



# Field Notes

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## Social Work Training Program Helps Tanzania Improve Care for Orphans, Vulnerable Children

Twinning Center partners in Tanzania have launched a training program to arm community-based caregivers with basic social work skills in an effort to improve the quality of support available to the country's 2.5 million children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

The Institute of Social Work (ISW) in Dar es Salaam is working with the University of Illinois-Chicago's Jane Addams College of Social Work and the Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center to expand in-service and pre-service training for social workers and other caregivers who provide services and support to orphans and vulnerable children.

Despite the critical need, trained government social workers are presently assigned to only one-third of Tanzania's 126 districts and the country's welfare system is severely overstretched.

Partners are working to change this by building human resource capacity to meet both the immediate and long-term needs of these children, says ISW Principal Dr. Hosea Rwegoshora. "In particular, the para-social worker training project is designed to rapidly scale up support for orphans and vulnerable children by upgrading the skills of community caregivers already working in the field," Rwegoshora explains.

Under the USAID-funded project, partners are conducting trainings in the high-burden regions of Dar es Salaam, Mbeya, and Iringa.

"Every day, we receive a minimum of three proposals requesting funds for work with orphans and vulnerable children," Dr. Fatma Hafidhi Mrisho, executive chairman of the Tanzania Commission for AIDS, told participants at the inaugural para-social worker training workshop conducted July 9-20 in Dar es Salaam's Temeke Municipality.

Calling the para-social work training innovative, Mrisho lauded partners' efforts to improve care at district and ward levels.

Through the training project, community-based caregivers learn to help children better cope with illness and the loss of family members. They also learn how to provide support to ensure each child's physical, emotional, and developmental needs are met.

Specific topics covered during the two-week workshops include how to identify children in need, the social work process, and how to tap into existing support structures.

So far, 120 para-social workers were trained at the first two workshops. In total, more than 300 will be trained through the project in the coming year.



The interactive para-social worker training workshops use lectures, role plays, and small group activities to teach caregivers how to provide support to orphans and vulnerable children.

**In the coming year, partners will train more than 300 para-social workers to provide improved care and support to Tanzania's orphans and vulnerable children.**

## Prevention with Positives Partnership Looks to Scale Up Project in Mozambique



Members of a community-based education and outreach organization in Chinde display a map that illustrates local sites they support.

The Twinning Center’s CDC-funded Prevention with Positives partnership is gearing up for the expansion of the project to two additional sites in the coming year.

The partnership—which links Beluluane Clinic and the Namaacha Health Center in Mozambique with the University of California in San Francisco (UCSF)—is in the process of looking at potential scale up sites in Sofala and Zambezia provinces.

A team of Twinning Center staff and partners traveled to Mozambique June 27-July 15, where they conducted a series of meetings with various community-based groups and nongovernmental organizations, including Columbia University’s International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs and World Vision’s Reduction of the Impact of Transmission of AIDS Project.

Based on these visits, partners will work with the

US government team in Mozambique to select the scale up sites.

In the meantime, partners continue to provide training and technical assistance to Beluluane volunteers and staff to improve community-based prevention services. At Namaacha, they are training staff to provide prevention counseling to HIV-positive patients who visit the clinic.

Working together, they are incorporating interventions that help people living with HIV reduce their risk of transmitting the virus to others into existing services.

Community-based programs targeted include support groups and organizations that provide voluntary counseling and testing and home-based care.

In May, four counselors from Mozambique traveled to San Francisco, where they attended an array of meet-

ings, workshops, and other training events related to prevention with positives programs.

This training was continued during the more recent exchange when UCSF partners had the opportunity to observe the counselors in action and provide feedback and mentoring.

Partners have also been working to finalize a monitoring and evaluation protocol, along with seven quantitative and qualitative tools designed to facilitate accurate tracking of prevention activities.

During the July exchange, they met with Dr. Francisco Mbofana, head of the Bio-Ethics Committee at Mozambique’s Ministry of Health, to discuss submission of the instruments for Ministry approval in August.

