



BE-CAUSE HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2019



BECAUSE HEALTH IN PICTURES

2019



From top left to bottom right:

Photo 1: E-Health Academy Working Group Digitalisation, 30 April 2019

Photo 2: Expérience de synergie entre Médecins Sans Vacances, ULB coopération, Chaîne de l'Espoir Belgique et la Plateforme Hospitalière RDC @ Santé en RDC event, December 2019

Photo 3: Participants @ Parallel session Annual Conference, 16 October 2019

Photo 4: Panel with Catherine Dujardin, DGD @ Side event Acces to Quality Medicines, World Health Assembly, 21 May 2019

Photo 5: Jean Van Wetter, Director Enabel @ opening of Annual Conference of BCH

Photo 6: Panel session Annual Conference, 16 October 2019

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PREFACE

The right to healthcare is now more than ever a topic we are all confronted with; the corona virus is challenging even our health systems. As I'm writing these words at the end of March 2019, the future is unclear and everybody is waiting to see what will happen tomorrow. The epidemic will most probably take on another form in Africa, but it is clear that strong resilient health facilities which are accessible to all are required to absorb the shock of any epidemic. The reality is unfortunately still different for many people worldwide.

Many solidarity-based initiatives are emerging; Be-cause health continues to facilitate discussions, stimulate collaboration and learning, and bring together (virtually) all Belgian actors concerned with international health, including with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the current events preoccupying us all, we want to take a moment to look back at last year's events. We are happy to present you with this annual report on the activities of Be-cause health in 2019. It has been a year full of activities and exchanges.

Following different individuals' specific interest in these topics, two new working groups were launched: the working group on Mental Health and the working group on Research, opening up new opportunities for collaboration and inspiring many. The revived DRC working group organised a two-day event at the end of December, bringing together Belgian and Congolese actors engaged in the health sector in DRC. On the first day, a round table with the Congolese Ministry of Health focused on universal health coverage in DRC. The second day brought together different experiences firstly on the fight against gender-based violence, and secondly on the added value of synergy between Belgian actors.

Different working groups bringing together different organisations pooled their efforts to organise the annual Autumn conference on the theme of "Urban Health", whether from an 'eco-health' and climate perspective or a diverse range of social determinants, sexual reproductive health, and many related topics such as (sexual) violence (road traffic) safety,...

We hope this report boosts your enthusiasm for further strengthening our network. We are convinced that these exchanges of ideas and experiences will further improve the quality of our work in the field of international health.



Elies Van Belle
Chair Be-cause health

NETWORK EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL CONFERENCES

The Be-cause health 2019 international health conference, *Taking the urban turn*, brought together 200 eager participants, comprised field visits in Brussels on the first day and engaged experts from 24 different countries. The conference brought urban planners together with health professionals with a focus on international experiences from low- and middle-income countries.

All presentations are available [online](#). A publication with key messages on Urban Health is currently being compiled. Are you interested in sharing more experiences and/or raising additional (programmatic/research) questions related to Urban Health?

If so, then join in the setting up of a Working Group on Urban Health and contact the secretariat to find out more at becausehealth@itg.be.



INTERNATIONAL FORA

Belgian sessions @ ECTMIH2019

As a Belgian platform and member association of FESTMIH, Be-cause health participated at the 11th European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International Health held from 16 until 20 September in Liverpool.

Be-cause health organised a session on **Social Protection in Health**. This session was a joint effort by ITM (Paul Verlé), ULB/Université de Liège (Elisabeth Paul), Enabel (Paul Bosyns, Karel Gyselinck) and Memisa (Elies Van Belle, Felipe Sere).

The session entitled **'Modelling social protection in health: exchanges between concepts and field experiences in Wet-Africa'** consisted of presentations on experiences from Senegal, Mauritania and Benin.



Many more Belgian stakeholders (academic and development stakeholders) contributed to different sessions, oral presentations as well as poster sessions, on themes such as the health of migrants and refugees by Médecins du Monde (MdM), the prevention of sexual violence by Enabel, Performance Based Financing by the University of Liège (ULg) and many more.

During ECTMIH, Be-cause health organised a Belgian booth at the conference venue. This space was used by member organisations to exhibit material to share with conference participants and the Be-cause health stand became a Belgian hotspot to meet and network.

Belgian model on quality assurance of medicines @ World Health Assembly – #WHA72

Belgium targeted fellow donors and WHO experts at the 72nd World Assembly of Ministers of Health, advocating for "Assuring Quality in Medicines Procurement". Cathérine Dujardin from DGD (the Belgian Development Cooperation) and Raffaëlla Ravinetto, ITM and Chair of the WG on Access to Quality Medicines, promoted the 'Belgian model' in the procurement of medicines and medical products for humanitarian and development programmes. It inspired other donors (EU Member States, ECHO, World Bank etc.) to work towards adopting adequate quality assurance guidelines (by proposing the 'Belgian model' as a 'good practice') and highlighted the leading role played by the WHO.

