KEY ACTIVITIES
2015 TO PRESENT
The Champions for an AIDS-Free Generation in Africa

“The Champions are determined to keep HIV high on the continental agenda. We will leave no one behind and we will not rest until Africa has reached the goal of an AIDS-free generation.”

Festus Mogae, Chairperson of the Champions
Founded in 2008, the Champions for an AIDS-Free Generation (Champions) are a distinguished group of former Presidents and influential African leaders who are committed to the goal of achieving an AIDS-free generation in Africa. Individually and collectively, the Champions rally and support regional leaders towards ending AIDS as a public health threat. The Champions transcend political partisanship to speak freely and independently, both in public and behind the scenes, on the issues that need solutions. They use their influence to encourage fellow African leaders to step up their efforts and commit to policies, laws and practices that are human-rights responsive and evidence-based. They reinforce best practices on the continent and highlight progress made. As outspoken opinion-leaders, they seek to initiate dialogue in changing harmful behaviour and cultural norms.

- H.E. Festus Mogae, former President of Botswana and Chairman of the Champions
- H.E. Joyce Banda, former President of Malawi
- Edwin Cameron, Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa
- H.E. Joaquim A. Chissano, former President of Mozambique
- H.E. Kenneth D. Kaunda, former President of Zambia
- H.E. Alpha Oumar Konaré, former President of Mali
- H.E. Benjamin Mkapa, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania
- H.E. Kigalema Motlanthe, former President of the Republic of South Africa
- H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria
- H.E. Hifikepunye Pohamba, former President of Namibia
- Desmond Tutu, Archbishop, Emeritus Cape Town
- H.E. Speciosa Wandira-Kasibwe, former Vice President of Uganda
- Miriam Were, Former Chancellor of Moi University, Kenya

The Champions thematic priorities 2014 to 2022
- Stepping up high-level advocacy to address complacency and to increase national ownership and domestic investment for scaling up the HIV response;
- Bold call to close the prevention gap;
- Engaging the current generation of African leaders in difficult conversations on complex issues to ensure no one is left behind;
- Brokering commitment to the Fast-Track targets, particularly the "location-population approach";
- High political leadership and engagement in the West and Central Africa region to get HIV high on the political agenda;
- Lobbying for the removal of barriers to implementation;
- Advancing the agenda of commodity security.

In 2016, given the changing landscape of Africa’s response to HIV and the lessons acquired through the Champions experience, they deepened their focus and re-committed to taking on complex issues on expanding access to HIV services and leaving no one behind. The Champions advocate for:
1. Increased commitment to address political, social and legal barriers and blockages to fast track the response in Africa.
2. Sustaining the response through increased commitment to domestic investments for HIV and health, commodity security and access to medicines.
3. Increased commitment for addressing political blockages and social issues through high level diplomacy in African countries.
### KEY ACTIVITIES 2015 TO PRESENT

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Amref Health Africa Courtesy Call to the Champions - July 2019
In a courtesy call by Amref (African Medical and Research Foundation) Health Africa, the Champions for an AIDS-Free Generation met to discuss common interests and mutual partnerships in ending AIDS and expanding access to health services for communities across the African continent.
• As a result of the courtesy call, Amref confirmed their support to the high level regional political dialogue to address structural barriers to men, including key populations and sexual and gender minorities. The high-level dialogue will take place in October 2019 in Nairobi and will call participants from 12 priority countries from east and southern Africa.

Advocacy for commitment to Sustained HIV Epidemic in SADC region - June 2019
At the invitation of the SADC Chair, President of Namibia, the Champions provided their advocacy to the 12 SADC countries represented by Minister Responsible for HIV and AIDS. The Champions advocacy focused on sustainability and increased domestic resources for health and HIV while also laying a strong emphasis on complacency and the critical issues concerning an inclusive response. The Champions called for adoption and commitment to the SADC Roadmap for Sustained HIV Epidemic Control.
• The SADC Roadmap for Sustained HIV Epidemic Control was adopted by the meeting of the Ministers responsible for HIV and AIDS on the 20th June 2019.
• The Champions have committed to support the region in implementing the Roadmap.

