INTRODUCTION

This is a report on a particular year covering the period from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020.

After a good start, WHO hosting the 9th Global Forum on Health Promotion held in November 2019 the environment has dramatically changed with COVID-19 appearing, the pandemic expanding and posing a great variety of challenges for running our business.

First week of February 2020 we were still able to organise successfully our traditional NGO-WHO Consultation. However, the pre-WHA Seminar in May originally planned to take place in the Palais celebrating the 75th year of the United Nations had to go virtual. The annual Regional Workshop in Kitale, Kenya could not be held but our member in India was able to move to a virtual CME Seminar in Bangalore including a Health Promotion component.

Planning for the 10th Global Forum on Health Promotion started with the hope to take place in Ottawa, Canada at the invitation of our member Health Nexus but during the summer it became evident that it can only be run virtually.

All these developments have immensely influenced our activities and put a heavy burden on our small team to change radically its working method. On the other hand, it obliged us to change our thinking and focusing more on the use of digital technology. This has led to developing a funding proposal on building the Digital Capacity of the Alliance.

We are proud that even in these difficult times WHO recently established Health Promotion Department and even the Director General expressed their full support for the Alliance though it has remained at the level of technical assistance due to the slowed down process of negotiating the conditions of benefiting financial support for implementing our work collaboration plan.

The Framework of our collaboration was provided by two processes at global level, namely the development of the first ever Global Strategy on Health Promotion and planning for the 10th Global Conference on Health Promotion. Both processes had to be adjusted during the year due to the pandemic but remained valid for the longer term.
The Vision of the Alliance relies on the aspiration to see empowered individuals and communities equipped with ownership of knowledge and the means to better control their health and fully enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

The Mission focuses on connecting and catalysing Civil Society Organisations, advocating for a holistic approach to health and bridging the gap between international declarations and local realities.

The Alliance is using the following tools to achieve the above mission and its strategic objectives by:
- Knowledge sharing
- Advocacy
- Awareness training,
- Partnership building and,
- Networking

The Annual Report is structured accordingly.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

9th Global Forum on Health Promotion
hosted by WHO in the Executive Board Room
12 November 2019, 09:00-13:00
“Health Promotion - A Critical Pathway to Achieving Universal Health Coverage”

The Global Forum held annually since 2011, organised in collaboration with WHO, provides a platform for key stakeholders to address current challenges and opportunities of Health Promotion. Additionally, it sets the agenda for research, advocacy and action. It is a platform intended for everyone involved in promoting healthy lives, to share experiences, to learn from one another and to build understanding of best practices.

The theme of the 9GFHP was a timely and gave participants an opportunity to reflect on how to translate the recently adopted UN political declaration on UHC to local action. With more than 100 attendees and over 20 government missions represented, the event drew a diverse audience including participants from non-health sectors. Zsuzsanna Jakab, Deputy Director-General (DDG) of the WHO delivered the keynote speech and shared her vision on how the WHO will coordinate global efforts on UHC. She outlined the WHO's strategy to shift away from the focus on curing diseases, towards a focus on preventive approaches, which enhances the importance of health promotion.

In view of the current global health landscape and discussions around universal health coverage and the sustainable development goals, it was particularly encouraging for health promotion advocates present at the forum to witness WHO’s reaffirmation through its structural transformation and priority re-alignment for health promotion as
a top global health agenda. Government representatives from the Geneva Permanent missions such as Germany, Sweden and Georgia elaborated on their crucial roles in advocating health promotion at the national level and also within the global development agenda. Among key topics addressed by the speakers and the audience during the forum were the outcome of the UN High-Level Meeting on UHC and its meaning for health promotion as well as the approach to translate the UHC declaration to local action in the context of health promotion.

Pre-World Health Assembly Seminar (webinar)
15 May 2020, 15:00-16:00
“Positioning Health Promotion in Global Development to Achieve SDG3 – Think Beyond COVID-19”

The third pre-WHA Seminar had to be organised in the form of a Webinar and reduced to a one-hour meeting due to the pandemic. It was originally planned to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva to celebrate the 75 years of the United Nations Organisation with the aim of raising the profile of health promotion and forge a broader partnership between civil society and the UN system. As 2020 also marked 5 years since the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted and the Alliance obtained UN ECOSOC status, it seemed to be an appropriate moment to look back at our achievements and impact. On the other hand, an opportunity to look ahead and explore how working together, UN system and Civil Society, can increase outreach and achieve better health outcomes in the context of the SDGs.

