

# MHRP PEPFAR EXCHANGE

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## One-of-a-Kind Mobile Clinic Brings Safe Male Circumcision Services To The Hardest-to-Reach Populations in Uganda

Makerere University Walter Reed Project (MUWRP) launched its new mobile circumcision clinic on 13 May with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by U.S. Ambassador to Uganda, Jerry Lanier. The mobile medical male circumcision clinic is designed to help prevent HIV by providing medical male circumcision safely and cost-effectively to difficult to reach populations in Uganda.

“The American people are very proud to provide Uganda its first ever [mobile] medical male circumcision clinic,” remarked Ambassador Lanier. “Today, we’re celebrating the fact that many remote communities across this country will now have access to another HIV/AIDS prevention tool to protect themselves and to protect their families.”

Working with partners in the Kayunga and Mukono districts, MUWRP has been providing free Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) for local men since 2009. Additionally, MUWRP is helping to train local health workers and has renovated rural clinical sites within these two districts.

With the addition of the new mobile MMC clinic, MUWRP will be able to bring safe MMC services closer to the people, including those at high risk for HIV or too poor to travel to a health clinic.

“The beauty of this mobile clinic is that we can move it from place to place,” said Mark Breda, MUWRP PEPFAR Program Manager.

“We can reach the hardest to reach populations in Uganda and those that are most at risk for HIV. It’s going to save lives.”

Based on research findings that MMC reduces the risk of HIV acquisition by circumcised men by about 60%, the World Health Organization, the Uganda Ministry of Health and scientists worldwide have endorsed MMC as an effective HIV prevention strategy. As a result, there is an increased effort to develop and expand safe and cost-effective circumcision services.

The mobile clinic will be able to provide services to populations not easily able to access existing static male circumcision facilities. The first location the mobile clinic will serve is the fishing village of Kawongo on the remote shores of Lake Kyoga. With all efforts combined, MUWRP hopes to circumcise 6,000 men in 2011.

### *Watch a Video About the Mobile Circumcision Clinic*

MUWRP, in collaboration with the U.S. Mission Uganda, produced a video highlighting their work to bring safe medical male circumcision services to the people of Uganda.

Watch the video at: [bit.ly/oxBkg4](http://bit.ly/oxBkg4)



U.S. Ambassador to Uganda, Jerry Lanier (second from right) cuts the ribbon to officially launch MUWRP's mobile circumcision clinic.



The one-of-a-kind clinic was modeled after a similar mobile TB testing clinic used at a partner research site in Tanzania.

# MHRP Partners with Kenyan Government to Develop a Comprehensive Care Center in Kombewa

## Kenya

A new state-of-the-art comprehensive care center and outpatient department will be built at the Kombewa District Hospital in Kisumu West, Kenya. The new facility will serve 300-500 patients daily, which will greatly improve health care delivery in Kisumu West.

Co-funded by MHRP's PEPFAR program and the Kenyan Ministry of Medical Services (MoMS), the new facility will help integrate PEPFAR HIV care and general outpatient services in an effort to reduce stigma associated with HIV/AIDS. The new building, slated to be complete by December 2011, will include the following amenities:

- Pharmacy
- Laboratory
- Family planning, Ante- and post-natal, and maternal and child health clinics
- TB/HIV treatment rooms
- Clinician, counseling and nutrition rooms
- Outdoor waiting and play areas
- Administrative space for nurses, records, conferences and IT

A ceremony held 17 February marked the signing of the contract between the MoMS, the Walter Reed Program (WRP), the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine (HJF)

and Mellech Engineering Limited, the chosen construction firm. Dr. Ojwang' Lusi, the Provincial Director of Medical Services-Nyanza Province, acknowledged the "great partnership" between WRP and the Kenyan Government and asked for other organizations to emulate it.



From Left to Right: Mr. Gerald Wamalwa (CEO, Mellech Group) Mr. Craig Lebo (HJF Vice president for acquisitions), Dr. Ojwang' Lusi (Provincial Director of Ministry of Medical, Nyanza Province-Kenya).

## Capt. Darrell Singer Recognized for His Contributions to PEPFAR

Capt. Darrell Singer, recent Country Director for WRP-N, was awarded the 2011 Major Joe Haydon Award for Exceptional Contributions to PEPFAR in a ceremony held at the 2011 PEPFAR meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Capt. Singer's leadership and commitment to creating and fostering an inter-governmental partnership has earned the program the respect of his counterparts in the Nigerian Ministry of Defense while increasing diversified funding for the program. Additionally, the program has garnered the accolades of many including the former Deputy Secretary of State, Jack Lew, who declared the program a "model program."

"[Joe Haydon] was a tireless supporter of PEPFAR, the Nigerian Military and our engagement with both. For Darrell to be awarded this is truly a great honor," said COL Nelson Michael, Director, MHRP.

