

U N IN RUSSIA

No.2 (63)

March–April

2009



Translating economic growth into sustainable human development with human rights

Published by
the United Nations Office
in the Russian Federation



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a new UNDP report calls for action / 8

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According to the World Health Organization, the total number of disabled people in the world reached 600 million last year, and 175 million of those are children. How will these people live in the 21st century? This question is of utmost importance to Russia, whose every 11th national is a disabled person

People /11

Nikita is 16 years old and lives with his mother, younger brother, and two sisters in a small room of a St. Petersburg communal apartment on his mother's very modest earnings. There are quite a lot of families like Nikita's in difficult life situations. In the Admiralteysky part of St Petersburg alone, there are about 5,000 families in crisis

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The major TB indicators in Russia exceed the rate of those in the European countries by 5-8 times. TB incidence has grown by 2.8% in 2009 and now equals 85.2 per 100,000, whereas in 2008, it was 83.2. About 117,000-120,000 TB cases are registered in the country annually. Every year, TB kills about 25,000 Russians

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Secretary-General's Message on World Health Day

When disaster strikes, well-prepared, functioning medical services are a priority. Floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters can take a terrible toll on human life. So, too, can infectious disease outbreaks and man-made disasters, such as chemical spills or radiation accidents. Hospitals, clinics and other health facilities must react swiftly and efficiently. They must also provide safe havens, and not become disaster zones themselves.

When a hospital collapses in an earthquake, burying patients and staff, the human cost multiplies. When an infectious disease spreads because a hospital is poorly ventilated or constructed, or because health care workers lack adequate training, we are failing people at their most vulnerable.

To focus attention on these simple but important principles, World Health Day for 2009 has adopted the campaign slogan: "Save lives. Make hospitals safe in emergencies". It is a global call to action for countries to work to prepare their health systems for emergencies.

Collaboration between different United Nations entities and other international actors is crucial to helping countries



to achieve this goal. The World Disaster Reduction Campaign for 2008 has pooled the efforts of the World Health Organization, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the World Bank towards making health facilities more able to stand up to cyclones, earthquakes and other hazards.

We must protect public health by designing and building health care facilities that are safe from natural disasters. We must also ensure they are not targeted during conflicts. Health care workers must be trained to work safely in emergencies, so they can save

lives, rather than becoming victims themselves. And we must guarantee the continuity of the health services that a community relies on, such as immunizations, dialysis and the delivery of babies, once the immediate emergency has passed.

We cannot prevent all disasters. But we can work together to ensure that when they occur, hospitals and other health facilities are ready and able to save lives.

*Ban Ki-moon
7 April 2009*

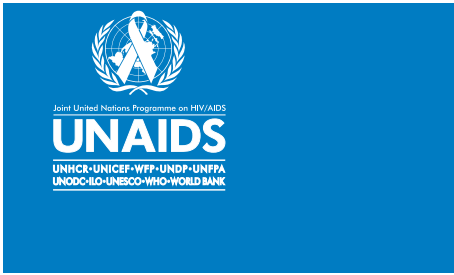
UN in Russia
Published once in two months
Circulation: 2,000 copies

www.unrussia.ru
www.undp.ru

Founder:
United Nations Office
in the Russian Federation

Editor-in-Chief: Victoria Zotikova
Editor: Vladimir Sadakov

Address:
125009, Moscow,
Leontyevsky Lane., 9
Tel. 787-21-00
Fax: 787-21-01
E-mail: vladimir.sadakov@undp.ru



Highlights

Youth in Hindsight of HIV: to Prevent Is Easier Than to Treat



A three year-long project 'Expanding HIV Prevention Programmes Among Youth in Russia' funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is successfully completed. The work in Russia became part of a global project launched in 2006 that coordinated HIV prevention efforts in six countries. Overall funding for Russia, China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, and Nigeria amounted to US\$ 5 million. The principal goal of the project is study and dissemination of best methods and practices of prevention.



“Each country depending on its internal situation and allocated resources selected its priorities,” remarks Elena Sosnovskaya, UNAIDS Youth Programmes

Consultant. For instance, China’s priority is to change the attitude to HIV of key actors in the Chinese political arena. Their innovation was to organize ‘positive meetings’ with representatives of people living with HIV (PLWH). Main issues in Indone-

sia were feminization of the edipemic and involvement of business sector and government in HIV response. In India, they focused on the attitude of police to PLWH. In Nigeria, the project aimed at fostering favourable conditions for HIV positive people in a workplace and building up leadership skills of religious leaders. In Russia, where every 8 out of 10 PLWH are young people under 30, we concentrated on HIV prevention among youth.

By ‘we’ I mean three UN agencies: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). They are in charge of design and implementation of this initiative. All agencies carry out HIV prevention work in compliance with their mandates. UNAIDS ensured overall project management, negotiations with the donor and technical assistance in report writing. The project envisaged close collaboration of all agencies, and coordination required some efforts.”

How effective these efforts had been? How do project participants evalu-

ate the project after three years, upon its completion? What worked well and what could be done better? What are development perspectives achieved after the end of funding by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation? Stakeholders, young people for whom the project was designed, and its authors, programme coordinators of respective UN agencies, discussed these issues.

The United Nations Population Fund focused on establishing a Youth Council for increase of youth participation at all stages of design and development of HIV prevention programmes as well as improvement, promotion, and standard evaluation of ‘peer-to-peer’ programmes.



Olesya Kochkina, UNFPA Youth and HIV/AIDS Consultant, comments on this work: “Peer-to-peer programmes are not new for Russia. They are success-



fully developed in a number of regions. However, no programme standards existed until now, while standards are crucial for further development and youth involvement in prevention. To formulate our goals and objectives, we needed to create a common language, which will be also used by our new supporters and stakeholders. This is a long and quite complicated process, but in the long run, standards were designed and adopted by peer-to-peer net. It provides us with an opportunity and gives us hope for programme continuation in the future. Our second focus was the establishment of a Youth Council. Originally, it was planned as a council in the framework of the programme. But in reality, the council had outgrown the programme. For me, the Council's development, personal growth of its participants, and capacity building of each member and all members as a working group is the most remarkable achievement of the three year-long project."

Fifteen young people from various Russian regions already very active in HIV prevention joined the Youth Council. Representatives of regional offices of the Red Cross, drug addiction prevention centres, public foundations, and organizations could meet under the auspices of the Council. All members of the Council are no older than 24, but in this case, their young age does not mean the absence of experience. For example, Roman Polikarpov, a representative of 'Young Medical Professionals of the Don', has participated in theatre performances on HIV topic, lectures in Rostov-on-the-Don schools, as well as round tables at a high regional level. Tatiana Talankina from Saint-Petersburg Healthy Generation ROO takes an active part in designing prevention projects for youth at Social Project Design trainings and later on helps participating volunteers to implement them in the Kalininsky district of Saint-Petersburg.



Tatiana Talankina says: "Unfortunately, the education system is still 'afraid' of cooperation with NGOs. There still exist many superstitions with regard to trainings run by volunteers. However, we managed to achieve some small positive changes during the project. We

organized several seminars on management for volunteers, on expansion of youth involvement for school psychologists, deputy principals for pedagogic work and social workers. Personal interest and love for what I am doing help me in my work on promotion of peer-to-peer principles. At the same time, an enormous number of administrative barriers and the lack of unified programmes approved by the Ministry of Education hinder the process."



