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Building the Right to Health Movement

Join us: engage@pih.org

Why build a movement for the right to health?

PIH Engage is building a movement for the right to health. Why do we need a social movement? Why now?

A Brief History – we’ve been here before:

In 1978 in Alma Atta, Kazakhstan, the World Health Organization proclaimed that we would fight for “Health For All By the Year 2000.” Unfortunately, as we all well know, these aspirations were quickly dampened by the rise of highly conservative national governments in the U.S. and United Kingdom during the 1980’s. These governments exported a particularly bad brand of neoliberal economic policies to poor countries. Structural adjustment polices were one major class of economic tools that gutted public sectors’ ability to protect basic social safety net functions, including health care and education systems.

A Lesson Emerges – the leaders in 1978 lacked a broad social movement:

The neoliberal technocrats dominated the world political stage throughout the 1980’s, driving forward a “selective primary care” agenda for global health (read: cheap health care for poor people). Narrow cost effectiveness analysis produced an “iron cage of rationality,” preventing investment in the “staff and stuff” necessary to actually strengthen primary health care delivery systems in poor countries.

Then, in the late 1980’s, weakened health systems in poor countries paved the way for the wildfire of HIV/AIDS to slash and burn its path globally. HIV epidemiology showed clearly the fault lines in society: the poor and marginalized were “preferentially” at risk of becoming infected and dying from HIV/AIDS, just as they were the least likely to receive the medical care necessary to prevent this suffering.

For these reasons, HIV became a hot-button human rights issue, not merely a question of technical delivery and cost effectiveness. Activists ranging from young American gay men in New York City to HIV-positive advocates in the slums of South Africa campaigned hard to demand access to a new class of medicines – antiretroviral therapy – that had been shown to suppress the HIV virus and extend life significantly. Led by activist organizations such as ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) and TAC (Treatment Action Campaign), a transnational social movement emerged. People came together to pressure the world to build the treatment platforms that would enable the millions of people in need of HIV treatment to gain access to the care they needed to live.

Partners In Health also played an important role in this movement. In 1998, PIH launched the HIV Equity Initiative in rural Haiti. It was among the first programs globally treating people with HIV with ART therapy in a poor country. The evidence – that poor people can stay on treatment and have great health outcomes when paired with social support and a community health worker – flew directly in
the face of the “public health establishment,” which said that it was too expensive, too complicated, and too risky to treat people in poor countries with HIV.

The AIDS Treatment Movement Brought Massive New Resources

The combination of evidence of successful treatment at scale from PIH’s HIV Equity Initiative, grassroots pressure in the United States from ACT UP and other activist groups, and international pressure from TAC and patient advocacy groups combined to create an undeniable base of power. They demanded that access to effective HIV treatment be considered a matter of fundamental human rights.

The result has been one of the largest redistributive sets of programs in the history of global health. The creation of the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria both brought unprecedented resources to fund the scale of HIV treatment, not as vertical, stand-alone programs, but rather as a means to strengthen primary care delivery capacity for a range of illnesses and conditions.
This launched what Paul Farmer has called the “delivery decade.” And, it made this gathering possible. We can now imagine and demand that we build off of these gains to secure a broad-based right to health globally.

**NOW is the time to build off of these gains and demand rights-based universal health care everywhere. We need a campaign to build power for the right to health.**

The PIH Engage campaign seeks build off the AIDS movement and to change what’s possible in global health. To date, global health has been seen largely as a collection of separate issues—HIV, TB, Hep C, NCDs. Yet, there exist countless individuals—from scientists to AIDS activists—who believe the promise of global health is not just to treat a specific disease, but to ensure that all people have universal access to health services.

Launching with a Global Day of Action on October 25, 2014 this campaign aims to build a grassroots movement for universal health coverage, or UHC. To date, many civil society and policy actors have been working tirelessly to promote UHC in the post-2015 process (when the Millennium Development Goals will expire), but many grassroots global health actors—from students to small NGOs—have yet to be mobilized. This campaign would mobilize these groups through the day of action, digital activism, and media work, generating the grassroots momentum needed to firmly embed UHC in the post-2015 agenda.

This campaign would also ensure that Article 25—the universal declaration for the right to health—is the key value underlying any UHC goal. A key criticism of UHC has been that it may only focus on financing mechanisms or serve to push forward neoliberal health reforms that have proven destructive in the past. By strongly tying UHC to the right to health, however, we will ensure that any UHC policy is judged by its ability to strengthen health systems and improve health outcomes—especially for those that need it most.