The Major Joe Haydon Award for Exceptional Contribution to PEPFAR was established in 2006 as a memorial to Major Joe Haydon, U.S. Army. Major Haydon was a Foreign Area Officer and served as the Chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy, Abuja. He died in the line of duty in 2005 when his plane crashed as he returned from a mission in Lagos.



Capt. Darrell Singer, pictured right, accepts the 2011 Major Joe Haydon Award for Exceptional Contributions to PEPFAR.

## Collaborative Efforts to Combat Malaria in Tanzania

### Tanzania

The Walter Reed Program-Tanzania (WRP-T) is working closely with the Malaria Program at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) to build much needed capacity within Tanzania to strengthen malaria diagnostic capabilities. This collaborative program leverages WRP-T's established infrastructure, strong local relationships and experience in capacity building with WRAIR's expertise in malaria diagnostics and quality assurance and control. This program is part of the US President's Malaria Initiative (PMI).

WRP-T is working with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the National Malaria Control Programme on the mainland as well as the Zanzibar Malaria Control Programme in conducting activities to improve basic infrastructure and diagnostic procedures. Using new diagnostics strengthening and quality management protocol and assessment tools developed by Amethyst and WRAIR, WRP-T and its local counterparts are conducting site assessments and implementing improvement plans in three regions on the Tanzania mainland and at facilities on Zanzibar.

WRP-T and WRAIR are also providing technical support in developing the training capacity of the National Health Laboratory and Quality Assurance Training Centre in Dar es Salaam to help increase the number of qualified expert and clinical microscopists through out the country.

# The U.S. and Tanzanian People's Defense Force Formalize Arrangement

## Tanzania

In a ceremony held at the Tanzania People's Defence Forces (TPDF) headquarters in Dar es Salaam on 15 April, the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command and the TPDF signed an arrangement to formalize their military-to-military collaboration in HIV care and treatment activities among the armed services in Tanzania.

While the U.S. Military HIV Research Program (MHRP) has been supporting local organizations in providing HIV prevention, care and treatment in Tanzania since 2004, the signing of this arrangement establishes a formal relationship between the two government's militaries. This document is a result of intensive consultations between military, public health and development officials of Tanzania and the U.S.

"This has been five years in the making and is a testament to the commitment and strong partnership of both our governments to defeat this disease," said Edward Sekonde, MHRP's Tanzania Country Director.

The new agreement outlines how the TPDF and the U.S. Army will collaborate to reduce new HIV infections while maintaining ongoing activities aimed at improving the quality of treatment and care, and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS in military and civilian populations.

The Ambassador of the United States of America to Tanzania, Ambassador Alfonso E. Lenhardt signed the arrangement on behalf of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. Signing for TPDF was Brigadier General Greyson Elihaki Idinga, Acting Chief of Medical Services, TPDF.

"The security of our nations depends in part on the ability of our military forces to protect citizens from harm," remarked Ambassador Lenhardt. "This joint US-Tanzanian program aims to prevent HIV and mitigate the effects this devastating disease has on Tanzanian Forces."



U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania Alfonso Lenhardt (center), the Tanzania People's Defense Force Acting Chief of Medical Services, Brigadier General Greyson Idinga (left) and Edward Sekonde, Tanzania Country Director (right) at the signing.

## Nigeria Site Name Change

In an effort to be more consistent across the network, the MHRP Nigeria site will now be called the Walter Reed Program–Nigeria, or WRP–N for short.

## Innovative Program Brings Mentorship and Training to Military Community

### Nigeria

The Walter Reed Program – Nigeria (WRP-N) has developed an innovative program to address the HIV/AIDS and reproductive health challenges of Nigeria's military personnel, their families and dependants and civilians living within the military barrack community. A coordinated committee, known as the Barrack Health Committee (BHC), will provide HIV mentorship and training in each barrack.

To date, the majority of WRP-N activities have been treatment focused and carried out in healthcare facilities, which has limited the amount of behavior change activities at the community level.

Each committee comprises individuals who represent the diversity of the barrack including women, youth and religious groups. The BHC is designed to create a sustainable channel to communicate about HIV/AIDS. It is likely that the committees also will serve as a point of entry from which to launch future research efforts within barrack communities.

## Let's Talk HIV Prevention

### Uganda

Makerere University Walter Reed Project (MUWRP) commemorated HIV Vaccine Awareness Day (HVAD) at a round-table discussion – E'kimeza. Community members and leading and upcoming Ugandan scientists engaged in dialogue on issues surrounding HIV vaccines, microbicides and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). MUWRP's Lillian Mutengu and Radio Simba's Dick Nvule moderated the event. Through MUWRP support, the discussion aired live on Radio Simba for the first hour.