Tatiana's colleague from the Youth Council, Svetlana Hacharyan from town of Balakovo, presents Saratov regional office of a Russian charity fund 'No to Alcoholism and Drug Abuse'. Svetlana evaluates the project's achievements from a practical standpoint: "Volunteers movement started working more efficiently than before. It is linked to experience sharing and an opportunity to analyze the situation in the area of prevention with colleagues from various regions. I became confident and professional in my work."



Alexei Sakharov from Arkhangelsk regional office of the Red Cross agrees with Tatiana. He believes that thanks to the project, Arkhangelsk authorities began to invite youth to discuss city problems more often and started considering youth opinion.

"The most important thing", says Alexei, "is that in the regions they started talking about the very idea of encouraging youth to participate in decision-making. The process of youth involvement in the discussion and designing of plans cannot be speedy, but I believe that we have overcome the first barrier."



In order to achieve new goals, UNICEF introduced a few new programmes to the project. Karina Vartanova, Coordinator of

UNICEF programme 'Youth Health and Development' in RF says:

"Only well trained specialists can equip youth with knowledge, which will help them to easily understand health protection issues. For this reason, the first Russian language training and methodological site www.adolesmed.ru was designed, dedicated to youth health and intended for specialists. One more site – www.phd.org.ru – created with UNICEF support, is called to become a data base and a source of training and methodological information on various aspects of HIV prevention, STIs, and other socially relevant diseases. At the same time, the site will serve as a space for exchange of ideas for specialists-practitioners in the prevention medicine."

The establishment of a Russian-speaking Department of European School of Teenage Health 'EuTeach' on the basis of the Department of Teenage Medicine of Saint-Petersburg Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education could be considered another achievement of the project. This also refers to annual Summer schools on teenage health.

At such sessions, Russian experts present ample opportunities for mastering the most contemporary methods and approaches to teenage health issues to their colleagues from regions and to Russian-speaking specialists from CIS. About 30 specialists from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, and Uzbekistan attended the first Summer school.

Virtually all participants of the project are convinced that HIV prevention should be incorporated into school curriculum in order to achieve more effectiveness and wider youth coverage. Elements of HIV knowledge and prevention programmes could be incorporated into various school subjects (biology, life skills), as well as the content of specific classes. As a UN agency specialized in education, UNESCO is a leading organization responsible for HIV prevention among youth in educational institutions. UNESCO committed to design a concept of implementation of HIV component in school curriculum in 5-11 grades. This concept has already been designed and is being piloted.

"To implement the pilot project, we have chosen one school in Moscow, Saint-Petersburg, and Koltsovo district of Novosibirsk region," mentions Larisa



Permyakova, UNESCO HIV Programme Assistant. The schools were enthusiastic about our invitation to participate in the project. Children are very active and interested. Seminars on introduction of HIV educational component for teachers, including a seminar-internet conference, were held in all the schools. As result of the seminars, curricula have been designed at schools in such a way that each school decides, which subjects for HIV prevention will be included into the programme. This is done in order that the subjects do not repeat, but each school has its own. As a result, the curriculum will include a full range of subjects. These programmes are being discussed and further worked on now."

The 'Expansion of HIV Prevention Programmes among Youth in Russia' project showed that there exists a large

number of gifted youth and a huge potential for the implementation of prevention programmes. In addition to the enormous work carried out by the Russian Government in response to HIV, it is the prevention, which requires to be strengthened in terms of both funding and professional support, meaning the influx of new qualified staff. The project has been forging staff for this work. Roman Polikarpov, a representative of the regional NGO 'Young Medical Professionals of the Don' shared this opinion:

«The Youth Council is a place for cultivating young leaders, who are ready to accept responsibility for themselves and others. Continuation of the Council's work means developing the potential of people who will be able to ensure HIV prevention



among youth at a higher level, where issues of youth programmes funding and their role in government measures in response to HIV are discussed."

The project has proved that HIV response measures belong to the sphere of youth interests and responsibility. The necessity of such work and the preparedness of UN agencies, governmental, and non-governmental youth organizations to jointly continue it is apparent. The project laid a foundation for a certain structure in the area of HIV prevention, which can be sustainable without international funding, but shall, if possible, rely on UN agencies technical and expert support. An event marking the completion of the three year long work is planned for the end of June, which is being prepared exclusively by young people, the project co-authors.

Anna Chernyakhovskaya

Photos: Pavel Babushkin,
Kirill Kiryushin

UNAIDS

Tel.: (7 495) 663-67-90
Fax: (7 495) 663-67-98
www.unaids.ru



Society

**Internet for Disabled:
Accessing Access**

According to the World Health Organization, the total number of disabled people in the world reached 600 million last year and 175 million of those are children. How will these people live in the 21st century and how will they be able to use the technological achievements of the civilization realizing themselves as full-fledged members of the society? These questions are of utmost importance to Russia where every 11-th person is disabled.

A press briefing titled 'The Internet and the Disabled People's Access to Information: A Hard Way Forward,' was held on 17 March at RIA-Novosti news agency's media centre. The event was organized by the UN Office in Russia and addressed a key provision of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the disabled people's access to information and communications technology. The Convention entered into force last May and was signed, but not yet ratified, by Russia.

Accessibility of web content for disabled was in the focus of the Recommendations put forward by the World Wide Web Consortium back in 1999. The second edition of Recommendations was approved late last year, whereas in this country, State All-Russia Standard P 52872-2007 'Internet resources. Requirements of Accessibility for the Visually Impaired People' has been in effect since 1 January 2009.

Unfortunately, despite the availability of comprehensive recommendations, most Russian websites have not yet been adapted to meet the requirements of people with disabilities. Why are the hosts of Russian sites and web-designers often indifferent to the disabled people's information needs? What can and must the state do to help meet their requirements? That is what the briefing was all about.

Irina Zadirako, member of the Russian Public Chamber's working group on the development of Russian information society, focused on the importance of finding



gaps in the Russian legislation regulating the sphere of information society and the participation of professionals in filling those gaps and in developing quality web content in

Russian. According to her, the major task of the Russian civil society is to replace a 'medical' approach to disabled people with a system of all-inclusive social responsibility. In this context, ensuring transparency and accessibility of national and other socially important information for all is an important precondition for such a change in approach.

Anatoly Popko from 'Reakomp' Institute of the All Russian Society of the Blind briefed the audience on the essence of State All-Russia Standard P 52872-2007 developed by his institute. In today's Russia, very few resources are up to the stan-



dard (websites of the UN Office and the Russian Ministry for Health and Social Development can be mentioned as examples to be followed).

ascertaining whether they embrace the ten principles of the newly introduced State Standard. Having confirmed the leadership of the Ministry for Health and Social Development and described some inadequacies of the portals used by other state structures, he said that though active work in this direction is already underway, it should be deepened and widened.



Urvan Parfentiev, analyst with the Regional Non-governmental Centre for Internet-based Technologies, said that the reasonable solution for the websites of government bodies lies in the sphere of setting up an electronic government. As for Internet business, it should take advantage of such relatively new avenues as online banking, online payments, and online shopping, i.e. market options which will help successfully meet the challenge of accessibility of various online services by people with disabilities.



Dirk Hebecker, Senior Human Rights Advisor, OHCHR Moscow, noted that inadequate 'friendliness' of some websites to the disabled is not an exclusively Russian problem. The widespread errors by webmasters often limit the accessibility of their sites even for those who encounter no problems with their eye-sight. He stressed the importance of involving the disabled persons in discussing issues related to adapting web content, recalling the popular slogan, "Nothing for us without us."