A Zoom platform has been provided by Health Nexus and sponsored by Espriu Foundation, both, member organisations of the Alliance. Speakers as well as 89 participants were connected virtually and discussed the future path for health promotion and the role of Civil Society Organisations (CSO).

COVID-19 exposed the fact that health systems were not as strong as we used to think. Inequities on basic human rights are still very prevalent despite the fact that it has been five years since Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations.

The Alliance took this chance to communicate on how CSO responded the challenges of COVID-19 and where health promotion is supposed to proceed in this new-normal era. Proactive and prompt reactions from civil society organisations provided helping hands to confront this global disaster and filled the gap where attention was lacking with innovative means.

Dr. Rüdiger Krech, Director of the WHO Health Promotion Department, highlighted the financial and legal needs and support for health promotion in order to guide and reform the future beyond COVID-19. As we realised, health is a result of the intricate interaction of multiple components in our lives. It is not only SDG 3 on health but all of the SDGs which should be taken into consideration for a balanced and equitable development.
Preparations for the 10th Global Forum on Health Promotion (10GFHP)  
22 October 2020

“Global Health in a Changing Climate”

Planning for the 10th Global Forum on Health Promotion started early 2020 with the hope of being able to accept the invitation of Health Nexus to host it in Ottawa, Canada. However, during the summer it became evident that it can only be run virtually due to the restrictions necessitated by the pandemic.

The Global Forum was incorporated into the four-day programme of the 26th Canadian Conference on Global Health (CCGH) held 19-22 October 2020. Without the partnership of Health Nexus and the Canadian Society for Global Health (CSIH) we would not have been able to organize the Global Forum.

The overall theme of the Canadian Conference was Global Health in a Changing Climate. The Alliance decided to interpret Climate in a broader sense at the Global Forum and discuss the challenges for Health Promotion in a changing environment, including the ongoing pandemic.

A rich programme has been developed including an interview and live discussion with Prof Ilona Kickbusch, a keynote speech by Dr Ruediger Krech, WHO Director for Health Promotion and a video message from Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

The three sessions of the Forum addressed the following themes:

“Organising Civil Society for impactful Health Promotion”
Including a case study on older adults, Community experiences from Kenya and India on how Civil Society contributes to increasing resilience, Health Promotion at the workplace, Mechanisms for WHO-Civil Society partnerships

“Opportunities for Digital Innovation in Population Health”
With the learning objectives on increased understanding of equity frameworks guiding development of inter-operable mobile health technologies, increased awareness of population health mobile technology implementation trends and challenges and increased knowledge of promising innovation frameworks and approaches for collaboration and partnership through World Health policy and innovation tables

“Health Promotion and Social Determinants of Health Equity in the COVID-19 times”
A case study from Peru, Co-operative experience from Spain, Scaling up the Kitale Model by the Health Promotion Alliance Cameroon (HPAC), the Youth perspective by the Medical and Pharmaceutical Students federations and comments from PAHO, WHO Regional Office for the Americas
ADVOCACY

The WHO Executive Board session in the first week of February offered again an excellent opportunity for advocacy and networking. In collaboration with the International Pharmaceutical Students Federation, IPSF the Alliance organized its annual consultation. The theme was “Health Promotion to achieve Universal Health Coverage - Working with the youth, through the youth, for the youth as a key population”.

It was an honour to welcome the representation of WHO senior management in the persons of Naoko Yamamoto, Assistant Director General for UHC and Healthier Populations, Rüdiger Krech, Director, Health Promotion Department and Maria Neira, Director, Environment, Climate Change and Health Department. This dialogue has given rise to launching the Alliance Youth Hub and School Project.

