



"Bergse Hei" The Netherlands
Photo: Lieke van Alphen

Editorial

Dear friends,

Winter is here again... So it is time for the EAN winter newsletter.

We were happy to see so many of you at ESCAIDE last year. In this seasonal edition we look back at ESCAIDE 2017. This year EAN was able to provide travel grants to two speakers at ESCAIDE. They tell us about their experiences. We also present the winners of the best oral and poster presentations, and best photo of the EAN photo contest. And lastly, we congratulate yet another successful graduating cohort of EPIET and EUPHEM fellows, cohort 2015.

Following the General Assembly, three new EAN board members were elected; they will introduce themselves in this newsletter. To our three leaving EAN board members, Aileen Kitching (former President), Lisi Aichinger (former Secretary) and Javiera Rebolledo (former Treasurer): we want to deeply thank you for all your hard work and dedication in service of EAN and to say: we hope our paths will cross again in the future!

We also have other great stories to share with you. There is a summary of the Refugee Migrant health workshop that was co-organised with MediPIET and there is a wonderful 'Where are you now' story from Angie Rose.

Enjoy the Newsletter!

The EAN Board

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Céline Barnadas

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From the new President

Dear all,

It's an honour to be the freshly elected EAN President. Thanks for everybody who cast their vote on any of the candidates who put themselves up for election. Always a challenging job to step into the footsteps of a President and crew who served the network supportively with warmth and a critical eye (Thanks Aileen, Lisi and Javiera).

A strong bound, active community is the fundament of EAN, and together with my fellow Board members, we hope to actively reel you in for the coming activities, which you could propose or organise. If you ever have any questions or ideas, please drop them in our mailbox, as alumnus, or as current fellow, it doesn't matter we are looking forward to hearing from you. In the next edition of the EAN newsletter we, as board will present you some of the outcomes of our face to face meeting in Barcelona at the end of this month including our main goals for the coming year. I hope to see and interact with many of you in our coming term.

The door is always open,

Amrish

Where are you now? - Angie Rose (Cohort 7 / 2002)

EAN: First of all, a bit of background. Could you please tell us something about yourself?

I'm originally from Guyana, a beautiful but crazy country the size of Great Britain with a population under 1 million. We are the only English-speaking nation in South America, on the north coast above Brazil – sandwiched between Venezuela to our west and Suriname to the east. Despite our geography, as a result of our history we are culturally part of the West Indies, so are more Caribbean than Latin American. I have an English mother and dual nationality, but grew up in Guyana. First I studied biology in the US (the University of Texas at Austin), then later I did a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) at Oxford in the UK. The PGCE is a teacher training course; so I am trained as a secondary school science and mathematics teacher. Later I did an MSc in Public Health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine in London, and finally a PhD in Epidemiology here at the University of the West Indies in Barbados.

What happened after EPIET, where have you worked and how did you like it?

After completing EPIET in Helsinki in 2004, I went to work for Epicentre in Paris. It was really the dream job for an infectious disease epidemiologist – most of the missions I went on were in sub-Saharan Africa, as my work was primarily with epidemic meningitis, but I also did some work on mortality estimation and routine childhood malnutrition surveys.

Let's talk about the main topic for this interview: where are you now?

Right now I am living in Barbados – you could say this was another type of dream for many people! In fact, being from the Caribbean, I had long wanted to return to my home region. But I loved my job at Epicentre, so I was a bit torn. Still, after 23 years away from the region (I had left Guyana for university in 1983), it was time to come home. I applied for a job at The University of the West Indies, which is our regional university, with three campuses: one in Trinidad, one in Jamaica and one in Barbados. The job I got was in Barbados, but: it was a job for a chronic disease epidemiologist – which I was not. However, my thought was, "epi is epi" and we trained in EPIET using chronic disease case studies, so... would it really be that different?



Typical sunset on the beach in Barbados, 2017

The answer really is yes and no. The principles are the same but, for example, the questionnaires can be much longer. And of course there are no outbreak investigations! But it is just as interesting and, for many diseases, much more complex.

What do you do?

I am in charge of non-communicable disease (NCD) surveillance here at the George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre, which is a research unit at the university. We have a multi-NCD registry, collecting information on all cases of stroke, heart attack and cancer across the island. It's been a great job, as I have really been able to see the benefits of routine surveillance, as our data (particularly on mortality) have encouraged the hospital and the Ministry of Health to introduce changes that have benefited patients, e.g. there is now a stroke unit in the hospital and a cardiac suite is ready to go – both thanks in part to registry data. The registry is also responsible for running two continuing medical education-accredited seminars for medical professionals on the island every year, one on cardiovascular disease (stroke or heart attack) and one on cancer, and we tend to theme these on gaps we see in the data. It's a great opportunity to highlight to the medical community any challenges we are having with data collection and issues like missing data because of the information not being entered in the patient notes.



