



USIZO News

Usizo = Zulu for aid

Volume 1, Issue 3

Supporting My Family With Love and Respect

Inside this issue:

Supporting My Family with Love and Respect	1
Youth Group Meets Former U.S. President Bill Clinton	2
USAID Helps a Parliamentarian Become a Deputy Minister	2
Wheel is Rolling To Empower South African Women	3
South African AIDS Clinic's One Year Anniversary	3-4

Welcome to USAID South Africa's newsletter "Usizo"—Zulu for "aid". This publication reports important and timely news about USAID's activities in Africa's "rainbow" nation.



Photo: R. Zurba

Nkonzo helps his siblings/relatives to study



Photo: R. Zurba, USAID/SA

Nkonzo is proud of his family

President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief supports EngenderHealth and MAP through USAID.

One quiet evening in Soweto, a loud bang on our door frightened us. We knew it was him—my father. We didn't want to let him in or he'd beat up my mother. He demanded, "Vulani, vulani!" [Open up!] We froze. My mother, sisters, brothers and I didn't know what to do.

He used to come home smiling. Whenever we heard his knock, we knew he had gifts for us and we threw open the door. I was his first-born, so he spent extra time with me. I don't know what happened to that kind father. Now his life is ruled by alcohol and led to a divorce. He disappeared.

I kept all those childhood memories with me. When I was 16, my Mom passed away after giving birth to my youngest brother, Mzwakhe. No one knew why or what happened. I was still trying to get used to her not being around when my eldest brother (from another father)—our family's sole breadwinner—got shot and died delivering food for the bakery where he worked.

I became a hermit. I earned money by doing "izikorobho" (painting, tiling and things like that). I found a way to survive. I had to grow up on my own, but I wanted to be there for Mzwakhe. Today, I spend time with him, helping him with his homework, taking him to parks and sharing with him what I do at work—teach men to respect women. He believes in me. He looks up to me as a father figure.

And it's funny. Our father showed up after many years. Strangely, I managed to find peace with him. We have become friends, but he has no say in my

life. He lost his job, so I give him money. I support four sisters, three brothers, nieces and nephews by planning ahead to pay for rent, food and services. Ten of us live in our four-room house and draw water from an outdoor tap. A brother and I sleep in a shack we built outside. My family and I manage. And we love each other.

I'm helping my eldest sister adjust to being HIV positive. She denied it when she first found out. But I took her to the hospital. They said she also had Tuberculosis, so she got treatments. She's feeling so well, she's looking for a job to support her two children. I look beyond her status and see her as my sister—someone good, caring, loving. I'm proud of her and the strength and courage she shows.

Three years ago, a friend invited me to a workshop in my neighborhood, called "Men As Partners" (MAP). I eventually realized what was wrong in my life, how I could change and what kind of man I want to be. I asked the organizers if I could work with them, even as a volunteer. I became a peer educator, talking to others in my age range about important things, especially gender roles. A guy will tell you he's got HIV or is hurting his Mom or partner or another woman in his life... men need someone they trust so they open up. Yesterday, my best friend admitted his father is violent to his own Mom. He'd never talked about it before. Guys who have experienced domestic violence have the choice of stopping it and preventing it.

People need to do all things as equally as possible. Nobody should be

favored or prejudiced by gender, but given an equal chance at home, school and work. Each and every role is meant for both people. Let's understand and accept that and treat each other with respect, fairness and love.

I work at EngenderHealth, the organization that developed the MAP idea. In my job and personal life, I help South Africans learn why it's important to treat everybody respectfully, regardless of gender. This concept is not a goal for me, but a way of life.

"They say a man can change his stars through the help of God. I will be a star for Mzwakhe."

Many people are afraid of getting AIDS. I tell them to abstain from sex before marriage and stick with one partner after marriage. Not everybody finds this message easy to live, but we talk about ways to avoid sexual compromises. Some guys tell us we're crazy. Others accept it and live safer lives. I hope life will be better when Mzwakhe grows up.

