

## **GLOBAL HEALTH PROGRESS HOSTS 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL DELEGATION OF SENIOR AFRICAN HEALTH OFFICIALS TO WASHINGTON, DC.**

Global Health Progress (GHP) hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual African Health Delegation visit of senior African health officials to Washington, DC, from June 21 to 25, 2010. The officials came from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa and Swaziland, and engaged with a broad range of US stakeholders engaged in African health issues, including officials from the Obama Administration, members of Congress, and representatives from the private sector, NGOs, foundations and universities.

In addition to sharing their experiences, expertise and insights from the front lines of the battle against disease in Africa, the delegates reported on successful public private partnerships and explored how innovative new partnerships could promote sustainable health systems on the continent. As the Obama Administration advances its new Global Health Initiative (GHI) with its focus on country-driven programs, US policy makers and business and NGO leaders were eager to hear directly from African health leaders about their health priorities as well as how the delegates felt resources from the GHI could be most effectively mobilized.

### **African Health Delegation and Private Sector Partners Discuss Building Successful Collaborations**

On Monday, June 21, Mr. Brian Toohey, Senior Vice President at PhRMA, welcomed the delegation to Washington and emphasized the importance to US policymakers and private sector partners of hearing the African perspective on how best to address the continent's health challenges. He invited the delegates to take the lead in telling key players in the pharmaceutical industry what they consider priorities in their respective countries and how they think partnerships can best be deployed to address these priorities.

Ms. Christine Bugos, Senior Director, International Affairs, sanofi-aventis, gave a presentation about the company's partnership with the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi) to develop and distribute ASAQ, the first anti-malarial treatment to specifically target some of the poorest patients in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular children.

Dr. Jerry Zeldis, CEO of Celgene, spoke about Celgene's Global Health program, founded in 2009 to develop and fund technologies and products to fight a host of neglected tropical diseases.

Mr. Michael Joyner, Director of HIV & AIDS Programs for Positive Action of ViiV Healthcare Ltd., gave a presentation about the company's collaboration with biopharmaceutical research companies GlaxoSmithKline and Pfizer to help communities affected by HIV and AIDS. The partnership provides support for vulnerable populations and identifies gaps in existing health care. Current programs exist in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa.

Mr. Kris Natarajan, Director, Global Partnerships at Merck, outlined a number of partnerships the company has in Africa, including the Gardasil Access Program that

extends vaccination to protect girls in 19 participating sub-Saharan African countries against the virus that causes cervical cancer, and the African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnerships (ACHAPS) which is a collaboration between Merck, the Government of Botswana and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The African delegates were given the opportunity to comment on these and other partnerships, highlighting what made such collaborations successful and sharing with representatives of pharmaceutical companies opportunities for new partnerships.

Among the keys to success mentioned by Dr. Nomonde Xundu, Health Attaché, Embassy of South Africa, were political commitment by government partners and strong support at the community level. Dr. Ngozi Obike-Azodoh of the Nigerian Ministry of Health also stressed the importance of integrating public-private programs into the host country's national health system.

### **Delegation Discusses Building Sustainable Alliances with Private Sector and NGO Leaders to Combat Chronic, Non-communicable Diseases.**

At a private dinner discussion on Monday, June 21, Dr. Robert Einterz, Associate Dean of the Indiana University School of Medicine, Ms. Loyce Pace Bass, Director of Regional Programs, American Cancer Society, and Mr. Ken Thorpe, Executive Director, Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, led a discussion on how the public-private partnership model could be employed to fight non-communicable diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes.

Dr. Einterz described the 20-year-old AMPATH partnership in Kenya between the Schools of Medicine at Indiana University and Moi University which began as a joint effort to develop leaders in health care for both the US and Kenya, and which has grown to provide treatment and prevention for HIV/AIDS, testing for HIV and tuberculosis, the distribution of bed nets to prevent malaria, food and income security programs and care for orphans and vulnerable children.

Ms. Bass outlined the work done by the American Cancer Society under its Africa Cancer Information and Advocacy Initiative to address the rising cancer burden on the continent. The society has held several workshops in Africa to help local NGOs establish successful cancer control and awareness programs.

