



A221 Inter-Agency Collaboration Combating Child Sexual Abuse in Zambia: Focus on Training and the Development of a Forensic DNA Laboratory

*Laura D. Silva, MS**, Oakland Police Department, Criminalistics Division, 455 7th St, 6th Fl, Oakland, CA 94607; *Charles Clemons, MD*, Georgian Foundation, 1361 Corte Loma, Walnut Creek, CA 94598; *Shota Shubladze, MS, MPA*, Georgian Foundation, 1361 Corte Loma, Walnut Creek, CA 94598; and *Cristian J. Orrego, PhD*, Univ of California, Human Rights Center, 2850 Telegraph Ave, Ste 500, Berkeley, CA 94705

After attending this presentation, attendees will learn about the implementation and experiences of international multi-disciplinary collaborations and training to combat child sexual abuse with a focus on forensic DNA analysis, specifically on a developed and ongoing NGO fellowship training program, and share experiences of international professional exchanges between the U.S. and Zambia

This presentation will impact the forensic community by sharing the knowledge of international collaboration involving forensic science as one part of a multi-disciplinary approach to the complicated problem of stopping child sexual assault. It may help attendees start or improve their own forensic science related collaborations.

Georgian Foundation* and the Zambian Society for Child Protection** (both non-governmental organizations) have initiated a child centered multi-disciplinary program with the goal of assisting local communities in Zambia with the response to allegations of child abuse in ways that focus on the child victims. One objective is to create an effective system of inter-agency collaboration to respond to the numerous child sexual assault cases in and around Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. The program includes training in child advocacy, forensic and clinical medical examinations, police operations, forensic DNA analysis, and judicial prosecution.

To that end, an Experience Exchange Fellowship Program was created and is currently being coordinated and developed with participation of Zambian professionals across multiple disciplines. The Fellowship Program will enable healthcare, forensic, and police professionals from the Republic of Zambia to engage in practical specialty training programs in California and Utah. Police officials from Zambia have already had productive meetings and observational tours with law enforcement and forensic laboratories in the U.S. as well as attending a regional forensic science meeting in California. They also met with a District Attorney's Office prosecutor that manages investigation and prosecution of child sexual assault cases. Medical professionals from the United States with expertise in child protection have traveled to Zambia to assist with education and training of Zambian staff at the One Stop Center, a center for diagnosis and treatment of child sexual assault at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka.

In collaboration with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, the Fellowship Program will provide more intensive hands-on training experience for Zambian forensic science, police, and medical professionals. This phase of the training by forensic science professionals will include a thorough and documented forensic DNA analysis component that is expected to enhance the capacity of the participants to more effectively manage and coordinate interagency response in child sexual assault cases.

In addition to the Experience Exchange Fellowship Program, a main goal of the organization is to collaborate and support the Zambian government in establishing a forensic DNA laboratory in-country to facilitate prosecution in sexual assault cases. In the first steps toward this goal, medical and forensic science professionals from the United States have traveled to Zambia for strategic collaboration and planning with Zambian government officials.

Ultimately, the goal of the organization is to facilitate the development of an interagency working group including medical, police, forensic, and legal experts to strengthen the child sexual abuse response system in Zambia, thus reducing and preventing child sexual abuse and further transmission of HIV and AIDS.

*Georgian Foundation 501(c) 3 is an international organization registered in California, United States.

**Zambian Society for Child Protection (ZSCP) is a registered non-governmental organization founded by the Georgian Foundation.

Forensic DNA Lab, International Collaboration, Child Sexual Abuse