About to start a 5K walk for breast cancer with my daughter and friends, Oct 2017

What EPIET-skills do you need or use in your current job?

Most of them: I analyse surveillance data, write interim and annual reports, supervise students and volunteers doing research projects which use registry data, write scientific articles, present our data at local, regional and international conferences as well as to hospital staff, the Ministry of Health and the general public, and I teach epi (especially infectious disease epi!) on our MPH programme. Now that we have several years of data, there are quite a few small, and some not so small, research projects which link with the registry – so there's a lot to do!



First ever EPIET visit in 2007 – from EPIET Fellow Nathalie el Omeiri, on mission in Guyana for mass gathering surveillance during the 2007 World Cup Cricket

How did you get this job?

I applied for it! It was advertised on the university website.

What do you like about it?

What's not to like? I get to do analysis and writing almost daily. There are also meetings to attend, which maybe aren't as much fun as analysis or writing, but still aren't so bad when you consider the beautiful surroundings. I get the biggest kick out of seeing the results of our work here being translated into positive changes in the hospital, however. (Barbados is pretty small: population just over a quarter of a million, with one tertiary public 600-bed hospital serving the entire island.)

Could you describe a typical day at work?

I come in to work around 7:15 am. In the mornings I check emails and respond to urgent queries then work on analysis for a couple of hours. If there's no urgent analysis then I will write (report, paper, whatever's next). I try to leave meetings and other stuff

(preparing presentations, meeting students, etc.) to the afternoons, after lunch. The university (like many places) has a lot of forms to be completed for various things, so there always seems to be some admin to be done. There are always several projects on the go, as well as routine registry data queries or reviews of possible cases to be resolved. In a small country, with a small population, you often have to wear more hats than you would in a big country, where there is often a specialist for each area. For example, here in Barbados, we were only recently able to get a Research Manager for our unit. Basically, every day is different... but my best kind of day would involve some analysis and some writing.



Dr. Carissa Etienne, Head of PAHO, visiting our unit on 25 Oct 2017 and meeting members of the registry team (from L to R: Dr. Etienne, Jacqui Campbell (Quality Control Coordinator), Jared King (Assistant QCC), Kirt Gill (Cancer Data Abstractor), Shelly-Anne Forde (Registrar).

Are you still connected to the current fellowship or with the EPIET network in general?

Yes! Mainly through Facebook, but I have also reviewed ESCAIDE abstracts pretty much every year since I came to Barbados in 2007. This year (2017) was the first time I was actually able to go to ESCAIDE since I left more than 10 years ago.

Do you have anything to say, any tips or advice for current fellows with regards to their future careers, in field epidemiology or elsewhere?

You will always find a job, as the world needs epidemiologists. But don't limit yourself: try to reach beyond what you traditionally think of as "field epi". I've worked in NCD epi now for almost 11 years and it's been as challenging, and as much fun, as infectious disease epi (true!).



Most recent EPIET visit – from EAN member Sarika Patel, in Barbados in 2017 for rapid assessments of nearby islands hit by hurricanes Irma and Maria (#8000daysofEPIET)

It's also good to try working in different countries; it's a privilege to be able to learn about other cultures through your work, doing a job you love. On the one hand, I believe that as long as your job can still teach you new things, and you enjoy it, stick with it. But on the other, I do also believe that after some time, it's good to move on. Change allows for fresh ideas to come in, while you move on to learn something new and to bring change elsewhere.

So, after 11 years (the longest in any one country at a single stretch and the longest in any one job, in my life), it's time for something new for me once again. I will be moving back to Europe (brrr!!) in the New Year, where I will be working for EpiConcept, with a great team of epidemiologists – most of whom also are ex-EPIET. I'm really excited about it and looking forward to this change.

ESCAIDE 2017 - Travel grant winners – Dr Frank Izuchukwu Obi

"I am Dr. Frank Izuchukwu Obi, a second-year resident of the Nigeria Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (Nigeria-FELTP) and a senior registrar in the Department of Community Medicine, University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital Enugu Nigeria. I have interest in disease control, public health surveillance and field epidemiology.



Frank presenting his work on acute flaccid paralysis in Ebonyi State Nigeria

ESCAIDE 2017 was my first time in Europe and certainly my best conference experience so far. Following the acceptance of two of my abstracts; one for oral presentation (Evaluation of acute flaccid paralysis in Ebonyi State Nigeria) and the other for a poster presentation (Virologic response among HIV-infected adults on antiretroviral therapy in a tertiary facility in Enugu state Nigeria) in the conference, I decided to apply for the EAN travel grant.



