

Foundations and awards

1. Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize and Fellowship – Report of the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Committee

Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize

The Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize is awarded to a person having made the most significant contribution to any health problem in the geographical area in which Dr A.T. Shousha served WHO, namely the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

During the sixty-fifth session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean (Khartoum, 15–18 October 2018), the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Committee met on 15 October, chaired by Her Excellency Dr Fawziya Abikar Nur, Minister of Health and Human Services, Somalia (First Vice-Chairman of the Regional Committee).

The Committee reviewed nominations from Afghanistan, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The Committee members considered the nominations of the four candidates and recommended that the candidate from Egypt, Dr Radi Hammad, Director-General of the Viral Hepatitis Control Department at the Ministry of Health and Population, should be selected as the person to be proposed to the Executive Board at its 144th session as the recipient of the Prize.

If the Board confirms the award, the laureate will receive the equivalent of 2500 Swiss francs in United States dollars.

Dr Radi Hammad is being honoured for his significant contribution to public health in Egypt, especially in the control of hepatitis C. He has over 14 years of experience in public health, hepatology, health policy and health care management.

A leading force in Egypt's ambitious hepatitis C elimination campaign, Dr Hammad has overseen the national hepatitis C virus screening initiative that has tested more than 7 million people since August 2016. The resulting positive cases are referred to the nearest treatment centre and are followed up until cured. This enormous undertaking has involved the coordination of different departments within the Ministry of Health and Population, as well as coordination with different ministries and civil society organizations.

Dr Hammad graduated in medicine and surgery from Cairo University in 2003. He received a diploma in total quality management from the American University in Cairo in 2008, a master's in internal medicine from Cairo University in 2010, and an MBA in health care management from Loyola University in the United States of America in 2012.

Dr Hammad has published widely in scientific journals on hepatitis C infection and treatment.

Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Fellowship

Member States of the Region were also invited to submit a nomination for a fellowship to be awarded in 2019. A nomination was received from the Islamic Republic of Iran, nominating Ms Golaleh Asghari for the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Fellowship of US\$ 15 000, to enable her to study for a PhD in nutrition sciences.

Since 2007, Ms Asghari has worked at the Research Institute of Endocrine Sciences and Metabolism, investigating noncommunicable diseases and their risk factors, such as childhood obesity and its health consequences, including diabetes and metabolic syndrome. She has collaborated in research projects including the Tehran lipid and glucose prospective cohort study and clinical trials. Ms Asghari has also been involved in designing nutrition software for nutritionists and researchers, writing on nutrition for magazines and journals, and helping to translate research and evidence into policy and programmes.

During her outreach in the community as a speaker on a healthy diet and active lifestyles, or carrying out nutritional assessments as part of a screening programme, she became aware of the prevalence of vitamin D deficiency among children and adolescents in Egypt and its undesirable consequences. This led her to focus her PhD research on vitamin D dosages to support public health organizations in policy formulation regarding the distribution of vitamin D supplements in primary schools and food fortification. She has demonstrated a desire to make a significant original contribution to research in nutrition and to find new methods for translating research and evidence into policy, programmes and practice, pursuant to her long-term goal of a career in teaching and research.

Ms Asghari has acted as thesis adviser to numerous master's degree students, given poster and oral presentations at many international symposia, and co-published over 60 research papers on diabetes and obesity in international and national peer-reviewed journals.

2. Sasakawa Health Prize – Report of the Sasakawa Health Prize Selection Panel

The Sasakawa Health Prize is awarded for outstanding innovative work in health development to a person or persons, an institution or institutions, or a nongovernmental organization or organizations. Such work includes the promotion of given health programmes or notable advances in primary health care.

The Sasakawa Health Prize Selection Panel met on 28 January 2019 to consider the nominations of the 13 candidates, together with the Administrator's technical comments on each. The Panel also discussed and decided on revisions to the Statutes governing the award of the Prize, as described below.

(a) Nominations for the Sasakawa Health Prize 2019

The Panel decided unanimously to propose to the Executive Board that the 2019 Prize should be awarded to two nominees: Professor Judith Ndongo Embola Torimiro (Cameroon) and Mr Eusebio Quispe Rodriguez (Peru). If the Board confirms the award, each laureate, as an individual, will receive US\$ 30 000.

