



MARCH 2008 NEWSLETTER

# The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

A MONTHLY UPDATE ON THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO TURN THE TIDE AGAINST GLOBAL HIV/AIDS

## First Lady Laura Bush Visits PEPFAR-Supported HIV/AIDS Program in Haiti



As part of a one-day trip to Haiti on Thursday, March 13, 2008, First Lady Laura Bush visited the PEPFAR-supported GHESKIO HIV/AIDS Center in Port-au-Prince.

Following her visit, Mrs. Bush stated, "So this shows why it's so important for people to be tested, to find out what your HIV status is, because you can go on antiretrovirals and be healthy and live a healthy, positive life."

Additional Coverage of Mrs. Bush's visit to Haiti is available online:

- Statement by Mrs. Bush After Visiting GHESKIO HIV/AIDS Center: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/03/20080313-17.html>
- Mrs. Bush's Remarks During a Visit with HIV-Positive Youth: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/03/20080313-20.html>
- Photos highlighting Mrs. Bush's Visit to Haiti: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/03/images/20080313-14\\_1y3q5510-515h.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/03/images/20080313-14_1y3q5510-515h.html)



White House photo by Shealah Craighead  
Mrs. Laura Bush speaks with a clinic patient during her visit at the PEPFAR-supported GHESKIO HIV/AIDS Center in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

## WORLD TB DAY

March 24, 2008



TB is the number one killer of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). This is why PEPFAR is leading a unified U.S. Government global response to fully integrate HIV and TB services through partnerships with host nations.

For information on PEPFAR-supported efforts to combat TB and HIV/AIDS, please visit: <http://www.pepfar.gov/press/81964.htm>.

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## Roundtable Helps Kenyan Journalists Report on Rape



A PEPFAR-supported roundtable recently brought together a group of Kenyan journalists, who focused on the challenges facing writers reporting on gender-based violence and rape.

The roundtable, which was attended by 24 journalists, included an experienced counselor who provided advice on how to interact with rape survivors. The writers were told not to interview a survivor who had not been previously counseled, and that an adult must accompany a child survivor being interviewed. Information was also provided on antiretroviral treatment (ART) and follow-up care.

The roundtable is a good example of PEPFAR's effort to address gender issues, and by doing so to lessen the vulnerability of women to HIV infection. Sexual violence against women exacerbates the spread of HIV because it makes it impossible for them to voluntarily abstain from sex or to insist on condom use. PEPFAR supports efforts to change social norms that perpetuate male violence against women, and to strengthen laws that make gender-based violence a crime. In clinical settings, it supports post-exposure prophylaxis, as well as psychological and social support for rape victims.

In its discussion of how to interview rape victims, the roundtable also covered the challenge of journalists using appropriate language in interviewing victims of rape, particularly when those victims are children. The words used to describe sexual violation vary within a given language, and a phrase that is clear to an adult might not be understood by a child. The challenge is to find the appropriate terminology.

Even experienced journalists have found it difficult to deal with the brutality encountered by rape victims during



Photo by Internews

Journalists Mary Kiio and Jane Mwangi recount the challenges they faced reporting on displaced people, including those victimized by rape.

Kenya's recent period of post-election turmoil.

Journalist Mary Kiio recounted her experiences after she made contact with an organization dealing with rape survivors. "Initially I just wanted to be a journalist and tell a story," she said, referring to her reporting on the rape of a woman and two young children. "I hadn't realized the magnitude of the story." Kassim Mohammed, another journalist, wished he had been more prepared when he wrote an article on a woman who had been raped by ten men. "I was up and down and all over the place with my questions, [which] did not help the situation."

Kassim also regrets that he had not known more about post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) when talking to the woman. PEP is the antiretroviral treatment given to rape survivors to prevent HIV infection.

## President Bush Urges Congress to Act Quickly to Reauthorize PEPFAR



White House photo by Chris Greenberg

President George W. Bush gestures as he speaks to the press during a morning news conference Thursday, February 28, 2008.

