



THE BHF NEWSLETTER

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HONORARY CO-CHAIRS: GEORGE F. RUSSELL, JR. AND JOHN C. WHITEHEAD

IN THIS ISSUE:

[BHF and Swiss Red Cross Renew their Partnership Agreement and Plan Expansion to Other Southern African Countries](#)

[Next Training Workshop on Partnerships for Peacebuilding Set for June at International Rescue Committee \(IRC\) in New York](#)

[BHF Hosts Conference Board Meeting; Maresca speaks on Globalization and the Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#)

[New Staff Member](#)

[Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina Continues BHF Assistance to the Wood Products Industry](#)

[Other Staff Missions](#)

[BHF to Assist Non-Profit Organization in Madagascar](#)

[New Members of International Advisory Board](#)

[Public Affairs Activities](#)

BHF and Swiss Red Cross Renew their Partnership Agreement and Plan Expansion to Other Southern African Countries



The Mahwalala Clinic in Swaziland, cited as a "best practice" case by the WHO

The BHF and the Swiss Red Cross (SRC) have agreed to continue their cooperation in the southern Africa region. Daniel Biedermann, Director of the SRC, and John Maresca, President of the BHF, signed the renewal of the agreement between the two organizations

in December. The goal of this cooperation is to improve health care facilities in the region by renovating, upgrading, equipping and staffing private rural clinics for comprehensive and sustainable HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, as well as providing medicines against opportunistic infections associated with HIV/AIDS cases. Funding for this program has come from private sector sources and foundations.

The BHF and SRC partners have agreed to continue to support the successful pilot project, the Mahwalala Clinic in Swaziland, during the key phase of start-up of anti-retroviral treatment of HIV/AIDS patients. At the same time, they plan to replicate this model in other countries in the southern Africa region. The HIV/AIDS therapy and prevention approach at the Mahwalala Clinic has been cited as a "best practice case" by the World Health Organization (WHO). While the program's therapy depends basically on continuing use of anti-retroviral medicines, prevention includes a variety of educational methods, such as traveling clowns, who carry out teaching performances at schools and other youth centers.

The BHF: Recipient of the 2006 European Generic Medicines Association Award

Next Training Workshop on Partnerships for Peacebuilding Set for June at International Rescue Committee (IRC) in New York

The BHF has agreed with its co-sponsors, the UN University for Peace (UPeace) and the US Institute of Peace (USIP), to hold another training workshop on “Public-Private Partnerships for Peacebuilding” in New York in June. This event will repeat the well-received seminar the three organizations co-sponsored in Geneva last September (see Newsletter volume 4 issue 3). The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has generously offered to host the one-day session at its New York headquarters. The sponsoring organizations plan to invite participation by mid-level officials from UN and national organizations, NGOs, and the private sector with an interest and relevant experience in post-conflict reconstruction and other peacebuilding activities.

BHF Hosts Conference Board Meeting; Maresca speaks on Globalization and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The BHF hosted a meeting of the Conference Board Europe’s Council on Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability on January 17-18. The meeting was chaired by Lothar Meinzer of BASF, Chairman of the Council, and organized under the supervision of Robin Aram, its Director. The group heard presentations by BHF President John Maresca, on Business and the Millennium Development Goals, and by Brent Wilton, Deputy Secretary General of the International Organization of Employers (IOE); Claus Conzelmann, Vice President of Nestlé; José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Director, Employment Sector, International Labor Organization (ILO); Jean Paul Jeanrenaud, Head of Business & Industry Relations, World Wildlife Fund (WWF); Ibrahim Wani, Chief of Research and Right to Development, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); and Adam Faruk, Assistant Director, Ashridge Centre for Business and Society. The BHF welcomes hosting such meetings by like-minded organizations interested in hearing viewpoints of Geneva-based organizations and officials.



