



Newsletter Jan-Mar 2016

Out of country activities some HISP staff have been involved in

Quite a few HISP staff have gone to the USA over the past few months

1. **Vincent and Gerda** went to CDC in Atlanta to attend the first meeting of organisations contracted to support the Global Health Security (GHS) agenda. GHS is all about setting-up surveillance systems that are efficient and timely in helping to identify outbreaks. Of course everyone talks about Ebola, and we also know about measles, cholera, and malaria. However, the reality is that over the next years, 70% of new outbreaks are expected to come at us (humans) through mutation of viruses and parasites that are animal borne, so the unknown is to be expected. Given that our current surveillance systems are severely lacking (and as shown by the Ebola, Zika, and Flu virus outbreaks), you can understand the risk that exists for mankind. The meetings in Atlanta were to orientate contractors to administrative arrangements (standards for financial and reporting formats), as well as technical discussions. During the week we met with teams that are working in all 5 countries we are contracted to support, such as Mauritania, Benin, Togo, and Guinea-Bissau, and The Gambia, and we met with country representatives from some of those countries as well.

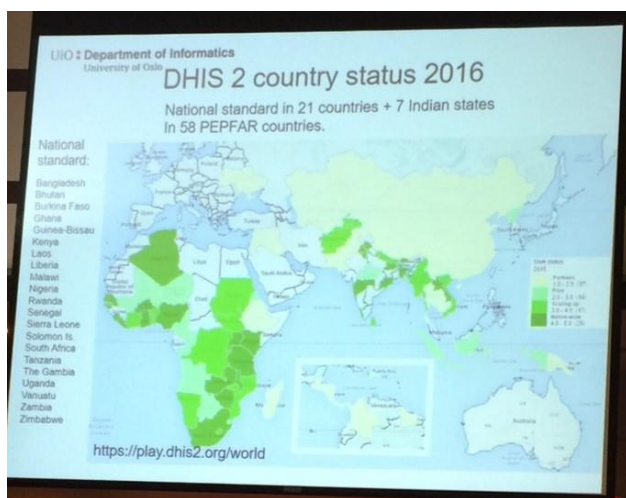


During the week we celebrated Gerda's birthday (Vincent took her out for a hamburger!), and we had some light snow (see the picture of the Boss in the snow). It was a busy week as this was also the week that the Khuphukani follow-on needed to be prepared for submission, so there wasn't a lot of time for sight-seeing or partying, unfortunately, or maybe fortunately!

2. **Elmarie and Ferdie** also did a trip to the US to attend a workshop on NGOs using DHIS2 for their own use and also in the countries where they work.



Arrival on a Sunday morning at Dulles Airport at Washington to discover that a USD85 taxi ride to hotel costs a lot when converted into ZAR... Sunday was used to explore the sights of Washington including the Smithsonian Air and Space museum, a sight that Calle would have enjoyed, and well as many government buildings that we have all heard of like the White House (see photo), the Pentagon and Capitol Hill



Monday saw the start of the 2-day DHIS2 for NGOs symposium - quite refreshing to see the widespread global use of DHIS2 (see photo) by NGOs and also realising that SA is one of the forefront players in DHIS2 developments globally! Where there is a will – there is a way!

There were presentations from a wide range of NGOs about their own and very limited country implementations. It was quite interesting to see the various innovative development work some NGOs have done to support their unique requirements and really the message is that you can do (almost) anything – Moving on to 2-days (and evening) of training at the Swedish Embassy in George Town, we experienced working together with a various country's "eager beavers" very positively. With not much time left for relaxation, we at least had some local burgers and beers which were nice and (relatively) inexpensive....The take home message is that HISP-SA should showcase the work we are doing more in these forums and we should consider participating next year as a presenter at this symposium.

3. **Calle** also made the trip to the US



This was to attend a meeting at CDC on Disease Surveillance using DHIS2. Unfortunately there are no details of what was said or discussed, but there is a photo to prove the Troll was there.

4. **Norah went to Pakistan** to provide support for IRC/BAO on DHIS2

IRC (International Rescue Committee) has set up DHIS2 for project reporting in some of the 40 odd countries they work in. Pakistan was one of the pilot countries selected to start the implementation. Time was spent in providing support with the setup of the file for 3 projects and then also the training of the staff to use DHIS2, which is called COMET (Comprehensive Online Measurement and Effectiveness Tool). Being February it was winter, so it made a change to pack winter clothing instead of lightweight summer clothing for the heat and dust of Africa that I am used to. In places like this there are always very strict security briefings, and it was emphasised that this was a very conservative society and under no circumstances was it ever alright for me to wear, in public, shorts and a tank top.....



I stayed in Islamabad; a 'new' city build in 1970's to accommodate the diplomats and wealthy business people. So I never saw the 'real' Pakistan. But on my way home from the office each day I passed the Country Club, the Polo Club, the Gun Club, the Tennis Club, the Boy Scouts Association, telling me that the colonial influence is alive and well.

This photo is of me at the Pakistan National Monument showing 4 petals representing the 4 provinces of Pakistan

5. General News



- 5.1 Kevin has moved to the East London office and is now part of the Arnold/Gina/Bulelwa team
- 5.2 A HISP board meeting is planned for mid-April in Cape Town
- 5.3 The planning for the next team meeting is underway, in early June.
- 5.4 There are 2 staff members who are not well at the moment and need your prayers and good wishes.

And our cousins outside South Africa also have some news

6. Zimbabwe

HISP – Zimbabwe was established in January 2016. It is in a partnership with World Vision South Africa for technical and financial support. Two proposals have been submitted to PEPFAR for work with Health Information Systems. One proposal is to work with Ministry of Health and Child Care funded via CDC. The other proposal is working with local HIV/AIDS consortium and civil society organisations. It is called DREAMS. HISP – Zim is also part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Network Group co-ordinated by MOH.

7. Zambia

Zambia is busy with the Better Immunization Data (BID) for Zambia project working with PATH and the Ministry of Health in a project consisting of consortium of HISP-SA, HISP-India, IntraHealth and led by the University of Oslo.

8. Namibia

After being registered as a Trust in June 2015, HISP Namibia has accomplished a lot over the last 10 months. Working closely with the Ministry of Health and Social Services and other key stakeholders, and with technical support from HISP SA, HISP Namibia played a key role in the creation of a national data dictionary (<http://dd.hispna.org>) and the Master Facility List. The organisation has been implementing capacity development activities including DHIS2 Foundation training; and data clean-up workshops. HISP Namibia has also been taking a lead on health information system governance related issues, including drafting of the district health information management system policy and actively participates in the Health Information System Technical Working Group. With the technical support of HISP SA, HISP Namibia has just finalised the transition of the Core Module to DHIS2 and expects to have the In-Patient Module transitioned by the end of May 2016. The HISP Namibia team of six staff members is enthusiastic about its future contribution to Namibia's Health Information System.

9. HISP House

There have been some alternations to the garden with the setting up of a gazebo and new outside chairs. Building plans have been submitted to make some changes with the building of a training room.

