

Investing in Research and Education: GNR-  
MENA defines the struggle against  
HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North  
Africa



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## Description of GNR-MENA: The Project, Its Objectives and Goals

In a 2003 World Bank publication, *HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa: The Costs of Inaction*, researchers Carol Jenkins and David Robalino recommend steps to improve responses to HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Among them, they note establishing and developing regional networks of experts to “fulfill technical needs while developing local capacity,” and creating collaborative partnerships on international, regional and national levels.<sup>1</sup> Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS, made this recommendation one year earlier in Beirut where he said, “Partnerships are the foundation of taking forward effective work against the epidemic.”<sup>2</sup>

The mission of the Global Network of Researchers on HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa (GNR-MENA) is to realize these recommendations. Its mission statement is as follows: The Global Network of Researchers on HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa is a network of researchers interested in the interdisciplinary study of HIV/AIDS. Its focus is on the manifestation of the disease and its epidemic nature in the Middle East and North Africa region.

GNR-MENA has articulated five objectives to fulfill its mission:

- 1) To increase awareness of HIV/AIDS in MENA at the national, regional and international levels;
- 2) To develop research and educational agendas in the areas of work of its members;
- 3) To facilitate the flow and exchange of information, data, and study results among its members;
- 4) To publish and presenting joint statements, comparative and other data as well as educational materials;
- 5) To promote regional cooperation.

Participation in GNR-MENA is possible for all researchers from the region and outside of it who share this vision. In this sense, it is much broader than just a group of researchers from the Middle East discussing HIV/AIDS in the region; rather, it is a network that opens its doors to *all* researchers who currently work on or are interested in better understanding the dynamics of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region.

This interdisciplinary network establishes collaborations between social scientists, infectious disease experts, clinicians, humanities scholars, public policy and public health professionals to advance the production of more comprehensive knowledge about HIV/AIDS in the region and to promote more informed,

coordinated responses to it. The network endorses a multi-sectoral and multi-faceted approach to prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

GNR-MENA is not a funding source or mechanism. It seeks financial support for the infrastructure and projects of network members from a variety of international, regional and local sources. In particular, funds sought will be used for the development of GNR-MENA through the creation of collaborative, research partnerships and associations between US, European and/or Middle Eastern university faculties, businesses, international agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders in the region to begin the long term process of recruiting academics and public policy professionals to work together in order to tackle HIV/AIDS in the region. In this way, our work contributes to creating stronger civil societies and community outreach in the MENA region working towards the health of all sectors of the population.

The network is relatively small but rapidly growing. As of July 2006, we have 85 members. Members are scholars in Middle East Studies, medical historians, medical sociologists, medical anthropologists, clinicians, health policy scholars, epidemiologists, and international health and development experts who share ideas and knowledge about HIV/AIDS and its impact in the region.

To summarize, GNR-MENA seeks to promote and facilitate a regional, interdisciplinary research agenda on HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa. GNR-MENA encourages rigorous research on HIV/AIDS that addresses its medical, economic, social and political perspectives. The network consists of an advisory committee with several key implementation committees (research and grants committee, communications committee and recruitment committee.). Membership is free and voluntary. The network is based at the University of Illinois-Chicago School of Medicine.

## Background on HIV/AIDS in MENA: Rationale for GNR-MENA

Like many widespread epidemics, HIV/AIDS should be considered a serious, global and regional security issue in that it can severely weaken Middle Eastern economies, social structures, family support systems, and regional political stability. It is, as Peter Piot has stated, an “extremely complex development challenge, raising cultural, political, economic and a social issues that most of us would prefer not to have to face.”<sup>3</sup> To be sure, a far-reaching HIV/AIDS epidemic in MENA could conceivably further exacerbate socio-political trends towards religious-political conservatism due to intensified disillusion with the current political regimes’ inaction against the disease, the epidemics’ production of economic strain and of an ominous future. As such, the American administration should encourage research and capacity building in this area.