Let's Talk HIV Prevention is a series of worldwide community events to raise awareness of the exceptional progress and challenges in HIV prevention research and to increase leadership opportunities for young and early-career investigators. As part of the series the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise provides funding and support to individuals and organizations around the world interested in hosting a community event around HIV Vaccine Awareness Day (18 May). Lillian Mutengu's application was one of 12 selected to receive funding for this event. For more information on Let's Talk HIV Prevention activities, visit [www.hivvaccineenterprise.org/LetsTalkPrevention](http://www.hivvaccineenterprise.org/LetsTalkPrevention).

## Welcome

### **Keith Crawford** *Maryland*

Dr. Keith Crawford joined the PEPFAR headquarters team in February as the Associate Chief for Public Health Research. Dr. Crawford will be working with each PEPFAR site to enhance evaluation of services and operational research and to support various programs in assessing and improving activities on the ground. This will also include direction and support behind the upcoming AFRICOS protocol.

Dr. Crawford comes to MHRP with a wealth of experience in executing clinical trials and operational research. Previously, Dr. Crawford served as a clinical and principal investigator on multiple ACTG protocols at Johns Hopkins University. Additionally, he served as clinical director of a national training center focused on supporting improved standard-of-care in HIV disease management to clinicians providing care in clinics serving low-income communities. Training focused on conducting needs assessments to improve clinical service delivery through continuous quality improvement (CQI).



### **Robbie Nelson** *Nigeria*

Robbie Nelson assumed the role of Country Director for the Walter Reed Program – Nigeria (WRP-N). Robbie is not an entirely new face to WRP-N, having joined the program in 2010 as the Deputy Director. Prior to joining WRP-N, Robbie worked as the female condom technical lead writer on a multi-year reproductive health initiative encompassing new prevention technologies for countries in Europe, Latin America, Eurasia, Asia, and Africa. His work with various governments helped the registration process and policy design for the female condom. Additionally, Robbie worked with a social marketing organization in Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, and Zimbabwe where he designed aggressive promotional condom campaigns to reach rural populations.

Robbie has already made significant contributions to WRP-N with his implementation of private sector management tools, including a management by objectives strategy to improve and facilitate research, clinical care and treatment outcomes, and achieve PEPFAR metrics.

## Goodbye

### **Wyckliffe Obwiri** *Kenya*

Since 2006, Wyckliffe Obwiri served as the Assistant Prevention Program Manager at WRP-Kenya. He left WRP to assume the role of National Evidence Based Interventions Coordinator at the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation in Nairobi, Kenya. In his time with WRP, Wyckliffe was instrumental in reaching youth in the community through innovative programs such as “moonlight” HIV testing and counseling.

### **Ilana Lapidos** *Nigeria*

Dr. Ilana Lapidos led the WRP-N PEPFAR program in Nigeria. As the MHRP PEPFAR lead in country with a growing platform of activities, her role in coordinating this expansion with the U.S. Government team in country was key. Her experience in prior positions as a clinician and program manager allowed the team in country to adapt new tools and models to better track and manage the growing Nigeria portfolio. Dr. Lapidos and her family still reside in Abuja, Nigeria as the family completes their time in country.

### **Darrell Singer** *Nigeria*

Captain (Sel.) Darrell Singer led MHRP’s program in Nigeria, WRP-N. As Country Director, Capt. Singer was committed to developing strong intergovernmental partnerships with the Government of Nigeria and the Nigerian Ministry of Defence. Capt. Singer also made significant contributions to building professional capacity through innovative training programs. Capt. Singer will be transitioning to a position at the Pentagon, U.S.A.

### **Judith Chamberlin** *Maryland*

Dr. Judith Chamberlin led the MHRP PEPFAR Research program now taken over by Dr. Keith Crawford. Her role in supporting capacity development and coordinating research protocols across the MHRP network helped country PEPFAR programs move toward conducting more hypothesis driven research within the Prevention, Care, and Treatment portfolios. She and her husband Army COL Dave Jones retired from Kisumu, Kenya back to the U.S. where they are currently traveling cross-country and enjoying their retirement.



## Follow us on Facebook!

Are you one of millions who use the social networking site, Facebook? Then “Like” the U.S. Military HIV Research Program to stay up-to-date on MHRP PEPFAR activities, research and interesting news and information from the HIV field. To like us, visit [www.facebook.com/hivresearch](http://www.facebook.com/hivresearch).

**The U.S. Military HIV Research Program (MHRP) is a multi-disciplinary HIV vaccine research program that successfully integrates HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment.**

### **MHRP PEPFAR Programs:**

Walter Reed Program–Nigeria (Abuja)  
MUWRP/Makerere University  
Walter Reed Project (Kayunga)  
Walter Reed Program–Tanzania (Mbeya)  
Walter Reed Project–Kenya (Kericho)

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