



## **MIND THE GAPS:**

### **AIDS TREATMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF HEALTH CARE WORKER SHORTAGES**

#### **A Médecins Sans Frontières Satellite Meeting XVII International AIDS Conference - Mexico City 2008**



Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) welcomes you to attend this satellite meeting on the impact of the health care worker shortage on access to HIV/AIDS treatment and lessons learned from clinicians and advocates working on the ground to overcome this gap.

**Sunday, 3 August 2008**

**9:00 am-1:00 pm**

Join us for breakfast starting at 8:30 am

**Melia Reforma Hotel**

**Paseo de la Reforma Mexico City**

#### **Introduction**

An estimated 70% of people who need antiretroviral treatment are still not getting it. Recent advocacy efforts have brought more attention to the critical shortage of health care workers and how this shortage contributes to unnecessary illness and death.

In Malawi a medical assistant can see up to 200 patients per day, far too many to ensure quality HIV care. Patients in parts of Mozambique can wait up to two months to start AIDS treatment, and many have died during the wait. In parts of Lesotho, over half of nursing posts remain vacant, and the leading cause of staff attrition is death due to HIV/AIDS.

One strategy used by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and others is task-shifting to lower levels of health care workers and lay health care workers. However, this strategy has its own limits and MSF teams and other implementers find themselves hitting a wall in terms of further scaling up and maintaining an acceptable level of quality care.

Urgent measures must be taken by donor and national governments to retain a skilled workforce and attract new staff by increasing pay, improving working conditions, and keeping staff healthy. The lack of health care workers must be confronted as an emergency for the millions of people with HIV/AIDS still waiting for treatment.

# Mind the Gaps

## Agenda

**August 3, 2008**

*Please note that this agenda is subject to change.*

### **8:30 BREAKFAST**

### **9:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

*Nathan Ford, Head of Medical Unit, MSF South Africa*

#### Setting the scene

- Stephen Lewis, Co-director of AIDS-Free World and former UN Special Envoy on HIV/AIDS in Africa
- The Hon. Dr Mphu Ramatlapeng, Minister of Health & Social Welfare of the Kingdom of Lesotho

### **9:45 TASK-SHIFTING: LESSONS AND LIMITS**

*Moderator: Dr Joia Mukherjee, Partners in Health (PIH) (TBC)*

- **Case study 1:** Nurse-based ART and the role of facility-based lay health workers at primary care level in rural Lesotho, Dr Pheello Lethola, MSF Lesotho
- **Case study 2:** Universal access and upholding adherence in rural Malawi: the contribution of task shifting to more effective ART, Marielle Bemelmans, MSF Malawi
- Trends and challenges of task-shifting to lay workers, Dr Wim Van Damme, Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium
- Finding and holding the line on quality: building an operational research agenda, Dr David Olson, MSF
- Question and Answer: 15 minutes

### **11:00 COFFEE BREAK**

### **11:30 REMARKS**

- Sr Mpumelelo Mantangan, Professional Nurse, Ubuntu HIV/TB Clinic, Khayelitsha, South Africa (TBC)

### **11:30 THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT: BARRIERS, ACTIONS, AND AGENDAS**

*Moderator: Dr. Mit Philips, MSF*

- Fighting for nurses' salary increases in Zambia, Paul Kasonkomona, Treatment Advocacy and Literacy Campaign (TALC), Zambia
- Overcoming donor and international barriers to increase the health workforce, Gorik Ooms, Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium
- Campaigning for health worker retention measures in Uganda, Dr Jenifer Kavuma, Health Workforce Advocacy Forum (HWAF), Uganda
- Risks and opportunities of the new financing frontier, Asia Russell, Health GAP
- Question and Answer: 15 minutes

### **12:45 CLOSING REMARKS**

- Vuyiseka Dubula, Secretary General, Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), South Africa

### **1:00 CLOSE**

# Mind the Gaps

Satellite Speakers

## **Marielle Bemelmans**

With a professional background in nursing and management, Marielle Bemelmans has been involved in humanitarian medical work with different nongovernmental organizations, including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Zimbabwe since 2000. She obtained a Master's in Community Health from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, after which she was working with LATH, a consultancy arm of the Liverpool School. She has a special interest in management of HIV/AIDS projects, Human Resources for Health, and health systems in Africa. Since 2007, she is part of the MSF mission in Malawi, initially as organizer of the HRH conference "Medicines without Doctors," facilitated by MSF in Malawi. Currently she is Head of Mission for MSF in Malawi.

## **Vuyiseka Dubula**

Vuyiseka Dubula is the General Secretary of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) in South Africa. Vuyiseka is a young woman living openly with HIV who, prior to being appointed General Secretary of TAC, served as a TAC Treatment Literacy Coordinator, Provincial Coordinator, and National PLWHA Coordinator. She founded the Samora TAC branch in 2001 and the Victoria Mxenge TAC branch in 2008. She was a co-founder of the TAC Treatment Project and currently serves as the chairperson of its Board of Directors, and represents PLWHAs in the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC).

## **Nathan Ford**

Nathan Ford has a background in microbiology and virology, with postgraduate training in humanitarian assistance. He has worked with Médecins Sans Frontières' (MSF) for 10 years and is currently head of the Medical Unit of MSF South Africa, which supports training, operational research, and technical support for MSF medical programmes in the region. Areas of interest in policy issues related to access to essential medicines and models of ARV delivery in resource-limited settings.

