



**AIM** Healthcare and  
social benefits  
for all

# SPECIAL BRIEFING

November 2022

## **Dear Members,**

Unfortunately, we had to hold our General Assembly in November online. This also makes the Special Briefing on it look less appealing than you are used to: we can only share the content and miss the photos. This immediately also shows that we miss a very important element with an online assembly: our mutual encounters, the contact with each other. Fortunately, we will meet for real again in Geneva in June!

Even though it was digital, the content of our meetings was certainly not unimportant. And actually, looking back, there was a nice common thread: the future of mutualism and solidarity.

In the joint meeting, we adopted a new strategy for the future of AIM. That strategy reaffirms our guiding principles and, on that basis, chooses focus and priorities in our work. Based on this strategy, we are working towards a healthy future for AIM and its members. To do so, we will also have to renew ourselves and redefine a concept like solidarity. The seminar on involvement of youth was a good example of this. And the same goes for the theme 'Health challenges and Gender-based Services' that was central to the Latin-American Committee.

The meeting of the Africa and Middle-East Committee focused on accelerating access to social protection despite the crises. The biggest challenge to work towards universal access to healthcare probably lies in that part of the world. In mutual solidarity, AIM members will share their knowledge and expertise to contribute to this in the years to come.

I sincerely hope that this Special Briefing brings these important themes to your attention again. Together with you and under the leadership of a new Presidium, which we will elect in Geneva in June, AIM will work in the coming years to shape our new strategy and firmly establish mutualism, in Europe, Africa and the Middle-East and Latin America.

**Loek Caubo**

## Upcoming Statutory Meetings

21 06 23 - 23 06 23

The next AIM General Assembly will take place  
in **Geneva** from 21 to 23 June 2023.

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## Africa and Middle-East Committee

*The meeting of the Africa and Middle East Committee culminates in the seminar on “Accelerating access to social protection despite the crises - what levers for action?”*

The committee meeting started with the presentation of the results of the AIM Secretariat’s visit to Morocco. The Secretariat met with the Mutuelle Générale des Postes et des Télécommunications (MGPTT), the Mutuelle Générale du Personnel des Administrations Publiques (MGPAP), the Union Africaine de la Mutualité (UAM), the Caisse Nationale des Organismes de Prévoyance Sociale (CNOPS), Caisse Mutualiste Interprofessionnelle Marocaine (CMIM), Laboratoire d’Analyses Médicales de la MGEN Maroc, Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale (CNSS), Mutuelle d’Action Sociale (MAS), Centre d’Oncologie Majorelle and Hôpital International de Marrakech. Among the perspectives of the mission, we can mention the search for international partnerships in terms of access to care both for MGPTT members abroad and for foreigners directly in Morocco; support for international cooperation with partners in Europe for the UAM; the continuation of exchanges on subjects on which the CNOPS may have common concerns and which may be of interest to Moroccan and African mutuals; discussion of the possibility of having access to training; the presentation of the internal reorganisation of the MAS at a forthcoming General Assembly.

Thomas Kanga-Tona then presented the post-Dakar international mutualist conference actions. These include advocacy with international organisations and relevant technical and financial partners, the creation, dissemination and updating of a document for monitoring promotional activities at local, regional and international level, contacts between AIM and sub-regional organisations, the dissemination of the Lomé Platform and the Dakar Declaration at national events, the creation of a mutual/regulatory body or mutual/PTF partnership in Côte d’Ivoire and Senegal, and closer links between mutualists and civil society organisations.

Then, Mr Walid Benazzouz, Director General of the MGPTT, presented the MGPTT. The MGPTT has 28,000 members and 70,000 beneficiaries and provides supplementary coverage for its members and their dependents. The mutual’s objectives for the future include expanding the MGPTT’s basket of services, increasing reimbursements, deploying the proximity policy and implementing a new IT system.

The meeting continued with the AIM seminar “Accelerating access to social protection despite crises - what levers for action? Olivier de Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, presented the Global Social Protection Fund. For half of the African Union countries, financing social protection is difficult. It would require devoting 15% of their GDP to it, hence the idea of the Global Social Protection Fund, which relies on international solidarity to fill the gap, which represents less than 1% of the GDP of the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Stéphanie Lecharlier, Political and Citizen Mobilisation Officer at SolSoc, representing Mon Assurance Santé Mutuelle (MASMUT), presented the actions of Belgian civil society around the Global Social Protection Fund. For SolSoc, it is important that a Global Fund is accessible to middle-income countries, that it favours the participation of civil society in the distribution of the resources of such funds as well as in the mobilisation of national resources to favour access to social protection.

