

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO HIV/AIDS IN ZAMBIA

The Republic of Zambia is at crossroads in facing several core development challenges, not the least of which is the destructive impact of HIV/AIDS. The most recent Demographic and Health Survey data show that out of a population of 10 million, about eighteen percent of women and thirteen percent of men are living with HIV. HIV/AIDS has produced workforce attrition, is a principal cause of under-five mortality, and has produced 82% of Zambia's orphans. Having lost over 1.5 million citizens, the pandemic persists in causing economic, social, and labor crises in the country.



Thandazani staff training volunteer Community AIDS Counselors

The Zambia Integrated Health Programme (ZIHP), now beginning its fifth and final year, has priority areas of malaria, child health and nutrition, integrated reproductive health as well as HIV/AIDS. With a countrywide scope but a geographical focus in twelve districts, the programme supports activities at different levels in the health care system and collaborates with various organizations and government bodies such as the Central Board of Health.

Funded by USAID/Zambia, ZIHP aims to change behavior and social norms through targeted interventions such as increased access to condoms through social marketing, and increased capacity-building of local organizations to take action in both prevention and care by demonstrating and replicating community-based models that are working.

Thandazani Community Based HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care (CBPC) is an example of just such a local organization, operating in Lundazi district in Eastern Zambia. Thandizani CBPC was founded in 1999 as a local response to an increasing number of clients undergoing voluntary HIV testing and counseling (VCT). Serving over 63,000 people in four rural communities, Thandizani encourages the formation of 'post-test clubs' by those clients willing to discuss HIV/AIDS, educate community members about prevention, decrease stigma surrounding the disease, and increase community care for affected families. ZIHP provided funding for Thandizani to expand its efforts, resulting in the training of 30 volunteer Community AIDS counselors to provide community counseling and home-based care.



Community members after a Thandazani Post-Test Club in Lundazi district

an award at the 23rd Annual Telly Awards, a competition honoring outstanding non-network television programs and non-broadcast videos and film production. The film was designed to provide accurate information to raise awareness and mobilise resources to confront the HIV/AIDS crisis across sub-Saharan Africa.

Supporting ongoing community programs such as Thandazani and launching similar efforts is a main strategy in ZIHP's efforts to reduce the burden of HIV/AIDS in Zambia.

The Zambian Integrated Health Programme continues to make a positive impact in addressing Zambia's HIV/AIDS problem.

Further, with ZIHP support, Thandazani renovated a building and dedicated the site to provide testing, information, and counseling for community members. As one of the many organizations provided grant funds by ZIHP, Thandazani has concentrated on helping local communities recognize their responsibilities regarding HIV/AIDS. Based on the success of this model, Thandazani has been asked by the government to expand the program to other communities in Zambia.

A recent documentary about Thandazani's efforts, recently won

For more information about JSI projects that address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Zambia and elsewhere, please go to www.jsi.com or contact:

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