## **Paul Kasonkomona**

*Treatment Advocacy and Literacy Campaign (TALC), Zambia*

## **Dr Jenifer Kavuma**

*Health Workforce Advocacy Forum (HWAF), Uganda*

## **Dr Pheello Lethola**

Pheello Lethola, MD, has been working for Médecins Sans Frontières' (MSF) HIV/AIDS care and treatment programme in Lesotho since 2006 as a HIV/TB Field Doctor, providing direct clinical care, on-site mentorship, in-service training and supervision, and referral support for 14 health centres and the district hospital in Scott Hospital Health Service Area (H.S.A.). She earned her medical degree from University of Cape Town where she received a 1999 award for academic excellence. Prior to joining MSF, Dr Lethola worked at Maseru Private Hospital, Gauteng Department of Health, and the National University of Lesotho.

## **Stephen Lewis**

*Co-director of AIDS-Free World and former UN Special Envoy on HIV/AIDS in Africa*

## **Sr Mpumelelo Mantangan**

Professional Nurse, Ubuntu HIV/TB Clinic, Khayelitsha, South Africa

**Dr Joia Mukherjee**

*Partners in Health (PIH)*

Dr. Joia Mukherjee trained in Infectious Disease, Internal Medicine, and Pediatrics at the Massachusetts General Hospital and has an MPH from the Harvard School of Public Health. She is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Social Medicine and Health Inequalities at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School where she teaches medical students, residents and fellows in the fields of infectious disease, global health and health disparities. Since 2000, Dr. Mukherjee has served as the Medical Director of Partners in Health, an international medical charity with clinical programs in Haiti, Rwanda, Lesotho, Malawi, Peru, Mexico, Russia, and Boston. In this capacity she is involved in programmatic and clinical work to provide health care and reduce health disparities by developing public sector, community based programs with local colleagues in those countries. Additionally, Dr. Mukherjee consults for the World Health Organisation on the treatment of HIV and MDR-TB in developing countries and is a member of the Executive Board of Health Action AIDS, a campaign conducted with Physicians for Human Rights to engage the US health professional community in the international advocacy and education effort to stop the global AIDS pandemic.

**Dr David Olson**

David Olson, MD, is an American Board Certified Physician of Internal Medicine and Critical Care and the Medical Advisor for the US section of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). Dr. Olson advises on the day-to-day medical operations of MSF's projects in Haiti, Nigeria, Somalia, and Uganda, where in 2001 he helped, as the field doctor, establish and run the organisation's HIV/AIDS treatment programme in Arua. He has also worked in the field for MSF in Nagorno-Karabagh (Armenia) and Abkhazia (a republic of Georgia) treating tuberculosis, as well as in Burundi and Haiti. He is an adjunct member of the MSF Tuberculosis Working Group. Prior to MSF, Dr. Olson treated homeless people and those living with HIV/AIDS and TB at Chicago Health Outreach. He received his doctorate of medicine from the University of Texas and completed his residency and fellowship at the University of Chicago.

**Gorik Ooms, Lic. Jur., PhD**

Gorik Ooms is a human rights lawyer, graduated from the Catholic University of Leuven in 1989. He worked with Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), including as General Director of its Belgian section, until the beginning of this year; then joined the Department of Public Health at the Institute of Tropical Medicine of Antwerp. In March 2008, he obtained a PhD in Medical Sciences from the University of Ghent, on the subject "The right to health and the sustainability of healthcare: Why a new global health aid paradigm is needed."

**Dr. Mit Philips**

*Médecins Sans Frontières*

Mit Philips is a medical doctor with a Masters in Public Health from the London School for Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She has been working for Médecins Sans Frontières in the field since 1985, mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Since 1999 she has been based in Brussels at MSF, first working as director of operations, later in the Analysis and Advocacy Unit. Her present field of work covers HIV/AIDS policy, the crisis in the health workforce, financial barriers to essential care and health financing.

**The Hon. Dr Mphu Ramatlapeng**

The Hon. Dr Mphu Ramatlapeng is the Minister of Health & Social Welfare of the Kingdom of Lesotho. Dr Ramatlapeng was born in Lesotho, studied medicine at Kharkov Medical School in Ukraine, and later obtained a Masters in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University in the United States. After completing her education she returned to Lesotho where she held numerous positions in the public and private sectors before joining the Clinton Foundation as its Country Director in 2005. Dr Ramatlapeng was appointed Minister of Health & Social Welfare in February 2007.

**Asia Russell***Health GAP*

Asia Russell has worked extensively as part of the U.S. and international AIDS activist movements for over 10 years, focusing on treatment access, particularly among low-income people and other marginalised groups. She is the Director of International Policy for Health GAP (Global Access Project). Founded in 1999, Health GAP is a US network of people living with HIV, public health and human rights experts, and academics working for universal access to affordable HIV treatment in the global South, and the resources needed to fund access to treatment for all. Health GAP and other organizations helped force G8 donors to create the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in 2001. Health GAP's advocacy to correct the harmful impact of pharmaceutical industry monopolies on public health and access to medicines have helped to secure dramatic price reductions for lifesaving AIDS medicines. Russell represents Northern NGOs on the Board of the Global Fund and serves on the Global Fund's Policy and Strategy Committee. Asia Russell is a 2008 recipient of the Keith Cylar Courage Award from Housing Works.

**Dr Wim Van Damme**

Wim Van Damme, MD, MPH, PhD, is a senior lecturer in public health, teaching health policy at ITM-Antwerp. He has worked 10 year overseas with Médecins sans Frontières in Peru, Sudan, Guinea and Cambodia. He wrote a PhD thesis: Medical Assistance to Self-settled Refugees in Guinea, 1990–96. His research focus on health policy in fast changing societies: pro-poor health financing and health policy in South-East Asia, with a special focus on Health Equity Funds; international health policy, mainly new funding mechanisms and their impact on national health systems, such as the Global Health Initiatives, as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB & malaria; and delivery models for AIDS care, especially as related to human resources.