To all of you who have lost your role models, it's up to us to put a stop to this, because someday, we, too, may become fathers. Fathers, be positive role models for your children, especially your sons. You are their spirit, hope and inspiration.

They say a man can change his stars through the help of God. I will be a star for Mzwakhe.

By Nkonzo Khanyile, EngenderHealth



Youth Group Meets Former U.S. President Bill Clinton

On July 19, 2005, former U.S. President Bill Clinton addressed over 100 young community volunteers from City Year South Africa during the third stop of his African tour. USAID recently approved a \$500,000 grant to City Year South Africa for its National Youth Service program. The primary goal of the program is to encourage civic leadership and national service among South African youth. At the same time, youth will be trained to develop skills and knowledge to enhance their learning and employment opportunities upon completing the program. City Year South Africa is the first international site of City Year, Inc., which plans to expand the program to other countries in the near future. City Year operates programs in 15 cities across the United States and has a 15 year track record as a leader in the national youth service field.

The City Year National Youth Service Program contributes to the achievements



Former U.S. President Bill Clinton with community volunteers from City Year South Africa

of four USAID/South Africa objectives including economic growth, education, democracy & good governance, and environmentally sound housing and urban services. It is also aligned with the Agency's increasing focus on youth issues. Essentially, by the end of 2009, City Year plans to train a total of 2,900 young people in service, receiving hard and soft-skills, making tangible contributions to society – and potentially serving 58,000 children along with hundreds

of agencies, companies and community groups in the process.

There are many challenges facing South Africa's marginalized youth, including HIV/AIDS, joblessness, low literacy and numeracy skills, lack of motivation, mistrust of authority, low self esteem, and crime. The South African government estimates that more than seven million young adults, ranging in age from 16 to 30, need assistance in education, training for employment, and civil and economic participation.

Mr. Clinton was in South Africa as part of a six-nation African tour to check on AIDS projects funded by his foundation. Mr. Clinton also traveled to Tanzania, Kenya and Rwanda after his visit to South Africa.

USAID Helps Parliamentarian Become a Deputy Minister



Photo: Neal Cohen, USAID/SA

Elizabeth Thabethe

Elizabeth Thabethe, a graduate of USAID/South Africa's Economics training for Parliamentarians, has been appointed as Deputy Minister of

Trade and Industry. She was the leader of Cosatu's (SA's largest trade union) Commercial Catering Workers Union prior to being elected to Parliament in 1994. She was re-elected in 1999 and 2004, serving on the Labour, Trade and Industry, and Rules Committees, as well as being on the Chief Whip's Forum, Convener of the Human Resources Cluster, and on both the African National Congress ("largest" political party and successful leader of anti-apartheid movement) and the Multi-party Women's Parliamentary Caucuses. She was elected chairperson of the National Assembly's Environmental Affairs and

"Without the knowledge I gained in the USAID course for Parliamentarians, I would not have been able to achieve this new position. I am excited by the prospect of using the economics knowledge I have gained to improve the life of South Africans."

Tourism Committee in 2004.

Elizabeth was unable to secure her secondary school graduation certificate because of involvement in anti-apartheid activities in the 1980s.

She joined USAID/South Africa's special economics education program for Parliamentarians because the rules on university admission were relaxed to reflect non-academic learning. Elizabeth received her certificate in economics from UNISA (University of South Africa) and immediately went on to the diploma course at the University of the Western Cape – a special program also established by USAID. She expects to finish the diploma in 2006. The requirements of USAID's program are the same as for regular students, but classes are taught

at times permitted by Parliament's schedule. The program is taught by South African professors, private sector economists, senior government officials, plus professors from Williams College, Massachusetts in Boston.

Ms. Thabethe, whose constituency is in Germiston (east of Johannesburg), has been a leader in structuring USAID's course this past year and making arrangements to extend the program to newly elected Parliamentarians. She is outspoken on women's issues and was a key contact during USAID/South Africa's recent gender assessment.