At the opening of the Executive Board itself held 3-8 February 2020 the WHO Director General reflected on the importance of Health Promotion: “(...) 2019 was the year our new division of Healthier Populations was born, reflecting the new emphasis we are putting on health promotion and disease prevention, by addressing the root causes of ill-health.” He also reinforced this idea in his closing report saying: “I wish to thank all Member States – and all our other partners – for your support for WHO, as we work together to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable. The most important thing, especially at this difficult time is solidarity, solidarity, solidarity.”

This consultation was the last physical meeting taking place in the WHO Headquarters before closing it during the pandemic.

At the reduced session of the 73rd World Health Assembly taking place virtually 18-19 May we had limited opportunity for advocacy. The agenda focused on COVID-19 which provided us an opportunity to advocate for Health Promotion through written statements. One was prepared on the Aged population during COVID-19 and the other one submitted addressed the issue of right to health in support of a Framework Convention on Global Health.

AWARENESS TRAINING

Regional Workshop in Bangalore, India
26 July 2020

This year’s Annual Continuing Medical Education Programme of the Lakeside Education Trust and the Lakeside Center for Health Promotion organized with the support of the Alliance for Health Promotion was held on 26 July 2020. Due to the COVID-19 situation the workshop took place online and was attended by over 300 people. The main session of the conference had the theme of WHO - Support Nurses and Midwives presented by Dr Bakul Jayant Parekh, President of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics. This theme was chosen to reflect the critical role of nurses, midwives and health workers in general at the forefront of the response to COVID-19. Another
session followed on ‘Dos and Don’ts’ in the management of respiratory diseases. Bernard Kadasia, President of the Alliance, was among the honourable guests.

The question and answer session was an opportunity for updating knowledge and experience and sharing between practising pediatricians and health workers. The fact that the event was online enabled many participants who otherwise would have found it difficult to attend physically. The COVID challenged situation did not deter the commitment of the participants.

The Regional Workshop in Kitale, Kenya held annually since 2012 had to be cancelled due to the difficulties caused by the pandemic.

**NETWORKING**

During this reporting period we have had substantially less opportunity for traditional networking at big gatherings of WHO or other conferences. Digital networking has taken the place of personal meetings which is not the same but you can do that efficiently if you are able to change your mindset and learn new technologies. All this requires flexibility and another approach. Virtual coffee breaks or lunchbreaks do not provide us the same possibility as having conversations around the white table. The world has changed. Our lifestyle has changed enormously.

However, we took advantage of networking at the Global Forum in November 2019 and during the WHO EB in February 2020 both of which events took place in the WHO headquarters.

A major networking opportunity, namely the NGO Consultation with WHO senior management during the Executive Board session on 5 February 2020 has led to launching the Youth Hub, an online platform and the School Project, a joint initiative with the Alliance members. The International Federation of Medical Students’ Association and the International Pharmaceutical Students have been our faithful partners and Board Members in the past 10 years and actively contributed not only to organizing this annual event but also in taking forward the messages and help us turn them into action.

Around forty people attended the meeting which was building on the outcome of the 9th Global Forum entitled “Health Promotion as a key pathway to achieving Universal Health Coverage” and explored how “Working with the youth, through the youth, for the youth as a key population” can contribute to achieving UHC.

A good dialogue continued with the WHO representative from the WHO-Civil Society Working Group on Climate & Health, with the International Union of Health Promotion and Education, IFMSA, IPSF, Health Nexus and several other NGOs interested in increased youth engagement.
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Strategic Plan 2018-2020 of the Alliance states that “…the activities and events of the Alliance will contribute to the organizational mission as an authority of knowledge exchange at the international level, as well as a trainer at the local level. The Alliance strives to align events with the current health debates and provide high quality information to inform these debates.”

One of the outputs targeted in the Strategic Plan is “…to Improve the quality of activities: Quality will trump quantity in the activities held, offering a higher level of added values to the Alliance’s member organizations, and potentially equipping the activities with profit-generating ability. In addition, the Board will appoint Project Committees (PCs) for its activities to help define their scopes of responsibilities in the events. PCs will be responsible for all matters related to the organisation of activities, such as marketing, sponsorship, logistics, and others as relevant. The activities’ and events’ output should be retained as they can be further utilized within a large framework of information exchange.”

