



# HIV/AIDS NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER FROM THE NATIONAL HIV/AIDS AND TB PROGRAMME, PRETORIA

3 August 2001

## EDITOR'S NOTES

For contributions, please submit contributions and suggestions to [serenc@health.gov.za](mailto:serenc@health.gov.za).

## STAFF MATTERS

Two new people joined the Sub-Directorate: STIs, Barrier Methods and Research - Maurice Maubane as an Admin Officer, and Dr. Kgomotso Vilakazi as a Principal Medical Officer. Welcome to both, and best wishes to them.

Alfred Mmoto who has been invaluable in his work on the SANAC Task Teams will unfortunately leave the unit in mid-September 2001 to take up a new position in the Department of Public Enterprises. Congratulations on the promotion though!

## PROGRAMME FOR NGO MENTORING

One of the important initiatives in the NGO Programme Unit was the establishment of a small group of NGOs that were prepared to mentor small grassroots organisations that currently would not qualify for funds due their lack of infrastructure. The role of the mentors is to offer one-to-one assistance with real problem by finding local relevant solutions. This will help the grassroots organisations to develop their capacity and eventually become self-sustaining organisations that can apply for funding in their own right. The following story provides an insight into the important work of this initiative.

“Nosisa lies on a rough wooden palette in the corner of a small dark room in Duncan Village, a settlement on the border of the Transkei. She is 17, and is in the final “bloom” stage of AIDS. For days she has been lying there alone. No one has come near her since she started to show the visible signs of the disease on her skin. Every day her terrified relatives send someone in with a plate of food. They push the plate along the floor towards her bed, faces covered for the stench and for fear of infection, and pull the old one away quickly before the dreaded disease can get them too.

Can you imagine how she feels? She is still a child, but she faces a slow agonised death alone from a disease no one understands. Now imagine that one day the door opens. She hears a brisk, friendly Xhosa voice saying her name. Weakly she turns her head, and a woman comes towards her. As she comes she is telling the family that they can't be infected with the HI Virus by touch or by breathing it in. She helps Nosisa to sit up, she is so frail, so thin...and gradually, gently Ivy starts to wash her, talking all the time, humming choruses, and explaining what she is doing and how, to Nosisa and the family. The filthy bedding is removed and new clothes and blankets are found. Nosisa's little sister brings her a drink and sits gingerly on the bed. As Ivy gets up to leave, she says a prayer, smiles and promises to return soon.

Ivy and some of the women she works with came to the workshop that was held by YFC/Barnabas Trust in East



London last June. At the workshop we helped her and her team to discover the strengths and weaknesses of their little organisation. And we looked together at the main problems they are facing, and taught them how to plan their own solutions and budget for their plans. Until now they have worked as volunteers using their own meagre resources. But as a result of the new mentoring scheme being established by the Barnabas Trust, in collaboration with YFC and the Department of Health, Ivy's group (the Xhasanani Project) will receive a small regular income (R3,000 pm), training and the friendship and assistance of a trained mentor from an established NGO. The mentor who is working with Ivy's group, is "borrowed" from Youth for Christ. She will allocate 3 days of her time per month to the Xhasanani Project for two years, and in return YFC receives R1,300 from the Barnabas Trust every month to cover her salary and costs for that period. Some of her time will be spent with Ivy and her volunteers in regular meetings, formal and informal, and some will be spent on administration, reporting and checking that the systems being set up in the organisation are working effectively.

The Barnabas Trust is being established to offer help and friendship to the Xhasanani Project and others like it. We will assist them to plan strategically, problem solve, handle their finances and establish appropriate systems for managing the organisation honourably and effectively. And we believe that eventually they will be stable and sufficiently established and organised to manage their own development and receive and handle funding in their own right.

When Ivy came to the workshop she was thinking about giving up the work.

So often people working at the grass roots with people with HIV and AIDS feel that it is all too much. By the end of our time together, she was excited about what the future holds, and what they can do for the people of Duncan village. Maybe one day Ivy will mentor another struggling CBO."