Topical and bold remarks triggered quite a few questions. Two commentaries were an important supplement. Alexandre Aighistov, Director-General of the Russian Agency for the Development of Information Society, told the audience about the upcoming launch of an international festival Electronic Future-2009

to be held all over Russia and in some neighbouring countries. According to Alexei Demidov, Head of a non-governmental organization in support of the UNESCO's Information for All programme, the accessibility of web content for disabled persons is expected to be quite thoroughly discussed at the Second International Information Technology Forum scheduled for April in Nizhny Novgorod. In his opinion, it is important to look into the pattern offered by some subjects of the Russian Federation, where regional authorities organized events aimed at developing information policies with due regard to the disabled people's needs.

All in all, the briefing was useful in terms of bringing issues related to e-accessibility into the centre of public interest. The profound knowledge of the subject demonstrated by the participants, their obvious commitment, and a wide range of opinions expressed contributed to a lively discussion.

Vladimir Pavinsky

Photo: Yuri Shishaeu



Dmitry Satin, head of the 'Usabilitylab' company, spoke about the results of the testing by his company of a number of governmental websites, with a view to

quite a few questions. Two commentaries were an important supplement. Alexandre Aighistov, Director-General of the Russian Agency for the Development of Information Society, told the audience about the upcoming launch of an international festival Electronic Future-2009

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Tel.: (7 495) 241-28-01 (Library), 241-28-94

Fax (7 495) 695-21-38

E-mail: dpi-moscow@unic.ru

www.unic.ru





Russian Disabled on the Path to Equal Opportunities

A new analytical overview *Russia: on the Path to Equal Opportunities* prepared on the initiative of the United Nations in Russia by a group of independent national experts under the leadership of Evgeny Gontmakher, Dr. Sc., Professor, Head of the Centre on Social Policy of the Institute of Economics, Russian Academy of Sciences, was launched in Moscow on 14 April 2009.



Evgeny Gontmakher

One in 11 Russians has a certain form of disability. Nationwide, this amounts to 13 million people with special physical, mental or intellectual needs of varying degree. The publication is dedicated to issues of access to education and employment for persons with disabilities in the context of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that came into force in May 2008 and was signed by the Russian Federation in September 2008. One of the main ideas of the Convention is that disability is caused not by health problems associated with a particular medical condition but rather by the status of the development of a given society, which impedes, by the barriers it creates, the exercise of rights and freedoms by individuals with health problems.

The country is on the way to the ratification of the Convention, and the government pays more attention to the problems people with disabilities are facing. On 7 April, the first meeting of the Council for the Disabled, chaired by President Medvedev, took place. It addressed the issues of social adaptation of people with disabilities, their integration in the society, and improvements to legislation protecting their rights. As Sergey Mironov, Chairman of the Federation Council, noted in the address to the readers of the publication, “now, the task is to ensure that people with disabilities can get access to education and take an active part in all areas of the economic, cultural and social life of the country.”

The UN-commissioned research could assist in this, as according to Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka, Under-Secretary-General Communications and Public Information, who opened the discussion, it is aimed at “providing support to the Rus-

sian society in overcoming existing barriers to the promotion of an inclusive approach to persons with disabilities. The basic idea is to attentively review existing opportunities for greater social and economic integration and to propose appropriate recommendations for action.”

Indeed, the publication gives a definition of disability, provides information on international trends and practices in the area of the rights of disabled people for education and employment with examples of particular countries. It also includes an overview of legislative measures and initiatives in this sphere in the Russian Federation, the effectiveness of their implementation, as well as their compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

Natalya Malysheva, Adviser to the Chairman of the Federation Council, noted, that “To my mind, the main problem in Russia is to change the attitude to disabled people in the society. This is not a problem of disabled people, but the problem of the society.”

Authors of the report, Deputy Chair of the All-Russian Society of Disabled, Oleg Rysev, and First Deputy Chair, Alexander Klepikov, spoke about two main issues covered in the report: education and employment. The authors of the

publication made the following major conclusions:

- Inclusion is a new form of effective and, by extension, high-quality education enabling an individual to realize his potential. Viewing inclusive education as a right we should remember that education is a key prerequisite for a broader process of social inclusion of disabled persons, including employment. While current system of education for disabled people in Russia does not correspond to the requirements of inclusion and, in particular, the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- The adoption in 2004 of Federal Law No 122 brought about significant changes in the lives of people with disabilities. Disability pension is now calculated on the basis of the degree of employment limitation, which is viewed as a step backwards and contradicts the main principles of the Convention. Thus the motivation for active life among disabled decreased. Moreover, additional barriers to the employment of disabled people were created; in fact, activities aimed at creation of barrier free environment were suspended.
- In light of reduction in state support for enterprises employing disabled persons in Russia, the recent years have witnessed a drop in the number of disabled



workers, in both open and sheltered markets. Specialized enterprises employing disabled workers, including enterprises managed by disability associations, were especially hard hit because such enterprises are more dependent on the state support than employers in the open market.

- The existence of anti-discrimination legislation is a necessary, but in itself not a sufficient prerequisite to ensure employment for the disabled. It appears that this challenge should be addressed on a systemic basis, with legislative provisions backed up by incentives for employers and measures enhancing a disabled person's motivation to work, as well as efforts to encourage the public acceptance of this process, especially in periods of recession and crisis.

If the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is ratified in Russia, significant changes will be required in the

legislation and disability policies. In effect, however, it comes down to changes in public attitude. The focus must shift from charity to equal partnership with disabled persons, their families and associations.

Without abolishing current payments, benefits and other preferences targeting disabled persons, the implementation of the fundamental principles of the Convention will necessitate a new quality of existing civic institutions.

Thus, an education system with an increased focus on individual approach to students organically prepared to work with disabled persons is to be created.

Pro-active government policy in the labour market reimbursing employers for additional costs of hiring disabled workers will not only permit more efficient use of the nation's workforce but will also

give millions of persons with disabilities the opportunity to realize their potential as equal citizens of Russia. Such employment policy still remains to be designed.

However, judging by international and Russian experience, this will take more than one year. Still, the first steps need to be taken and priority measures might include the following: make a number of amendments to the current legislation; create a database of best practices in the area of integration of disabled people in education and employment; establish a Public Council under the President to monitor the progress of implementation of the main provisions of the Convention; as well as prepare and disseminate information about main provisions of the Convention in media, as its successful implementation requires joint efforts of the whole society.

Victoria Zotikova



Russia Facing Demographic Challenges

New policies are needed in Russia to address demographic challenges that seriously threaten the country's economic and social security, finds a new Human Development Report, *Russia Facing Demographic Challenges*, which was released by the United Nations Development Programme in Moscow on 24 April, 2009.

Despite the fact that the acute nature of Russia's demographic problems has been officially recognized, and efforts are being made to mitigate them, it will not be possible to overcome negative demographic trends in the foreseeable future without a comprehensive, well-designed, consistent, and long-term strategy.

“It is not possible to attain noticeable changes in 10-20 years even in the best scenario. Russian society must comprehend these problems and search for answers in the economic and social spheres,” says Anatoliy Vishnevsky, Director of the Institute of Demography, Higher School of Economics, one of the lead authors. “There are some things that

can be changed through a successful policy, e.g. reduction in the mortality rate – our top priority, and an increase in the birth rate. But there are some things that we cannot influence: for example, the aging population”.



