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STUDY OF MICROBICIDE GEL SHOWS REDUCED RISK OF HIV & HERPES INFECTIONS IN WOMEN

Researchers have achieved an important scientific breakthrough in the fight against HIV and genital herpes with a vaginal gel that significantly reduces a woman's risk of being infected with these viruses. The results of the groundbreaking safety and effectiveness study of an antiretroviral microbicide gel study were reported today by the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) at the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna, Austria.

Dr. Quarraisha Abdoal Karim, Associate Director of CAPRISA and associate Professor of Epidemiology at Columbia University stated that "This new technology has the potential to alter the course of the HIV epidemic, especially in southern Africa where young women bear the brunt of this devastating disease."

USAID is proud to be the major funder of the first-ever proof of concept that a microbicide can effectively and safely reduce the transmission of HIV from men to vulnerable women, said USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah.

GNP Has New Community Education Center

Large numbers of local community members in and around Gorongosa National Park (GNP) do not have an opportunity to attend school, and high poverty rates and a lack of school buildings only exacerbate this situation. On July 23, as part of the celebration of 50 yrs since Gorongosa's establish-

ment, U.S. Ambassador Leslie Rowe and representatives of the Portuguese Development Agency inaugurated the Community Education Center (CEC) which will serve as a "living classroom" through its use of "green" architecture and engineering, the buildings themselves being a teaching tool about healthy relationships with the environment. The CEC will be a training venue serving the needs of the entire

province on issues related to agriculture, health, conservation and environmental education. The capacity to care for and protect important sites like Gorongosa will have a better chance of success over the longer term if more local community mem-

bers pursue careers in the sciences and accord greater value to the environment. This state-of-the-art Community Education Center (CEC) was co-financed by USAID, the Greg Carr Foundation and the Portuguese Development Agency. The increased attention paid by the Mozambican Govern-



Minister Sumbana unveils the plaque at the new Community Education Center

ment to environmental issues translated into the approval by the Council of Ministers for the annexation of Mount Gorongosa to the Park area, a major milestone for science-based conservation in this country. This expands the park by 10% from 3,700km² to 4,067km².

USAID/Mozambique has been working with the Gorongosa Restoration Project for the past two years, replanting native forest species along important waterways on the mountain. As a next step, USAID/Mozambique is also supporting the U.S. Forest Services' work in planning the management of this important mountain ecosystem in relation to the park.

Message from the Ambassador



Leslie V. Rowe

It was my great pleasure to travel to Beira and into Sofala Province to participate in the celebration of 50 years of the establishment of the Gorongosa National Park, together with the Minister of Tourism and other local officials. The ceremony was followed by a tour of the park, which impressed us all with its natural beauty. For me, in many ways, the park represents Mozambique, with beauty and potential waiting to

be tapped. The more I travel around the country and see our projects, the more I am impressed with the resilience and ingenuity of Mozambicans, and am proud of what our partnership is accomplishing, from environmental cooperation to improvements in health, from food security to national and regional security. As we embark this month on a historic military cooperation exercise, I am optimistic that Mozambique is gaining more of the capabilities all countries need to secure a positive and prosperous future.

Leslie Rowe



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Public Affairs Office
542, Mao Tse Tung Avenue
Tel: 258-21-491-916
Fax: 258-21-491-918

Mundialito Brings the World Cup Spirit and HIV Prevention into One

The 2010 World Cup has brought distinction and respect to Africa in ways that perhaps no other event could. And the positive consequences are undeni-

able, with the exception perhaps, of the least fortunate in southern African countries. This is a story of how the spirit of the World Cup was brought to underprivileged communities in Mozambique, particularly Maputo Province, in anticipation of the World Cup. From April 17 until June 1, 2010 the U.S. Embassy in Maputo together with our partner ProSport conducted a project called "Mundialito", also in collaboration with the South African High Commission, various other embassies, TVM, PSI, and several additional partners. The idea was to provide less fortunate youth, who rarely have opportunities to participate in large-scale tournaments, with the chance to show their skills, play in a competition, and learn important life skills at the same time. 32 teams with players ages 14-17 from various communities within the Province were randomly selected to represent the 32 countries playing in the World Cup, and subsequently played in a tournament modeled exactly after the World Cup schedule in 8 soccer fields across the Province. Each team was provided with a set of uniforms similar to the ones the country they represented would wear in the World Cup, and the competition commenced.

