



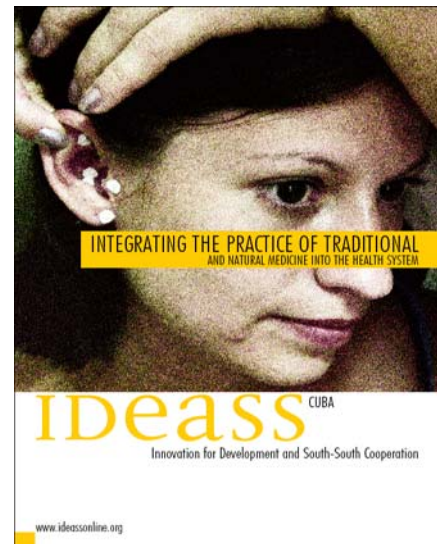
International Workshop Innovation and development in health: Integration of complementary and traditional medicine in public health systems

28 – 31 October
Florence, Italy

From 28-31 October 2008 an International Workshop on *Innovation and Development in Health: Integration of Complementary and Traditional Medicine in Public Health Systems* will take place in Florence, Italy.

The workshop is being organized jointly by the Tuscany Region and UNDP-UNOPS in the framework of the ART Initiative. Participants include representatives from the Ministries of Health of countries where ART Programmes and cooperation programmes from the Tuscany Region are active, representatives from the international cooperation organizations, as representatives of Specialised Centres of the Tuscany Region.

In particular, representatives of the Ministries of Health of the following countries will participate: Afghanistan, Albania, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, India, Iran, Lebanon, Macedonia FYR, Mali, Morocco, México, Paraguay, Serbia, Sri Lanka and Venezuela.



In 1978, the World Health Organization, in the Declaration of Alma Ata on primary health care, made a strong appeal to the international community to support the inclusion of complementary medicine and traditional therapies of scientifically-proven effectiveness in national health systems.

Using the therapeutic resources of complementary and traditional medicine in a rational and appropriate way can reduce the consumption of conventional pharmaceuticals and thus costs of public health systems. They can also reduce patients' adverse responses to conventional drugs, a phenomenon that is spreading in many countries. Moreover, the production and use of traditional medicines is a way to contribute to the development of local economies, by highlighting important aspects of indigenous cultures and generating economic activities that maximise local resources.

The Tuscany Region is a pioneer in Italy and a leader in Europe in the integration of these practices in its regional public health system. Over several years, the Tuscany Region has established an active

partnership with the UN in the framework of the ART Initiative on these issues, supporting interested countries in implementing projects to adapt and transfer this methodology.

The ART Initiative (*Articulating territorial and thematic networks for human development cooperation*), promoted by UNDP, UNESCO, UNIFEM, WHO, ILO, UNHCR, UNITAR and UNOPS, constitutes a framework of reference in which several UN programmes are being implemented that share the objectives of reinforcing territorial development processes and pursuing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The ART Initiative associates several country-level programmes, known as ART GOLD (Governance and Local Development), presently active in Albania, Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Indonesia, Lebanon, Morocco, Dominican Republic, Serbia, Sri Lanka and Uruguay. Other programmes are being formulated in different countries. Thematic programmes also operate within the framework of the ART Initiative, supporting the ongoing development processes in the countries. Of these, ART IDEASS is the international programme which promotes the dissemination of innovations for human development and their concrete adoption in interested countries.



At international level, ART IDEASS is promoting methodologies aimed at including traditional medicine in national health systems. Several technology-transfer actions have been implemented with the support of the health services of the Tuscany Region. In particular, ART IDEASS is promoting the methodologies adopted by the National Department of Natural and Traditional Medicine of the Cuban Ministry of Health, which has generated great international interest.

Within this framework of ongoing collaboration, the workshop's strategic function is to inform/form representatives of Ministries of Health on these innovative primary health practices so as to stimulate a broad exchange of experiences and new demands for transfer of this methodology. The integration of Complementary and Traditional Medicine in the Public Health Systems of interested countries can help reduce significantly health care costs and increase the sustainability of health services.



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