Visit of UNAIDS Executive Director ai - May 2019
The Champions' Programme supported the visit of the UNAIDS Executive Director ai to Botswana. The EXDai engaged with the Chairman of the Champions and expressed gratitude to his commitment and contributions to the AIDS response and the role he played in establishing and leading the Champions. The EXDai. Confirmed the continued importance of high-level political advocacy for ending AIDS. President Mogae in his remarks, referenced the role of inclusivity and welcomed the Botswana High Court judgement whilst regretting that bad laws still remain on the statutes in many countries in Africa. The Chairman lamented the growing complacency that is retarding progress in the response.
• On behalf of all the Champions he expressed their commitment to fighting HIV and AIDS in Africa and thanked UNAIDS for its role on the continent.
• The EXDai was provided with a review of key activities and outcomes of the Champions from 2015.

Advocacy for repeal of penal codes criminalising same-sex sexual conduct- May 2019
HE. Mogae mobilised the national leadership for the eventual repeal of penal codes criminalising same-sex sexual conduct. He engaged the Head of State, Parliamentary Health Caucus, two key ministers, NACA and others between November 2018 to May 2019 for Botswana to repeal the discriminatory laws, explaining how they affect progress in the AIDS response. He heightened his efforts following the engagements of Champions with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in November 2018, which was followed by Champions convening a high-level political dialogue with selected countries to address inclusivity in the response in February 2019.
• The countries included Botswana. The penal codes criminalising same-sex sexual conduct have been repealed in the High Court of Botswana and the Government does not plan to challenge the ruling.
• Civil society in Botswana claim HE. Mogae as a champion of their rights.

Côte d’Ivoire Country Visit - March 2019
Mobilized Côte d’Ivoire leadership to increase its commitment to raise domestic investment in the HIV response, remove user fees, and accelerate progression towards 90-90-90 targets and address political, social and legal barriers to an AIDS-free generation.
• At the invitation of President Alassane Ouattara, the Champions, led by H.E. Mogae, undertook a country visit to Côte d’Ivoire. The Champions engaged with President Ouattara, President of the Senate, the Vice President of the National Assembly and Health and HIV Caucus, the Minister of Health and the National AIDS Commission and twenty two (22) civil society organizations.
• Two concrete outcomes were produced: (1) President Ouattara pledged to increase the country’s domestic allocation for the HIV response by $10 million in next national budget. (2) The week following the conclusion of the country visit, the barriers presented by user fees to accessing services was addressed with a Note Circulaire signed by the Ministry of Health. The Note Circulaire provided instruction for the immediate removal of user fees across health institutions in Côte d’Ivoire.

HIV, Health and Inclusion High-Level Dialogue - February 2019
Mobilized Parliamentarians from southern and eastern Africa to secure the rights of key populations, LGBT+ people and adolescent girls and young women in Sub-Saharan Africa at the HIV, Health and Inclusion High-Level Dialogue held in Cape Town.
• The Champions advocated for Parliamentarians to secure the rights of key populations, LGBT+ people and adolescent girls and young women during the roundtable dialogue. Champions present included: H.E. Mogae, H.E. Chissano and H.E. Motlanthe. Participants, including Chairpersons and members of the HIV and Health Parliamentary Caucuses, reviewed discriminatory laws in Sub-Saharan Africa and options for introducing and implementing legislative change. The Champions also inspired youth leaders from Commonwealth countries to take leadership ensuring that no one is left behind on the continent during the Youth Dialogue.
• The three Champions committed to actively engage national and political leaders in their own countries to repeal discriminatory laws and foster inclusion. At the conclusion of the dialogue, Botswana, Malawi and Namibia Health and HIV Caucuses committed to strengthen their efforts to address the repeal of discriminatory laws in their countries. In a follow up actions, President Mogae met with the Minister of Health, NAHFA Coordinator and the Chairperson of Parliamentary HIV and Health Caucus in Botswana. His publicized advocacy on repealing of discriminatory laws contributed to Botswana’s High Court decision to repeal same-sex sexual acts in June 2019.
Advocacy with African Parliamentarians of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association- November 2018
- The Champions, represented by H.E. Mogae and H.E. Chissano, advocated for increased access to health and HIV services for key populations, LGBT+ people and adolescent girls and young women with African Parliamentarians of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Commonwealth Secretariat during their mission to London, United Kingdom.
- Six southern African allied countries were identified during the engagement with Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for further mobilization to address (1) removal of structural barriers to HIV prevention and services, (2) address vulnerability of Adolescent Girls and Young Women and (3) call for increased access to services for Key Populations especially LGBT+ people and repeal discriminatory laws that prevent access to services. Furthermore, as a result of this engagement, the Champions convened the HIV, Health and Inclusion Dialogue in February 2019 to deepen the commitments of represented countries.

