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PRESS RELEASE

Twinning Center Partnership Provides Access to Essential, Up-to-Date Health Resources at Nursing Schools in Rural Tanzania

PEPFAR-supported Tanzania Nursing Initiative Delivers Mobile Libraries to Schools in Ilala and Singida Regions, Provides Training for Library Leaders

WASHINGTON, DC, and DAR es SALAAM, TANZANIA, May 25, 2010 — The American International Health Alliance (AIHA) announced today the recent delivery of International Council of Nurses (ICN) Mobile Libraries to two nursing schools in Tanzania, with a third slated for delivery within the next six weeks.

Nurses in Tanzania provide the bulk of all healthcare services to a vast majority of the population, yet they have very little access to critical educational texts and reference materials that can guide their practice and make their care more effective. This is a particular problem in remote regions. Housed in transportable, moisture and insect resistant trunks, the ICN Mobile Libraries make access to much-needed medical information a reality for these front-line care providers.

“The resources contained in the Mobile Libraries are in line with Tanzania’s nursing curriculum and are especially beneficial to schools in remote, difficult to reach areas of the country,” says Mrs. Eliaremisa Ayo, Assistant Director of the Nurse Training Unit of Tanzania’s Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

Muhimbili School of Nurse Teachers in Dar es Salaam’s Ilala Region and Kiomboi School of Nursing in Kiomboi, Singida Region, were the first two nursing schools to receive the Mobile Libraries through an HIV/AIDS Twinning Center partnership supported by the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through CDC/Tanzania.

This partnership links Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences School of Nursing with the University of California-San Francisco School of Nursing with the goal of strengthening nursing education throughout Tanzania, particularly in the field of HIV/AIDS treatment, care, and prevention. The third Mobile Library will be delivered to Mbulu School of Nursing in Mbulu, Arusha Region in early summer.

AIHA and its Tanzania Nursing Initiative partners conducted a three-day workshop in Dar es Salaam April 13-15 to train 15 nurse tutors from the schools on use of the Mobile Libraries, which contain the most up-to-date editions of more than 80 nursing and health texts. Key topics covered during the training included how to set up the library, local policies and guidelines for managing the library, searching for information, responding to requests for information, and effective research techniques.

Speaking at the conclusion of the workshop, Muhimbili School of Midwifery Nurse Tutor Mr. Saturine Managwa expressed gratitude on behalf of his counterparts at all three schools receiving the Mobile Libraries. “We are thankful to the US Government, AIHA, and the Tanzania Nursing Initiative team for providing our schools with these important resources. We promise you that we

are going to train, disseminate information about what we have learned, and influence the effective use of these Mobile Libraries in our institutions for the purpose of updating our knowledge and, more importantly, improving our services.”

Only three other nursing schools in Tanzania possess a Mobile Library; 37 institutions currently house Nursing Libraries for Refugee Health. AIHA and its Tanzania Nursing Initiative partners worked closely with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to select the three schools where the Mobile Libraries were placed. To be selected, the schools had to be situated in an area with limited resources; had to have a minimum of 60 students in attendance and a venue for students to use as a reading place; and had to show a commitment to operating the library, including a staff member or volunteer who would take responsibility for the library’s day-to-day operations and management.

In the coming year, partners will closely monitor the implementation of the libraries at these three pilot institutions to determine if the project should be expanded to other nursing schools throughout the country.

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