

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

28 FEBRUARY 2024

UPDATES

Dr Chido Dziva Chikwari shines at HIV & Women International Workshop

We are delighted to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Dr Chido Dziva Chikwari for her significant contribution to the inaugural African Workshop on HIV & Women, held on February 22–23, 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya. This groundbreaking initiative serves as a regional complement to the annual "International Workshop on HIV & Women," providing a remarkable platform for local and international healthcare providers, researchers, government officials, industry representatives, and community advocates to engage in meaningful discussions and expand their knowledge on critical issues surrounding HIV and women in Africa. The overarching goal of this workshop is to drive positive change that enhances the quality of life for women living with HIV and reduces HIV transmissions within the region. The workshop format facilitates invaluable opportunities for attendees to learn from esteemed HIV experts, address challenges, identify knowledge gaps, and explore avenues for further learning and research. The debates and roundtable discussions play a pivotal role in examining pertinent issues and challenging existing perceptions. Moreover, this workshop is a vital platform for early-career investigators, enabling them to showcase their research and establish personal connections with esteemed mentors who serve as a source of inspiration for their work. At the workshop, Dr Dziva Chikwari was invited to deliver a compelling presentation titled "Update on other STIs: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Management." During her talk, she also shared notable findings from the CHIEDZA and STICH trials, illuminating critical insights into the subject matter. Dr Dziva Chikwari's active participation and insightful contribution have undoubtedly enriched the workshop and furthered our collective understanding of HIV and women's health.



Dr Chido Dziva Chikwari at the HIV & Women International Workshop in Kenya

Celebrating the Art of Ageing Showcase & Exhibition

The Art of Ageing Showcase & Exhibition took place on Friday, February 16th, at Nhaka Gallery in Harare. This highly anticipated event marked the culmination of the Art of Ageing Competition, where the exceptional work of the finalists was put on display for the public. The competition, funded by the Wellcome Trust, is a remarkable public engagement programme that has been implemented in Zimbabwe and The Gambia. Its primary objective is to empower older individuals by providing them with a platform to express their opinions and share their experiences on aging through various creative art forms. Furthermore, the programme strives to promote innovation and generate ideas that contribute to the well-being of older individuals while combating ageism—a cause that aligns perfectly with the goals outlined in the WHO Healthy Ageing 2021-30 strategy.

The Art of Ageing Competition in Zimbabwe received an overwhelming response, with over 300 entries pouring in from talented individuals across the country specializing in music, dance, prose, and mixed media. Following a rigorous selection process, the top 16 participants advanced to a mentorship stage where they received guidance and support to create their final projects centered around the themes of well-being and aging. The final projects were then evaluated by a panel of judges who had the challenging task of choosing the winners. The Art of Ageing Showcase brought together the 16 finalists' captivating art entries and featured live performances, a special lunch and cocktails for guests. It was an eagerly anticipated event that also included a prize-giving ceremony where the winners were announced. Allow us to congratulate the winners in each category:

Music and Dance

- 1. Hopley Senior Citizens Group
- 2. Vhuramai Dancers
- 3. Sekuru Mupavaenda

Prose

- 1. Gogo Thandiwe
- 2. Gogo Ahani
- 3. Gogo Hanyane

Mixed Media

- 1. Gogo Nyakapini
- 2. Sekuru Mandiopera
- 3. Mbuya Chisvo

Distinguished figures from the Ministry of Health and Child Care, including Dr Justice Mudavanhu from the Non-Communicable Diseases Department and Dr Khuzi Ncube, Deputy Director for Rehabilitation Services, graced the occasion with their presence. The event was also honoured by the commendation of Mr Marck Chikanza from the National Age Network of Zimbabwe and Mr Sam Pfidzai from Island Hospice, who emphasized the significance of local initiatives that support healthy aging among elderly people. Prominent media outlets, NRTV and the Daily News Zimbabwe, provided extensive coverage of the event, contributing to our outreach efforts in effectively communicating important messages regarding healthy aging.

Following the resounding success of the showcase, the Art of Ageing continued to engage the public through public exhibitions held at Nhaka Gallery from February 27th to 29th.

Many congratulations to Prof Celia Gregson, Dr Mandi Tembo, and the Ardent and THRU ZIM teams for executing such an amazing event.



Collins Timire passes PhD Viva

We are thrilled to congratulate Dr Collins Timire on successfully passing his PhD viva! As a Fogarty PhD fellow at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, he focused his research on the impact of tuberculosis on patients' and households' livelihoods. This accomplishment marks a significant milestone in his academic journey, and we are excited to officially call him Dr Collins Timire. To celebrate this remarkable achievement, a special cake was made in recognition of his dedication and hard work. Dr Timire's research has provided invaluable insights to the field, and we look forward to his continued contributions as he embarks on an impactful career.



