

An Experienced Nurse's Commitment to a Strong Health Workforce in Botswana

Everyone has a role to play in achieving an AIDS-free generation. One woman who takes this to heart is Opelo Rankopo, MSN — a skilled nurse in her native country of Botswana. Botswana faces a severe shortage of health care workers, with less than [four combined doctors, nurses, and midwives per 10,000 people](#). This falls far below the 23 health care workers per 10,000 people minimum threshold established by the World Health Organization.



Opelo Rankopo, MSN (right) in Botswana

In 2008, Opelo began working as a clinical practice officer in the Ministry of Health's Nursing and Midwifery Council of Botswana (NMCB), which oversees the education and practice of all trained nurses and midwives throughout the country. In 2011, Opelo was selected to receive an [Afya Bora Fellowship in Global Health Leadership](#). This innovative one-year fellowship, which receives support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) works to address key gaps in health professionals working in global health with the ultimate goal of improving health-related service delivery in Africa.

With the knowledge and skills she gained through this Fellowship, Opelo says she is better able both to serve the patients in front of her each day and to promote the sustainability of essential health care services for the patients of tomorrow.

Opelo's story is further proof that, despite the enormity of the challenge posed by HIV/AIDS, every individual has the capacity to make a true difference through concerted and compassionate action. PEPFAR, in conjunction with the Afya Bora Fellowship, is proud to support healthcare workers like Opelo who are transforming the future of their communities and countries each and every day.