Engagement with the UK Parliament and UK Civil Society - November 2018
Increased the Champions’ advocacy at a global level and solidified strategic partnerships
- During the Champion’s London mission to the UK Parliament and UK civil society, H.E. Mogae and H.E. Chissano emphasized that the reality for Africa is that AIDS is not yet over and HIV prevention is key. The Champions participated in a World AIDS Day Commemoration and H.E. Mogae provided a speech at the UK Parliament. H.E. Mogae furthered the Champions’ HIV and health advocacy by participating in a radio interview with BBC’s Focus on Africa.
- Commitment and contribution of Africa’s leadership on complex issues of leaving no one behind was amplified. Also during the engagement, Champions secured strategic partnership with Royal Commonwealth Society and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. This partnership resulted in the partnering and cost-sharing of the HIV, Health and Inclusion Roundtable Dialogue with Royal Commonwealth Society in February 2019.

Secured Full Time Communications Support from Peace Corps September 2019
Improved and increased Champions’ advocacy visibility
- Through mobilization by the Chairman of the Champions with the American Ambassador to Botswana, a Peace Corps Volunteer with relevant communications skills was identified and commenced her duties during the last week of September 2018.
- This support has provided the much needed assistance to the communication component of the Champions’ advocacy, seeing that the Secretariat is short staffed.

Increasing Domestic Investment and Equal access to HIV and Health services - September 2018
Advocated for domestic investment in the HIV response, at a focused high level political dialogue held in Pretoria, South Africa
- The Champions, represented by H.E. Mogae, H.E. Wandira and Professor Were, advocated for increased domestic investment in the HIV response. The Champions program organized the dialogue, convening parliamentarians, ministers and senior officials from the ministries of health, information and finance across 12 countries in east and southern Africa.
- A policy brief on increased domestic financing was developed and distributed. Throughout the high-level engagement, the brief informed the discussions. As a result of the dialogue, parliamentarians interrogated the prevailing funding environment and defined viable options for increasing domestic contributions to the response. The meeting concluded with a call for one agenda, a multi-sectorial approach, regional alignment, harmonization of purchasing, national ownership, political leadership and common results framework.

Right to Health Advocacy with Leadership of Human Rights Institutions August 2018
- The Champions, represented by Professor Miriam Were, utilized a regional consultation of Parliamentarians, leadership of national human rights institutions and civil society on realizing the right to health. The meeting, held in Nairobi, advocated for equal access to health services and social rights, as well as actions to address sexual and gender-based violence.
- As a result, commitment and contribution of Africa’s leadership on complex issues of leaving no one behind continues to be amplified.

Zambia Country Visit - May 2018
Influenced Zambia’s leadership to increase its commitment and visibility regarding eliminating stigma and discrimination and leaving no one behind, following high-level engagements
- Due to concerns over complacency towards the HIV response in Zambia, the Champions visited Zambia to engage with the national leadership. The visit included four Champions: H.E. Kaunda, H.E. Pohamba, H.E. Wandira, and Professor Were. Throughout meetings with national leadership, the four Champions advocated for the rights of adolescent girls and young women and key populations and sustainability of the HIV response.
- As a result of the Country Visit, the Champions gained commitment from the President, Cabinet and Parliament to further the legacy of Kenneth Kaunda and ensure that no one is left behind in the HIV response. The Champions presented a communiqué further outlining the bottlenecks and need for action.

