

# BI-WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

29 SEPTEMBER 2022

## NEWS

### EMPOWA WEEK AT UZ

The first in-person week of the second Empowering Professionals for the Wellbeing of Adolescents Programme for the Wellbeing of Adolescents Programme (EMPOWA) was held at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) on the 12-15 September with 22 participants from various ministries and organisations in attendance. EMPOWA is designed to equip senior policy makers and programmers with knowledge and skills to improve their work on adolescent wellbeing. Participants were supported to develop a change project, which they will implement within their organisations over 12 months, with the end goal of improving adolescent wellbeing. One participant described EMPOWA as a, "Never-before-experienced rich and practical training program", another said that, "The programme is life changing indeed." The participants are beginning to implement their change projects, with support and feedback from four senior and four youth facilitators, and their supervisors in their organisation. The second in-person week will be held from 10-14 October at UZ.



*Introductions and panel discussion*



*Adolescent engagement sessions*



*Adolescent engagement group work*

### DR. CHIDO DZIVA CHIKWARI SHARES PUBLIC HEALTH JOURNEY IN NEW PODCAST

Dr. Chido Dziva Chikwari shared her exciting journey in public health research for episode 10 of Utano Public Health Chats, a bi-weekly podcast focused on public health work in Africa and public health careers. Dr. Chido, spoke about the timeline of her career, current roles, and how her skills have allowed her to pivot to different programme areas. The episode also touched upon her PhD research project, which was on increasing access and uptake of HIV testing for children in Zimbabwe and more. The podcast episode is available to listen to now on Spotify. Listen to the podcast episode [here](#).



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## PRESENTATIONS AT 7TH SATB CONFERENCE

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THRU ZIM was represented at the 7th South African TB Conference in Durban by Katharina Kranzer, Collins Timire, and Claire Calderwood. It was a great conference with keynote talks covering a range of critical issues for tuberculosis (TB) programming, from scientific innovations to implementation and the importance of community involvement and advocacy to end TB. During the conference, Collins, presented his PhD research on coping strategies among people with drug resistant TB during the COVID-19 pandemic in Zimbabwe, highlighting the devastating consequences of TB for people affected by the disease and their families. Claire also presented some data from the ongoing ERASE-TB project, outlining the high prevalence of chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and undernutrition among TB household contacts, and called for further research into 'person-centred' approaches to TB screening, which consider other causes of poor health in this population. We are looking forward to the next conference, when we will have more exciting results from our ongoing research projects.



***Collins presenting his PhD research***

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## PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION PRESENTATION AT SOCIAL SCIENCE WORKING GROUP

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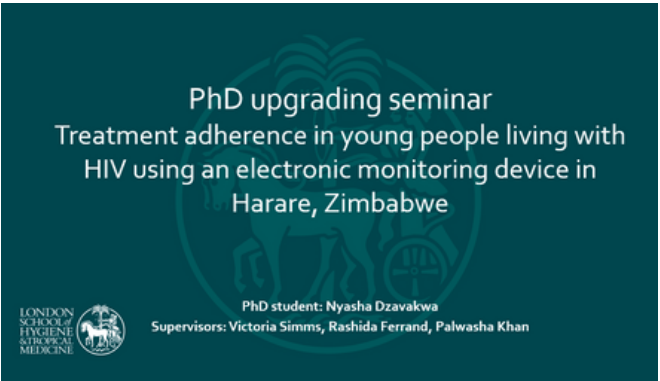


***Salome presenting on participant observation***

Salome Manyau delivered a superb presentation on participant observation at the first Social Science Working Group session held on Tuesday 27th September. Salome detailed the history of the method, ways of notetaking to detail thick description, navigating ethical challenges, and the benefits and challenges of such close and long-term relationships with participants. Salome exemplified the method with two different examples – observations as part of the Y-Check process evaluation and participant observation on medicines in Mbare as part of her PhD. The next Social Science Working Group session is on Wednesday 19th October at 11:00 – 12:30 (CAT), where Joanna Busza will be presenting about process evaluation. If you would like to be added to the Social Science Working Group mailing list, please email [constance.mackworth-young1@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:constance.mackworth-young1@lshtm.ac.uk).

## NYASHA DZAVAKWA PASSES PhD UPGRADING

A huge congratulations to Nyasha Dzavakwa for passing her PhD upgrading! Nyasha's PhD upgrading seminar was on an intervention to improve treatment adherence in young people living with HIV using an electronic monitoring device (EMD) called a Wisepill RT2000 dispenser. The device will be linked to a participant's mobile phone so that they can receive text message reminders if they do not open the pillbox at their scheduled intake time. On a monthly basis, the participant using the device will receive focused adherence feedback on their adherence behaviour patterns as recorded on the device. Nyasha has hypothesized that use of the EMD with text message reminders and adherence feedback will result in adherence behaviour change that will also result in viral suppression in young people at risk of virologic failure.



## 5 MINUTES WITH... JOSEPH CHIPANGA



### What do you do and when did you did start?

I work as a database administrator for the ERASE-TB and FRACTURES E3 studies. For ERASE-TB, I upload the x-rays onto the Sync + Share cloud server. For FRACTURES E3, I manage data for all their work packages for which I use ODK, SurveyCTO, REDCap and STATA softwares for data management. I would also, however, say my role is an interesting blend of IT support and logistics. I offer a helping hand to colleagues that need assistance with their computers and operating the generator during power outages. I am also a part of the data team and we have a very strong work ethic.

### Where can we find you in the office?

I am stationed in the data office. I am the first person you see when you enter our office because my desk is located right beside the door. It's also easy to point me out, since I am the only man in our office, that is always smiling!

