



Leadership for Women's Health Joins PHI, Works to Improve Women's Health in Sub-Saharan Africa

OAKLAND, CA (January 25, 2011) -- The Public Health Institute is pleased to announce that Leadership for Women's Health (LWH), which works with first ladies and other women leaders in sub-Saharan Africa to advance women's health, has recently joined our organization.

LWH was created in 2010 to help implement in-country projects developed by first ladies working with the First Ladies Initiative and Fellowship program, which originated at the Rand Corporation in 2009.

The development of a Birth Waiting Home and Community Resource Center (BWH/CRC) in Mattru Jong in the Southern District of Sierra Leone is LWH's first undertaking. The BWH/CRC project is a top priority of Sierra Leone's first lady, Mrs. Sia N. Koroma, in her work to help the country achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. It will support efforts to improve maternal health, reduce child mortality, promote gender equality and combat HIV/AIDS.

The BWH/CRC will rely on the Mattru Jong Hospital for referrals, but the hospital is currently in severe disrepair. In order to succeed, the project is seeking the support of partners to renovate the hospital, provide health manpower, and support training and direct service delivery.

LWH is also working with first ladies across Africa on developing sustainable businesses, such as solar energy and clean cookstoves.

Leadership for Women's Health is co-directed by Nicole Brezeski, Kathleen West and Cora Neuman. West, who leads the BWH/CRC project, has worked in Sierra Leone and has extensive background in high-risk maternal and child health, public health and anthropology.