UNAIDS Leadership Award - May 2018
- The Zambia Country Visit coincided with the commemoration of former President H.E. Kenneth Kaunda’s 2018 UNAIDS Leadership Award, for his role in fighting stigma and discrimination in the HIV response.
- The bestowment served as an acknowledgement of the Champions advocacy. It also provided an opportune time for the Champions to further their advocacy on the necessity of political leadership in ending AIDS.

Mobilization for the adoption of the Pan African Parliament Continental Resolution -May 2018
Advocated for and influenced the adoption of the historic continental resolution on “Realizing the Right to Health and achieving health targets for all in Africa” at the May 2018 sitting of the Pan-African Parliament.
- In response to advocacy by the Champions and UNAIDS, the Pan African Parliament sitting in South Africa in May 2018 adopted a resolution titled “Realizing the Right to Health and Achieving Health targets for All in Africa”.
- The resolution calls on national Parliaments and the Pan-African Parliament to enact or amend legislation to guarantee the human right to health and access to health services for all, without discrimination. This was the Champions’ second engagement of the Pan African Parliament; the first engagement in 2017 resulted in a Parliamentary Plan of Action on achieving health targets in Africa.
Engaged the President of the Republic of Tanzania on an inclusive response - 2017 and 2018

• Following concerns of the national leadership rhetoric and statements on key populations in 2016, 2017 and 2018 the Champions wrote 6 letters to the President of the United Republic of Tanzania raising their concerns. The Champions noted the change in position regarding the key populations and expressed their belief that if some sectors of our population are left behind, we will not end AIDS in our countries or on the continent. They highlighted the effects of stigma and discrimination on prevention, treatment, care and support.

African High-Level Parliamentary Colloquium - October 2017

• At the October 2017 African High-Level Parliamentary Colloquium, Champion H.E. Motlanthe, addressed the body on the topic of achieving health targets and leaving no one behind.
• As a result, H.E. Motlanthe urged for African leaders to step up efforts and jointly commit to polities, laws and practices that are human-rights responsive and evidence-based in the national responses. This advocacy has contributed to the Pan Africa Parliament’s resolution “Realizing the Right to Health and achieving health targets for all in Africa” in May 2018.

South Africa Country Visit - October 2017

• South Africa bears the largest HIV epidemic. In their third country visit, the Champions met with national leadership to provide support to the country in fast-tracking the response and meeting 90-90-90 global targets.

Avenues for Implementing Resolution 60/2 on the Commission of the Status of Women - July 2017

• The Champion participated in the high level SADC Parliamentary Forum Summit that reviewed progress in the status of women in the region. The summit brought together Parliamentarians of both groups to explore opportunities for meaningful engagements and working with partners to share costs, efficient governance (developing work plans and assessing program needs), strengthened partnerships and receiving targeted strategic support where needed (such as from UNAIDS on communications), have allowed the Champions to make efficient use of their expertise and resources, targeting key issues and stakeholders.

Mobilization of the private sector for the HIV response: Tripartite Business Summit - July 2016

• The Champions convened a Tripartite Business Summit in 2016, in partnership with the SADC Private Sector Forum and UNAIDS RSTESA. H.E. Pohamba, H.E. Banda, H.E. Motlanthe and Professor Were participated. The three roundtables focused on the role of building a strong local manufacturing sector in order to sustain the response, urgency to focus adolescent girls and young women, and leaving no one behind. The summit included then South Africa Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, Ministers of Health from southern and eastern Africa, business, civil society, young women and development partners.
• The roundtables resulted in commitments and recommendations on the role of business, especially in the workplace, to address health, social and environmental issues affecting adolescent girls and young women.