#### NEWS FROM MALARIA PROGRAMME

Congratulations to the Malaria Programme! South Africa received an Award from WHO- AFRO at the SAMC 2001 conference held at the end of July in Zimbabwe for the best Malaria control programme in the Southern African region. South Africa was given the award for the following achievements:

1. Significantly decreasing the prevalence of malaria for the season 2000-2001,
2. Strengthening government commitment to malaria control.
3. Effectively addressing the issue of drug resistance, through the introduction of combination therapy.
4. Scaling up of resources for malaria control.
5. The malaria control component of the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative - and its impact on reducing malaria cases in Mozambique coupled with the decreases in malaria cases in KZN.
6. Introduction of an effective Insecticide (DDT) for malaria control.

#### NEWS FROM THE TB PROGRAMME

The TB Control Programme (TBSP) held a very successful meeting at the



end of July in Johannesburg to deliberate on a strategic vision and implementation plan for the programme. Once the final report is available, we will provide further updates.

#### NEWS FROM THE IPAA BULLETIN

##### *Awareness card for peacekeepers*

The United Nations Security Council has welcomed the Declaration of Commitment adopted by UNGASS. The Declaration calls for national strategies to be in place by 2003 to address the spread of AIDS among uniformed services, and to consider ways of using uniformed personnel to spread AIDS awareness and prevention. One initiative has been the development of the HIV/AIDS Awareness Card for Peacekeeping Operations. The card contains basic facts about HIV and AIDS, a Code of Conduct for Uniformed Services, prevention instructions, and a sleeve in which to carry a condom. It was funded by the Norwegian government and produced by UNAIDS and the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations. For more information, contact Gael Lescornec at [Lescornecq@unaids.org](mailto:Lescornecq@unaids.org)

#### NEWS FROM THE YOUTH PROGRAMME

##### *Life skills*

The Life Skills unit held 3 provincial workshops in May 2001 to begin the process of generating Standards of Practice for Peer Education Practitioners, Educators and Donors. The workshops were held in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Western Cape and involved people from the Departments

of Health, Education, Social Development and NGOs.

This is a component of the National Integrated Plan for Children and Youth Infected and Affected with HIV/AIDS. The project is a collaborative effort involving the national Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta and Harvard School of Public Health, Boston USA. The workshops were very well attended and generated valuable contributions for the process of developing a country document reflecting practical and realistic standards and criteria for practice of Peer Education Strategies.

It initially began as a project to address school based programmes, but it was realised that the process should, and now will, include the broader context of youth programmes and strategies. All three social sector departments and NGOs contributed to the process and participated in the discussion and debates.

The next phase is to interact with the remaining provinces in workshops to be held in October.

##### *Materials development Workshop in Cape Town*

The Life Skills unit attended a workshop in Cape Town to look at the development of an interactive IT programme on HIV/AIDS for the secondary school learners as well as linking youth from schools in various countries in Africa and the USA through internet and on-line communication. The project is facilitated by I-EARN (International Education and Resource Network), the World Bank and World Links Project. 8 African Countries were represented. There are plans for further collaboration.

*IEC Materials for the primary school learner on HIV/AIDS*

Age appropriate materials for the primary school learner is to be available from later this month. The need for this project has evolved from the problem of inappropriate information and mass media items being given to children.

The new materials involve 2 wall charts for use in the classroom by the teacher with essential information about friendship and is called 'Forever Friends'. The second chart is called 'Facts about HIV and AIDS'. The other materials include an activity booklet for the younger learners and a pamphlet for the senior primary level.

The materials will be distributed to all provinces and targeted to reach learners in primary schools through the life skills teachers.

*Waterkloof*

ABSA together with the Waterkloof Air Force Base and Coca-Cola have initiated a career drive with youth from township areas. On 18 July they held a Youth Aviation and HIV/AIDS awareness day and invited the Life Skills People to have a session with 100 learners from a Katlehong Secondary School. The programme included some time to interact and talk to an HIV infected member of the SA Army.

It is very interesting how they have made a link between HIV/AIDS and career advocacy and guidance! The day was a great success with learners asking pertinent and informed questions. The success of this first attempt has indicated their interest in continuing with this initiative and targeting other secondary school youth.



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