But the intent of the tournament was to provide not just sports, but also additional education and support to both the players and those in attendance at the games. Basic information on HIV/AIDS prevention was provided to players,

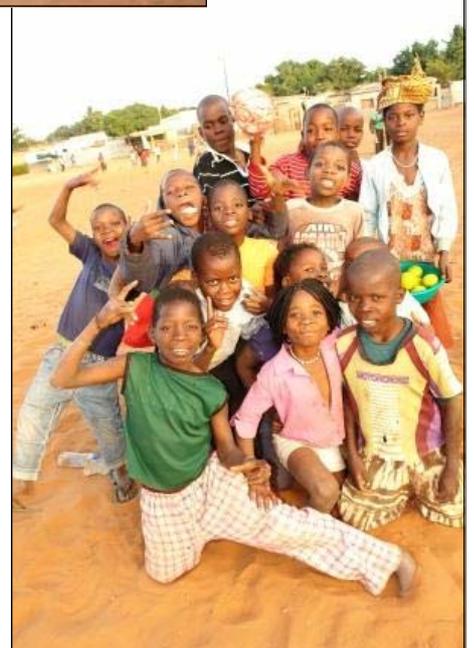
referees, coaches, and other volunteers from the beginning of the tournament. PSI also began early on offering counseling and testing services to the adults

who attended the games, and hundreds of tests were performed by the time the final game took place. By the end of Mundialito, tens of thousands of youth had learned about how to avoid risky behaviors and where to get

ond, and third. Players who were interviewed spoke of the honor that it was to represent the various countries, that they learned more about the culture of each, and were better prepared to live a safe life for having participated.

As a follow-up, the U.S. Embassy provided a large outdoor screen and television coverage of all the World Cup games to the Polana Caniço community, whose team represented the U.S. in the Mundialito. All games were shown in public, along with films and other information resources about HIV prevention, and counseling and testing were made available at some of the games. Ambassador Rowe joined members of the community for the U.S.-

Algeria game, distributed American flags, U.S. team cards, and other cultural items to thank the community for their participation in the tournament, and to encourage them in their efforts to keep their community, especially their youth, healthy and involved.



more information and support to keep themselves and others free from HIV.

Over 5000 youth and hundreds of additional adults attended the final game on June 1, the International Day of the Child, at Machava Stadium. Interestingly, the final game of the Mundialito also featured Spain and Holland, mirroring the World Cup final, which occurred six weeks later (although the final outcome was reversed). U.S. Embassy staff shared information about the U.S. World Cup team, PEPFAR projects fighting HIV/AIDS, distributed t-shirts, caps, pencils, calendars, U.S. team cards, and showed a new film developed by the U.S. Department of State, entitled "Golo! Futebol para uma Vida Melhor," highlighting how soccer promotes health, youth leadership, and social change in the U.S., South Africa, and Brazil. TVM featured full -day programming of the game and lead-up, including speeches from various Mozambican government ministries, sponsors, entertainers and cultural figures. The Minister of Women and Social Action, along with the U.S., Spanish, and Dutch Ambassadors, awarded medals and cups to the teams placing first, sec-

Top: Ambassador Leslie Rowe distributes American flags to the Polana Caniço kids.

Middle: The U.S. soccer team that played at the Mundialito.

Bottom: A group of cheerful soccer fans from the Polana Caniço community.

Fighting Corruption: the Role of Civil Society

Corruption challenges every country throughout the world and although its eradication is likely impossible, there are many successful methods of controlling it. This was the message of Robert Smolik, retired U.S. Ambassador and professor at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, who participated in a U.S. Embassy-sponsored Speaker Program in Mozambique on “anti-corruption and good governance” from July 10 – 18.

During the program, Ambassador Smolik engaged with diverse representatives of government, political parties, civil society, and youth, as well as several different media outlets in Beira, Nampula, and Maputo, and met with key figures across civil society at the residence of U.S. Ambassador Leslie Rowe.

The large turnouts and intense participation and debate by citizens from virtually every region and background were a testament to the relevance of the topic of corruption in Mozambique. While Ambassador Smolik noted examples of corruption throughout the world, he articulated a series of instruments in



Ambassador Smolik addressing students at the International Relations Institute

the U.S. and in other countries that effectively reduce and prosecute cases of corruption. These instruments largely center around the existence of strong, well-designed laws; an independent media; a strong system of checks and balances between independent executive, legislative, and judicial bodies; a vibrant civil society; and civic education in homes and schools. As an expert of the U.S. experience fighting corruption and anti-corruption efforts in international organizations such as OECD, he frequently mentioned the use of international dialogues between donors, the adoption of merit-based civil service examinations, the prohibition of political activity by civil servants, plea bargaining, and conflict of interest and freedom of information laws as powerful anti-corruption tools.

On the final day of the program, one Mozambican panelist remarked that a large turnout discussing corruption is a start, but the more difficult next step is make personal and societal changes to control and reduce levels of corruption.

Mozambique Announces Results from First Ever National HIV Prevalence Survey

On July 5th, the Government of Mozambique announced prevalence estimates from the nation’s first ever national HIV survey, INSIDA. With financial and technical support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the INSIDA survey measured HIV prevalence in over 16,500 individuals aged zero to 64 years of age. Additionally, INSIDA assessed risk behaviors in youth, adolescents, and adults, and sources of HIV prevention information for persons of all ages.

In addition to a revised national prevalence estimate of 11.5%, INSIDA has produced a number of interesting findings. For example, HIV prevalence was higher in the south of the country and in urban areas. Secondly, unlike many other infectious diseases which disproportionately burden the poor, HIV appears to target more educated Mozambicans from wealthier households. Finally, women generally have higher rates of HIV than men – this is particularly true for young women aged 15-24 among whom prevalence is 3 times higher than for men in the same age group.