The Report emphasizes that the design and implementation of an efficient strategy in response to demographic chal-

lenges requires three components: political will, economic resources and specific knowledge.

Russia has been grappling with a demographic crisis for a long time: short life expectancy, low birth rate, shrinking and aging population, and lack of clear immigration policy.

As a result, Russia lost over 12 mln. people during the last 16 years. Although it was partially compensated by migration (5.7 mln.), the number of inhabitants of Russia at the beginning of 2008 was 142 mln. people.

According to the forecasts of the Russian Statistical Committee, by 2025, the natural decrease in the population of Russia will exceed 11 mln. people; the loss of the working-age population will be 14 mln. people; the number of persons of pension age will increase by approximately 5 mln. people.

The Report suggests two directions for the design of strategic responses to demographic challenges: to ‘repair’ the

demographic situation, where it is possible, and to adapt to what cannot be repaired.

The first direction includes a radical change in mortality rates, increase of life expectancy, as well as healthy life expectancy by promoting an active and conscientious attitude on the part of ordinary people to their own health, helping to control mortality due to avoidable causes of death associated with modern life. The most important of them are cardiovascular disease in relatively young age groups and external factors, the latter particularly among men. The share of deaths due to external causes in Russia is almost three times bigger than in the West.

The second consists of adaption of public, government and social institutions to certain demographic trends that cannot be changed.

Due to the overall aging of the population, the authors of the Report call for adaptation of social institutions, public health, social security, and education systems to the needs of the older population.

If, for example, Russia is successful in attaining a sustainable rise of fertility,

this will be a sign of successful 'demographic repairs'. However, it will be a long time before children who are born today reach the labor market, and, moreover, the birth of a second or third child may drive many women out of a job. So intensification of the economy is indispensable to adapt to the shrinkage of the labour force.

Reduced mortality in middle-age groups will improve the situation on the labor market, but later it will increase pressures on the pension system, which will need to undergo reform.

Compensatory international migration, if used as a tool for 'demographic repairs', will help to fill or reduce demographic gaps due to a population decrease, adverse changes in the age structure, and geographic population distribution. However, international migration is only a feasible solution if Russian society can become adjusted to it. This involves special efforts to change mass consciousness, social institutions and government attitudes.

Each of the above examples is indicative of the extremely important role of the demographic component as a driver for human development and all

national economic and social development in coming decades.

The Human Development Concept, used by the UN Development Programme, includes demographic, economic and social development. Longevity and health of people serve as the basis for expanding of people's choice, creative life, welfare, and education. The life expectancy index is included in the calculation of the Human Development Index. The report contains HDI for the regions of the Russian Federation. Specifically, the life expectancy index pulls downward the overall Human Development Index for Russia in comparison with other countries.

The role of demographic policy is increasingly (though somewhat belatedly) becoming clear to Russian society and its intellectual and political elite. However, Russia is still at the very beginning of a long road – concludes the Report.

UNDP

Tel.: (7 495) 787-21-00

Fax: (7 495) 787-21-01

E-mail: office@undp.ru

www.undp.ru



People

WFP Calls for Rescue Package for the World's Hungry

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) urged countries to step up and allocate to urgent hunger needs a fraction of what is proposed for financial rescue packages to address the global economic downturn.

“We need to send a bold signal of hope to the world with a human rescue package,” said Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, speaking from New Delhi during her first visit to India, the country with the single largest population of undernourished people in the world. “As we take care of Wall Street and Main Street, we can’t forget the places that have no streets,” she said, referring to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon’s challenge to political leaders.

WFP, which is set to feed nearly 100 million of the world’s hungriest people in 2009, announced that it will start the new year needing US \$5.2 billion for urgent hunger needs. WFP is voluntarily funded, and relies on annual contributions for all of its programmes. Sudan, Ethiopia, DPRK, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan and Congo are among major recipients of WFP food assistance. The needs of these six countries amount to 50 percent of WFP’s total requirement in 2009.

Sheeran said that with a mere one percent of what has been tabled for financial rescue packages and stimulus packages in the United States and Europe developed countries could fully

fund the work of the World Food Programme and make a contribution toward meeting other urgent hunger needs, for example, feeding all 59 million hungry school children worldwide (US \$3 billion per year) and the establishment of a reserve fund for fast acquisition of food stocks for emergencies.





Funds are also needed to boost the agricultural production of smallholder farmers, who have seen the price of seeds and fertilizers more than double since 2006.

“World leaders need to be confronted with the values implicit in the policy choices they are making,” Sheeran said. “The world is poised to produce trillions for financial rescue packages. What will they produce for the human rescue?”

WFP’s urgent call in 2008 is the consequence of historically high food prices followed by continued market volatility. The global financial crisis in the developed world is spilling into the developing world as incomes are affected, and trade, capital flows and remittances decrease. The Kyrgyz government asked WFP to help feed 600,000 people pushed into desperate hunger following a sharp decline in remittances, which account for 20 percent of the country’s GDP.

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) announced that another 40 million people have been pushed into hunger in 2008 primarily due to high food prices, bringing the total number of hungry to nearly 1 billion worldwide. This increase comes after four decades of progress when the international community collectively helped to bring down the percentage of hungry people from 37 to 17.

Sheeran noted that hunger can lead to civil unrest as witnessed in Haiti, where people were killed and the prime minister was driven from office when food prices soared last year. There were riots in dozens of other countries around the world.

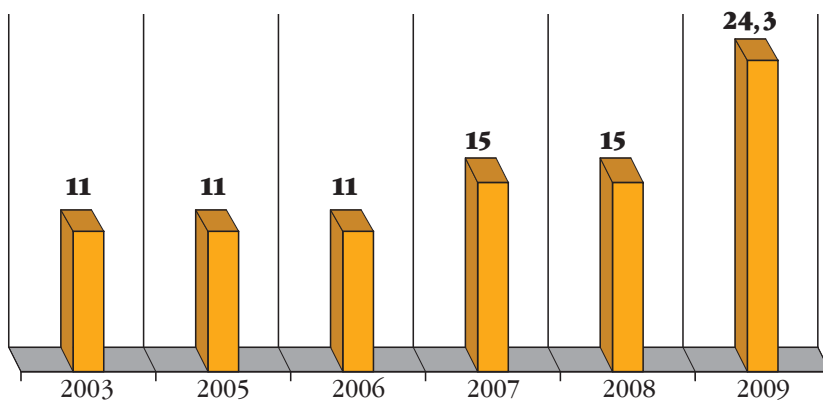
“We are at a critical juncture where we risk watching hunger spiral out of control as the world’s population is set to climb toward 9 billion mid-century,” Sheeran said, adding that the effect of hunger during a child’s earliest years prevents them from reaching their full intellectual and physical capacity.

“We can’t afford to lose the next generation,” she said.



Russian Donations to WFP (2003-2009)

US\$ million¹



¹DPRK – US\$18 mln, Tajikistan – US\$18 mln, Afghanistan – US\$8 mln, oPT – US\$7.3 mln, Armenia – US\$6 mln, Ethiopia – US\$6 mln, Kenya – US\$4 mln, Cuba – US\$4 mln, Zimbabwe – US\$3 mln, Azerbaijan – US\$2.5 mln, Indonesia – US\$2 mln, Kyrgyzstan – US\$2 mln, Sudan – US\$2 mln, Bangladesh – US\$1.5 mln, Angola – US\$1 mln, Guinea – US\$1 mln, Somali – US\$1 mln.