[Read more.](#)

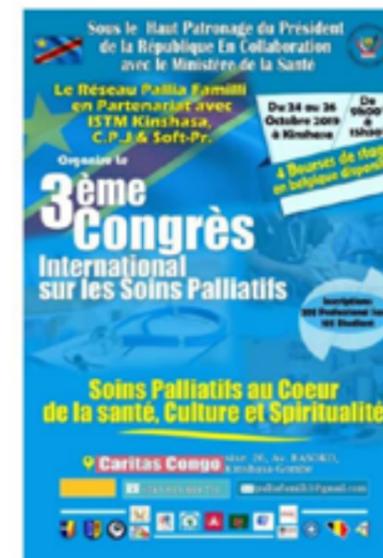


Conference on palliative care, Kinshasa, DRC

Be-cause health supports the Belgian Congolese diaspora and via its member organisation IYAD asbl, the International Youth Association for Development, has supported the efforts to keep palliative care high on the agenda.

From 24 to 26 October, IYAD, Pallia Famili and a partnership of Belgian health actors organised the third International Symposium on Palliative Care, held in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

[More information.](#) [Watch a video here.](#)



HIGHLIGHTS OF WORKING GROUPS

E-Health Academy: Tools and country case studies

On 30 April, the working group on E-health/Digitalisation, led by Enabel and VUB, brought together an international panel of speakers from Central Africa and Belgian public and private stakeholders. The event was held at ICAB, the VUB's 'incubator', and shared lessons learned on digital health applications. This E-Health Academy looked back on 3 years of implementation by Enabel and a VUB-led consortium consisting of AEDES, Bluesquare, Close the Gap, ITM and 3E.



Between 2016 and 2019, a large number of E-Health initiatives has been developed through a framework contract, signed between Enabel and a VUB-led consortium, including academic and private stakeholders. A specific 5+1 E-Health approach has been developed, covering and articulating the national information systems, the health facility



levels, health care professionals, the community level, the patient level and the capacity building/digital skills level (competence development). Implementation is ongoing in Burundi, Dem. Rep. Congo, Peru, Guinea, Benin, Senegal and is planned in Rwanda, Niger and Burkina Faso. All presentations are available [online](#).

Researchers in Global Health

The working group on Research in Global Health organised a seminar on realist evaluation with Prof. Dr. Bruno Marchal. The seminar took place at the Institute of Tropical Medicine on 18 November.

Realist evaluation is increasingly becoming a popular approach to evaluate health (systems') interventions. With increased popularity comes increased confusion as not all realist evaluations adhere to the best practices of realist evaluation. In order to provide more clarity, the Belgian Network of Researchers in Global Health invited Prof. Dr. Bruno Marchal to introduce this interesting approach. Prof. Marchal is one of the leading scholars worldwide when it comes to realist evaluation and has published widely on the topic, including an interesting discussion text on the sense and nonsense of realist randomised controlled trials. He supervises several interesting PhDs on realist evaluation and is closely involved in the organisation of the realist evaluation conferences. He provided a better understanding of what realist evaluation really is, how it differs from other kinds of evaluation and how it can make a difference for global health research.

All presentations are available online: <https://www.be-causehealth.be/en/bch-events/bnr-ghps-third-meeting/>

Determinants of International Health: Nutrition – key international health determinant

The working group "Determinants of International Health" had a transition year in 2019. After many years of effort, both chairpersons chose to embark upon a new professional path. The working group also decided to broaden our horizons in terms of the theme.

During its first meeting of January 10 2019, an open discussion was held to define a new central theme and to draw up a rough agenda of activities. The focus became the theme "Nutrition as a determinant of health". The working group's experience in 2017-2018 of working with one in-depth article/policy document, which can be used afterwards for various purposes in our work (publication, presentation at international congresses/seminars, etc.) led to the plan to do the same for this topic.

Specific "task force" meetings are held if a specific activity or product needs to be planned or produced.

The theme "Nutrition as a determinant of health" was presented in depth by colleague Valerie van Belle (MC) on the planning meeting in February. The theme is popular; it was up to the working group to find the gaps. Where can the research of our working group be most relevant? What is the link with international cooperation and Belgian policy?

At the end of May, the working group on Determinants of International Health met with the Flemish general practitioner and researcher Staf Henderickx for an exchange on the commercial determinants of our nutritional diet. The search for a new chair is still ongoing at the moment of writing this publication.

You can contact the Be-cause health coordinator Pol De Vos (pdevos@itg.be) if you are interested in participating in this working group.

Access to Qualitative Medicines

This working group continued to meet regularly and share the latest updates on access to quality assured medicines.

