



World Health
Organization

Botswana

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Foreword



The second quarter of 2025 has been marked by renewed collaboration and targeted action to strengthen Botswana's public health systems. WHO Botswana, in close partnership with the Ministry of Health and regional institutions such as Africa CDC and UN agencies, continued to drive key initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes and preparing for future challenges.

A major highlight in this quarter was Botswana advancing to the Gold Tier on the Path to Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV, an achievement that underscores the country's sustained commitment to ending preventable infections and promoting the health and well-being of women and children. This milestone, along with World Health Day commemorations, reaffirmed Botswana's strong focus on maternal and child health.

WHO Botswana also provided technical support in responding to the malaria outbreak, contributing to a coordinated national response. Further, cervical cancer prevention efforts were amplified through nationwide training, and community engagement around TB and road safety intensified, reinforcing a preventative health agenda. Our internal capacity also continued to grow, with in-house trainings and ongoing development of the Pandemic Fund proposal, efforts that strengthen readiness and resilience across our operations.

As we move into the next quarter, WHO Botswana remains committed to working with all partners to build a healthier, stronger, and more equitable health system for every person in Botswana.

Dr Fabian Ndenzako
WHO Representative to Botswana

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WHO strengthens coordination and collaboration with UN leaders



As a sign of renewed partnership and commitment to multilateralism, WHO Botswana recently hosted courtesy visits from Ms. Wenyan Yang, UN Resident Coordinator, and Ms. Nthisana Motsete-Phillips, Ambassador of Botswana to Switzerland and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva and other International Organizations.

Ms. Wenyan Yang's visit formed part of her introductory engagements with UN agencies in Botswana. She was warmly welcomed by the WHO team and WHO Representative Dr. Fabian Ndenzako.

During the meeting, Ms. Yang shared her vision of fostering collaboration, innovation, and collective impact within the UN Country team, stressing the need for creative and integrated approaches amid global financial constraints.

"We must find new and more effective ways of working together leveraging our collective strengths to deliver real, measurable change for the people of Botswana," said Ms. Yang.

[Read More](#)



Dr Fabian Ndenzako, and Ms. Wenyan Yang



Ambassador Nthisana Motsete-Phillips



Africa CDC and WHO strengthen ties

Africa CDC Regional Director Dr. Lul Riek and his team recently paid a courtesy call to the WHO Botswana Country Office to explore areas of collaboration and discuss key priorities in Botswana's health system.

The visit reaffirmed the shared commitment of both institutions to strengthening National Public Health Institutes (NPHIs) and enhancing coordination in public health responses across the continent. During the meeting, WHO Representative to Botswana, Dr. Fabian Ndenzako, underscored the importance of deeper collaboration between WHO and Africa CDC in advancing national health priorities.

"We really need to come together. WHO handles coordination, and Africa CDC is implementing its mandate. But ultimately, we are supporting the same government," he said. "We must work in complementarity, not competition, to ensure our efforts contribute meaningfully to country priorities."

Dr. Ndenzako proposed the establishment of a regular coordination platform at the country level, such as monthly or quarterly forums, to jointly review planned activities, identify synergies, and avoid duplication. He also highlighted the recent joint submission to the Pandemic Fund by WHO and Africa CDC, which focuses on strengthening surveillance systems, laboratory capacity, and the health workforce.

[Read More](#)



WHO Country Representative Dr Fabian Ndenzako and Africa CDC Regional Director Dr. Lul Riek



Africa CDC staff accompanying their Regional Director



WHO Botswana and Africa CDC teams

Botswana attains Gold Tier award towards eliminating mother-to-child transmission

In a historic global health milestone, Botswana has been validated as the first high HIV-burden country in the world and the first in Africa, to achieve the World Health Organization's Gold Tier status, marking significant progress on the path of eliminating vertical transmission of HIV as a public health issue.

This groundbreaking validation reflects more than two decades of committed leadership, innovation, and strategic partnerships to combat one of the world's most persistent epidemics.