WFP is the world’s largest humanitarian agency and the UN frontline agency for hunger solutions. Next year, WFP aims to feed 98 million people in 77 countries. Following the WFP Appeal to the Russian Government in early 2008 the Russian Government allocated an additional US\$9.3 million to Ethiopia and oPT which will mean a significant increase in Russian funding to WFP in April 2009 compared to 2008.

WFP

Tel.: (7 495) 956-49-68

Fax: (7 495) 956-49-89

www.wfp.org

www.fighthunger.org

Actor Ville Haapasalo and Uncared Children of St. Petersburg

A girls' orphanage and a day care rehabilitation centre for disadvantaged children in St. Petersburg welcomed unusual guests. Together with UNICEF staff from Russia and Finland, a well-known Finnish actor, Ville Haapasalo, and Finnish comedian and TV presenter, Yakko Saariluoma,



came to see the kids. The children quickly became friends with affable and vivacious Ville and Yakko. They were excited to show them how they live, what they do, and to demonstrate their crafts.

UNICEF National Committee for Finland is preparing a series of TV programmes about projects supported by UNICEF in different countries. Ville Haapasalo and Yakko Saariluoma will be telling about UNICEF activities. In Russia, two projects in St Petersburg were chosen demonstrating how UNICEF supports the most vulnerable children.

There are 15 girls aged 8 to 18 from problem families in the social rehabilitation centre for juveniles. It is one of few centres in St Petersburg that accepts children with complex diseases such as HIV, hepatitis B and C. The girls live in the orphanage from half a year up to a year.

“Our girls are wonderful,” says Vasiliy Sereda, Head of the shelter, “but each of them has problems, we don't have any simple cases here. Some of them have no documents at all. Others haven't gone to school for several years.” The girls come to the shelter from families, where it is not safe to live or after living on the street. While in the shelter, all the girls go to school or acquire professional skills. Qualified psychologists work with each girl to design an individual rehabilitation plan. The centre also works with parents to improve relations within families.

“Our task is to return girls to their families,” Vasiliy Sereda says. “If it is impossible, we look for opportunities to place them in families, but most end up in orphanages.”

For the girls, Ville's visit was a real joy. They showed him their rooms, had tea with him, told him what they like to do and even sang their favourite karaoke song.

“I want Ville to visit us every day,” said one of the girls during the goodbyes.

The next day, UNICEF staff and Ville Haapasalo visited the day care rehabilitation centre for disadvantaged children.

The centre exists in St. Petersburg for 10 years, working with families in difficult life situations but still possible to rehabilitate. Every day, it accepts 30-50 boys and girls. These children spend nights at home, but come to the centre during the day after school. Here they do their homework, go to various workshops, and even stage plays. For some of them, the day care centre is also a possibility to eat well during the day. UNICEF supported the project for several years. In particular, pottery and theatre classrooms have been equipped to assist children's rehabilitation and development. Thanks to the joint project of UNICEF and KMB Bank, children regularly visit workshops at the Hermitage. Parents take an active part in all events, thus parents and children can build their relations and learn to understand each other better.

In this centre, Ville met Nikita who comes there almost every day. He is 16 years old and lives with his mother, younger brother and two sisters in a small room of a St. Petersburg communal apartment. His mother really loves her children and takes care of them, but she is going through hard times: after her divorce she lost her housing and official registration in St. Petersburg. In such situation, it is almost impossible to get a job. Nikita and his family live on his mother's occasional and very mo-



dest earnings. Unfortunately, there are quite a lot of families like Nikita's, who are in difficult life situations. In the Admiralteysky part of St. Petersburg alone, there are about 5,000 families in crisis.

“It’s not boring here. We spend time together a lot, and really cool guys come here,” Nikita told Ville. Now, the teenager spends less time on the street, as he has come to his senses. He added: “I want to become a computer programmer when I grow up.”

“It was very hard to hear these children’s stories,” Ville said after visiting



UNICEF project sites in St. Petersburg. “How can people do that to their kids?! We need to help these families and to do everything to prevent their children from living on the streets.”

**Anna Kochineva,
Yana Negreeva**

UNICEF

Tel.: (7 495) 933-88-18
Fax: (7 495) 933-88-19
www.unicef.ru



Regions

UNHCR Representative Visited the North Caucasus and St.Petersburg



Ms. Gesche Karrenbrock, new UNHCR Representative in the Russian Federation, has recently arrived in the country. G. Karrenbrock has worked in UNHCR for almost 30 years. With a legal background, she joined UNHCR as an Associate Protection Officer in Zambia in 1980, later worked in Malaysia, Sudan, Germany, as UNHCR’s Representative in Rwanda, Cameroon, Turkey, and is familiar with Eastern Europe having held senior positions at UNHCR HQs in Geneva.

This February, Ms. Karrenbrock made a series of visits to the sites on the territory of Russia, where UNHCR is implementing its activities. She traveled to the republics of the North Caucasus (North Ossetia-Alania, Ingushetia, and Chechnya) and the city of Saint-Petersburg. The visits aimed at analyzing the situation with refugees and internally displaced persons and, jointly with the authorities, to determine ways to effectively address the emerging issues and plan for UNHCR’s contribution. During her mission, the UNHCR representative met with senior government officials, civil society representatives, refugees and displaced persons, as well as with UNHCR implementing partners to discuss practical areas of cooperation in the light of UNHCR’s new bi-annual planning format called the Global Needs Assessment (GNA). This initiative intends to gather needs assessments from a multitude of stakeholders, strengthen UNHCR’s ability to set clear and justifiable priorities, support its advocacy efforts, expand its funding base and enhance resource mobilization in order to fulfil UNHCR’s mandate.

Ms. G. Karrenbrock’s visit to the North Caucasus started in Beslan, North Ossetia-Alania, where the delegation laid wreaths at the monument commemorating the victims of the Beslan school siege. Then, G. Karrenbrock met with the head of North Ossetia Taimuraz Mamsurov who outlined measures taken by the authorities to assist the displaced population in the republic. For 15 years, the republican authorities addressed the needs of forced migrants and refugees from Georgia and South Ossetia, but the events of August 2008 considerably aggravated the situation. “We are convinced that the federal centre will help us, but we also count on UNHCR support. We have always been and want to remain sincere and reliable partners for UNHCR representatives”, stressed Taimuraz Mamsurov.

In North Ossetia, Ms. Karrenbrock visited the collective centre in Gizel village (Prigorodny District). Upon learning about the long years of hardship endured by its residents, she stressed the need for a renewed and concerted investment in

shelter solutions for the currently over 12,000 forced migrants who still reside in



40 remaining collective centres in the republic. Where alternative shelter is difficult to find, improvements to current living conditions should be urgently contemplated. UNHCR's shelter programme for the displaced population has been a complementary one to the government's efforts, and aims to address the most vulnerable in need of sustainable solutions.