Indeed, international agencies are finally recognizing the presence and consequences of accelerating prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in the MENA region—the “time bomb” of disease in the Middle East.<sup>4</sup> UNAIDS has recently reported that there are currently 540,000 adults and children living with HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa region. Of that number, approximately 250,000 are women. In 2003 alone, UNAIDS estimated that 92,000 people have been newly infected with HIV/AIDS while 24,000 adults and children died from the disease in the same year. According to the World Bank, HIV/AIDS was the third leading cause of morbidity in 1998 among 14-44 year-olds in low to middle income countries of the region.<sup>5</sup>

Due to inadequate surveillance systems in most MENA countries, it is very likely that this data is significantly underestimated. Although some governments in the Middle East region have developed reporting systems, other governments in the region supply unreliable data to international agencies and possess insufficient reporting systems. For example, the most recent HIV/AIDS data for Iraq and Yemen are from the year 1998.<sup>6</sup>

Addressing the AIDS problem in MENA and trying to find solutions must vary according to each country’s population density and age profile, economic status, and surveillance system, among other factors. To be sure, local economic, social and demographic conditions—especially variations in levels of wealth and trajectories of historical development—most likely demand different kinds of analyses and interventions.<sup>7</sup> On the aggregate level, we know, however, that the region possesses many of the economic and social risk factors that typically lead to HIV/AIDS transmission: wars, a large young population, large migrant and refugee populations, unemployment and housing issues, weak health infrastructures, and vulnerable economies.

Because of the insufficient quality of data and state of underreporting, there is a substantial lack of extant scholarship on all aspects of HIV/AIDS, both in terms of individual countries and the region as a whole. This is particularly true in the humanities and certainly true of interdisciplinary research on the subject. The regional and local specificities of HIV/AIDS epidemiology in MENA require specialists on the Middle East, as those that have gathered as part of GNR-MENA, to seriously engage in these issues and attract the attention of their medical and public health colleagues leading to integrated public health programs that address transmission, treatment and prevention. Researchers from outside the region can contribute in a meaningful way to focused studies as well as scholarly views and insights as part of the global dynamics we anticipate in the network exchanges.

To begin to address these questions, fifteen scholars from a variety of academic disciplines gathered together in Chicago in April 2003 to discuss the problems and issues surrounding research on HIV/AIDS in the Middle East.<sup>8</sup> The workshop concluded by creating a solid working group committed to a collaborative, trans-disciplinary research agenda on HIV/AIDS in the Middle East for the next five to ten years called the Global Network of Researchers on HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa (GNR-MENA).

## **Events and Collaborations: Past Present and Future**

### **April 2003 Workshop Held at the University of Illinois at Chicago**

The April 2003 meeting served as the starting point for the wider initiative of GNR-MENA.

#### **Session One- “Overview of AIDS in the MENA Region”**

This session outlined regional and local approaches to responding to HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA). Along with describing facts about numbers of people living with HIV/AIDS, this session also theorized about successful approaches to take in the future regarding managing AIDS. Finally this session offered awareness that a variety of stakeholders are needed to engage regional approaches successfully.

#### **Session Two- “Gender, Religion, Stigma and AIDS in MENA”**

This session provided a thorough examination of the gendered implications of HIV/AIDS within MENA societies. The session highlighted how women are placed in unique situations by their societies that often afford them scripted roles of mother, wife and sexual object. Gender inequalities promote increased rates of transmission among women.

#### **Session Three- “Areas of Needed Research/ New Directions and Funding Possibilities”**

This session began to outline possible directions and approaches that could be undertaken in the MENA region. The session also allowed for a dialogue of effective measures to utilize in increasing multi-national efforts to supervise HIV/AIDS.

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## **Satellite Meeting: International HIV/AIDS Conference, Bangkok, Thailand (2004)**

GNR-MENA held a successful Satellite Meeting at the XV International AIDS Conference. Our meeting was the only session at the conference devoted entirely to issues of HIV/AIDS in MENA.

Sponsors: Understanding the importance of academic exchange on this issue, **USAID's Asia and Near East Bureau**.

**UNAIDS, WHO and the World Bank** provided the expertise and experience of their senior professionals involved in action and research on HIV/AIDS in the MENA region.

The **University of Illinois at Chicago Department of Medical Education** provided the technical and administrative assistance for planning and executing the session.

