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Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) are set to be used to help improve data

South Africa's Deputy Health Minister Attends CREATE Annual Meeting



During the VI CREATE Annual Meeting held in Cape Town in October 2009, Dr. Molefi Sefularo, South Africa's Deputy Minister of Health, addressed participants on "Progress in Tuberculosis Control in South Africa."

In his address, Deputy Minister Sefularo conceded that South Africa is still a long way from controlling TB. He noted that TB is the leading cause of death in the country, and that efforts to control the disease, especially HIV-related TB and drug-resistant disease, have not been sufficient. "We have to more than double our efforts in order to scale our response so that it is commensurate with the challenge at hand," said Dr. Sefularo.

"Our performance is worse than those of our neighbours, like Mozambique, despite the fact that we have better resources. We are in danger of not meeting our Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a result of these poor outcomes", he added.

The Deputy Minister also pointed out that real success depends on strong partnerships between the Department of Health and other government departments, non-governmental organizations and research institutions, and

capturing for the ZAMSTAR prevalence survey over the next year. This digital device no larger than a mobile phone, is scheduled for use by field teams to capture an array of data in the 24 ZAMSTAR sites in Zambia and South Africa.

"With these devices we are really looking for wholesale improvement in our data capturing," said Ab Schaap, Data Manager at ZAMBART Project. "Our current process is quite cumbersome, expensive, involves transporting paperwork and takes quite a bit of time to complete. Also once the information reaches its destination it needs to be manually entered into the database. This device should shorten the time period while maintaining the information's accuracy."

Schaap anticipates sourcing up to 66 PDAs by January 2010. Field teams were exposed to the PDAs for the first time at the August retreat in Pretoria where most were enthusiastic about using the device during the survey; however, more intensive training is still to come.

acknowledged CREATE as a major partner in trying to reduce the burden of TB in South Africa.

In conclusion Dr. Sefularo announced that the department was in the process of reviewing the country's TB program and pledged that a plan would be presented to a consultative meeting by April 2010.

ZAMSTAR Prevalence Survey Ready to Start: Protocols in Place; Introducing ZamLab Containerized TB Laboratories;

Prevalence survey protocols in place



As the ZAMSTAR study shifts into its final phase, work is being done to ensure the upcoming prevalence survey is poised to accurately measure the effectiveness of the interventions the study has been executing over the past three years. Dr. Monde Muyoyeta, ZAMSTAR study co-manager, based in Lusaka, has been hard at work constructing the prevalence survey protocol over the past six months.

"This 104-page document outlines how we will go about conducting the survey, listing in detail various aspects of the survey and why we are measuring them," said Dr. Muyoyeta. "Since we are unable to include every participant in this survey we will be using a representative group to gauge our effectiveness. It is very important that the survey is statistically sound."

Over the next couple of months, the ZAMSTAR study managers will be conducting intensive training with research assistants and teams so that the operators on the ground are well aware of the aims of the prevalence survey.

TB & HIV

FIND TB

TREAT TB

PREVENT TB

CREA  E

**Journalists in Zambia
are trained on TB and
HIV by ZAMSTAR team**



Recognizing the need for increased awareness among the public and in an effort to harness the power of the media to influence public debate and change behavior, the Zambia AIDS Related Tuberculosis (ZAMBART) Project hosted a training workshop for Zambian journalists.

The workshop was co-facilitated by ZAMBART and PANOS Southern Africa, with additional input from International HIV/AIDS Alliance and support from the DFID TARGETS Consortium. The partnership of 22 journalists from television, print and radio media houses worked together

Introducing ZamLab Containerized TB Laboratories (CTL)



From October 2009 to September 2010, 80,000 sputum specimens for TB culture will be collected at 16 sites in Zambia as part of the ZAMSTAR TB Prevalence Survey. "Rapid delivery of sputum specimens to a central laboratory is difficult in Zambia, due to the great distances and poor roads," said Barry Kosloff, ZAMSTAR Mini-Lab Project Manager.

