



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

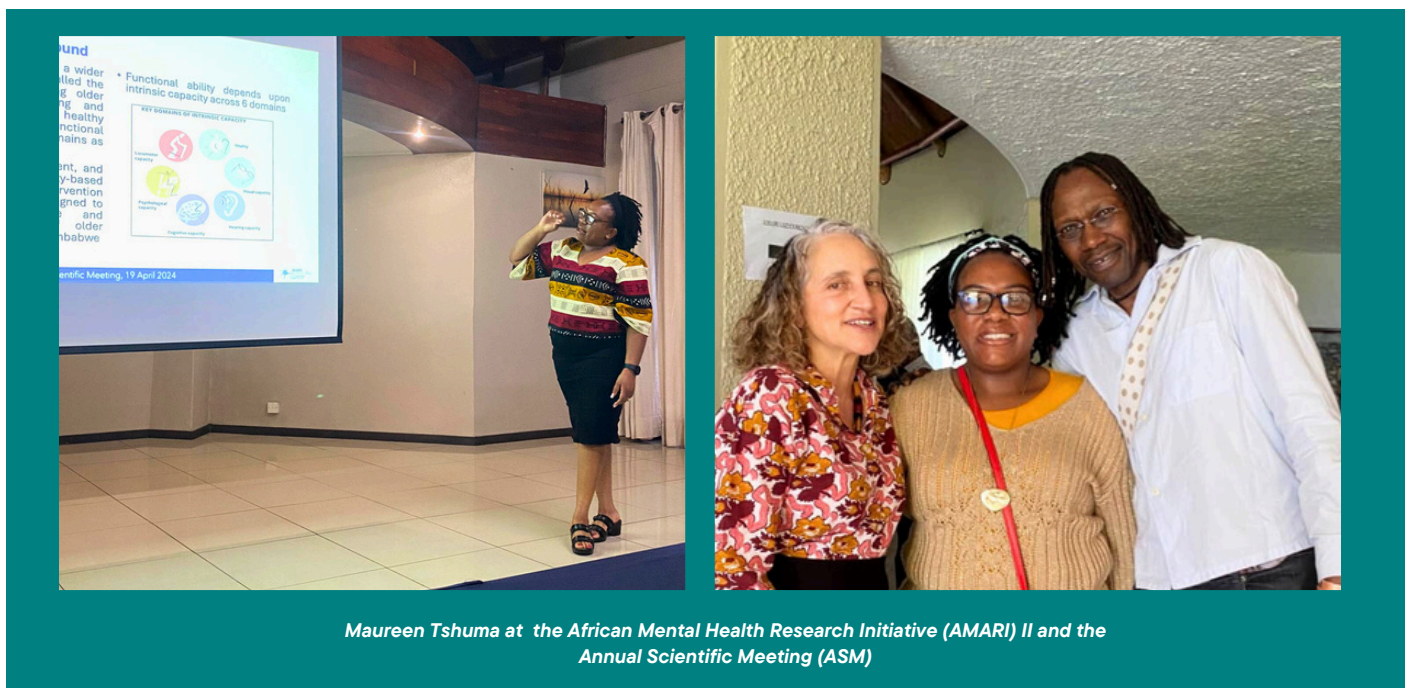
30 APRIL 2024



UPDATES

Maureen Tshuma Shines at AMARI II & ASM: Insights into African Mental Health Research

Maureen Tshuma presents at the African Mental Health Research Initiative (AMARI) II and the Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM). Congratulations to Maureen Tshuma who presented her PhD research plan at the African Mental Health Research Initiative (AMARI) II and Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) from 15 – 20 April 2024 in the resort town of Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. The ASM schedule comprised of PhD fellows' introductory trainings (15–20 April), and an ASM (19 April). The primary aim of the ASM was to facilitate networking of AMARI-II participants and established scientists, to expose partner countries to mental, neurological and substance misuse disorders (MNS) research activities and to develop leadership skills and allow AMARI-II fellows to get high-level feedback from established scientists. Rhulani Beji-Chauke also presented.



Maureen Tshuma at the African Mental Health Research Initiative (AMARI) II and the Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM)

Com-BP study partnership with Solidarmed

The Com-BP study forged a partnership with Solidarmed, an organisation Implementing an NCD project in Masvingo province. This partnership saw the Com-BP team travelling to Chiredzi and Bikita(24-29March 2024) districts to evaluate Solidarmed's IEC material being distributed in their supported clinics and also to collect formative data that would help in charting the way forward for the study.

On the 24th of April, the team also held a one day training of Com-BP facilitators for Chitungwiza (one of the study sites) marking the kickstart of our Community Hypertension Groups.



