

# Refugees in Botswana to Get ARVs on Parallel Programme

By Doris N. Kumbawa

The Government of Botswana has finally succumbed to pressure to provide antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) to refugees albeit on a parallel programme funded by the United States government and managed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

This pronouncement was made at a meeting held at Dukwi Refugee Camp on the 15th of May 2009 by the UNHCR Head of Mission, Roy Herrman. At the meeting attended by the Dukwi Refugee Camp support group members, Botswana Red Cross Society and the Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BONELA), participants welcomed this news as it would provide the most needed relief to those in urgent need of treatment.

Whilst Mr. Herrman went to great lengths to explain how the programme which will be implemented together with the Botswana and United States of America partnership programme (BOTUSA) will work, it goes against the grain of one of the international best practices of having one national ARV programme outlined by the United Nations joint programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) and UNHCR. Participants at the meeting felt that in this light, the message should be driven home that the Government of Botswana had failed the refugees as it is their responsibility to provide them treatment through the national programme.



Refugee Support Group; BONELA; Botswana Red Cross and UNHCR gather at Dukwi Refugee Camp for a meeting at which it was announced that the Government of Botswana had bowed to local and international pressure to provide refugees.

Members of the Dukwi Refugee Camp support group were of the view that the current policy by the Government of Botswana may have an impact on international programmes as other governments may follow suit. They emphasized that all refugees wherever they are should be able to access treatment and the example set by the Government of Botswana may be taken as precedence to follow by other countries in Africa even though Botswana was the last country to grant access to ARVs to refugees. They thus requested BONELA to challenge the Government of Botswana using international media to honour their commitments.

BONELA Director, Christine Stegling, also appreciated the efforts by the UNHCR

but made it clear that the decision by the Botswana government for refugees to access treatment was made possible due to support of international players mobilized by one of BONELA's partners, ARASA which got people's attention and they too should be given credit. For BONELA, government's current position is an interim solution because if refugees are free to move in search of employment but can only access the treatment at the camp, it means they are still discriminated. BONELA would like to pursue this matter further until the Government of Botswana takes responsibility for the programme and includes refugees in the national programme as they are giving out a right with one hand and taking it away with another.

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Vice-President of the Republic of Botswana Lt. General Mompoti Merafe at the BONELA stall at BOCONGO NGO week



Colleagues, donors, partners and friends take time to say farewell to Christine Stegling, BONELA's outgoing Director.

# The Sustainability of the National ARV Botswana

By Leticia Addai



*Policy Advisor, Diana Meswele and Policy and Legal Intern Leticia Addai, welcome the vice-President of the Republic of Botswana Lt. General Mompoti Merafe to the BONELA stall during the BOCONGO NGO week where BONELA also held a panel discussion on treatment sustainability with civil society*

As a country with the second highest adult HIV prevalence rate in the world at approximately 23.9 percent, Botswana has been significantly affected by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. (UNAIDS: 2008) In 2003 it was estimated that there were between 330 000 to 380 000 people living with HIV and AIDS in Botswana (WHO: 2005).

Given that Botswana is a small country with an estimated population of 1.8 million, HIV and AIDS has impacted almost every sphere of life for Botswana (WHO: 2005). In 2003 it was said that approximately one-third of the workforce in Botswana was living with

HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Of particular concern is the impact that the disease has had in reducing the life expectancy at birth of the average Botswana. In the 1990's the average life expectancy of a Botswana was 64 years but by 2004 this was reduced to 35 years (Progressive Policy Institute: 2006) affecting close to 100,000 children due to the loss of at least one parent to HIV/AIDS (AVERT: 2009).

In response to this crisis, the Government of Botswana established one of the first national antiretroviral (ARV) therapy programs in Africa in 2002. This program enables eligible Botswana citizens who are infected with HIV to access ARV

treatment free of charge. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) estimated that approximately 60 000 people were in need of ARV treatment in 2003, and a treatment target was set for 30 000 people by the end of 2005. While Botswana successfully met this treatment target by the end of 2005, treating an estimated 55 829 people by October of 2005, the number of people in need of treatment rose to 84 000 in that same year (WHO: 2005). Currently the national ARV Program in Botswana has about 128 000 people enrolled in its treatment program although a growing demand for treatment may result in a rapid increase

# Treatment Program in

in this number. The Government of Botswana has demonstrated a high level of commitment to addressing the HIV crisis through its ARV program but there are concerns about the ability of the government to sustain this program in the future.