Damien Revault, Project Manager and Health Financing Expert, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) argued that COVID-19 has brought opportunities in terms of health sector financing. However, recurrent crises present difficult contexts for establishing social protection, while health insurance is built over the long term. Decision-makers and beneficiaries must be convinced, and human, infrastructural and institutional capacities must be built. External support is also a driving force for social protection in terms of funding studies, research or training.

The meeting concluded with a question and answer session for which Martini Hagiefstratiou, Policy Officer at the European and International Affairs Department of Solidaritis, representing Mon Assurance Santé Mutuelle (MASMUT), replaced Stéphanie Lecharlier.



## Latin-America Committee

*Health challenges and Gender-based Services high on the Agenda*

The meeting of the Committee was divided into two sessions. The first part dealt with the main health challenges facing members of each country. The objective was to highlight common concerns so as to identify paths for collaboration within the Committee for the years to come. The second part of the meeting allowed members to discuss another high priority topic with the region: gender involvement and empowerment. Participants could hear from some best practices from Colombia and Argentina.

On health challenges, speakers from Argentina, Colombia, and Uruguay, shared their national experience. Dr Alfredo Torres (UMU), Juan Piveta (CAM), Carlos Nemesio (FNAMMF) and Dr Elisa Torrenegra (Gestarsalud) agreed on some key overarching necessities for the future of healthcare in the region: ensure the sustainability of healthcare and equity in access given the growing demand and costs relating to ageing but also of the price of innovation and pharmaceuticals; tackle all social determinants of health; achieve the recognition of social economy organisations and especially mutuals as the best model to provide health services. As a conclusion to the exchanges, it was agreed that the AIM regional Committee would add to its priorities the recognition of mutuals and solidarity-based healthcare insurers as the perfect entity to articulate between providers and the community and to guarantee better health outcomes and a greater sustainability of the system.

The second part of the meeting focussed on services with a gender perspectives. Nora Landard, coordinator of the gender equality committee of CAM, explain how it

is necessary to start within the organisations themselves, addressing at least four dimensions of organisational life. She insisted on the need to start recognising existing inequities and try to gather data on those within the own mutual. She also highlighted some priority areas, which are key to gender equality like: the financing for the development of autonomy (e.g. microcredits for women and with lower interests, mentorship, peer to peer learning, etc.), an integrated care economy, based on a rights-based perspective, responsible and sustainable consumption, the identification of situations of violence and development of strategies to address them, and the inclusion the gender perspective in education. Elisa Torrenegra, presented how EPS (mutuals) in Colombia tackle the health risks specific to women. She described some successful programmes like the “Ser Madre Hijo” for pregnant women and their child, “Mujer Sana” which follows the cancer pathway for cervical and breast cancer, “VIH/SIDA”, for infected women, and “Ser joven” for girls and young women 10 and 24 years old. She also highlighted how hard it is, beyond the services provided, to achieve the gender focus in the management and government of the entities themselves. As a conclusion, AIM stressed that it will continue to work on the topic of gender and more specifically on achieving a greater representation and involvement of women in the governance of its members.



## General Assembly

*AIM adopts new Strategy*

The General Assembly in November has been organised virtually to ensure an event under the best conditions. This General Assembly was the first to be organised under the new AIM Statutes.

The members of the General Assembly adopted the adhesion of MGPAP from Morocco as a new member of AIM. AIM's President, Loek Caubo thanked the President of MGPAP, Moulay Brahim El Atmani, for the confidence in AIM and the new member has been welcomed by all AIM members.

Another cornerstone for the future of AIM has been discussed and decided: A new strategy for the AIM towards becoming a member driven, strong and professional organisation, appreciated by members and respected and recognised by external partners. A further objective is to strive towards a healthy financial future of AIM. The members agreed that the future focus of AIM will be the following:

*"Our focus is to protect the health of all citizens and to develop and defend sustainable universal access to high-quality, affordable healthcare along with social protection based on solidarity and democracy."*

The implementation of the strategy will be prepared during the first half of 2023.

The Vice-President reported about the most important priorities for their regions, the Mutuals Working Group as well as Communication. For the Latin American region, the Mont Blanc meetings in Cartagena de las Indias was one of the major events to mention, where leaders from 24 countries worldwide discussed on the role of actors of the social and solidarity economy. The meetings concluded with a declaration as well as a roadmap for future exchanges and the role of social and solidarity economy for the ongoing social, environmental and societal challenges ahead.

For the Africa and the Middle East region a seminar on 'Accelerating access to social protection despite the crises – what levers for action' was on the agenda. The role of

international solidarity to put the poorest countries on a path of sustainable financing of social protection was underlined during this seminar among other.

