



USIZO News

Usizo = Zulu for aid

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Welcome to the first edition of USAID South Africa's newsletter, "Usizo"—Zulu for "aid". This publication reports important and timely information about USAID's activities in the "rainbow nation" that held its first democratic election 11 years ago.



US Global Aids Coordinator Randall Tobias with disadvantaged children at the USAID assisted NOAH project



Sabelo Ndlovu (middle) told Ambassador Frazer (back row) and other U.S. officials, "I feel a hundred times better since I got tested for AIDS and started taking treatment."

Spotlight on Highest Infected AIDS Region

Global AIDS Coordinator and Ambassador Frazer Visit KwaZulu-Natal



South Africa has the largest number of individuals living with HIV in a single country, according to UNAIDS' Report on the global AIDS epidemic. KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) is the country's highest infected province, with one-third of the population HIV positive. U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Ambassador Randall Tobias, and U.S. Ambassador to South Africa (SA), Jendayi Frazer, recently visited KZN to see first-hand how President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is helping residents deal with the epidemic.

USAID HIV/AIDS specialists showed the Ambassadors five projects. NOAH's Ark (Nurturing Orphans of AIDS for Humanity) protects 230 orphans and vulnerable children in the rural community called Trustfeed. NOAH provides nutrition, healthcare and education at resource centers and trains community volunteers to help orphans at home. Rural children's houses lack electricity and indoor water, so NOAH's after school computer training gives youngsters employable skills for their future.

In the remote "Valley of a Thousand Hills," Health Promoters staged skits about abuse and HIV. DramAidE (Drama AIDS Education) project staff portrayed a frustrated young man returning to his family homestead where his father wheedles him to marry a second wife and bear more children. The adult son tells his father that he prefers one wife and less children

for health and economic reasons. The audience hears key messages about preventing domestic violence and sexually transmitted infections by remaining faithful to one partner. Performers invited the Ambassadors to participate, creatively influencing the outcome. HIV positive Health Promoters perform interactive dramas at SA's 22 tertiary institutions, promoting healthy lifestyles, AIDS prevention, counseling and testing.

In Durban, one of KZN's largest cities and seaports, six people on antiretroviral therapy at Addington Hospital described their ordeals contracting HIV. The Ambassadors signed an Agreement on behalf of USAID for the Reproductive Health Research Unit to train Addington staff to improve maternal health care, including HIV prevention and services, assisting the SA government's treatment rollout program.

Ambassadors Tobias and Frazer saw HIV/AIDS care pioneered for patients and families at McCord Hospital, founded by an American Missionary to "serve the under-served". Emergency Plan funding enhances McCord's antiretroviral treatment (ART) services. No HIV positive babies have been born to women given "highly active" ART (HAART). McCord's Pediatric ART Clinic treats more than 100 children.

Men told Ambassador Tobias and Ambassador Frazer how they are prevent-



Ambassador Tobias hugs a child at McCord Hospital

ing violence against women and promoting HIV/AIDS care through the USAID-supported EngenderHealth's Men As Partners (MAP) program. Gender roles and expectations drive the spread of HIV and worsen its impact. Another project assisted by USAID, Hope World Wide, assembles groups of men of all ages and walks of life for MAP workshops in major cities, talking openly about modern gender and cultural norms. Participants develop new attitudes and behavior about sexual responsibility for themselves, women and children. MAP counselor, Sgidi Sibeko, said, "I will not be like my father who used to beat up my mother."

Ambassador Tobias complimented the "spirit of South Africans fighting the epidemic."

Between 5 and 7 million South Africans are expected to die from AIDS by the year 2010.



All The Ingredients For Success: Mrs. Govender's All-In-One Curry Paste

Mrs. Govender likes to tell the story of her first effort to market her home-made food products to the public in 1990. She brought a basket full of 24 savoury samosas to a local flea market--she sold six and ate 18. Since that day, this family-owned and operated business in KwaZulu-Natal has demonstrated great tenacity and ingenuity. Mrs. Vino Govender and her husband, Krish, have embarked on a long and challenging journey to build their operation into a viable commercial manufacturing business that produces flavorful, healthy foods.