The Government of Botswana contributes over six percent of its national budget to funding the National ARV Program (UN: 2009). However, Botswana's diamond industry, a major source of Botswana's economic growth, has faltered in the current global economic downturn. Economic challenges such as this have important implications for the National ARV Program in Botswana and threaten the sustainability of the program in the future. The President of Botswana has even made public statements regarding the sustainability of the national ARV program, indicating that at the current rate of enrollment the continued progress of the national program cannot be guaranteed.

In 2005, the Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BONELA) facilitated a seminar on the national ARV program in order to examine the issues around the sustainability of the national ARV program in hopes of outlining long-term strategies for continued success. At that time, the particular issues that were examined in relation to the sustainability of the ARV program centered on medical safety, international trade, intellectual property law and issues of equity. These areas remain important to the discussion around the sustainability of the national

ARV program in order to preserve the health and welfare of the people of Botswana in the future. Additionally, it is important to monitor and evaluate the current procurement system in Botswana in order to ensure that it is effectively and efficiently obtaining the life saving medications used in the national ARV program.

*"In 2005, the Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BONELA) facilitated a seminar on the national ARV program in order to examine the issues around the sustainability of the national ARV program in hopes of outlining long-term strategies for continued success."*

Whilst Botswana has made tremendous progress towards mitigating the effects that HIV/AIDS has had on the lives of many Botswana, the increasing number of people who are in need of ARV treatment and the nature of the treatment which requires an uninterrupted regimen, demands that Botswana provide a plan for the sustainability of the national ARV program in the future.

[This article is the first in a series( of articles on Treatment Sustainability.)]




**Call for submissions**

The Botswana Review of Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BRELA) welcomes contributions on a wide variety of relevant issues from a broad range of disciplinary backgrounds. Each contribution sent for publication will be reviewed by a peer review committee.

**Submission guidelines**

- \* Short articles should be up to 5,000 words long. Long articles should be up to 10,000 words including footnotes.
- \* Recent Development and Events should be up to 2,500 words.
- \* Reviews of books and articles should be up to 2,500 words.

**Format**

All manuscripts should be submitted in their final form and should conform to the following guidelines:

- \* Submissions must be typed, 1.5-spaced with pages numbered.
- \* Contributions should include the name(s), professional details (including affiliation), and contact information of the authors (s).

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# Forum Syd Partnership Teambuilding

By Doris N. Kumbawa



*Kemelo Moputing (Forum Syd) shows off one of her favourite t-shirts (BONELA anti-stigma t-shirt) at the Forum Syd Teambuilding session. Looking on (left to right) is Lorato Sakufiwa (BONEPWA+), Diana Meswele (BONELA), Rosemary Mokgosi and Anne Lee (BONEPWA+)*

**Board member, Godisang Mookodi; Director, Uyapo Ndadi; Media and Advocacy Officer, Doris Kumbawa; Policy Advisor, Diana Meswele; PRISM Coordinator, Felistus Motimedi and Treatment Literacy Coordinator, Cindy Kelemi attended the Forum Syd teambuilding and no-cost extension planning meeting in Palapye from the 22nd to the 25th of June.**

The team building was the second for the partnership, conducted by South African consultant Alicia Peters. The consultant pointed out that at the first team building, the partnership was storming and forming, and there was a lot of tension as partners still viewed the other with suspicion and mistrust, and were not a united front at all. She also gave feedback on what she viewed as the successes of the Forum Syd partnership to date, which consists of BONASO, BOCONGO, BONELA, BONEPWA+ and Forum Syd.