Elizabeth Thabethe, front row, second from right, with colleagues at the economics Parliamentary training

Wheel is Rolling To Empower South African Women

Launching the “Women in Higher Education Executive Leadership” (WHEEL) Program, Dr. Rachel Gumbi of the University of Zululand, the only female Vice Chancellor in South Africa, challenged the status quo by saying, “We need visionary leadership without losing local perspective. Moreover, we need service, not self aggrandizement.” This call to fellow women leaders in South Africa as well as the academic community at large was part of her keynote speech to inaugurate the WHEEL, a component of USAID/South Africa’s Tertiary Education Linkages Project (TELP).

WHEEL responds to the severe shortage of women serving in academic and executive leadership positions in South Africa. The program focuses on building the capacity of women who currently serve as senior academics, heads of departments, deans, and other executive administrators.

“We need visionary leadership without losing local perspective. Moreover, we need service, not self aggrandizement.”

The primary goal of this new program is to increase the cadre of women who are eligible to move into executive management positions. The series of program activities in the first year includes as-



Oliva Scriven (Spelman College, USA); Dr. Anna Hammond (Bennett College for Women, USA); Dr. Carleene Dei (USAID/South Africa Mission Director); Liz Lowe (United Negro College Fund – Special Programs, (UNCFSP)); Dr. Gloria Braxton, Chief of Party, TELP II Project (UNCFSP, South Africa) launched WHEEL.

sessing work and leadership styles; workshops on executive and leadership issues and skills development, career planning; diversity and equity support programs; research capacity-building; fellowships for mentoring activities in South Africa and the United States, and establishing electronic networks, such as a newsletter and bulletin board.

The launch included inspiring speeches by both South African and American women leaders involved in the higher education sector. Other higher education

leaders joining Dr. Gumbi at the podium included Puyishi Kotecha, Interim CEO of Higher Education South Africa, Professor Anshu Padayachee, Director of an alternative development program funded by the Netherlands, and Dr. Anna Hammond of Bennett College for Women in the US speaking of her personal journey in higher education.

According to USAID Mission Director, Carleene Dei, “It is only when the South African university begins to question and dispute the current disempowerment of women that this country’s women will have an equal chance of becoming managers, senior managers and executive leaders in higher education institutions, as well as in society.”

South African AIDS Clinic’s One Year Anniversary



Nomsa receives antiretroviral (ARV) treatment at South Africa’s Themba Lethu [Zulu word for “our hope”] Clinic, Helen Joseph Hospital. For Nomsa, entering the sprightly premises of Themba Lethu opens the doors to friendly people who care about her. “Coming for treatment at the clinic is like attending a social club,” she said during her speech to 500 guests celebrating the clinic’s first anniversary in October 2005.

Nomsa was diagnosed HIV positive in 1999 at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. A doctor had suggested an HIV test after repeated visits of unsuccessful treatments on her swollen chest. She stopped visiting Bara in 2000 after a doctor advised her that she only had two years to live.

A year later in 2001, Nomsa learnt of the IC2 infectious disease management clinic (Helen Joseph Treatment Center) – now named Themba Lethu – at Helen Joseph Hospital. During one of

Nomsa’s early visits, Sister Sue Roberts, coordinator of the IC2 clinic at the time, arranged a CD4 count test for her. The results were 72cells/mm3 (well below the minimum count of 800cells/mm3). The low CD4 count sent panic messages to Nomsa’s doctors. Dr. Charles performed a viral load test after a private company that Nomsa used to work for offered to pay for her treatment. The viral load results were a high of 750 000cell/mm (number of HIV viruses effecting her blood cells in comparison to 0cell/mm). Mum Beauty, a volunteer counselor from CARE (Community Aids Response – a care and support non-governmental organisation) in the



Nomsa keeps herself informed with literature at the clinic

clinic began counseling and educating Nomsa about HIV, drug adherence, viral loads and CD4 counts. Nomsa says Themba Lethu doctors, nurses and counselors were very supportive, even when the private company could no longer finance her treatment. She was there at the opportune time when the clinic became the first site in Gauteng Province to commence the South African Government’s public antiretroviral (ARV) drug rollout program. Nomsa has been receiving treatment, care and support at this clinic ever since.

