (III) focus FESTMIH – specific (long term)

Focus (specific) of national societies

- Curriculum development (Tropical medicine).
- Establish and maintain relations with educational systems (universities, research institutes)
- Establish and maintain relations with development organisations / NGOs
- Establish and maintain relations with (national) governments
- Influence policies and national agendas in the area of international health / development aid (as a consequence of historical processes national focus may vary from country to country)
- Dissemination of information on issues related to international health and tropical medicine

Conclusion: all the above do not fall within the scope of Festmih

(III) Specific short term activities (1/2 years)		
What	How	Who, when
Establish direction of Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion at the council meeting (Marseille, September 2005) - Quick scan / questionnaire for member societies - Prepare and distribute leaflet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MB and EJ to send out letter (including this overview and questionnaire) - MB, EJ: prepare leaflet
Organise congresses and (possible) meetings in between the bi-annual conferences	<p>Marseille 2005 Amsterdam 2007 To be established: 2009: Italy? 2011: Czech Republic? Austrian society?</p>	Board already agreed on bi-annual conferences
Establish new memberships	<p><i>What needs to be done:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visits and networking - On website place call for new member societies - Investigation on possible members: Poland, Finland, Baltic states, Ireland, Croatia (contact through School of public health and epidemiology in Zagreb) - In Southern Europe look into: Greece and Malta - In the North: contact the Scandinavian society <p><i>Discussed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was felt that Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary are not ready yet. - Slovakia might be interesting: there is an epidemiological society in Bratislava. 	<p>Marcel will continue to lead this process for Poland, Finland, Baltic States and Ireland.</p> <p>Martin to contact WHO for information on European schools and societies.</p>
Support to new members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer space on the website 	
Bridging the gap between national societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of national societies (focus, direction, activities) - Increase use website as linking pin between the members (discussion, dissemination of information on activities) - Keep track of what is happening throughout Europe in the area of international health 	
Respond to specific requests from member Societies:	To be established after consultations with member societies.	
(co)Sponsoring / financial support for activities in the interest of tropical medicine and international health	<p>Could become an important future activity, is at the moment not yet possible (no funds, no decision). When decided to increase actions in this area, then the following needs to be done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fundraising - develop criteria on which activities will be sponsored - promotion of the Fund. 	
PR and communication: active promotion of the work of FESTMIH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website and other promotion material (poster presentation, leaflets, articles etc.) - Investigate and initiate further possibilities of the site - Marseille meeting: install computer with FESTMIH promotion material - Leaflet and poster FESTMIH 	Martin will take over webmaster activities from Marcel

(IV) Specific long term activities (3/5 years)		
What	How	Who, when
Enhance FESTMIH's credibility, and (re)define its role as a stimulator of a European debate on International Health	Through the organization of meetings with politicians and policy makers: eg. organisation of one day (technical meetings) on issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ethics and poverty - role of industry - ethics of clinical trials - Millennium development goals <p>Write articles TM/IH</p> <p>Prepare (technical / working) papers on issues.</p>	
Stimulate discussions on development aid and promote formulation of recommendations on this issue (influence policies and agenda setting)	Not discussed	
Establish European Guidelines on malaria, tb etc.	Decided that this is not the role of FESTMIH to take up this task.	
Increase FESTMIH's role as an European Platform/network	Is FESTMIH's core business, in order to do this above mentioned activities need to be implemented.	