Dr Collins Timire and his celebratory cake!

Nyasha Buwu presents on Iterative Ethnographic Methods at the Social Science Research Group

Congratulations to Nyasha Buwu for delivering a captivating presentation at the Social Science Research Group! On February 14th, Nyasha shared her expertise in a talk titled "Iterative Data Collection Over Time Through Ethnography: Added Value and Challenges." Focusing on the Fractures E3 study's fifth work package, which explores hip fracture services in Zimbabwe, Nyasha discussed the use of iterative ethnographic methods, sharing experiences, methodologies, and data. Her engaging presentation impressed the audience, generating insightful discussions on the value and challenges of such approaches. We commend Nyasha for her outstanding contribution and look forward to the continued impact of her research.



Nyasha Buwu presenting on ethnographic methods at the Social Science Research Group Seminar

Writing retreat in Mozambique!

We had the incredible opportunity to collaborate with our colleagues at the Instituto Nacional de Saúde (INS) for a week-long writing retreat in the beautiful Ponto del Oro, Mozambique, in February. The retreat brought together a group of our dedicated PhD students: Tafadzwa Madanhire, Farirayi Kowo, Dr Claire Calderwood, Martha Chipinduro, Dr Ioana Olaru, and Leyla Larsson, who were diligently working on their PhD publications. This retreat proved to be a fruitful occasion for knowledge sharing, collaboration strengthening, and accelerated progress in our writing endeavors. We were fortunate to receive mentorship and expert guidance from Dr Celso Khosa, as well as Prof Rashida Ferrand and Prof Katharina Kranzer, who contributed their valuable insights. In addition, we had the privilege of attending a webinar by Dr Liam Messin, the deputy editor at Lancet Global Health. Dr Messin provided us with invaluable tips on crafting impactful publications and strategies for successfully submitting our work to top-tier research journals. Despite our focused efforts, we also found time to unwind and enjoy the picturesque beach setting. The INS team generously shared their expertise in beach volleyball and organized engaging team-building games, fostering a sense of camaraderie and collaboration.



Highlights of the writing retreat in Mozambique



Dr Ioana Olaru

Dr Ioana Olaru recognized with The Woodruff Medal for Outstanding PhD Research

We are thrilled to congratulate Dr Ioana Olaru on being awarded The Woodruff Medal for her exceptional doctoral thesis completed at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. This prestigious medal is bestowed upon research students who demonstrate outstanding achievements in clinical research studies with the potential to alleviate suffering in low-resource settings. Dr Olaru's PhD project, titled "Understanding Gram-negative infections and antimicrobial resistance in Zimbabwe," made significant contributions to our understanding of antimicrobial resistance. Her research delved into the prevalence and determinants of antimicrobial resistance, explored strategies for improving diagnostic approaches, and shed light on antimicrobial prescribing practices.

Dr Mandi Tembo recognized with The Cicely Williams Prize for Outstanding PhD Research

We are thrilled to congratulate Dr Mandikudza Tembo on being awarded The Cicely Williams Prize for her brilliant PhD research completed at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine from 2018 - 2022. This prize is awarded to an outstanding research student completing a doctoral thesis on a topic which advances the health of vulnerable populations. Dr Tembo's PhD project is titled "Acceptability, uptake, and effectiveness of a menstrual health intervention among young women in Zimbabwe."



Dr Mandi Tembo

Dr Aoife Doyle receives a prestigious public engagement award

We are thrilled to congratulate Dr Aoife Doyle on receiving the Public Engagement Award at the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Future Leaders Fellowships Impact Awards. This prestigious recognition highlights her exceptional efforts in incorporating public engagement within her project, Y-Check. Y-Check, a multi-country study coordinated by the World Health Organization, focuses on adolescent health check-ups in low- and middle-income countries. Supported by a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship (2021-25), Dr Doyle and her team are leading the implementation and evaluation of this innovative intervention, aimed at enhancing adolescent health and well-being during check-up visits in Zimbabwe.

A key strength of the Y-Check study lies in its integration of youth and community engagement throughout every research stage. Guided by a youth advisory panel, the project actively involves mentored youth researchers in purposefully embedded research. Moreover, the Y-Check study was co-designed in collaboration with adolescents, parents, teachers, and healthcare workers. The team's commitment to engaging young people led them to organize a crowdsourcing contest and hackathon, enabling active participation in designing the intervention brand and fostering a sense of connection with Y-Check. In addition, working in partnership with colleagues at THRU ZIM and OPHID, Dr Doyle has documented effective youth engagement practices and facilitated the development of public engagement skills among both young people and researchers.



