

IANPHI

The Public Health  
Institutes of the  
World [www.ianphi.org](http://www.ianphi.org)

## BRIEF

Avian flu, SARS, multidrug-resistant TB, chemical exposures, natural disasters, bioterror threats, the next unknown disease agent... In today's world each country faces similar challenges in keeping their populations healthy and preventing the cross-border spread of disease.

SARS demonstrated this in 2003. Since then, the spread of H5N1 avian flu virus has put the world on high alert for an influenza pandemic, endemic diseases continue to threaten the stability of communities around the world, and new health hazards enter the world's consciousness daily. As behaviors change globally, issues related to non-communicable conditions, injuries, and occupational and mental health are also becoming increasingly common to all.

National public health institutes, or NPHIs, secure countries against these hazards, spearheading efforts to detect and contain disease outbreaks and safeguard the population's health. NPHIs provide centralized leadership and coordination for public health and allow countries to set and implement priorities, develop capacity, implement coordinated responses, and absorb donor funds.

Countries without NPHIs, or with faltering NPHIs, are particularly vulnerable to imminent hazards such as pandemic flu as well as endemic problems like malaria, AIDS, and diarrheal disease that imperil public health security. Even in countries with strong NPHIs, rapidly changing and unpredictable health conditions can overwhelm current capacities.



## What is IANPHI?

### A peer-assistance organization for NPHI development and proliferation

Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, IANPHI is a catalyst for NPHI development and collaboration. We aim to strengthen public health capacity in low-resource countries by strengthening NPHIs. Experts from IANPHI member institutes provide peer assistance and project support targeted at critical NPHI needs.

Through strategies to define and develop core public health functions and to share expertise, IANPHI helps NPHIs sharpen their focus and raise standards of performance. These improvements not only protect the health of the population but also benefit all donor groups in the country by promoting science-based decision-making, fostering workforce development, and forging linkages among those working to improve public health.

### A professional association for NPHI directors

IANPHI also stimulates and facilitates communication, collaboration, and cooperation among the world's NPHI directors. By focusing on information sharing, mutual assistance, and advocacy, IANPHI provides a platform for collective action in tackling public health challenges.

## Who we are

IANPHI was launched in 2006 by the directors of 39 NPHIs. Since then, the founding members have continued to expand the network and operationalize their shared vision. IANPHI received initial support from the Rockefeller Foundation. Our primary source of ongoing support is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. With current funding, we are committed to implementing 20 NPHI development projects by 2011.

IANPHI is managed by an Executive Board and a Secretariat co-located in Finland and the United States. Our growing membership of more than 50 NPHIs has an ambitious agenda for collaboration, service, and growth toward a vision of a robust and fully integrated global network of NPHIs equipped to address critical public health challenges.

## What we do

IANPHI assists NPHIs, particularly those in low-resource countries, through a three-part approach of *advocacy*, *assistance*, and *community*.

- **IANPHI advocates** for NPHI development and proliferation through partnerships with key global health organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO). Through these partnerships, IANPHI will ensure that NPHIs are considered in major global public health initiatives and that public health, and the work of NPHIs, are included in efforts to strengthen health systems.
- **IANPHI assists** NPHIs in low-resource countries through three grant programs. A short-term technical assistance program helps countries quickly resolve priority gaps in NPHI capability and infrastructure. A medium-term capacity-building program helps NPHIs address high-priority needs over a period of up to 3 years. IANPHI's long-term grant program, the most intensive of the assistance efforts, will help create NPHIs in low-resource countries that currently lack a central public health focus. IANPHI also provides seed grants to support collaborative NPHI research.
- **IANPHI links** NPHIs through annual meetings, regional events, leadership development activities, research seed grants, and communication outlets including a website, newsletter, and list-serv. By fostering an international community of public health leadership, IANPHI helps NPHIs around the globe gain the benefits of shared information, experience, and expertise to address public health threats and opportunities.

## IANPHI's strengths

IANPHI brings particular strengths to its service mission of strengthening NPHIs:

- Explicit focus on national public health infrastructure, capacity, and advocacy
- Multidisciplinary skills and expertise of the directors and partners of NPHIs around the world
- Peer-assistance approach that facilitates sharing of expertise and experience to solve common problems
- Mission targeted at specific NPHI needs, as identified by the institute and the country
- Support of leading global health partners and funders

## IANPHI's benefits

### To member institutes

- Opportunities to provide and receive peer assistance
- Improved ability to perform essential public health functions
- Eligibility for IANPHI development and research grants
- Membership in a community of global leaders working together to address modern public health challenges

### To countries

- Strengthening or creation of a centralized public health focus to support science-based policies and sustainable development
- Aggregation of the skills, disciplines, experience, and expertise needed to develop and implement strategies to address contemporary health challenges
- Enhanced capacity to absorb and distribute donor funds to meet national public health priorities
- Linkages among all those working to improve public health in the country
- Advancement toward attainment of Millennium Development Goals

### To global health

- Strengthened global public health systems
- Enhanced global public health leadership
- Increased linkages and information sharing
- Facilitated collaboration and collective action
- Optimization of public health outcomes
- Improved international capacity to address emerging threats and opportunities