

# I-TECH BOTSWANA Update

UPDATE # 8 (JANUARY 2012)

The Update is published half yearly by the International Training and Education Center for Health (I-TECH) Botswana to inform program partners, funders and stakeholders about our activities.

I-TECH is a collaboration between the University of Washington and University of California, San Francisco. The email address is [info@itech.org.bw](mailto:info@itech.org.bw).

## I-TECH Contacts

### Botswana Office:

I-TECH Botswana  
P.O. Box AC46  
ACH, Riverwalk  
Gaborone, Botswana

**Tel:** +267 390 0925

**Fax:** +267 390 0952

### For programmatic inquiries:

Baz Semo  
Country Director  
[bazsemo@u.washington.edu](mailto:bazsemo@u.washington.edu)

### For administrative inquiries:

Jessica Grignon  
Deputy Country Director  
[jgrignon@u.washington.edu](mailto:jgrignon@u.washington.edu)



[www.go2itech.org](http://www.go2itech.org)

## From the Director

The past six months have been very exciting for I-TECH Botswana. The organization has continued to take on new strategic initiatives alongside its current programs.

In 2012, I-TECH will support a new women's health initiative. A request to support the Ministry of Health (MOH) in cervical cancer screening came as part of our 2012 US Government Country Operational Plan.

I-TECH will second a national cervical cancer programme manager to the Department of Public Health at the MOH, who will assist with scaling up cervical cancer "See and Treat" implementation. "See and Treat" is a cost-effective method of screening and treating cervical cancer that is known to reduce morbidity in resource-limited countries and yield high levels of client satisfaction.

Some of I-TECH's existing programs will shift focus slightly in 2012. I-TECH's work with the safe male circumcision (SMC) program will move from a focus on SMC training toward supporting the MOH as it scales up SMC service delivery. To that end, we have committed to seconding 12 clinicians and 4 support staff to 2 facilities in Botswana and to performing over 35,000 circumcisions by 2013. We believe that our efforts, combined with those of other partners, will go a long way in curbing the HIV epidemic.

In our previous edition of the Update, we discussed our support to the Project Management Unit at the MOH. Recently, through I-TECH support, the unit evolved into the Office of Strategy Management (OSM), tasked with providing a comprehensive solution to the challenges of project management and operational strategy. In a very short time, the OSM has proved to be a great vehicle for producing results. One example is a project designed to clear an existing backlog of over a thousand women waiting for gynaecological surgery. The goal is to provide them with needed treatment within three months.

Our many accomplishments would not be possible without the commitment of our staff. As always, we would like to thank our host, the Government of Botswana, and our donors HRSA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for their confidence in our work.

Happy reading!

**Baz Semo**



*I-TECH Botswana  
Country Director,  
Baz Semo*

## Efficiency and Safety: New Teams Employ the MOVE Model for Safe Male Circumcision

Since 2009, I-TECH Botswana has supported the Ministry of Health (MOH) in its efforts to scale up Safe Male Circumcision (SMC) as an additional strategy for HIV prevention. The goal of the program is to meet the public health target of having 470,000 HIV-negative men and boys in Botswana (birth to 49 years of age) circumcised by the year 2016.

To help guide its continued SMC efforts, the MOH has adopted the World Health Organization's Model for Optimizing Volume and Efficiency (MOVE), a shift that includes the creation of new dedicated SMC teams at designated MOH sites.

Unlike other traditional models for the SMC procedure, the MOVE model includes a high nurse-to-doctor ratio. It incorporates the sharing of tasks between nurses and the physician, thereby decreasing client waiting and procedure time and increasing the number of procedures physicians can perform without compromising quality.

I-TECH has recruited two full MOVE teams, each comprised of a medical officer, five nurses, a healthcare auxiliary, and a site administrator. The teams will each be supported by three counsellors provided by another PEPFAR partner. The first team started providing SMC services in Gaborone in November 2011, while the next team is expected to start in February 2012 and will be based in Maun. The teams will offer onsite and outreach SMC services to eligible clients and work closely with the facility

management, district health management teams, the MOH, and other collaborating partners. To ensure that the teams continue to provide high quality services, they will receive close mentoring support from I-TECH master trainers.



*Demonstration of appropriate use of SMC surgical packs at Bontleng Clinic*

## I-TECH Participates in World AIDS Day

I-TECH staff attended the World AIDS Day event in Moshupa to showcase the contribution of I-TECH Botswana to the national HIV response.