In support of achieving improvement in the quality of activities the Alliance, while considering each of its events as a project, has developed a tool, a project proposal on Building the Digital Capacity of the Alliance. It is a multidimensional project aimed at enhancing the Alliance’s capabilities to collate and communicate health promotion related information and activities to people across the world.

The following are the primary objectives of this programme:

- Improve internal and external communications
- Expand the Alliance’s network and facilitate the creation of partnerships among civil society organisations
- Create a virtual platform for health promotion related interactions.

The Digital capacity building project was planned to be executed in two phases. The first phase has been implemented due to the contribution of the Alliance Canadian member Health Nexus. It included developing a range of digital communication tools and in particular the website reconstruction.

The second phase includes new forms of outreach activities such as the creation of new collaborations with member organisations and the launching of the YouthHub initiative to digitally engage with young people across the world and bring them onboard the health promotion agenda. The YouthHub for Youth and Young Professionals (YHYYP) is planned to be an online platform on the Alliance website providing students and young professionals with an opportunity to share their ideas, innovations, research, and experiences. Now more than ever digital means and networks are key to connecting youth globally and hearing their voice advocating for a holistic approach to health. Within its efforts and commitment to working with the youth and for the youth as Key Population as confirmed at the NGO Consultation with WHO during the Executive Board session in February 2020, the Alliance for Health Promotion is proud to deliver on its long-term commitment on youth engagement. Youth as the leaders of tomorrow are key actors for health promotion.
As part of the YouthHub initiative a School Project has been developed by the Alliance in collaboration with its two members, the Education and Solidarity Network and Health Nexus. The aim is to target high school students and provide them awareness training on health promotion instruments making them more resilient in future pandemics and being aware how to control the adverse effects of climate change. Through this training they would be empowered with knowledge allowing them to get more involved in negotiations at international level starting with MUN, Model of United Nations, an association run by students. MUN encourages high school students to participate in international relations and diplomacy by simulating the debates using the style of the United Nations. MUN engages young people from all backgrounds actively in current diplomacy and international issues, while learning to respect and understand global politics, diversity and complexity about global decision-making processes.

In addition to the Digital Capacity Building and YouthHub/School Project Board Members identified additional themes they would be interested in and could contribute with their expertise. These are among others: maternal/child and reproductive health with specific attention to early childhood development, primary health care and social protection. Project groups are being formed with the participation of members interested in order to brainstorm and develop the project ideas into funding proposals.

**PARTNERSHIP BUILDING**

Work Collaboration with the World Health Organization, WHO

The WHO Executive Board admitted the Alliance into official relations in 2015. The official relations are governed by the Framework of Engagement with non-State actors, according to which the basis of official relations is a plan for collaboration between WHO and the non-State actor with agreed objectives. Apart from an annual report this year we are coming to the end of a 3-year evaluation period 2018-2020. In 2019 we were obliged to re-orient our activities due to the transformation process of WHO. Thus, a pilot training remains to be implemented in support of civil society groups capacities on SDGs and health promotion. As one of the deliverables the Report of the joint Global Forum on Health Promotion on Universal Health Coverage (November 2019) was accepted. It was considered as a multi-sectoral mobilization promoting health in the 2030 Agenda on SDGs. Re-orientation was also necessary in this period due to a shift of Health Promotion from the NCD cluster to the new Healthier Populations Division and elevating simultaneously the unit to a Health Promotion Department.

The activities in the renewed work collaboration for the period 2021-2023 have been structured in accordance with the WHO 13th General Programme of Work (GPW13) and Programme budget. The agreed activities are intended to contribute to the outcome targets in WHO GPW13. More specifically the Alliance will contribute to Strategic priority 3: One billion more people enjoying better health and well-being. Our activities will address the determinants of health, multi-sectoral actions and healthy settings within Health in All Policies. The two areas where the Alliance is expected to focus are health literacy and health-promoting schools.
As a founding member of WHO-Civil Society Working Group (WHO-CS WG) on Climate and Health the Alliance was recognized as a partner in organizing the health events at COP 25 and our delegation attended the Health Day and the Global Health & Climate Summit which took place in Madrid in December 2019.