The **Jerusalem AIDS Project**, particularly Ms. Hani Oren, served as the local, regional, technical and financial coordinating partner.

**Speakers** during the formal lecture portion of the Satellite Meeting included :

Drs. Arash and Kamiar Alaei of the National Research Institute of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (NRITLD). Their talk was titled: "The Best Practice Model for Prevention and Care for HIV/AIDS and Potentials for Expansion into a Muslim Country Program."

Dr. Carol Jenkins, independent scholar and affiliate of the World Bank. Dr. Jenkins spoke on "Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa: A Socio-Epidemiology Overview"

Dr. Inon Schenker of Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His talk was entitled: "HIV/AIDS Prevention-Care Continuum in MENA: Realities and Obstacles"

Dr. Sandy Sufian, Founder, GNR-MENA. Dr. Sufian gave the welcoming address with her co-chair Dr. Arash Alaei.

Dr. Oussama Tawil of UNAIDS. Dr. Tawil spoke on “ Averting HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa Region: Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward.”

Dr. Hany Ziady of the WHO. “The Meaning of the 3 by 5 Initiative for Global Health and the Middle East”

Audience members represented HIV/AIDS researchers from many different countries, including Tunisia, Sudan, Palestine, Nepal, USA, Laos, Egypt, Israel and Iran. Organizations such as UNICEF’s Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, the Fogarty Organization, and the sponsors’ organizations (UNAIDS, WHO, World Bank, USAID) were also represented.

The BBC Arabic was present at the meeting and videotaped the discussion.

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### **Thematic Conversation at Middle East Studies Association meeting (November 2004)**

A group of four GNR-MENA members presented the work and mission of GNR-MENA to Middle Eastern regional specialists at the Middle East Studies Association held in San Francisco.

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### **GNR-MENA Website**

A GNR-MENA website has been launched and is constantly being revised in order to serve as an online clearinghouse for new research on HIV/AIDS in MENA and to support and expedite ongoing, online scholarly exchanges and partnerships. Our logo, on the title page of this report, is exhibited on our website. It was created by Koosai Kedri, a French Arab artist who specializes in Arabic calligraphy.

Our url is: <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/gnr-mena>

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### **Thematic Conversation at Middle East Studies Association meeting (November 2005)**

GNR-MENA will continue and expand upon last year’s conversation by focusing on graduate students at this year’s meeting in Washington D.C. Participants include: Angel Foster, Louise Lambert, Ellen Amster, Debra Budiani, Kamiar Alaei, Navid Mandani and Sandy Sufian.

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### **Grant Writing**

Funding sources are constantly being identified by the Research and Grants Committee to build and sustain the GNR-MENA initiative.

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**Satellite Meeting: International HIV/AIDS Conference, Toronto, Canada (2006)**

GNR-MENA held another successful Satellite Meeting at the XVI International AIDS Conference.

Co-Sponsors: GNR-MENA and UNAIDS

The **University of Illinois at Chicago Department of Medical Education** provided the technical and administrative assistance for planning and executing the session.

**Plenary Speakers** during the formal lecture portion of the Satellite Meeting included :

Dr. Sandy Sufian, GNR-MENA Chair, Co-Chair GNR-MENA Conference Committee. Sufian gave an overview of the objectives and activities of the Global Network of Researchers on HIV/AIDS in MENA

Dr. Navid Madani, Co-Chair GNR-MENA Conference Committee. Madani provided the audience with an outline of satellite session

Dr. HamidReza Setayesh, UNAIDS Country Officer, Iran. Dr. Setayesh talked about current data on HIV/AIDS and vulnerability in MENA.

Dr. Jocelyn DeJong, Faculty of Health Sciences, American University of Beirut DeJong spoke on “HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa: Some Key Knowledge Gaps and Suggestions for Research”.

Hanni Oren, Chair Jerusalem AIDS Project  
Oren talked about civil society approaches to vulnerability in MENA.

