

MAMAS Core Team



I. MAMAS International Staff:

Linda Hawkin Israel, RN, Executive Director is a nurse and midwife. She has pursued a lifetime interest in healthcare and empowerment for rural and refugee women in Africa. Years ago, during apartheid, she was a midwife in South Africa and managed a hospital in the heart of Zululand. Her Africa-related work has been influenced by these earlier experiences; during the last ten years this has included extensive consultations with leaders of the Mano River Union (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Guinea) and with United Nations, local governments, international relief agencies and university leaders in Sierra Leone and the U.S.

During final stages of Sierra Leone's bitter rebel war, Linda began extensive surveys and videotaped research interviews with women in post-war refugee camps on healthcare problems they faced in the camps, had previously faced in their home districts, and expected to face upon return home. She has devoted many years to researching how to use technology to empower women and health workers in remote, rural African countries to overcome lack of access to timely and appropriate health care and to necessary medical supplies. Her involvement in these pursuits has led to her appointment as adjunct faculty at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, School of Economics and Development, South Africa.

Linda brings to MAMASnet her experience and training as an RN and midwife, innovations in uses of media in rural and refugee environments, an analysis of the factors necessary to affordable health delivery in Africa, and a strategy which is foundational to MAMASnet, arrived at in cooperation with rural healthworkers, researchers, scientists, policy makers, activists and the staff and core advisors of MAMAS International.

Rona F. Feit, JD. Policy Director (“Ronnie”) is a former Wall Street corporate lawyer, and a former high level official in the Federal government including appointments as Deputy Assistant to the President for Public Liaison on the Carter White House staff and as Associate Administrator for Women's Business Enterprise at the U.S. Small Business Administration.

As a Senior Fellow at the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED), a Washington-based think tank, she helped design and evaluate a variety of self-employment programs for those disadvantaged in the labor market and studied small business opportunity programs in the UK and France. She has advised the OECD in Paris and numerous OECD sponsored conferences in European countries on the development of women's small and medium enterprises.

She has also had a long volunteer career as a Founder, Director, Adviser or Managerial Trustee of several non-profit organizations over the years including the National Congress of Neighborhood Women (NW), the Huairou Commission, GROOTS International, the National Women's Political Caucus, the Association for Enterprise Opportunity, Wider Opportunities for Women, the US Association for UNIFEM and the International Association of Women Judges. As a director of NW, she wrote the widely utilized “Principled Partnerships” manual for grassroots

women groups working with outside partners. She has her BA magna cum laude in philosophy from Bryn Mawr College and her JD from the Columbia University Law School.

Mary Jesse, MA. Technical Director has more than two decades of intensive engineering and business experience and is considered a pioneer in the wireless industry for her work developing advanced wireless communications systems. She has been on the forefront of wireless systems development leading, among several programs, the development of the first cellular packet data network in the world. She has had extensive management experience and in the process has successfully started multiple companies and corporate organizations personally hiring hundreds of people and being responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mary currently serves as a strategic technology consultant for executives in the wireless industry offering expertise in the development, integration and testing of emerging wireless technologies. She holds Bachelors and Masters degrees in Electrical Engineering and has been granted many US and International technology patents. She has served in several executive positions including Vice-President of Strategic Technology Development for AT&T Wireless and Chief Technology Officer for RadioFrame Networks. As a published author of children's books, she brings to MAMAS a deep understanding of cultures, gender, maternal and child wellness along with a strong desire to apply technology to help underprivileged populations.

Joanne Kumekawa. MBA Planning Director has served as a senior advisor to a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce, and to the President of the National Telecommunication and Information Administration. She was a telecom policy analyst at the US Federal Communication Commission and a strategic planner for the International Telecommunication Union, a special agency of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

She has served as a senior advisor with the International eHealth Association, a UK-based NGO, and as Director of Policy in the Office for the Advancement of Telehealth, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She is currently Director of Kingston e-Health, a consultancy which has provided services to the World Bank, WHO and the National Institute of Science and Technology. Joanne received her BA in Economics from Yale University and an MBA in Finance from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. As a team member who has spent a decade as an economic and telehealth consultant, Joanne brings her heart, professional experience and commitment to health and human rights.

II. MAMAS International Core Consultant Team (alphabetical)

Kathe Boucha was co-founder of the Alaska Telemedicine Project (1994-2001) and co-developer of the Alaska Telecare System, a virtual clinic system. Her principal interest is in development of educational and health care management programs. As Treasurer of the World Trade Center of Alaska (1998-2004) Kathe completed professional training in Foreign Diplomacy, Protocol. Cultural Awareness and U.S. Foreign Relations.