Advocacy at the International AIDS Conference (IAC) 2016 - July 2016

• The Champions co-convened a satellite session with the South African Presidency at the International AIDS Conference (IAC) 2016 in Durban, South Africa. The session focused on the role of political leadership in the AIDS response and specifically addressed political leadership issues around adolescent girls and young women.
• The Champions created a strong relationship with the political leadership of South Africa through their numerous country visits and collaboration efforts over this event. South African leadership represented at the session included the Deputy President, four national Ministers, provincial Ministers, Mayors and Heads of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in Member States. Three Champions participate, HE Wandia Kazibwe, H.E. Pohamba and HE. Motlanthe.
• The summit resulted in the commitment to formalize the first SADC Women’s Parliament.

African Think Tank on HIV, Health and Social Justice - June 2017

• The African Think-Tank on HIV, Health and Social Justice provided a platform for strategic thinking, leadership and collaboration to support, expand and accelerate action and results on human rights and social justice in the context of HIV, across the African continent.

Champions’ Evaluation - May 2017

• An external evaluation of the Champions’ program was completed in May 2017, reviewing implementation, highlighting successes and challenges and making recommendations for adjustments that could render it more effective.
• The evaluation concluded that the Champions program remains relevant and key advocacy tool for the AIDS response in Africa and that the success of the Champions program lies in the ability of the Champions to gain the ear of sitting Heads of State across the continent and in the credibility of the Champions. The Evaluation identified the varied achievements and successes of the Champions to date. It also raised challenges and constraints such as, cost of the Champions’ model, capacity -size of the secretariat and resource constraints that limit the extent to which the Programmed can implement sustained interventions or follow up on interventions undertaken.
• Cost saving measures (such as piggy-backing on other engagements and working with partners to share costs), efficient governance (developing work plans and assessing program needs), strengthened partnerships and receiving targeted strategic support where needed (such as from UNAIDS on communications), have allowed the Champions to make efficient use of their expertise and resources, targeting key issues and stakeholders.

Girls to Power: Champions Mentoring of Young Women Leaders in HIV - July 2016

• In partnership with the Southern African AIDS Trust (SAT), in July 2016, the Champions hosted a ‘Girls to Power’ Round Table Dialogue with and on adolescent girls and young women. The roundtable was attended by two female Champions, Dr. Joyce Banda and Professor Were, young women leaders, the South African Minister of Gender, African Union representatives, private sector partners, NGO’s, development partners and UN agencies.
• The purpose of the dialogue was to connect adolescent girls with young female leaders. The dialogue prompted the Champions to develop plans for leadership and political mentoring of young women.

The Global TB Caucus - July 2016

• A meeting of the Champions and the Global TB Caucus - made up of HIV, AIDS and TB Parliamentary caucuses from around the world - was held in July 2016, providing an opportunity for members of both groups to explore opportunities for meaningful partnerships. The Champions, H.E. Motlanthe, H.E. Pohamba, H.E. Banda and the Professor Were, met with twenty African parliamentarians of the Global TB Caucus.
• The Champions advocated for heightened leadership and commitment to end major health crises. They also urged the caucuses to confront stigma and social isolation and build a broad range of partners.
Annual High-Level Coordinating Committee (HLCC) meeting - July 2016
- The second HLCC was held in July 2016 on the sidelines of the IAC 2016 in Durban. Six Champions met with PEPFAR Global Coordinator, Ambassador Deborah Brix and UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibé. They agreed that the landscape of Africa’s response to HIV has radically changed in recent years, as have the issues that require the Champions’ unique influence.
- The Champions’ Strategy was reviewed and it was concluded that it remains relevant; however, the HLCC agreed that the Champions should skew their advocacy towards removing barriers to the response. This HLCC resulted in the current strategic orientation intended to “Take on Complex Issues to Expand Access to HIV Services and Leaving No One Behind – 2018-2019”.

UNGA High-Level Meeting on ending AIDS - June 2016
- At the June 2016 UN General Assembly meeting on ending AIDS, Champions, represented by H.E. Obasanjo, advocated for increased focus on financial vulnerability. H.E. Obasanjo urged that fragile communities become the center for the global public health agenda. Health of fragile communities must be secured, especially when new epidemics and health issues threaten to further increase vulnerability of low to middle income countries.
- H.E. Obasanjo mobilized the Africa block to build momentum in building on critical success factors sustainable financing for health and HIV, leaving no one behind, leadership and mutual accountability and the role of Communities in ending AIDS by 2030.