## HIV/AIDS Twinning Center: The Program in Numbers

As of June 30, 2007, the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center reports the following achievements:

- Organizations receiving technical assistance: 137
- Individuals trained through capacity-building activities: 2,631
- Individuals reached and/or receiving HIV/AIDS-related services: 5,383
- Partnerships established: 25
- Countries funding programmatic activities: 9
- VHC volunteers deployed: 9
- Individuals trained at Learning Resource Centers: 85
- Visitors to the Twinning Center Web site each quarter: 1,891

## Botswana HIV/AIDS Media Partners Visit ZAMCOM, Tour Print and Broadcast Outlets

Partners from the Media Institute of Southern Africa's Botswana Chapter traveled to Zambia May 27-June 1 to meet with their counterparts at the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication Educational Trust (ZAMCOM).

In Lusaka, partners visited local media houses such as the Zambia National Broad-

casting Corporation, the Zambia Daily Mail, Yatsani Community Radio, and PANOS Southern Africa. These site visits provided them with a first-hand look at how journalists in Zambia are covering HIV-related news.

The remainder of the exchange was devoted to workplan development and

familiarizing the Botswana partners with the technical support capabilities available to them at ZAMCOM.

In the coming months, the partners will conduct a needs assessment and situational analysis of Botswana's media outlets in an effort to help improve the quality of HIV/AIDS reporting.



Partners at ZAMCOM's campus.

## Expanding Training and Continuing Education Opportunities for Tanzania's Lab Professionals

Twinning Center partners from Boulder Community Hospital and the Colorado Association of Continuing Medical Laboratory Education (CACMLE) conducted a series of training activities at five diploma laboratory schools and associated labs in Tanzania June 4-15.

Part of ongoing CDC-funded efforts to improve the quality of HIV and AIDS-related lab

education and services in Tanzania, these trainings provided nearly 360 faculty and students at medical laboratory science schools in Dar es Salaam, Iringa, Moshi, Mwanza, and Zanzibar with updated clinical information on HIV-related topics.

US partners also worked with lab school principals and faculty to enhance the teaching skills of lab tutors and to

improve communication and collaboration among the zonal labs. To that end, each institution has been provided with laptop computers to facilitate networking and information transfer.

Upcoming exchanges will focus on in-service training on HIV/AIDS diagnostics and laboratory management for technicians already working in zonal and regional labs.



CACMLE's Lynn Maedel reviews new med-tech materials with the Tanzanian partners.

## PCAZ Conducts Training-of-Trainers Courses for Zambian Healthcare Professionals

Twinning Center partners at the Palliative Care Association of Zambia (PCAZ) are helping expand hospice and palliative care services by training caregivers and identifying key elements of palliative care that can be integrated into home-based care.

With support from USAID, PCAZ recently hosted two training and advocacy workshops in Lusaka for 26 representatives from Care International's home-based program, district health management teams, cancer hospitals, the University

Teaching Hospital, Human Service Trust Hospice, and SHARE.

Held May 28-June 1, the first training focused on introducing new concepts in hospice and palliative care, including latest developments in Africa and various models of service delivery. Other topics covered include personal awareness of death and dying, assessing pain in adults and children, pain management, pain and symptom management for PLWH, and communicating effectively with terminal patients and their families.

Participants also worked with patients to put their new knowledge into practice.

Conducted July 15-22, the second workshop focused on pediatric care and preparing participants to provide palliative care training to other caregivers.

Home-based care providers gained skills in palliative care and advocacy at the PCAZ workshops.



## Preceptors Program Deploys Four Volunteers to Assist PEPFAR-funded Projects in Tanzania



Robinah N. Kimbugwe



Kenneth R. Down



Hilda K. Sinkonde



Embry M. Howell

The Twinning Center recently deployed four new volunteers to Tanzania, where they are helping build local capacity to provide HIV and AIDS care and treatment at PEPFAR-supported sites throughout the country.

Embry M. Howell and Robinah N. Kimbugwe are both working with Pact's Jali Watoto team based in Dar es Salaam. Jali Watoto is a PEPFAR-funded project designed to support Tanzania's national Most Vulnerable Children (MVC) Program in 19 target districts of the country.