Mrs. Govender's All-in-One Curry Paste is widely recognized for its ease of use and mouth-watering taste. The "paste" is a blend of garlic, ginger and 21 Indian curry spices. It has won global awards. When Mrs. Govender started exhibiting her curry paste at international food shows, the delicious taste and appeal of her combination of ingredients was undeniable, displayed in plain jars with simple labels she designed herself. Mr. and Mrs. Govender had personally labelled every bottle, including hand-drawn bar codes.

Mrs. Govender formally started her business in 1999. After a few years, she asked USAID for help. She got it



Mrs Govender, left, and her employees, prepare her All-In-One curry paste

through USAID's South African International Business Linkages (SAIBL) project that provides technical assistance and helps build links between small and large businesses, that act as both mentors and clients. SAIBL assisted Mrs. Govender to design a professional looking label with U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) compliant data and a genuine bar code.

From a small family business, Mrs. Govender's grew to employ a staff of eight workers. She expanded her product range to include vegetable atchar pepper relish) and chilli sauce. Further USAID assistance enabled Mrs. Govender's business to meet the requirements for food imports into the United States. SAIBL helped her market her products in the U.S by supporting her participation at food industry shows.

"Remember if one door closes, another will open. I always know that if someone turns me down, tomorrow someone also will listen to me."

Demand for Mrs. Govender's exotic food products grew impressively—both within South Africa and internationally (export transactions valued at approximately R500 000 and local sales valued at about R532 000), including clients from Harrods' Department Store in London. SAIBL continued to work with the company to enhance the efficiency of its product line and on March 8, 2005, Mrs. Govender sold her All-In-One-Curry Paste company for an undisclosed price to All Joy Foods, a major listed South African sauce producer. All Joy said the acquisition is part of its strategy of investing in black-owned and managed businesses and said it was excited about the potential of the brand. Mrs. Govender and her husband will oversee the integration of their brand with those of the All Joy group to ensure maximum economies of scale while maintaining Mrs. Govender's signature high quality. With her All-In-One Curry Paste, Mrs. Govender has certainly come a long way from her flea market days!

Childline Heals Wounds of Violence and Abuse

Dr. V.B. Mohomed works miracles from the room that serves as an office, an examination room and, often, she concedes, a kitchen. She keeps bread and peanut butter in a desk drawer to offer the 100-150 rape victims who seek her care every month, many of whom arrive hungry and reluctant to speak.

As head of the Rape Survivors Unit of Umlazi Public Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal, Dr. Mohomed works in coordination with Childline South Africa, an organization supported by USAID. Childline provides Dr. Mohomed with social workers to interview victims, counsel them and help them obtain short- and long-term care. For nearly two decades Childline has worked to prevent violence and abuse, offering educational, therapeutic and rehabilitative services to children and their families. With centers in six cities and projects in seven provinces, Childline has become a lifeline for South African communities.

The organization began with a 24-hour national crisis line for counselors to assist children, young people and their

families in reporting abuse and seeking help. A seven-week training course for new counselors is offered four times a year.

"With children increasingly growing up with external caretakers as a result of the HIV/AIDS virus, we have seen abuse rates soar," explained the crisis line director in Durban.

Durban's call volumes are among the nation's highest, averaging 19,000 a month. New cases are forwarded to the State Child Protection Unit, child welfare societies or other appropriate parties and monitored to ensure that each is addressed appropriately. A mammoth green filing cabinet houses thousands of cases pending with state authorities, but "we don't give up," says the crisis line director. Childline's greatest obstacle has been its dependence on underfunded government child welfare services to respond to urgent calls, but it is working to build partnerships that will ease the process.

Childline is also the first organization in KwaZulu-Natal to offer help for sexual

offenders. As part of its education and prevention initiatives, Childline hosts bi-monthly individual and group therapy sessions for child and adult sexual offenders.

"We have to change the idea of abuse. We can't teach these kids to protect themselves—we must teach their communities to protect them."

