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Systems for Improved Access  
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Building Local Capacity  
(BLC)



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## Pre-service Pharmacy Training on Rational Medicine Use to Avert Antimicrobial Resistance in HIV, TB and other Public Health Diseases

The USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) Project provided technical support to the University of Namibia (UNAM)'s School of Pharmacy (SoP) in strengthening pre-service training of pharmacy students on rational medicine use (RMU) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR), including HIV drug-resistance (HIV-DR) and Multi-Drug Resistant TB (MDR-TB).

A technical team from SIAPS, UNAM, the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS)' National Health Training Center (NHTC) and the Division of Pharmaceutical Services participated in a three-day consultative stakeholder workshop at UNAM from June 24-26, 2014 to review, validate, and further develop the package of RMU materials for use in the pre-service training of pharmacy students.



*Dr. Mohan P. Joshi, SIAPS Principal Technical Advisor and Cluster Lead for Pharmaceutical Services, (standing) facilitates a three-day consultative workshop at the University of Namibia, June 2014. In attendance were UNAM and MoHSS representatives. Photo credit: SIAPS/Namibia.*

The technical team enhanced the RMU content by customizing it to the Namibian context through the use of local case studies.

RMU is a theme in the Pharmacy Practice II learning module of the UNAM Bachelor of Pharmacy curriculum that equips students with the fundamental skills needed to perform the daily duties of a pharmacist. While the Pharmacy Practice II study guide emphasizes a learner-centered approach and supports case-based, problem-oriented, and self-directed learning, a detailed operational design to implement the RMU theme was not available.

SIAPS provided technical support to UNAM SoP to fill this gap. UNAM, SIAPS and the MoHSS collaborated to develop a curriculum implementation framework, instructor's guide, and training materials on the RMU theme that emphasizes self-directed learning. A self-directed learning approach enables better comprehension, interpretation, and real-life application of newly acquired knowledge. The RMU pre-service training materials were designed to encourage students to actively participate in their own learning. UNAM lecturers who participated in the workshop appreciated the proposed teaching approach. Furthermore, SIAPS used the consultative

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### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES (SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2014)

- Training CAFO's Board of Trustees on leadership, management and governance (BLC)
- Re-assessing CAFO's organizational capacity (BLC)
- Verifying CAFO's reported data for July–September (BLC)
- Implementing the Supply Chain Performance Improvement (SCPI) program at CMS (SCMS)
- Collaborating with Global Fund to train health workers on inventory control of ARVs and other medicines (SCMS)
- Enhancing capacity of the Namibia Medicines Regulatory Council for medicines registration and regulation (SIAPS)
- Capacity building on application of pharmaco-economics in selection of essential medicines (SIAPS)
- Continuing professional development of health workers on rational medicine use (SIAPS)
- Supporting the use of the Electronic Dispensing Tool at ART sites (SIAPS)

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# SCMS Supports the Ministry of Health and Social Services to Finalise and Award Tender Contracts for Anti-Retroviral Medicines

On August 7, 2014, the Namibia Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) awarded one-year contracts to five suppliers totalling to US\$ 24 million for the supply of antiretroviral medicines (ARVs) for the treatment of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV).

The tender contracts award ceremony was the culmination of several months of technical assistance by the PEPFAR-funded and USAID-managed Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) project in Namibia. During the ceremony, USAID/ Namibia was represented by Ms. Rosalia Indongo, the TB/HIV Advisor at the Mission.

SCMS support involved the technical review and updating of the Central Medical Store (CMS) procurement and tender documents and subsequent forecasting of ARV requirements prior to tendering.

The contracts awarded included new formulations such as the more convenient one-pill-a-day ARV medicine, which will immensely contribute to improved adherence to antiretroviral treatment



*The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Social Services, Mr Andrew Ndishishi (standing centre) hands over a contract to one of the successful bidders during a contracts award ceremony for HIV/AIDS medicines and clinical supplies tenders, held in Windhoek on August 7, 2014. Looking on is the acting Director of Tertiary Health Care and Clinical Support Services, Mr Johannes Gaeseb (standing left) and the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Dr Norbert Forster (seated). Photo credit: SCMS/Namibia.*

(ART) for PLHIV. Namibia currently has over 100,000 people on ART, equivalent to about 6% of the country's population of two million people. SCMS will continue to provide technical assistance to the CMS in the revision of ARV forecasts, scheduling

deliveries of the ARVs by suppliers and ensuring proper monitoring of supplier performance as part of supplier contract management.

Contributed by: Benjamin Ongeri  
(Senior Technical Manager, SCMS)

## Assuring Safety of Patients on Antiretrovirals and Anti-Tuberculosis Medicines Through Enhanced Pharmacovigilance

The Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) project in collaboration with Namibia's Therapeutics Information and Pharmacovigilance Centre (TIPC) of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) supported efforts for assuring patients' safety by enhancing the awareness and skills capacity of health workers for pharmacovigilance.