Lastly, this campaign would ensure that governments are held accountable for delivering on the promises made at the global level. By raising awareness among people of their right to universal health services, and providing organizing training and tools for them to hold local institutions accountable for delivering on those services, we can start to lay the groundwork for ensuring that the promise of UHC is fulfilled in the years ahead.

**This year, we will train each of YOU to serve as powerful advocates and movement builders for the right to health.**

By bringing to bear lessons from Alma Atta and the “health for all by the year 2000,” the successes of the AIDS Treatment Movement, and the community organizing framework pioneered by movement builder/organizer Marshall Ganz, we hope to build the foundations of a grassroots, volunteer-driven organization that can challenge the status quo in global health.

**Onward!**
Why Partners In Health?

Why “PIH” Engage? Why join with a nonprofit to build a movement?

1. The movement for the right to health needs to align with and amplify the mission and values of Partners In Health – who have shown how to deliver the right to health in the poorest places in the world for the past 26 years.

Partners In Health Mission

Our mission is to provide a preferential option for the poor in health care. By establishing long-term relationships with sister organizations based in settings of poverty, Partners In Heath strives to achieve two overarching goals: to bring the benefits of modern medical science to those most in need of them and to serve as an antidote to despair.

We draw on the resources of the world’s leading medical and academic institutions and on the lived experience of the world’s poorest and sickest communities. At its root, our mission is both medical and moral. It is based on solidarity, rather than charity alone.

When our patients are ill and have no access to care, our team of health professionals, scholars, and activists will do whatever it takes to make them well—just as we would do if a member of our own families or we ourselves were ill.

Partners In Health Values

We strive to act in accordance to four main values: commitment, accompaniment, humility, and integrity.

Commitment: We are tenacious and resolute in our drive to attain social justice.

- We are passionate about our work to break the cycle of poverty and disease.
- We push boundaries; we challenge conventions and the status quo.
- We set high standards of quality for ourselves and others.
- We strive to be efficient, effective, and focused on improving outcomes.
- We are devoted to this work for the long term.

Accompaniment: We make common cause with those in need.

- We accompany our patients, colleagues, and partners, working shoulder to shoulder.
- We are responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable; we are flexible and nimble.
- We invest in others to maximize their potential and self-efficacy.
- We recognize that we cannot deliver on this cause alone; we embrace partners and partnerships to help further our work.
Humility: We listen to and learn from others.
- We are deeply attentive to those living in poverty, and are guided by their input and participation.
- We actively promote a trusting, supportive environment that fosters inclusion, confidence, and the open sharing of ideas.
- We interact with kindness, compassion, and respect.
- We acknowledge and learn from our mistakes.

Integrity: We operate with honesty and fairness.
- We are purposefully frugal when we can be, ensuring that resources deployed maximize value to the patients and communities we serve.
- We are transparent and open in our actions and our work.
- We are responsible stewards of resources entrusted to us.

2. PIH Engage is an important part of Partners In Health’s Strategic Plan.

Partners In Health, as a part of the broader Global Health Delivery Partnership with the Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Harvard Medical School, recently launched an ambitious 5-year Strategic Plan.

Of the Strategic Priorities, “Mobilizing the Global Health Community” and “Movement Building” feature prominently. That’s where we come in.

PIH Engage and our community organizing work will be a central piece of Partners In Health’s trajectory over the next five years – PIH needs us to be advocating for rights-based global health policies, funding their innovative work, and changing the discourse around global health.

Our colleagues and friends around the world are counting on us to deliver big in this year’s campaign.

We have a chance, if we drive forward this year’s PIH Engage campaign, to build significant power behind the movement for the right to health. Will you join us?
What is the PIH Engage yearlong campaign?

PIH Engage is building the right to health movement by recruiting, training, and enabling teams of dedicated volunteer community organizers. These teams drive year-long campaigns focused on building the power to advance the right to health.

- We organize by building strong teams capable of hosting events, rallies, town hall meetings, and marches.
- We generate resources to finance high quality health care for people living in poverty.
- We advocate for policies both globally and domestically that further the right to health for all.
- We educate by holding discussion groups and public lectures about the right to health.

Together, we will demand that the right to health be protected for all people, everywhere.

Our Strategy: A Yearlong Campaign

In order to build the right to health movement, we must have a successful yearlong campaign that consists of multiple campaign peaks. The campaign will enable us to have a shared strategy, where we’re all working towards the same goals. With no clear strategy or campaign, PIH Engage events and tactics would go off in many directions instead of achieving a clear, measurable, set of outcomes. This campaign will allow us to build power for the right to health.