It confirms Botswana's success in maintaining and improving the impact and process indicators required for the path to elimination of vertical transmission. [Read More](#)



Minister of Health, Dr. Stephen Modise, receives award from WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros

“This is a major milestone not only for Botswana but for the region”

WHO Representative Dr Fabian Ndenzako briefs Minister Modise ahead of World Health Assembly

The World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to Botswana, Dr Fabian Ndenzako, held a high-level debriefing session with the Honourable Minister of Health, Dr Stephen Modise, to discuss Botswana's preparations for the upcoming World Health Assembly (WHA).

The meeting comes shortly after the launch of Botswana's National Health Insurance scheme, signaling the country's commitment to strengthening its health system. Dr Ndenzako emphasized WHA as a critical platform for Botswana to advance its national and regional health priorities.

He commended the country's longstanding leadership in global health governance.

[Read More](#)



Dr. Fabian Ndenzako and WHO Botswana delegation

WHO Regional Director Emeritus pays courtesy call to His Excellency President Duma Boko

His Excellency, President Duma Boko has acknowledged the urgent need to overhaul Botswana's health systems, citing inefficiencies and delayed responsiveness that continue to cost lives.

He was speaking during a high-level engagement with Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director Emeritus, who was accompanied by the WHO Representative to Botswana, Dr. Fabian Ndenzako and other officers from the WHO country office.

His Excellency, President Boko expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to engage in a candid and solutions-focused dialogue. "Your wisdom and guidance are not only welcome, but they are needed," he told Dr. Moeti.

President Boko spoke candidly about the reality that Botswana's health sector is facing. [Read More](#)



President Advocate, Duma Boko and WHO Regional Director Emeritus Dr. Matshidiso Moeti



WHO Regional Director Emeritus joined by WHO Botswana delegation

WHO Representative visits UB School of Nursing Collaborating Centre

WHO Country Representative, Dr. Fabian Ndenzako, paid a courtesy visit to the University of Botswana School of Nursing, a WHO Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) for Nursing and Midwifery Development since 1990. He was accompanied by Dr. Juliet Bataringaya, Health Systems Advisor, and Ms. Boingotlo Ramontshonyana, Focal Point for District Health System Strengthening.

In her welcome remarks, Prof. Magowe provided an overview of the Faculty of Health Sciences. She highlighted that the School of Nursing, established in 1978, is the oldest within the faculty. [Read More](#)



Dr. Fabian Ndenzako with Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Professor Phaladze

World Health Day: Botswana renews commitment to ending preventable maternal deaths



As countries around the world observed World Health Day on April 7 2025, Botswana used the moment to reflect on its maternal health journey and renew its commitment to ending preventable maternal and newborn deaths.

The national commemoration, jointly hosted by WHO Botswana and the Ministry of Health, brought together government officials, health experts, development partners, and citizens under the theme “Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures.” [Read More](#)



In the middle, WHO Botswana OIC, Dr. Juliet Bataringaya with other dignitaries

“Safe delivery should be guaranteed for every mother, no matter where she lives.”

In Pictures: Highlights from the World Health Day and the World Health Run



Tackling the Malaria surge: WHO supports Botswana's coordinated response to 2025 outbreak



In response to a surge in malaria cases earlier this year, the Ministry of Health, with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) initiative, launched an emergency response in March 2025 to contain the outbreak and protect vulnerable communities.

Triggered by unusually heavy rainfall, the outbreak created widespread mosquito breeding grounds, leading to a sharp rise in infections across both traditionally endemic areas and districts previously considered malaria-free.

[Read More](#)



WHO experts conducting an assessment in malaria-endemic areas

National training boosts cervical cancer prevention efforts in Botswana

In a continued effort to reduce the burden of cervical cancer, the Ministry of Health, supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other key partners has launched a national training initiative aimed at strengthening the capacity of both doctors and nurses in the screening and treatment of pre-cancerous cervical lesions.

The two-week training brought together healthcare workers from various districts. The programme focused on equipping six doctors and a group of nurses with advanced clinical skills, particularly in managing cases that require more than basic procedures such as thermal ablation or cryotherapy. [Read More](#)



Dr. Tebogo Madidimalo reviews documents with ToT participant

WHO Botswana visits National Blood Transfusion Services in support for a stronger blood system

The WHO Botswana team led by WHO Representative, Dr Fabian Ndenzako, paid a visit to the National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) Laboratory in Gaborone.