In Ingushetia, the UNHCR Representative visited several houses in Sleptovskaya and Troitskaya locations, where UNHCR implements an integration programme for IDPs who opted not to return to Chechnya as well as for displaced from the Prigorodny District, North Ossetia Alania. She also met with Chechen IDPs in Crystal and Darya, two temporary settlements in Ingushetia, and discussed how UNHCR could contribute to facilitate the inhabitants' access to the

republic expressed gratitude to UNHCR for assistance provided to internally displaced persons, and his hope for UNHCR's continued activities in the North Caucasus based on the experience of the past years. "We all share a common comprehensive goal in the North Caucasus – to support durable solutions for displaced persons and end their predicaments", noted Gesche Karrenbrock. She also exchanged opinions on the situation of IDPs in Ingushetia with Vesta NGO, UNHCR long-term implementing partner.

In the Chechen Republic, the Representative met with the Ombudsman for the Chechen Republic, Nurdi Nukhazhiev, governmental officials, lawyers from legal counseling centers run by local NGOs and funded by UNHCR, and IDPs in one of the temporary settlements. Nurdi Nuk-

king individuals in Chechnya as well, mainly from Georgia, which added to the issues to be jointly tackled with UNHCR.

Back in Vladikavkaz, G. Karrenbrock shared her impressions about the visit to the three republics of the North Caucasus with representatives of the Federal Migration Service who were on mission in the region at that time. This led to a constructive discussion, which paved the way for immediate plans to intensify cooperation on equipment and information exchange, and consultations to coordinate the search for durable solutions for displaced individuals and families, removing remaining legal and administrative barriers.

In Saint-Petersburg, Gesche Karrenbrock's meeting with Vladimir Tikhonov, Vice-Governor of the city, was also attended by representatives of the Saint-Petersburg branch of the Russian Red Cross and the Department of the Federal Migration Service in Saint-Petersburg and Leningradsky Region. In addition, she met with Igor Mikhailov, Saint-Petersburg Ombudsman. Local authorities and UNHCR have a long history of cooperation in response to the migration situation, namely, the provision of social assistance to refugees and stateless persons, including the opening of a refugee center. The Saint-Petersburg Government has made considerable efforts aimed at the improvement of the legal framework and of practical approaches to ensuring refugees' rights.

Ms. Karrenbrock stressed in her discussions the impact of the St. Petersburg 'Tolerance Programme' that could be implemented in other Russia's regions at a time, when the global economic downturn gave rise to increased xenophobic attitudes and violence. She promised to support further activities that enhance the prospects of integration of refugees and persons enjoying temporary asylum status and the respectful treatment of all asylum seekers, that this programme promotes among other objectives.

Vera Soboleva



assistance measures taken by the Government, and address remaining needs of the most vulnerable. Since 2000, over 20,000 houses were built or repaired in Ingushetia and Chechnya by the humanitarian community including UNHCR, supported by extensive counselling activities implemented with NGO partners.

Ms. Karrenbrock met with the President of Ingushetia, Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, who informed the mission of a forthcoming federal target programme on the socio-economic development of Ingushetia. This programme will also cover durable solutions for IDPs residing in Ingushetia. The President of the

hazhiev thanked UNHCR for close cooperation with local authorities and NGOs in providing assistance to residents of the Chechen Republic: "You have extended a helping hand at the most difficult time to all of us. People of our republic appreciate your sympathy and assistance. Today, our republic is reviving, and many acute problems that we have faced recently, have been resolved. Still, there are unresolved ones as well, and here the help and assistance of international organizations are most welcome." He noted that in addition to housing assistance, psychological and social rehabilitation of people was still acute in the republic. FMS officials mentioned the recent increase of asylum see-

UNHCR

Tel.: (7 495) 232-30-11
Fax: (7 495) 232-30-17/16
E-mail: rusmo@unhcr.org
www.unhcr.ru



World Health Day – 2009

On the 7th of April, the WHO Office in Russia organized a reception on the occasion of World Health Day. This year, World Health Day focused on the safety of health facilities and the preparedness of health workers who treat people affected by emergencies.

On the occasion of World Health Day 2009, WHO has been promoting best practices that are applicable in various settings, irrespective of available resources. In addition to determining safe sites for building hospitals and polyclinics, bearing in mind a possibility of earthquakes, an effective planning and timely trainings on emergency situations can help maintain major functions of health facilities. Proven effective measures are diverse: from early notification systems to assessment of hospital safety, from availability of safety and life saving equipment to training of staff in managing big numbers of injured, as well as ensuring that infection control measures are in place.

Dr Luigi Migliorini, WHO Special Representative in the Russian Federation, said that the approaches promoted by WHO proved to be effective during the recent earthquakes in Italy, where hospitals built in line with special technologies remained unharmed and were able to continue rescuing lives of the injured. In addition, Dr Migliorini shared WHO plans in Russia for 2009 with major partners and friends.



Marina Shevyreva points out to significant achievements of the WHO Office in Russia

Dr Marina Shevyreva, Director of the Department for Healthcare and Sanitary and Epidemiological Well-Being, Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation, pointed out to significant achievements of the WHO Office in Russia. Sergei Yeremin, Coordinator of the Programme on International Health Regulation in Russia, noted that

World Health Day was not a one-time event. “WHO has been constantly working with national and international partners in order to assist in preparing health facilities and staff for emergencies”, said Sergey Yeremin. The WHO Office in Russia actively cooperates with the Ministry of Health and Social Development in this area, primarily when it comes to preparedness of health facilities to respond to epidemics or pandemics of communicable diseases.”

“Since 2006,” Sergey Yeremin reminded, “WHO experts, jointly with the national partners from the Central, Southern, North-West and Far East Federal Okrugs, have been organizing workshops and trainings on hospital functioning in emergency situations, ensuring infection control, staff safety and planning for the preparedness to pandemics.” Just recently, before World Health Day, a workshop was conducted in the Kaluga Region, where participants could learn about new WHO guidelines on infection control and prevention of acute respiratory diseases that cause epidemics and pandemics. They also benefited from participating in practical exercises on staff safety.



Photo: Rimma Kuznetsova

Alexander Panchenko

"I Had TB and I Am Cured"

It is with these exact words that Arsen Arzumanyan addressed the participants of the press conference in the ITAR-TASS news agency on 24 March 2009. Arsen became the winner of the annual poster contest on the occasion of World TB Day. The purpose of the contest is to raise awareness among school students about TB and equip them with knowledge about early symptoms and basics of TB prevention, as well as the need to live a healthy life.



Photo: Igor Netuzhlin

Happy Arsen Arzumanyan...

Arsen had TB and got cured in the children department of the Regional TB Dispensary in the town of Mikhailovsk, Stavropol Krai. Arsen better than anyone knows what TB is about and how much patience and will it takes to undergo an entire 6 to 8 month treatment course. Arsen has never been to Moscow before. That was his first press conference ever. Out of 60 posters from 22 regions of the country, Arsen's poster proved to be the best in terms of the content and artistic expressiveness. "I know for sure that TB is not scary," said 17-year-old Arsen, "TB needs to be cured!"

Other winners of the contest were: Irina Kravchenko (Secondary School No.211), village Aleksandrovsky, Georgievsky District, Stavropolsky Krai;

Fariza Batieva (fourth grade, Secondary School No.2), Grozny; 13-year-old Daria Serebryakova (Secondary School No.5), Sayanogorsk, Republic of Khakasiya, 8-year-old Anastasia Vlasova (Secondary School No.17) Pyatigorsk, Stavropol Krai and 15-year-old Vsevolod Sadovnichy (Secondary School No.5) Lobnya, Moscow Region.