Mr. Thorpe spoke about how life style changes in Africa were leading to a rise in chronic non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, as well as the devastating economic impact of these diseases. The group discussed ways to raise awareness among African populations about the dangers of less healthy life styles, including partnerships that would bring models used in the US to African countries.

### **US Government Briefings on Critical Health Challenges and Initiatives**

On Tuesday, June 22, key members of the global health teams at the US Agency for International Development, Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control, briefed the delegates on the Obama Administration's Global Health Initiative. The delegation expressed deep gratitude for the new initiative, which has

committed \$63 billion over six years to help partner countries improve health outcomes through strengthened health systems - with a particular focus on improving the health of women, newborns and children through programs including infectious disease, nutrition, maternal and child health, and safe water. Officials were especially pleased that the GHI was focusing on supporting country-driven programs that strengthened national health systems, rather than supporting programs focused on single diseases.

On Thursday, June 24, the delegation met with Ms. Ann Gavaghan, Chief of Staff, at the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC). Members of the delegation lauded US investments under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in treating and preventing HIV/AIDS in Africa and praised the new PEPFAR strategy's emphasis on country ownership.

Following the meeting at OGAC on Thursday, the delegates held a meeting at the State Department with Jennifer Klein and Rachel Vogelstein, Senior Advisors in the newly-established Office of Global Women's Issues. They were briefed on the vital role of the Office of Global Women's Issues, and shared successes and challenges in promoting gender equality and empowering women in their own countries.

### **African Health Delegates Meet at the Headquarters of the African Union with US government and NGO Partners to Discuss Combating Counterfeit Drugs**

At a roundtable discussion on Tuesday, June 22, hosted by the African Union Mission in Washington, DC, and the George Washington University Center for Health and Human Security, members of the health delegation shared ideas with US government, NGO and private sector representatives on how to work together both regionally and internationally to combat the flood of counterfeit and substandard drugs that are costing hundreds of thousands of lives each year in Africa.

Dr. John Ayres, Medical Director at Eli Lilly, said that while the technology to detect fake drugs was improving, it was still necessary to "create a package of solutions" that attacked the problem all along the distribution chain.

The African delegates said they were committed to working regionally to solve the problem and called on the African Union to take the lead in working with governments to harmonize regulatory mechanisms to police counterfeits. Dr. Vishal Patel from the US State Department spoke about the importance of government-to-government programs to give technical assistance to customs departments and to help African governments develop strong enforcement of anti-counterfeiting laws.

Other speakers included Dr. Chinua Akukwe, the Chair of the Technical Board at the GW Center for Health and Human Security; Dr. Vincent Ahonkhai from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; and Mr. Tom Woods, President, Woods International, LLC.

### **African Officials Brief Members of Congress on Successful Public-Private Partnerships**

On Wednesday, June 23, members of the health delegation met with a number of members of Congress and their staff to brief them on the role of public-private health

partnerships in Africa and were invited to share their insights with legislators on how the US could best deploy its resources to make the most positive impact on African health challenges. Among the members of Congress that the delegation met with were Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA), Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Rep. Brad Miller (D-NC) and Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN).

The delegation also attended a private roundtable meeting chaired by Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ), chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, and attended by Jim Geraghty, Senior Vice President, Genzyme, Kavita Bali, Senior Manager, Pfizer Inc., Tiffany Atwell, Director, Government Affairs, Abbott Laboratories, Dr. Jerry Zeldis, CEO, Celgene, and Carol Spahn, Executive Director, Accordia Global Health Foundation. Rep. Jackson Lee, Rep. Chris Smith and Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA) also participated in the discussion.

The delegation thanked legislators for the generous health funding provided under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Obama Administration's Global Health Initiative (GHI), particularly in light of the global economic recession.

Rep. Payne told the delegation that he was preparing to introduce legislation to increase US support for higher education to help alleviate the shortage of trained medical personnel in Africa.