While only basic data analysis has been conducted thus far, investigators from the Government of Mozambique and CDC are looking forward to more in-depth data analysis in the coming months. Notably, INSIDA was one of the first national HIV prevalence surveys anywhere in the world to measure HIV among very young children. Additionally, this is one of the first national surveys to look at concurrent sexual partnerships using newly standardized definitions. Finally, the survey will allow investigators to look at the possible benefits of introducing new prevention approaches based on data from discordant couples, alcohol use, or the link between male circumcision and HIV status.

The data generated from INSIDA will contribute immeasurably to the fight against HIV/AIDS in Mozambique. With the INSIDA data, decision-makers now have more accurate national HIV prevalence estimates due to the inclusion of men and other populations, and a clearer picture of the relationship between prevalence and behavior. With this information, Mozambique’s public health community can make more informed decisions about HIV/AIDS programming, improving both the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs in which PEPFAR and other donors invest.



Eu disse SIM!

Sports and Health for Young Athletes



A group of attentive young athletes observe PSI actors performance

The 5th. Edition of the Millennium bim Mini Basketball Tournament that falls under the corporate responsibility program of this financial institution was held in five provincial capitals, namely Tete, Quelimane, Nampula, Beira and Maputo, in partnership with the Railway Club of Maputo, the Maputo City Basketball Association, and had the support of USAID and PSI (Population Services International).

During two months, from April to June, on Saturdays, about 1300 children aged 8 to 12 years old, learned the ABC of basketball, made new friendships, cultivate values such as team spirit, camaraderie and fair play.

Through the practice of the sport, it is intended, to give children the benefit of a wide range of motor activities that allow them access to new knowledge and experiences, as well as fostering attitudes of commitment, perseverance, effort and discipline, an essential aspect of a comprehensive development process in which improvement and resilience are a constant challenge.

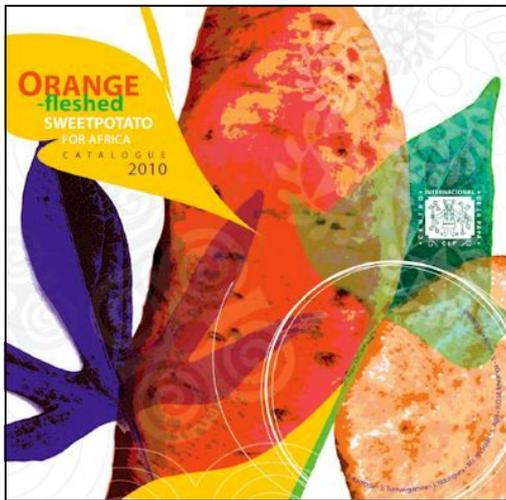
In parallel to the sport, and under PSI monitoring, the stars of the future had small theater sessions on how to prevent cholera and malaria.

The finals were held in a climate of great celebration, where all athletes who participated showed that fun and enjoyment are more important than the result of the competition.



Kids playing during one of the tournament's game

Mozambique as a Model for Southern Africa



On June 4, 2010 the Sweetpotato Support Platform for Southern Africa was launched at the Instituto de Investigação Agrária de Moçambique (Mozambique Agriculture Research Institute) (IIAM) with the Permanent Secretary of Agriculture, Daniel Miguel Angelo Clemente, presenting a newly released catalog of existing orange-fleshed sweet potato varieties available across the continent. Creating Support Platforms in 3 sub-regions (East, Southern, and West Africa) is a cornerstone of the recently launched Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative.

USAID has been supporting the work of Dr. Maria Andrade of the International Potato Center (CIP) and her collaborators at IIAM since 2002. Major efforts have focused on the development promotion of pro-vitamin A rich, orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP)--- O Doce que Dá Saúde (the sweet that gives health), with over 500,000 families throughout Mozambique receiving these varieties as part of the government's food security efforts. Just ½ cup of OFSP can meet the daily vitamin A requirements of a young child. More recently, efforts are focusing on building business opportunities for women, the principal producers of OFSP, by developing processed products using OFSP as an ingredient to replace 30-50% of wheat flour in bakery products. Over 2,000 producers (60% of them women) have been trained on agro-processing techniques.

USAID also financed the construction of a modern tissue culture facility at IIAM. This facility, combined with equipment financed by other donors to permit the removal of viruses from sweet potato, means that IIAM can support the clean-up of sweet potato material from Mozambique and other Southern African countries. Utilizing virus free planting material can raise yields 30-50%.

With better, more drought tolerant OFSP varieties expected for release in late 2010 and the ability to provide virus free planting material, CIP and IIAM are expecting that the a major improvement in OFSP productivity and utilization is on the horizon. The program intends to reach at least 54,000 Mozambican households with these new materials by the end of 2011. The experience gained to date in how to raise awareness of the benefits of consuming OFSP will be shared with other countries in Southern Africa through the twice yearly meetings of the Support Platform.

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