Campaign peaks will give us specific points in time on which to focus our actions and efforts. Within each season (Fall, Winter, and Spring), we have oriented the campaign towards two important campaign peaks. Although each will be unique and with their own specific focus, they all will build power for health as a human right.
Social for Justice

**Purpose:** The Social for Justice is a critical public kick-off point for your campaign. A Social for Justice is any kind of social gathering, bringing together a broad coalition of health justice organizations and people to present the yearlong campaign vision and ask for commitments.

**Details:**
- Held in mid-September
- Centered around informing potential community members about work of PIH Engage and relationship building
- Set up a group of people ready to mobilize for the Global Day of Action

Global Day of Action

**Purpose:** The October 25th, PIH Engage communities will join people from every corner of the planet for vigils, teach-ins, marches, and rallies to demand that everyone finally gets the health care and services we all have a right to.

**Details:**
- Part of a broader campaign orchestrated by Article 25, a PIH partner organization that focuses igniting a global movement for the right to health.
- Advocacy will be carried out through vigils, demonstrations, protests, marches, rallies, etc. in order to include many people and rally support
- Intended to bolster media presence of health as a human right on a national and international scale

Grassroots Giving Campaign

**Purpose:** We aim to secure a matching gift fund of up to $500,000, which will only be unlocked if PIH Engage can drive an additional $500,000 from grassroots individual donors. We aim to invest $1M in strategic Maternal and Child Health infrastructure and interventions that will help PIH meet it’s strategic goal of zero maternal deaths.

**Details:**
- Intended to use urgency, collective effort, the holiday season and matching gifts to drive grassroots fundraising
- We will use social networks, public narrative, and one on one meetings to ask for small donations
- Could bring in more than 20,000 new donors — major source of acquisition
World AIDS Day

**Purpose:** On World AIDS Day (Dec. 1, 2014) we aim to build a strong media presence—engaging our local newspapers and media sources—in publishing letters to the editor and Op Eds using timely news hooks.

**Details:**
- World AIDS Day is a great a media hook to allow organizers to share their experiences and perspectives
- Opportunity to get PIH in the newspaper
- Opportunity to link to particular advocacy / policy asks

Congressional Visits

**Purpose:** During Congress’ spring recess when Representatives and Senators are in their home districts, PIH Engage communities can schedule meetings with their lawmakers, building relationships, sharing stories from the field, and making timely, strategic asks.

**Details:**
- During March and April 2015
- Working with RESULTS (a PIH partner organization that focuses on power for advocacy through legislation) to train organizers and structure planning for meetings
- Opportunity to link to particular advocacy/policy asks

Strides in Solidarity

**Purpose:** As our culminating campaign event, we hope that Strides in Solidarity will represent massive demonstrations of power in cities and towns all across the U.S. We envision these events as walks or marches in solidarity with community health workers globally.

**Details:**
- Raise money through personal fundraising, selling tickets to walk, etc.
- Education through pamphlets, speakers etc.
- Bring together a broad coalition of organizations focused on health justice domestically and globally
Discussion Group Lesson Plans

**Purpose:** These discussion group lesson plans will focus on fostering transformative discussion and motivating individuals to continue the fight for health as a human right. Lesson plans will focus on topics pertinent to the seasonal Campaign Peaks. These modules are designed to be flexible and to facilitate discussions that cater to each individual community’s interests and knowledge base.

**Details:**
- **Fall – Social For Justice + Global Day of Action**
  These sessions will focus on developing a strong understanding of the history of the right to health and contextualizing PIH’s role in this movement.
- **Winter – Grassroots Giving Campaign + World AIDS Day**
  These sessions will focus on maternal and child health and HIV/AIDS broadly. We will understand both of these global health issues through the lens of PIH case studies from specific PIH sites.
- **Spring – Congressional Visits + Strides in Solidarity**
  These sessions will focus on the US healthcare system and community health worker systems across the PIH sites and the US.
What could we achieve?

More than 100 PIH Engage teams exist across the country. With each community mobilizing around these campaign peaks, we have the power to produce some pretty incredible outcomes.

Imagine this:

**Generate**

- Raise $1,000,000 from grassroots sources

**Advocate**

- 100 meetings w/ Congress
- 1,000 LTEs submitted
- 100,000 people at events

**Educate**

- 100 discussion groups meeting monthly
- 10 new student-run seminars

- Create popular discourse about the right to health
- Share PIH’s lessons, stories, and evidence demonstrating what’s possible

- Build relationships with Congress
- Engage in online action and petitions
- Build pressure through media

- Fund PIH’s work
- Broaden the base
- Diversify our funding sources
- Build organizing skills in PIH Engage communities

Are you in?