Nigeria Country Visit - May 2016
- In May 2016, the Champions undertook a country visit to Nigeria-home to the world’s second largest HIV epidemic after South Africa - to discuss the AIDS response in the country, advocate for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and promote public-private partnerships for the production of antiretroviral medicines and HIV commodities in Africa. The visit was led by H.E. Festus Mogae and H.E. Speciosa Wandira-Kazibwe.

2015

Sierra Leone Country Visit - December 2015
- At the invitation of the President of Sierra Leone, the Champions, led by H.E. Wandira, undertook a visit to support the national leadership in commemorating World AIDS Day. Efforts to raise the profile of the country’s HIV epidemic and response were made through engaging a range of stakeholders and beneficiaries from all levels and sectors.
- At the end of the visit, Sierra Leone leadership expressed their commitment to begin allocating domestic resources to the HIV response. A commitment was also made to push for fast-tracking the AIDS response and ensuring that complete and quality HIV care is provided to all clients, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation or social status. In his speech on World AIDS Day 2015, which coincided with the Champions’ visit, His Excellency the President announced a policy of free HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment services for all, prioritizing children, pregnant women and key populations. The domestic allocation for the AIDS Response and budget line within the 2016 National Budget was established at USD 360,000, with a further increase to USD 500,000 in 2017 and over USD 2million approved by Parliament for 2018.

Defining Private Sector Support with Parliamentarians in the HIV response - November 2015
- The Champions partnered with the SADC Parliamentary Forum, made up of Members of Parliament from health and HIV/AIDS caucuses of 15 countries in the region. The Champions convened a dialogue in November 2015 with the forum to define support that Champions and Parliamentarians can provide to enhance private sector engagement in national AIDS responses. This was the first opportunity these Parliamentarians had been given to interact with regional private sector partners on these issues. A follow-up meeting to address other priority issues of the response took place in 2017 in Seychelles.
- The Champions’ advocacy and engagement with SADC Parliamentary Forum sparked an ongoing collaboration that has seen several joint dialogues and heightened receptivity to the advocacy of the Champions.

Youth Dialogues - Botswana September 2015 and Tanzania October 2015
- The Champions convened youth dialogues in 2015, with majority representation of adolescent girls and young women. Having prioritized collaboration with and engagement of young people in the regional AIDS response, the Champions and PEPFAR convened two dialogues - in Botswana in September 2015 and Tanzania in October 2015. The dialogues, led by H.E. Mlaka of Tanzania and H.E. Mogae, provided the opportunity for youth leaders to engage on key issues around HIV and inform the Champions ongoing activities.
- As a result of the dialogue, promotional videos were produced and distributed to relevant media outlets.

South Africa Country Visit - March 2016
- The Champions met with the South African leadership on the sidelines of the Champions’ convened private sector dialogue.
- In recognition of the political role of South Africa and its leadership in the global HIV and AIDS and health response, the Champions urged the Deputy President, Cyril Ramaphosa, to use South Africa’s influence and positionality, especially at the African Union, to mobilize other African nations for increased sustainability of the response and leaving no one behind. One of the results of this engagement was a co-convening of a political leadership session by Champions and the South African Presidencies at the International AIDS Conference in July 2016.

Raising support for UNAIDS with the UK Government - March 2016
- Following a request by the UNAIDS Executive Director for the Champions to support UNAIDS in mobilizing resources, the Champions’ Chairman leveraged engagements with the APPG on HIV and with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The Champion affirmed the critical role of UNAIDS in the AIDS response globally (and especially in Africa) and urged for continued UK support to UNAIDS. The Chairman of the Champions, H.E. Mogae also met with STOPAIDS, a network of UK agencies working together to secure an effective global response to HIV and AIDS, in 2016. The meeting was motivated by concern over the absence of HIV and AIDS in the latest DFID strategy and its purpose was to support and mobilize civil society for continued engagement of the UK Government in HIV and AIDS in Africa.
- Following the meeting between the Champions and the All-Party Group on HIV and AIDS, the APPG wrote to the Secretary of State for International Development concerning the absence of AIDS in the new DFID Strategy and the need for continued support to UNAIDS. This resulted in UNAIDS receiving confirmation of funding of 75 million GBP later in 2016.