Frank with former EAN Treasurer Javiera Rebolledo

Thank God, it came out successful. The award motivated me to attend the conference.

Without mincing words, ESCAIDE 2017 surpassed my expectations. Starting from the very neat and ever so beautiful city of Stockholm, to the extremely nice, humble and welcoming people, the beautiful conference venue, the excellent organization and execution of the conference, as well as the wonderful opportunity to network with great minds in public health.

I certainly enjoyed every bit of the conference; the global audience from nearly every continent, the rich plenaries and parallel sessions, the technological advancement, the innovative bar camp and career compass, the rejuvenating experience at Fotografiska Museum, the post-conference workshop on evidence based medicine and most of all the warm welcome by the EAN family.

I have made new friends at Stockholm and also found potential collaborative research partners at the conference.



Frank enjoying Stockholm

Many thanks to the EAN family and the EAN board for giving me this wonderful opportunity. My gratitude to the conference organizers and the ECDC for putting together such a wonderful conference. ESCAIDE is certainly one conference I will recommend to any of my colleagues any day, any time!"

ESCAIDE 2017 - Travel grant winners - Dr. Praseon Sheoran

"To present work at a prestigious infectious disease conference like ESCAIDE is always a delight. I was happy when I came to know that my abstract for "Outbreak investigation of malaria - Pratapgarh district, Rajasthan, India" was accepted for poster presentation at ESCAIDE 2017, however I was not sure that I would get any travel grant for the same.

Initially I applied and was denied ESCAIDE funding initiative travel award. For EAN grant I knew preference was given to oral

presentation. However when I was informed that one travel award was reserved for a poster presentation, I knew I had a chance. To my utmost delight I got that travel award. Now I did know I was presenting for sure at the conference. I reached Stockholm in a recently introduced direct flight from Delhi so my journey was comfortable. I had booked a hostel in Stockholm and stayed there comfortably during the conference. Conference venue was scenic and in front of prestigious Stockholm city hall.

On 6 November the conference started on a keynote address on infectious disease elimination - opportunities and challenges: past,



Travel grant winners Frank and Prasoon with EAN treasurer Lieke van Alphen

present and future perspective by Dr. Donato Greko. This lecture gives me an overview of infectious disease elimination scenario.

Among oral presentations, the “Acute flaccid paralysis surveillance – Kaduna State, Nigeria 2011-2015 by Ummulkhulthum Bajoga impressed me a lot. In addition, the poster presentation on Outbreak Investigation of Cutaneous anthrax in Kulon Progo, Indonesia, 2017 by Rimawati was very interesting. I presented my poster presentation on 8 November. During the conference, all sessions were informative. Food offered during the conference was typically Swedish and good. Reception at Fotografiska Museum was a different experience altogether with lot of visual delight. Overall it was an interesting, knowledgeable and enjoyable conference to attend. I am now looking forward to join ESCAIDE 2018 at Malta.”

ESCAIDE 2017 - Graduation of Cohort 2015



Pictures by Heidi Jung

Well-deserved congratulations to cohort 2015 for graduating their fellowship! The graduation ceremony was held again at the beautiful Nalen venue. Speeches were delivered during a tasty dinner. Next to all fellows from cohorts 2015, 2016 and 2017, many coordinators, supervisors, staff from the fellowship programme office (thanks for all the organisational work), alumni and other friends of the fellowship attended the ceremony which concluded with fantastic party full of dancing till the early hours like only EPIETS and EUPHEMs can.

Thanks to all for a great evening and see you again this year for the anticipated graduation of cohort 2016!

ESCAIDE 2017 - General Assembly

On Tuesday 7th November 2017 the EAN General Assembly (GA) was held at ESCAIDE. Many different topics were presented by the Board and discussed by over 100 attendees. We would like to thank all current fellows and alumni for their attendance and valuable input! The minutes of the GA will be shared with active EAN members in due course.

We would like to warmly thank Aileen and Lisi who stepped down from their roles as President and Secretary, whom both served EAN two years and to Javiera who served as our treasurer for four years. Many thanks to the three of you for all the time you freely and enthusiastically dedicated to EAN Board and the network over the last years.

ESCAIDE 2017 - Oral and poster presentation winners

Participants from all around the world shared their scientific work at ESCAIDE 2017 through oral and poster presentations. As in previous years, EAN awards two presentations at ESCAIDE (one oral and one poster), which are most effective in transmitting a public health message as “best oral” and “best poster” presentation at ESCAIDE. An EAN Prize Committee, consisting of EAN members, judged the oral presentations, while the poster presentations were judged by the moderator of the respective session acknowledging those with the highest scores. There were many high-quality presentations this year, and we would like to gratefully acknowledge the help of all judges scoring the oral and poster presentations.