Howell—who is the principal research associate at the Urban Institute's Health Policy Center in Washington, DC—is working with Pact to help evaluate how effectively the MVC Program is meeting the needs of Tanzanian children living with HIV. She will spend three months primarily in Dar es Salaam with travel to other regions including Mbeya and Mtwara as needed.

"I am a maternal and child health specialist ... that is where my heart is, so I am thrilled by this chance to help [Pact and the Jali Watoto team]," Howell says.

A teacher by trade, Kimbugwe is a native of Uganda with more than eight years of experience implementing HIV/AIDS programs for children and young adults. She is spending the next year working with Pact to mitigate the stigma and discrimination faced by youth living with HIV or AIDS.

Kimbugwe will be based in Dar es Salaam and travel as needed to Kagera, Mara, Mbeya, Mtwara, and Tabora.

Kenneth R. Down, a UK native who also has a background in education, is stationed in Dar es Salaam. Down is spending two months at the Tanzania Ministry of Education and Vocational Training's Institute of Education where he is helping incorporate HIV/AIDS prevention messages into life planning skills materials for primary school students.

His main objectives are to assist with the development of an age-appropriate life skills curriculum and a complementary teacher's guide. He will also design an instructor training course to familiarize teachers with the new material, as well as collaborate with CDC and other

US government staff to identify appropriate monitoring and evaluation plans for these activities.

Hilda K. Sinkonde is working with the Dodoma Zonal Training Center, one of eight such centers established by Tanzania's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and supported by the International Training and Education Center on HIV (I-TECH).

Sinkonde is a native of Tanzania and has extensive experience as a technical trainer and adult educator, as well as nearly 15 years of working with HIV/AIDS volunteer groups and service organizations.

"At this stage of my life, I feel I have something to give back to the community, particularly to my homeland of Tanzania," Sinkonde explains. "I know building this type of capacity is a long process and I am so happy to be involved in the beginning stages."

The Tanzania Preceptors Program facilitates placement of skilled volunteers at partner institutions and PEPFAR-supported sites to help build capacity to combat the country's HIV/AIDS epidemic.

## Twining Center Launches Two New Hospital-based Partnerships in Ethiopia

The HIV/AIDS Twinning Center has launched two new partnerships designed to develop institutional and human resource capacity at hospitals in Ethiopia.

Elmhurst Hospital Center in New York City is partnering with Debre Birhan Hospital in the North Shoa zone of Ethiopia's Amhara Region. Amhara is Ethiopia's second

most populous region and has the country's highest HIV prevalence rate.

In cooperation with the International Training and Education Center on HIV/AIDS (I-TECH), partners are focusing on strengthening Debre Birhan Hospital's capacity to provide care to PLWH, as well as improve its management infrastructure.

The second partnership links Ambo Hospital in Ethiopia's Oromiya Region with Jersey Shore University Medical Center in New Jersey.

Partners are working in conjunction with Columbia University to bolster Ambo's capacity to provide HIV/AIDS treatment and expand professional development opportunities for staff.

Ethiopia is home to 76.5 million people and has an estimated adult HIV prevalence rate of 5.5 percent in urban centers of the country.

## Partnership LRC Contributes to Maina Soko Hospital's Selection as SmartCare Pilot Site

Maina Soko Military Hospital in Lusaka was selected by Zambia's Ministry of Health as a round-one implementation site for an electronic patient record system developed in conjunction with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Dubbed "SmartCare," the Continuity of Care Patient Tracking System has been approved by the Ministry of Health for eventual use at all health facilities in Zambia.

Utilizing a chip similar to a mobile phone SIM card, SmartCare cards securely

store health records that patients can easily carry from one point of service to the next to keep care providers informed of their test results and treatment regimens.

The cards, along with the SmartCare software, help ensure proper, continuous care even if patients seek treatment at multiple facilities over the course of time.

Clinicians use touch screen computers to view and update client data, which is stored in an onsite database, as well as on the SmartCare cards kept by patients.

Ministry of Health Warrant Officer First Class Tommy Sajisa and Corporal Kenny Njekwa attended a SmartCare training-of-trainers course in October 2006 and have since trained 32 Maina Soko personnel in the application.

