

## SWHAP Southern Africa Regional Newsletter April 2014

### World TB Day

Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* which most commonly affects the lungs. TB is easily spread from person to person via droplets in the air when a person with the active respiratory disease coughs or sneezes. As much as one third of the world's population has latent TB, which means they have been infected by the bacteria but do not have the active tuberculosis disease. In 2012, 1.3 million people died of TB, 95% of these deaths occurred in low to medium income countries (WHO). The risk of TB is greater in people suffering from conditions that impair the immune system such as HIV and TB is the major cause of death among people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa.

TB mostly affects the productive segment of society with serious economic consequences. An employee with TB may lose an average of 3-4 months of work and income. As for businesses operating in high prevalence settings, TB is bad news, as sick workers mean reduced productivity, absenteeism and associated costs (Stop TB). The good news is that TB is treatable and curable for a relatively low cost. The workplace is an ideal arena to raise public awareness on the disease and ensure that employees suffering from the disease have access to screening and treatment. Prompt diagnosis and early treatment is beneficial as it curbs absenteeism and reduces the likelihood of transmission to other workers.

To commemorate World Tuberculosis day, held annually on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, Scania Botswana used their lunchtime awareness sessions to raise awareness on the prevention treatment and care of TB. They were also joined by an expert from the Ministry of Health in Botswana who shared on the latest prevention and treatment strategies.

### Ironman Challenge

Congratulations to Ian Bagshaw, Managing Director of Sandvik Zimbabwe who completed the gruelling Ironman Challenge in a time of 12 hours, nine

minutes and 26 seconds. The Ironman Triathlon is a long distance race consisting of a 3.8 km swim, 180km bike ride and 42.2km run. Ian Bagshaw was fortunate to be part of "Team Smiddy" (<http://www.smiddy.org.au/>) an amazing group of people that raise funds for research into the causes, prevention and improved treatments of cancer. Raising the profile of cancer is a cause close to the hearts of those at Sandvik. In the last two years the Sandvik HIV and Wellness programme has supported two members of staff who were diagnosed with cancer to full recovery. The two employees are now cancer ambassadors at Sandvik sharing information on the importance of regular check-ups and early detection.



*Ian Bagshaw at the Ironman Challenge in Perth Australia*

In more news from Sandvik Zimbabwe, the company launched their second supply chain programme in February. Three companies, Servcor, Dairyhill and Bindura Nickel will be mentored by Sandvik to set up HIV and Wellness programmes.

At a recent management sensitisation session, management from the supply chain companies expressed their excitement about the programme's focus on promoting proactive health seeking behaviours amongst their respective workforces.

The Swedish Workplace HIV and AIDS Programme (SWHAP) is a long-term strategy to support the response to HIV and AIDS at Swedish related workplaces in sub-Saharan Africa. SWHAP is a joint programme between the International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR) and the Swedish Industrial and Metalworkers' Union (IF Metall). It is financially supported by Sida and Norad.

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### On the radio

Edith Maziofa the Southern Africa Regional Coordinator and Boitshepo Balowzi from Scania Botswana were featured on local radio stations in January and February respectively creating awareness on policy development and the benefits of HIV and AIDS programmes. Radio is accessible to many people and is a great medium to share information on HIV and wellness, helping to change perceptions and attitudes.



*Boitshepo Balozwi on Duma FM*

### Workplace Management System

SWHAP in Zimbabwe is part of the technical committee working towards developing a new standard for the management of HIV and wellness in the workplace. Once complete, workplaces will be able to use the standard to bench mark against best practice.

### Atlas Copco Zambia Environmental Health Initiative

Atlas Copco Zambia recently received a certificate of registration from the Zambian government for their corporate social responsibility initiative "Water for All" through which they have adopted a local community, sinking boreholes to ensure access to safe drinking water. According to the World Health Organisation, safer water supplies could prevent 1.4 million child deaths from diarrhoea and 500,000 deaths from malaria annually. Initiatives such as these are some of the reasons why Atlas Copco is ranked amongst the top sustainable companies in the world. ([Atlas Copco Global 100](#))

### Community Outreach-Revco Zimbabwe

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February Revco Peer Educators, provided training on potato sack farming and HIV and wellness outreach to 284 ward councillors, in

Zvishavane. This was at the invitation of the Senator for Midlands Lillian Timveous, who is also the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Thematic Committee on HIV and AIDS.

The Revco Peer Educators presented information on the major drivers of HIV and conducted Bridges of Hope exercises. 6000 male condoms and 300 female condoms were distributed in the beer halls and night clubs surrounding the training venue. Information and posters on human trafficking were also distributed. This is amid concerns that the declining socio-economic situation in Zimbabwe is fuelling human trafficking with many young women being lured into the commercial sex trade.

This community outreach initiative is an extension of the Revco HIV & AIDS and Wellness Programme. Increasingly workplace programmes are looking at health in a holistic manner, addressing factors influencing physical, psychological and societal health, recognising that good health is not just the absence of disease. Part of this focus also includes financial health an important aspect of wellness. Revco Peer Educators use potato sack farming training (a low cost initiative that boots household food security as well as generating extra income) as platform for sharing information on health and wellness.



*Kedious Mphiningo from Revco talking to participants in Zvishavane*

### Condolences

Sad news from Sandvik Zimbabwe, who lost one of their Peer Educators in January. Solomon Buwe will be sorely missed. Condolences to his family and the Sandvik Zimbabwe Team.

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