THRU ZIM AT THE MARCH RETREAT

On March 27th 2023, members of the THRU ZIM team attended LSHTM’s MARCH Centre Retreat at The Foundling Museum in London. This retreat provided an opportunity to identify actionable changes that the MARCH Centre can take by 2030 to increase high impact research to improve health worldwide, building leadership, equitable partnerships and including the participation of women, children and adolescents. The event featured an in-depth interview with Prof Rashida Ferrand, a presentation on the Art of Health by Tino Mavimba, and strategy session facilitated by Dr Mandi Tembo.

Y-CHECK COMPLETES RECRUITMENT

The Y-Check study has completed recruitment of the targeted 2000 adolescents aged 10-19 years for health check-up services in Zimbabwe. On the 24th of March, the study team was treated to a delightful luncheon and cake in celebration of this milestone. A job well done Y-Check!

MAGUS REACHES TARGETS

MAGUS Zimbabwe is happy to announce that it has reached the targeted enrolment of 200 participants per country. They are the first country to have reached this target. The study is also happy to announce that its abstract on co-prevalent sexually transmitted infections among individuals presenting with genital ulcer disease in Zimbabwe has been accepted as a poster presentation at the upcoming International Society for STD Research set to be held in Chicago in June 2023.

CONGRATULATIONS PhD GRADUATES!

We would like to sincerely congratulate Dr. Constancia Mavodza, Dr. Ioana Olaru and Dr. Mandi Tembo for graduating at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). The graduation ceremony was held at the Central Hall Westminster (at LSHTM) on the 20th of March.
FRACTURES-E3 INVESTIGATORS’ MEETING

From the 13-16th of March, the Fractures-E3 study held its core investigators’ meeting at Cresta Lodge in Harare. The senior investigation team from Zimbabwe, South Africa, and The Gambia met to strategize the study’s scientific outputs which included publication schedules, drafting paper outlines and interpreting preliminary data from all its five work packages. Discussions on future funding opportunities with respect to grants, PhD studentships, and developing programmes post 2025 were held. Strategies to engage policy makers, ministries of health and keyholders to maximise the impact of the study’s outputs were also developed. The senior investigators were also treated to a series of dinners, a poolside BBQ at Cresta Lodge, and a sunset walk at Domboshava for recreation.

INSIGHTFUL AND PERSONAL PRESENTATION BY HANNAH GANNON ON ‘ETHNOGRAPHY IN HOSPITAL SETTINGS’

Hannah Gannon presented to the Social Science Working Group on Wednesday the 15th of March on her experience as a medical doctor conducting ethnography in hospital settings. It provided an enriching learning opportunity, particularly for researchers who consider themselves more quantitative or medical, on experiences and insights from conducting ethnography.

The next upcoming seminars for the Social Science Working Group will be:

Wednesday the 12th of April 2023 at 11am - 12.30pm: Prof Marvellous Mhloyi (University of Zimbabwe), speaking about ‘Community Engagement in Research’

Wednesday the 31st of May 2023 at 11am - 12.30pm: Faith Kandiye and Chipo Nyamayaro (THRU ZIM), speaking about ‘Participant or non-participant observation: experiences from process evaluation within a complex intervention’
EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS’ MEETING

This month, the Early Career Researchers’ Club hosted Dr. Anya Burton and Dr. George Tavengwa. The learning outcomes for Dr. Anya’s training on how to critically appraise a paper was to give researchers a guide on factors to consider when appraising a paper and checklists to follow to ensure good reporting. The training on referencing covered plagiarism, referencing management software, referencing styles and guidelines to referencing using examples. Dr. George spoke about the Harare Meningitis Aetiology Study which aimed to describe the epidemiology of meningitis in Harare, to generate the clinical and cost-effectiveness data to support implementation of enhanced diagnostics in to routine care and to improve the diagnosis of CNSI and reduce associated mortality.

ERASE-TB STUDY HOLDS COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

On the 10th of March, the ERASE-TB study held its third community advisory board meeting. Participants from various communities in Harare attended this meeting and many issues were discussed such as study progress, important preliminary findings and success stories from the community and the clinic. In addition to this Dr. Claire Calderwood, Karlos Madziva and Edson Marambire delivered some informative presentations. Dr. Claire presented on IMBA HUTANO and all the comprehensive health screening benefits to TB household contacts and index cases. Edson presented on his PhD plans; Investigation of TB transmission in households and Karlos presented on identified TB risk factors among index cases.
PRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE ON RETROVIRUSES AND OPPORTUNITISTIC INFECTIONS

Last February, Prof. Rashida Ferrand presented the CHIEDZA study results at The Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Seattle, USA. CROI is a forum for basic scientists and clinical investigators to present, discuss, and critique their investigations into the epidemiology and biology of human retroviruses and associated diseases. The study itself started in 2019, ended in June 2022 and was unblinded in November 2022.

For more information about the study, visit its website: https://www.chiedza.co.zw/

PRESENTATIONS AT THE ADOLESCENT HIV PREVENTION AND TREATMENT SCIENCE ALLIANCE TRAINING

Earlier this month, Dr. Chido Dziva Chikwari, Dr. Constancia Mavodza and Chelsea Mazonde represented THRU ZIM at the Adolescent HIV Prevention and Treatment Implementation Science Alliance (AHISA) Implementation Science Training hosted by Pangaea Zimbabwe AIDS Trust (PZAT). Chelsea delivered a testimonial about her experiences as a youth researcher within the Youth Researchers Academy (class of 2021), while Dr. Chido and Dr. Constancia delivered talks on qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis to young people in attendance. This collaboration was facilitated by Dr Mandi Tembo.