And **Working group** facilitators included:

Dr. Navid Madani, Instructor in Pathology, Harvard University  
“Women and Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in MENA”

Dr. Wafa Ramahi, Center for Sustainable Development and Community Health, Bethlehem University

“Youth Vulnerability and Action for Mitigation”

Dr. Inon Schenker, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

“Prevention Efforts for Vulnerable Populations in MENA Countries”

Dr. Eisa Hamouda, Head, Surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Sudan  
Nat’l AIDS Programme

“Access to HIV/AIDS Care in MENA”

Adel Zedam, Chair, AIDS Algeria

“Policy Issues and Vulnerability at a National Level”

Closing remarks were given by Prof. Francisco Sy, Editor of Interdisciplinary  
Journal on AIDS Education and Prevention

Concluding Remarks: The Way Forward

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**Thematic Conversation at Middle East Studies Association meeting  
(November 2006)**

GNR-MENA will continue its association with the Middle East Studies  
Association by holding another thematic conversation at this year’s annual meeting  
in Boston, MA.

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## Conclusion

All of GNR-MENA activities are intended to address and mitigate Peter Piot's diagnosis about the HIV/AIDS epidemic:

*AIDS has called into question the fundamental continuity of humanity—the passing of one generation to the next of basic values, of a legacy of happiness and prosperity and most important, of trust in the future.*

Towards this end, we expect that our educational efforts will contribute to the ongoing struggle against the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa region.

## Appendix 1: Media coverage

22 September 2004



Science and Development Network

print 

### NEWS

#### **AIDS network for Middle East and North Africa set up**

T V Padma  
6 August 2004  
Source: SciDev.Net

[NEW DELHI] A global network of researchers has been set up to study the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Middle East and North Africa.

The Global Network of Researchers for HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa (GNR-MENA) was conceived at a meeting of academics at the University of Illinois-Chicago last year and formally launched at the 15th International AIDS Conference in Bangkok last month. It will encourage research initiatives, scientific exchanges and debate on HIV in this troubled region.

Sandy Sufian, founder of GNR-MENA and professor at the University of Illinois-Chicago, says one of the major goals of the network is to be "a scientific forum with no political or disciplinary boundaries". It will allow health experts from the region to draw up plans to tackle the HIV epidemic, prioritise research agendas, and collaborate on studies.

GNR-MENA will create a database of names and affiliations of interested researchers around the world, particularly in the Middle East, and will organise meetings for scholars from the MENA region to plan research on HIV/AIDS.

According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the total number of HIV infections in the Middle East and North Africa more than doubled from 210,000 in 1998 to 480,000 in 2003. Despite this, research on HIV and sexually transmitted infections in the region is scarce. Medline, the international index of medical research publications, lists only ten articles published in 2002-03, mostly relating to Israel and Turkey. During this period, fewer than 20 presentations on HIV in the region were given in international conferences.

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the adult population in the Middle East and North Africa is low compared to sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, at 0.2 per cent of the population. But Carol Jenkins of the World Bank warns that the quality of local HIV/AIDS surveillance is poor, and that what data exists is from one-off studies, mostly from captive populations, such as prisoners, who do not represent communities. Moreover, she says the studies often do not describe their sampling methods and are not peer-reviewed.

Jenkins says there have been few behavioural studies to help explain who is getting infected and why. Lacking this kind of data is "dangerous", she says, as it is easy to miss the epidemic in its early stages, especially in hidden populations in hard-to-reach groups.

The behavioural data that is available is from specific and limited groups. For example, prevalence rates were established among 291 injecting drug users in Bahrain in 2000 (0.3 per cent prevalence), bar girls in Djibouti in 1996-98 (2.8 per cent), and among 815 homosexual men in Egypt in 2001 (0.86 per cent).

The limited data does, however, indicate that socio-economic conditions and risk behaviours conducive to spreading the epidemic do exist. These include a large number of migrants, slow-growing economies in some countries, high youth unemployment, illicit drug trade and low educational levels.

Some countries have responded to the epidemic by setting up blood screening measures and making antiretroviral treatment available. But Oussama Tawil of UNAIDS says more needs to be done by offering "psycho-social support and voluntary counselling and testing centres".