In Childline's newly painted treatment facilities, a social worker sits on a straw mat cradling a young girl whose eyes barely move when the door opens. The child was brutally raped just two weeks earlier by a man who came to her home asking for directions. The Childline social worker will lead this 10-year-old through as many play therapy sessions as it takes to help her heal. Childline will continue to champion her cause. "We have to change the idea of abuse," said one Childline social worker. "We can't teach these kids to protect themselves—we must teach their communities to protect them."

“TALK-TO-ME” Launch—A Children’s Appeal



Kami, Takalani Sesame’s HIV/AIDS muppet

Takalani Sesame began with a simple idea: create a place where all South African children, especially those who have limited access to education, could feel safe and learn about themselves and the world in which they live. *Takalani Sesame* reaches millions

of South African boys and girls through television, radio and literature in children’s own home languages, especially in rural areas.

In November 2004, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) proudly launched a new program called “talk-to-me,” featuring South Africa’s most popular AIDS orphan, a 5-year-old Muppet named Kami. Kami is joined by celebrity and ordinary friends urging the country’s grown-ups to talk to children about HIV/AIDS.

Kami was created two years ago through collaboration between USAID’s education program, Sesame Workshop and the South African Department of Education. USAID is gratified to have been part of the challenging birthing

process for Kami as she teaches children tolerance and acceptance for people living with HIV and AIDS.

“Helping South Africans cope positively with AIDS is one of the United States government’s top priorities.”

Talk-to-me takes AIDS education for children and educators a step further to break the undesirable culture of silence at home, in schools and in churches. Research shows that families, parents, caregivers and teachers feel isolated and are uncomfortable talking about sexual and other personal issues with children. *talk-to-me* gives adults ideas of how to speak openly and honestly with children. USAID supports *talk-to-me* because it is a call to ALL South Africans to communicate with children about protecting themselves from HIV and to live with its effects.

“Helping South Africans cope positively with AIDS is one of the United States government’s top priorities,” says USAID’s Deputy Mission Director, Denise Rollins. In 2002, President Bush established the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, committing \$15 billion to combat HIV and AIDS in 15 countries in the world, including \$78.5 million for South Africa. These resources are being used for prevention, treatment, care and support activities throughout the country working through a network of partners including the

South African government.

USAID provided critical support needed to develop and launch *Takalani* and the international, award-winning HIV positive Muppet, Kami.

With continued collaboration among the key players and partners, including the South African Department of Education, SABC and corporate sponsor, Sanlam, *Takalani Sesame* is reaching high levels of relevant preschool education. The interactive learning experiences that make education materials come alive are now helping children and their families deal constructively with AIDS by talking about HIV together for perhaps the first time in their lives.

NEWSFLASH: “talk to me” won the Gold Plaque in the Educational-Adult Audience category at the 2005 Hugo Awards (part of the Chicago Film Festival) on March 31, 2005



Deputy Mission Director, Denise Rollins speaks at the “talk to Me” launch

South Africa’s Sprawling Slums

Millions of South Africans live in slums. Rural people rush to cities hoping for jobs, education, health care and a better life. Slum dwellers don’t find the “egoli” (golden city) of their dreams. They become homeless, swallowed by poverty, attacked by criminals and exploited by predators. South Africa’s government has declared “war against shacks and informal settlements,” aiming to eradicate slums in the next 10 years. Housing Minister, Lindiwe Sisulu, urges local authorities to learn to work effectively with constituencies and upgrade informal settlements.

Supporting the battle against burgeoning informal settlements, USAID is intro-



Recycling will help clean up slums

ducing local authorities to policy changes and supporting private and NGO efforts to supply shelter, drinking water, sanitation, low cost energy, tree planting and other projects to improve daily life.

Minister Sisulu says, “South Africa has the

political will, capacity and resources to lead the way in Africa and no issue is more urgent to us than improving the lot of the poor.”

Garbage Everywhere

Piles of garbage clutter overpopulated slums. Some of it is toxic and much of it won’t biodegrade. Half the communities (20 million people) don’t have access to waste collection. Rubbish is

dumped carelessly on the ground. People are exposed to poisonous litter, rodents, insects and infectious micro-organisms. Discarded trash, however, can become treasure for people living in slums. They own little and can afford nothing. Useless litter tossed on the ground can take on new meaning and value for poor people.

