

Messages From Friends of HDN

Nadine France

Dear friends,

It is with great sadness that I communicate to you all this message.

In February, HDN found out that it will not be receiving its core funding for 2009 which constitutes 70% of total funding.

Since then, we have worked tirelessly to understand the implications of this to programming in 2009 and beyond.

It has now become clear that it is no longer viable for HDN to remain operational and we have put a plan in place to transfer key programmes, and to move towards the closure of HDN by September of this year.



THE HDN FAMILY

As you know, we were very close to finalizing a merger with the International HIV/AIDS Alliance. In light of the loss of core funding it became clear that the merger as it was envisaged and planned was no longer feasible and could no longer go ahead.

However, because of the extent of the integration work we had done together with our colleagues in the Alliance, we will continue with the integration of key programme areas into the Alliance offices, but in a shorter timeframe and with a more limited scope of work. We are very grateful for the support of the Alliance over the past few weeks to help us understand and get clarity on how to move forward. Other partners are also offering support and may be able to house some of our programmes. We are confident that we will ensure that the key tools and approaches of HDN, the KC team being among the most important, will be continued and flourish in new locations and contexts.

The KC team will find a newhome within the Alliance by the end of July. The Alliance, along with our other partners, will continue to support the valuable work you, as KCs, are doing. The stories you share, the people you meet and the work you do will live on.

The KC team is the heart and soul of HDN. It's a phrase in which we at HDN believe strongly. Your voices, your experiences have always guided us and the wider AIDS/TB community and will continue to be heard.

At this moment, we do not have all the answers of what will happen, but we want to assure you that we will continue to support you. We are working very hard to make sure the transfer is as seamless and

effortless for you. We would also appreciate your ideas and suggestions for how it can improve and continue to flourish.

The recent survey you filled out (KC Survey 2009) will now be used to understand the important aspects of the KC program as seen through your eyes. Your comments and suggestions will help position the team for a new and exciting future in which you have all been instrumental. When the survey results are analysed we will share that and hope to engage you all in a meaningful dialogue around it.

We recognize that this will come as a shock to many of you and may be seen as the end of something great, however, we want to let you know that nothing will end for the KCs. The Speak your World mantra will continue, albeit, through a different window.

People are asking, what can we do to support HDN? If you are asking that question, the best way to support is to keep writing! Please keep telling your stories! Please keep speaking your world! HealthDev.net and the KC e-forums will still be your home base for communication and article dissemination for now.

Please let us know how you feel. We are very open to all ideas and suggestions. You can email us or use the KC e-forum.

We are putting a KC communication plan in place for the next few months to make sure that you, as part of the HDN family, are kept informed and can participate in the transfer of the KC programme. We will be here to help you understand the transformation of the KC Team.

We are all very shocked by this quick turn of events, but the staff here in Chiang Mai and in-country are responding with commitment, professionalism and incredible integrity.

So please, share your views on the KC-forum by posting to: KC-forum@eforums.healthdev.org

Lesley Wright will be pleased to answer any questions you have, as will I.

Email addresses are Lesley@hdnet.org and Nadine@hdnet.org

With our best regards from Chiang Mai,

Nadine

Amber Phalen

Dear KCs,

In light of this message from Nadine, I would like to now take the opportunity to say that it has truly been an honor and a privilege to work with you all. While it means a huge change for HDN, as Nadine has stated, we're all very much dedicated to doing all that we can to ensure that the beauty,

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***Nenet Ortega
KC, Philippines***

professionalism, energy and humanity that is the core of the KC Team will continue long into the future.

If anyone would like to keep in touch on a personal basis I can be reached at amberHDN@gmail.com after the first week of April (or now, for that matter!). I've also created on Facebook a Group entitled "Friends of HDN". If you are already on Facebook, feel free to add me as a friend (amber.phalen@gmail.com) and I can send out an invitation to you. Alternately, if you're not on Facebook you can still join this group. Just send me an email with the email address you want me to use and I will send you an invite to this group.

Once again, I'd just like to say a heart-felt thank you for your continued dedication in the struggle against HIV, AIDS, TB, and other health-related issues. Your dedication has been greatly appreciated and we hope that it will continue via the new home of the KC Team.

