

WEEKLY BULLETIN

National Empowerment Network of PLHAs in Kenya (NEPHAK) 24th – 30th Oct 2010

Say Yes to Life Say Yes to Life Say Yes to Life Say Yes to Life Say Yes to Life Say Yes to Life Edition 42

Coast Province PLHIV Network becomes First and Last

NEPHAK members in coast province last week realized their dream of becoming the first region under NEPHAK to successfully launch a PLHIV Network with elected leadership (*see picture below*) at a provincial level.



Coast Province PLHIV Network leaders-elect **Kasena Changawa, elizabeth Simba and David Karisa** during the launch of the network.

Coast Province PLHIV network was initiated with support from USAIDS/APHIA 2 Coast Programme and launched during the Provincial Stakeholders forum where NEPHAK members also displayed their products and services (*see photo below*). The network becomes the last because NEPHAK will now be focusing on Counties to align with new constitution.



Global Fund Faces a Bleak Future: Does that Worry You?

The Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) is facing a bleak future after donors failed to pledge enough money and those who pledged did not honour their commitment. At the global level, the Fund falls short of the target by \$1 billion dollar.

There is a clear sign that the world and governments are backsliding on the commitments, made recently at the MDG Summit in New York, to expand access to millions of people to life-saving interventions.

To be hard hit will be countries in the sub-Saharan Africa which have the highest burden of TB, Malaria and HIV/AIDS and where governments rarely allocate enough money for responding to these diseases. In Kenya, GFATM supports substantial number of people in need with life saving interventions, including TB drugs, ARVs and Malaria prevention and treatment commodities. In fact, 130,000 PLHIV are on ART and HIV treatment with resources from the Global Fund.

On September 18th, representatives of PLHIV joined others in Nairobi to campaign and march to drum up support to Global Fund (*see photo below*)



FACTBOX this week aims to enhance your AIDS Competence by enabling you learn about CD4 Cell (sometimes called T-cells, or helper cells) and which are white blood cells that organize your immune response to infections. Your CD4 cell count is the measurement of the number of CD4 cells in cubic milliliter of blood sample expressed as a number. The 'normal CD4 cell count ranges between 450 and 1600 but varies a lot between people. Women tend to have higher CD4.

Open Budget Survey 2010 Just Released!

Kenya was among the 40 of the 94 countries in which access to government budget information was carefully evaluated by the International Budget Partnership's (IBP) **and** found to provide such minimal information to the public that the country's governments are able to hide unpopular, wasteful, and corrupt spending. No wonder last week, the Inspector General revealed a misappropriation of large sums of money in the ministry of health and which occurred without anybody knowing.

Nevertheless, the 2010 Survey also identified a positive trend – even in Kenya where, there has been a nearly 20 percent improvement in the average performance. In Kenya, this overall improvement is driven by substantial improvements in the budget transparency, in some cases supported by donor influence and assistance. The provision of budget transparency in the new constitution will enable Kenya perform much better if this good provision is implemented.

Have you Started Planning for World AIDS Day 2010?

The theme will still be Universal Access and Human Rights and for NEPHAK, it is always **Universal and Access and Human Rights for People living with HIV (PLHIV)**.

At NEPHAK, we shall be joining other partners and stakeholder to draw national attention to the rights of people living with HIV and vulnerable populations and to mobilise support for the protection of these rights in order to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support and combat stigma and discrimination



Lest You Forget: TB Grant with favourable Deadline

The call for the fourth round of the Stop TB Partnership's Challenge Facility for Civil Society is still on. This round will provide funds (between USD 5,000 - USD 20,000) to community-based civil society organizations whose work focuses on advocacy and social mobilization activities in countries affected by TB. It aims to make the voices of vulnerable communities affected by tuberculosis heard by local policy makers. In addition, grantees help find potential TB cases in the community, direct them to health centres for TB testing and provide social support to persons in treatment.

This Challenge Facility can continue supporting civil society activities designed to attract greater attention from governments, vulnerable people and the general public to the prevention and control of this lethal yet curable disease. Applications focusing on advocacy, awareness raising and empowering communities to become part of the solution in the fight against TB are welcome. Visit <http://www.stoptb.org/global/awards/cfcs/>

World Bank Reviews Laboratory Project.

East Africa Public Health Laboratories Networking Project team last week visited Kenya to establish the project progress and to provide implementation support to the project implementation team.

This is a unique project given the fact that Laboratories are the most ignored aspect of the health systems. In deed, not many health facilities have laboratories making timely and accurate diagnostics the most important obstacle to treatment and care. It is even sometimes forgotten that access to quality laboratories is a key component of Universal Access to services.

NEPHAK is keen with labs and will be undertaking patients and community satisfaction survey on access to quality laboratories in selected parts of Kenya.