The purpose of the visit was to better understand the current operations, strengths, and challenges faced by NBTS, and to explore areas where WHO can offer technical support to strengthen the country's blood transfusion system.

Dr Ndenzako commended the NBTS team for their dedication in ensuring a safe and adequate blood supply across the country. He emphasized WHO's commitment to working closely with the Ministry of Health to align national blood services with global standards and ensure the quality, safety, and availability of blood and blood products. [Read More](#)

**“Donate blood,
save a life”**



WHO delegation with NBTS officials at the lab



Botswana commits to stronger food safety through science and policy reform



Speaking at the event, WHO Representative Dr Fabian Ndenzako warned that contaminated food causes 600 million illnesses and 420,000 deaths globally each year, with children under five the most affected.

He stressed that unsafe food also costs low- and middle-income countries over \$110 billion annually in lost productivity and healthcare. “Food safety is not optional, it is essential for protecting health and promoting development,” he said.

[Read More](#)



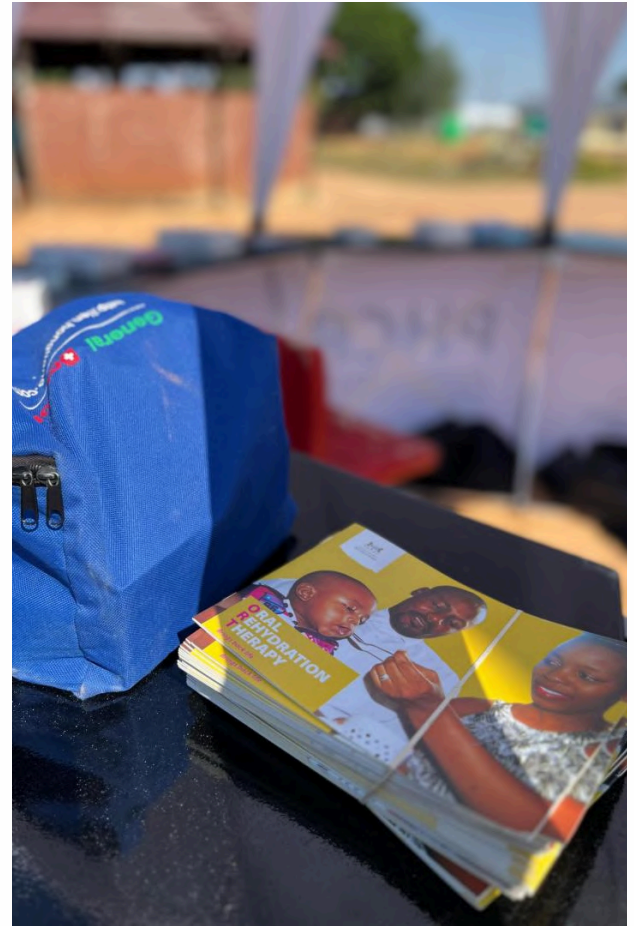
Health outreach strengthened during African Vaccination Week in Tsabong

Botswana commemorated African Vaccination Week (AVW) from 24th to 30th April 2025 under the regional theme, “Immunization for All is Humanly Possible.” The weeklong campaign aimed to promote equitable access to immunization and integrate other high-impact child health interventions.

In Tsabong District, the AVW activities served not only as an opportunity to provide health services but also to reach some of the district's most remote and underserved populations.

The district-level commemoration was strategically held in Kokotsha Village, located nearly 200 kilometers from the District Health Management Team (DHMT) headquarters. Kokotsha is home to a largely nomadic population and has historically recorded low immunization coverage, high levels of childhood malnutrition, and limited access to healthcare services.

Hosting the event in this community was a deliberate move to bridge health gaps by bringing services directly to those in greatest need. [Read More](#)



Community members queue for services during African Vaccination Week in Tsabong

The Adverse Events Following Immunization committee strengthens Botswana's vaccine safety surveillance

The Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Committee held a pivotal meeting from 19 to 22 May 2025 at Cresta Botsalo Hotel in Palapye.

The session brought together 16 committee members alongside representatives from the Botswana Medicines Regulatory Authority (BOMRA), the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), and the World Health Organization (WHO). The gathering focused on refresher training, onboarding new members, and conducting causality assessments of AEFI cases reported in 2024/2025.

