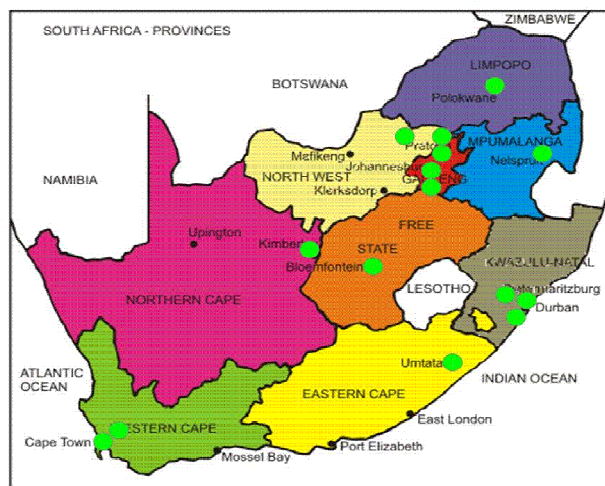


# Link

Volume 37, April 2013



## First Quarter



GERMS-SA Surveillance Officers' meeting at Genesis Conference Centre (7-8 March, 2013)

Enjoy this bumper issue of the LINK in which we look at the future of GERMS, report back on our very successful SO meeting (pg 2) and pictorially document the site visits covered these last four months (pgs 4 and 5). We also give you information on how we monitor GERMS-SA data quality (pg 6) and give you updates on our projects: the IPD case-control study (pg 7 and 8), the Health

Utilisation Survey and rifampicin-resistant TB (pg 9) and the Cryptococcal Screening Programme (pg 10) as well as our usual newsy tidbits. [Sonwabo Lindani]

### *“Germs-SA : Looking to the future”*

There are big things happening this year! Our name will no longer be an acronym. We will simply be called GERMS-SA which will include all the new pathogens under one umbrella including HIV, TB and STIs. GERMS-SA will have a laboratory-based component AND also a clinic surveillance component where we will monitor HIV- and TB-resistance and STIs. SARI and ROTA surveillance will also be incorporated into this platform as GERMS-SA becomes the NICD surveillance network.

So there will be rapid expansion at enhanced surveillance sites which will include clinic surveillance in each province. The NICD wants to expand its footprint into the provinces by hiring epidemiologists who will work closely with the NICD and the provincial Department of Health. All this is made possible by funding from National Treasury through the Department of Health. We look forward to this new adventure. [Vanessa Quan—GERMS-SA]