



# Newsletter

African Centre for HIV/AIDS Management, Volume 2 Number 3 2004

## HIV takes toll on mining

HIV/AIDS related illnesses and deaths are taking their toll on the mining sector, with over 60% of the mines in a recent Sabcoha survey done by the Bureau for Economic Research (BER) reporting lower profits due to HIV/AIDS. The survey was done on 1008 companies in the mining, manufacturing, retail, wholesale, motor trade, building and construction and financial services sectors. It aims to build awareness of the nature and extent of the economic impact of HIV/AIDS in order to assist business to respond effectively.

The results suggest that a substantial number of South African companies are already suffering the consequences of the epidemic.

When asked how HIV/AIDS affects profits, 40% to 50% of the respondents in the manufacturing and financial services sectors and 62% of the mines surveyed indicated that the epidemic has already had an adverse impact on the bottom line.

Whereas mines and manufacturers are more alarmed by the impact of AIDS on their labour force and production costs, financial services companies also seem concerned about the impact on their target markets.

According to Brad Mears, CEO of Sabcoha, HIV/AIDS will slow the growth in consumer markets, and increase banks' exposure to non-performing loans as clients fall ill and die.

Profitability in the retail, wholesale, motor trade and construction sectors appear to be less affected, but respondents in all seven sectors expect the impact of the epidemic to escalate over the next 5 years.

Overall, it appears as if HIV/AIDS had the largest impact on productivity and absenteeism, followed by employee benefit costs. A number of companies are also experiencing higher labour turnover rates, lost skills and higher recruitment and training costs.

On a positive note, less than 10% of the companies indicated that the epidemic had an adverse impact on their decision to invest in South Africa. The majority also indicated that HIV/AIDS has either no impact or a net positive impact on employing new workers.

"The global spread of the epidemic and increasing evidence of the economic impact has highlighted the need for business to take action. Although many South African firms stepped up to the challenge, the survey showed there is more work to be done," said Mears.



*Prof Jimmie Earl Perry brings educational theatre to the African Centre.*

### Educational Theatre and HIV/AIDS

Our constitution says we'll do community mobilisation, and for that educator, singer/ dancer/ actor Jimmie Earl Perry joined us. In line with a UNAIDS report stating that music and culture make a big difference in sexual behaviour change, Perry wants to use tools like educational theatre to accomplish that. "I want to educate and liberate people," he says. "My younger brother died of AIDS and in many ways I ignored the contribution I might be able to make."

Perry grew up in New Jersey in a musical, spiritual family. After completing his musical education degrees at the world famous Westminster Choir College at Princeton, New Jersey and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Manhattan he embarked on a remarkable journey into the world of show business.

His musical theatre credits include the role of Old Deuteronomy in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats* and being an original cast member in *Miss Saigon*. He also performed on cruise ships, and was the lead singer of the USA Gospel Singers, which toured Europe's great theatres. A highlight was singing at a reception in Montreal for former Pres Nelson Mandela.

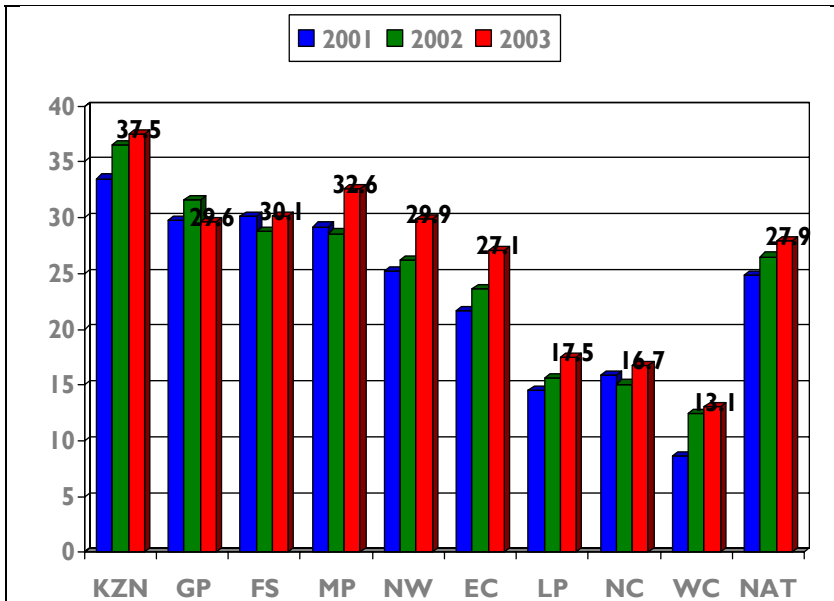
Earlier this year, performing as Pontius Pilate in *Jesus Christ Superstar* in Germany, he met with staff from the African Centre and decided to join them. Perry is bubbling with plans for his work at the Centre, and wants to start with a workshop to determine from various stakeholders what will be effective. He welcomes input from people for this exciting venture - feel free to contact him at [jep@sun.ac.za](mailto:jep@sun.ac.za) or +27 21 808 3707.