Led by the TIPC, SIAPS in collaboration with Project HOPE, trained 105 health workers on medication safety monitoring and counselling of patients regarding their therapy. The participants included Project HOPE Regional Managers, Tuberculosis (TB) District Supervisors and TB Field Promoters from three of Namibia's 14 regions where about 30% of Namibia's population lives.

The training took place in Kavango and Oshana on June 25 and July 01, 2014. In the training, SIAPS also tested pictograms for depicting common anti-TB medicine-related adverse reactions

for user friendliness. The pictograms are aimed at guiding TB Field Promoters on the early identification of the adverse reactions of anti-TB and antiretroviral medicines.



*Ms. Thelma Davids of Project HOPE, one of SIAPS' project collaborators on community pharmacovigilance, co-facilitates a session on reporting of adverse reactions to ARV's and anti-TB medicines. This was during training for health workers conducted on July 01, 2014 in Osbana, Namibia. Photo credit: SIAPS/Namibia.*

Community-based health workers provide a means of extending into the community the surveillance and promotion of medication safety particularly among TB/HIV co-infected

patients. The PEPFAR-funded Project HOPE implements activities to improve community-based antiretroviral therapy (ART) and TB - Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course (DOTS) while strengthening case finding, advocacy and reporting of adverse medicine reactions.

Elsewhere, SIAPS in collaboration with the TIPC, encouraged 62 doctors and dentists who attended the annual doctor's forum to increase pharmacovigilance activities within their respective health facilities.

On their part, the doctors and dentists pledged more commitment to monitoring patient safety and reporting to TIPC any medication safety concerns, including those associated with antiretrovirals (ARVs) and anti-TB medicines.

Contributed by Greatjoy Njabulo Mazibuko (Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS), Dr. Assegid Mengistu (TIPC Advisor, MoHSS), Mrs. Lisa Petersen (TB/HIV Advisor, Project HOPE) Ms. Thelma Davids (M&E Advisor, Project HOPE) and Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior M&E Advisor, SIAPS).

# CAFO Fosters Community Partnerships for HIV Prevention Among the Namibian Youths Through Social Behavior Change Communication Skills Development

The HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to affect all Namibians, and Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) below 15 years continue to be at the most risk of the HIV infection.

The Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO) believes that the best HIV prevention strategy among this age group is to educate and involve them in making informed choices about their health in order to influence the sexual behavior.

With technical assistance from the USAID-funded Building Local Capacity (BLC) project, CAFO trained 30 volunteers using a tested program known as Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) to youth aged 10 to 14 years. The program was developed by C-Change Namibia with funding from USAID.

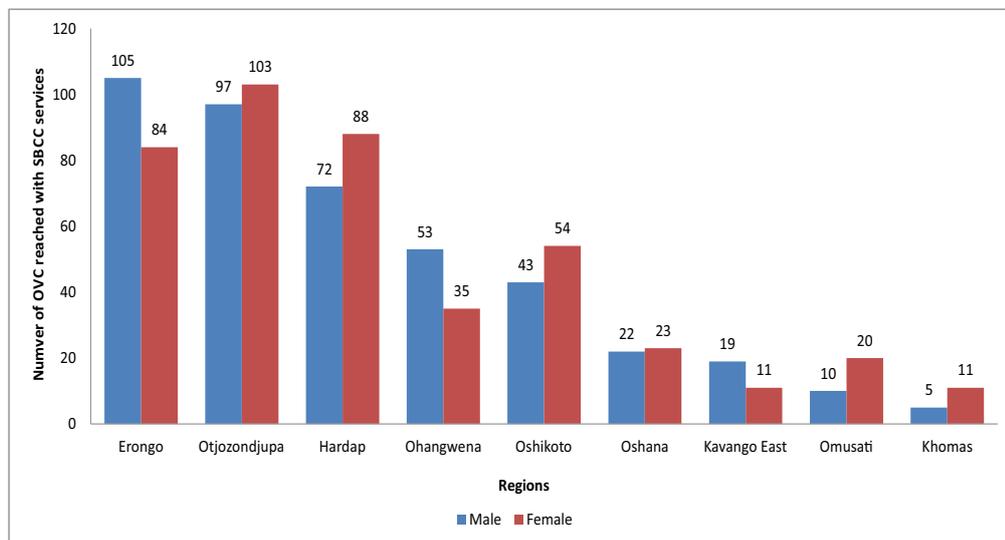
CAFO's SBCC program works in partnership with communities in Namibia to develop community-appropriate interventions which respond to local needs. CAFO conducted two SBCC trainings in Hardap on July 7 - 11, 2014 and in Ongwediva on July 14 - 18, 2014 covering the 30 new volunteers from five of Namibia's 14 regions - Hardap, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Oshana and Omusati regions in addition to the 30 existing volunteers.

