

Iraq, Kurdistan Region: MedChild – IME Pilot Project

Ilja Gardi, MD

Abstract

The Mediterranean, especially considered in a wider sense as the area concerned throughout the centuries by Mediterranean traditions, cultures and religions, is unquestionably one of the most important and fundamental region in the world's history, being this enhanced today by all the dramatic facts of the Middle East that every day break into our lives, directly or by newspapers and televisions.

On the contrary, if we take into consideration health topics, it seems that the for the most part the common concern – not without reason, of course – is basically focused on Africa, and particularly on sub-Saharan countries (as for concrete actions, we know, it's a completely different issue...). But if we make a real comparison from this point of view between this two regions – the Mediterranean, apart from the Western countries, and the Sub-Saharan Africa – we could probably realize that it is not a matter of fixing a classification or making a choice between them, but essentially of facing up to both them, each one with the proper approach.

The MedChild and MIH foundations have both been created with a Mediterranean vocation and provided with the highest medical skills – MIH with a specific mission for hematology and other genetic blood diseases and with a wider commitment concerning the (re)organization of health structures, MedChild with the wider scope of promoting and pursuing full respect for children's rights to grow as person. It was therefore natural to strengthen the cooperation between the two Institutes which is now also secured by the gathering of responsibilities in the person of the MIH Commissioner, who is also member of MedChild Board with a specific delegation for health. As a result, the partnership MedChild-MIH is deeply committed to find and implement the best solutions to health problems in the Mediterranean, mainly springing from an endemic situation in which conflicts and widespread lacks of highly qualified health assistance often prevent from eradicating pathologies such as cardiopathies, oncological diseases and blood disorders (strictly close to those peculiar to South Europe and North Africa). This situation generates in less developed countries, as well as in war zones and crisis areas, an intolerable socio-medical situation. Furthermore, at the same time, MedChild-MIH partnership aims at promoting concrete actions in other notable fields (like e.g. education and human rights) which, together and in relationship with health, form the natural environment of any sound human life.

For all these purposes MedChild-MIH has established a specific method, consisting in cure, training and transfer of know-how, with the aim of making each country self-sufficient for the treatment of its own people. This process is now being specifically tested in the so called "Pilot Project for Iraqi Kurdistan Region", as well as in other health program in many other Middle Eastern countries. The real success of the first phases of this Pilot Project are certainly the best possible approach to the wider project of the Mediterranean Pediatric Center – MPC, which will be officially introduced during this conference. As the "Pilot Project" is already fully accepted and agreed upon in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, the MPC must in fact be implemented with a larger and shared Mediterranean consensus.

A basic report will be therefore delivered and discussed on the following subjects:

- pediatric assistance: improvement of the quality level of pediatric assistance in the large area of the Mediterranean, as a milestone of MedChild-MIH's mission; main issues of the existing gap and prioritization of interventions;
- Medchild-MIH partnership in pediatric: trial and development of an innovative method of cooperation; briefing on the ongoing activities and on executed ones in order to monitor, improve and further develop the method (Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon);

- Pilot Project for Iraqi Kurdistan Region;
- “MPC” Project: definition of the mission, roles, tools of intervention and management;
- main components of the MPC Project as intervention tools: general background with attention to methodology applied to each tool. Special focus on (a) pediatric ship, (b) mobile units MOPSET – Mobile Pediatric System for Emergency and Tele-diagnosis, (c) Mediterranean Sections, (d) PTCO – Pediatric Clinical Trial Office, (e) MPN – Mediterranean Pediatric Network;
- continuing education: strategic objective of MPC through all the project components.