

FALL 2011

AIHA PARTNERSHIPS

IN BOTSWANA

- Media Institute of Southern Africa - Gaborone / Zambia Institute of Mass Communication, University of Kentucky
(HIV/AIDS Media)
- Botswana Institute of Health Sciences / African Palliative Care Association
(Palliative Care)
- Tebelepole VCT / Liverpool VCT
(Counseling & Testing)
- Botswana Christian AIDS Intervention Program / The Foundation for Professional Development
(OVC)
- Marang Childcare Network / The Children's Place Association
(OVC)

CONTACT US

For more information about our projects in Botswana, please contact JANNA SMITH, AIHA Program Associate, at jgsmith@aiha.com.

HIV/AIDS Twinning Center Partnerships in Botswana

Botswana has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 2008 estimates placing the HIV prevalence rate among adults at 23.9 percent. In real numbers that translates to some 300,000 people under the age of 49 living with HIV. The virus has had a dramatic impact on Botswana's healthcare system — including approximately 17 percent of the country's healthcare workers lost to AIDS between 1999 and 2005. With support from PEPFAR and the United States Government team in country, AIHA currently manages five partnerships in Botswana, as well as a Volunteer Healthcare Corps program and Russian mentor and technical assistance initiative.

Supporting OVC Service Organizations

In January 2008, the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center launched a south-south partnership linking the Marang Childcare Network in Botswana with Tanzania's Human Development Trust (HDT) with the goal of strengthening Marang's organizational capacity to support its network members in their efforts to deliver high quality, comprehensive care and support services to children living with, or affected by, HIV and AIDS in Botswana. The Chicago-based Children's Place replaced HDT in 2010 to better respond to the technical assistance needs of Marang.

Children's Place experts conducted an initial organizational assessment to help direct partnership activities moving forward and partners have jointly developed a work plan for their year-one activities. AIHA placed a VHC volunteer at Marang to help build organizational capacity and train staff in preparation for implementation of ongoing fundraising efforts and a small grants program; A Children's Place partner travelled to Botswana to provide assistance with grant applications and helped developed a case for support to present to corporations and other major donors. In addition, AIHA has awarded Marang a sub-grant and provided targeted training on grants management and accounting procedures to local staff.

Integrating Palliative Care in Health Education

The Institute of Health Sciences in Gaborone is partnering with the African Palliative Care Association (APCA) in Uganda to strengthen its capacity to provide quality palliative care education and training for pre-service and post-basic students. Partners are focusing on faculty development in topics related to palliative care. They are also working to introduce palliative care into the Institute's existing pharmacy technology, health education, and dental therapy programs, as well as to develop organizational capacity in the areas of planning, research, and monitoring and evaluation. Partners have to date conducted a sensitization workshop for IHS faculty and staff and community stakeholders to introduce the concept of palliative care; successfully incorporated palliative care into teaching programs and curriculum; conducted sensitization workshops with principals of all seven IHS Health Teaching Institutes outside of the main campus in Gaborone, as well as with community partners such as local hospices and hospitals; and established a modern palliative care resource center in the library at IHS-Gaborone including laptops, journals, and palliative care reference books.

Using Media to Raise HIV Awareness

People in Botswana often receive inaccurate information about HIV/AIDS through the media because reporters lack basic knowledge about the virus and have limited access to reputable sources and evidence-based resources. This inaccurate information fosters stigma and does little to stem the spread of HIV. Partners at the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) in Gaborone and the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication (ZAMCOM) in Lusaka are working to change this through a targeted effort to improve the quality, quantity, and scope of HIV/AIDS reporting in Botswana. With the objective of increasing public awareness of HIV/AIDS and its impact on all sectors of society, this south-south partnership is providing skills-based journalism training for reporters and editors, as well as timely, accurate, issue-based information on HIV/AIDS. Through the multi-country Hearts & Minds Campaign, partners are working to combat media fatigue and change the way people think, feel, and behave about HIV and people living with the virus. Other key activities include implementing a situational analysis of HIV/AIDS reporting in Botswana and conducting multiple related trainings on the topic to educate reporters and editors; developing a publication, "Inspiring HIV and AIDS Reporting in Africa," which was distributed to participants at the Highway Africa Conference in South Africa in 2008 and 2009; and conducting "Mafoko Mathlong," a type of community forum or open conversation about HIV/AIDS, which are recorded and later broadcast to the public.

Skilled Volunteers Support Development Goals

Health and allied professionals placed in Botswana through AIHA's Volunteer Healthcare Corps (VHC) have collectively contributed a total of 32 months of service toward building organizational capacity at local NGOs.



Partnering to Strengthen VCT Services

With the goal of improving access to quality HIV prevention services, including voluntary counseling and testing, AIHA has established two south-south partnerships linking community-based organizations in Botswana with counterpart organizations elsewhere in Africa. Tebelopele VCT is collaborating with Kenya-based Liverpool VCT and Botswana Christian AIDS Intervention Program (BOCAIP) is working with the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) in South Africa. The overall goal of these partnerships is to strengthen the capacity of Tebelopele and BOCAIP to provide quality counseling and testing programs in Botswana. Specifically, partners are working to:

- Improve organizational capacity as a means of making HIV counseling, testing, prevention, care, and support services more readily available to children and adults;
- Strengthen organizational capacity and quality of service by developing and implementing a quality assurance program;
- Develop a comprehensive Supportive Counseling Program; and
- Share experiences of Liverpool VCT and FPD regarding implementation of an organizational capacity building program for community-based organizations.

Liverpool VCT has trained and mentored Tebelopele and BOCAIP in the establishment of post-test clubs. The support has focused on developing post-test protocols and procedures, including a proper exit strategy for clients and improved linkages to existing support services. Partners have also developed informational materials for clients; established a comprehensive supportive counseling program; and implemented quality assurance measures by strengthening counselor supervision and monitoring and evaluation programs. This has included a training-of-trainers workshop for three Botswana partners and counselor supervision training for staff from BOCAIP, Tebelopele, and the Botswana Defense Force. The FPD partners have conducted an organizational capacity assessment of BOCAIP to guide their upcoming strategic planning session. The new strategic plan will include organizational guidelines for each BOCAIP testing site, as well as for the headquarters and executive staff.

AIHA/South Africa

The HIV/AIDS Twinning Center

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