CONGRATULATIONS MSc STUDENTS!
We are thrilled to celebrate Faith Kandiye and Karlos Madziva on successfully finishing their first year of the MSc Public Health program through distance learning with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. While balancing full-time jobs, Faith and Karlos have demonstrated remarkable commitment to furthering their education. They devoted evenings and weekends to coursework, often logging in from different time zones for lectures and group revisions. Their mentors, Katharina Kranzer, Rashida Ferrand, Aoife Doyle, Justin Dixon, and Ioana Olaru, have provided invaluable guidance and support. Faith and Karlos are grateful for the knowledge gained so far, from honing epidemiology skills to learning new quantitative research methods. Their passion for improving population health motivates them through each challenging week. As Faith and Karlos begin their final year, we applaud their drive and growth on this rewarding educational journey. Their perseverance and teamwork are inspiring examples of the values that make THRU ZIM great.

YPAA STUDY PROTOCOL TRAINING
The Young People, ART, and Adherence (YPAA) study held its protocol training with its core research team on all study procedures, implementation of the intervention, training on good clinical practices in trials and communicating effectively with young people. The YPAA study is Nyasha Dzavakwa’s PhD which focuses on the effectiveness of the Wisepill RT2000 dispenser to improve patient ARV adherence. In addition, a special training on gender ideology was also held which involved sensitizing the research team on how to navigate gender identity and sexuality in young people living with HIV. Nicol Redzo also trained the research team on sample storage and transfer during the pretesting of clinical record form (CRF). Wishing the team, the best of luck as they begin the intervention. A study film is currently in production, and we look forward to seeing it soon!
TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY DELEGATES VISIT THRU ZIM

We hosted delegates from Tsinghua University in China who had travelled to Zimbabwe to seek new collaborations with THRU ZIM and other research organizations. The delegates were hosted by Nyasha Dzavakwa and Tinashe Mwaturura, who chartered a series of study site visits that included the UZ Clinical Trials Research Centre, where they met some of our ‘on-site’ research teams (including MSc and PhD students), the IPSAZ study at Kuwadzana Polyclinic where they got to see the STI point of care gene expert machine in use, and touring the Biomedical Research and Training Institute headquarters where they met with Dr. Shungu Munyati and the laboratory staff. On the final day of their visit, the delegates were treated to a wonderful Chinese dinner at Golden Peacock hotel.

“A MAN’S SECRET” - A MUSIC VIDEO ON MEN’S MENTAL HEALTH

“A Man’s Secret” is an R&B music video, written and performed by Elton Muyatwa. The music video presents a compelling case on the difficulties African men experience with fulfilling the traditional ‘male provider’ role in the harsh economic settings in Zimbabwe. The song depicts a young man struggling with the chronic stress of this reality and highlights the devastating effects mental illness can have on African men especially in a society that also tells them to not show emotion, share their problems or exhibit any signs of weakness.

Video link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VC27pLCzrrVHiIkTJLQwlLcbTqSS4YOF/view
RUMBI GUMBIE VISITS THE USA

This month, Rumbi, attended the Implementation Science in Global Health Summer Institute at the University of Washington in Seattle. This was a week-long course that gave participants an intensive dive into the field of implementation science. This was an important step in Rumbi’s PhD work which focuses on implementation science. Rumbi managed to form a new friendship with a young enthusiastic researcher named, Chido Moira Majaha, during her tour of Washington (Seattle) who expressed an interest in working at THRU ZIM. She learnt about THRU ZIM through Dr. Chido Dziva Chikwari when they worked on a project together with Dr. Irene Njuguna. Her research interest is in improving health outcomes of adolescents and young adults’ health, particularly those living with HIV. She has been following the CHIEDZA trial and is now interested in working with Rumbi Gumbie on her PhD (Integrating Sexual and Reproductive Health into clinic-based HIV care - TSIME) study. As an early-career researcher, she is drawn to THRU ZIM’s culture of mentorship and strong HIV and STI research. THRU ZIM welcomes such collaborations and we are excited to hear more about their partnership in the near future.

