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...and more

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES (MAY - JUNE 2014)

- Supply Chain Performance Improvement program at Central Medical Stores
- Workload and staffing needs assessment at CMS
- Training on evaluation of medicines registration dossiers
- TA to the NHTC for accreditation of the pharmacy assistants curriculum
- Revision of the national infection control and medical waste management guidelines
- TA to UNAM-School of Pharmacy for development of supply chain management module
- Training on leadership, management and governance for CAFO Board members
- Training on communication, monitoring and evaluation for CAFO regional support staff

BLC Supports Evidence-based Programming of the Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO) Capacity Building Interventions



The Church Alliance for Orphans CAFO Chief of Party Laura Cronje (middle), Khomas Region Support Officer, Macci Boois (left) and BLC's Pamela Shoniva during the OCAT assessment. Photo by MSH Staff.

Evidence-based programming is necessary for focused and useful interventions. The USAID-funded Building Local Capacity (BLC) project in Namibia assessed the organizational capacity of CAFO from February 28 to March 3, 2014 to obtain baseline information for evidence-based programming of CAFO's capacity building interventions.

CAFO, a registered Trust and Welfare Organization (WO 225), is one of the partner organizations, which BLC is supporting from March 2014 to August 2015. The organization supports Early Childhood Development Centers and HIV and AIDS Social Behavior Communication Change programs (SBCC) among youth under 18 years of age.

BLC designed a 360 degrees Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) which was used to collect data that will be used as a basis for measuring performance and accurately documenting the impact of the capacity building interventions. The tool gathers data on the capacity of organizations along a broad range of performance parameters. Three BLC and four CAFO staffs conducted the assessment. BLC always conducts baseline assessment for its partners to inform the development of appropriate mechanisms to facilitate the partners to plan and implement interventions for improved and sustainable service delivery. While majority of the OCAT components scored 60% and higher, grant management, program management and knowledge management components scored

The OCAT assesses organizations' capacity across nine areas:

- Leadership and Governance
- Structures and Systems
- Human Resource Management
- Financial Management
- Sub-Grants Management
- Program Management
- Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Partnerships, External Relations and Networking
- Knowledge Management

less than 40%. This presents CAFO as a strong organization in overall with a capacity to become better after addressing the challenges currently affecting the three program areas which scored less than 40%. BLC's support to CAFO will focus on all the areas to ensure sustainable improved service delivery. Special attention will be given to the three areas with the lowest scores.

Further, BLC used the findings of the assessment to:

- ▶ Conduct a pre-award assessment for a USAID grant to CAFO
- ▶ Develop a prioritized capacity building plan for CAFO
- ▶ Develop a technical assistance plan for the BLC support to CAFO

The challenges and gaps that BLC and CAFO identified during the assessments will be addressed through the development of systems and procedures and capacity building

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Members of Namibia's Essential Medicine List Committee pose for a group photo on March 26, 2014.
Photo by MSH/Namibia Staff

In a meeting held in Windhoek on March 26, 2014, Namibia's Essential Medicine List Committee (EMLC) made important changes to the antiretroviral (ARV) list of medicines on the Namibia Essential Medicines List (Nemlist) to bring it in line with recently adopted new guidelines for the management of HIV and AIDS.

The committee also made a land mark decision of adding, for the first time in the history of the Nemlist, nutritional supplements for the management of malnutrition. The committee initiated revisions of sections of Namibia's comprehensive Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) at the meeting. Nemlist is Namibia's reference document for the public sector procurement of medicines including ARVs.

STGs are one of the strategies for promoting rational use of medicines (RUM), assuring patient safety and therapeutic effectiveness. The USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program provided technical assistance to Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) for the meeting which was attended by 17 EMLC members. The EMLC is a multi-disciplinary team of health workers that reviews the Nemlist to ensure that it is responsive to changes in treatment guidelines and the country's morbidity patterns. The EMLC reviews motivations for changes (addition, deletion or reclassification of medicines) to the Nemlist. Chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the MoHSS, Dr. Norbert Forster, the EMLC membership

also includes doctors, pharmacists, nurses, health economist and program officers. Nutritional status has an impact on success of antiretroviral therapy (ART). Malnutrition is one of the most common causes of morbidity and mortality among children in Namibia, causing approximately 1000 deaths per year.