A subgroup of Belgian stakeholders (mainly non-governmental organisations including Médecins du Monde, Memisa, the Damian Foundation, Médecins sans Vacances, Light for the World) explored, with the support of ITM, the further implementation of the 'Belgian commitment on quality assured medicines' signed by several major Belgian development cooperation organisations and Minister De Croo at the end of 2018.

Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights - SRHR

The working group on SRHR continued to meet regularly and share updates on the topics SRHR and HIV.

The WG contributed to the organisation of October's "Urban Health" conference, in particular to the session on "The challenges of health service delivery in Africa's mega-cities and urban slums", including presentations on obstetric care in Lagos, the design of Reproductive Health (RH) interventions to meet the health access needs of adolescents (15-19 years) living in urban poor settings of Kampala, Uganda; and the integration of private health centres into the health system, Kinshasa.

Several WG members travelled to Nairobi to participate in the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Twenty-five years ago in Cairo, 179 governments adopted a landmark Programme of Action which set out to empower women and girls. The 25th anniversary of the ICPD is a high-level conference to mobilise political will and financial commitments to finally and fully implement the ICPD Programme of Action. These commitments were centred around achieving zero unmet needs in family planning information and services, zero preventable maternal deaths, and zero sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls.

[More information on the ICPD Nairobi Summit.](#)

LOOKING FORWARD

Today (April 2020) the Covid-19 crisis has created a worldwide health and health (care) emergency. The right to healthcare is now more than ever a topic we are all confronted with. The corona virus is challenging health systems worldwide. At the time of writing these words, the future is unclear. We don't really know what will happen tomorrow. The epidemic might take other forms in Africa, but it is clear that strong resilient health facilities accessible to all will be necessary to absorb the shock of any epidemic. For many people worldwide the reality is unfortunately still otherwise.

With many solidarity-based initiatives emerging, Be-cause health continues to facilitate exchange, to support collaboration and learning, and bring together (virtually...) all Belgian actors concerned with international health. [A specific webpage](#) was set up, where you can find information on initiatives of Belgian actors in international health in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Annual Conference on Climate Change?

On 29 November Be-cause health is planning its annual conference on the topic of Climate Change. We invite all working groups to prepare this topic for their field.

Are you interested in being part of the organising committee on climate change? Do you have interesting ideas regarding content or possible specialists to invite? If so, contact Pol De Vos, Be-cause health coordinator at pdevos@itg.be.



NETWORK ORGANISATION / GOVERNANCE

Steering Committee 2019

- » Elies Van Belle, Memisa | Chair
- » Tim Roosen, Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) | Coordinator
- » Anselme Mubenshayi Kananga, International Youth Association for Development (IYAD) | Treasurer
- » Marlies Casier, Sensoa
- » Aline Labat & Anne Fromont, École de Santé Publique – Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB)
- » Raffaella Ravinetto & Thérèse Delvaux, Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM)
- » Ignace Ronse & Cathérine Dujardin, Belgian Development Cooperation - DGD | Observer
- » Pieter Van Wolvelaer, Christelijke mutualiteiten - Mutualités chrétiennes (CM)

- » LUMOS UZ Leuven
- » Médecins du Monde – Dokters van de Wereld
- » Médecins sans Vacances – Artsen zonder Vakantie
- » Memisa
- » Le Monde selon les Femmes
- » Mutualités chrétiennes - Christelijke Mutualiteiten
- » Odah vzw/NUV-HOP
- » Rode Kruis Vlaanderen
- » Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences
- » Sensoa – Vlaams Expertisecentrum voor Seksuele Gezondheid
- » UC Louvain
- » ULB Coopération
- » Viva Salud

Listed member organisations (December 2019)

- » AEDES - European Agency for Development & Health
- » Belgian Medical Students Association
- » Benelux Afro Center
- » Çavaria
- » La Chaîne de l'Espoir - De Keten van Hoop
- » COTA
- » Damien Foundation
- » Ecole de Santé Publique – ULB
- » Enabel - Belgian Development Agency
- » FOS - Socialistische Solidariteit
- » Fracarita
- » GAMS
- » HERA
- » International Centre for Reproductive Health
- » Institute of Tropical Medicine
- » International Youth Association for Development
- » Light for the World
- » Louvain Coopération