One of the successes highlighted was the management coaching. Staff from the five organisations gave

feedback on the management coaching for their directors. The feedback by BONELA staff was to the effect that it had transformed the former director. Through the coaching, she was more effective as a leader as she provided the necessary direction, encouragement and support, whilst allowing programme officers to run their programmes without micromanaging. The transformation was so drastic that one officer said they could not deal with the new person as they were now met with understanding and help to solve a difficult situation. BONELA staff reported the office to be friendlier and un-intimidating which has created a more enabling environment for staff productivity and retention.

Overall, all the organizations reported a favourable outcome of the management coaching, and expressed the need to extend it to middle management to build their capacity as managers in their various organizations. BONELA suggested team coaching for their management team when it started functioning.

The partnership felt it was more united than before, which would enable them to work with and through each other in the spirit of the partnership. However, the meeting brought to the fore areas which still needed redress such as inter- and intra-partnership communication; greater transparency and accountability; the need to share and uphold the code of conduct and also align it to the NGO code of conduct; develop a fundraising strategy and enhance the sharing of resources; improve monitoring and evaluation, including conducting joint monitoring and capacity building of staff through results-based training.

This activity saw the emergence of a stronger sense of self for the institution (the partnership), and the ability of the individual organizations to bring to the fore their strengths whilst dealing with their weaknesses. This was done through the *ten out of ten* principle, where successes were openly celebrated. The partnership agreed to continue with constructive criticism and to do away with naming and shaming which does not help the victim to rise from their mistakes. All these strategies will in the long run ensure a strong leadership for civil society to challenge government to improve and honour its commitments to service delivery while upholding human rights in the national response to HIV and AIDS.

## **No-cost Extension Planning Meeting**

The Forum Syd programme which commenced in 2007 was slated to run for three years and will come to an end this year. Due to the late disbursement of funds and subsequent commencement of implementation of activities, the five organizations were not able to use the funds allocated to them between 2007 and 2008. Further delays for some organisations due to institutional problems also severely limited capacity to implement programmes, resulting in a slow start and burn rate of funds. These problems which varied from organization to organization resulted in leftover funds from the 2007 and 2008 period.

This situation prompted Forum Syd Botswana to negotiate with the Stockholm office for a no-cost extension period to allow organizations to exhaust these funds. The no-cost extension was approved and will run for one year in 2010, in which all funds, including those for 2009 will have to be used. This would be in preparation of the second phase of the Forum Syd programme. In preparation for the no-cost extension period, Forum Syd invited partners to a planning meeting in Palapye and this was held from the 24th to the 25th of June.

In preparation for the latter meeting, BONELA staff held a meeting in which they shared the results of the mid-term review. The results that pointed to the need for improvement on the part of BONELA were turned into activities for the no cost extension. Among these was the need to strengthen BONELA's presence and visibility in the districts through a holistic training package. Staff agreed to conduct training on all BONELA programme areas, that is human rights and HIV; Legal aid; sexual minorities; gender; children's rights and treatment literacy in three districts, that is Ghansi, Francistown and Tsabong. BONELA would also endeavor to work in areas where BOCONGO, BONASO and BONEPWA+ already had district structures. The focal people at the centres would thus have their capacity built on HIV and human rights issues, act as referral points and distribute BONELA information, education and communication materials.

It was also decided that BONELA should hold a membership forum to strengthen its membership; conduct policy forms on Access to Information in collaboration with BOCONGO and Treatment Sustainability forums in partnership with BONASO as well as conduct training for the partnership organizations in human rights and HIV; sexual minorities and treatment literacy, as the mid-term review had pointed to the need to use BONELA's comparative advantage in human rights to benefit the Forum Syd

partnership and to ensure that civil society will speak with one voice on controversial advocacy issues.

A plan was thus developed which took into cognizance activities that would be carried forward to 2010 from 2007 through to 2009. The BONELA no-cost extension work-plan also included the continuation of activities initiated in 2009 for organisational development such as strengthening the M&E system; team-building, leadership and governance training for the board; management coaching for the director and finance manager and team coaching for the management team. In addition, the organization will provide project management training to build the capacity of staff in this regard and to enable them to make the transition to results-based management as per the Swedish International Development Agency's requirements.

