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GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY- A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE?

INTRODUCTION

There is growing recognition in Europe of the need to play a more proactive role in global health policy. The European Union-which for this Australian audience needs to remember represents pooled sovereignty and not a federal state- and its Member States are being pressed by European Philanthropy to play a more proactive role and to act now for global health. The policy imperatives for the EU and its member states are Firstly to extend European and national health policy and other policies to embrace global health as a priority and as an exemplar of Europe in the World working for prosperity, security and solidarity for all; Secondly to develop a European global health strategy; Thirdly to include health within and without all EU policies; Fourthly Europe must assert its approach to global health governance and Finally establish a European societal dialogue and partnerships for global health. These imperatives lie at the heart of the work which the European Partnership for Global Health of the EFC (European Foundation Centre) has been pursuing for some years. I single out the role of Foundations and Partnerships as an important and often neglected sector in policy development and also recommend the recent EFC's Policy Glossary as important resources for all with an interest in this topic [1].

This presentation from a foundations viewpoint will tackle the question-"global health is there a European perspective?" by addressing Europe's engagement at the interface between national and global policies with a perspective on global health, its place in foreign, development, trade and environment policies; global governance as part of a vision of a resilient Europe and its new global diplomacy reflecting interconnectedness and responding to future global challenges.

GLOBALISATION

Globalization is one of the most profound and lasting phenomenon of our age and so the EU needs to turn its economic power, political influence, values and its commitment to human rights to ensure prosperity, security and solidarity for the benefit of all. The processes of globalization are leading to the internationalization of health risk and the strengthening of interdependence. It is recognized that global health requires cooperation, coordination and opportunities to exchange ideas and to learn from one another in order to develop joint action to protect, promote and improve health as a global public good and also to make health care appropriate, effective and safe. Although there are variations amongst countries we share many public health challenges and we all need better ways to achieve quality health care. Other common challenges include coping with the increased incidence of chronic diseases and the negative impact of environmental effects on health as well as with the persistent problems of old and new infectious diseases.

In a globalizing world there is no such place as abroad as problems and solutions reach across national borders in a growing number of fields - economic opportunity and growth, development and human security- and result in the need for international collective action and abolishing the traditional distinction between internal and external policy responses. Political stability or instability further shapes the nature of international alignments while leaving them in an unprecedented state of flux. Global challenges are also leading to increasing recognition of the links between health and diplomacy. The threat of bioterrorism, the SARS epidemic, avian flu and the threat of a global flu pandemic, the challenges of HIV/AIDS, natural disasters such as the floods in Europe or the Tsunami and controversies around food, trade policy and cross border pollution are examples of cases that present diplomatic dilemmas involving science, technology and health and which have become every day considerations for European member states and for the EU.

Traditional models of leadership are no longer as effective as illustrated by the disputes within the World Trade Organization, disagreements within the Kyoto Protocol and the UN discord over Iraq. There is a need for new forms of leadership as governments can not form sustainable society from their own recourses alone. It takes partnerships and civic engagement to create a dynamic society. Mr Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common and Security policy for Europe and President of the Madariaga Foundation of the College of Europe, has stressed the importance of developing partnerships to unlock Europe's role and voice in the global future recognizing that its history and diversity confer a potential to become a bridge between civilizations and cultures that this will not be realized automatically, as it requires organization and concerted action. Robert Schumann observed that "Europe will not be made all at once. It will be built through concrete achievements which create a defacto solidarity". The development of a coherent and visible European Global Health Strategy I contend would not only be in our self interests, but also an exemplar of an effective Europe, of our external relations and a way of promoting our values inside and outside of our borders of sustainable development and a commitment to human rights including health

GLOBALISATION AND HEALTH

Lee and Collin [2] define Global Health as an "issue when the determinants circumvent, undermine or are oblivious to the territorial boundaries of states and thus beyond the capacity of individual countries to address through domestic institutions' and a reflection of "spatial, temporal and cognitive changes" in short "globalization". The EU Commissioner for external Relations Benita Ferrarro- Walden[3] claims that the debate about the EU boils down to one word "Globalization". Further she goes on that the biggest member states are too small to handle the" challenges of climate change, fighting pandemics, alleviating poverty, stabilizing neighboring states and that the only effective approach is to work together to negotiate globalizations terms and consolidate a rule based order of the future". Further the Commissioner quoted Tony Blair "the world is more interdependent than ever. Nations are obliged to cooperate. If the EU did not exist we would have to invent it."