Professor Judith Ndongo Embola Torimiro has been nominated for her extensive contribution, since 1992, to health and development in Cameroon. Professor Torimiro is presently Associate Professor in Molecular Biology, Director of Laboratories, in the Chantal Biya International Reference Centre for Research on the Prevention and Management of HIV/AIDS, and Chair of the Department of Biochemistry in the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University of Yaoundé. Professor Torimiro has over 38 peer-reviewed publications on HIV and hepatitis B, C, D and G.

Professor Torimiro's notable achievements are in the following main areas of work related to HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B and C, namely: strengthening health systems; capacity-building, health ethics research; and training of health workers and supervising postdoctoral fellows, specifically in molecular biology. She is also recognized for her contribution to increasing awareness of, and providing outreach services on, sexually transmitted infections and cancers in women, especially in rural areas of Cameroon.

The prize money would be used to further Professor Torimiro's research on the impact of hepatitis B viral infections in pregnant and breastfeeding women and the outcome of children exposed to and/or infected by hepatitis B virus during pregnancy or breastfeeding. The results would serve to develop health policy and treatment guidelines for Cameroon.

Mr Eusebio Quispe Rodriguez, mayor of the district of Iguain in Peru, has been nominated for his key leadership role in reducing the rate of anaemia in children under three years of age from 65% to 12% over the past three years in Iguain. This is one of the poorest districts in the country, having experienced decades of social unrest and violent acts of terrorism. Its population was decimated, being reduced by 30% and many more people were pushed to leave and abandon their farms and livestock.

Since 2015, under the leadership of Mr Quispe Rodriguez, the population of Iguain has been rebuilding its social fabric and improving its health conditions. Mr Quispe Rodriguez created multisectoral technical teams composed of local authorities, community leaders, staff of the health centres that are responsible for social programmes, teachers and parents. These teams manage community surveillance centres and carry out home visits to raise awareness of basic sanitation, chronic infant malnutrition and anaemia, introducing a food model created to reduce the high rate of anaemia and teaching people to improve their diets by consuming locally cultivated products, such as potatoes, quinoa and corn strengthened with state-provided micronutrients. There is a plan to replicate this model in other areas of the country.

As mayor, Mr Quispe Rodriguez and his administration have made plans for an irrigation project, in order to increase agricultural productivity and thus ensure improved nutrition for their community throughout the year. The prize money would be used for this project and would also serve to create and sustain more community surveillance centres.

(b) Amendments to the Statutes of the Sasakawa Health Prize

In accordance with the provisions of Article 9 of the Statutes, the Panel unanimously decided to propose to the Executive Board that Articles 4 and 9 of the Statutes of the Sasakawa Health Prize be revised as shown below (with new text underlined and deletions in strikethrough). If approved by the Executive Board, the text of Articles 4 and 9 would read as follows:

Article 4
Prize

The Sasakawa Health Prize shall consist of a statuette and a sum of money of the order of US\$ ~~100 30 000~~ to be given to a person or persons, and/or of the order of US\$ 40 000 to be given to an institution or institutions, or a nongovernmental organization or organizations having accomplished outstanding innovative work in health development, such as the promotion of given health programmes or notable advances in primary health care, in order to encourage the further development of such work. Current and former staff members of the World Health Organization, and current members of the Executive Board, shall be ineligible to receive the Prize. The sum of money, derived from the income and/or the undistributed reserves, shall be determined by the Prize Selection Panel. The Prize shall be presented during a meeting of the World Health Assembly to the recipient(s) or to a person(s) representing the recipient(s).

Article 9
Revision of the Statutes

On the motion of one of its members, the Prize Selection Panel may propose revision of the present Statutes. Any such motion, if endorsed by a majority of the members of the Selection Panel, shall be submitted to the Executive Board for its approval. ~~Any revision shall be reported for information to the next session of the World Health Assembly.~~

3. United Arab Emirates Health Foundation Prize – Report of the United Arab Emirates Health Foundation Selection Panel

The United Arab Emirates Health Foundation Prize is awarded for an outstanding contribution to health development to a person or persons, an institution or institutions, or a nongovernmental organization or organizations.