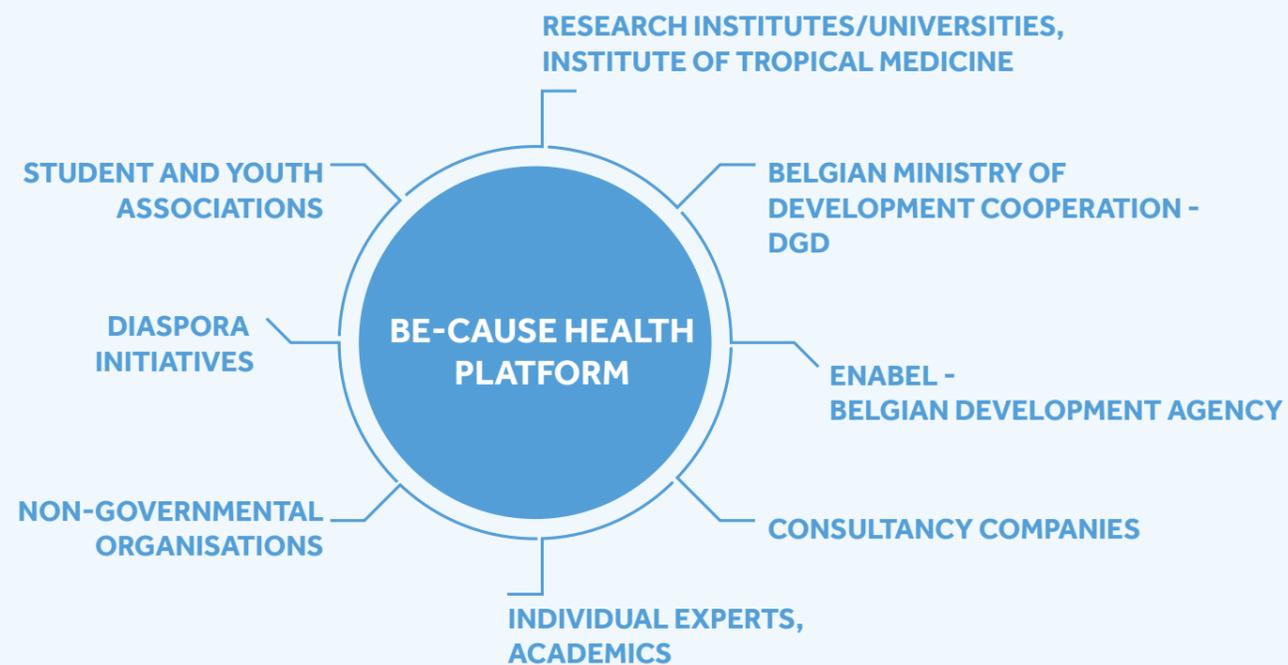
Observer organisations

- » Belgian Development Cooperation – DGD
- » Ministry/Federal Public Services for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment
- » Vlaanderen – Departement Buitenlandse Zaken

FINANCIAL RESULTS

REVENUES	RECEIVED
DGD FA4 ITM project (operating costs)	€ 50.000,00
Due amounts 2017 - 2018	€ 32.400,27
Total	€ 82.400,27

EXPENSES	BUDGET	REALISED
Network management - Steering group	€ 1.035,45	€ 1.378,39
External evaluation of Body & Rights	€ 12.000,00	€ 13.733,50
Advocacy and consultation activities - research	€ 500,00	0
Develop communication messages – website, publications: annual report, programme booklet conference	€ 5.000,00	€ 2.649,59
Development of new learning tools	€ 8.000,00	0
Representation of Be-cause health expertise at international fora: ECTMIH & HSR conference (September/October Liverpool)	€ 10.000,00	€ 3.700,35
Annual conference Urban Health 16 October 2019	€ 25.864,82	€ 33.054,68
Working group activities and events: ICAB - WG Digitalisation, DRC conference	€ 18.000,00	€ 3.569,49
Stimulate cooperation in Global South: Palliative care congress (via IYAD vzw)	€ 1.000,00	€ 5.500,00
Total expenses 2019		€ 62.986,00
Total budget operating costs 2019	€ 82.400,27	
Balance 2019 (operating costs)	€ 18.814,27	



WHO WE ARE

Thematic groups contacts

For the following themes, there is an active group of members who organise regular meetings to exchange and learn, co-organise workshops or seminars and co-develop tools:

- » Access to Quality Medicines | Raffaëlla Ravinetto, ITM
- » DRC – Diaspora co-operation | Anselme Mubeneshayi Kananga, IYAD
- » E-health - Digitalisation | Stefaan Van Bastelaere, Enabel
- » Mental Health | Willem Van de Put, ITM
- » Research on Health Systems | Elisabeth Paul, ULiège & ULB - Dimitri Renmans, University of Antwerp
- » Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights | Marlies Casier, Sensoa
- » Determinants of International Health | Jasper Thys, Viva Salud & Pol De Vos, ITM

Other themes with pooled expertise within the platform include:

- » Complexity
- » Chronic non communicable diseases – NCDs
- » Human Resources for health
- » People Centred Care
- » Social Health Protection
- » Universal Health Coverage.

For each of these themes, you will find reference documents, essential links and presentations of previous workshops and conferences, available online at <https://www.be-causehealth.be/en/working-groups-overview/>.



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