The trainings equipped the 10-14 years youths with up-to-date SBCC skills for the application of various forms of communication to make informed decisions on choices for healthy lifestyles, HIV prevention and treatment, and reproductive and sexual health.

SBCC sessions are conducted together with other CAFO activities like the soup kitchen

that equally equip beneficiaries to utilise acquired skills. CAFO has been providing SBCC in communities since 2008 and as such have mastered strategies of mobilizing and motivating young people to participate, adopt and sustain healthy behaviours and lifestyles.

By July 2014, the CAFO-trained volunteers from nine regions reached a total of 855 OVC with SBCC, exceeding the set April – June quarter target of 500 OVC.



OVC under 15 years of age reached with SBCC services for HIV prevention in nine Namibia regions. The data shows CAFO's achievement against the set April – June quarter target. Data source: CAFO organization records.

Although CAFO can effectively reach more OVC under 15 years through SBCC, the Regional Coordinators who are CAFO staff need additional capacity building to implement the planned activities and document achievements and lessons learned.

BLC will continue providing technical assistance to CAFO to implement planned staff development initiatives.



Ms. Eva Fillander, a trained SBCC volunteer in Hardap region presents to the group during an SBCC group session on July 1, 2014. Photo credit: Macci Boois, Regional Coordinator -CAFO.

Contributed by  
**Rachel Basirika (BLC Namibia Country Lead),  
 Alex Sikume (Capacity Building Advisor, BLC)  
 and Cherizaan Willemse (Project Associate, BLC)**

## Pre-service Pharmacy Training on Rational Medicine Use

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workshop to enhance the capacity of UNAM lecturers to develop and implement pre-service training materials across other pharmaceutical topic areas.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends pre-service education of health professionals as a key intervention to improve RMU and contain AMR. Pre-service training is a cost-effective and sustainable health system strengthening intervention. With a high and dual burden of HIV/AIDS and TB in Namibia, and fewer

than 200 pharmacists available to provide care for the two million people including over 100,000 on antiretroviral therapy (ART), the need to develop well-qualified and competent pharmaceutical personnel is crucial to the successful management of HIV/AIDS and TB programs.

UNAM-SoP began implementing this innovative approach in teaching the RMU theme in August 2014. SIAPS will continue to provide follow-up technical assistance to UNAM to ensure an effective and

efficient implementation of the theme. To learn more about the framework and operational design of the RMU theme, read the technical report here:

<http://siapsprogram.org/publication/altview/strengthening-pre-service-pharmacy-training-on-rational-medicine-use-and-antimicrobial-resistance/English/>

Contributed by  
**Malaika Ludman, Mohan Joshi, Bayobuya Phulu and  
 Harriet R. Kagoya (SIAPS)**

# Towards Safer HIV Clinical Practices: SIAPS Supports Development and Training of Trainers on the First-ever Phlebotomy Guideline for Namibia

The USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) project provided technical assistance to Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) to develop and conduct a training of trainers (TOT) workshop on Namibia's first edition of phlebotomy guideline.

Twenty eight (28) health professionals from public and private hospitals, the Namibia Blood Transfusion Service, Namibia Institute of Pathology, nursing council, World Health Organization (WHO), MoHSS Quality Assurance Unit and SIAPS participated in developing and reviewing the phlebotomy guideline, which was adapted from the current WHO phlebotomy guideline.

In July 14 -18, 2014 SIAPS supported the MoHSS to conduct a TOT for seventeen health care professionals (15 nurses and 2 doctors) from nine of Namibia's 14 regions. The TOT, which took place in Otjiwarongo, was based on the phlebotomy guideline developed with SIAPS technical support.

The training equipped participants with skills for teaching and enhancing safe and high standards of protection against accidental HIV and other infections in health facilities for healthcare workers, patients and visitors.



Participants of the MoHSS workshop for developing Namibia's first Phlebotomy Guideline. On the front second row is Sr. Christine Gordon, the Head of Quality Assurance Unit of MoHSS (extreme right). Photo credit: SIAPS/Namibia.

Implementation of the guideline will reduce risk of transmission of blood born viruses such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B and C and viral hemorrhagic fevers. The activity was part of SIAPS' support to MoHSS through the

Quality Assurance Unit to address existing challenges in infection prevention and control in public health facilities.

