

TELEPHONE: (267) 3710314
FAX: (267) 3710312



NATIONAL AIDS COORDINATING AGENCY
(NACA)
PRIVATE BAG 00463
GABORONE
BOTSWANA

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PRESS RELEASE

BOTSWANA HOSTS THE FIRST NATIONAL HIV PREVENTION PITSO

The National AIDS Coordinating Agency, (NACA) will next week bring together communities, partners and stakeholders working on HIV prevention interventions to the first ever National HIV Prevention Pitso.

Botswana has prioritized prevention of new HIV infections as its number one goal and set itself a target of eliminating new HIV infections by 2016. However, HIV prevention interventions have not achieved desired impact of reducing new HIV infections with nearly 15 000 people getting infected every year.

The National HIV Prevention Pitso, the first of its kind will provide a platform to learn and share best practices in HIV prevention and create an opportunity to share different perspectives and experiences. It will create space to make new connections and build networks to bring efficiency and effectiveness in efforts to prevent the spread of HIV in Botswana.

The theme for the Pitso is **‘The time is now! Working towards Zero New infections by 2016’**

The objectives of the Pitso are;

- To share evidence based best practices related to HIV prevention behaviors and new prevention strategies in Botswana and internationally.
- To strengthen relationship and long-term coordination among individuals and organizations working in HIV prevention in Botswana.
- To underscore the importance of tracking programmatic goals and effects and highlight effective best practices in Research, monitoring and Evaluation.

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- To build consensus on strategies to integrate behavioral and biomedical prevention services.
- To develop concrete recommendations to guide an integrated and comprehensive national strategy on HIV prevention.

The National HIV Prevention Pitso will be held at **Tati River Lodge in Francistown** from **October 29 – 30** and the Honorable **Assistant Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration Gloria Somolekae** will give the keynote address. More than 250 delegates are expected to attend.

BACKGROUND

The Prevention Pitso comes at the time when UNAIDS High Level Commission on HIV Prevention has renewed calls for a prevention revolution through rapidly scaling-up successful prevention tactics, understanding the dynamics of each country's HIV epidemic and directing scarce resources appropriately, enhancing the accountability of political and business leaders and protecting human rights to overcome inequalities that drive the spread of HIV.

- **End** -

Should you require any additional information, do not hesitate to contact the Public Relations Office at 393 6249, 3710314 or lomongatane@gov.bw.