



THRU ZIM

THE HEALTH RESEARCH
UNIT ZIMBABWE

BI-WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

30 JUNE 2022

HELLO COLLEAGUES!

We are thrilled to introduce the THRU ZIM newsletter!

Sent out bi-weekly, this newsletter will highlight the latest internal publications, events, announcements, photos, employee news and much more.



NEWS

VAXEF STUDY BEGINS PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

Recruitment has started for **VAXEF**: investigating the vaccine effectiveness of Sinopharm and Sinovac among people living with chronic conditions in Zimbabwe funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and China CDC.



VAXEF study flyer

MaCoCo STUDY HARARE STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

The study disseminated important evidence on how COVID-19 broadly impacted the nation's health system. The stakeholders meeting was aligned to the OPHID TASQC project (Target, Accelerate and Sustain Quality Care) and was themed, "Paediatric surge: improving PMTCT/MNCH/EID health indicators".



Study coordinator presents findings

ART OF HEALTH PRESENTS "TAURA" STAGE PLAY & ART EXHIBITION



Art of Health performers

The Art of Health showcased its stage play "TAURA" to packed audiences at Reps Theatre from 1 – 4 June. "TAURA" uses theatre to highlight the views and experiences of young people in Zimbabwe, where their health and wellbeing is concerned. It was directed by Tafadzwa Bob Mutumbi and the cast included winners from last year's Art of Health drama and music competitions.

It has received critical acclaim from attendees and the media alike. The play also received widespread media coverage in press, radio and local television.

<https://www.newsday.co.zw/2022/05/taura-captures-the-state-of-well-being/>

<https://dailynews.co.zw/hosha-taura-theatrical-set-to-feature-in-hre-byo/>

<https://dailynews.co.zw/dont-politicise-mental-health-issues/>

THRU ZIM HOSTS OFFICIAL LAUNCH PARTY

In celebration of our major step in rebranding as "The Health Research Unit Zimbabwe," we hosted an exclusive launch cocktail evening for invited guests. The event featured an impactful speech from Prof. Rashida Ferrand that offered insight into our core values and mission as well as our newly established leadership team. So much fun was had in a memorable evening of networking, music, food, drinks and branded takeaway bags for all our guests.



Guests enjoying THRU ZIM cocktail evening

VITALITY TRIAL HOSTS A TREATMENT SUPPORT DAY



Physical and emotional abuse discussion



This special treatment support day amassed a total of 200 participants in attendance! The event aimed to give participants an educational and informative experience which was achieved through an important discussion about physical and emotional abuse by representatives from the Zimbabwe Republic Police Victims Friendly Unit and the Criminal Investigation Department Drugs and Narcotic section. The discussion also featured issues of the dangers of drugs and illicit substance abuse. Participants were also informed on reporting channels to pursue for accessing services for abuse cases. The younger cohort of participants were treated to lots of entertaining activities such as music, dance, face painting and jumping castles.

MAGUS TEAM UNDERGOES TRAINING

The MAGUS team begins a full package training that covers the study protocol, usage of various study forms & SOPs and specimen logs. This is a multi-country study that aims to determine the aetiology of Genital Ulcer Disease and the genomic epidemiology of *treponema pallidum*.



MAGUS research assistants training for tablet use

Y-CHECK BEGINS PILOT STUDY



Y-CHECK team at Seke 6 Parents' meeting



Research assistant screens a young person at Seke 6 High School

Y-CHECK has begun the first phase of its pilot study which involves the team screening for a range of health conditions such as hearing, vision, physical impairment, mental health, alcohol substance abuse and psychosocial issues among adolescents in Chitungwiza. The screening sites are located at: Chinembiri Primary School, Dungwiza Primary, Zengeza 1 High School, Seke 6 High School and 2 community hubs. The pilot will take place over the course of 8 weeks with a sample size of 200 adolescents. The main intervention is expected to begin in September.



New Y-CHECK combi

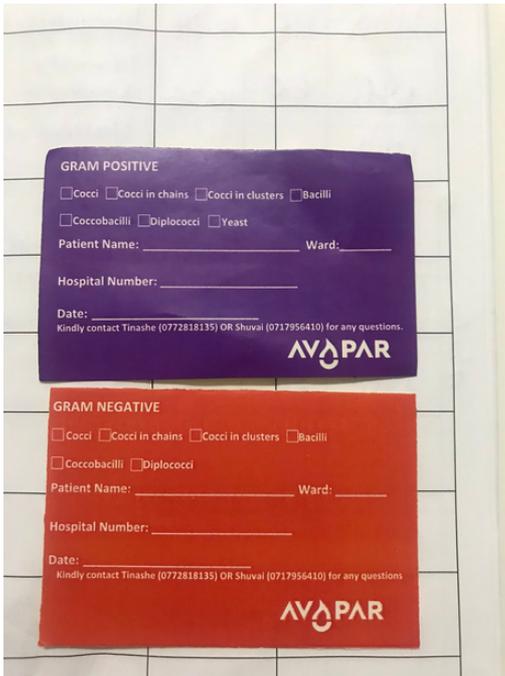
IMBA HUTANO REACHES RECRUITMENT MILESTONE

The ERASE-TB sub-study celebrates recruiting over 100 participants! Recruitment started 9 weeks ago for the integrated multi-component health check for TB-affected households which is embedded in the ERASE-TB study at the Zimbabwean site. The sub-study offers person-centred health checks to people with TB (at end of treatment) and their household members in Harare with follow-up to assess linkage to care, quality and life and disease control outcomes at 12 months. Integrated screening includes testing for HIV, TB, diabetes, hypertension, undernutrition and obesity (BMI), vision impairment and mental health.