All the best,

Amber

Nenet L. Ortega

Dear Nadine and to all the dedicated KCs who have been part of the HDN family,

it is indeed SAD to hear this news from Nadine. I myself have been part of the HDN KC team starting in the 1990s. Both sides, HDN, the people who make HDN and the communities that it reaches have learned much from each other. The enormous contribution of the HDN team and the KCs provided shape and guidance to the different sectors and communities in the way HIV/AIDS should be looked at, responded to and addressed. HDN has been in every place wherever there is a need for it to provide assistance and input through the different communication platforms designed in order to get through to the stakeholders. It indeed was a place for WATCH DOGS.

At the current situation, what can be done is to continuously communicate with one another and continuously be watch dogs. On the part of HDN, as what Nadine had said, it should be re-programmed and study the way supports are being provided to organizations by donors.

The new turf of donors in the way they channel funding may be a contributory factor in the support of NGOs and community-based initiatives.... maybe it is time to innovate and study the current donor system. Most importantly for us and our partners is to rally for more support of community-based initiatives, knowledge and information management, and consumers' participation in the overall health systems to strengthen the flavor of the donors.

This is a huge challenge for everyone. Let us look for opportunities in this current challenge that HDN is going through. I am pretty sure that there will be new windows to open up in support of what HDN has started. And I know there will be!

***I'm very sad to
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something even
in this crisis
situation.***

***Yudi Manggala
KC, Indonesia***

Regards to everyone and let us keep on being optimistic that something good will happen- let us make the move!

Cheers,
Nenet

Sheila Coutinho

Dear Nadine,

This is shocking news indeed. I really valued the experience I got working with HDN last year in Mexico and I will be eternally grateful. The team you had were warm and professional especially in handling many of us from the developing countries. Please pass my gratitude to them.

I look forward to the continuation of the KC work.

God bless
Sheila Marunga Coutinho

Dr. Prakash Tyagi

Dear Nadine,

This indeed is very sad news. Over the years, the KC network has been a great learning platform for many of us. I hope the connectivity continues further. I will always be available to the network on tyagiprakash@hotmail.com.

With regards,
Prakash
Director, GRAVIS

Henry Neondo

It is sad. This is hard to fathom. KCs have been a worthy cause and I hope a way out will emerge.
Henry Neondo

Suksma Ratri

Dear Nadine and all HDN staff,
It is indeed really sad to read such news...Apparently the financial crisis had struck most of us. However, we must not lose contact and keep fighting together...

Cheers!
Ratri

Dr Sugata Mukhopadhyay

Dear Friends,

I think the good works of the KCs can be continued through socialization networks like Facebook, Multiply and the existing e-groups.

***I am sure when
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***Michael Kiwonbojjo
KC, Zimbabwe***

When economic recession is hitting hard, we have to be prepared for the funding deficit of this kind, probably for the next couple of years or who knows, maybe more.

So don't worry. This is the part of life in public health.

The suitable strategy might be the old one we popularized in the Indian Navy as a favourite campaign: Much More with Much Less.

I am connected to facebook (sugata64@yahoo.com) and multiply (www.publichealthorg.multiply.com). I am also adding all of you who are already connected to these networks with the reference of your mail in this forum.

If there is a will, there are many ways.

Regards,
Sugata
New Delhi, India

Michael Kiwonbojjo

Dear Nadine,

It is sad indeed. When I read through the email for the first time I could not believe it. But after some reflection I realised that we are living in very trying times.

Needless to say the obvious that HDN has greatly added value to our various work in different countries through information sharing and learning. I am sure when the dust settles there might be some strategies to keep the remaining batteries charged to offer some light.

Please keep the KC family posted as new ideas develop. May God guide you during these uncomfortable times.

Michael Kiwombojjo

Jennifer Bushee

Dear fellow KCs,

I just wrote a note to Nadine and Tim expressing my deep regret. I wanted to write to all of you as well to tell you how much I enjoyed collaborating and learning together. I hope we can keep the KC programme alive through the Alliance or in some other way.

Let us please think about how we can keep our work going.



JIMMY PETER
KC, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Kind regards,
Jennifer

Chheav Aphrya

Dear Nadine and Beloved Colleagues,

I am really so shocked to hear this information. Beloved Colleagues, in the name of a PLHIV and KC in Cambodia I would like to take this opportunity to express my regret with all of you and your families. Truly, KCs in Cambodia and I have just known you in a short time but you have shared and trained us with new knowledge in writing articles and the way PLHIV can advocate to relevant stockholders. Funding is ended but our concept or initiative and best practice is not easy to end.

