



World Health
Organization

Botswana

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Foreword



As we reflect on the first quarter of 2025, it is clear that our collective efforts have paved the way for meaningful advancements in Botswana's health sector. This bulletin encapsulates the strides we have made in cementing partnerships, particularly with the Ministry of Health and other key stakeholders.

These collaborations remain crucial in driving our health priorities forward and ensuring that we are well-prepared to address both current and emerging challenges.

On a personal note, I am honored to have officially presented my credentials as the new WHO Representative to Botswana. I am excited to join this dedicated team and to build upon the strong foundation that has been laid. Together, I am confident that we can bring innovative approaches to our work, ensuring greater impact and efficiency across our health programmes.

Our commitment to supporting Botswana's health system is further demonstrated through the nationwide consultations for the National Strategic Framework 4 (NSF4). These consultations are pivotal in developing a comprehensive and inclusive roadmap that responds to the diverse health needs of the population. In addition, the enhancement of our IT infrastructure through the Business Management System (BMS) marks a major step towards improving operational efficiency and accountability.

The intensified fight against polio, especially efforts to address circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2), remains a top priority. The implementation of targeted strategies and strengthened surveillance systems will be key in protecting our communities and ensuring a polio-free future for Botswana.

As we move forward, let us continue to build on these achievements with unwavering dedication and collaboration. Together, we can create a healthier, safer, and more resilient Botswana.

Dr Fabian Ndenzako
WHO Representative Botswana

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WHO Botswana welcomes Dr. Fabian Ndenzako as new country Representative



The World Health Organization (WHO) has officially welcomed Dr. Fabian Ndenzako as the new Head of Mission and WHO Representative to Botswana and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). A seasoned global health expert, Dr. Ndenzako brings with him over 25 years of experience in public health, including more than two decades of service within WHO across various regions and leadership capacities.

His appointment comes at a pivotal time, as WHO continues to deepen its collaboration with the newly constituted Government of Botswana, following the November 2024 elections. Guided by the WHO Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) 2024–2027, Dr. Ndenzako will lead efforts aligned with Botswana's National Development Plan.

Dr. Ndenzako is a medical doctor trained at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. He holds a master's in public health from the University of Oslo and a master's in development studies and diplomacy from the University for Peace in collaboration with UNITAR. [Read More](#)



Dr Fabian Ndenzako, WHO Botswana country Representative



Strengthening Partnerships for improved health outcomes

Advancing public health today requires more than technical expertise, it demands strong, coordinated partnerships. WHO Botswana is leading by example, prioritizing strategic collaborations that align with national priorities and deliver lasting health impact.

Under the leadership of the WHO Representative, Dr Fabian Ndenzako, the office has actively engaged a wide range of stakeholders to cement these partnerships.

Over the past months, Dr Ndenzako has undertaken high-level courtesy visits and technical discussions with key ministries such as Health, Finance, and Foreign Affairs, reaffirming WHO's role as a trusted advisor in Botswana's health sector.

Partnership-building efforts have extended beyond government ministries. [Read More](#)



WHO Country Representative Dr Fabian Ndenzako and Mrs Petra Pereyra, the EU Ambassador to Botswana are committed to strengthen collaboration on global health, equity, universal health coverage and leaving no one behind.



Dr Fabian Ndenzako and his team meeting the Botswana Public Health Institute team, led by Dr Pamela Smith-Lawrence.



Dr. Fabian Ndenzako met the One Health partners FAO (Ms. Carla Mucavi, Country Representative) and the representative of the World organization for Animal Health (WOAH), Mr. Moetapele Letshwenyo.



Dr Fabian Ndenzako and his team meets Minister of Health, Dr Stephen Modise & senior management to cement partnership



WHO Team led by Dr Fabian Ndenzako met the Hon. Kethlalefie Motshegwa, Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs and his team and discussed around primary health care aspects of collaboration.



Dr. Fabian Ndenzako met H.E. Thaninga Shope-Soumah, the High Commissioner of South Africa to Botswana

WHO Botswana Representative Presents Credentials

WHO Botswana Representative Dr. Fabian Ndenzako presented his credentials to the Ministry of International Relations today, expressing his honor in assuming the role. He praised Botswana's strides in public health, especially in reducing HIV and eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV, hepatitis, and STIs.

While noting challenges like post-COVID recovery, climate change, and economic strain, Dr. Ndenzako reaffirmed WHO's commitment to supporting Botswana's health systems and vulnerable populations.

Minister Phenyio Butale welcomed the collaboration, underscoring the importance of robust health systems and modern approaches to healthcare.

