

CECHE specializes in the use of mass media and information technology to promote healthy lifestyles through projects in five program areas:

- **Community Intervention**
- **Environmental and Public Health Policy**
- **Professional Training**
- **Public Education**
- **Private Voluntary Sector Development**

Evaluation of impact shows that millions of viewers have been influenced by CECHE-inspired and -produced health-related public service announcements (PSAs) and television series. Hundreds of media and medical professionals have received CECHE-sponsored training to promote public health. And scores of organizations have partnered under CECHE's tutelage to tackle local, national and global health concerns ranging from malnutrition and food and water contaminants to HIV/AIDS, overnutrition, tobacco use, alcohol abuse, cardiovascular diseases, cancer and obesity.

In 2000, a decade after its formation, CECHE adopted a partnership agenda that focuses on providing seed grants and strategic assistance to catalyze projects rather than taking sole charge of implementing them. Through these efforts, CECHE remains dedicated to public health promotion and to empowering underserved communities worldwide to enhance their quality of life.

CECHE is governed by a board of directors; its programs are guided by the CECHE Council and supported by some 30 US-based and international public and private organizations, as well as scores of individuals.

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Sofia, Bulgaria

Zofia Slonska, M.D.
Deputy Head, Health Promotion Department
National Institute of Cardiology
Warsaw, Poland

Antonia Trichopoulou, M.D.
Professor of Public Health
Athens School of Public Health
Athens, Greece

David Zaridze, M.D.
Director, Russian Institute of Carcinogenesis
Russian Academy of Medical Sciences
Moscow, Russia

Center for Communications, Health and the Environment
4437 Reservoir Road, NW
Washington, DC 20007
Tel: (202) 965-5990; Fax: (202) 965-5996
E-mail: ceche@att.net
Web site: <http://www.ceche.org>

* Through December 2000

CECHE Improving Lifestyles to Promote Health and Prevent Disease

The Center for Communications, Health and the Environment (CECHE) was founded in 1990 in Washington, DC as a 501(c)(3) organization to assist underserved communities — initially in Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States, and subsequently in the United States and developing nations worldwide — by initiating, coordinating and supporting programs to improve health and alleviate the adverse health affects of environmental pollution. Since its origin, the organization has spearheaded more than 30 major projects, working in partnership with scientists, journalists, media organizations, educators, nonprofits and policy-makers from over 100 organizations in 16 countries to increase awareness, enhance knowledge, and positively impact public attitudes and actions on health in 20 countries with a total population of more than a billion people.



CECHE's First Decade | Examples of Action and Impact

1990

December 1990
The Central European Center for Health and the Environment (CECHE) is founded as a US nonprofit (501(c)(3) organization) in Washington, DC with a focus on health promotion and disease prevention in Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States (CEE-NIS). Prior to its official launch, in March 1990, CECHE begins operating in the District of Columbia, and in June 1990, it opens offices in Berlin, Germany.



1991

June 1991
CECHE's first conference, "Environmental Factors in Child Health in Central Europe: Priorities for Action," brings together health and environmental experts and government representatives from CEE-NIS with then US Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan in Chicago. Resulting partnerships on child health promotion include one between CECHE and the Georgetown University Child Development Center (GTUCC) that creates *Communities Can*, a project to provide CEE-NIS with support systems for communities with special needs.

July 1991
Biomedical and Environmental Fellows Training Program launched in Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic to create public health experts and productive partnerships between CEE and US institutions. More than 20 partnerships ensue, and over 100 post-graduates in seven countries receive tailor-made training over eight years.

September 1991
Eat Smart, a one-hour television program on nutrition and chronic diseases conceived by CECHE Chairman Dr. Sushma Palmer at the Georgetown University Medical Center, premieres on the Public Broadcasting System nationwide, receives rave reviews and reaches 8 million American viewers. New resources enable CECHE to promote the program and evaluate its impact.



1992

March 1992
Primary and secondary *Cerebrovascular and Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Program* launched in the Czech Republic through CECHE's largest single grant (with University of California, San Francisco in the lead, and Stanford University and three Czech partners). Program continues for nine years, records 25% drop in participant cholesterol levels and a doubling in community awareness in districts covering some 50% of the country.

July 1992
CECHE's unveiling of PSA program launches multifaceted mass media effort in CEE-NIS focusing on the Czech Republic and Russia. TV spots catalyze trend of free PSA broadcast, PSA co-production with local partners. Multiple PSA series and national broadcasts ensue in partnership with Czech TV, the IBS (Internews) Network and Ukrainian TV channels. Evaluation shows tripling to quadrupling of knowledge and awareness among millions in 18 countries.

September 1992
CECHE and Hungarian partners host "Priorities in Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Public Health Policy in Central Europe." The conference leads to a blueprint of CECHE's agenda and 10-year implementation plan for the region, as well as conception of the Russian Health and Environment Foundation (RHEF). In 1993, RHEF, modeled after CECHE, becomes the first Russian NGO devoted to environmental health promotion and disease prevention.



1993

June 1993
CECHE and the Hungarian National Public Health Center host the first *Summer Courses Institute* in Balatonfoldvar, Hungary — a "train the trainers" program to create dynamic, young health professionals and policy-makers for CEE-NIS.