The addition of nutritional supplements and ready-to-use supplementary therapeutic food to the Nemlist will enable timely procurement and availability of these supplements for use in the fight against malnutrition. The addition of emtricitabine containing fixed dose combinations of ARV medicines will enable Namibia to implement the new WHO recommended guidelines for the management of HIV and AIDS.

Contributed by: Bayobuya Phulu (Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS), Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, SIAPS)

CAFO Continued from page 1...

FOR START TO BE ABLE TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE SERVICES.

BLC will support CAFO to motivate staff for teamwork and collaboration. The support for improving systems and procedures will focus on the areas such as sustainability, communication and resource mobilization. The assessment's next steps include signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and mobilizing staff and the Board to support implementation of prioritized activities.

Contributed by: Rachel Basirika (Technical Capacity Building Advisor, BLC)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (MoHSS), Dr. Richard Kamwi, presided over the launch the fourth edition of Namibia's National Guidelines for Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) in a colourful ceremony held at Windhoek on February 19, 2014.

The revised guidelines expand eligibility for ART significantly, hence why they are termed progressive. The CD4 cut-off for eligibility was revised upwards from 350 to 500 cells/mm³ for adults and adolescents. In addition, all pregnant women, all children under 15 years of age, all HIV-positive people co-infected with tuberculosis or hepatitis B virus and HIV-positive persons whose partners are HIV-negative, are eligible for ART irrespective of CD4 count.

Another major development was the adoption of a convenient, one-pill-a-day tenofovir-based triple-fixed dose combination as the standard first line treatment regimen for adults and adolescents. The USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) and Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) projects were among the key partners acknowledged by the Minister for providing technical assistance during the guideline review process.

In his speech, the Minister reported that Namibia has registered remarkable success in tackling the HIV/AIDS epidemic, achieving more than 84% ART treatment coverage against a national target of 90%. Following the ART guideline launch, the HIV/AIDS program of the MoHSS invited SCMS to a joint planning meeting with regional health management teams to discuss and plan for the guideline implementation. The meeting was held from April 14 to 17, 2014 in Swakopmund and attended by 50 participants from 12 of 14 regions. SCMS provided technical assistance to the regional teams to consider and incorporate supply chain interventions (such as inventory management trainings and dispensing data capturing tools) when developing regional implementation plans for decentralisation of ART services to all primary health care facilities.

The MoHSS intends to achieve further decentralisation through expansion of nurse-initiated and managed antiretroviral treatment (NIMART) to support the roll-out of life-long ART for all pregnant women (Option B+).

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

The USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program provided technical assistance to the Pharmacy Council and the Health Professions Council of Namibia (HPCNa) to streamline processes for the licensure and regulation of pharmaceutical human resources [pharmacists and pharmacy assistants (PAs)] in Namibia.

The TA included a series of in-country multi-stakeholder consultations on the registration and regulation of pharmacy professionals; facilitating a Pharmacy council education committee workshop; and developing a framework and tools for the licensure of pharmacy practitioners. SIAPS also facilitated a Training of Trainers workshop to orient four (4) Pharmacy Intern Tutors on the framework, methodology, and tools for evaluation of applicants to equip them with skills to conduct subsequent trainings for tutors and evaluators of pharmacy personnel for licensure.

Mr. Cornelius Weyulu, the Registrar of the HPCNa, in his remarks at the official opening of the Pharmacy Council education committee workshop on March 12, 2014 in Windhoek, Namibia thanked SIAPS for the excellent partnership and stated, *“There is no better way to express what is happening than to say it is such an excellent opportunity”. With a poor process (of registration), eligible people may be denied registration and ineligible people may be*



Participants of the Pharmacy council education committee workshop pose for a photo in Windhoek, Namibia. March 12, 2014. Photo by MSH/Namibia staff

registered. “Skills for assessing applicants will be sharpened”.

Qualified, competent, and licensed pharmacy professionals are critical in the provision of quality pharmaceutical care for patients on antiretroviral therapy (ART) and other public health diseases. Namibia's high HIV and AIDS burden has accentuated the demand for pharmaceutical personnel and services. The licensing process is a key step towards ensuring that only qualified and competent pharmaceutical personnel are licensed to practice in Namibia.

According to the Namibia Pharmacy Act No 9 of 2004, all persons who complete a pre-service training in pharmacy need to be assessed by the Pharmacy Council to ensure that they meet the standards of professional practice before they are licensed to practice within Namibia. This intervention contributes towards ensuring that more pharmacists and pharmacy assistants are available to make ART services accessible to patients, especially in rural settings.