Maina Soko was chosen as an early implementation site thanks in part to improved information and communication technology capabilities introduced at the hospital through an onsite Learning Resource Center (LRC) established in 2006 with support from the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center.



Tommy Sajisa (left) works with CDC representative Dr. Mark Shields and Anton Delsink of Microsoft. The CDC donated eight touch screen computers and four printers to help the hospital implement SmartCare.

## Treatment, Support, and Positive Attitude Help South African Women Overcome HIV Infection

When Ruth Modingwane tested positive for HIV in July 2003 she was frightened about what the future would bring. As a single mother living in Brits, South Africa, she was concerned not only about herself, but also about her 10 year-old son.

Instead of giving into her fears, 25-year-old Ruth accepted her condition and began to speak openly about it. She told her family and friends that she was HIV-positive and even talked about it on a local radio station where she worked.

"I knew keeping my diagnosis bottled up would kill me," Ruth says, attributing her decision to disclose her status to the community support group she attended and to her family's love and encouragement.

Although her decision to live life in the open has been a source of strength to many in the community, Ruth faced her share of hardship and

discrimination. Recalling what happened when staff at the radio station first learned she had HIV, Ruth describes how everyone avoided her and there was a constant buzz of depressing conversations about people who were dying of AIDS.

"The negative reactions really hurt me, but as time passed I came to accept that HIV is no different than diabetes or hypertension," Ruth admits.

In November 2005, Ruth began ARV therapy through a program supported by a Twinning Center partnership linking Brits District Hospital with the Pretoria-based Foundation for Professional Development.

"Before I started ART, I was very weak and felt sick every day. My CD4 count was only 34 and I had just about every symptom you can think of. The treatment has changed that, though. After just eight months, my CD4 was up to 284 and I hadn't experienced

any side effects from the medication. ART has kept me going," Ruth says happily, noting that her body and skin tone are back to normal.

"I have the support of my son and my boyfriend. I also work at Motswedi waTshepo Clinic as a data capture clerk," Ruth continues. "People are always shocked that I work, but there is nothing wrong with HIV-positive people, as long as they get the treatment and support they need."

Motswedi waTshepo Clinic, an ART referral site of Brits, is one place they can get that care and support, according to Ruth. For her, it is more than just a place to work—it is a place where she can give something back to her community. "When people come here they see me, an HIV-positive woman who used to be so sick, and they believe there are possibilities for them too," she says. "They become more optimistic and motivated ... they start to have hope for a better life."



Thanks to ART and the related care she receives at a PEPFAR-supported clinic in Brits, South Africa, Ruth Modingwane is living proof that treatment does help. Ruth says, "People who come to Motswedi waTshepo Clinic see me and realize that it is possible to have HIV and still live a normal, productive life."

## Volunteer Healthcare Corps Announces New Opportunities in Ethiopia



The Volunteer Healthcare Corps (VHC) recently announced seven openings for skilled professionals who are looking to help organizations in Ethiopia combat the country's HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The VHC places qualified individuals at host organizations that need the long-term, onsite presence a volunteer can provide.

VHC volunteers help scale up existing services and jump-start new projects in support of PEPFAR and host countries' national HIV/AIDS strategies.

Opportunities currently exist in Ethiopia for the following professionals:

- Web Content Developers
- Monitoring and Evaluation Advisors
- Pediatric HIV/AIDS Advisors
- Infection Prevention/ Post Exposure Prevention Advisors
- Laboratory Specialists
- HIV/AIDS Nutrition Specialists
- Clinical HIV/AIDS Care Mentors

These volunteer placements range from 3-12 months in duration and are located at various institutions in Addis Ababa and elsewhere in Ethiopia.

The VHC offers individuals a chance to serve as a catalyst for sustainable change and make a meaningful contribution to the war against HIV and AIDS.

More detailed information on each of the opportunities can be found on the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center's Web site.

