

FALL 2009

TouchFoundation

Events in New York and London Honor President Kikwete and other Vital Tanzanian Partners

At a September 23 dinner in New York hosted by the Touch Foundation and sponsored by Barrick Gold, the guest of honor, His Excellency President Jakaya M. Kikwete, thanked us for our support and asked guests to “continue to assist the Touch Foundation...Train the doctors who are going to save so many lives – the many people who are dying of diseases that can be eliminated.”

Events on both sides of the Atlantic this fall highlighted our close partnerships with the Tanzanian and US governments as well as with private sector partners committed to Tanzania.

At the dinner, the Tanzanian President, who was in town for the UN General Assembly, noted, “So many women are dying in the process of giving life to another human being. That is the most unfair way of dying. But we have the commitment to do something. We cannot give up.”



H.E. President Jakaya M. Kikwete addressed guests at the NY Touch Foundation dinner in NY.

Touch Foundation President Lowell Bryan expressed admiration for Kikwete’s leadership in the high priority he has assigned to healthcare access for all Tanzanians, including those in the most rural and hard-to-reach areas. The government has pledged to build thousands of new health centers to ensure no one is more than five kilometers from medical care.

Guests at the New York event also included Eric Goosby, US Global AIDS Coordinator; H.E. Augustine Mahiga, Permanent Representative of Tanzania to the UN; and Honorable Professor David Mwakuyusa, Tanzania’s Minister of Health and Social Welfare. Representatives from foundations, media, nonprofits, academia, and corporations interested in Tanzania also attended.

The evening’s theme was the synergy created in bringing members from the nonprofit, public and private sectors together to achieve more efficient and wider access to healthcare in Tanzania.

Jeff Sturchio, President and CEO of the Global Health Council, spoke to this issue when he stated, “The Touch Foundation has taken a private sector perspective on understanding how to measure the returns on investment and an analytical approach to systems development to ... improve health in Tanzania and by extension, to other countries. They have actually been able to accomplish more through partnerships than the partners could do on their own.”

Just one week later, the Touch Foundation held a complementary event in London, hosted by the Tanzanian High Commissioner, demonstrating our growing presence on the other side of the Atlantic. Touch Founda-

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New Executive Director and Program Director Bring New Assets to Touch Foundation

This spring we announced the promotion of Lee Wells, formerly Director of External Affairs, to Executive Director, and welcomed Feizin Amlani as our new Program Director in Tanzania.

Before coming to the Touch Foundation, Lee was Head of Global Access to Medicines Policy at Novartis, where he was responsible for the company's malaria initiative in Africa. Previously, his roles included Director of Corporate Affairs for Novartis and Senior Health Adviser and Chief Press Officer for a political party in the UK Parliament.

Lee oversees the Foundation's strategic direction and manages staff in London, Mwanza and New York. In particular, he has helped to strengthen relationships with the US Government and corporations such as Barrick Gold.

Feizin joined the Foundation after serving most recently as Country Director in Afghanistan for the nonprofit, Children in Crisis, where she managed 80 staff and oversaw programs dedicated to education and children's rights.

As Program Director, Feizin manages our activities on the ground in Tanzania by providing financial, administrative and procurement support to Weill Bugando; maintaining relationships with and identifying new partners; and collaborating with Weill Bugando leadership, faculty and students to expand the capacity of the school and teaching hospital.

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tion Executive Director, Lee Wells, shared early plans to create a regional training program in the Lake Zone region and Dominic Barton, Managing Director of McKinsey & Company, spoke to the firm's growing commitment to work in Africa. This event marked the first in a series of gatherings in the UK, building towards a large gala dinner scheduled to take place in March of 2010.

A video of President Kikwete's speech can be found on touchfoundation.org by clicking on "News & Resources" and "Films" under the menu at the top.

Touch Foundation Facilitates Visit to Weill Bugando for Members of US Congress

The Touch Foundation hosted two US Congresswomen from California, Representatives Lynn Woolsey and Zoe Lofgren, when they visited Weill Bugando's medical school and teaching hospital in April.

CARE – one of the largest humanitarian organizations – arranged the trip as part of a US Congressional "Learning Tour" funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The ongoing tour aims to cultivate "global health champions" or advocates in Congress. Dr. Helene Gayle, President of CARE USA and chair of the US Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, joined the trip.

The Touch Foundation was pleased to facilitate the Bugando trip, which helped to further the US Government's awareness of the need, and our work, in Tanzania. To date, we have received \$2.25 million from the US Agency for International Development to address the shortage of health workers in Tanzania as part of the fight against AIDS and other diseases.



From left to right: Representatives Woolsey and Lofgren; Bugando medical students, Athuman and Hassan; staff from Ministry of Health; Bugando resident, Dr. Stella Mongella; President of CARE USA, Dr. Helene Gayle; former Touch Foundation staff, Amanda Rawls; CARE staff, Sarah Lynch. Photo courtesy of CARE.