Following the example of the WHO-CS WG on Climate and Health the Alliance has received the support of Dr Tedros to take the lead in setting up a similar mechanism for collaboration on Health Promotion, Health and Well-being.

Through the official relations (OR) of the Alliance we are able to offer our members who are not in OR many opportunities to get involved in WHO activities and participate actively in various meetings such as the recently launched series of interactive dialogue between the Director General and Civil Society.

**Collaboration with the United Nations Organization**

The Alliance was granted special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations in 2015. A four-year activity report had to be submitted this year in order to renew our status. At its substantive session, held on 18 June 2020, ECOSOC decided to take note of the Alliance quadrennial report which meant the extension of our consultative status. The Alliance appointed representatives not only in the Geneva office of the UN (UNOG) but also in the UN Headquarters in New York. Wendy Katherine from Health Nexus, Canada and Hussein Elsangak from Life University Atlanta, US are entitled to attend meetings in New York as designated by the Alliance.

Both the active partnership with WHO and with the UN allow the Alliance to make use of the Geneva network and its partners to influence the global debate as planned in the Alliance’s Strategic Plan 2018-2020.

**GOVERNANCE**

Since the last Annual General Meeting the Board has met 8 times. It means Board meetings took place more frequently than in normal times. Apart from two physical meetings all the others were held online due to the restrictions during the pandemic. This changed working method allowed for more consultations with members which has improved the governance of the Alliance.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The Alliance has 29 institutional members, mainly NGOs and academic institutions. By admitting four new individual members during this reporting year the number of individuals has reached 22 including the students of the University of California Los Angeles, UCLA.
As regards payment of the annual membership fee only 60 % has been received compared to the invoiced amount. This is due to the challenges caused by COVID-19. We hope the arrears will be paid in 2021 and we'll not be obliged to exclude members for non-payment.

COMMUNICATION

Improved communication has substantially increased the visibility of the Alliance and its members.

- The new website launched in May with the help of Health Nexus, Canada provides new functions including payments of membership fees and donations as well as new platforms for sharing best practices.
- The leaflet “Connecting Civil Society for healthier populations” introducing the Alliance mission and activities in a nutshell was published on the new website in English, French and Spanish.
- The “Milestones” document covers the history of the Alliance since its start as an advisory group in 1997 and focuses on its achievements after it had become an Alliance of NGOs registered in Geneva in 2008. In addition to the original English version of the “Milestones” the Spanish and French translations will also be uploaded shortly on the website of the Alliance.
- Presence and movement on the social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Youtube) have accelerated.
- Publishing our online newsletter has become more regular reaching 800 people on the mailing list.

All these developments reflect the huge change the COVID-19 pandemic have pushed us by switching to virtual communication.

RESOURCES

Office
Since August 2012 the Secretariat coordinates the activities of the Alliance from a small independent office in Versoix, canton of Geneva where several other NGOs have their seat. We share the office in the Villa Grand-Montfleury to accommodate the Geneva Representation of Life University, REPSSI (Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative) and the Framework Convention on Global Health Alliance, FCGHA, an NGO recently established and supported by our member organisation the O’Neill Institute of Georgetown University. This service and the conditions are regulated by the NGO Office of the State of Geneva which issues authorization subject to annual renewal. To have a physical address is a precondition for registering an NGO or an NGO representation in Geneva.

Year 2020 has been extremely challenging for maintaining the office. The rent and maintenance costs represented 60% of our expenditure although between March and
September it was practically closed except for a few days during the summer. Unfortunately, our request for financial support has been refused by FIPOI, the Foundation in charge of the management of the building.

**Human resources**

Despite of the difficulties the Alliance continued to carry on its activities under these difficult circumstances thanks to the free services of interns and volunteers. There is no budget item for compensating human resources. The digital capacity of the Alliance replacing partly human capacity would also require investment in order to adapt ourselves to the changing working methods.

**Finances**

The attached Financial Report clearly shows the critical situation of the Alliance. Without the extra contribution of members we would not be able to survive. Our efforts to attract external funding has not been successful this year. Despite of all the difficulties we are proud of having raised a modest amount (CHF 1.250) and transferred it into the WHO COVID-19 Response Fund to express our solidarity.