

An Invitation from the Chair, Overall Organizing Committee, INCLEN XVIII Global Meeting

Dear Friends,

In spite of world unrest and turmoil, the INCLEN Board of Trustees, after careful consideration of safety and feasibility issues, decided to go ahead with plans to hold the INCLEN XVIII Global Meeting in Sharm El -Sheikh, Egypt, on February 10 - 13, 2002. Indeed, INCLEN faculty and participants from around the world have continued to show interest in contributing to the meeting. This year we received over 300 abstracts from 30 countries, including seven from the Eastern Mediterranean region. The Organizing Committee, with help and support from the IEO (Manila and Philadelphia) and financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, is working hard to finalize plans for the meeting and trying to get as many participants as possible to the meeting despite the limited funds available this year.

We are pleased to announce that the International Epidemiology Association (IEA/EMR) is co-sponsoring the meeting by supporting its members from the Eastern Mediterranean Region and participating in the scientific program. Similarly, the World Health Organization and a number of other partner organizations and institutions are co-sponsoring continuing education sessions and workshops to present their programs and activities and enjoin INCLEN faculty to collaborate.

The meeting and accommodation will be at Sharm Sheraton Hotel at the lovely beach resort area of Sharm El- Sheikh, situated at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula. Participants will start arriving on February 8 for pre-meeting workshops, while some will stay on for post-meeting workshops on February 14. All INCLEN participants will be met and appropriately assisted at Cairo and/or Sharm El- Sheikh airports by our travel agent.

The opening ceremony is scheduled on the evening of Sunday, February 10, followed by a reception, featuring Egyptian and Middle Eastern food.

Scientific sessions will be held daily from February 11 - 13, Monday to Wednesday. A plenary session is scheduled every morning from 8:30 to 10:00. In keeping with the main theme of this year "Equity-oriented Research: Leadership Challenges for the 21st Century", the plenary lectures will focus on equity and leadership issues.

Concurrent sessions for oral presentations will be held as usual from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Poster sessions will be displayed from 8:00 onwards, with discussions during coffee breaks. Continuing education sessions and workshops are scheduled in the after-noon through the evening every day of the meeting. In the early afternoon (1:30 - 3:30 p.m.) a series of workshops are planned, providing different perspectives on the struggle against inequity, including sessions on Knowledge Management, Preventing Adverse Outcomes, and Shared Decision Making in healthcare. Later in the afternoon (4:00 - 7:00 p.m.), there will be concurrent workshops and presentations on various research programs and projects of other international organizations and research groups around the world. There will also be opportunities for various regional and special interest groups of INCLEN to meet and discuss strategies, proposals, progress and issues.

The closing ceremony on the evening of February 13 will feature an exciting trip to the desert, where there will be an exquisite Bedouin banquet, with delicious food and traditional music and dancing beneath the silver moonlight.

The organizing committee encourages INCLEN members of the different interest groups to arrange their gatherings during the meeting. We are willing to provide all the logistic requirements needed. Please inform the organizing committee or IEO of your plans in advance. We are quite sure that participants will enjoy their stay in Sharm El- Sheikh under the shining clear skies or under the crystal clear waters of the Red Sea. Do not forget to bring your snorkels and scuba diving gear.

This is one of the best areas for corals and colored fish. We guarantee an unforgettable experience for you!

Dr Amr Hassan
Chair,
Overall Organizing Committee