IMBA HUTANO logo

AVAPAR STARTS VALIDATION OF MOLECULAR MACHINES



Gram stain stickers

After receiving ethical approval from RCZ, the study has begun validating their intended automated platforms for anti-microbial resistance testing. The machines they are using for validation are the Biofire FilmArray System (Biomerieux) and the Iron-qPCR System (Bioneer) for the blood culturing process.

PUBLICATIONS

Chingono RMS, Nzvere FP, Marambire ET, Makwembere M, Mhembere N, Herbert T, Maunganidze AJV, Pasi C, Chiwanga M, Chonzi P, Ndhlovu CE, Mujuru H, Rusakaniko S, Olaru ID, Ferrand RA, Simms V, Kranzer K. Psychological distress among healthcare workers accessing occupational health services during the COVID-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe. *Compr Psychiatry*. 2022 Apr 30;116:152321.

Eur Respir J. Updating the approaches to define susceptibility and resistance to anti-tuberculosis agents: implications for diagnosis and treatment. Antimycobacterial Susceptibility Testing Group. 2022 Apr 14;59(4):2200166.

Bateson A, Ortiz Canseco J, McHugh TD, Witney AA, Feuerriegel S, Merker M, Kohl TA, Utpatel C, Niemann S, Andres S, Kranzer K, Maurer FP, Ghodousi A, Borroni E, Cirillo DM, Wijkander M, Toro JC, Groenheit R, Werngren J, Machado D, Viveiros M, Warren RM, Sirgel F, Dippenaar A, Köser CU, Sun E, Timm J. Ancient and recent differences in the intrinsic susceptibility of Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex to pretomanid. *J Antimicrob Chemother*. 2022 May 29;77(6):1685-1693.

Tembo Mandikudza, Mackworth-Young Constance, Kranzer Katharina, Dziva Chikwari Chido, Mavodza Constancia, Dauya Ethel, Makuni Mufaro, Chipare Dakarai, Munyavi-Dehew Blessing, Raradza Daniel, Bernays Sarah, Chingono Rudo, Dzavakwa Nyasha, Nyamwanza Rangarirayi, Francis Suzanna, Simms Victoria, Ferrand Rashida A. Youth researchers academy: A report on an innovative research training programme for young people in Zimbabwe. *BMJ Innovations*. 2022 June 6.

5 MINUTES WITH...

RAPHEL NYAHWEDEGWE



What do you do and when did you start?

I am a finance intern within the Y-CHECK study. I started with THRU ZIM on the 24th of February 2022. My role now covers multiple studies as part of my overall training.

Where can we find you in the office?

Well, I am known as "the man with no fixed abode," but care to pay to me a visit in the clinical trials office with my colleagues Tadios, Edith and Nyasha.

What do you enjoy about your work?

I really enjoy working with the finance team and other departments within our research unit who I consider as family away from home. I especially value the mentorship and guidance I constantly receive from my colleagues, Ivan and Nyaradzo, who both played an instrumental role in helping me get settled when I first started. I am very passionate about numbers and accounting and this role has given me fulfilment in that respect. Finally, I cherish the sense of camaraderie that exists within our workplace culture.

NEW EMPLOYEES

We welcome, Norest Chambion, a new driver for the Y-CHECK study.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Internal noticeboard

A physical noticeboard has been introduced to ensure that all staff and study teams are informed about important notices at any given time. Let us all make effective use of this facility to post relevant announcements (and memos), upcoming events such as trainings, meetings and workshops (in the gazebo or virtual).

BRTI PhD club meeting scheduled for Tuesday 5th July 2022

Tatenda T. Yemeke will be presenting, "Impact of COVID-19 on Procurement, Price, and Quality of Medical Products in Zimbabwe." Join in via Zoom: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81074636280?pwd=Zu_b0aE_dPhQcePlfVxS_Vb-8MRqZH.1#success

JIAS webinar on scientific writing and publishing

The Journal of the International AIDS Society (JIAS) is pleased to invite you to a webinar on scientific writing and publishing entitled "Publish or Perish: How to write and publish a scientific manuscript". Wednesday, 29 June Time: 12pm – 1pm CEST / 10:00 - 11:00 UTC
[Register here.](#)

Call for abstracts for the Annual Medical Research Day (AMRD)

There is a call for submissions of abstracts (oral or poster) for the AMRD scheduled for Saturday, 9th July 2022. For more details please email: publicengagement@thruzim.org

ISEG 50th anniversary symposium

This is a virtual symposium in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the International Statistics and Epidemiology Group (ISEG). The title is "New horizons for medical statistics and epidemiology in global health". It is from Tuesday 28 June-Thursday 30 June, from 1pm-6pm (Zimbabwe time).
[Registration is free.](#)

PICTURE OF THE MONTH

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.

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

THANK YOU!