President Bush urged Congress to move quickly, following a House committee vote on a bill to reauthorize PEPFAR. He spoke on the issue at a February 28, 2008 press conference, a day after the House of Representatives' Committee on Foreign Relations approved by voice vote a bill to reauthorize PEPFAR.

"They approved a good, bipartisan bill that maintains the principles that have made this program effective," he said. "Obviously, our hope is now that the House will act quickly and send the bill reauthorizing PEPFAR to the Senate, and I'd like to sign it into law as quickly as possible," he added.

Separately, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved on March 13 its version of a bill to reauthorize PEPFAR.

The full text of President Bush's February 28 press conference is available online at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/02/20080228-2.html>.

## President Bush Discusses February 2008 Trip to Africa



During a speech delivered on February 28, 2008 before the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation in Washington D.C., President George W. Bush discussed the six-day trip that he and Mrs. Bush made to Africa. He also treated his audience to a slideshow. The slideshow, assembled by White House photographers, covered scenes from all five of the countries visited: Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, and Liberia.

Commenting on the response of Africans to his visit, President Bush said: "Throughout our trip, Laura and I were overwhelmed by the outpouring of warmth and affection for the American people." President Bush added: "Again and again, we heard the same words: 'Thank you.' Thank you for sparing lives from malaria and HIV/AIDS. Thank you for training teachers and bringing books to schools. Thank you for investing in infrastructure and helping our economies grow."

President Bush also discussed the importance of PEPFAR-supported facilities. He singled out the HIV/AIDS clinic at the Amana District Hospital in Tanzania. "I was struck by the devotion and the professionalism of the clinic's staff," he said. "They spoke proudly about the rigorous training they received, and the meticulous way they instruct patients on how to take their medicine... This is helping extend lives, reduce the stigma of HIV/AIDS, and build the health infrastructure that will save many more lives in the future."

In addition, President Bush mentioned meeting



White House photo by Eric Draper

President Bush meets with staff members at the PEPFAR-supported Amana District Hospital in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

students and their parents at a PEPFAR-supported school in Rwanda. "This is a scene at the most popular club at the school -- which is the anti-AIDS club," he said, describing a slide.

A transcript of President Bush's speech is available online at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/02/20080226.html>.

A slideshow containing images from President and Mrs. Bush's trip to Africa is also available online at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/slideshow/africaslides.html>.

## 2008 HIV/AIDS Implementers' Meeting to Highlight Progress and Lessons Learned in Programming



HIV/AIDS implementers from around the world will gather in Kampala, Uganda, from June 3-7 for the 2008 HIV/AIDS Implementers' Meeting. The meeting, which recognizes the rapid expansion of HIV/AIDS programs worldwide, will focus on building the capacity of local prevention, treatment, and care programs; enhancing quality; and promoting coordination among partners.

"The achievements in the global response to HIV/AIDS in recent years are rooted in the partnerships with host nations to build their systems and to empower individuals, communities and nations to tackle their epidemics," said Ambassador Mark Dybul, PEPFAR Coordinator. "The 2008 Implementers' Meeting is an opportunity for all partners to come together to share ideas to further strengthen the global response."

The theme of the meeting is "Scaling Up Through Partnerships: Overcoming Obstacles to Implementation." A total of 1,700 attendees are expected, representing governments, non-governmental organizations including faith- and community-based groups, multilateral organizations, the private sector, and

groups of people living with HIV/AIDS. Through presentations, dialogue and networking, participants will identify critical barriers and share information that will directly impact HIV/AIDS program implementation in the coming years.

"The experience in Uganda in fighting HIV/AIDS is a true reflection of the meeting's theme," said Dr Kihumuro Apuuli, Director General of the Uganda AIDS Commission. "Uganda's achievements in fighting the epidemic cannot be attributed to a single stakeholder or even a cluster of stakeholders, but the collective efforts of all."

Building on the 2007 Implementers' Meeting held in Kigali, Rwanda, the meeting is hosted by the Government of Uganda and is once again sponsored by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; UNAIDS; UNICEF; the World Bank; the World Health Organization; and the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS.

Meeting information and registration are available online at: <http://www.hivimplementers.com>.