In his opening remarks, AEFI Chairperson Dr. Kaone Pansirah Mabaka welcomed participants and emphasized the committee's evolving role from managing COVID-19 vaccine issues to broader vaccine safety surveillance. [Read More](#)



AEFI Committee held a pivotal meeting in Palapye

"Safe vaccines build healthy futures"

WHO Botswana calls for TB Awareness

Although World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is commemorated globally on 24 March, WHO Botswana extended the conversation into May with a staff awareness session aimed at reinforcing key messages around TB prevention and control.

During the session, Boingotlo Ramontshonyana delivered a compelling address, urging colleagues to remain vigilant and proactive in addressing one of the country's enduring public health challenges. [Read More](#)



WHO Botswana staff during TB awareness campaign

"TB knows no boundaries"

The 8th UN Global Road Safety Week launched

In May, Botswana joined the rest of the world in launching the 8th UN Global Road Safety Week under the theme “Streets for Life: #MakingWalkingAndCyclingSafe.”

Speaking at the launch, WHO Representative Dr. Fabian Ndenzako emphasized that safe and inclusive roads not only encourage walking and cycling but also enhance physical, mental, and social wellbeing. He noted that road crashes claim an estimated 1.2 million lives and injure 50 million people globally each year, particularly among young people aged 5 to 29.

Dr. Ndenzako highlighted the urgent need for safer roads and commended Botswana’s commitment to road safety. [Read More](#)



Assistant Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Hon. Keoagile Atamelang leading the walk

“Streets for life: Making walking and cycling safe”

World Hand Hygiene Day – Promoting safety through clean hands



Supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), the event brought together health professionals, administrators, and members of the public under the banner of this year’s theme: “It might be gloves. It’s always hand hygiene.”

Prior to the main programme, participants engaged in a lively fitness walk, reinforcing the broader message of healthy living and disease prevention.

The walk, which drew hospital staff and community members alike, set the tone for a day focused on proactive and preventive health measures. [Read More](#)



A participant shares her knowledge on proper hand hygiene practices

WHO Botswana builds capacity for staff to improve performance and effectiveness

The User Experience (UX) Lab simulation sessions for (BMS)

WHO Botswana staff participated in UX Lab simulation sessions to gain hands-on experience with the new Building Management System (BMS), designed to enhance operational efficiency and streamline facility management. The training covered system navigation, troubleshooting, and real-time monitoring features.



In pictures: Virtual training on Photography & Videography



Botswana prepares for the 3rd call for proposals to the Pandemic Fund



In response to the third call for proposals by the Pandemic Fund, an international financing mechanism with a budget of \$500 million, Botswana developed a single-country proposal aimed at strengthening its health systems for pandemic preparedness and response through a One Health approach. The Fund supports countries with multiyear grants to enhance health system resilience, increase investments, and improve readiness for future health threats.

Guided by the Fund's principles of promoting collaboration and coordinated action, Botswana's health stakeholders convened for the third consecutive year to identify and prioritize the country's needs. [Read More](#)

**“Investing in
health systems
is investing in
our future”**

Dodoli Wilfred bids farewell after 25 years with WHO



After an inspiring and impactful career spanning 25 years, Dodoli Wilfred, a long-serving and highly respected WHO professional, has officially retired from the World Health Organization.

On 29th April 2025, Dodoli marked his final day with the organization, closing a remarkable chapter defined by dedication, innovation, and unwavering commitment to public health. At the time of his retirement, he was based at the WHO Country Office in Botswana, where he served in a key Programme Management role.

Dodoli's journey with WHO began in the early 2000s, when he joined the fight against malaria, an area he would become deeply immersed in for over two decades.

From his early years as a national officer in malaria control to later roles in programme management, his passion and purpose remained steadfast: to save lives and improve health outcomes for communities most in need. [Read More](#)



Partners Appreciation





**World Health
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Botswana

Country Office, Botswana
MVA Fund Building
Plot 50367, Fairgrounds, Gaborone
+267 3905593
[www.who.int/countries Botswana](http://www.who.int/countries/Botswana)