Respectfully Yours,
Chheav Aphrya,
Technical Assistant,
Khmer HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance

Christopher Mumba Jr.

Hi Nadine, HDN and the KC Team worldwide,

It is with deep regret to learn about this setback. This unfortunate downturn has come at a time when we were in the process of training our members, mostly persons living with HIV in several parts of the country on how to become a KC. Some of the Key Correspondents who have been trained have remarkably improved in the discourse of news gathering and reportage on Partners Zambia eForum through which we have been receiving interesting and informative articles from rural areas.

On the other hand, we house the HDN staff under the same roof for which we have created a formidable partnership for improved harmonization of efforts and an increased number of trained KCs. As a highly qualified journalist who has been living with HIV infection over the past 15 years, a KC and one of the founding members of several organizations that include the Network of African People Living with HIV/AIDS [NAP+] and one of the first National United Nations Volunteers on the UNV/UNAIDS/UNDP pilot project to support people living with HIV/AIDS in Zambia, Malawi and South Africa [RAF97/VO1], I feel greatly stressed about this sad development.

However, there's always a solution to each and every problem and I pray and hope that light could still be visible at the end of the tunnel. I should implore all HDN staff and KCs not to lose hope as something fruitful might emerge sooner or later irrespective of the global recession.

Christopher Mumba, Jr
Treatment Literacy & Communications Officer, TALC

Francisco Rosas

Dear Tim and Nadine and KCs:

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***Dr. Sugata
Mukhopadhyay
KC, India***

I regret to hear that and I wish that the partnership with the Alliance will continue the good work that HDN has done in the past.

I wanted to thank you all for your dedication to the HDN forums.

Francisco Rosas
General Coordinator
Vivir. Participacion, Incidencia y Transparencia, A.C., Mexico

Wika Gofwen

Dear Tim and Nadine and KCs,

It is indeed a very very sad development but as development practitioners we have to come to terms with what has happened. But we must confess that we receive such News with great shock having anticipated the great things that will come as a result of the Alliance.

We must therefore thank all of you for the great job that you have done, are doing and will continue to do as another alternative hangs in the corridor.

Wika Gofwen
Team Leader
Media Network on HIV/AIDS and Development, Nigeria



**GODSWAY SHUMBA – KC, ZIMBABWE
&
MANY DY – KC, CAMBODIA**

Aruna Hewapathirane

Dear Friends,

I personally feel a sense of great loss at the news but that being said I also know for a fact HDN will always BE.

We as KCs were (and still very much are...) the core component that always drove and mobilized communities all over and as long as "we" continue to do what we do I see no reason why all of us cannot still effect the much needed change somehow.

...and why is everybody so sad ? This is not a time to be sad or start feeling sorry for ourselves This is most definitely a turn of events that requires us to come together and BE united in solidarity and do whatever it is we do individually and collectively to continue and carry on the work of HDN somehow with or without funding.

I, for one, am going to start writing and contributing again after a long period of silence, so let us keep the faith and move forward united. We have a pool of vastly

experienced and resilient people here on the KC team and all it takes is that one determined individual to say, "We shall overcome... we shall BE the change!"

My question to you is, "ARE you that person?" How about the rest of you? Is everyone gonna be sad and depressed or are we gonna DO something about this?

Well I am going to do what I can and that is contribute on a regular basis again to the forum. Let's start writing again, let us collaborate and speak our world as HDN taught us how...nothing will change if we remain united.

To Nadine and Tim all I have to say is this...

Thank you my dear friends for getting us involved long years ago, for giving us the necessary guidance in the beginning and leadership skills later on. This is NOT, I repeat NOT the end of HDN but the beginning of a whole new era of "Speak Your World" and as only you KCs out there can speak it. So stop feeling sorry for yourselves and get started with the stories and articles once again, huh?

I now reach out especially to the KOBE team, Odilon, Nenet, Bobby, Nipa, Jamie, Edmund, Mat, Kanako, Sumadhee...I thought you guys were special ? How come you're so silent and sad? You guys were MY inspiration so start motivating and inspiring the others out there NOW!

In Solidarity - Aruna (*having nil funds never stopped us back in Sri Lanka, we managed to get access somehow... hear what am saying people ? :-)* Sure I am sad but I am not letting that stop me... *uh-uh I am going to start effecting change and quickly too...*and I hope you will too!

