

CECHE's Path to Health Promotion

The Center for Communications, Health and Environment (CECHE), formerly known as Central European Center for Health and the Environment, works throughout the NIS and CEE, using a variety of approaches to health promotion. Program highlights include:

A two-pronged approach to reduce cardiovascular disease (CVD) in the Czech Republic includes a community-based intervention program that examines an entire community (Dubec, a village of 1,800 residents) and undertakes medical, educational and other interventions to reduce CVD risk factors. A high-risk intervention program identifies and treats individuals likely to develop CVD and those with manifest coronary artery disease. Overall, average reductions of some 25 percent LDL-cholesterol in the high risk groups have been achieved, and this alone should reduce new or recurrent coronary events by approximately 50 percent.

- Over the last two years, CECHE has contributed financial assistance, technical support, and training in the rudiments of survival to two Russian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) — the Health and Environment Foundation (HEF) in Moscow, and the Association of Physicians of the Don (ADP) in Azov. HEF and ADP strengthened their organizations, launched health promotion programs, cultivated decision-makers, developed media relations, and mobilized health care NGOs throughout Russia to form a cohesive network. A direct outcome of this effort is the creation of a network of over 50 health care NGOs throughout the Russian Federation and supported by the Russian Public Health Association (ROZA), an association spanning half of Russia's 89 oblasts and regions.
- CECHE specializes in the use of media, especially mass media and television for positive social impact. A five-part television series, *A Family Year*, features ways in which families from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Russia are coping with environmental and health challenges. Each of half-hour episodes features a major topic — cigarette smoking and substance abuse, diet and chronic disease prevention, maternal and child health, health impact of environmental pollution and others. *A Family Year* is designed to motivate individuals and families to take charge of their own health and environment, and to prompt decision-makers and environmental health professionals to help encourage policy changes and create positive lifestyle models. The program is currently showing on national television channels in 17 CEE-NIS countries.
- CECHE also produces two electronic publications for the NIS: The NIS Health Promotion Bulletin (available through AIHA's Web site) contains news about current NIS programs striving to improve public health through public education to catalyze behavioral change. The Environmental Cooperation Bulletin is a monthly brief that reports on a wide range of environmental projects and commercial entities operating in the former Soviet Union and Central Europe. To view these publications, visit the CECHE web page at igc.apc.org/CECHE.