Contributed by: Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, SIAPS), Greatjoy Mazibuko (Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS) and Evans Sagwa (Acting Country Project Director, SIAPS/SCMS)

Equipping Public Health Supply Chain Managers with Leadership and Management Skills

Three senior managers of the Namibian Central Medical Store (CMS) participated in a one-week executive public health supply chain management training held at the Imperial Health Sciences (IHS) Supply Chain Academy in South Africa during the first week of April 2014.

The training was made possible through funding from PEPFAR/USAID and collaboration between Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) and the People-that-Deliver (PtD) initiative.

The training was conducted in response to leadership and management skills gap identified during a supply chain task and competency mapping exercise undertaken

in Namibia in February 2014. It introduced the managers to key leadership and management principles in order to prepare them to steer the implementation of a structured supply chain performance improvement (SCPI) program planned to start at CMS in May 2014. CMS oversees the procurement, storage and distribution of all pharmaceuticals and clinical supplies used in public health facilities in Namibia.

As part of the training, the Namibia team visited the IHS warehouse and was exposed to the internationally accredited quality management systems and best practices applied in pharmaceutical warehouse operations. The team also visited the government owned but semi-autonomously-managed Gauteng Medical

Depot, which faces similar challenges to those of CMS in Windhoek, and learned some creative ideas from the warehouse manager.

Speaking at the close of the five-day training, the MoHSS Deputy Director of the Division of Pharmaceutical Services, Mr. Lazarus Indongo who was one of the participants acknowledged that pharmacists at the division often get elevated to management positions before being exposed to management training or mentorship program. He added that *“... (we have) seen what other people are doing... we have gotten new ideas and we want to go back and implement”.*

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

In April 2014, the USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) in liaison with the HIV Case Management Division of the Directorate of Special Programs of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) disseminated results of an antiretroviral therapy (ART) baseline survey that was conducted in 2011.

Fifty (50) senior officials of the MoHSS from the national, regional and district levels attended the dissemination in Swakopmund, Namibia on April 14, 2014. In addition, SIAPS conducted regional dissemination meetings in two of Namibia's 14 regions on April 23 and 24, 2014. Eighteen (18) healthcare workers participated in the dissemination in Oshana and Omusati regions.

The MoHSS, with support from the USAID-funded Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems (SPS) program conducted the baseline survey of patients on ART in Namibia to determine the baseline adherence levels to ART among patients in the public sector in Namibia; identify existing interventions and practices to monitor and improve adherence to ART and identify possible interventions that could be implemented by the MoHSS ART program to improve ART adherence.



Mr. Evans Sagva (left), Acting Country Project Director for SIAPS/SCMS explains the use of the ART treatment literacy flip charts during orientation of healthcare workers on the tool. April 2014. Photo by MSH/Namibia staff

The use of audio visual materials (DVDs) and pictorial desk flip charts are among the specific interventions that were outlined in the report, aimed at enhancing treatment literacy and adherence amongst patients receiving ART. SIAPS supported the development and printing of 200 DVDs and 280 desk flip charts in nine local languages with various themes on improving adherence of patients on ART

After the dissemination of the findings, stakeholders developed implementation plans for rolling out the treatment literacy materials in the 14 regions of Namibia. SIAPS continues to provide technical assistance to MoHSS for implementation of ART adherence interventions in Namibia.

Contributed by: Greatjoy Mazibuko (Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS) and Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, SIAPS)

BLC Re-strategizes to Develop Leadership and Management Capacity of Civil Society Organizations to Improve and Expand the Multi-sectoral Response to HIV and AIDS

Due to Namibia's classification as an upper-middle-income country by the World Bank, donor support in the country is dwindling.

To ensure ownership and sustainability of achievements and best practices, the USAID-funded Building Local Capacity (BLC) project revised its work plan to refocus activities.