Kathe's background is in nursing, midwifery, health and wellness education, early childhood education, business development, telemedicine/telehealth and cultural anthropology. She has traveled and consulted extensively for Providence Health Systems in Alaska and for her own company, Alaska Health Resources LLC (AHR) which managed the Telehealth Efficacy Project sponsored by the Alaska Telehealth Advisory Council. AHR has signed telemedicine partnership agreements with regions of the Russian Far East, Siberia and the Buryat Republic.

Kathe is Executive Director of the International Virtual e-Hospital Foundation (IveH) and the Associate Manager-Administrator of its program: *Improving Healthcare in the Balkans, Using Telemedicine, Advanced Technologies and Cultural Exchange*, supported by a grant recently awarded to IVEH by the U.S. Department of State.

Linda Guild Curda is Associate Professor, Community Health at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and Academic Liaison from that university's College of Rural and Community Development to the internationally recognized Alaskan Community Health Aide Practitioner (CHAP) program for rural health worker trainings and administration. Linda is a Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) with a Masters of Public Health degree from Johns Hopkins University where she has taught. Her earlier experiences include that of Coordinator and Faculty for Community Health Practitioner trainings for the Red Crescent Society Paramedic Staff, Saudi Arabia.

Two decades of innovative leadership in remote Alaskan communities include her roles as Head Nurse, Obstetrical Department, Public Health Service Hospital, Bethel, Alaska, and health work force educator, program strategist and Project Leader for Alaska's Statewide Committee on revision of the Alaska Community Health Aide/Practitioner Manual (CHAM), now in a 2006 edition. The CHAM, which can provide a basis for MAMAS training of rural health workers, provides standard of care guidelines for over five hundred Community Health Aides and Practitioners in the 178 village clinics serving Alaska Natives. It is the vital reference document for over 300,000 patient encounters each year in rural villages. It serves as the foundation for statewide program standardization and quality assurance. The CHAM is also the primary text for the UAF Community Health basic courses (CHP 131-135) and for 200 level coursework.

Dr. Rifat Latifi is Professor of Surgery and Associate Director, Telesurgery and International Affairs, at the University of Arizona Telemedicine Program. He is also project director of the Telemedicine Center of Kosova, and is leading a two-year project designed to improve health-care delivery in the Balkans. With a grant from the U.S. State Department to the Kosova Foundation for Medical Development, based in Anchorage, Alaska, the University of Arizona College of Medicine will host 44 physicians, nurses and technical professionals from Kosova, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania at a second site for education and training in telemedicine, e-health, electronic library management, trauma and surgical critical care.

Dr. Latifi's other research includes telemedicine, telepresence and teleteaching, nutritional support in critically ill and trauma patients, distance learning and web-based surgical education. www.surgery.arizona.edu/faculty/Latifi.htm The Telemedicine project of Kosova is the best example of successful establishment of telemedicine in developing countries.

After two years of intensive preparation the Telemedicine Centre of Kosova (TCK) and International Virtual e-Hospital Network of Kosova was inaugurated on December 10, 2002. This state of the art telemedicine facility is located at the heart of the University Clinical Centre of Kosova (UCCCK) in Prishtina. To this end, TCK is filling a huge gap in medical education in Kosova resulting from neglect, war and poor management.

Dr. Thomas Mensah is a world-renowned inventor and Georgia state resident with seven US and worldwide patents in Fiber Optics. He was born in 1950 in Kumasi, Ghana, and currently advises the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) on leadership in the analysis and best planning for ICT systems which will have impact across all sectors. He is committed to practical solutions to maternal-child health in Africa, and to MAMAS as a vehicle for international cooperation and implementation of advanced health infrastructures for maternal and newborn mortality prevention.

Dr. Mensah's achievements are a source of great pride in his country of birth and across Africa. As a world expert in the field of advanced materials, Dr. Mensah has worked on specialized projects for NASA (Superconductors for space communications), the U.S. Army (Smart munitions Picatinny Arsenal) and the U.S. Department of Energy, (Fiber optics sensors for Highway Traffic monitoring). Dr. Mensah has additional patents pending in some of these areas. He has held high level engineering positions in US industry first at Air Products and Chemicals (1980-83), then Corning Glass Works in Fiber Optics research at Sullivan Park, New York (1983-1986) where he built the fastest Fiber Optics draw and coating process, 50 meters per second. He holds 4 patents for this effort.

He joined AT&T Bell laboratories in 1986 and led the program to develop fiber optic reels used in the guided missile program. This effort led to the development of a system that was successfully deployed at missile speeds up to Mach 1 (The Speed of Sound). He received 3 US patents on this technology. Dr. Mensah also founded the high tech firm Supercond Technology in Norcross, GA, specializing in Aerospace and Communication products.

Dr. Frederick Pearce is Chair of the Department of Journalism and Public Communication, and Professor of Telecommunications and Director of the Applied Communications Laboratory at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. Dr. Pearce is a graduate of Iona College and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Pearce has an extensive background in broadband telecommunications and information technologies.