In a nutshell what I am trying to say is this... "Follow your hearts my friends..!"

So they cut our funding, big deal. If we allow that to stop us then we lose. But we are not known for losing, are we now ? We are known for adapting and adjusting and finding systems and mechanisms to survive against impossible odds right?

"Together" we will find a way... :-)

Yudi Manggala

Dear Nadine And all HDN staff,
I am very sad to hear about what happened. But we still have to fight and do something even in this crisis situation.

Regards,
Yudi

Michael Gwaba

Dear All,
This is really a sad development. I am really sorry it has had to come to this.
Michael

***We must
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***Wika Gofwen
KC, Nigeria***

Dr. Uzodinma Adirieje

Hello Nadine,

From the deepest sections of my heart, I pour encomiums on you and the entire HDN team for giving the world your best when they had the opportunity.

Your dreams and aspirations for HDN and KCs will be realised, someday, somehow, somewhere.

Congratulations.

Better Health for All,
Uzo
HIV/AIDS Focal Person and Program Manager
HEALTH REFORM FOUNDATION OF NIGERIA [HERFON]

Violet Nakamba

Dear Nadine,
This is a sad development. I did not think it would come to this. I am sure other ways will will come up. My sincere sympathy.

*Violet Nakamba
Zambia Daily Mail,*

Renuka Motihar

Dear Nadine,

It's very sad to hear about the new turn of events. I hope there is a way for you to receive funding from other sources and continue your exciting work. HDN has been a unique and pioneering forum.

Warm Regards,
Renuka

Aulora Stally

Dear Nadine, Amber, Masimba, KCs and the HDN team,

I join the team in conveying my shock at this recent development. However, I believe that the important work of the KCs has to continue somehow, given that in the absence of a cure for AIDS, our messages are the most effective means of shaping public attitudes and contributing to behaviour change. If anything, this news has prompted me to be active as a KC again, so I will be writing on a regular basis.

Aluta continua!

Aulora Stally

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***Aruna
Hewapathirane
KC, Sri Lanka***



KC TRAINING, CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

Sandra Mujokoro

This is really a sad development but we must remain focused and united...and keep sharing the stories.

Faith Nare

Hello,
this is a real sad development. We will keep praying that we get some funding.

Faith Nare

Ssebunya Kizza

Dear Nadine France,

It's really very sad news for every KC to hear about. We hope that we happen to be fixed somewhere with time.

Yours,
Ssebunya

Ayodele Sebiotimo

Hi Nadine, Lesley and all.

I got this message on the 13th of this month but I just had the time to open it about an hour ago and found out that HDN will be closing for lack of funding by the end of September 2009. I have been involved in UNICEF/NYSC PET monitoring project for the past two weeks in my country Nigeria and most times you are posted to rural areas and you don't have access to the Internet even in some towns where there are Internet cafes but due to the fact that we close late and start early does not make it easy for you to go looking for where to browse.

About an hour ago when I opened my e-mail box I was shocked beyond speech to learn that HDN and the KC team will not be funded for 2009 program year. I started asking questions, if really any donor organization or someone at the helm of affairs of such donor agencies could really stave a creative program/network of this nature and still go to bed at night and have a sound sleep; I doubt it.

I joined KC Team in 2002 during WAC in Spain, Barcelona. I met a lot of young people like me who gave me reason/reasons to believe in myself due to their Can-Do spirit. I was just about two-years-old in the development sector then and some friends I made then are still in contact with me to date and some of them have been able to invite me to attend courses in their country, some as a facilitator, while others for research and paper presentation either for their organization, network or conferences.

What am I driving at? The concept of HDN and the KC Team are one of the best concepts in the world that has brought young people together and at the same time united them while passing accurate information

to one another from one end of the world to the other. Why would anyone in his or her right senses allow such a project to suffer or even kill such a project for whatever reasons. We are not aware of the reasons behind the backing out of the donor agency but I will like to plead on behalf of millions of youth who has been saved through this network and the one yet to join that the organization should re-visit the decision.