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South Africa Country Visit - April 2015
- During a country visit meeting, President H.E. Zuma confirmed his continued support for the Champions and their efforts to achieve an AIDS-free generation. Then Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa also acknowledged the important role of the Champions in supporting the South African AIDS response. He confirmed the country’s commitment to urgently engaging young people, especially adolescent girls and young women, as well as to scaling up HIV treatment and prevention in South
Africa over the next five years.

• The result of this commitment was evident in the South African National Strategic Plan on HIV, TB and STIs 2017-2022, where the new areas of focus include a “… substantially stronger focus on adolescent girls and young women and on key vulnerable populations…” According to the South African leadership, the Champions’ advocacy played an important role in rallying the political support for this policy commitment.

Private Sector Think Tanks convened by the Champions - April and November 2015

• The Champions convened a private sector think tank in April and November 2015, in collaboration with the SADC Private Sector Forum, UNAIDS/ Regional Support Team’s, the SADC Parliamentary Forum, SADC Secretariat and ECOWAS. The think tank focused on sustainable financing, provided expert opinions and most importantly, defined what leadership should be doing to sustain the response. This included areas for enhanced private sector engagement in AIDS response.

AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) - June 2015

• The Champions were invited to the June 2015 AU Summit, where AIDS Watch Africa reviewed the Roadmap for Shared Responsibility. Strategic advocacy and diplomacy took place with AWA during a meeting on the sidelines of the summit.

Declaration of the Champions - April 2015

• The High-Level Coordinating Committee meeting resulted in a firm re-commitment by the Champions, defining and signing a declaration that outlines areas of emphasis going forward. Also outlined in the declaration was commitment by partners to continue supporting the program.

Annual High-Level Coordinating Committee (HLCC) meeting - April 2015

• The first HLCC meeting under the Revitalized Strategy was held in April 2015, bringing together ten Champions and principals of partner organizations - PEPFAR (Ambassador Debbie Brix), UNAIDS (Dr Luiz Loures) and SADC (Mr. Stephen Singe).

Champions Rebranding and Relaunch - February & April 2015

• As part of the rebranding exercise, in February, the Champions’ website was updated. Social media was overhauled to increase the visibility of the Champions amongst youth and allow the Champions’ messaging to reach a wider audience. Development and printing of updated materials, including fliers, calling cards, posters, messages and new Champions’ biographies were distributed.

• At the conclusion of the rebranding, there was a high-level relaunch event for the “new look” Champions’ program in Johannesburg in April 2015.

Recruitment of Five New Champions - February 2015

• Following the HLCC meeting in Washington DC in 2012, the Chairman of the Champions and the Secretariat were tasked with recruiting new Champions to cover West Africa.

• The recruitment resulted in five new Champions accepting the positions within a month of being invited, joining the program in 2015. The new Champions are: (1) H.E. Joyce Banda, Former President of Malawi, (2) H.E. Alpha Konare, Former President of Mali, (3) H.E. Kgalema Motlanthe, Former President of South Africa, (4) H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria and (5) H.E. Hifikepunye Pohamba, Former President of Namibia.

UN LGBT Core Group “Leaving no one behind” - 2015

• The catalyst for the Champions’ position on key populations, especially LGBTI, were remarks by H.E. Mogae at the UN LGBT Core Group meeting “Leaving no one Behind: Equality and inclusion in the post-2015 Development Agenda - Challenging Stigma, Violence and Prejudice” in 2015.

• He challenged the discriminatory laws that prevail in some African countries, highlighting how they dehumanize those at risk of HIV, such as sex workers, LGBTI+ people, people who use drugs, prisoners and migrants. The remarks sparked intense media commentary and debate.

Advocacy during Commemorative Days and events - Annually


• The Champions’ advocacy is published on the Champions’ online platforms and distributed across relevant media platforms.