Congratulations to both!



Best Oral presentation:

Ummulkhulthum Bajoga with her presentation on “Acute flaccid paralysis surveillance - Kaduna State, Nigeria 2011-2015”.



Best Poster presentation:

Ulrike Baum with her poster on “Interactive vaccination coverage maps – a multipurpose tool for programme monitoring and health system development”.

ESCAIDE 2017 - Photo contest

The EAN photo competition made another appearance at ESCAIDE this year! Conference participants were requested to send in photos from their work in the field. We received 18 interesting and beautiful shots from all over the world, highlighting the diversity of the field. The photos were displayed during the conference. Many people took the time to vote for their favourite photo and winners were revealed during the closing ceremony. We are already looking forward to receiving your photos from the field for ESCAIDE 2018



First Place: “The gathering” By Susana Monge



Second place "Sling Teddy" by Claudia Ruscher



Third place: "Harvest of the first sampling day of a serosurvey to assess immunity against vaccine-preventable diseases among refugees in the Netherlands" by Gudrun Freidl

ESCAIDE 2017 - Career compass

During ESCAIDE 2017, cohort representatives from the graduating cohort 2015 (Patrick Keating and Amrish Baidjoe) and cohort 2016 (Alistair Donachie and Zsofia Igloi) jointly organised with EAN (Alma Tostmann) and the ESCAIDE organising committee the first edition of the Career Compass. An event organised to give junior professionals the opportunity to ask questions to professionals working in the arena of public health. The panel this year consisted of Henriette de Valk (Santé Publique France), Steffen Glismann (GSK), Annick Lenglet (MSF-OCA), Karen Wilsen (Euro Surveillance) and Margarita Riera (P95). The event was well received and will hopefully see another run at coming ESCAIDE in Malta.

ESCAIDE 2017 - Meeting cohort representatives and EAN Vice President

The EAN Vice President holds a telephone conference with the cohort representatives every 2-3 months to discuss matters that relate to the fellowship and the alumni network. ESCAIDE is the time of year when they have a change to all meet face-to-face. The current cohort representatives are: Alastair Donachie (EPIET) and Zsofia Igloi (EUPHEM) for C2016, and Lucia Reh (EUPHEM) and Timothee Dub (EPIET) with Regina Selb as a deputee cohort rep for C2017. Amrish Baidjoe (EUPHEM) and Patrick Keating (EPIET) were the cohort representatives for C2015.



From left to right: Lucia Reh, Zsofia Igloi, Alastair Donachie, Amrish Baidjoe, Alma Tostmann (EAN VP), Patrick Keating, Regina Selb, Timothee Dub.

Report: Refugee & Migrant Health Workshop, Athens, 14-16 October 2017

In October 2017, after the very successful workshop from last year and under the request of many EAN members, EAN in collaboration with the Mediterranean Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (MediPIET) organised the 2nd workshop on Refugee and Migrant Health in Athens, Greece, which was hosted by the Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (KEELPNO). Thirty-two participants listened, exchanged experiences and views, debated and discussed with 17 speakers coming from universities, NGO and UN/European organisations during this 3-day workshop, which was particularly inspired by the recent and continuous influx of refugees in Europe and its surrounding countries.



Participants of the Refugee and Migrant Health Workshop, Athens, 14-16 October 2017



Field visit to a refugee camp in Athens, Refugee and Migrant Health Workshop, Athens, 14-16 October 2017

The workshop aimed to provide an understanding of refugee/migrant-related health issues, to give an overview of surveillance systems, health screening programs and their

challenges and, migrant health policies and recommendations within the EU and neighbouring Mediterranean countries. The contents included a broad range of topics, such as physical, mental and reproductive health, detention, torture and sexual violence, surveillance and health screenings, access to health and economic benefits, citizens', refugees' and volunteers' perspectives on the crisis, cultural understanding of health needs and international response policies.

The last day was dedicated to a field visit to two refugee camps in Athens where a rapid assessment exercise of the needs of refugees hosted in the camps was carried out.

Many participants expressed the opinion that the time available was not enough to cover and discuss the topics, but all enjoyed it, learned and networked with other colleagues. There was a strong joint voice of the workshop being repeated in subsequent years. Many participants expressed their interest to participate in the development of a public announcement expressing a joint statement including recommendations that were formulated during the plenary discussion at the end of the second day. This document is currently being drafted.