The United Arab Emirates Health Foundation Selection Panel met on 23 January 2019 to consider the nominations of the seven candidates, together with the Administrator's technical comments on them. The Panel decided unanimously to propose to the Executive Board that the United Arab Emirates Health Foundation Prize for 2019 should be awarded to two nominees: the National Center for Global Health and Medicine (Japan) and Dr Askwar Hilonga (United Republic of Tanzania).

If the Board confirms the award, each laureate will receive US\$ 20 000.

The National Center for Global Health and Medicine was nominated for its contribution to the improvement of public health, both in Japan and, through its Bureau of International Health Cooperation, in developing countries.

The National Center for Global Health and Medicine and its Bureau of International Health Cooperation work with Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Official Development Assistance office as well as with implementing agencies, such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency, and other aid agencies and international organizations, including WHO. The Center provides technical assistance, conducts research, organizes training courses and creates networks for health in several fields. They include the control of infectious diseases, human resources for health, maternal and child health, cancer, cardiovascular disease, ageing and improvement of quality of care, with the aim of reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and preventing the spread of diseases, in furtherance of the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the Center works towards universal health coverage in coordination with other stakeholders, including developing countries, international organizations and aid agencies.

The Center dispatches its staff as consultants (short-term or long-term) to developing countries where they transfer their knowledge and skills and provide health services to local populations. During their assignments, the consultants formulate implementation models for health activities such as surveillance, service promotion, social mobilization, outbreak response, training management and operational research, and make policy recommendations on controlling diseases. The Center has dispatched more than 3600 consultants to more than 140 countries. The Center also organizes training courses for health professionals from developing countries and has trained more than 4100 individuals from more than 140 countries. Some trainees have become high-level government officials in their respective countries.

Dr Askwar Hilonga grew up in a rural area of the United Republic of Tanzania, where waterborne diseases were prevalent. After obtaining his PhD in nanotechnology from Hanyang University in the Republic of Korea, he started looking at nanomaterials that could be suitable for water purification, with the aim of improving access to safe drinking water and reducing the number of lives lost to waterborne diseases. Since 2011, Dr Hilonga has been Senior Lecturer at the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology. While working there, he used nanomaterials to develop a low-cost water purification system, which is protected by patent and trademark. Water that passes through the filter is clean and safe to drink. Unlike other water filters, the filter he developed can be calibrated to target, absorb and eliminate contaminants, such as toxic heavy metals, bacteria, viruses and other pollutants from mining, industrial effluent and poor sewage systems, and which are specific to a particular region. It can thus be customized according to local needs, which may differ according to geographical location.

Dr Hilonga has won many prestigious awards for his invention, including the first Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation from the Royal Academy of Engineering of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. His water purification system is already installed in houses and schools in rural areas of the United Republic of Tanzania. The company making them entered into an agreement with Global Sustainable Partnerships to provide the filters to 100 Tanzanian schools. The commercial use of these filters was sponsored by the United States African Development Foundation and the Human Development Innovation Fund (through UK Aid Direct, which is funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's Department for International Development). Dr Hilonga is working with local entrepreneurs to create water stations. As at October 2018, 60 water stations (points where people can buy clean and safe water at affordable prices) using the filters he developed, serving 100 000 users, have been established; 400 households and 55 institutions, including schools in rural areas in the United Republic of Tanzania have already installed these filters. A total of 60 young women have been trained as operators of the water stations, and the company making the filters employs 15 staff, mostly university graduates, and collaborates with about another 120 individuals.

Dr Hilonga is planning to scale up the impact of the water purification system he developed through the establishment of franchises granting private owners the right to run the water stations in their local communities, across Africa and beyond. A first foreign franchise for 10 such water stations was signed in Kenya in 2018.

4. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Prize for Research in Health Care for the Elderly and in Health Promotion – Report of the State of Kuwait Health Promotion Foundation Selection Panel

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Prize for Research in Health Care for the Elderly and in Health Promotion is awarded to a person or persons, institution or institutions, or a nongovernmental organization or organizations having made an outstanding contribution to research in the areas of health care for the elderly and in health promotion.

The State of Kuwait Health Promotion Foundation Selection Panel met on 25 January 2019, to consider the nominations of the three candidates, together with the Administrator's technical comments on them. The Panel decided unanimously to propose to the Executive Board that His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Prize for Research in Health Care for the Elderly and in Health Promotion for 2019 be awarded to the Aging and Fragility in the Elderly Group of the Research Institute of La Paz Hospital (Spain).