MENOPAUSE STUDY RELEASES RESOURCE WEBSITE

The menopause study has released an information resource website to help inform people about menopause, why it happens, what to expect and how to manage symptoms. It is available in different formats for people speaking different languages, with different levels of literacy, and with different availabilities of communication technologies.

For more information follow this link: https://t.co/XYKTpCXrxX

TAURA STUDY LAUNCHES MWEDZI - A CROWDSOURCING COMPETITION ABOUT PERIODS

Led by Dr. Mandikudza Tembo, TAURA (“Speak Up” in Shona), is a study looking to understand what women and healthcare providers need to address MH-related issues (including managing menstrual pain and bleeding, accessing menstrual products, water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities, and accessing MH-related healthcare) in rural and urban settings in Zimbabwe, and the impact of these needs on their health-related quality of life (HRQoL). As part of this work, Dr. Tembo is collaborating with Ardent to conduct a public engagement (PE) competition to capture menstrual experiences across Zimbabwe through artwork (paintings and photography). Crowdsourcing of artwork will be used to bring a focus to MH-related issues in different contexts across Zimbabwe and will give voice to an often stigmatized and mystified subject matter. Shortlisted entries will be mentored to allow them to refine their work and work will be showcased within a menstrual health film and in subsequent workshops and discussions that will guide menstrual health resource and training tool development.
WELCOME PhD STUDENTS!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Lydia Davidson and Kate Mattick, two PhD students that will be doing their PhD projects with THRU ZIM. Lydia’s PhD will involve working closely with staff and families to investigate how a participatory approach may improve care and ensure sustainability of infection prevention and control in low-resource neonatal units. Kate’s PhD will focus on co-developing community rehabilitation services to promote functional ability and quality of life of older people.

More information about them can be found on our website: https://www.thruzim.org/phd-students

5 MINUTES WITH...

BRIDGET KANENGONI

What do you do and when did you start?
I work as a study coordinator for the VAXEF study, and I am responsible for the day to day running of the study and coordination of all activities. I ensure that the study has all the appropriate and valid IRB approvals, well connected to our stakeholders, smooth coordination of involved departments and making sure that there is adequate staff to execute the required study activities. I started working for THRU ZIM in June 2021.

Where can we find you in the office?
I can be found in Prof. Katharina’s project office, the one facing the main gate.

What do you enjoy about your work?
I work with a great team and I enjoy being part of it. Having to face daily challenges with the team is something motivating and there is always something new to learn.

PUBLICATIONS

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2023.102125

OPPORTUNITIES

Vacancy: ISEP coordinator
The ISEP coordinator position is now open to applicants: EPH-EPIH-2023-05 Research Fellow or Assistant Professor - Jobs at LSHTM. The applicant will be responsible for coordinating and supporting key aspects of the Partnership including co-developing an equitable partnership framework, leading the monitoring and evaluation of ISEP activities, conducting a scoping review on capacity strengthening in applied medical statistics in LMICs, coordinating the preparation and delivery of statistical skills courses and placements between partner institutes, and ensuring links with other biostatistics capacity strengthening initiatives in sub Saharan Africa.

Application deadline: September 10th

Call for applications: The Second Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing
The Second Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing is opening a call for five experts to serve on the multi-disciplinary ‘Adolescent and Youth Review Group’.

The Second Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing brings together a diverse group of 41 Commissioners including ten Youth Commissioners from across disciplines, sectors, and geographies.

Meaningful adolescent and youth engagement is front and centre of the approach of the Commission, we have ensured youth mainstreaming at every stage of the Commissions’ activities. Since its inception, the Commission appointed eight young experts who are serving as Youth Commissioners and are playing a pivotal role in the application of a youth lens to the Commission’s work, as well as serving as co-chairs leading workstreams through an intergenerational, equal partnerships model.

Ideal applicants:
- Aged 18 to 30 years;
- Have a passion for improving the health and wellbeing of all young people;
- Work in or have an interest in all fields including political sciences, gender equality, climate justice, economics, and health financing;
- We welcome applications from regions of the globe as well as marginalized populations such as indigenous youth, refugees and the LGBTQI+ community.