[Read More](#)



Dr. Fabian Ndenzako presenting his credentials to Minister of International Relations, Dr Phenyio Butale

WHO and Ministry of Health strengthen partnership to advance Botswana's health priorities

WHO Botswana Representative Dr. Fabian Ndenzako and his team paid a courtesy call on the Ministry of Health, where they met with Honorable Minister Dr. Stephen Modise and senior ministry officials to reaffirm their partnership and shared commitment to improving health outcomes in Botswana.

During the meeting, Dr. Ndenzako expressed WHO's continued commitment to working closely with Botswana to advance national health priorities. He emphasized the need to build resilient health systems, particularly in light of recent natural disasters such as floods, and congratulated the country on its remarkable progress in key areas, including the national HIV response. [Read More](#)



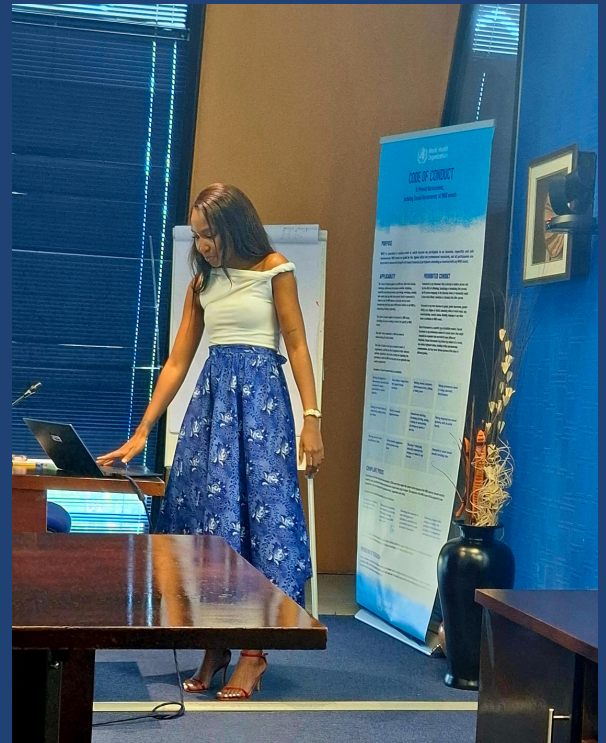
Dr. Fabian Ndenzako and Minister of Health, Dr. Stephen Modise

Women rising: Progress, challenges & the road ahead – International Women's Day 2025



International Women's Day is an important occasion for reflecting on the progress made toward gender equality, celebrating the achievements of women, and recognizing the challenges that still remain.

This year's theme, "For All Women and Girls- Rights, Equality, Empowerment," serves as a reminder of both the strides women have made in various sectors and the barriers that persist. As Selelo aptly stated. [Read More](#)



WHO Botswana officer, Lorina Selelo delivering a presentation on IWD

In pictures: WHO Botswana joins other partners to commemorate International Women's Day in Ramotswa



Upgrading IT infrastructure: boosting efficiency with BMS

In a move to enhance efficiency and streamline operations, WHO Botswana has upgraded its IT infrastructure with the implementation of the Business Management System (BMS).

This transition replaces the outdated GSM-based system, which required staff to log in and out of multiple platforms to complete tasks. By centralizing essential services, BMS reduces inefficiencies, creating a seamless and integrated workflow.

Explaining the significance of this upgrade, WHO Botswana IT Officer, Dumiliso Benjamin, described BMS as a comprehensive digital platform that consolidates multiple functions into a single, user-friendly system. It provides one-stop access to crucial services such as contracts, HR modules, finance, and procurement systems. "By eliminating the need to switch between different systems, BMS enhances speed, accessibility, and productivity.

[Read More](#)



IT officer, Mr Dumiliso Benjamin in the control room



Mr Benjamin explaining about BMS

Botswana Commemorates SADC Healthy Lifestyles Day in Goodhope



On the 14th of March 2025, Botswana joined the rest of the region in commemorating SADC Healthy Lifestyles Day in Goodhope under the theme: "Risk factors of today are diseases of tomorrow."

Speaking at the event, WHO Botswana Representative Dr. Fabian Ndenzako, emphasized the urgent need to prevent noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease. [Read More](#)



WHO Botswana Representative, Dr. Fabian Ndenzako

Botswana strengthens HIV Testing Systems with new integrated guidelines

Botswana continues to lead in the global fight against HIV/AIDS, taking a bold step forward with the finalization of its Integrated HIV Testing Services (HTS) Guidelines.

