



Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz  
Promotion Santé Suisse  
Promozione Salute Svizzera

## Standpunkt

### From Ottawa to Bangkok

Triggered by the debates around the Bangkok Charter on Health Promotion in a globalized world, many public health colleagues, also in my organisation, come up with the question: What relevance do health promotion's high level political processes, and charters and declarations have for health professionals? Also, professionals around the world asked: Will the Bangkok Charter's impact be similar to that of the Ottawa Charter on health promotion? Here, I won't try to give the answer. Rather I invite you, to look into the website [www.rhpeo.org/reviews/2005/index.htm](http://www.rhpeo.org/reviews/2005/index.htm) and contribute to the ongoing discussions and reflections. In the International Union of Health Promotion and Health Education online series "Ottawa 1986–Vancouver 2007: should the Ottawa charter be revisited?" are most interesting commentaries, articles and links as well as results of debates such as that among the francophone health promotion and prevention community 2005/2006 (all in French, English or Spanish). There, the president of the International Union of Health Promotion and Health Education, Prof. Maurice Mittelmark, offers a general response to the first question above: "(...) if health promotion is to remain vital, and to serve the practical functions (...), it requires periodic illumination, with critical debate."

At the very least, the WHO global conference on health promotion held in Bangkok in August 2006 and the then adopted Bangkok Charter "do illuminate health promotion and do spark much needed debate". Health Promotion Switzerland participated in this. One of the outcomes are the affirmation of the health promotion approach also in our rapidly changing world – of its basic principles; and its foci on the behavioural, environmental, social and economic "determinants" of health and more effective collaboration across sectors and levels of society – including the global level!

The Bangkok Charter is based on much evidence on 'what' to do to sustain health and close health gaps. However, some 'how to do'-questions 20 years after the Ottawa Charter remain still a challenge. For example, to initiate and sustain the collaboration and partnerships for the promotion of health (also called for in the Bangkok Charter) still needs lots of mutual learning. Are the 'actors in health' realistic about and under-

stand the motivations and values of other sectors - politicians and high level decision makers of various kinds? Health Promotion Switzerland will tackle this issue more systematically soon - when implementing its new long term strategy with a focus, amongst other, on particular intersectoral alliances (for healthy weight/ mental health) and on the creation of health promotion policies at the level public and private actors (the Swiss cantons (states) and health insurance companies and other private sector businesses). This is in fully line with the calls for action of the Bangkok Charter.

The fact that the adoption of a formal resolution on "health promotion in a globalized world", drafted on the basis of the Bangkok Charter, was on the agenda of this year's World Health Assembly (the assembly of the ministries of health around the world) hopefully is a sign that also governments will become more aware of their potential and responsibility for sustainable health promotion now. The World Health Assembly resolution (A59/21 4 May 2006) will hopefully be adopted in 2007. This year, dramatic unforeseeable circumstances led to time constraints and the postponement of this agenda item.

*Ursel Broesskamp-Stone is head of International Affairs and of Evidence at Health Promotion Switzerland.*

## Termine

### 9. Nationale Gesundheitsförderungs-Konferenz

Erfolgsfaktor intersektorale Zusammenarbeit

25.–26. Januar 2007, Zug

Internet: [www.gesundheitsfoerderung.ch/konferenz](http://www.gesundheitsfoerderung.ch/konferenz)

Auf dieser Seite erscheinen Informationen von und über Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz. Die Stiftung hat zum Ziel, die Gesundheitsressourcen aller in der Schweiz lebenden Menschen zu fördern. Im Auftrag von Bund, Kantonen und Krankenkassen unterstützt sie Projekte, welche die Gesundheit stärken und koordiniert solche Aktivitäten gemeinsam mit Partnern.

Dufourstr. 30, Postfach 311  
CH-3000 Bern 6  
Tel. +41 (0) 31 350 04 04  
Fax +41 (0) 31 368 17 00  
[office.bern@promotionsante.ch](mailto:office.bern@promotionsante.ch)  
[www.gesundheitsfoerderung.ch](http://www.gesundheitsfoerderung.ch)

Avenue de la Gare 52, Case postale 670  
CH-1001 Lausanne  
Tel. +41 (0) 21 345 15 15  
Fax +41 (0) 21 345 15 45  
[office@promotionsante.ch](mailto:office@promotionsante.ch)  
[www.promotionsante.ch](http://www.promotionsante.ch)