To face today's challenges –and more which are ahead, the capacity to project 'soft' power will be increasingly important." Health can act as a bridge between internal and external policy development in Europe ; as a key element of human security health can extend the traditional features of foreign policy beyond state security and 'hard power', and play a part in a Europe in the World building 'Prosperity, Security and Solidarity'[4]There is also a dark side to globalization and which requires action on the hard security side-the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and organized crime –and health protection measures are crucial .

Europe is already playing a leading role in world affairs as a sensible and responsible approach to globalization but as has been stressed by Benita Ferrarra Walden there is a need for" a stronger EU Foreign Policy" and I would add health as an exemplar of a new EU foreign policy 'in a world where there is no such place as abroad' [5] Fiddler claims "health rise in foreign policy signals a profound change in national and international governance. The position of health has become an independent marker of good governance." [6]

GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

The global health challenges for poor and advanced economies are well documented- global health inequalities; legal, illegal migration ; health professions cross border migration from poor economies are adding to a global public health emergency; traditional infectious diseases and new emerging diseases that do not recognize borders such as SARS and Avian flu; chronic diseases traditionally of the wealthier societies are now an added burden for poor economies; and often neglected mental health. When we have been successful in eradicating diseases such as smallpox we have created potentially threatening biological weapons .Europe is well experienced with

conflicts, natural disasters and zoonoses and planning for a flu pandemic is increasingly in the news. The enormous increase in trade in food across borders may enable the transmission of intentional or unintentional contamination and lead to a serious outbreaks of disease. People traveling on public transport means pathogens are transferred with great speed from one location to another locally, regionally or even globally. Food insecurity continues to be a major issue and malnutrition makes worse existing vulnerabilities and acts as a persistent drain on productivity. Conflict and civil unrest increase people vulnerability to health risks and violence adds to preventable morbidity and premature death. The instability associated with poverty and poor health accelerates state or institutional failure and the proliferation of violence. Social problems of homelessness, crime and substance abuse also affect health particularly children and young people.

EUROPEAN RESPONSES TO GLOBAL HEALTH

So what has been the European response to global health to date? A recognition of Europe's contribution to Global Health was signaled by David Byrne in his valedictory address at the European Health Forum in Gastein in October 2004 'Global Health, Global Healing'. There is work in hand on a European Health Strategy ; there is now established in Stockholm a European CDC with a global remit of health protection on behalf of member states. European health industries are in a powerful position particularly the pharmaceutical industries in their negotiations on intellectual property and vaccine patents which have enormous public health implications. The European health insurance industry health care services, universities, financial institutions and their capacity, competence and capabilities are in a position to play a major influence on global health care. European philanthropy in the form of the EFC (European Foundation Centre) is increasingly working together to promote Global Health Global giving and promoting a policy debate. Further European Foundations convening power and their Trans Atlantic and wider links and networks across civic society in Europe makes them important partners. European Foundations working within the EFC (European Foundation Centre) and its Europe in the World initiative have recognized the importance of in interdependent world and have taken a range of cooperation and networking initiatives with international organizations and academic organizations. It has urged Foundations to spend 5% outside Europe on global and development issues-particularly the MDG's (Millennium Development Goals) .The EFC and its members have recognized that further information and advocacy is need to mobiles political and social action within Europe to take the global health agenda forward and to translate European values of sustainable development and commitments to human rights into action on health as a global public good The promotion of a European perspective on global health by the EFC European Partnership for Global Health and the publication of its Policy Glossary reflects the long tradition of Foundations as private society entities serving public goals. In a world in which civil society has a global context of social and political change and the state is no longer the only guardian of the public interest.

Europe's member states healthcare systems are experienced and public health experts can play a more central role in global, European and national debates on policy development and there is scope for further coordination of the work of multiple actors. In number of countries such in the UK where the Department of Health and the Foreign Office have been exploring health and foreign policy and where there is a UK Partnership for Global Health [7].The Swiss Federal Government have produced a draft health and foreign policy. The Foreign Ministries of Norway and France are also collaborating on developing health and foreign policy proposals for global health.

EUROPEAN STRATIGIC ISSUES AND GLOBAL HEALTH

Let me now comment on some European strategic issues and global health .

First health, security and foreign policy

Health has raised its position and profile in foreign policy but there continues to be a need for an assessment of current thinking in Europe about new security challenges such as fragile or failing states, what health can do for foreign policy and what foreign policy can do for health.

