



## Continuum of Care for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS in Tanzania (CHAT)

### Background

In the United Republic of Tanzania an estimated one in every 218 persons needs palliative care services.<sup>1</sup> However, the Government of Tanzania recognises that a gap exists in palliative care in HIV / AIDS services for those in need, particularly in home-based care (HBC) for people living with HIV / AIDS (PLWHAs) and support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC).

The Continuum of Care for People Living with HIV/AIDS in Tanzania (CHAT) is a New Partners Initiative (NPI) collaborative project funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and awarded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to the Foundation for Hospices in Sub-Saharan Africa (FHSSA). FHSSA's partners on the project are the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) and the African Palliative Care Association (APCA). The aim of CHAT is to scale up existing HBC and OVC programmes by adding a palliative care component. Moreover, it intends to reach populations in remote and underserved geographical areas of the country and help create a continuum of care by linking with existing treatment programmes.

The ELCT will oversee and implement the CHAT activities over the 3-year project period through its network of 18 Lutheran hospitals dispersed across the country. One of the 18 hospitals, Selian Lutheran Hospital in Arusha, will be enhanced to be the model palliative care / HBC programme to be replicated at the 17 other sites. In each expansion region, palliative care / HBC activities will be linked with existing HIV / AIDS programmes, whilst the ELCT will lead the palliative care training with the assistance of APCA, the Tanzanian National AIDS Control Programme, and the Selian staff. Lastly, the Tanzanian Palliative Care Association, an umbrella organization for palliative care providers in Tanzania, will function in an advisory capacity to CHAT.

The ELCT will also facilitate the involvement of local parishes throughout the Lutheran Dioceses of Tanzania through a model programme called Every Church a Caring Church (ECCC), which is already in operation at Selian Lutheran Hospital. Through ECCC, parish volunteers are identified and trained as community caregivers. This grassroots, church-based mobilisation extends into communities to recruit volunteers who are reflective of the communities they serve, thus promoting cultural sensitivity and assuring a broad reach.

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization (2004) *A Community Health Approach to Palliative Care for HIV/AIDS and Cancer Patients in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Geneva: World Health Organization (<http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2004/9241591498.pdf>). This extrapolated figure underestimates the true extent of the need for palliative care in the country as it only includes people requiring terminal care, thereby excluding those suffering from a life-limiting illness but not dying that same year, and omits other diseases other than HIV/AIDS or cancer.

## **Project goals**

CHAT's overall goals are to:

- Increase the number of PLWHA, including OVC, that receive holistic palliative care as part of a continuum of services;
- Provide comprehensive and compassionate care to OVC;
- Increase the capacity of the Selian Lutheran Hospital and the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) to become palliative care training centres;
- Lay the foundation for ongoing quality initiatives throughout the ECLT health system through effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

All activities are designed to promote capacity-building among indigenous partners and to create sustainability for palliative care services as part of the continuum of care in Tanzania.

## **Project outcomes**

There will be two major thematic deliverables for the CHAT NPI project: service delivery; and indigenous capacity-building.

### **(i) Service delivery**

- Approximately 12,015 new PLWHAs will be identified and served by the project.
- A total of 27,034 new OVC will be identified and served by the project.

### **(ii) Indigenous capacity-building**

- Building sustainable community capacity and engaging approximately 800 congregations of the Lutheran Church in the ECCC initiative.
- Recruiting, training and deploying 540 community volunteers as part of palliative care / HBC service delivery teams.
- Training 68 professional staff to participate in the palliative care / HBC teams through the Selian Lutheran Hospital, who will serve as a model and a source of palliative care training and mentoring in Tanzania.
- Developing an inpatient palliative care consultation and teaching service at KCMC that will train 50 clinicians in its initial phase.

## **APCA's involvement in the project**

As the second FHSSA sub-grantee on this project, APCA is charged with providing monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) expert input. The MER system to be used in the CHAT project will draw upon a combination of the best practices being used for palliative care in Africa today

and state-of-the-art data collection methodologies to track the progress of the project efficiently and promote quality reporting during the grant period and into the future.

The MER system refers to a documented framework that the various managers involved in this multi-organisational project can use to ensure that they are achieving change. More specifically, it entails a systematic process of data collection, analysis and quality assurance that enables the managers to track the efficiency with which the project is being implemented and the effectiveness of its impact, by providing feedback on the progress of the project's activities, the challenges encountered, the successes achieved, and the lessons learnt.

In developing this MER system, APCA will undertake, in collaboration with its project partners, the following activities:

- Conduct a stakeholder audience data needs analysis
- Develop the project's results framework
- Develop a logistical framework (log frame) to supplement the results framework
- Develop the overall project indicators and indicator protocols
- Design data collection tools to capture the project indicator information
- Develop a comprehensive data quality management plan

### **Stakeholder benefits from APCA's MER work**

The ELCT and other local stakeholders involved in this project stand to benefit from APCA's MER work by the:

- Acquisition of new knowledge and skills in MER (capacity building) for staff and partners.
- Creation of a pool of MER-trained trainers-of-trainers sufficiently skilled to teach their colleagues in the appreciation and use of MER in palliative care in Tanzania.
- Increased access to new advantageous technology (i.e. web-based M&E systems, MIS systems / databases).
- Acquisition of, and exposure to, new or improved technical infrastructure (i.e. computers, Personal Digital Assistants [PDAs], etc.).
- Project potentially forming the basis for more substantial opportunities for networking and partnership formation in MER within the Eastern African region among palliative care organisations and practitioners.

### **A new dawn for palliative care MER in Africa**

The MER capacity building component of the CHAT project promises to act as a launch-pad to the development of a wider MER agenda for APCA and its partners in palliative care across the continent. However, this is not simply achieved by the introduction of sophisticated

technological innovations. Rather the MER capacity-building in Tanzania promises to start challenging the culture of indifference to, and misunderstanding of, the role of MER in palliative care services that will hopefully ultimately lead to improved outcomes for PLWHAs, OVC and their families and informal carers.

**Further information**

African Palliative Care Association – [www.apca.co.ug](http://www.apca.co.ug)

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania – [www.elct.org](http://www.elct.org)

Foundation for Hospices in Sub-Saharan Africa – [www.fhssa.org](http://www.fhssa.org)

Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre – [www.kcmc.ac.tz](http://www.kcmc.ac.tz)

New Partners Initiative – [www.pepfarmpi.gov](http://www.pepfarmpi.gov)

Selian Lutheran Hospital – <http://selianlh.habari.co.tz>

USAID – [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

Tanzanian National AIDS Control Programme – [www.nacptz.org](http://www.nacptz.org)