## New Video Supports Risk Reduction Counselling As Part of Safe Male Circumcision Services

I-TECH Botswana supports the MOH Safe Male Circumcision (SMC) efforts by providing direct SMC services, building the capacity of health care workers through training, onsite mentoring, and technical assistance for monitoring and evaluation and supply chain management. Recently, as part of its scope of work, the MOH tasked I-TECH to support the development of an SMC counselling video focusing on risk reduction.

Although scientific evidence has demonstrated the benefits of SMC, including a reduced risk of acquiring HIV through sexual contact, it is not a vaccination against infection. Circumcised men can still acquire HIV. In Botswana, however, as in many other countries, there are concerns that circumcised men may engage in high-risk sexual behaviours due to the false perception that SMC offers them complete protection against infection.

In Botswana, the way SMC is provided to men may help to reduce this risk. The surgery is not offered alone, but rather as part of a package of services that also includes HIV testing, counselling, screening for sexually transmitted infections, and the provision

of condoms. Counselling is the cornerstone for providing each client with information on HIV testing, the surgical procedure itself, the benefits and limitations of the procedure, and behaviour changes to promote and protect their health. Counselling for SMC has been adapted by the MOH in line with World Health Organization recommendations, and incorporated into the SMC training curricula for both technical and non-technical health care workers. The new counselling video will be used to train and guide health care workers involved in SMC counselling and will be distributed to all hospitals, clinics, and health posts that offer counselling services. The initiative was led by the MOH HIV Testing and Counselling Unit and SMC Unit, through a technical working group which derived membership from the MOH and other partners, including the World Health Organization, Population Services International, Africa Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnerships, the Botswana-Harvard Partnership, and Tebelopele.



*SMC Counselling Video developed for MOH*

## Spotlight: Introducing Mpho Letebele

Mpho Letebele joined I-TECH Botswana as a tuberculosis (TB) Physician Trainer in May 2010 and was seconded to the Ministry of Health's Botswana National Tuberculosis Program (BNTP). He had previously worked as a medical officer at the Princess Marina Hospital (PMH) within the Infectious Disease Care Center (IDCC) where he managed clients with HIV related diseases.

Dr. Letebele graduated with a bachelor of science (BSc) from University of Botswana and a bachelor of medicine and bachelor of surgery (MBChB) from the University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. He also underwent training on Clinical Management of Multi drug resistant TB conducted by the International Union against TB and Lung Diseases (IUATLD),

While at the BNTP, Dr Letebele has coordinated and facilitated in-service trainings on TB clinical case management for public, private and military clinicians that has equipped many clinicians with skills to manage tuberculosis, a disease of major public health concern in Botswana.

He has also been involved in mentoring of trained clinicians at high prevalence districts identified by BNTP for mentoring support. The mentoring activities have resulted in improvement in indicators such as complete records, sputum collection for diagnosis and follow-up, and treatment completion. He was also involved in the revision of the TB training curriculum in line with the new TB/HIV guidelines, facilitation in the quarterly Team TB review meetings, and development of Global Fund Round 11 proposal for Botswana.

He has also attended many significant conferences on behalf of BNTP. These include the 41st IUATLD Conference (Berlin, Germany, November 2010) and Technical Working Meeting on Implementation of Minimum Standards for Communicable Diseases, hosted by South African Development Community South Africa, July 2011.



*TB Physician Trainer, Dr Mpho Letebele*

## Operations Team Attends 'Grants and Cooperative Agreements Workshop'

I-TECH Botswana's finance manager, Tamara Chilinkhwambe, and operations manager, Thulaganyo Kauta, recently attended a grants and cooperative agreements workshop in Maputo, Mozambique. The purpose of the workshop was to equip the team with comprehensive knowledge on rules and regulations of grants and cooperative agreements, and hence develop capacity in successful award implementation. This comes at a time when I-TECH Botswana is working towards achieving sustainability through a diversified funding portfolio, one of the objectives of its five-year strategic plan.