Expected involvement:
- 1-2 virtual calls, October – December 2023
- Reviewing the Commission’s draft report
- Participating in an in-person meeting in early December 2023 (flights and accommodation will be covered)
- 2-4 virtual calls, 2024
- Final review of the Commission report
- Participate, as needed, in report launch dissemination activities

A modest stipend will be included and all costs for the in-person meeting will be covered. Selected experts will also be acknowledged in the Commission report.

Deadline: September 17th
Follow this link to apply: https://redcap.mcri.edu.au/surveys/?s=37FWER8NXD4XD39R

Vacancy: Team Lead, Zimbabwe Tree of Life Trauma Healing Long-Term Program Evaluation
Type and Period of Performance: Part-time consultancy

The Cloudburst Group frequently develops and implements evaluations, assessments, and other learning tools for USAID/DDI/DRG. To support these projects, Cloudburst seeks qualified experts with experience across a variety of DRG subject matter and methodologies. USAID/Zimbabwe has commissioned Cloudburst to conduct a program evaluation of the long-term effects of two components of Tree of Life’s trauma healing activities. Tree of Life (TOL) has implemented a five-year Community Health and Cohesion (CHC) activity, which kicked off on April 1, 2018 and ends on July 31, 2023. The evaluation will focus on the sustained impact and effect of TOL’s work on trauma healing and psychosocial coping skills with victims of violence and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) survivors.
Cloudburst is currently seeking a Team Lead to manage a team consisting of subject matter experts, local researchers, and a logistician/translator. The evaluation will be a mixed-methods design, including content analysis of existing data from Tree of Life participants, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. The evaluation is estimated to take place between September 2023 and April 2024.

Illustrative Duties/Tasks and Responsibilities:
- Lead the evaluation team in conducting a rigorous mixed-methods research design in the Zimbabwean context. The research will include a thorough desk review, content analysis of Tree of Life’s records, follow-up with participants of a previous evaluation, and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- Lead evaluation fieldwork in Zimbabwe, including managing a team of technical and evaluation experts.
- Lead in-brief and out-brief at the start and conclusion of fieldwork for Mission and Embassy staff.
- Lead drafting of the evaluation report, responding to USAID’s questions and criteria, with an emphasis on evidence-based, actionable, and operational recommendations that can assist with strategic decision-making and programmatic decisions.
- Lead presenting findings and facilitate recommendations workshop for USAID and other USG officials.

Minimum Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:
- At least 10 years of extensive analytical experience program evaluation and trauma healing or governance programming.
- Master’s degree in a related field required
- Prior experience managing a research team
- Familiarity with USAID’s objectives, approaches, and operations
- Prior experience leading evaluations and assessments for USAID required
- Deep familiarity with developing country contexts
- Superior writing, communication, and analytical skills
- English fluency and extensive experience in Zimbabwe required
- Zimbabwean national preferred

Application deadline: September 3rd
Follow this link to apply: https://www.devex.com/jobs/evaluation-specialist-zimbabwe-civil-society-program-evaluation-1150691

Call for Applications: Essential Grant Writing Skills Programme October/November 2023

The Africa Research Excellence Fund (AREF) works to strengthen the health research capacity of scientists in Africa who are engaged in tackling the continent’s significant health challenges. AREF is calling for applications from scientists who are active, emerging biomedical/health researchers in African countries to participate in the forthcoming Essential Grant Writing Skills Programme.

This fully on-line programme will be held over eight 3-hour sessions during the weeks of 9 October 2023 and 27 November 2023. There will be a six-week break in between the two sessions, where you will be expected to write a mini proposal. This is an intensive programme that is designed to produce tangible progress towards a grant proposal by the end of the workshop series. Your commitment to the entire series and to the additional work outside of sessions will be necessary to achieve these outcomes.

To fully benefit from this workshop series, you will be at a stage in your research career where you are actively seeking independent funding, or have won smaller grants, but have yet to secure that big grant necessary to support your research independence.

https://www.africaresearchexcellencefund.org.uk/news/essential-grant-writing-skills-programme-octobernovember-2023
Healthy Ageing meets ZARDA - the Zimbabwean Alzheimer’s and Related Disorders Association to discuss collaboration

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

THANK YOU!