This innovative HIV care service builds public and private sector capacity to deliver safe, effective and affordable ARV therapy so that thousands more people living with HIV/AIDS can access treatment and improve their survival and productivity. The clinic was renovated

continued on page 4 ...

South African AIDS Clinic's One Year Anniversary

continued from page 3

from an old facility used previously for storage. Hundreds of patients now benefit weekly at the clinic. The new premises include eight confidential counseling rooms, nine doctors' consulting rooms, a training room, pharmacy and spacious patient waiting room. More than 2000 HIV positive people have received care and support services since April 2004 and more than 1400 people are on treatment. An average of 350 patients attend treatment readiness counseling prior to starting ARV therapy and 48,000 state condoms are distributed every month. About 61% of Themba Lethu's patients are female. A high number are unemployed or low-earning domestic workers.

Themba Lethu Clinic is becoming popular for its caring and professional services among patients and as a "center of excellence" in South Africa's healthcare arena. It has the most patients

"ARVs gave me a second chance," declares Nomsa. "The clinic is staffed with incredible people."

US Assistant Secretary of State (African Affairs) and former Ambassador to South Africa, Jendayi Frazer, (left) celebrated the first anniversary of Helen Joseph Hospital's Themba Lethu (Zulu for "place of hope") Antiretroviral Clinic, joining people with AIDS and South African officials to mark Gauteng Province's first (and now largest) treatment center. Dr. Frazer said, "It is a special pleasure to visit a place where despair is being replaced by hope and where the challenge of HIV and AIDS is being met by dedicated, competent health professionals who are saving lives—setting an example for the entire nation." Considered a center of excellence for health care, the clinic was established by a collaboration between Gauteng's Department of Health, Helen Joseph Hospital, Right to Care NGO, Wits Health's Clinical HIV Research Unit and President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief through USAID.



Photo: Robert Powers, USAID/SA

on ARVs. President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has provided immeasurable assistance to the clinic through USAID for treatment and care.

Today Nomsa is self-employed and keen to rejoin the corporate world. She is a happy mother with a healthy CD4 count. "ARVs gave me a second chance," she declares. "The clinic has

always been staffed with incredible people." Now with the new facility and more doctors and nurses funded by the US Government through PEPFAR and USAID, Nomsa's greatest wish is for more social club establishments nationwide where people can get help.

By Tebogo Lesele, Right To Care



HIGHLIGHTS

December 1, 2005 is **World AIDS Day** and it's about getting involved so that everyone can make a positive difference in tackling HIV and AIDS. World AIDS Day isn't just about one day. Throughout the year, countrywide activities are doing something positive to prevent, treat and care for people with AIDS, emphasizing orphans and other vulnerable children.

USAID South Africa's new Mission Director, Carleene Dei, says, "Over the past decade we have made significant strides towards acquiring the tools needed to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that every HIV/AIDS statistic represents an actual person who needs and deserves the best available assistance. USAID is totally committed to achieving the World AIDS Day mandate: STOP AIDS: Keep the promise. We are one of the U.S. Government Agencies implementing President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Re-

lief (PEPFAR), the largest health initiative in the history of the world."

The **16 Days of Activism** campaign challenges South Africans to declare a truce on violence against women and children and, ultimately, to make it a permanent one.

South Africans are being called on to oppose violence against women and children. For the eighth year, South Africa is taking part in the global 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign that runs from November 25 through to International Human Rights Day on December 10.

Dr. Dei says, "I can think of no condition more appalling than living under the shadow of violence and abuse. To end the cycle of violence against women and

children requires everybody's fervent commitment. Let us use these 16 days to pledge and demonstrate our support of this essential initiative."

USAID's Democracy and Governance team supports the Department of Correctional Services for the production and broadcasting of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for the campaign.



Photo: Herbert Matimba, Pretoria

Mission Director, Carleene Dei, talking with children at a PEPFAR assisted project implemented through USAID.

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 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**

Americans working with South Africans for South Africans