Due to the complexity associated with management of different funding awards, I-TECH Botswana's policies and procedures have consolidated the various rules and regulations of different stakeholders, thus ensuring that all the necessary governing requirements are met. I-TECH Botswana policies and procedures will enhance the organization's eligibility for future awards and may attract new funding partners. The policies also allow I-TECH Botswana to achieve sustainability as it incorporates the key

policies that form the basis of US federal funding audits: Procurement and inventory management, Accounting and finance procedures, Travel, Human resources, and Sub-recipient management (P.A.T.H.S)



*Thulaganyo Kauta & Tamara Chilinkhwambe attended the Grants & Cooperative Agreements Workshop in Maputo.*

## Results of the Lay Counsellor Evaluation

I-TECH Botswana recently completed a process evaluation of the lay counsellor cadre to provide recommendations for the Ministry of Health (MOH) as it works to improve the effectiveness and contribution of lay counsellors to the health workforce. In 2000, Botswana began a national PMTCT (prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV) programme. However, nurses struggled with the added responsibility of PMTCT initiation. To meet the expanded workload, a new 'lay counsellor' cadre was created in 2002. Lay counsellors were employed to provide counselling for HIV testing. Since that time, their role has grown to include administration of rapid HIV testing and support for other programs. While the redistribution of HIV testing and counselling services to lay counsellors seems to have helped address the shortage of health care workers in Botswana, a formal evaluation was needed to help ensure that this task-shifting approach was safe, efficient, effective, equitable, and sustainable.



*Process Evaluation of the Lay Counsellor Cadre in Botswana.*

The evaluation included a variety of methods: a desk review, interviews with key informants, a national survey for all lay counsellors, focus group discussions with lay counsellors, and secondary data analyses of data from the MOH. A key finding is that the lay counsellors are significant contributors to essentially all HIV-related programs, including HIV testing and counselling, PMTCT, tuberculosis care and treatment, and antiretroviral treatment, as well as non-HIV related programs such as child welfare clinics. Because of the assistance of this cadre, there has been a reported reduction in the workload of more skilled health care workers.

Lay counsellors have also played a role in reducing stigma by making HIV a more acceptable issue in the communities in which they work. The evaluation also found that the lay counsellors conduct many duties beyond their job description and training which will need to be addressed to ensure clients receive a high quality of care. This report was released at a critical time, as the MOH is deliberating regarding the absorption of the cadre. To help with this process, the report includes timely recommendations for consideration at the national, district, and facility levels, including discussions on human resources, service delivery, training, and on-going support.

## I-TECH Botswana Holds 4th Annual Staff Retreat

I-TECH Botswana country office and seconded staff participated in the annual staff retreat, held this year at the Mokolodi Nature Reserve from 6–8 December 2011. The retreat included professional development activities focused on team building, public speaking, strategic planning, conflict resolution, communication, self-care, and time management.

Activities included conducting a strategic plan analysis of I-TECH Botswana's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC), identifying individual conflict management styles, applying 'win-win' strategies to a conflict, and learning practical ways to manage time when there's 'too much to do.' The retreat gave the group time to come together, build their skills, take a 'big picture' view of their work and goals, and have some time for personal renewal—all of which can make I-TECH Botswana's programs even stronger in the coming year!



## New EverydayLeadership.org Website: Inspiration and Resources for Leaders at Every Level

I-TECH is very pleased to announce the formal launch of a new website, [www.EverydayLeadership.org](http://www.EverydayLeadership.org), which features hundreds of videos and resources on leadership and management in global health. The website includes resources for trainers, curriculum developers, and motivated learners seeking self-study materials. One of the most interesting features of the site is a series of short one- to five-minute video clips, along with longer videos, in which leaders from around the world share stories and lessons they have learned while managing and leading in complex settings. From Botswana, the site features Dr Ndwapi Ndwapi of the Office of Strategic Management at the Ministry of Health.

This is a wonderful site for any person who is working to support health! It recognizes that leaders come from every part of an organization or group—not only those who sit at the 'top.'

[EverydayLeadership.org](http://www.EverydayLeadership.org) explores how definitions of good leadership are affected by culture, context, gender, and language. I-TECH Executive Director Ann

Downer writes, "I have had the pleasure of learning from a wonderful cross section of people over the course of this project. They range from names you will recognize to individuals who are leading quietly at the local or organizational level. We filmed in Ethiopia, India, Malawi, Namibia, and South Africa, as well as interviewing global health leaders as they visited Seattle. I send my deepest gratitude to all of the participants who generously shared their wisdom and perspectives for this project."

The intent of the site is to provide a resource for teachers, trainers, global health professionals, healthcare practitioners, and those who simply wish to reflect privately on the topic of effective and ethical management and leadership in complex environments.

Visit the site at [www.EverydayLeadership.org](http://www.EverydayLeadership.org)

## New Video Highlights Botswana M&E Officers

I-TECH has completed production of a new video, titled Data for Action. This 20-minute video shows the impact of an innovative national health data monitoring and evaluation (M&E) initiative in Botswana.

The film follows a dedicated group of young M&E officers as they set out every day to answer the question: How can accurate, timely data improve health care in Botswana?