Some activities under the sex work project were carried forward from 2009, whilst those which were imperative to build on such as the legal aid radio talk show, reprinting of existing IEC materials and media monitoring were included in the plan for 2010. The

plan also budgeted for imperative yearly activities such as the audit, production of the annual report, newsletters and contribution to staff salaries.

This plan was presented at the meeting in Palapye, and together with those of the other 4 organisations, formed the basis for strategising and prioritising for the no cost extension period.



*BONELA Board Member Dr. Mookodi summarises the priority areas for the Forum Syd Partnership at a teambuilding workshop in Palapye*

# BONELA Takes Domestic Violence Act Maiden Case

By Tautona Chaba



**The interim, tenancy and restraint orders that Morongwanyana Ramodimo had applied for against her husband, Maleke Ramodimo following alleged abuse did not see the light of the day as the couple was ordered to go home and reconcile.**

Morongwanya told the court that her eight years of marriage to Maleke have been a living hell, characterized by verbal and emotional abuse. Maleke, according to his wife has called her a promiscuous thief and has threatened to stop buying food for the kids. She wanted the court to intervene and remove her husband out of their matrimonial house in Ramotswa as he continued supporting the family as per the domestic violence act.

She related to the court how her prince has not been so charming: "My husband has been abusing me verbally in the presence of our minor children and has recently threatened to kill me." She said the alleged abuser who confessed to have been a marijuana user, on the 22nd of May, out of the blue went ballistic and started throwing insults at her –at around 6am. This happened in the sight of their five and nine year old kids. "He then went on to strangle me in sight of the kids who then rushed to call for help from the neighbors. I sought

medical help from local hospital for injuries sustained from the strangling," she added.

It is said by the applicant that prior to that horrific incident, several meetings by both her parents and in-laws convened in attempts to counter the wayward behavior of her husband have since hit a snag. She continued: "Both my parents and his had convened on three occasions to try and admonish him, and despite their efforts there has not been any improvement with his behavior, instead things have gotten worse."

In his attempts to vindicate himself from allegations leveled against him Maleke told the court how his wife concocted a story designed to drag his name in the mud. Though he admitted to be a recovering substance user, he said he knew himself to be a loving husband and would go to extreme lengths to defend his family. He poured cold water on words uttered by his wife saying the wife was the culprit in that whole fiasco. Maleke told the court that his wife was the vulgar one and would insult his mother if what is said to him causes no effect.

"I have never laid a hand on my wife since we got married only this time I held her by the neck because I

could not stand her calling my mother promiscuous," he said, adding that in turn his wife kicked him on the genitals causing him immense pain before he went to the kitchen and prepared tea.

After a long wrangle, the Magistrate in delivering his ruling he told the couple that their marriage is not a happy one, and both parties have a fair share to the unrest in their family. "Both parties are vulgar and each one tries hard to hide their wrong doings. Prior to the May 22nd incident, the court observed that the marriage was characterized by vulgar language and it is difficult to tell if there was domestic violence as both parties have been abusive.

The magistrate said physically the first act was on the 22nd May which could be prompted by insults directed at the respondent's mother. He continued: "But response though not tolerable and unacceptable some people might react that way. Even though there was domestic violence, the court does not think it is the one referred to in the Act as innocent people might be left with no protection." Paradoxically, the couple was ordered to go home and reconcile, a ruling that did not sit well with Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BONELA).



# BONELA in Pictures



*Christine Stegling's Farewell Party hosted by Forum Syd*



*Colleagues, donors, partners and friends take time to say farewell to Christine Stegling, BONELA's founding member and outgoing Director. From left to right, Mr. C. Molomo (NACA Coordinator); John Muzhingji (BONELA Finance Volunteer) and Christine Stegling on the dance floor*



*Smiles of Joy: Mosimanewaditau Kefetoge (BONELA's Client) and wife. With the help of BONELA, successfully sued his former employer, the South East District Council, (SEDC) Roads Department in Ramotswa for dismissing him without benefits after working for them for 17 years as a contract worker. He was awarded about P40 000.*