This development was marked by a high-level workshop held in Gaborone, bringing together key stakeholders including the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization (WHO), and development partners.

Speaking at the event, Director of Public Health Mr. Samuel Kolane reaffirmed Botswana's position as a global frontrunner in HIV response. "With 95% of people living with HIV identified, 98% initiated on antiretroviral therapy, and 98% achieving viral suppression, we are on the right track," he said. "But our ultimate goal remains zero new infections by 2030."

He emphasized that the updated guidelines are aimed at improving service delivery, expanding access to care, and promoting targeted testing, particularly for underserved communities.

[Read More](#)

"Our ultimate goal remains zero new infections by 2030."



Director of Public Health, Mr Samuel Kolane



Dr Busisiwe Radebe of WHO Geneva addressing the participants

WHO visits HIV testing centre laboratory: A step into cutting-edge technology

There is nothing as intriguing as getting firsthand information and experiencing the inner workings of a vital facility. Recently, I had the opportunity to tour the state-of-the-art HIV Testing Centre Lab, and I was truly impressed by what I saw.

The lab's advanced infrastructure and equipment are far beyond what I had imagined, offering a clear glimpse into the future of HIV drug resistance testing.

One of the key departments that stood out during my visit was the HIV Drug Resistance Department. I was fortunate enough to be guided through the lab's workflow, which is both meticulous and groundbreaking.

The lab operates with precision at every stage to ensure the highest level of accuracy in detecting drug resistance among HIV patients. The entire process, from sample collection to analysis, involves multiple critical steps. [Read More](#)



**“Firsthand experience
unveils true innovation”**



World Cancer Day Sparks Urgent Call to Action

Data from the Botswana STEP Survey of 2014 reveals a concerning reality: 50.7% of adult females in Botswana have never been screened for cervical cancer. This staggering statistic highlights a pressing public health challenge and underscores the urgent need to prioritize regular screening and early detection efforts, especially for women.

Speaking during the World Cancer Day commemoration held in Takatokwane, WHO Botswana Officer in Charge, Dr. Juliet Bataringaya, emphasized that the 2025 theme, “United by Unique,” is a reminder of the collective need for equitable and compassionate cancer care for all. [Read More](#)



Looking on: WHO Botswana OIC, Dr. Juliet Bataringaya and Minister of Arts & Sports, Hon Jacob Kelebeng

Botswana intensifies polio fight: new strategies against cVDPV2 threats



Some of the participants at the NCC meeting

Botswana has reinforced its efforts to eradicate polio as part of the global initiative outlined in the 2022-2029 Global Polio Eradication Strategy. At a recent National Certification Committee (NCC) meeting, experts reviewed Botswana’s progress in combating both wild poliovirus (WPV) and circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2).

The country has made notable advancements in surveillance and vaccination, with Dr. Melvin Leteane, who led the presentation on Botswana’s polio response, emphasizing the importance of early detection and rapid response to outbreaks. Dr. Leteane highlighted the transition away from the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) by 2030, underscoring the significance of this shift in reducing vaccine-derived polio cases. [Read More](#)



Dr Melvin Leteane giving a presentation on Botswana’s polio response

“There has been a decrease in cVDPV2 cases across Southern Africa”

Nationwide consultations concluded to shape the next HIV/AIDS national strategic framework

The Botswana National AIDS & Health Promotion Agency (NAHPA), with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and other partners, concluded a weeklong series of nationwide consultative forums in February aimed at gathering input for the development of the country's fourth HIV/AIDS National Strategic Framework (NSF4).

These district-level forums were designed to ensure inclusive engagement and collect insights to guide Botswana's HIV response through 2030. [Read More](#)



Consultative team with Stepping-Stones International students

Botswana conducts Global Fund Grant closeout missions ahead of next funding cycle

A team comprising members from the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), Botswana Country Coordinating Mechanism (BCCM), Global Fund Program Management, and WHO Botswana undertook closeout missions for the Global Fund's Grant Cycle 6 (GC6), which began on the 10th of February 2025 in Maun and Francistown, respectively.

These missions were conducted to assess accountability, review program outcomes, and evaluate implementation efficiency, as the country prepared to transition to Grant Cycle 7 (GC7), scheduled to begin in the second quarter of 2025.

Following the conclusion of GC6 on December 31, 2024., and having focused primarily on HIV and TB, the closeout visits aimed to document key achievements, challenges, and lessons learned, ensuring a seamless transition to GC7. [Read More](#)



Dr. Tebogo Madidimalo of WHO Botswana at the field

Partners Appreciation





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