### What do you enjoy about your work?

I enjoy how my job allows me to serve people. Over and above performing the duties of my role, it's the relationships I have formed over the years with my colleagues that I value the most. Most of our time is spent here at work and I consider my colleagues as family away from home. I also enjoy offering my colleagues moral support in trying times and letting them know I am around for a laugh or two.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **School-Based Interventions Interest Group webinar**

The School-Based Interventions Interest Group at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) is pleased to host a virtual seminar on: Implementation and evaluation of comprehensive school-based services: Two innovative programmes in Zimbabwe and Zambia. The webinar is scheduled to take place on Monday 10th October at 13:00 – 14:00 (BST). This session will explore how comprehensive school-based health interventions can address some of the major health challenges faced by school-age children in low-and middle-income settings. Dr. Aoife Doyle and Dr. Farirai Nzvere will represent the Y-CHECK study and will discuss the work they have been doing in providing routine health and well-being check-ups for young people. Representatives from Healthy Learners, are also scheduled to deliver a talk. Health Learners is a Zambian-based initiative focused on keeping children healthy through school-based interventions to optimize their ability to learn and ultimately reach their full potential. For those that would like to attend, access the zoom link [here](#).

## **R Programming Survey**

Please be advised of this survey that is seeking to find out how many people are interested in learning about or forming a group that shares ideas on, R, a statistical software. The group will also be an opportunity to determine your proficiency with the software. For those that are interested, please follow this link to complete the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QBDVBDB> . The survey deadline is Wednesday 5th of October.

## **Taura play at University of Zimbabwe**

We are thrilled that there will be another performance of the Taura play, that will be held at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) on Thursday 13th October at 17:00 – 18:00 (CAT). After highly acclaimed performances at Reps Theatre in Harare and at Bulawayo, the stage play will have a rerun, during the second in-person week for the EMPOWA: Empowering Professionals for the Wellbeing of Adolescents Programme at UZ. Do come and experience this fabulous play, written and acted by young people, telling the unfiltered truths of the health and well-being issues faced by young people in Zimbabwe. Entry is free.

## **Free statistics training courses by Radiance**

Rigorous Training in Longitudinal Data Science (Radiance), a UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funded project led by Prof Paola Zaninotto and Prof Bianca De Stavola, is offering free online training in data science to quantitative researchers involved with biomedical and social data. The training levels are as follows:

- Introduction to key concepts <https://radiance.org.uk/appetisers/>
- Intermediate courses <https://radiance.org.uk/modules/>
- Advanced topics such as programming, machine learning and causal inference courses <https://radiance.org.uk/training/>

Autumn courses:

Using administrative data for research: a brief introduction, Monday 3rd October 2022

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/using-administrative-data-for-research-a-brief-introduction-tickets-383434110747>

Regression models 18-22 October 2022

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/regression-models-tickets-383406468067>

Addressing Causal Questions using Real World Data: An Introduction, 14-17 November 2022

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/regression-models-tickets-383406468067>



## Causal Data Science Meeting 2022

The Causal Data Science Meeting which will be held from the 7-8 November 2022 aims to establish an interdisciplinary dialogue between academics and business experts on causal inference methods & applications. Abstracts and full research papers are also required.

The workshop features invited talks and presentations of accepted proposals. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Causal machine learning and artificial intelligence
- Data-augmented business decision-making
- Applications of causal inference, e.g., in management, entrepreneurship, innovation, marketing, economics, and finance
- Organizational challenges & best practice examples with respect to the adoption of causal inference in industry
- Experimentation & A/B testing
- Applications of Directed Acyclic Graphs and Causal Discovery
- Causal inference methods in econometrics & statistics
- (Open Source) Software for causal inference
- Talks on challenges of practitioners in applying causal inference

Follow this link for more information: <https://www.causalscience.org/blog/causal-data-science-meeting-2022-call-for-papers/>

## PUBLICATIONS

Rehman AM, Simms V, McHugh G, Mujuru H, Ngwira LG, Semphere R, Moyo B, Bandason T, Odland JO, Ferrand RA. Adherence to additional medication for management of HIV-associated comorbidities among older children and adolescents taking antiretroviral therapy. PLOS ONE. 2022 Jun 15;17(6): e0269229. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0269229>

Olayinka O. Ogunleye, Brian Godman, Joseph O. Fadare, Steward Mudenda, Adekunle O. Adeoti, Adesola F. Yinka-Ogunleye, Sunday O. Ogundele, Modupe R. Oyawole, Marione Schönfeldt, Wafaa M. Rashed, Ahmad M. Galal, Nyasha Masuka, Trust Zaranyika, Aubrey C. Kalungia, Oliver O. Malande, Dan Kibuule, Amos Massele, Ibrahim Chikowe, Felix Khuluza, Tinotenda Taruvinga, Abubakr Alfiadl, Elfatih Malik, Margaret Oluka, Sylvia Opanga, Daniel N. A. Ankrah, Israel A. Sefah, Daniel Afriyie, Eunice T. Tagoe, Adefolarin A. Amu, Mlungisi P. Msibi, Ayukafangha Etando, Mobolaji E. Alabi, Patrick Okwen, Loveline Lum Niba, Julius C. Mwita, Godfrey M. Rwegerera, Joyce Kgatlwane, Ammar A. Jairoun, Chioma Ejekam, Rooyen T. Mavenyengwa, Irene Murimi-Worstell, Stephen M. Campbell and Johanna C. Meyer. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic across Africa: Current Status of Vaccinations and Implications for the Future. Vaccines 2022, 10, 1553. <https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines10091553>

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](mailto:publicengagement@thruzim.org). Follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ThruZim>