Dr Aoife Doyle (far right) receives the prestigious Public Engagement Award at the UKRI Impact Awards

5 MINUTES WITH...

Tendai Chiweshe



Tendai Chiweshe

What is your role and when did you start?

I am a qualitative researcher working on the Koshesai and Fractures E3 studies. My involvement includes conducting formative work and process evaluation for the Koshesai study, with the aim of developing and implementing an evidence-based clinical framework to enhance the health and well-being of elderly individuals in Zimbabwe. Additionally, I am responsible for conducting ethnographic research as part of the Fractures E3 study, where I observe and analyze patients with hip fractures and healthcare professionals to gain insights into patient care pathways and the delivery of health services. I joined THRU ZIM in February 2020 when I became part of the Y-Check study.

Where can we find you in the office?

You can find me in the old Y-Check office, which has now been transformed to be the social science office. My workstation is situated next to Pauline and opposite Nyasha. While I primarily work from the office, there are occasions where I may be in the field for research purposes. However, whenever I am in the office, you can reliably locate me in the social science office.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

The aspect I find most fulfilling about my work is immersing myself in the rich narratives of people's lives. Through qualitative research, I have the privilege of uncovering unique perspectives, insights, and stories from both adolescents and older individuals. This process provides a deeper understanding of the human experience. Collaborating with diverse teams to tackle challenges and achieve common goals is another aspect I greatly enjoy. Building strong relationships with my colleagues, sharing knowledge, and fostering a positive work environment are all rewarding aspects of my job. Furthermore, the opportunity to continuously learn and grow professionally while making a meaningful contribution to the team's success brings me a great sense of satisfaction.

PUBLICATIONS

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Beyond tuberculosis: a person-centred and rights-based approach to screening for household contacts. Calderwood CJ, Timire C, Mavodza C, Kavenga F, Ngwenya M, Madziva K, Fielding K, Dixon J, Ferrand RA, Kranzer K. *Lancet Glob Health*. 2024 Mar;12(3):e509–e515. doi: 10.1016/S2214-109X(23)00544-2. PMID: 38365421 Review.

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OPPORTUNITIES

Call for applications – Public Engagement Coordinator

We are currently seeking a Public Engagement Coordinator to join our team. As the Public Engagement Coordinator, the successful candidate will play a vital role in delivering our core Public Engagement activities, working closely with the Public Engagement Lead and the wider THRU ZIM team. Responsibilities include developing and disseminating internal and external communications, coordinating engagement events, supporting the development of public engagement tools and resources, and maintaining an active network of contacts.

Application deadline is March 8, 2024.

To apply visit the following link: <https://www.thruzim.org/opportunities>

Call for applications - 2024/2025 Harvard Global Health Institute LEAD Fellowship Programme

We are thrilled to announce that applications are now open for the highly esteemed 2024/2025 Harvard Global Health Institute LEAD Fellowship Programme!

This exceptional one-year fellowship is specifically designed to enhance leadership skills in individuals from low- and middle-income countries. Jointly offered by the Harvard Global Health Institute (HGHI) and the Department of Global Health and Population at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the program aims to support the ongoing development of women leaders in global health.

The 2024/2025 LEAD Fellowship Programme offers a comprehensive curriculum, combining a 12-month virtual learning experience with a four-week in-person component scheduled for Spring 2025. Throughout the fellowship year, selected fellows will have the unique opportunity to engage in diverse activities, including one-on-one leadership coaching, mentorship programs, executive education courses, speaking events, leadership workshops, and networking opportunities.

Application Deadline: March 15th, 2024

To apply for this transformative opportunity, please visit the official Harvard Global Health Institute LEAD Fellowship Programme website: <https://www.opportunitiesforafricans.com/harvard-global-health-institute-lead-fellowship-program-2024-2025-for-promoting-women-in-global-health/>

Call for applications - MSc Sexual & Reproductive Health Policy and Programming

We are thrilled to announce the ongoing recruitment for the online MSc in Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy and Programming, a collaborative effort between LSHTM and the University of Ghana School of Public Health. Applications are now open for the 2024/25 academic year, and we are delighted to offer 50 scholarships to eligible candidates.

For detailed information on eligibility, fees, and the application process, please refer to the attached program flyers and visit the MSc programme page at the following link: <https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/study/courses/masters-degrees/sexual-reproductive-health-policy-programming#overview>

The deadline for scholarship applications is **March 1st, 2024**, while fee-paying candidates have until **September 1st, 2024**, to apply. We kindly request your support in sharing the programme flyers and spreading the word about this exciting opportunity within your networks. If you or potential applicants have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at mcsrhpp@lshtm.ac.uk.

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/>

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

THANK YOU!