In addition to touring the hospital, the Congresswomen met with MD, Nursing and Assistant Medical Officer students, as well as faculty. They said they were struck by the students' strong ambition to improve healthcare in Tanzania.

The Congresswomen have drawn attention to the health worker shortage in Africa since their return to the US. In particular, Representative Woolsey, who serves on the

House Foreign Affairs Committee and its Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, has spoken about the urgent need to strengthen healthcare in Africa during recent Congressional hearings.

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In his own words...

An excerpt of a letter to the Touch Foundation from Medical Student, Omare Boniface Atandi

Boniface is a second year MD student at Weill Bugando University. He and other students continue to fulfill their dreams to become health workers through the Touch Foundation's Weill Bugando Scholarship Fund.



“Born in a poor family with no hopes, I grew up in one of the villages in the country, which was faced with natural disasters. Life would seem to be normal even though people were dying of diseases that can be cured, but because of a lack of doctors and personnel, dying was a daily song.

When I was nine, there was an outbreak of cholera and people in my village died from this. Humanity was in no man's mind.

I wanted to become a doctor when I was ten. What hurt me most

was when I watched close family members die because of lack of access to treatment. The truth is, there was no doctor or hospital facility to assist them.

My neighbor died while delivering on the roadside next to our house while I was watching her without help. Both girls and boys [bled to death as a result of traditional circumcision performed] by people without any knowledge about what they were doing. I remember seeing my mother use cow dung as treatment after cutting an umbilical cord from a baby! And you can imagine what most of the outcomes were. But neither you nor I can blame them!

After performing well in secondary school, I was like the hero in my village community... I was supposed to join university to study medicine (MD), but it was absolutely impossible because money was needed to pay fees,

accommodation and food.

I [finally] got a person in the city who told me he would help me study clinical medicine, which I did study for three years. I became a clinical officer and started helping people greatly in my village and even in the next seven villages because I was the only clinical officer (not doctor) for more than 5,000 people.

I was moved to a mission hospital, where I worked for quite some time. But the problem is there were so many diseases that I didn't know because I wasn't a fully qualified doctor.

After I heard of the Touch Foundation and Weill Bugando University, I applied and really prayed for God to help me to be chosen. To me, it was a miracle. I was admitted to Weill Bugando. To my village, it's a celebration and during this holiday vacation I am going back to continue treating them.

I wish that you all could come and see what you have done for us. We are now an asset to our communities and even to the whole country. Presently, because of your contribution, I see a future working back in my home village and improving Tanzania.”

Let's Take That Discussion Online!

This summer we launched *Who Cares?* – The Campaign to Train 90,000 Health Workers. The Campaign's blog encourages volunteers, Tanzanian health workers, staff, and others to contribute their thoughts on healthcare issues in Africa.

The blog features a different theme each month. In October, the blog examined traditional versus western medicine. This month, we are looking at “brain drain”

and attrition and how to encourage health professionals to practice healthcare in their home country. Interestingly, health workers in Tanzania are less likely to emigrate compared to those in other African countries. Leave a comment anytime, or e-mail Emily_Bell@mckinsey.com to write a post.

To visit the blog, go to whocarescampaign.org and click “Blog” on the menu at the top.

Behind the scenes... **“The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer” Features Touch Foundation**

In a special segment about the shortage of doctors in Tanzania, *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* reported on the impact of the Touch Foundation’s efforts to train new health workers at Weill Bugando’s university and teaching hospital.

The show, which aired in September, featured the Tanzanian Minister of Health, Honorable Professor David Mwakuyusa, Touch Foundation Executive Director, Lee Wells, Bugando medical students, and a visiting doctor from Weill Cornell Medical School, Dr. Robert Peck, who is supported by the Touch Foundation.

The show was the first in *The NewsHour’s* three-part Tanzanian healthcare series that included segments on malaria control and laboratory capacity. In July, the PBS crew spent ten days on the ground filming and researching the three topics. Touch Foundation staff



The NewsHour Senior Correspondent Ray Suarez (far right) conducted an interview with a public health advocate in Tanzania. Photo courtesy of *The NewsHour*.

organized all aspects of the filming at Kahama District Hospital and Bugando and arranged interviews with the Minister of Health, the District Medical Officer, as well as with administrators, professors and students at Bugando.

The NewsHour’s coverage of Tanzanian health issues was part of a three-year project funded by a \$3.5 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to promote “in-depth, balanced news coverage of major global health issues and humanitarian emergencies.”

The NewsHour team indicated that PBS received a lot of positive

feedback after the three segments aired. Viewers commented that they felt coverage of development issues in Africa often sends a discouraging message; in this case, however, viewers felt heartened by the positive action and commitment to address the shortage of health workers. In fact, a number of viewers became new donors to the Touch Foundation immediately after seeing the segment.

The nine-minute video segment from the The NewsHour can be found on touchfoundation.org by clicking on “News & Resources” and “Films” under menu at the top.