### **GHP, ONE, and the African-American Unity Caucus Host Reception for Health Delegation**

Global Health Progress (GHP), the anti-poverty group ONE, and the African-American Unity Caucus, which seeks to mobilize the African Diaspora behind initiatives to advance African development, hosted a reception on Wednesday, June 23, at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill to welcome the African health delegation to Washington and celebrate public-private partnerships in health. Also welcoming the delegation were members of Congress, the African Diplomatic Corps and representatives from NGOs, foundations and the business community.

Speaking at the reception, Mr. Chris Singer, President International of Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), a founding member of GHP, estimated that pharmaceutical companies, working in partnership with governments, foundations and NGOs, had so far given an estimated \$9.2 billion in donations and in-kind services to the developing world.

“What it all comes down to is searching for sustainable solutions and progress. GHP tries to convene some of the best minds in the world around health solutions,” he said.

Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI) spoke about how important it was for the US to support health programs in Africa. “Africa matters a lot for three reasons,” she said. “Demographics, demographics, demographics. Whether we are talking about trade or security, it all hearkens back to health in Africa.”

She emphasized the importance of backing sustained funding for African health programs in spite of the global economic recession. “HIV doesn’t care about deficits. Maternal mortality doesn’t care about deficits,” Rep. Moore said.

Speaking on behalf of the delegation, Dr. Ngozi Obike-Azodoh, Assistant Director, Planning, Research and Statistics at the Nigerian Ministry of Health, thanked the American people for their generosity in providing historic levels of funding for African health programs, and expressed particular gratitude for the new focus of the Global Health Initiative (GHI) on building African health systems and supporting country-led programs.

“The GHI is as if it were written by Africans. We couldn’t have done a better job,” she said. “There is a need to maintain sustainability and strengthen our health systems. While programs focused on specific diseases would collapse without funding, it is very important that there is funding to sustain a country’s health system. Innovative financing and public private partnerships are also critical and those partnerships should be equal and mutually beneficial.”

### **African Health Officials Join US Stakeholders in Roundtable Discussion on Millennium Development Goals**

At a roundtable discussion on Thursday, June 24, hosted by GHP and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the members of the health delegation shared their experiences in working to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Dr. Kolaatamo Malefho, Permanent Secretary at the Botswana Ministry of Health described how his country is finding it challenging to meet the health-related MDGs by the 2015 deadline in spite of its middle income status. Among the challenges faced by all African countries, he said, are high rates of HIV infection, a lack of adequately trained staff, weak health systems and under funding for the health sector. Dr. Malefho added that the goals were attainable but only with the help of partnerships and collaboration.

### **African Health Delegation Visits Pfizer Laboratory in Groton, Connecticut**

On Friday, June 25, the delegation visited the Pfizer Global Research and Development facilities in Groton, Connecticut. The delegation was welcomed by the Pfizer team and Dr. Ann Jernigan, Vice President of World Wide Comparative Medicine at Pfizer, who gave the delegates an introduction to Pfizer’s role as a research facility and as a global biopharmaceutical business. Pfizer representatives reviewed the company’s long-standing partnership programs in Africa. Delegates and Pfizer officials also engaged in discussions around health systems strengthening and access to medicines. Jernigan reiterated that patents provide funding for continued research and underscored Pfizer’s commitment social responsibility and its continued desire to engage with the community.

The delegates then visited the diabetes research lab where they met with Associate Research Fellow Bryan Goodwin, who shared insights on developments in diabetes

control, prevention, and treatment. The delegates shared their views on the rise in diabetes and other non-communicable diseases in Africa. The delegation was also briefed on antibiotics by Dr. Paul Miller, Vice President of the Antibacterials Research Unit at Pfizer. Dr. Miller engaged the delegation in discussion on recent findings in the treatment of drug resistant tuberculosis. He added that Pfizer has testing centers in South Africa and was expecting to advance in this area of research. In the afternoon session Greg Kauffman, a Senior Principal Scientist in the Neurosciences Research Unit, demonstrated how molecular chemists used 3D modeling programs to conceptualize new drugs for retarding the onset of Alzheimer's.