Health interests have already played a key role in conflict prevention and in post conflict situations but there is more work to be done in promoting peace studies [8], developing the place of health in security policy including the role of the military in humanitarian assistance, the role of health in European military doctrine and rebuilding post conflict societies to ensure the creation of long term stability within countries and regions.

Second health and sustainable development.

Health, climate and the environment are I contend under researched given the challenges to society of shifts in demographics, urbanization and the need for safe clean water. There are opportunities for further collaborations between NGO's, intergovernmental organizations and governments. European Foundations could play an important convening role as illustrated by the work of the Bellagio Forum.

Foundations in partnerships with other sectors have a long tradition of supporting learning by investing in the sciences and the humanities. A European innovation which could compliment developing new health interventions, drugs, vaccines, vector control and better nutrition ,would be to use existing knowledge to strengthen the health care systems globally that deliver health interventions and thus reduce the gap between knowing and doing. European Foundations might consider establishing a national library of health as part of the emerging national academies of science in a number of developing countries.

Third health and trade

There is also a need to support efforts to clarify policy options between global health and economic interests. The potential impact of economic policies on determinants of European health and Europe on the health of others globally through in particular trade and intellectual property are matters for further analysis recognizing that 'good health is good economics'. The economic consequences of SARS for the global economy were variously estimated as up to \$60-100bn while avian flu and planning for a flu pandemic are prominent reminders of the present and possible future economic consequences. Many international financiers are asking what other public health emergencies will have macro economic consequences.

European pharmaceutical companies, universities, research centres are major sources of R&D, yet as we know only 10% is spent on 90% of the health problems which are also concentrated in the poorer countries of the world. Further efforts to develop health systems in these poor economies are threatened by the flow of qualified personnel to EU countries. This continues to be an area for urgent action by member states. Again Foundations in Europe could play an important part in convening meeting of interested parties including member states the Commission and WHO.

Finally health and governance

The recent appreciation of the importance of global health by governments and philanthropists has revolutionized the scene with money, tools, creative ideas but narrowing the gap between aspirations and actions remains a challenge. The revolution has done some good but according to the American Association for the Advancement of Science' the missing piece is the architecture for global health and the proper arrangements for health governance. [9]

EUROPE IN THE WORLD

The challenge for Europe - the EU, its member states, the Commission and the Parliaments- as it confronts the interface between national and global health policies is to make globalization work

and to use health to foster better forms of globalization. Implicit in the idea of making globalization work is the contention that it is not working at the moment. Some may argue that this is not the case; global life expectancy continues to rise, the global economy expands, and scientific innovation and discovery proceed at seemingly exponential rates unlocking the keys to increased health, wealthy and happiness. However, we are aware, as never before, of the downside of increasing interconnectedness and while large parts of the globe experience the positive story of globalization, millions are cut off from it. Less than 10% of health research is directed towards major health problems that affect 90% of the world's population. These failings must be addressed, not just for reasons of common humanity but for the fundamental reason that negative externalities of economic globalization may in time threaten its very foundations. Health has a central role to play in meeting the challenges of making globalization work. The danger is that we will have health as a private good, health as exclusive and hierarchical, health as only the preserve of the rich and health as a matter only of national or European security. The challenge is not just about technology, neither is it just about supply and demand, getting markets right, although both will play a role. What is important and a priority is to extend the appreciation of health issues amongst policy makers and bring diverse members of the policy community including European Foundations to discuss global challenges and through consultation and engagement develop a European Global Health Strategy. There is a need to build on the EFC's European Partnership for Global health and engage the Commission, Governments of Member States, business and industry. If weapons were the currency of the cold war health could be one of the currencies to make globalization work; "health could be a bridge to peace"; health has a role in conflict prevention and in rebuilding society in post conflict situations and "good health is also good economics".

SUMMARY

In summary there is emerging a stronger and more visible European perspective on global health, as well as a recognition that Europe needs to play a more proactive role in global health and engage at the interface between national and global health policies. The imperative, as seen by Foundations in Europe is that the EU and its Member States should extend their health policy and other policies to embrace global health as exemplars of Europe in the World and as practical steps to develop a global health strategy, include health in all policies, assert Europe's approach to global health governance and establish a societal dialogue and partnerships for global health.

These are matters not just for politicians, although they must play their part. This is fundamentally a challenge to our ability to act together at all levels that are affected by these issues: the place we live; political communities and nations; across different countries of Europe, in institutions of global governance. By mobilizing the key actors we can begin to fulfill the promise of the benefits of global health for ' Prosperity, Security and Solidarity'

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