

MOHSS and UNDP honours TB survey field operators

In 2017, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Namibia, in partnership with the Global Fund, issued its support for the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) for the first ever Tuberculosis (TB) Disease Prevalence Survey Project (DPS) in the country.



Over 60 health professionals and support staff were recruited and inducted for the project.

UNDP has maintained a strong partnership with the Namibian government over the years, providing support in the implementation of programmes targeted at improving access to quality health care, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #3: Good Health and Well Being.

The 2017/2018 TB Disease Prevalence Survey was conducted from July to December 2017, with the aim of ascertaining the prevalence of TB cases in Namibia. Additionally, random sampling was conducted on 34 000 people, ranging from 15 years upwards, from 68 clusters of about 500 adults, representing both the rural and urban population.

The survey, which was in the pipeline for about 12 years, would not have come to fruition without the efforts and commitment of the 55 field operator champions who conducted and collected data throughout the survey period.

On Thursday, 29 March 2018, MOHSS and UNDP hosted an event to thank the champions, who despite working under extreme conditions, maintained their professionalism and ensured that the survey was completed on time.

“It wasn’t always easy”, said Lucia Sakaria, Senior Data Clerk on the survey. She continued, “One of the main challenges we faced were transportation issues. Often three teams would be using one vehicle in an area and it was difficult for us to coordinate properly at times”.

However, the experience also proved to be beneficial to Sakaria, who noted that she reveled in the opportunity to see more of the country and meet people from all walks of life.

“I thought I could communicate with people very well but after this experience I realised that I need to learn several languages”, said Sakaria.

Lastly, Sakaria noted that she really appreciated the one month training session they received, which took place at the Gateway Centre in Windhoek. During the training session, the champions were taught interpersonal and team building skills, which Sakaria and the others will carry with

them into their next phase of life. They were also grateful for the experience they gained from the survey management team.

“First and foremost, UNDP was a great employer, and I felt I always had the support I needed from my supervisors and leaders. I am grateful for the opportunity I was given and I believe that greater opportunities lie ahead because of this experience”, said Irish Gorah, Survey Coordinator.

Though the event was meant to show appreciation for the hard work carried out by the champions during the survey, they also expressed their gratitude for the new sense of empowerment they felt. Through this experience, they will reenter the workforce with more confidence, due to the training and new skill sets that they now possess.