**Atualidade: Oriente Médio**

**Árabes e israelenses de mãos dadas no combate à AIDS**

*Clivia Caracciolo, 16 de junho de 2004*

**Médicos israelenses e palestinos juntaram-se a uma aliança regional para o combate à AIDS, colocando de lado suas diferenças políticas.**



**Rede médica**

Médicos das comunidades árabe e israelense estiveram reunidos, em um encontro paralelo à conferência internacional sobre a AIDS que está se encerrando hoje na Tailândia. A criadora desta rede que congrega pesquisadores e médicos árabes e israelenses, Sandy Sufian, da Universidade de Chicago mostrou-se satisfeita porque por ter conseguido realizar esta reunião aparte em Bangcoc e avançado nas discussões sobre o assunto.

**490 mil infectados no Oriente Médio**

Segundo dados da agência da ONU de combate à AIDS, a UNAIDS, quase meio milhão de pessoas estão infectadas com o vírus da doença, o HIV no Oriente Médio e no norte da África. Cada ano 75 mil novos casos de infecção surgem nas duas regiões.

**Conservadorismo**

A agência da ONU criticou os governos locais pela morosidade em fornecer tratamento aos pacientes aidéticos e de certa forma dar apoio às crenças conservadoras da sociedade que leva as famílias à segregar parentes portadores do vírus. Eles são acusados de ter praticado sexo ilegal e não recebem nenhuma simpatia ou tolerância de um modo geral. Além do que até as equipes médicas são receosas de tratar os pacientes com medo de também se infectarem.

**Via e.mail**

A médica palestina Etaf Maqboul da Univeridade de Belém disse que antes da atual intifada dos palestinos, ela se reunia regularmente com os especialistas israelenses e havia espaço para a troca de informações e debates, mas devido à restrição à liberdade de movimento na região este contato agora está sendo levado apenas via e.mail, o que não é suficiente segundo, a doutora Etaf.

**Vírus sem fronteira**

As ações de combate à doença devem ser intensificadas porque foi lançado o alarme de que a epidemia está crescendo em países como Israel, Palestina, Líbano, Egito e Síria e em todos os países do norte da África, sem exceção. Segundo Inon Schenker, um cientista da Universidade Hebraica de Jerusalém que participa do programa de prevenção de AIDS das Nações Unidas, o Oriente Médio é o cruzamento entre a África, Europa do leste e Ásia e, portanto, uma porta aberta para que a infecção se propague sem fronteiras, se medidas não forem tomadas agora.

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[www2.rnw.nl/rnw/pt/atualidade/orientemedio/at040716\\_aids](http://www2.rnw.nl/rnw/pt/atualidade/orientemedio/at040716_aids)

[http://www2.rnw.nl/rnw/pt/atualidade/orientemedio/at040716\\_aids](http://www2.rnw.nl/rnw/pt/atualidade/orientemedio/at040716_aids)

11/9/04

[VIEW IN FRAME](#)

**Important note:** Information in this article was accurate in 2004. The state of the art may have changed since the publication date.




## Israeli, Palestinian doctors join hands to fight AIDS



Reuters NewMedia - July 16, 2004

**Darren Schuettler**

BANGKOK (Reuters) - Israeli and Palestinian doctors came together this week to forge an alliance against HIV/AIDS at a global conference on the killer disease.

In a first for the biennial AIDS gathering, health experts from Israel, Palestine, [Lebanon](#), [Egypt](#), [Syria](#) and several North African nations attended a session on the disease, which has infected nearly half a million people in the region.

"Arabs and Israelis were in a room together and no one walked out," said Dr. Sandy Sufian, a University of Chicago professor and founder of a new global network bringing together AIDS researchers and doctors from the Middle East and North Africa.

"We were fortunate to have people who put politics on the back burner to look at this human tragedy," said Sufian, who founded the Global Network of Researchers on HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa.

They swapped meagre data on the scope of the disease and debated ways to overcome the conservative cultures and government complacency hampering the fight against HIV/AIDS in their region.

About 480,000 people are believed to be living with the disease in the Middle East and North Africa, with 75,000 new infections last year, according to [UNAIDS](#), the United Nations AIDS body.

The region's 0.2 percent prevalence rate in the adult population is low compared to harder hit areas such as sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.

But experts say governments are too complacent and that HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, can spread easily from neighbouring regions.