# Quest for an HIV Free Generation of Babies

By Doris N. Kumbawa

**Kesego Basha and Kennedy Mumpeli have been HIV and AIDS activists for almost 10 years. Basha, as Kesego is commonly known, who disclosed her HIV status over a decade ago is considered one of Botswana's icons in de-stigmatising HIV/AIDS in the country, together with her husband, Zambian national, Mumpeli. This year, however, the couple is at the centre of controversy as they decided that they wanted to have a baby. For Basha and Kennedy, their decision has reaped tremendous animosity even among friends and seemingly enlightened colleagues, who have openly told them they are no longer role models for people living with HIV.**

For Basha, this has easily been the hardest decision to make as the discrimination she has faced is not only institutional, but emanating from friends and close work associates. She narrated how one of her friends had openly told her that she is no longer an icon in the fight against HIV and AIDS. In the family sphere she says her children told her they overheard their neighbours discussing her saying she was lying that she was sick because if she was, she would not be pregnant.

Not surprisingly, the Government of Botswana has been at the forefront in labeling HIV positive women as spreading HIV through repeat pregnancies. The latest remarks were uttered on national radio by Gaborone Central Member of Parliament, Dumelang Salishando. Although, the MP later retracted his statement saying he had been misquoted, his utterances are a reflection of the generalization and the naming and shaming that now characterizes Botswana's approach to the issue of honoring sexual reproductive health rights of HIV positive women.

To begin with, the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission programme



*Lesego Basha and Kennedy Mumpeli at their baby shower with journalists from the Midweek Sun, a local newspaper.*

policy document addresses only the needs of women who are HIV positive and pregnant for the first time. The document thus served no purpose to people like Basha and Kennedy who wish to exercise their rights responsibly. Before falling pregnant, the couple went through all available reading material on HIV and pregnancy. To their dismay, the local documentation did not speak to their situation. Instead, they depended on individual doctors to provide them with information and support in conception. Service at the local clinic was depressing and at best, humorous. According to Basha, "The first time I went to the clinic and told the nurse I was HIV positive and pregnant, I could see the panic in her and the rest of the staff. They clearly were at a loss of what to do with me. It's just as well this was not my first baby so I knew what should be given to me." Whilst nothing was said to Basha, at the clinic, a staff member at Princess Marina Hospital was not as diplomatic as she asked her why she was continuing to have children when she was HIV

positive.

In the couple's quest to conceive, they also discovered that they did not have access to relevant tests for Hepatitis for example which are necessary precautions for pregnant women, even more so when they are HIV positive as they can be transmitted to the unborn child. They were told in un-categorical terms that they were not able to get these tests and had to go to neighbouring South Africa instead.

These birthing problems have seen Basha and Kennedy digging deeply into their pockets to travel to South Africa for tests and consultations with doctors. A deeply worried Basha solemnly narrated how she was concerned not only for the safety of the baby, but her own. The journey to conceive also helped Basha realize how it was difficult for an HIV positive woman to access good health services when pregnant.

From Basha's narration, one can imagine how a less informed person



may not access requisite health services. Whilst women succumb to all forms of pressures to conceive, the pressures do not delineate between a woman who is HIV positive and one who is negative. Family, social and personal pressure may prompt a woman to conceive and this is a reality of life. Denial of this reality can easily lead to infection between couples and mother to child transmission.

These concerns prompted BONELA to adapt a booklet on HIV and Pregnancy produced by I-base to suit the local context. The booklet provides information on conception and birth as well as the afterbirth period for women who are HIV positive. This is in line with the organization's sexual reproductive

health rights project which promotes rights and responsibility around sexual reproductive health issues. The context for the project is provided by women being fired from work because they are HIV positive and pregnant and their limited access to health services, such as PMTCT and PAP smears.

Basha's baby shower thus offered an opportune moment to present this booklet to guests at the event and give a synopsis of the contents in the booklet. These include information on safe conception, delivery and breast feeding. With such information at hand, it is no surprise that Basha is now the proud mother of a healthy baby boy and has fulfilled her dream of having a child with her husband.