I will again plead with each and every one of us who has benefited one way or the other from HDN and the KC team that we should not allow the project to die. If each and everyone of us can donate the sum of \$ 50 to rescue the situation I believe we will not need the support of any donor organization in funding some programs under the project. This has worked in Nigeria and I believe we can make it work. In 1999, a TV station in Nigeria solicited for 100 Naira, about \$10, from all Nigerians who believe that they are doing a good job for them to be able to pay back 300 billion they were owing a particular government bank. Guess what? They got the money and today, the TV station is one of the best we have in the country. The Obama campaign team asked for \$5 and they won the election with the support of the youth. We can rescue HDN and the KC Team. It all depends on how much sacrifice we are willing to give.

Last but not the least, we could make HDN and KCs a membership network whereby, we subscribe or pay an annual dues to sustain the project. This project has helped many young people all over the world and should not be allow to die.

Ayodele Sebiotimo
Project Manager
Media AIDS Project (MAP)

Bharathi Ghanashyam

Wonderful suggestion. If this is taken up, please count me in for whatever I can afford.

Bharathi

Kalliopi Tavoulari

This proposition also finds me in agreement. Perhaps we in the west (and not necessarily civil nor developed countries) could also look for further funding options and solutions.

My respects to all,
Kalliopi

Zofeen Ebrahim

I'm in too.

Zofeen

Nipaporn Intong

Dear Nadine and all KC team,

***"Together" we
will find a
way... :-)***

***Aruna
Hewapathirane
KC, Sri Lanka***

I am willing to contribute to HDN as well. Please let me know when, where and how I can make this contribution.

All the best,
Nipa

Nadine France

Dear friends,
On behalf of us all here in Chiang Mai, I just want to thank you for your kind words of support and also for the ideas that are coming in from you all – we continue to be inspired and touched by this. There have been so many messages, both on the forum and coming directly we have not been able to respond.

Please keep your ideas and suggestions coming! We are working on a transfer plan for the KC team and will try to incorporate your suggestions as ways forward for the future. From next week, we should be able to share some concepts for how to move forward with you and then get your inputs.

Again, so many thanks to all,
Best, Nadine

Tumaini Mbibo

Dear Nadine

Thank you for this communication. It has really been a shocking moment for all of us regarding your sad communication. As you are getting inspired in Chiang Mai, we are also taking strength from your encouraging words. Thank you once again and keep on looking forward to finding the best way to keep the KC Team on board.

Regards,
Tumaini Mbibo

Kalliopi Tavoulari

Hello to all again,

from my part here in England initially I can begin a charity swim, run, fitness trial etc, being sponsored by all those that work with me within the Great Western Hospital, and raise some funds that way. Perhaps this is an idea that others can adopt as well.

If this sounds like something tangible and pragmatic then I am more than willing to discuss it further with HDN admin staff and other members that might be interested.

Regards, Kali



DAVID KAZAALA
CHILD KC, UGANDA

Ssebunya Kizza

Dear Nadine France,

Thanks so much for the updates, we will keep together with you at this very trying moment.

Yours,
Ssebunya

Penny Shuillula

I really like your idea and I'm willing to be part of it. We really need to find a way to keep the KC Team.

Penny

Elena Obieta

Dearest friends:

I was shocked and sad with the news, and all of a sudden hundreds of images and voices came to my mind.

Bangkok, Nenet as a room mate (and Thai teacher!!), Peter Eriki (Uganda) travelling for the first time by train in his life. Eric Lugada-"Mr President", and Jimmy (PNG) dancing, Abby with a present for me on my birthday in Toronto...

Ishdeep: A beloved friend, sharing her daughter's wedding with me, from Mumbai to Buenos Aires.

Ian: "My Boss" in Mexico, how much I've learnt from you, and Chitra in Mexico...

Faces, smiles, tears, all there in pictures at home and in my heart.

Tim: I will ALWAYS be grateful for your trust in me. You made me feel "someone" in this fight, I could speak about TB (Bobby, my dear! I want to go to Delhi to see you again).

Nadine: Sweetest person I've ever met. Your friendship, your voice, your talent and your beautiful Irish accent, are such a gift...

I know saying thank you is not enough. Therefore, the only thing I can think about right now is that I will keep in touch, I will try really hard in order to go to the Conferences and write/post conclusions for anyone out there willing to share.

Last, not least, whenever ANY Key Correspondent happens to touch Argentina, you can be sure you have a friend down here, and a home.

A big, big hug, thank you ALL. Sorry for this long email," latin" style I'm afraid.

Elena Obieta, Buenos Aires

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***Ayodele
Sebiotimo
KC, Nigeria***