Contributed by Alemayehu Wolde (Senior Technical Advisor, SCMS) and Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, SIAPS)

## Preventing Accidental HIV Infections Through Proper Medical Waste Management in Namibia's Health Facilities

The Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) project, with funding from USAID, provided technical assistance to Namibia's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) to train health professionals on proper medical waste management.

Thirty-three (33) healthcare professionals and administrative staff involved in the procurement of color-coded waste disposal bags and the management of waste disposal participated in two trainings conducted in Windhoek between June and July, 2014.

The participants were drawn from health facilities in Khomas region, which is one of Namibia's 14 regions where Windhoek is located and represents 17% of the country's

total population. As part of the workshop, the participants visited Namibia's national referral hospital (Windhoek Central Hospital) and the Intermediate Hospital, Katutura, which are the two main public hospitals in Windhoek.

The site visits enabled participants to observe the complete waste management process of waste generation and segregation in clinical departments to waste treatment including incineration and the eventual disposal of treated health care waste at the specially engineered municipal landfill in Windhoek.

In addition, the participants visited the garden and construction debris waste disposal landfill and the general waste recycling facility operated by Rent-A-

Drum. This medical waste management training enhanced the capacity of health workers to protect themselves and patients, the public and the environment from potentially infectious disease causing agents such as HIV and Hepatitis B viruses.

The trained participants will provide stewardship for the implementation of proper medical waste management practices in their respective facilities.

Contributed by Alemayehu L. Wolde (Senior Technical Advisor, SCMS)

## Assuring Quality in the Pre-service Training of Pharmacy Assistants Needed for Dispensing ARV Medicines

To enhance Quality Management Systems (QMS) at the National Health Training Centre (NHTC), the Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) project, in collaboration with the International Training and Education Center for Health (I-TECH), Namibia facilitated a strategic planning workshop to develop the QMS for the NHTC.

NHTC is the only Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) institution that trains Pharmacy Assistants (PAs) in Namibia. The QMS is a crucial requirement for the re-accreditation of the PA training program by the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA).

In addition, SIAPS supported the NHTC in updating the competency framework, standards and qualifications for its PA course so that it may be re-accredited by the NQA.

The PAs who graduate from the NHTC are mainly employed by the MoHSS to provide pharmaceutical services in Namibia, including dispensing of antiretroviral medicines to patients at HIV treatment sites in the country.

Contributed by

Greatjoy Njabulo Mazibuko (Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS) and Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior M&E Advisor, SIAPS)

### ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The SIAPS/SCMS/BLC Namibia e-Newsletter is a bi-monthly newsletter that keeps you abreast of activities funded by the USAID and implemented by MSH Namibia.

Key focus areas are HIV /AIDS Management:

- Strengthening Health Systems
- Capacity Building
- Human Resource Development

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Your contribution to this valuable communication medium would be highly appreciated and can be e-mailed to

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## Enabling NMRC to Efficiently Register Medicines for Patients' Sustained Access to Quality-assured Antiretroviral Medicines

In July, 2014 the USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access for Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) project, in collaboration with the Namibia Medicine Regulatory Council (NMRC) of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), conducted an intensive session in Windhoek to evaluate applications (dossiers) for the registration of medicines.

The session aimed at strengthening the operations of NMRC to improve the efficiency of medicine registration process in Namibia, which ultimately guarantees the availability of safe and high-quality medicines for people living with HIV/AIDS. Ten technical assessors including three NMRC staff, four MoHSS Pharmacists and three personnel from the private sector, all previously trained by SIAPS, participated in the July 2014 session.



A section of Pharmaceutical Technical Assessors during the medicine registration technical assessment session in Windhoek in July 21–25, 2014. At the right hand back corner are dossiers awaiting screening/assessment. Photo credit: SIAPS/Namibia.

The participants represent 23.8% of the personnel trained with SIAPS technical support in May 2014. The five-day session enhanced the practical evaluation skills for the technical assessors from both the private and public sectors in reviewing applications for registration of new and optimised antiretroviral (ARV) formulations and other medicines for the treatment of HIV-associated opportunistic infections.

A total of 127 dossiers, which accounted for 17% of the three year dossier backlog were screened and/or reviewed during the workshop. Sixty-five percent of the screened applications lacked critical information for registration and thus were not considered for technical evaluation. The dossiers assessed included the Tenofovir and Efavirez-based products, which are needed for first-line treatment of HIV as recommended by the current Namibia antiretroviral therapy guidelines that were revised in 2014.

The NMRC is committed to improving the efficiency of medicine registration, to ensure the availability of safe and quality-assured medicines in Namibia, and also get rid of the three year backlog of dossiers. SIAPS will provide continued technical assistance to NMRC for similar technical assessments sessions.

Contributed by

Nasser Mbaziira (Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS) and Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior M&E Advisor, SIAPS)

#### DISCLAIMER:

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