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Sub-Saharan Africa has the world’s largest proportion of urban residents living in slums. Almost 80% of South Africa will be “urbanized” in the next five years with nearly 40 million people living in overcrowded shanty towns surrounding large cities.

Shacks account for one in every five dwellings as nearly 2 million houses are inadequate. Rapid demographic changes strain local government abilities to deliver expected services like water, sanitation, electricity, and housing in urban informal settlements.



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“Working with South Africans for South Africans”

The U.S. Agency for International Development provides economic, development and humanitarian assistance worldwide. USAID supports people’s efforts to develop themselves and their countries. USAID programs in South Africa move the country closer to its goal of equality and a better life for all.

USAID began supporting South Africa through community organizations and study scholarships to the U.S. in 1985. Partnership with the South African government began after the 1994 democratic elections. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are an important component of USAID’s program.

USAID programs aim to strengthen South Africa politically, socially and economically. Historically disadvantaged South Africans are assisted to improve their abilities in six key areas:

- **Democracy and Good Governance**
- **Education**
- **HIV/AIDS and Health**
- **Economic Analysis**
- **Sustainable Employment**
- **Housing and Local Government Services**



Further information is available on our website on <http://www.sn.apc.org/usaidsa>

South Africa’s Sprawling Slums

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Trash to Treasure

USAID’s partnership with the South African Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism and the University of Cape Town established the **Eco-action Program** to develop environmental projects in Cape Town’s Khayelitsha community. These projects demonstrate outdoor improvements that reduce greenhouse gas emissions linked to Earth’s warming and impact on the climate affecting agricultural production and human living conditions.

“I did not know that what we used to consider useless waste and rubbish can turn to be a source of income.”

Eunice Roro manages the Inkqubela (‘progress’ in Xhosa) Recycling Project, eliminating waste and educating local residents about environmental opportunities. Fondly known as “Mama Roro,” the dedicated recycler recruits neighbors of all ages to tackle pollution. She spearheads the collection of cardboard, plastics, bottles, scrap, paper and cans for recycling. Unemployment is high and community people didn’t see value in collecting waste or recycling it until

Mama Roro showed them differently. One resident said, “I did not know that what we used to consider useless waste and rubbish can turn to be a source of income.”

Mama Roro gives home-made soup to people who bring their litter to her recycling depots, “What I pay people for bringing their waste is often their only source of income.” She employs 15 full-time staff and 10 part-time workers. She has achieved much with little. She used profits from the sale of recyclables to buy a pick-up truck and second-hand trailer, reducing the number of trips required daily and doubling the volume of recyclables delivered to buyers. This is saving time, energy and money.

Community members and students at 25 schools learn from Mama Roro about recycling, why it is important and what is recyclable. She mentored one woman to open her own business, training other women to make beads from recycled paper.

Successes are plentiful, but Mama Roro and her staff don’t have toilets, electricity, running water for wash up, an office or chairs. They work without shelter in heat or rain.

Mama Roro speaks regularly on a radio station and publicizes her training workshops. Locals show greater respect for the environment and daily recycled collection quantities are increasing.

Further information is available from USAID’s Regional Urban Development Office for Africa, based in South Africa, headed by Sarah Wines: swines@usaid.gov

USAID helps municipal authorities cope with waste problems

Cape Town’s beauty and history attract tourists from across the world. Townships such as Khayelitsha seldom feature on the sightseeing trail. These communities endured horrors of apartheid’s forced race separation and were ignored by municipal government services, such as rubbish collection. Seven former councils have now merged into one, challenged to meet the needs of all citizens.

Cape Town generates 1.6 million tons of rubbish every year. Landfill space is in short supply and disposal is becoming costlier as a result of increasing environmental and other legislative requirements. The City faces large scale illegal dumping and littering.

USAID assists local authorities with their awesome service delivery responsibilities by sponsoring Cape Town’s first ever Integrated Waste Management Plan. The focus on waste minimization, education and training will guide the sector for the next 20-30 years. The appropriate, affordable and environment-friendly mix of solutions will continually reduce the mass of waste requiring disposal.

USAID hopes this effort will lead the way for similar practices elsewhere in the country.