July 1993
CECHE's *Global Health & Environment MONITOR* premieres. Dedicated to timely, uncompromising coverage of key health and environmental concerns, the first issue (distributed to 1,000) addresses prevention of lifestyle-related diseases. Today the *MONITOR* reaches more than 10,000 readers in 56 countries via hard copy, e-mail distribution, and CECHE's Web site.



1994

July 1994
CECHE's *Media Fellows Program* begins training CEE-NIS media professionals in public health PSA and other program production and broadcast. The first training, held at Syracuse University in New York and the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute in New Jersey, targets eight fellows from three countries. By 1998, the program spans seven countries, including India, and trains more than 100 media professionals.

September 1994
CECHE partners with RHEF and opens Moscow office. By September 1996, the partners complete a public health policy agenda and create a computerized network of over 100 Russian health-oriented NGOs. RHEF and several other NGOs become self-sufficient, and RHEF partners with the Canadian Public Health Association to establish the Russian Public Health Association, patterned after the World Federation of Public Health Associations.



1995

June 1995
CECHE's five-part multilingual TV series, *A Family Year*, begins production in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Russia and Poland with direction from Skyscraper Productions in London, and local media and NGOs. The series follows one family in each country, focusing on the major causes of CEE-NIS mortality — tobacco, poor diet, sedentary lifestyle, alcohol abuse and environmental pollution. It is among the first series to use television for positive health impact in the region.

December 1995
Based on its successful five-year record of drawing public and private support, CECHE is granted permanent 501(c)(3) status by the IRS.

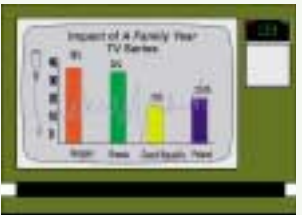
1996

April 1996
CECHE expands its agenda to include the US, India and developing countries, and relocates its headquarters to Washington, DC from Berlin. In December 1996, reflecting its new, global mission, CECHE is renamed the Center for Communications, Health and the Environment.

October 1996
CECHE's Web site premieres as www.ceche.org. Featuring CECHE programs and their assessments, the site increasingly serves as a barometer of impact.

October 1996
US Environmental Protection Agency-funded *Global Environment Bulletin (GEB)* published. This bilingual monthly electronic bulletin reports on environmental health issues, funding and activities in Russia. In 1998, GEB and CECHE's *Health Promotion Bulletin* merge into the *Global Health and Environment Bulletin* targeting the entire CEE-NIS.

November 1996
A Family Year premieres in Russia and 16 NIS states on IBS Network and Hungary's nationwide MTV, then debuts in the Czech Republic on TV NOVA and in Poland on Telewizja Polska in April and December 1997. The series receives rave reviews in several countries and reaches about 400 million viewers worldwide.



1997

April 1997
CECHE spearheads partnership with the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association and other US-based tobacco-control organizations. Over two years, CECHE and partners host workshops, conferences and meetings on Capitol Hill with foreign and US leaders, and seek overseas input to support passage of international tobacco-control legislation in the US. Partners successfully launch international tobacco-control projects, but passage of the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement reflects only domestic legislative progress.

October 1997
Model community intervention program unveiled in Punjab, India to combat malnutrition and diseases of affluence. CECHE trains media and health professionals, who then produce PSAs for broadcast in India.



1998

October 1998
Garfield Elementary School in southeast Washington, DC acquires computer network as part of CECHE's information technology program focused on health in DC public schools.

November 1998
Elixir of Life opens to rave reviews on Czech TV. An outgrowth of CECHE's *Cerebrovascular and Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Program* and *A Family Year*, the popular 10-part American-style health-magazine show is a CECHE-Czech TV co-production. It quizzes and motivates audiences to change lifestyles to improve cardiovascular and general health.



1999

April 1999
Global Democracy and Health Program unveiled, emphasizing the link between democracy, human rights and human health. The program brochure and several thousand buttons distributed at a democracy and human rights conference in Poland support efforts of DC-based Freedom House and Community of Democracies.

May 1999
CECHE's launch of *Peer Advocacy for Healthy Pregnancy Program* exemplifies inner-city focus. The resulting blueprint for "train the trainers" program targets women of childbearing age and parents of model elementary school Garfield to promote healthy diets and lifestyles during pregnancy.

June 1999
CECHE and Czech partners launch *Internet-based Tobacco Control Program* in the Czech Republic. Using CECHE's cardiovascular disease prevention program as a base, the initiative promotes new technologies, creates a network of well-trained 40+ NGOs and government entities — and catalyzes a powerful national anti-tobacco grassroots movement.

September 1999
Media-based *Substance Abuse Prevention Program* implemented in Ward 8, among the poorest in DC. The program trains local youth to develop PSAs for broadcast, creates a three-PSA series repeatedly aired on local cable channel DCTV.

2000

October 2000
The Czech Heart Association is founded. Modeled after the American Heart Association and emerging from the *Internet-based Tobacco Control Program*, the CHA is dedicated to tobacco control as a major avenue for cardiovascular disease prevention in the country.

December 2000
CECHE changes course, adopting a partnership agenda that provides seed grants and strategic assistance to catalyze, rather than itself operate, projects of mutual interest.*



* Since 2001, CECHE has initiated and currently supports more than 10 joint projects, which are operated by CECHE partners.