PEPFAR honors Media Awards Competition Winners

The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in partnership with the National AIDS Council and support from PEPFAR, observed the World AIDS Day by honoring nine (9) journalists who excelled in HIV and AIDS reporting. The Media Awards Competition attracted 130 articles for adjudication. Launched in October 2015, the competition was designed to promote more coverage of HIV and AIDS related initiatives and increase the uptake of health related services. Over 150 people witnessed the colorful ceremony officiated by Mark Troger, PEPFAR Coordinator, Brigadier Dr. Gerald Gwinji, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Child Care, Dr. Tapiwa Magure, Chief Executive of the National AIDS Council, and Mr Diwa, Director in the Ministry of State and Provincial Affairs. This innovative health diplomacy and outreach program not only reached substantial numbers of Zimbabweans and put them in direct contact with essential health services, but also strengthened collaborations between the U.S. and Zimbabwe governments as well as the media.
Amb. Thomas addressed multitudes on WAD

U.S. Ambassador Harry K. Thomas Jr. gave solidarity remarks at the 28th remembrance of World AIDS Day (WAD) held in Kwekwe in December 2016. He re-affirmed the U.S. government’s commitment to supporting the response to HIV and AIDS under the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Zimbabwe has received over $1 billion dollars in the last 10 years.

The commemoration attended by over 5000 people, was unique as it also served as a launch pad for two PEPFAR supported initiatives namely; the Guidelines for Antiretroviral Therapy and the Zimbabwe Population-Based HIV Impact Assessment (ZIMPHIA).

In his key note address, the guest of honor, Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, acknowledged the huge support from PEPFAR towards the national response to HIV and AIDS, noting that the AIDS Levy is inadequate. The Ambassador joined the Vice President and other government officials on a tour of exhibition stands where the PEPFAR brand was highly visible.

PEPFAR supports HIV Impact Assessment

UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets and will further efforts and resources towards populations at greatest risk and most in need of services.

Only 52% of people aged 15-24 years and living with HIV, admitted knowing their status (UNAIDS First 90) at the time they were tested by ZIMPHIA nurses. Therefore, more effort must be directed towards the testing and counseling of young adults who are the future of this country. Knowing one’s HIV status enables access to antiretroviral therapy and the allow viral suppression. Findings of the study came at an opportune time when the government of Zimbabwe launched the “Treat All” strategy nationally. Some PEPFAR supported partners are already implementing this important strategy designed to achieve epidemic control.

PEPFAR through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) supported the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC) to conduct the groundbreaking survey. ZIMPHIA was implemented by ICAP at Columbia University in collaboration with the National AIDS Council, Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, and Biomedical Research and Training Institute.
CDC Zimbabwe invests in space creation and human resources for HIV services

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC/Zimbabwe) and the Ministry of Health and Child Care officially launched the final phase of the Space Creation Project in October 2016. The project is being completed after the installation of 19 pre-fabricated Opportunistic Infection Antiretroviral Treatment (OI/ART) porta-cabin units in 19 health facilities in Harare including the Glen View and Hopley Clinics. Funded by the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), these cabins are the final phase of the Space Creation Project which began in 2013.

Ambassador Harry Thomas underlined that the additional space created by these porta-cabins is important as Zimbabwe transitions to the ‘Treat All’ approach, providing antiretroviral treatment to ALL HIV-positive individuals.

Africa Bureau Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS), Todd Haskell, and Director Mirembe Nantongo visited the Hopley Clinic - a recipient of a PEPFAR-funded porta-cabin. Located on the outskirts of Harare, the clinic is providing primary care services including antenatal care, childhood immunizations, and HIV/TB treatment. DAS Haskell appreciated the hard work being done by health personnel at the clinic. Sister Mazivisa, the Matron in Charge of Hopley Clinic, expressed for PEPFAR's support, emphasizing that additional space is always required given the huge numbers of people requiring health services.
CDC Zimbabwe promoting HIV Treatment, Infection Prevention and Control in Health Care Facilities

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC/Zimbabwe) and the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC) officially launched the national Healthcare Associated Tuberculosis Infection Prevention Project - Zimbabwe (HATIPP-Zim) in November 2016. HATIPP-Zim will support initiatives that seek to eliminate TB infection and develop systems to protect health care workers over five years (2016-2021). The United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has provided resources for the project.

Laurie Fuller, Deputy Director of CDC Zimbabwe, acknowledged that health care workers are the lifeblood of any health system, yet given their constant exposure to infection, are much more vulnerable than the general population. She further applauded the exemplary cooperation, collaboration and leadership demonstrated by officials in the MOHCC in designing HATIPP.

The program is being implemented by a consortium comprised of: The Biomedical Research and Training Institute (BRTI), Infection Control Association of Zimbabwe (ICAZ) and the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (Union).

DREAMS Initiative 1st anniversary

Why “DREAM”? Life without DREAMS is like a bird with broken wings...! Dreams allow us to aspire for a better future for empowered young women who are HIV free. To reduce young women’s vulnerability to HIV, USAID/Zimbabwe is supporting the DREAMS initiative in six high risk districts in Zimbabwe. The United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has provided resources for DREAMS which stands for Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored, and Safe.

The United States and Zimbabwe celebrated the first anniversary of the DREAMS initiative in Harare in December 2016. Girls who have participated on the initiative confidently spoke at the event and shared experiences on how this initiative is helping them realize that the choices they make today, affect their future.

The U.S. Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr. emphasized the need for more engagement of men in Zimbabwe to help achieve zero new HIV infections among young girls and adolescent women. The event which coincided with the observation of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, reinforced the need for communities to guide young girls to grow into health responsible women free of HIV.