PARTNER SIDE EVENT AT WOMEN DELIVER CONFERENCE 2023

We are delighted to announce that Dr Mandi Tembo’s proposal for Partner Side Event at the upcoming Women Deliver Conference to held in Kigali, Rwanda in June 2023 has been accepted. This session will focus on menstrual health (MH), featuring talks and debate from researchers and implementing partners evaluating MH interventions to improve sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania respectively. This event will be held in collaboration with colleagues from Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Mwanza Intervention Trials Unit, and MRC Uganda.

PRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE ON RETROVIRUSES AND OPPORTUNITISTIC INFECTIONS
COLLINS TIMIRE RECEIVES FUNDING FOR NEW STUDY

Collins Timire, a final year PhD student within the Faculty of Infectious and Tropical Diseases at the London School of School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine received funding from the Hamish Ogston Foundation. He will use the funds to conduct a follow up study on 'Impact of TB on adolescents (10-19 years) living in TB affected households in Harare, Zimbabwe'. His PhD project focused on investigating the impact of tuberculosis on livelihoods of people and their households in Zimbabwe. Results showed that household members are indirectly affected by TB disease in a household. TB affects material, educational and psychosocial domains and the impact may be huge, especially among adolescents since they have little financial autonomy and less developed coping mechanisms. The extent of impact of TB on adolescents could not be assessed since their perspective was not invited. Through funding from the Hamish Ogston Foundation, he will explore, from the perspective of adolescents growing up in TB affected households in Harare, the direct and indirect impacts of TB and how adolescents cope with effects of TB in a setting that is wracked with food insecurity, peer pressure, substance abuse and stigma.

5 MINUTES WITH...
STEVEN AZIZI

What do you do and when did you start?
In November 2022, I joined THRU ZIM as an LSHTM International Statistics and Epidemiology Group (ISEG) fellow. My fellowship placement extends until September 2023. As a medical statistician, my primary responsibilities involve collaborating with subject matter experts to design studies, analyzing data, interpreting results, and dissemination. This includes selecting appropriate study designs to address research questions, applying suitable statistical methods for data analysis, and accurately interpreting the results. Presently, I am working on the CHIEDZA dataset, focusing on exploratory outcomes such as alcohol and substance use. Dr. Victoria Simms, my mentor, is a valuable source of support in my daily work, and I am grateful for her guidance.

Where can we find you in the office?
I am in the Statistics office.

What do you enjoy about your work?
My work revolves around collaborating with researchers, as the saying goes, "Good data analysis goes hand-in-hand with good study design." I firmly believe that good study design and analysis is a collaborative effort, requiring input from multiple perspectives and skill sets. It's this shared commitment to making a positive impact on the world that drives my passion for what I do. Every day, I'm surrounded by like-minded individuals who are equally passionate about making a difference. Regardless of our diverse backgrounds and beliefs, we're united by a common goal: to push the boundaries of knowledge and practice, all in the pursuit of saving lives. For me, there's no greater sense of fulfilment than knowing that our collective efforts have led to tangible, real-world benefits. Whether it's one life saved or many, each success story inspires me to continue striving towards a better tomorrow.

Steven Azizi
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Social Science Working Group Sessions
Please take of these upcoming Social Working Group Sessions:

**Wednesday the 12th of April 2023 at 11am - 12.30pm:** Prof Marvellous Mhloyi (University of Zimbabwe), speaking about ‘Community Engagement in Research’
Zoom link: https://lshtm.zoom.us/j/92961074152?pwd=ZXFhUUNzaXU3Y0hOd2FkMURiNDVRQTo9. Meeting ID: 929 6107 4152. Password: 282412

**Wednesday the 31st of May 2023 at 11am - 12.30pm:** Faith Kandiye and Chipo Nyamayaro (THRU ZIM), speaking about ‘Participant or non-participant observation: experiences from process evaluation within a complex intervention’
Zoom link: https://lshtm.zoom.us/j/91903997874?pwd=WGVFNTg0VExyTDhNQ1UyZjJiQ3Bwdez09. Meeting ID: 919 0399 7874. Password: 418238

‘R’ WhatsApp Group
Individuals using the ‘R’ statistical programme, please feel free to join the WhatsApp platform to be kept up to date on all ‘R’ related opportunities and announcements.
Link: https://chat.whatsapp.com/LpxX6UdAS3K8NamfY7eZs3

THRU ZIM study registrations and updates
To all study leads, please take note of the study registrations and updates spreadsheet which contains information pertaining to study ethical approvals. Information highlights ethical approval expiry dates that need to be noted. You are all also required to update the spreadsheet with missing information pertaining to your ethical approvals as well.
Link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jyRcoKbCHn6lH2PVQ2VbWC5nmhnpiCLttkNoNS1p7mE/edit#gid=0

THRU ZIM MSc project list
To those that have an agreement with MSc students, the THRU ZIM MSc project list needs to be updated with their information. This is a working document that needs to be updated as you reach agreements with students over the coming months.
Link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15WWhSrHDSYB2PR7n1FNYUanMANsGd-1i/edit#gid=1747447857

PUBLICATIONS


PICTURE OF THE MONTH

Dr. Constancia Mavodza and Dr. Ioana Olaru at LSHTM Graduation 2023
Please do send us your submissions for “Picture of the Month” – it really can be about anything you and colleagues found interesting, entertaining, funny, and/or visually stunning. Fun captions are encouraged.

“Picture of the Month” will receive a small token of our appreciation, so let’s get creative!

Share your news, publications, pictures, announcements: publicengagement@thruzim.org. Follow us on Twitter: https://twitter.com/ThruZim

THANK YOU!