The redesigned work plan supports activities that strengthen the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to deliver improved and more sustainable services; specifically focusing on HIV prevention, care, and support. The change is in line with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)/ Namibia Country Health Partnership. While BLC continues supporting initiatives to

strengthen the role of the Network of AIDS Service Organizations (NANASO) as a principal recipient of the Global Fund; the project also updated its scope of work in Namibia to include building the capacity of CSOs to:

- Strengthen their sustainability
- Provision of technical assistance to improve service delivery
- Align and develop national policies and guidelines for HIV care and support – specifically supporting CSOs to liaise and coordinate with government
- Support CSOs to document lessons learnt and share best practices with stakeholders
- Transitioning BLC/Namibia's work with Katutura Intermediate and Windhoek Central hospitals to the Quality Assurance (QA) Unit of the

Ministry of Health and Social Services to ensure its sustainability and replication in other public health facilities

BLC is responding to three intermediate results:

- Strengthened leadership, Management and governance capacity of BLC partners for the delivery of improved and sustainable HIV and AIDS services
- Strengthened delivery of Orphans and Vulnerable Children and community-based care services by local institutions
- Improved coordination and implementation of Global Fund grants by BLC partners

Contributed by: Rachel Basirika (BLC, Namibia)

Strengthening Infection Control Committees at Different Levels of the Health System in Namibia

Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) in collaboration with the USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program conducted a national workshop to strengthen Infection Control Committees (ICCs) at different levels in Namibia by reviewing the Terms of References (TOR).

Sixteen health professionals from nine of Namibia's fourteen regions and private sector representatives attended the workshop from April 1 to 3, 2014 in

Otjiwarongo. This activity is part of the national plan that the ministry initiated with support from USAID to revitalize the infection control and waste management activities for safety of patients and healthcare workers towards improved health for all. Infection control is especially important for Namibia with a high burden of HIV and AIDS. SIAPS program provided technical assistance to the MoHSS (Division Quality Assurance) to conduct the workshop. The workshop analyzed Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in the provision of infection prevention and

control activities in line with performances of the ICCs. A competent and active ICC is an essential component of the infection prevention program; ICCs authorize and direct activities such as: communicating policy, conducting surveillance, monitoring behaviors of health workers with regard to infection control and medical waste management, addressing educational and problem resolution issues, providing information to the health facility committees and departments, and acting as liaison to decision makers.

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

Motivating Pioneer Pharmacy Students Towards Future Role in Delivery of ART and other Pharmaceutical Services

The USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program continues to be recognized as a key stakeholder of the University of Namibia's School of Pharmacy (UNAM-SoP) in the training of pharmaceutical personnel in Namibia.

This was confirmed on March 28, 2014 when SIAPS was invited by UNAM-SoP to officiate at the University's 2014 School of Pharmacy meritorious award ceremony for pharmacy students and staff. Speakers encouraged all students to strive towards excellence.

As part of the continued technical assistance to the School of Pharmacy, SIAPS handed over 32 hard and two electronic copies of the Managing Drug Supply (MDS-3) book, 500 copies of the Namibian Standard Treatment Guidelines and Dispensing phrases booklet for use by students in the various modules of the Bachelor of Pharmacy degree.

Prof. Peter Nyarango, Founding Dean of the School of Medicine and Ms. Tangeni Katrina Angula, patron of the Pharmacy Students Association in Namibia highlighted the role that SIAPS' predecessor, Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems (SPS) program, played in the profiling of competencies required of a pharmacist for Namibia and the development of the curriculum for the UNAM pharmacy course, which was launched in March 2011.



Prof. Peter Nyarango (2nd left), Founding Dean of the School of Medicine, Ms. Tangeni Katrina Angula, Patron of the Pharmacy Students Association in Namibia and Mr. Greatjoy Mazibuko (3rd right), Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS join School of Pharmacy lecturers for a group photo after the meritorious award ceremony. March 28, 2014. Photo by MSH/Namibia staff.

SIAPS continues to provide technical assistance to UNAM-SoP for quality training of pharmacy personnel for the scaled-up delivery of ART and other pharmaceutical services in Namibia. This support was necessary at the time as it aligned well with the Government of the Republic of Namibia's efforts in ensuring that well trained pharmacists graduating from the UNAM School of Pharmacy improve the country's capacity for pharmaceutical management and service provision to support expansion of HIV and AIDS and other essential public health programs.

Multi-stakeholder involvement is critical for success of the Pharmacy students training.

Contributed by: Greatjoy Mazibuko (Senior Technical Advisor, SIAPS), Evans Sagwa (Acting Country Project Director, SIAPS/SCMS) and Harriet Rachel Kagoya (Senior Monitoring and Evaluation 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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- Mr. Lazarus Indongo (MoHSS)
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Your contribution to this valuable communication medium would be highly appreciated and can be e-mailed to esagwa@msh.org

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