

AMBITION News

The AMBITION-cm Trial Newsletter

(Issue 31: June 2020)



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 - (a) **Phum'lani Machao** (AMNET Administration and Communications Officer, BHP)
 - (b) **Dr. Timotheé Boyer-Chammard** (Clinical Advisor, Institut Pasteur)
 - (c) **Sophia Hafeez** (Project Assistant, LSHTM)

Team email address: ambition@lshtm.ac.uk

Nabila and David (LSHTM, Gaborone)

Philippa (LSHTM, London)



@ambitioncm2020

Please do encourage colleagues to 'follow' us!



Refilwe Mmipi (Study Administrator), Ikanyeng Rulaganyang (Study Nurse), and Keatlaletse Siamisang (Study Doctor) bid farewell to Phum'lani Machao (far left).

Greetings from Gaborone!



The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact trial activities during June, but we are happy to report that recruitment has now resumed at the two Cape Town sites, as well as both sites in Uganda (Kampala and Mbarara), meaning we are back up and running at all sites! As always, we remain grateful to all colleagues for their continued hard work and patience during these unprecedented times.

We are pleased that two members of the AMBITION team in Gaborone have had posters accepted at the upcoming AIDS 2020 conference, which will take place online from 6-10 July. **Katlego Tsholo** (Research Nurse) will present her poster: *"Reasons for presentation with advanced HIV disease among individuals in Botswana: a mixed-method study"*. **Charles Muthoga** (Wellcome Trust Masters Fellow) will present *"The impact and cost-effectiveness of expanding cryptococcal antigen screening to include individuals with CD4 100-200 cells/ μ L in Botswana."*

We are sorry to bid farewell to three colleagues this month: **Phum'lani Machao** (AMNET Administration and Communications Officer, BHP), **Dr. Timotheé Boyer-Chammard** (Clinical Advisor, Institut Pasteur) and **Sophia Hafeez** (Project Assistant, LSHTM).

We remain very hopeful that during the second half of 2020 we will be able to make up for lost recruitment time. We will continue to do our best to support all study teams over the coming weeks and months.

Best Wishes,

Joe

Recruitment Update (as of 30 June 2020):

We are happy to share updates on participant recruitment numbers at each site:

**Botswana-Harvard Partnership
(Gaborone)**



The latest participant in **Gaborone** was recruited on **25 June 2020**

0 6 6

**University of Cape Town:
Mitchells Plain Hospital and
Khayelitsha Hospital**



The latest participant in **Cape Town** was recruited on **25 June 2020**

0 7 1

**University of Zimbabwe
(Harare)**



The latest participant in **Harare** was recruited on **10 June 2020**

0 7 2

**UNC Project Malawi
(Lilongwe)**

**Malawi-Liverpool Wellcome Trust
Clinical Research Programme
(Blantyre)**



The latest participant in **Lilongwe** was recruited on **27 June 2020**

0 8 4

The latest participant in **Blantyre** was recruited on **30 June 2020**

1 0 4

IDI Uganda (Kampala)

IDI Uganda (Mbarara)



The latest participant in **Kampala** was recruited on **30 June 2020**

2 0 5

The latest participant in **Mbarara** was recruited on **24 March 2020**

0 5 9



TOTAL: 661 (77.8%)

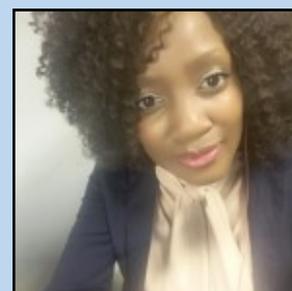
Farewell to a few AMBITION Colleagues

Phum'lani Machao—AMNET Network Coordinator

We are sorry to say goodbye to Phum'lani Machao, Administration and Communications Officer for the African Meningitis Trials Network (AMNET) (Work Package 4). Phum'lani has been based at BHP in Gaborone since late 2017. She has been an integral member of the AMBITION team and has been instrumental in managing AMNET activities.

Phum'lani created and cultivated the AMNET website, and organised two face-to-face meetings in Lilongwe (January 2018) and Cape Town (July 2019). She has also worked hard to engage and build a strong network of meningitis-related organisations across several continents. In addition, she has collaborated with TMG members to produce a number of trial-related templates, documents and procedures, which we hope will prove useful in setting up and running future meningitis trials. She has also maintained impeccable filing systems!

Phum'lani has been a much loved member of the AMBITION team and will be greatly missed. We would like to thank Phum'lani for all her hard work and wish her all the very best for the future!



A farewell message from Phum'lani...

There is a big part of me that is sad to be saying goodbye to such amazing co-workers. I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed my time working together, and how much I value the friendship that everyone has shown me over the past two and a half years.



The AMBITION Team - *You have made me look forward to coming into the office every day. Thank you for the support, guidance, and encouragement that you have provided me with during my time with you - I have grown so much.*

AMNET Members - *I am extremely honoured to have worked with such an incredible group of people. I could not have asked for a better team, and I know you are all destined to continue doing amazing things individually and as a Network. Thank you for teaching and inspiring me.*

This might be the end of my time with you all but I will definitely keep in touch. I wish nothing but the best as you all move forward.



Dr. Timotheé Boyer-Chammard: Clinical Advisor, Institut Pasteur

Timotheé joined the Institut Pasteur team in June 2017 as a Clinical Advisor, and over the past three years has been an integral member of the AMBITION TMG. In particular, Timotheé has collaborated closely with colleagues at the University of Zimbabwe and at UNC Project Malawi, providing clinical and trial management support both remotely and in-person.

Timotheé has also worked with other colleagues at Institut Pasteur - Prof. Olivier Lortholary, Prof. Françoise Dromer and Dr. Alexandre Alanio - and with Dr. Claire Hoving at the University of Cape Town - to supervise and mentor Tshepiso Mbangiwa, our AMBITION PhD Scholar. We are grateful for his assistance in arranging various Material Transfer Agreements for the safe transportation of trial samples and supplies.

Timotheé also made significant contributions to the Medical Mycology Course, held in Cape Town in December 2018, and to the third Investigators' Meeting in Paris in May 2019. He will be much missed, but we wish him all the very best for the future as he embarks upon his new clinical hospital role in Corsica, France.



Sophia Hafeez—Project Assistant, LSHTM

We are also very sorry to bid farewell to Sophia Hafeez, Project Assistant in the London office since mid-2018. Sophia has now come to the end of her two-year contract, and her patience, efficiency and good humour will be sorely missed by all. She has been an essential member of the coordinating team, undertaking a wide variety of tasks to support the TMG and to ensure that the whole project runs smoothly.

In particular, Sophia played an important role in the organisation of the Medical Mycology Course in Cape Town, including arranging the delicious meals that we all enjoyed after busy days in the lecture theatre and the laboratory. She has also kept the AMBITION website up-to-date and beautiful, and has been a source of great support to our AMBITION MSc scholars during their time in London.

We wish Sophia all the very best in her next chapter, and hope that our paths will cross again in the future.

