

# CASE STUDY:

## RTC FELLOW BRINGS HIV LEARNINGS FULL CIRCLE



### From Good to Great: Turning Lessons Learned into Local Community Action

**Fellowship Assignment:** As part of the MSD Fellowship for Global Health, Rose and three of her colleagues were chosen to work with the prestigious Infectious Disease Research Institute (IDRI) in South Africa and the United States for three months in 2016. The Fellows were tasked with developing a global stakeholder engagement strategy and addressing issues associated with critical HIV research and development as part of the HIV Cure Initiative (HCI).

**NGO Partner:** IDRI (Infectious Disease Research Institute) takes a holistic approach to combat infectious diseases, combining the state-of-the-art science of a research organization with the ground-breaking product development capabilities of a biotech company to create innovative diagnostics, drugs and vaccines to eliminate devastating infectious diseases. IDRI is the current fiscal sponsor of HCI which mobilizes key stakeholder organizations across scientific, governmental, academic, multilateral, private and philanthropic sectors to join forces to develop a cure for HIV.

**Benefit to the NGO:** The RTC Fellows worked closely with key stakeholders from various HIV efforts to develop and deliver policy platform recommendations for a high-level summit as part of the HCI agenda. Based on their robust stakeholder assessment and extensive interactions across the HIV landscape, the Fellows also produced a strategic engagement and prioritization road map that is helping to guide HCI's overall stakeholder plan in the short- and long-term.

One of the key recommendations from Rose and her team was to move the HIV Cure Initiative away from IDRI to an organization that had a greater focus on policy/advocacy. To that end, the initiative was transferred to the International AIDS Society (IAS), which is continuing to move forward with bringing together key stakeholders from around the world to find a cure for HIV. In fact, IAS is planning a large-scale meeting this fall in the U.S., which was another recommendation from Rose's team.

**Benefit to the Fellow:** Rose's management team noticed that upon her return to MSD, she was significantly more engaged with MSD's mission to change people's lives for the better. They also commented on her improved confidence and enhanced leadership skills. "I can see increased passion on the part of Rose...passion for the work we do in changing people's lives for the better," said Dr. Beaver Tamesis, President and Managing Director, MSD in the Philippines. "This will definitely help us as we go through all the twists and turns in the world we live in and keep our focus on what is important."

**Benefit to MSD and the Communities in Which We Live and Work:** Rose was deeply inspired to apply her knowledge of the global HIV landscape into community action. She arrived home with recommended strategies for the company to play an active role in stakeholder engagement for HIV/AIDS in the Philippines. Not only did she take the lead in crafting a multi-stakeholder engagement plan, but she began building relationships with local advocacy groups, and proposed education for testing centers and treatment hubs. In fact, Rose helped coordinate MSD's first sponsorship of and participation in an HIV Summit in the Philippines. The forum was led by Quezon City's Mayor in conjunction with local government, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS and the Department of Health. This far-reaching event shed light on the local government's AIDS response journey and highlighted the importance of accessible and interconnected care, treatment and support services for People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and their families.

### Rose Lauren Mariano

Associate Director,  
Policy & Communications  
MSD in the Philippines  
Richard T. Clark (RTC) Fellow