## BONELA Round up

The Policy Advisor, Diana Meswele facilitated a BONELA panel discussion on the sustainability of Botswana's national ARV program during the NGO week, which took place from 15-19 June 2009 at the Botswana National Youth Council grounds in Gaborone West. The NGO week provided an opportunity for non-governmental organizations in Botswana to showcase their work and discuss pertinent issues related to advocacy. The discussion focused on informing participants about crucial aspects of the issues surrounding treatment sustainability in Botswana as well as obtaining their feedback on the issues as implementing partners in the national response to HIV/AIDS.

She also attended a meeting to develop the PEPFAR Collaborative Partnership Framework on the third of July. The framework is intended to align the PEPFAR funding mechanism to existing national structures such as the national strategic framework on HIV/AIDS II and develop a collaborative mechanism for common reporting as well as monitoring and evaluation.

The Media and Advocacy Officer, Doris Kumbawa and Media Intern Tautona Chaba attended training by the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Botswana and the Zambia Institute of Mass Communications (ZAMCOMM). The training was tailored to accentuate

the use of media by civil society. NGOs were equipped with public relations skills to enhance the way they share their organizational information with the media.

The Media Intern attended court cases at the Lobatse High Court and the Village Magistrate's Court to cover a series of cases. Two of the cases that received a lot of public response were the Domestic Violence case and a right to privacy case. He also attended a week long creative writing training titled "the journey of a story teller" aimed at fortifying writing skills of media personnel conducted by Makgabaneng. The training was centered on writing for radio.

The Media and Advocacy Officer and the Media and Advocacy Intern, participated in the 2009 World Press Freedom commemorations spearheaded by MISA-Botswana. Together with the Policy Advisor, they also participated in a debate organized by MISA in the build-up to World Press Freedom Day in which the Policy Advisor made a presentation on BONELA's position on the Media Practitioner's Act which is by and large considered to be an attempt to shrink the democratic space in Botswana through stifling freedom of expression, state regulation of the media and self-censorship.

## About BONELA



### Who Are We and What Do We Stand For

The Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BONELA) is a non-governmental organization established in 2002. It is dedicated to creating an enabling and just environment for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS through the integration of ethical, legal and human rights dimensions into the national response to HIV/AIDS in Botswana.

### Mission Statement

- BONELA promotes a just and inclusive environment for people affected by HIV and AIDS through education, legal assistance, research and advocacy.

### Vision

- Making human rights a reality in the response to the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Botswana. To achieve its vision, BONELA works within the following five programme areas:
  - Advocacy
  - Legal Aid
  - Training
  - Media
  - Research

Through these programmes, BONELA carries out activities that ensure that ethics, law and human rights are made an essential part of the national response to fighting HIV and AIDS in Botswana. This is done through a focus on Goal 5 of the National Plan of Action on HIV and AIDS as articulated in Botswana's National Strategic Framework on HIV and AIDS.