“Awesome workshop! Enjoyed it a lot! Good mix between presentations from social sciences and epidemiology” - workshop participant

A big thanks to the participants, speakers, facilitators and one especially to to Javiera, Iro, Adela, Concha and the rest of the MediPIET team for making this workshop possible!

Click [here](#) for the presentations (PDF)

Click [here](#) for the recorded videos

New Board Members



Amrish Baidjoe
President
EUPHEM cohort 2015

Once I started my scientific career off as a biologist, my background is a bit of a mixed bag, spending a lot of time in labs and on the ground as an epi where I managed large community driven intervention surveys on malaria in east-Africa for several years, considering strategies for elimination. In 2015 I started my EUPHEM at Institute Pasteur in Paris, bridging areas of operational field-epidemiology and microbiology as a member of the outbreak investigation taskforce. Currently in my non-EAN hours I work as a field-epidemiologist/microbiologist consultant at Imperial College in London, within the department of infectious disease epidemiology. I am the coordinator of the [R Epidemics Consortium \(RECON\)](#) where we develop opensource/free tools and training for public health data analytics. I am originally from Amsterdam, but am living in London these days, if you can't find me, I am probably in the Natural History Museum or behind a photo camera on a deserted hiking trail.



Iro Evlampidou,
Secretary
EPIET cohort 2012

When I graduated from medical school I knew I wanted to help people – especially the most vulnerable, but that I also liked travel and numbers. So, I specialised in General Medicine and studied Public Health and I went on to join Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and worked in countries like Zambia, Myanmar, South Sudan, Kenya and Liberia. My love for numbers eventually led me to epidemiology and to EPIET in Bristol, from which I graduated in 2014. During the recent refugee crisis in Europe I supported MSF's projects as an epidemiologist and coordinator of field medical activities. I am currently working with ISGlobal in Barcelona on drinking water quality while trying to learn Spanish and enjoy the lovely city. It's a great honour for me to be part of the new EAN board as a Secretary and to contribute to EAN's activities.



Céline Barnadas
Treasurer
EUPHEM cohort 2015

At first a little unsure about what to do as a grown-up, I chose a mix of lab work, infectious diseases, epidemiology, public health, and travels, and kept eating lots of chocolate and baking to relax. After completing my pharmaceutical studies in France and a PhD on malaria in Madagascar, I went off to the US, Papua New Guinea, and then Australia continuing to work on research studies on malaria. Seven years and two beautiful children later, I joined the EUPHEM programme and moved to Copenhagen with my family. After graduating last Sept, I started working as a consultant for the laboratory strengthening team of the WHO (Lyon) supporting in countries activities. I am very grateful to be part of the new EAN board, as Treasurer, and I'm looking forward to contributing to strengthening the network, and sustaining EAN finances.

EAN Drinks and Dinner – Barcelona - 27 January 2018

The EAN Board has the annual face-to-face meeting in **Barcelona** during the last weekend of January 2018. Please come and join us for dinner and drinks on **Saturday evening 27 January 2018**. Location: a nice restaurant/bar in Barcelona.

More details will follow, but please spread the word to all EPIET/EUPHEM fellows, alumni and friends.

We hope to see you all there!



In the next edition!

- The Board will present an exciting overview of their main activities for the coming year following their face-to face-meeting in Barcelona
- “Exit interviews” with two long serving EPIET coordinators Kostas Danis and Chris Williams, who will reflect on their time as coordinators
- A brand new ‘Where are you now?’
- And much more

Membership

The annual membership fee is now €30 / £28.

There is a 10-year membership available at €250 / £230.

Fellows in their first and second year of training are exempt from paying membership fees, according to the accepted statute changes of the 2012 General Assembly.

The details for how to transfer fees by online banking are on the EAN webpage; if you require any further information on membership payment, we kindly ask you to contact the EAN board (eanboard@gmail.com), putting “membership payment” in the subject line.

Please indicate your name and membership year as reference in the bank transfer and also send an email to eanboard@gmail.com to inform us about your payment (sometimes names are not correctly transmitted with the transfer). Thank you for your support!

EURO ACCOUNT (€30 per annum)

Bank: HSBC UK

Address: 18 London Street, Norwich, NR2 1LG, UK

Account holder: Epiet Alumni Network

Account Number: 71822755

Sort code: 40-05-15

IBAN: GB11MIDL40051571822755

BIC/Swift: MIDLGB22

GBP ACCOUNT (£28 per annum)

Bank: HSBC UK

Address: 18 London Street, Norwich, NR2 1LG, UK

Account holder: Epiet Alumni Network

Account Number: 43922782

Sort code: 40-35-09