"The Middle East is a crossroads between Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia, so when you hear about a growing epidemic there, it's not that far away," said Inon Schenker, a senior HIV/AIDS prevention scientist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

### LITTLE SYMPATHY

UNAIDS says inadequate monitoring means potential epidemics in high risk groups such as sex workers, injecting drug users and men having sex with men are being overlooked.

Women, another high-risk group because being married and faithful is no protection against infection, account for 55 percent of AIDS cases in the region.

"People do not acknowledge that we have a problem. People are fooling themselves," said Dr. Etaf Maqboul of Bethlehem University, blaming a conservative culture for driving HIV/AIDS underground.

In some cases, the stigma attached to disease has driven families to cast out relatives with HIV. People who may have HIV are afraid to get tested and some medical workers are reluctant to treat people with the disease for fear they will be infected.

"We are a conservative society. People think those who have HIV/AIDS got it through illegal sex. They do not feel any

empathy or sympathy," Maqboul said.

She said meeting with Israeli counterparts showed they could put politics aside and tackle the disease together -- at least away from the conflict at home.

Before the Palestinian uprising began three and a half years ago, Maqboul met Israeli researchers regularly. That channel is all but closed due to restrictions on freedom of movement.

"It is an issue because e-mail is not good enough, you have to meet face to face," said Schenker, adding he hoped the new network would lead to more exchanges and debates.

"An understanding for the need for research allowed us to put politics aside. It doesn't mean things are easy, but I came out with a good feeling," he said.

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## **Appendix 2: Roster of GNR-MENA members**

### **Committees**

Research and Grants Committee

Chair: Suliman Eid, AMAN Project, Gaza

Conference Committee

Chair: Angel Foster, Ibis Reproductive Health  
Harvard Medical School, Cambridge, MA

Website and Communications Committee

Chair: Sandy Sufian, University of Illinois-Chicago  
Rachel Kaplan, University of California, San Francisco

Recruitment Committee

Chair: Rachel Kaplan, University of California, San Francisco  
Mike Gill, University of Illinois-Chicago

Advisory Committee:

Members:

Arash Alaei, Kermanshah University  
Kamiar Alaei, Kermanshah University  
Etaf Maqboul, Bethlehem University  
Inon Schenker, Hebrew University  
Sandy Sufian, University of Illinois-Chicago  
Angel Foster, Ibis Reproductive Health, Harvard Medical  
School

Student Committee:

Ahmed Khamis, International Federation of Medical Students'  
Association  
Razi Rashid, Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine

### **Additional Members:**

Lee Abdelfadil, Medical Officer, Sudan National HIV/AIDS Control Program

Suhail Abualsameed, Project Coordinator, University of Toronto- TeenNet  
Lino Baba Diye Aluma, National AIDS Coordinator, Sudan Council of Churches  
Ellen Amster, Department of History, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee  
Sawsan Baghdadi, Head of the Board of Directors, Center for Sustainable  
Development and Community Health (DAEM)  
Ahmed Bayoumi, Professor of Health Care Epidemiology, Medical and Research  
Center  
Debra Budiani, Medical Anthropology, Michigan State University  
Francoise Daoud, Nursing and Health Sciences, Bethlehem University  
Nadav Davidovitch, Lecturer, Ben Gurion University  
Jocelyn DeJong, Associate Professor, American University of Beirut  
Kate Dolan, Senior Lecturer, National Drug and Research Centre, Australia  
Dya Eldin M. Elsayed, Federal Ministry of Health, Sudan  
Farid Esack, Xavier University  
Becca Feldman, Harvard School of Public Health  
Sara Friedman, Editor and Writer, Aids Link  
Magdy Garas, Co-Director, Caritas- Egypt  
Randi Garber, Director, JDC Middle East Program- Jerusalem  
Mark Gelula, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Benjamin Hary, Associate Professor, Emory University  
Memoona Hasnain, Assistant Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Kanae Hayashi, Portland State University  
George Ionita, Regional HIV-AIDS Advisor, UNICEF  
Carol Jenkins, Bangkok, Thailand  
Rehana Kader, Director, Positive Muslims  
Amy Kay, UNDP/HARPAS (HIV/AIDS Regional programme), Egypt  
Salmaan Keshavjee, Brigham & Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School  
Jeffrey V. Lazarus, STI/HIV/AIDS Programme, WHO/EUROPE  
Navid Madani, Harvard Medical School  
Carla Makhoul Obermeyer, WHO  
Eltayeb Mansour, Sudan National HIV/AIDS Control Program  
Omer Mergani Nemery, Juba University  
Jacques Mokhbat, American University of Beirut and Lebanese AIDS Society  
Marie-Claire Mutanda M. Mbayo, UNICEF MENA Advisor  
Norma Claire Moruzzi, Associate Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Kathleen F. Norr, Professor, University of Illinois-Chicago  
Hanni Oren, Chair, Jerusalem AIDS Project  
Ruth Pfleiderer, HIV/AIDS Programme Officer, UNDP Somalia