# AIDS time bomb could hit Africa

Africa must brace itself for an AIDS time bomb as 8 000 people are infected with HIV a day, the UN warned. Of the 45 million people with HIV worldwide, 70% are in sub-Saharan Africa, which has only 11% of the world's people. The Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria said the per capita growth in sub-Saharan countries is falling by 0,5%

to 1,2% each year as a result of AIDS. "If we think we're seeing an impact today, we have to brace ourselves because it is set to get much worse," warned Prof Alan Whiteside, member of a UN commission to deal with HIV/AIDS and governance in Africa. In South Africa the population may be growing at only a third of the estimate,

largely due to AIDS. If the latest figures - projecting a decline - are correct, this could increase poverty and inequality, as people die in their productive years. The population could drop by 5 million (to 40 million) by 2050, whereas past research estimated it to be twice that. Whiteside said the projected decline is unique for a developing country.



HIV prevalence in each SA province, and nationally, based on the 2003 antenatal survey.

## SA's HIV prevalence still increasing

Government's HIV and Syphilis Antenatal Sero-Prevalence Survey for 2003 indicated an increase in the national HIV prevalence from 2002's 26,5% to 27,9%. According to the department of health the increase is not statistically significant and actually indicates that the epidemic is "slowly stabilising". The TAC disagreed. "While the infection rate might be slowing, which is expected when the prevalence is this high, this is not evidence that the

epidemic will stabilise any time soon." At 37,5%, KwaZulu-Natal continues to have the highest prevalence rate. Mpumalanga showed the steepest increase, and now stands at 32,6%.

The department of health estimates the number of South Africans with HIV in 2003 was 5,6 million, the majority being women. About 96 000 infants are also infected, emphasising the need for a more effective mother-to-child transmission prevention rollout.

## Centre mourns student's death

IT is with sadness that the African Centre learned of the death of Nokuzola Walaza, one of our students from the Eastern Cape.



One of her friends, Vivian Bukwana, describes Nokuzola as a supporting and resourceful person. As a primary school teacher she fought

for facilities at her school, and she succeeded. At the time of her death, they were adding new classrooms, plus the school now also offers grades 7 and 8. Nokuzola was a hard worker, and very involved in the community. She was always there for people who needed support. She will be missed, and the African Centre wishes her family and friends all the support and strength they need.

## Fresh snapshots

**Africa's rural communities** and farmers have become the forgotten victims of HIV/AIDS, while the bulk of prevention and support work focuses on the cities. "We can see that the epidemic has spread to rural areas, where most Africans live," said KY Amoako, Executive Secretary of the UN's Economic Commission for Africa. "Households lose important productive members in their prime, food production declines, crucial knowledge is lost and the fabric of rural communities is torn apart," he added.

**HIV/AIDS remains** one of the main causes of child mortality, with Botswana, Zimbabwe and Swaziland recording the fastest increases in under-five deaths, according to a UNICEF report. South Africa and Zambia also featured among the countries where the number of children who did not live to the age of 5 had increased since 1990. "The world has the tools to improve child survival, if only it would use them," said UNICEF's Carol Bellamy. "Vaccines, supplements and insecticide-treated mosquito nets do not cost much, and would save millions of children. No government should be allowed to let another 10 years pass with so little progress for children."

**South Africa received** a R160-million Christmas gift from Oprah Winfrey. The party she is co-hosting with Nelson Mandela in Qunu started as an opportunity to spread Christmas cheer among poor children, but developed into a commitment to raise international awareness of the plight of AIDS orphans. Winfrey said she was thrilled by the spirit of South Africa's youth and angered by the lack of anti-retroviral medication in public hospitals, but what struck her most was the number of children denied the opportunity to be children because of the death of their parents.

# From soldier to caregiver to PDM

"The PDM gave new direction to my life," says Thozi Qubuda, who went on to do his M.Phil. "Especially the socio-logical and economic topics broadened my horizon. It drove me to participate in community projects, and I wish more of my colleagues could do it."

This qualified nurse is now a district manager for a programme in community home-based care, with the focus of restricting the cost of hospital bed days. He says there is still a lack of knowledge and project management skills in the medical profession, and the strategies are still based on trial and error.