Chairman Lothar Meinzer (second from left) and Director Robin Aram (Third from left) preside the meeting

New Staff Member

The BHF welcomes new staff member Solange Guye, who will be a Project Officer. Ms. Guye has several years of experience in supporting private sector investments in developing countries. She was formerly with the Swiss Organisation for Facilitating Investments (SOFI) in Zurich and the Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS) in Geneva.

Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina Continues BHF Assistance to the Wood Products Industry

BH F Project Officer Roberto Dotta visited Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) February 4 to 9 to further discuss and coordinate plans for the establishment of a center of excellence in the wood processing sector of BiH at the University of Zenica, in central BiH. The project will include several European partners, notably the Berne University of Applied Sciences, as well as European manufacturers of machines and equipment for the wood processing industry.



BHF representative and project partners meet with Mayor of Zenica in BiH

While in BiH, Dotta participated in a workshop at the University of Zenica which was attended by a number of local private sector companies and various organizations. The main goal of this workshop was to clarify what expectations companies have with regard to professional education courses for their employees, as well as regarding the services and research such a center could carry out for BiH companies.

In addition, Dotta met with a number of national donor agency representatives in Sarajevo working in economic and business development for the country, as well as with representatives of local government and chambers of commerce.

The BHF mission also explored possibilities for cooperation between companies from Europe and BiH in sectors such as wood pellet production, windows and prefabricated shelters. The BHF suggested additional wood processing companies from BiH to the Swiss Import Promotion Program (SIPPO), which will provide a stand at the upcoming INTERZUM fair in Cologne where these companies can exhibit their products.

Other Staff Missions

Head of Operations Emily Talmon-l'Armée and Jacqueline Baroukzai, BHF Representative in Afghanistan, went on missions to Kabul in November and January, and had consultations in Amman and Dubai related to potential investments in Afghanistan, in connection with those trips. Mrs. Baroukzai has extended her contract and continues to monitor and manage all BHF activities related to Afghanistan from the BHF Kabul office.

BHF to Assist Non-Profit Organization in Madagascar

The BHF has undertaken to assist the local non-profit organization “MIORA”, which manages the Finaritra health clinic in Madagascar. The clinic is located in the southwest suburbs of the capital, Antananarivo, and serves the rural area south of the capital. It is officially recognized as a health service center by the government of Madagascar. The clinic provides basic health services to the local community and has the goal of developing a strong HIV/AIDS prevention program. The BHF is currently supporting Madame Claire Girardin-Falcy, who has been based in the country for over 2 years, in assistance for the clinic’s upgrade program. Madame Girardin-Falcy works with the clinic on a volunteer basis, and the BHF will work with her to identify partners which can help in the expansion/upgrading of Finaritra and other clinics in Madagascar. Details on how to assist or donate to this new project can be obtained from the BHF secretariat at bhinfo@bhforum.org.

New Members of International Advisory Board

Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, Ms. Christine Batruch and Mr. Thomas F. Maxey have agreed to join the BHF’s International Advisory Board. Ambassador Ekeus is the High Commissioner for National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and Chairman of the Board of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Ms. Batruch is Vice President for Corporate Responsibility of Lundin Petroleum AB, based in Geneva, and Mr. Maxey was Vice Chairman of N.W. Ayer, a major American advertising agency.

Public Affairs Activities

Ms. Talmon-l’Armée spoke at a conference at Wilton Park, in England, on January 12. The topic of the conference was “Investing in Peace: Spurring Private Involvement in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding”. Ms. Talmon-l’Armée spoke on the BHF experience with investors and investment-related risks in Afghanistan.

Roberto Dotta spoke as part of a panel on “Corporate Social Responsibility: Public-Private Partnerships in Practice,” at the annual Aid and Trade event in Geneva in January.

We Need Your Support

Contributions to the BHF fund are welcome and can be made to “The Business Humanitarian Forum” at:

BHF Secretariat
7-9 chemin de Balxert
1219 Châtelaine (Geneva)
Switzerland