## THANE Project is Helping Tanzania Build Sustainable Capacity to Train Nurses in HIV Care

**THANE's curriculum covers the following topics:**

- HIV Care for Nurses
- Overview of HIV
- HIV Prevention
- Counseling & Testing
- Stigma & Discrimination
- Care & Treatment for Adults and Adolescents
- Symptom Management
- PMTCT
- Care & Treatment for Infants and Children
- Hospital-based Care
- Community & Home-based Care
- Life Skills

Twinning Center partners at Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences School of Nursing (MUCHS) and the University of California - San Francisco School of Nursing (UCSF) are spearheading efforts to educate a cadre of master teachers who will provide training and clinical mentoring to faculty at all 61 of the country's nursing schools.

Through the CDC-funded Tanzania HIV/AIDS Nursing Education (THANE) Project, Tanzania's nurse educators are being equipped with adequate knowledge and resources on HIV/AIDS. Thus empowered, they are teaching nursing students how to provide quality care and treatment to individuals, families, and even entire communities.

Nurses constitute some 60 percent of Tanzania's professional healthcare workforce. They provide primary care services to most of the country's population, which

includes more than 2 million people living with HIV/AIDS. Because of this, they play a leading role when it comes to providing care, treatment, and support to people living with HIV/AIDS.

In addition to developing and supporting nursing faculty master trainers who can provide national leadership to sustain the HIV/AIDS nurse training program, partners are also working to bolster nursing school capacity through the THANE Project. Specific targets include building capacity to provide quality pre-service education in HIV/AIDS care and support and initiating a life skills training program that will support students both personally and professionally.

Working closely with the Nurse Training Unit at Tanzania's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to ensure integration into existing nursing curricula, partners have developed a 12-module HIV/AIDS nursing curriculum,

as well as instructor guides and toolkits—which include PowerPoint slides and other teaching materials—for each module.

The THANE curriculum is rooted in evidence-based clinical practice. It is designed to arm future nurses with the knowledge and skills they need to provide quality prevention, care, and treatment services to people in their communities.

Once the curriculum is implemented nationwide, some 6,600 nursing students will receive quality HIV/AIDS care instruction annually and eventually graduate with a strong foundation in HIV and AIDS care.

In 2007, partners initiated training of faculty master trainers at a pilot workshop for nurse educators from nine training zones.

As of July, the THANE Project has trained 18 nurse educators as master trainers.

## The Value of Twinning: Building Human and Institutional Capacity through Partnerships

Human beings are largely pre-wired for collaboration, so it's no surprise that the concept of partnerships has been around for ages. When it comes to public health, the common bond of wanting to help people live longer, better lives makes twinning a particularly well-suited vehicle for building human and institutional capacity.

Improving health system capacity is a non-stop process that requires continuous and constant evaluation and revamping. As a form of technical assistance, partnerships facilitate capacity building by offering many opportunities for peer-to-peer exchanges of information and skills-based training that help institutions and communities make the best use of limited financial, material, and human resources.

According to Zambian Defense Force (ZDF) Warrant Officer First Class Tommy Sajisa, partnerships create an effective framework for building sustainable institutional and human resource capacity. Sajisa works at Maina Soko Military Hospital in Lusaka and has been actively participating in a Twinning Center partnership linking the ZDF with US Naval Hospital in San Diego since 2005.

Through the partnership, a Learning Resource Center has been established at Maina Soko to improve patient care by expanding access to evidence-based research, says Sajisa, who is the center's information coordinator.

The hospital also expanded ART services for children and adults, as well as adopted updated protocols for cervical cancer screening and treatment thanks to the partnership. "We've developed new palliative care and pain

management guidelines and are in the process of establishing a Family Support Unit to provide a continuum of care to people living with HIV," Sajisa reports. "The open exchange of knowledge, information, and professional experience has really benefited both the hospital and our personnel," he stresses.

Because partnerships are generally of a longer duration than many other forms of technical assistance, they provide more opportunities for knowledge transfer and the development of sustainable programs, according to Mwiika Malindima, HIV/AIDS and gender media specialist at the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication (ZAMCOM) in Lusaka.

His involvement with a Twinning Center initiative to improve media coverage of the AIDS epidemic in countries targeted for PEPFAR assistance led to an ongoing exchange that helps ZAMCOM upgrade the knowledge and skills of healthcare journalists and editors through training workshops.

"Our partnership has had very tangible benefits, not only here at ZAMCOM, but throughout all of Zambia and in most parts of Africa," Malindima says.