"Stop TB!" was the theme of the press conference on World TB Day in ITAR-TASS on 24 March 2009. The press conference gathered around 50 representatives of national and international organizations and about 20 print, TV and radio reporters. Reporters had an opportunity to query Lyudmila Mikhailova, Head of the Division for Recording, Reporting and Quality Control, Depart-



... and his work – winner of the annual poster contest on the occasion of the World TB Day



Photo: Igor Netuzhlin

ment for Medical Care Improvement and Health Resort Service of the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation, Mikhail Perelman, Academician of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, and Chief TB Specialist-Expert of the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation. The reporters could also listen to the speeches of Alexander Kononets, Deputy Director of the Federal Correctional Service, Mikhail Bionyshev, Deputy Director of the Project 'Promoting a Strategic Response to TB Treatment and Care for Vulnerable Population in the Russian Federation', Russian Health Care Foundation and Tatiana Kolpakova, Deputy Head of the WHO Office in Russia.

The global economic crisis worsens the situation with TB. Given that TB is a complex issue, comprising social, medical and biological aspects, the leading national TB specialists foresee a growth in TB incidence and mortality, and an increased number of multidrug resistant (MDR) TB and TB/HIV cases in 2009. The situation might go out of control, unless

full funding of TB response measures is ensured in the coming five years.

Since 2002, the trend in the TB epidemic has changed, and the first signs of stabilization have emerged as a result of the improved TB control, in particular in the penitentiary sector. However, the epidemiological situation with TB is still complex, and major TB indicators in Russia remain high, exceeding the rate of those in the European countries by 5-8 times. "TB incidence has grown by 2.8% in 2009 and now equals 85.2 per 100,000, whereas in 2008, TB incidence was 83.2," said Lyudmila Mikhailova, representative of the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation. During the last three years, 117,000-120,000 TB cases were registered in the country annually. Every year, TB kills about 25,000 Russians. MDR-TB cases amount to 10% among new infectious TB cases. Increasing TB/HIV co-infection causes grave concern.

"TB is a severe threat to public health, human well-being and therefore the economic growth of any country in the

world," Tatiana Kolpakova, Deputy Head of the WHO Office in Russia, pointed out. "This is why the global community focuses on TB-related issues. Supported by G8 leaders, the 'Stop TB Strategy' has been developed and is now being implemented."

On 1-3 April 2009, Beijing hosted a Ministerial Meeting of 27 Countries with High Burden of Multidrug/Extensive Multidrug Resistant TB (M/XDR-TB). The meeting approved a 'Call for Action', where M/XDR-TB was indicated as a threat to global public health security that severely undermines the efforts to implement the 'Stop TB Strategy' and prevents reduction of the global burden of TB.

The speeches made at the press conference highlighted that TB is a complex and complicated issue. TB remains



Photo: Igor Netuzhlin

Vsevolod Sadovnichy, one of the winners

'killer No. 1' among all infectious diseases, taking away almost 2 million lives worldwide every year. The participants of the press conference had a common understanding that haltering the global threat is only possible provided urgent measures are taken with a systematic approach and involvement of partners within and beyond the healthcare system.

Olga Oleinik,
Programme Assistant,
WHO TB Control Programme
in the Russian Federation

WHO Russia

Tel.: (7 495) 787-21-17

Fax: (7 495) 787-21-19

E-mail: whorus@who.org.ru

Web sites: www.who.int
and www.who.dk



Photo: Igor Netuzhlin



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Running a Museum in XXI Century

To promote international cultural partnership and to enhance professional capacity in museum management, the UNESCO Office in Moscow, in association with UNESCO offices in Almaty and Tashkent, launched a series of UNESCO/ICOM training workshops for museum specialists from the CIS countries, 'Running a Museum'.

The training workshops are conducted within an agreement between UNESCO and the Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (IFESCCO) on contribution to the capacity building of the museums in CIS countries on the basis of the Museum Studies Training Package and manuals developed by UNESCO and International Council of Museums (ICOM). The programme of trainings includes the priority issues, such as the promotion of the role of museums as centres of knowledge and education, better protection of cultural objects in CIS countries and capacity building of museum professionals in museum management and collections conservation.

The series of trainings started with the UNESCO/ICOM Regional Training Workshop 'Running a Museum' conducted from 29 June to 6 July, 2008 in Saint-Petersburg. The museums principals and representatives of the ministries of culture from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus,

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan took part in the training workshop. Major museums of Saint-Petersburg actively participated in organizing of the event. According to



all participants, the training workshop helped develop contacts with colleagues from CIS countries and allowed to discuss the most topical issues, which would undoubtedly contribute to the development of regional museums.

A brochure and a DVD with materials on designing and organising UNESCO/ICOM trainings for museum

professionals 'Running a Museum – XXI century' were produced as result of the Regional Training Workshop. These materials supplement a series of UNESCO/ICOM publications 'Running a Museum' and contain diverse information on museums in CIS countries, facilitators, experts and participants of the Regional Training, as well as lectures, presentations, methodological recommendations on the development and conducting of national trainings for museum personnel in CIS. In addition, the materials contain legislative documents of CIS countries, international conventions and acts in the field of museums and protection of cultural heritage, with recommendations of museum professionals, as well as examples of day-to-day operations of Russian museums.

The Regional Training Workshop was the starting point for workshops in each of the countries involved in the project. In 2009, national trainings for museum professionals will be held with the support of the UNESCO Moscow Office and IFESCCO and participation of leading museums from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova, and Russia. The programme of the trainings will be based on the published materials of the Regional Training Workshop and will help increase significantly the qualifications of museum professionals of the countries involved.

More detailed information about the conducted regional training is available at <http://www.unesco.ru/eng/articles/2004/Valya09072008124654.php>



UNESCO

Tel.: (7 495) 637-28-75

Fax: (7 495) 637-39-60

www.unesco.ru



UN Association of Russia

Model Unites Us!

On 13-17 April 2009, the Russian capital welcomed the Moscow International UN Model – one of the largest youth forums of its kind that gathered over 600 young UN movement supporters from 29 countries.

The Moscow International UN Model is a unique educational project conducted in Russia for 20 years. Since 2000, Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University) of the MFA of Russia (MGIMO) has been its permanent venue. The United Nations Association of Russia (UNAR) has been supporting this prestigious higher diplomatic education institute in organizing this event.

By tradition, the Moscow International UN Model 2009 was officially opened by Anatoly Torkunov, UNAR Chairman, MGIMO Rector, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Member of Russian Academy of Sciences. Prominent Russian and foreign political figures were among the forum's guests. The opening ceremony was graced by the attendance of Alexandre Yakovenko, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Mikhail Margelov, Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Federation Council and Konstantin Kosachev, Chairman of the State Duma Committee for International Affairs.

Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka, Under-Secretary-General Communications and Public Information, addressed the UN Model participants. An active model participant himself in the past and nowadays a respected UN official he said the following:

“Your Model is part of a larger movement; it can be called a revolution for the development and strengthening of the ‘world citizenship’ feeling that forms globally responsible leaders.”

Young participants absorbed this international spirit of the Model and maintained it till the very end of the conference. This was helped by the fact that this year, English became the main working language of the conference, which demonstrated both the high preparedness level of participants, as well as their growing interest in the dialogue with foreign colleagues – also future diplomats.



