

## Editorial

*This thematic issue has two complementary goals:*

- 1. to give elements for a global model in which humanitarian action and development cooperation in the health care field are both situated within the broader methodological context of international health*
- 2. to illustrate these concepts through recent examples of operations and research in the various fields covered.*

*The first paper is an attempt to synthesize and develop the outcome of a round table which took place on July 1th 1994 as the conclusion of a scientific meeting of the Swiss Society of Social and Preventive Medicine. Contributions have been obtained from various authors and institutions: Institutes of Social and Preventive Medicine of Geneva and Lausanne, Institute of Development Studies (IUED), Medical Division of the International Comitee for the Red Cross (ICRC), World Health Organization (WHO), University Institute of Legal Medicine (UILM), Community Medicine Unit of the Policlinic of Internal Medicine, all in Geneva, and the Swiss Tropical Institute (STI) in Basle.*

*Specific thought on the role of universities in the international health field is discussed in an article written by the Director of the International Health Unit of the University of Montreal.*

*These two papers are followed by a series of articles on specific subjects aiming to illustrate the vast range of disciplinary, methodological and geographical actions covered by international health.*

*Yves Etienne and Giorgio Nembrini from the ICRC illustrate the importance of the role of sanitary engineers on health in a refugee camp, chiefly the potable water supply which constitutes an urgent priority in such a situation.*

*Paul Bouvier and colleagues from the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine in Geneva present selected results of an extensive forecast on the sanitary impact of the development of mother and child health services in a city in the south of Mali. The article focuses on the relationship between the prevalence of acute malnutrition and several socio-economic determinants.*

*Pascal Bovet, for the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine in Lausanne presents data on the cardio-vascular mortality and morbidity in the Seychelles Islands, an intermediate situation between industrialized and developing countries.*

*Claude-François Robert and colleagues describe the process of validation of a simple, inexpensive, reliable technique for the detection of proteinuria in basic health care centers in West Africa.*

*George Grau and Jin Ning Lou of the WHO collaborating center for malaria immunology, department of pathology Geneva School of Medicine review the most recent developments in immuno-biological research within the framework of a program seeking to prevent the lethal effects of cerebral malaria in children.*

*These two articles, illustrate two bio-medical approaches of priority health problems: the validation of simple, well standardized techniques for the first line clinical and epidemiological laboratory and a promising, fundamental way to furnish new tools to epidemiologists and clinicians to improve understanding, diagnosis and treatment of one of the very first cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide.*

Finally, an article by Pierre Perrin from the ICRC, describes several aspects of a training program for medical managers of emergency intervention teams developed jointly by ICRC, the Geneva School of Medicine and the WHO. Since 1986, the HELP and SOS programs have been devoted to such diverse areas as: Geneva, Brussels, Bangkok, Costa Rica, The Philippines, mainly in English but also in French and Spanish.

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Guest Editor

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