These young officers are part of the Government of Botswana's innovative M&E initiative, a collaborative effort to ensure that strategic information is collected and used to strengthen all levels of the health care system.

In 2007, University of Botswana graduates in the social sciences—most with little or no work experience—were hired to be part of a new cadre of M&E officers. After undergoing a training and mentoring program, they were placed across Botswana in the offices of the District AIDS Coordinators and District Health Management Teams. The new documentary profiles the roles and impact of the officers, particularly as this initiative was transitioned from being supported by international donors to being fully integrated into the

Government of Botswana's public health systems. In the video, viewers join several officers in the field as they collect, validate, and analyze health data, laying the groundwork for evidence-based planning at the local and national level.

This video will be used to help sensitize audiences to the importance of monitoring and evaluation. It will also help to showcase the project for other countries interested in beginning similar initiatives.



*M&E Officer Video*

## Office Move



I-TECH has moved offices and the new address is as follows: **Viscom House  
Plot 1267, Old Lobatse Road  
Gaborone**

## I-TECH HIV/AIDS Clinical Seminar Series

I-TECH Botswana offers HIV/AIDS clinical seminars twice a month, on Thursdays from 4 to 5 PM (one hour). These are free, live, interactive sessions that are case-based and target health care workers (physicians, nurses and others) from both public and private facilities. During each session, HIV/AIDS experts present on a variety of advanced care and treatment approaches. The sessions provide an opportunity for clinicians to update their knowledge and improve clinical skills on HIV/AIDS care, and to interact and share challenges with clinicians from other countries in the I-TECH global network. Participants are also able to engage in follow-up communication across sites after each session.

If you would like to view past sessions, log on to [www.globalhivlearning.org](http://www.globalhivlearning.org) and explore the session archives. If you would like to receive notification about upcoming sessions, please contact Spencer Manthe at [spencer.manthe@itech.org.bw](mailto:spencer.manthe@itech.org.bw), or Othilia Phumaphi at [othilia.phumaphi@itech.org.bw](mailto:othilia.phumaphi@itech.org.bw).

## Upcoming Sessions

Date	Topic	Presenter(s)
12 Jan 2012	Management of HIV/TB Co-infection	Gurusamy Manoharan, MD
9 Feb 2012	Case Consultations: Dermatology	Roy Colven, MD

## I-TECH Botswana Staffing Update: Our Staff Has Grown!

I-TECH Botswana would like to welcome eight new employees, as part of I-TECH's Safe Male Circumcision Project. All of the following employees will be seconded to Ministry of Health:



**From left:** Khenana Mothetho, SMC Auxillary; Boitumelo Banyatsang, SMC Nurse; Omphemetse Ramalepa, SMC Nurse; Ipeleng Chose, SMC Nurse; Mogomotsi Kgari, SMC Site Administrator; Chedza Ntshole, SMC Nurse; Boitshepo Tshupo, SMC Nurse; Dr Otsile Modisaotsile, SMC Medical Officer.

I-TECH is also pleased to welcome the following five employees to the I-TECH Botswana team. These new staff have provided support to I-TECH programs previously in various consultancy capacities. We are happy to have them on board as fulltime employees.



**Nankie Houghton:**  
Nankie is now employed as a programme officer (monitoring, evaluation, and research).



**Kabo Thankane:**  
Kabo is now employed as a programme officer (monitoring, evaluation, and research).



**Ditiro Molefhi:**  
Ditiro is now employed as the human resources assistant.



**Karabo Christmas:**  
Karabo is now employed as a receptionist.



**Matho Simeon:**  
Matho is now employed as a programme procurement assistant.

We would also like to welcome two new employees, seconded to the Ministry of Health.



**Elizabeth Mangope:**  
Elizabeth joined I-TECH Botswana in July as a principal health officer II. She is seconded to the Ministry of Health, DHAPC, STI.



**Gape Machao:** Gape joined I-TECH in September as a monitoring and evaluation specialist. He is seconded to the Ministry of Health, BNTP.

## I-TECH FAREWELLS

Mpho Motana, a training assistant seconded to Ministry of Health, DHAPC, has left I-TECH Botswana and is now with the University of Botswana School of Medicine where she holds the position of Research Midwife. We wish her well in her new role.

## OTHER EVENTS

I-TECH Botswana would like to offer warm wishes and congratulations to Clement Modise, Gakenabetsho Ntsie, Mogomotsi Kgari and their new wives on their recent marriages. I-TECH would also like to congratulate Jessica Grignon and her husband on the birth of their second daughter, Elspeth. Elspeth was born in September.