### The Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS

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# On the road

- In April, PRISM and other Southern African partners (GALZ, Durban Gay Centre and Triangle project) met with the Ministry of Local Government (Primary Health Care), Ministry of Health (Sexual Reproductive Health) and the Centre of Human rights (Ditshwanelo) as an exchange visit to discuss issues that affect sexual minorities in accessing quality health care. Felistus and Prisca also went to Durban to meet with other partners (GALZ, TRP, Triangle, OUT-Wellbeing and Durban gay centre) to solidify the identity, purpose and mandate of the partnership.
- In May, the PRISM Coordinator Felistus Motimedi, Assistant Prisca Mogapi and the Gender Officer Lenah Baitirile went to Francistown to present the MSM study findings and Needs Assessment to the District Multi-Sectoral AIDS Committee (DMSAC) and this was followed by a one day workshop with LGBTI where the Gender Officer presented on the Domestic Violence Act and the assistant PRISM officer presented the MSM study findings. Felistus Motimedi also made a presentation about the PRISM programme at the pre-NAC meeting in Gaborone.
- Board member, Godisang Mookodi; Director, Uyapo Ndadi; Media and Advocacy Officer, Doris Kumbawa; Policy Advisor, Diana Meswele; Finance Officer, Ogopoleng Robson' PRISM Coordinator, Felistus Motimedi and Treatment Literacy Coordinator, Cindy Kelemi attended the Forum Syd teambuilding and no-cost extension planning meeting in Palapye from the 22nd to the 25th of June. The team building gave feedback on the successes of the Forum Syd partnership which consists of BONASO, BOCONGO, BONELA, BONEPWA+ and Forum Syd, and sought to map the way forward. In the no-cost extension, the 5 organisations strategised on the priorities of the no cost extension which seeks to exhaust funds left over from the beginning of the programme in 2007 and in 2008. Forum Syd, apart from funding the legal, media, sexual reproductive health rights and sex work projects, has been committed to strengthening institutional capacity for the sustainability of the organization.
- The PRISM Coordinator, Felistus Motimedi and Policy Advisor, Diana Meswele attended the BAIS III policy report writing retreat in Palapye from July 6 to 10 alongside implementing partners from government, civil society and development partners such as the UNAIDS. The policy report writing process further extracts information from the BAIS III data and is hoped to be finalized in September.
- On June 16th, Malebogo Batsile and Lenah Baitirile participated in the Day of the African Child commemoration hosted by the Jwaneng Town Council and Department of Social Services at Jwaneng Debswana Club. The theme of the day was "Africa fit for children, accelerated action towards child survival". This was an opportunity for BONELA's children's rights project to be known to other stakeholders and the community especially the children. BONELA literature, especially the children's rights booklet and the leaflets were distributed in large amounts at the BONELA stall to the children that participated in the day's events.
- BONELA Training and Advocacy Officer, Anna Chalmers undertook a pre-site visit to Dukwi to ascertain the existence of sex work in the camp and strategise ways in which BONELA could work with the sex workers in the camp. The visit revealed the existence of sex work in the camp and that there is a lot that the sex work project can do. She also visited Tutume to engage the Tutume District AIDS Committee and strategise ways in which BONELA can work with the district in the sex work project. A human rights awareness raising for employees of Mahalapye Forestry was also undertaken by the training officer. She also trained teachers and children on human rights, stigma and HIV at Segopotso primary school.
- The Media Intern, Tautona Chaba attended a week long training in Molepolole conducted by the legal aid programme to sensitize the public on the importance of laws surrounding HIV/AIDS and how to best fully make use of the law to protect themselves against human rights abuses. A lot of people were not aware of these rights thus the training was an eye opener.

# BONELA Staff News



## **Rodgers Bande**

Rodgers Bande joined the BONELA team as an intern in the Treatment Literacy Project from the 1st of July 2009. He holds a Diploma in Education (University of Zimbabwe) and Certificate courses in HIV/AIDS Counseling and Treatment Adherence from IDM and Botswana Harvard AIDS Partnership. Prior to joining BONELA,

Rodgers has worked extensively as a Trainer, Counselor and Public Educator in Francistown and Tutume Districts particularly in the area of PLWHA mobilization, personal and support group development, prevention and care initiatives at community levels.

“Joining BONELA was a natural process, the HIV/AIDS discourse has evolved over the years and its clear that a human rights dispensation is a critical tool at this stage of my professional engagements. I am very excited at this opportunity and trust that during my time here, I will be able to learn, make positive contributions and support BONELA to continue with the tradition of exceptional service delivery that it has become synonymous with locally, regionally and internationally.”



## **Leticia Addai**

Leticia Addai joined BONELA for the summer as an intern working with the Legal Department and the Health Advocacy and Policy Department. Leticia is a third year law student at Indiana University School of Law-Indianapolis in the United States. She holds

a Masters in Public Health from the University of Michigan. Working with BONELA has provided her with an opportunity to combine her legal education with her background in public health. She is excited about the work that BONELA is doing in terms of human rights and HIV/AIDS and looks forward to learning as much as she can while she is in Botswana.



## **Bonolo Ramadi Dinokopila**

Bonolo Ramadi Dinokopila joined BONELA as the legal officer. He graduated with an LL.B from the University of Botswana in 2007. He worked briefly as a teaching assistant at the Law Department (UB)

& proceeded to obtain his Master of Laws Degree (LL.M in Human Rights & Democratization in Africa) from the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Prior to coming to BONELA he was a Doctoral candidate and tutor (in the same LL.M Programme) at the University of Pretoria, Centre for human rights.