Wafa Ramahi, Executive Director, Center for Sustainable Development and  
Community Health (DAEM)  
Mohammad Sajadi, University of Maryland  
Mohamed Sammad, National Center for Infectious Disease Control, Libya  
Ann Schlesinger, CBR Institute for Biomedical Research, Harvard Medical School  
HamidReza Setayesh, UNAIDS, Iran  
Ara Tekian, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Pierre-Etienne Vannier, UNDP/HARPAS  
Safwat Youssif, Caritas Egypt  
Ahmed Zoliten, Medicine Sans Frontieres, Laos

### **Appendix 3: Select publications of GNR-MENA members**

Alaei A; Alaei K. “Women, Gender, and STI in Iran.” *Encyclopedia on Women and Islamic Culture*. 2005. Volume III: 21-22.

Donoghoe MC, Lazarus JV, Matic S. “HIV/AIDS in the transitional countries of eastern Europe and central Asia.” *Clinical Medicine*. 2005, 5:487-490.

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“gp120 envelope glycoproteins of human immunodeficiency viruses competitively antagonize signaling by coreceptors CXCR4 and CCR5.” *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 1998; 95:8005-10.

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<sup>1</sup> Carol Jenkins and David Robalino. *HIV/AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa: The Costs of Inaction*. (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2003) xxii.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. "HIV/AIDS in the MENA Region: challenges and future prospects." Beirut, Lebanon. 17 June 2002. p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. "HIV/AIDS in the MENA Region: challenges and future prospects." Beirut, Lebanon. 17 June 2002. p. 3. [www.unaids.org/html/pub/media/speeches01/piot\\_beirut\\_170602\\_en\\_doc.htm](http://www.unaids.org/html/pub/media/speeches01/piot_beirut_170602_en_doc.htm).

<sup>4</sup> "Iran AIDS figures released." November 27, 2000. BBC News. [Hhpt://newsbbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/1043486.html](http://newsbbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/1043486.html)

\* The MENA region, for our purposes, will include all countries of the Levant (including Israel), the Gulf States, North Africa, Turkey and Iran.

<sup>5</sup> Jenkins and Robalino, xiv.

<sup>6</sup> There is no data at all for Afghanistan. *UNAIDS/WHO Epidemiological Fact Sheets on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections*. 2002 Update. Iraq, Yemen and Afghanistan.

[http://www.unaids.org/hivaidsinfo/statistics/fact\\_sheets/by\\_region\\_en.htm#asia](http://www.unaids.org/hivaidsinfo/statistics/fact_sheets/by_region_en.htm#asia).

<sup>7</sup> Israel and Iran, for instance, have relatively reliable reporting systems. *UNAIDS/WHO Epidemiological Fact Sheets on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections*. 2002 Update. Islamic Republic of Iran and Israel.

[http://www.unaids.org/hivaidsinfo/statistics/fact\\_sheets/by\\_region\\_en.htm#asia](http://www.unaids.org/hivaidsinfo/statistics/fact_sheets/by_region_en.htm#asia).

<sup>8</sup> The workshop was sponsored by the University of Illinois-Chicago Department of Medical Education, UIC Humanities Laboratory and University of Pennsylvania's Middle East Center. A list of the April 2003 participants is attached.