To combat this problem, ZAMBART has worked with stakeholders, including the Zambian Ministry of Health, to develop a decentralized approach placing four containerized BSL3 laboratories, each capable of processing 100 sputum specimens per day, close to the study sites. The containerized laboratories will be located at Ministry of Health facilities in Lusaka, Kabwe, Ndola and Livingstone.

Containerized laboratories may be a useful tool for performing large-scale TB prevalence surveys in areas with underdeveloped transportation networks. In addition, this design may serve as a model for expanding and decentralizing TB diagnostic capacity in many parts of the world.

For more information contact Barry Kosloff at Bkosloff@zambart.org.zm or check out his presentation at the 40th Union World Conference on Lung Health in December 2009.

with ZAMBART researchers with the primary goal of improving the relationship between the two groups as well as increasing the dialogue on TB and HIV in the mainstream media.

One promising result from this two-day training workshop was that journalists realized the importance of their role in fostering public health awareness especially when it comes to TB.

The majority of Zambians remain unaware of the intricate relationship between TB and HIV; therefore, the responsibility falls to both researchers and journalists to improve the current public health environment in the country. Moving forward, these focused trainings should continue to occur to increase the knowledge capacity of health journalists in the country, which would in turn empower community members with information on their basic human right to good health.

**Justin O'Brien - Policy, Advocacy and Communications Manager
ZAMBART/ZAMSTAR - Zambia**



Justin O'Brien is a classically trained journalist who has worked in communications on three different continents over the past ten years. Before joining ZAMBART/ZAMSTAR, he was an overseas volunteer working in advocacy and communications with a land rights NGO in Zambia. Below, he describes the experience of working with ZAMSTAR.

"I was hired in March 2009 and have been quickly learning all of the intricate details of TB, the ZAMSTAR

study and the prominence of the disease in the country. For me, communication and advocacy strategies are generally universal, so I've been able to transfer my previous work experience into tangible progress for this aspect of the study.

My favorite part of the job is the day-to-day variety of it, as well as the opportunity to work and interact with people from all parts of the organization. Everyone has a unique story to tell from the researcher to the clinician to the TB patient. My interaction with TB/HIV activists in the country is another fulfilling aspect of my work. There is a genuine passion in Zambia for REAL change at the community-level, especially when it comes to public health. So, if I had to synthesize it down to one word it would have to be: people.

In Zambia, there is a significant lack of knowledge on general TB information (transmission, treatment, prevention). As a result, it has left me starting my work at the base level of training activists, advocates and journalists in TB information, which can be quite a challenge. I think overcoming it has been relatively straightforward: I continuously organize specific training for key groups in the country. Also I've embedded myself within various countrywide HIV and TB networks to really push our message. I'm happy to report, people are coming around.

My hopes for the study are plentiful. I would really like to see the uptake of the findings in the Zambia country context; often times research results take a circuitous route from the study site to the international stage and then back to the

CREATE Video Documentaries Launched at Annual Meeting



During the VI CREATE Annual Meeting in Cape Town, CREATE launched two of the three video documentaries planned for 2009.

The **Thibela TB** and **THRio** documentaries aim at advocating the CREATE interventions to other health care systems without asking governments to undertake whole studies. They emphasize that a few inexpensive measures can make a big difference in resource-limited settings, within existing health structures.

The videos also aim at educating advocates and the general public on the facts behind the tuberculosis epidemic so that they can act and demand action from their governments regarding TB and HIV.

The videos are available online at YouTube:

[Thibela TB](#)
[THRIO](#)

study country for implementation. In my view, it is important the work done here over the past three years doesn't "end" after the study concludes. In terms of TB, it is my hope that the interventions we executed under ZAMSTAR will become commonplace strategies for effectively fighting TB in Zambia."

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Am J Ind Med. 2009 Oct 28.

If you would like a DVD copy of the videos, please e-mail create@jhmi.edu and request a copy.

The ZAMSTAR video documentary will be available in December 2009.

Quick Link to the

[CREATE website](#)

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