## **Omphile Quinton Tike**

Omphile Quinton Tike is a third year student at the University of Botswana, faculty of business and an undergraduate student of a Bachelors of Business Administration (management). He joined BONELA on the 8th of June this year as a part time job for the long winter vacation. “I have developed a life long bond with the organization. I have never

ever seen an organization so passionate about helping people, they take the issues to heart and it's very big of them”. He said.



## **Amo Leungo Sekoba**

Amo joins BONELA as an intern from the University of Botswana. She holds a Diploma In Social work and is currently pursuing her degree in Social Work (3rd year). She is working on the Domestic Violence project.

‘HIV/AIDS has become a national crisis in Botswana and BONELA is doing a commendable job in fighting and advocating for the ethical, legal and human rights of those living with HIV/AIDS, hence the reason why I joined this organization’. She said.



## **Tautona Chaba**

Tautona joined BONELA as a media intern on the 31st of April. He possesses a Diploma in Journalism and a Certificate in Creative Writing. “I couldn't have been with a better organization, BONELA is a dream come true.”



# From the Director's Desk

*Uyapo Ndadi*

During this last quarter, we scored massive victories in the litigation arena. More profoundly, we won a violation of privacy case, which created new jurisprudence in Botswana.

**It is with a combined sense of joy and sadness that we mark a new beginning for BONELA without its founder and hitherto Director, Mrs. Christine Stegling. She has left us to join the AIDS Alliance in the United Kingdom. While we are saddened by her departure, we are at the same time full of joy because she has been instrumental in making BONELA a proud and compelling brand.**

Her departure has brought with it a new dawn to BONELA as we are going through a transition and some form of transformation. The management is new and I have been roped in by the board to act in the directorship position for a period of six months with a view to a substantive appointment, which will depend on whether yours truly enjoys it and the board is also happy with his performance.

I also welcome onboard Ms. Wame Jallow, our maiden Programmes Manager, who used to be employed by Mrs. Stegling's current employer. Interesting! I have no shadow of doubt that BONELA staff will collectively ensure that the organisation remains afloat and focused.

The new management roadmap, in part, is to establish new partnerships

and also maintain and/or revive existing partnerships. Such partnerships, we trust, will help boost our advocacy campaigns and possibly change policy and law. We intend to attract new donors and also to find ways of engaging them more. We also plan to strengthen the capacity and impact of BONELA internally and externally.

During this last quarter, we scored massive victories in the litigation arena. More profoundly, we won a violation of privacy case, which created new jurisprudence in Botswana. Briefly, the case is about unlawful disclosure of our client's HIV status by an alleged paramour. Our impact in the communities is greatly felt as we continue to make inroads in matters of TB awareness, legal awareness creation and/or heightening, children's rights awareness and gender based violence issues.

We would like to thank the media for also helping us to reach out even further as we have enjoyed coverage from them. Our cases and topical issues are talked about in the streets. For instance, communities debate about issues of public interest such as protection of prisoners from HIV and AIDS by providing them with condoms.

Lately, the Former President of Botswana, Mr. Festus Mogae, echoed our sentiments on the need to include prisoners in our prevention strategies, including but not limited to, providing them with condoms. This is a commendable move by an arguably progressive and pragmatic man. We trust he will do more to join in the efforts of lobbying government to provide prisoners with condoms.

Moreover, we are inundated with external requests for trainings and lectures. Policy makers, interestingly and remarkably, are receptive to issues of prevention among sexual minorities as they invite us to address them on the same.

Lastly, we are happy to introduce to you Mr. Bonolo Dinokopila, who is now heading the Legal Aid Department. We bid farewell to Leticia Addai our legal and policy intern who was with BONELA for ten weeks, and Amogeleng Sekoba, who interned in the Gender project. We thank them for their contribution and wish them well in their future aspirations and endeavours.

Until we meet again, take care and remain steadfast in the pursuit of upholding the dignity and rights for all.