For the European region, the AI Act as well as the European Health Data Space continue to be on the agenda. Both legislative proposals have a major impact on AIM's members and therefore need to be followed closely. AIM's current European lobby is focusing thereon. Another highlight to mention is AIM's participation in a major European project called 'ASCERTAIN' which will focus on the development of pricing models for medicine. AIM has been approached by the University of Rotterdam due to its works on the Fair Pricing model.

For the mutual working group the works of the International coalition on the social and solidarity economy have been mentioned. In fact, the ILO adopted a resolution, the OECD adopted recommendations and the World Economic Forum also reported on social economy. AIM will continue its fight for a legal recognition of mutuals at European level.

Finally, the most recent developments concerning AIM's communication have been presented. While the outreach on Twitter and LinkedIn increased, publications on AIM's works helped AIM members to follow up on the activities of the Secretariat. The AIM team is also busy developing a communication strategy aligned with the overall AIM strategy.

Members have been updated about the state of the AIM accounts as per September 30th. Also the financial scenarios for the years to come have been proposed. While there are still sufficient reserves for the years to come, it is the intention to reach a stable financial position in 2026. A proposal was adopted to raise the membership fee by 2% in 2023 and 2024. To this end a new budget was proposed for 2023 and 2024. This budget also includes savings for some of the biggest expenses as well as the automatic indexation for the salary.



## Seminar

*Strengthening the solidary Base of social Protection through a better and stronger Involvement of Youth*

AIM President Loek Caubo opened the event by asking the core question to be answered through the exchanges: how do the mutualist movement and social protection systems as a whole make the best of the existing young impetus to impulse solidarity in our societies? Loek declared himself convinced of the potential of both younger generations and social economy organisations, such as mutuals, in making our social protection systems fit for future and rooted in solidarity.

After his introduction, he carried out a cross-interview, aiming to gather the view of older and younger generations on the topic of the changing face of solidarity. Katja Cic, Manager at the Youth Health Organization, stressed how solidarity is not vanishing but rather taking on new forms and how youth is particularly active on social platforms nowadays. She called for the meaningful engagement of youth, allowing them to contribute with their expertise and considering them an integral part of all steps in any decision-making process. She encouraged participants to raise motivation among younger generations by utilising their passion and directing it to the areas where their participation is more needed, like social protection. Barbro Westerholm, representing AGE-Platform Europe, spoke about the importance of overcoming age discrimination, which, as highlighted by

Katja, does not only concern older but also younger generations. Prejudices start forming at a very young age, Barbro therefore recommended to start tackling stereotypes from a very young age. Both interviewees agreed on the need for cross-generational dialogue and contacts, that values each generation for its worth and the valuable contribution it can bring.

Following the cross-generational exchange, a round table, gathering social protection organisations from Europe, Latin-America, and Africa was organised. It allowed to showcase how those entities achieved a greater involvement and participation of youth in their structures and projects. Marleen Veldhuis-Buijsman, Communications advisor at the Dutch Pensioenfederatie, explained how her organisation managed to turn an unpopular topic to youth like pensions into a “sexy” one. Alejandro Russo, AIM Vice-President for the Latin-American Region, described the commitments included in the AIM Mutualist Pledge for the greater involvement of youth, adopted a year ago, and the activities developed by members of the region since then. Benjamin Delfosse, Secretary General at Latitudes Jeunes, and Mohamed Houssein, Project Manager of the same youth organisation, spoke about the difficulties they encountered in engaging youth and the key aspects to take into account to be successful.

Finally, Jean-Victor Ayité, Director General at the Programme d'Appui aux Stratégies Sociales (PASS) presented a West African project on the role of youth in social protection and in health promotion. During the debate, all speakers agreed on some ingredients which are key to a better and greater involvement of youth in social protection organisation and in any project: trust, meaningful involvement, co-construction, motivation, passion, empowerment, valorisation and intergenerational contacts.

As a closure to the event, Mahmood Al-Hamody, members of the WHO Youth Council and Sibylle Reichert, AIM Executive Director, shared some thoughts and conclusions. Mahmood explained how the tree of meaningful youth involvement should be kept alive and flourishing, agreeing with the above-mentioned ingredients mentioned by panellist. He also shared four calls to action: acknowledge youth for their stakes; achieve meaningful engagement; create institutionalised platforms to communicate; and ensure accountability and transparency. After him, Sibylle closed the event, stressing the need to give trust and confidence to youth, to lift the silos and empower young people to participate in social protection systems and to promote solidarity.