Photo: Igor Lileev

United Nations Under Secretary General for Information and Communications Kiyo Okasaka greets the future colleagues

The format of the event is also interesting. Changing the famous Latin saying ‘docendo docemur’ – ‘we learn while teaching’, we can apply ‘we learn while playing’ to the UN Model. This is the way the work of various UN bodies is simulated during the Model. There are two main stages in the process of the game: first, an intensive preparation process of studying the countries the participants shall represent; second, a role-play itself, when each participant usually plays a role of an ‘ambassador’ of a country.

The Model requires full participants’ impersonation: each delegate must know the country’s history and external policy and, apart from that, its position on issues in the agenda. In just a couple of



Photo: Igor Lileev

days a delegate acquires useful knowledge and substantial experience in holding discussions and negotiations and finding mutually beneficial solutions as well as learns how to interact with the audience.

During the five days of the conference the participants continued discussing the agenda, ideas and proposals. As usual, the most burning issues of the world politics were discussed in 2009 at the meetings of working bodies. They included peacekeeping and maintaining friendly relations in South-East Europe, liquidation of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident, the situation in Afghanistan, anti-corruption measures and conflicts prevention.

At the conference – in the meeting halls or in the wings, while writing a resolution or socializing after the sessions – students from all over Russia, CIS and other countries became true friends. It reminds of a line in the Moscow UN Model anthem, written by its ex-participant and now a Ministry of Foreign Affairs staffer, Alexandre Boulychev, “Then what unites us, friends? In Model we unite!”

In its turn, the United Nations Association of Russia takes care to provide a chance to the brightest modern youth representatives to gather within the walls of MGIMO University and to work for the better world. This is because the most constructive proposals from the final documents of the event are often forwarded to respective Foreign Ministry departments and other specialized organizations. So, here is a simple formula of an ideal UN Model: play, learn, think, and communicate!

Yulia Taranova

UNA-Russia

Tel.: (7 495) 680-80-67

Fax: (7 495) 434-94-13

E-mail: una@una.ru

Web site: www.una.ru

Summary

You can find the full version of the UN in Russia Bulletin in English at www.undp.ru or www.unrussia.ru (Documents)

UN / Secretary-General's Message on World Health Day

On the occasion of the World Health Day on 7 April, the UN Secretary-General made a statement on the importance of having medical services well-prepared for disasters. Floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters can take a terrible toll on human life. So, too, can infectious disease outbreaks and man-made disasters. Hospitals, clinics and other health facilities must react swiftly and efficiently, and provide safe havens. 'Save lives. Make hospitals safe in emergencies' is the slogan of World Health Day for 2009.

UNAIDS / Youth in Hindsight of HIV: to Prevent Is Easier Than to Treat

The three year long project, 'Expanding HIV Prevention Programmes Among Youth in Russia', funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has been successfully completed. It was part of the global project, which started in 2006 and coordinated HIV prevention efforts in six countries. Overall funding for Russia, China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, and Nigeria amounted to US \$5 million. The principle goal of the project is study and dissemination of best methods of prevention promotion and best practices in this area.

UNIC / Internet for Disabled: Accessing Access

According World Health Organization, last year, the number of persons with disabilities in the world reached 600 million, out of which 175 million are children. The United Nations office in Russia organized a press briefing on 'Internet and access of persons with disabilities to information: a difficult way forward', a topic, which corresponds to one of the key provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – access to information and communication technologies.

UN / Russian Disabled on the Path to Equal Opportunities

The United Nations in Russia launched an overview *Russia: on the path to equal opportunities*, dedicated to the issues of access to education and employment for disabled in the context of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The publication describes general tendencies and concrete examples of state policies in Russia and other countries, targeted at the implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities for education and employment and provides concrete recommendations on the improvement of the situation.

UNDP / Russia Facing Demographic Challenges

New policies are needed in Russia to address demographic challenges that seriously threaten the country's economic and social security, finds a new Human Development Report, 'Russia Facing Demographic Challenges', which was released by the United Nations Development Programme in Moscow on 24 April, 2009.

WFP / WFP Calls for Rescue Package for the World's Hungry

WFP urged countries to step up and allocate to urgent hunger needs a fraction of what is proposed for financial rescue packages to address the global economic downturn. "We need to send a bold signal of hope to the world with a human rescue package," said Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, during her first visit to India. WFP, which aims to feed nearly 100 million of the world's hungriest people in 2009, will need US\$5.2 billion for urgent hunger needs.

UNICEF / Actor Ville Haapasalo and Uncared Children of St. Petersburg

Finnish actor, Ville Haapasalo and humorist Yakko Saariluoma, together with UNICEF representatives from Russia and Finland, visited children at Daytime Rehabilitation Center for Neglected Children and Social Rehabilitation Center for Teenagers in St. Petersburg. Earlier, both actors participated in a TV programme in Finland, dedicated to UNICEF projects in various countries, which included a story on these centres.

UNHCR / UNHCR Representative Visited North Caucasus and St. Petersburg

Ms. Gesche Karrenbrock, new UNHCR Representative in the Russian Federation, made a series of visits to the sites on the territory of Russia, where UNHCR is implementing its activities. She traveled to the republics of the North Caucasus and St. Petersburg. The visits aimed at analyzing the situation with refugees and internally displaced persons and, jointly with the authorities, to determine ways to effectively address the emerging issues and plan for UNHCR's contribution.

WHO / World Health Day – 2009

WHO Office in Russia marked World Health Day by a reception on 7 April, where Dr. Luigi Migliorini, WHO Special Representative in Moscow, noted that approaches promoted by this organization proved to be effective during the recent earthquake in Italy. This year, the main theme of the World Health Day was the security of medical facilities and preparedness of health professionals to assisting people in emergency situations.

WHO / "I Had TB and I Am Cured"

"I had TB and I am cured," started his speech Arsen Arzumanyan, the winner of the annual WHO photo competition to fight against tuberculosis, at ITAR-TASS press conference on 24 March. The goal of the photo exhibition was to draw the attention of school children to the problem TB, to get them know about the early symptoms of the disease and its prevention, as well as about the importance of healthy life style.

UNESCO / Running a Museum in XXI Century

To promote international partnership in the sphere of culture and to strengthen professional capacity in museum workers, the UNESCO Moscow Office, in association with UNESCO Offices in Almaty and Tashkent, has initiated a series of the UNESCO/ICOM (International Council of Museums) workshops for museum specialists from the CIS countries, 'Running a Museum.' The starting point was a regional workshop in Saint Petersburg in the summer of 2008. In 2009, national trainings for museum professionals will be conducted, involving leading museums of the CIS countries.

UNAR / Model Unites Us!

International UN Model was conducted in Moscow in 13-17 April at the premises of Moscow State Institute of International relations (MGIMO). It was a big annual youth forum, which brought together 600 participants from 29 countries and was organized by the United Nations Association of Russia. During the Moscow UN Model, sessions of various UN systems were imitated with some of the participants performing the role of 'ambassadors' of various countries.

United Nations



Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals is a set of specific and measurable targets aimed at reducing poverty and raising living standards, which was adopted by 191 United Nations member-states, including the Russian Federation, at the Millennium Summit in 2000.

These Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to be reached by 2015 or earlier, are as follows:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Goal 1 | Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger |
| Goal 2 | Achieve universal primary education |
| Goal 3 | Promote gender equality and empower women |
| Goal 4 | Reduce child mortality |
| Goal 5 | Improve maternal health |
| Goal 6 | Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases |
| Goal 7 | Ensure environmental sustainability |
| Goal 8 | Develop a global partnership for development |