He has worked in the radio and television industry and has developed, deployed, and evaluated healthcare and medical applications and technologies for narrow bandwidth use in Alaska, Montana, and the developing world. His "Alaska Telemedicine Testbed Project" (1994 –2001) began the re-engineering of healthcare delivery in Alaska, one of the world's most demanding environments. He developed, under contract to the National Library of Medicine (1996-2001), the "Alaska Telehealth System" which is being used for clinical decision support in Alaska, and the "Alaska Telemedicine Workstation" which is being used to deliver clinical medicine throughout Alaska and the Russian Far East.

Dr. Pearce has just completed the Alaska Medical Informatics Initiative (AMII) under contract to the U.S. Department of Defense (2002-2007). AMII is a display and sensor-neutral trauma patient movement monitoring system designed to move vital patient biomedical information in real-time from the point of trauma to medical response using extremely narrow bandwidth.

Rhonda Stengl has cooperated with Linda Hawkin Israel, MAMAS director, for nearly a decade as a pilot project advisor with focus on innovative approaches to project funding. Her ongoing mission has been to identify systems which will broaden the base of resources for women in remote communities and crisis arenas. Rhonda is co-founder of Gateways to the Future LLC, (GTF) based in the San Francisco Bay area. GTF will collaborate with MAMAS core team to develop a needs-resource portal which utilizes GPS mapping, webcasting and a search engine to connect MAMAS projects in remote communities to corporate social responsibility programs, foundations, trade relationships and opportunities to build assets.

Dr. Takeshi Utsumi is the Founder and Vice President for Technology & Coordination of Global University System (GUS) and the Chairman of the Global Systems Analysis and Simulation Association in the U.S.A. (GLOSAS/USA). He is the 1994 Laureate of the Lord Perry Award for Excellence in Distance Education. His public services have included political work for deregulation of global telecommunications and the use of e-mail and voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) through ARPANET, Telenet and Internet; helping extend American university courses to

developing countries; the conduct of innovative distance teaching trials with "Global Lecture Hall (GLH)[™]" multipoint-to-multipoint multimedia interactive videoconferences using hybrid technologies; as well as lectures, consultation, and research in process control, management science, systems science and engineering at the University of Michigan, the University of Pennsylvania, M.I.T. and many other universities, governmental agencies, and large firms in Japan and other countries.

Cornelius ("Neal") A. Van Milligen is an accountant and entrepreneur with over 20 years of experience in designing low cost projects to advance rural public health with innovative agricultural production and solid waste systems in both developed and developing worlds. Neal's expertise in parallel designs of health and sanitation systems is core to MAMASnet approach for sustainable health infrastructure.

Since Sierra Leone's economy has a major agricultural base, Neal offers an experienced eye on low cost ways to improve the incomes of the country's agricultural workers and on how to reduce health-related sanitation problems economically in Freetown and other urban settings. MAMAS International will be looking to Neal and his associates for advice on how to use MAMASnet connectivity infrastructure to support new, health related jobs and economic development in Sierra Leone.

As President of Kentucky Enrichment, Inc. in Utica, Kentucky, and predecessor firms, and a non-profit counterpart called Rural Innovations, Neal and his staff work closely with relevant university researchers, engineers, and companies on new ways to use agricultural, human, and animal waste to bring prosperity to rural areas. His projects have included work in several U.S. states, Canada, and Mexico and he is currently consulting on projects in Honduras and Uganda.

Neal has a B.S. in accounting from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale (1972) with honors, where he was president of Beta Alpha Psi, an accounting honors fraternity. He served in the U.S. Army from 1966-1969 as a First Lieutenant Amor and as a Senior Instructor, U.S. Army Armor School. He was an accountant Ernst & Ernst in 1972, and then spent over 20 years as an investigator for the U. S. Treasury Department. He has been successfully in business since 1984.

Dr. Mohamed A. Wansa, a lifelong resident of Sierra Leone, and an international businessman, is West African Regional Director for Japan's unique health and development project, AHDSI (Advocates For Human Development Toward Self Reliance International). Based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, he manages projects for partners and donors in Tokyo, Beijing and Rotterdam, Netherlands. His research and field projects focus on strategic economics for humanitarian aid, leading to capacity at the local level for long-term sustainability. His experience and knowledge of West Africa is invaluable to MAMASnet for identification of specific needs, design of programs, relationships with government leaders, outreach to donors and project management.

Dr. Wansa is recognized as an innovator and regional leader for the promotion of asset development for marginalized populations in Sierra Leone and other African countries which are emerging from conflict. His contributions on behalf of AHDSI, MAMAS and enterprise development programs have laid the groundwork for new infrastructures supporting health, fishing, bio-diesel and waste management projects and employment in these areas. Trained in both oral medicine and dental surgery at Cairo University, Egypt, and with a background in materials research, enterprise development and business management.