Should the Board confirm the award, the laureate will receive US\$ 20 000.

The Aging and Fragility in the Elderly Group of the Research Institute of La Paz Hospital in Madrid, established in 2006, is a multidisciplinary group of 20 researchers. The mission of the Group is to promote and improve the quality of research in the field of geriatric primary care through epidemiological studies on frailty and chronic diseases affecting elderly people.

One of its most outstanding projects is the clinical study of hip fractures in elderly people, which is undertaken by the working group on the National Registry of Hip Fractures. This working group, established in 2016, is integrated into and coordinated by the Aging and Fragility in the Elderly Group. The working group comprises a multidisciplinary research group of 190 specialists from 61 Spanish hospitals who have collected demographic, epidemiological and health care details of over 14 000 patients who have been affected by hip fracture pathology. The information contained in this registry has served to establish the most effective interventions and has led to the revision of clinical guidelines. These revised evidence-based practices have already contributed to the reduction of complications and mortality in orthogeriatric patients, average time spent in hospital and the number of specialist consultations. This has the potential to ultimately reduce health care costs.

5. Dr LEE Jong-wook Memorial Prize for Public Health – Report of the Dr LEE Jong-wook Memorial Prize Selection Panel

The Dr LEE Jong-wook Memorial Prize for Public Health is awarded to a person or persons, an institution or institutions, a governmental or nongovernmental organization or organizations, who have made an outstanding contribution to public health.

The Dr LEE Jong-wook Memorial Prize Selection Panel met on 25 January 2019 to consider the nominations of the 12 candidates, together with the Administrator's technical comments on each.

The Panel decided unanimously to propose to the Executive Board that the 2019 Prize should be awarded to two nominees: Professor Balram Bhargava (India) and the Health Promotion Unit of the Department of Public Health (Myanmar).

If the Board confirms the award, each laureate will receive US\$ 50 000.

Professor Balram Bhargava was nominated for his impressive career as a cardiologist and biomedical innovator. He is a professor of cardiology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, and serves as the Executive Director of the Stanford-India Biodesign Programme, which provides an interdisciplinary fellowship programme that fosters innovation and design of low-cost implants and devices. The Programme led to the establishment of the School of International Biodesign: over the course of 10 years, it has trained around 100 innovators who have created over 30 low-cost medical devices, four of which are now being marketed. For more than 25 years, Professor Bhargava has treated about 250 000 patients and trained over 200 cardiologists who are now leading several departments and hospitals in India and abroad. Professor Bhargava has developed the indigenous platinum–iridium coil coronary stent and has clinically evaluated and established the use of two other laser-cut medicated Indian stents. Several thousand patients have already benefited from these low-cost stents.

Professor Bhargava has pioneered several techniques in interventional cardiology and the treatment of patients with dilated cardiomyopathy. He is currently developing a chest compression device for patients with sudden cardiac arrest. He has published several papers on the harmful cardiovascular effects of chewing tobacco and is evaluating the continuous blood pressure of bus drivers in New Delhi with difficult-to-control hypertension.

Professor Bhargava was the founding Editor-in-chief of the journal *BMJ Innovations*.

The Health Promotion Unit of the Department of Public Health of Myanmar was nominated for its contribution to public health, in particular through its Community Health Clinic model, from concept to implementation. Myanmar has been struggling with the double burden of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, and the challenge of delivering health services in rural settings where 70% of its population lives. The concept of the Community Health Clinic is to strengthen community health services, through the efficient use of resources and increased promotion of health literacy.

The Community Health Clinic model places the community at the centre of care, while recognizing the contributions of community health volunteers, civil society organizations and local and international nongovernmental organizations. The health care activities provided focus on screening for hypertension and diabetes, and treatment of uncomplicated cases, health care for the ageing population and health literacy. Arrangements are made to supply essential medicines and equipment and providing training on the management of the above-mentioned conditions. Mobile clinics have been dispatched to the most remote areas.

The implementation of the Community Health Clinic model began in 2018, and after only seven months, a measurable increase in awareness and use of the public health care services has already been noted.

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