"Our technical capacity has been improved, particularly in our radio and IT departments and, on a personal level, I have learned so much from the experts I have worked with," Malindima points out. "I am much more effective at organizing local and international trainings. Better still, I have seen great changes in the way the people we train report on HIV/AIDS. There have been remarkable improvements in both the quantity and quality

of news stories about the epidemic," he says.

Another Twinning Center partner, Faith Mwangi-Powell, executive director of the African Palliative Care Association (APCA), says partnerships facilitate south-to-south transfer of knowledge and skills.

"The partnership enables us to strengthen our own capacity to provide technical assistance to our member organizations throughout Africa," she explains. "We've found that the relationships built through partnerships multiply and grow. The resulting network means our activities have a much broader impact."

It is not just the recipient-partners who reap the benefits of a twinning relationship, though. Time and time again, donor partners involved in these collaborations attribute a renewed professional vigor and commitment to their partnership experiences, not to mention a significantly expanded world view.

Terry L. Cunningham, chief of the HIV, STD, and Hepatitis Branch of San Diego County Public Health Services, says his work with the ZDF partners has shown him how to approach problems by drawing on multiple perspectives. "I have incorporated this in my own work by including different departments and community groups in the planning process," Cunningham admits.

"Partnerships are a valuable tool for building capacity," Cunningham concludes. "They harness the knowledge of various subject matter experts, use economies of scale, and prevent unnecessary duplication of effort."



Partnerships link institutions and individuals with a significant amount of experience in a target area with counterparts looking to develop that expertise in their own communities.



During professional exchanges, partners get to see effective technologies and programs in action. Working hand-in-hand, the partners then develop programs designed to meet the unique needs and conditions of the host community.



Collaboration helps partners rapidly scale up organizational and human resource capacity so they can more quickly expand training programs and deliver services to people in need.

## Conferences, Grants, and Opportunities



### 2nd International Workshop on HIV Transmission: Principles of Intervention

August 26-28, 2007  
Washington, DC

### Supply Chain Management of HIV/AIDS Medicines and Supplies

September 2-15, 2007  
Pretoria, South Africa

### HIV/AIDS Counseling: Trends and Challenges

September 4-6, 2007  
Nairobi, Kenya

### 2nd Annual Workshop on AIDS, TB, and Malaria

September 18-21, 2007  
Kampala, Uganda

### Palliative Care in Africa: Keeping it Real

September 19-21, 2007  
Nairobi, Kenya

### Butare Medical Congress

September 20, 2007  
Butare, Rwanda

### A Decade of HAART: Historical Perspectives and Future Directions

September 25-26, 2007  
San Francisco, United States

### Imagined Futures II

September 26-27, 2007  
Pretoria, South Africa

### From Research to Action: Mitigating the Impacts of HIV/AIDS on Agriculture and Food Security in West Africa

October 1-4, 2007  
Cotonou, Benin

### TB: Dying for Tests

November 7, 2007  
Cape Town, South Africa

### 38th Union World Conference on Lung Health: Confronting the Challenges of HIV and MDR in TB Prevention and Care

November 8-12, 2007  
Cape Town, South Africa

### International Summit on Infectious Diseases

November 20-24, 2007  
Abuja, Nigeria

### Under African Skies: The Imagination of Poetry and Storytelling in the HIV/AIDS Pandemic

Nov. 29-Dec 1, 2007  
Nairobi, Kenya

### 2007 Global Summit on AIDS and the Church

November 28-December 1, 2007  
Lake Forest, California

### East African Conference on the Role of Future Health Professionals in Community-based HIV/AIDS Control

December 11-15, 2007  
Butare, Rwanda

### 3rd Africa Conference on Sexual Health and Rights

February 4-7, 2008  
Abuja, Nigeria

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*The HIV/AIDS Twinning Center mobilizes and coordinates the resources of healthcare and allied professionals in the United States and abroad to effectively build capacity to reduce HIV infection rates and provide care to those infected with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS in support of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).*

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*The contents of this newsletter are the responsibility of AIHA and the Twinning Center and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States government or other funding agencies.*