Training of COM-BP Facilitators in Chitungwiza

Prof Fred Ssewamala presents seminar on “Economic Empowerment Interventions Addressing HIV-Risk Taking Behaviours, Care and Support for Adolescent Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from 20 Years of NIH funded Field Work”

On May 2nd, Prof Fred Ssewamala’s presentation will explore over 20 years of work, funded by the United States National Institutes of Health (NIH) on HIV Prevention, Care and Support, among adolescents. Examples will be drawn from intervention work done in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria with broader lessons for the HIV Prevention and Care Field. The presentation will also highlight the capacity building opportunities—specifically NIH funded training programs resulting from and utilizing the funded field studies as “social labs”. Prof Ssewamala, a leading researcher, focuses on economic empowerment and social protection interventions for children and youth affected by poverty and health disparities. He holds a joint appointment in the Washington University School of Medicine and directs the International Center for Child Health and Development (ICHAD) and SMART Africa Center. Prof Ssewamala is currently conducting eight NIH-funded longitudinal trials in sub-Saharan Africa. With over 190 peer- reviewed articles, he serves on several editorial boards and is a member of various professional scientific organizations.



Prof Fred shares insights on the impact of Economic Empowerment in addressing HIV in adolescents

5 MINUTES WITH...

Ellen Chiyindiko

What is your role and when did you start?

Hello, I'm Ellen Chiyindiko. I joined THRU Zimbabwe on May 2, 2024, as the Public Engagement Coordinator. My role revolves around amplifying the visibility of THRU ZIM's work, from showcasing inspiring projects to managing our online presence through the monthly newsletter, website, and social media platforms like Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. I'm not just behind the scenes, though. I actively participate in and coordinate internal events like Social Science Club meetings and conferences, where we share ideas and insights. I also help organize public engagement activities, such as school science fairs and study videos, to bring our research closer to the community. Innovation is a big part of what we do, so I'm always looking for new ways to engage the public. Whether it's developing tools or creating resources like toolkits for staff and students, I'm focused on making sure everyone has what they need to succeed in public engagement.

Where can we find you in the office?

I will be in room 5 next to Edith. You can also find me behind a camera capturing all the key aspects of various projects and people at the different projects within THRU Zim.

Who and/or what inspires you?

I'm inspired by everyday people. The ones that get up and go after what they want in life.

Why is public engagement important and what do you enjoy about it?

I love the sense of connection that public engagement brings. Meeting and interacting with people from different walks of life, each with their own stories and perspectives, is incredibly enriching. Public engagement, to me, is a platform for inclusivity, amplifying the voices of various communities, fuelling problem-solving and decision-making processes. Through public engagement, I've gained profound insights into people and their experiences. Listening to their stories first-hand challenges my perspectives and fosters genuine empathy and connection. The impact of public engagement cannot be overstated. It disseminates valuable knowledge and drives positive change in individuals and societies alike. And let's not forget the fun! Engaging with the public is often dynamic and exciting, whether it's participating in lively discussions, organizing events, or collaborating on projects. It's a source of joy and fulfilment that keeps me coming back for more.



Ellen Chiyindiko

PUBLICATIONS

High uptake of menstrual health information, products and analgesics within an integrated sexual reproductive health service for young people in Zimbabwe. Tembo, M., Simms, V., Weiss, H.A. et al. *Reprod Health* 21, 56 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-024-01789-y>

OPPORTUNITIES

MRC funding opportunity for African researchers

The Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) are pleased to announce an open funding opportunity. This grant aims to support exceptional early to mid-career African researchers in conducting outstanding global health research across sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The funding supports researchers in partnership with UK-based institutions and enthusiastic local research environments. The programme aims to attract and retain talented 'rising star' individuals who will lead high-quality research on key global health issues relevant to SSA. Awards, providing support for up to five years, range from £250,000 to £750,000. Applications are open from **January 24th to 24 April 24th, 2024**.

Please visit this link for more information: <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/african-research-leaders/>

Call for submissions - Inclusive Menstruation: Practice, Research, Action Conference

Wednesday 29th May 2024, Liverpool John Moores University, UK

Menstruation Research has continued to grow since the establishment of **The Menstruation Research Network UK (MRN)** in 2018.

We have seen shifts in policy, research, practice and understanding of the varied experiences of people who menstruate.

An intersectional and inclusive approach to the study of – and advocacy for – menstruation and menstruators is more important than ever. This is particularly true at a time where many governments are making repeated attacks on the most marginalised people in society, from people seeking asylum to our trans and gender diverse siblings, and from international students – for example, through restrictive visa reforms in the UK – to our rights in workplaces. How does this environment impact people who menstruate, their access to menstrual management, and public understandings of menstruation?

This conference seeks contributions from academics, activists, artists, policymakers and organisations of all kinds to discuss how we make our work on menstruation inclusive.

For more information and to submit your proposal, please use the online form here:

<https://menstruationresearchnetwork.org.uk/call-for-papers/>

Postdoctoral Fellowship Opportunity

Imperial College London (Dr Jamilah Meghji) has advertised for a post-doctoral fellow, to join a research programme looking at integrated TB-respiratory care in Africa. This is a 3-year post based in London UK, with a start date of July/August 2024. The advert will be open until Sunday 19th May.

Please find the link to the advert: **[Health Systems PDRA Job Advert](#)**

Share your news, publications, pictures, announcements: publicengagement@thruzim.org. Follow us on Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/ThruZim>

THANK YOU!