Born in the Eastern Cape, Thozi became involved in student politics, and later joined MK. While studying nursing by day, he was a soldier at night.

From childhood Thozi wanted to heal, and always used to rescue animals. Becoming a doctor was a dream, and in 1996 he was selected to study medicine at Stellenbosch University. Afrikaans as language of instruction and family problems however prevented him from finishing. Shortly after leaving the course, he saw the advert for the PDM, which lead to big changes in his life.

In-between he trained in Chinese herbal



medicine. Studying is a passion – he'll do his Ph.D in 2005, and then wants to do a masters in public health, an MBA, and medicine!

Fortunately he has the support of his family, and praises his wife, Nonzwakazi. "But I think I got my brain from my mother," he says, and calls her his role model. "She taught me to never give up, and to share my love with others." And that's his dream – to develop and empower communities to manage HIV/AIDS.



Peer educators from Stellenbosch University at the training weekend in August 2004.

## First peer educators trained at US

In an HIV testing campaign in March Stellenbosch students indicated that "a conversation with someone you trust" can be a powerful tool in preventing HIV in a generation with AIDS fatigue. The first student peer education programme at the university was initiated. It aims to promote responsible sexual

behaviour, and wants to develop skills in students to manage prevention and care. Evaluating the training, one peer educator said "previously I didn't think I could make a difference, but now I feel equipped". Another student added that "I can now express informed opinions backed by concrete facts".

## SA businesses could be 'forced' to fight HIV/AIDS

The lack of interest by South African business in the fight against HIV/AIDS could lead to a requirement that all businesses provide proof of their AIDS programmes before getting contracts. Recent research showed that about 9% of businesses had already felt the impact of AIDS, while 43% expected a significant impact within 5 years.

However, only 40% of companies surveyed recently had good HIV strategies. Gavin George of the Health Economics and AIDS Division at the University of KwaZulu-Natal said most managers had the wrong attitude because they often handed over the issue to the occupational health or HR department. There had to be commitment from top management, in

conjunction with employees.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also challenged the business community to do more to combat HIV/AIDS, warning that they are losing clients and qualified workers. "If they do not invest in prevention, care and support, they are investing in their downfall."

## Workplace snapshots

**Aflife** has become the first insurer in South Africa to lift HIV/AIDS exclusions and limitations on existing and new policies. Through waiting periods and other control mechanisms the company balanced its risk and the needs of customers in such a way that it treats HIV no differently to any other medical condition. The Life Offices Association said it will propose that all its members consider scrapping the exclusion clause for HIV/AIDS for new business, as it is discriminatory that it is there for HIV/AIDS, but not for other life-threatening illnesses.

**Virgin's Richard Branson** and mining magnate Cyril Ramaphosa launched a project to fight HIV/AIDS in South Africa. It will bring the music and business world together against HIV/AIDS by having people donate one hour of their salary to the fight.

**A conference** called "Effective and practical strategies to manage the impact of HIV/AIDS on business" will be held in January in Sandton. It will focus on risk management, a business plan that caters for the unexpected, finding out how HIV transforms governance and moving towards behaviour change. Email [erena.christofides@iqpc.co.za](mailto:erena.christofides@iqpc.co.za) for more information.



# Looking back on a year full of highlights

The African Centre can look back on a year filled with highlights, both academically and in its partnerships. The year kicked off with the summer school at Medunsa in Pretoria. Here students could meet their lecturers, and be introduced to online teaching. This year saw 65 students enrol for their M.Phil, and in August Proff Jan du Toit and Johan Augustyn travelled to meet with the students. Their research includes assessing the issue of stigma, investigating whether life skills education improves the attitude of young adults towards HIV and investigating

the effect of managers' lack of interest in HIV/AIDS related issues on the success of workplace programmes. Early in the year BATSA approached the Centre to assist with the planning of a workshop for Africa and the Far East on a code of practice for BATSA. This was developed at the Centre, with André Louw from the Law Faculty at Stellenbosch University. At the end of June the Centre hosted a successful winter school. Thereafter 3 staff members – Renice Williams, Anja Karsten and Du Toit – visited the ILO head office in Geneva. The Centre is

also looking forward to the ILO's Dr Franklyn Lisk joining us in January. Around the same time Du Toit visited the Centre for Adult Education at the University of Ghana for negotiations to introduce a masters programme based on the Stellenbosch model. This visit led to the signing of a partnership between the two universities. In August an advertisement for the PDM resulted in more than 800 enquiries. It seems the need for the programme grows every year. We can accommodate 300 students next year, but with funding this can increase.

## Workshop gives fresh inspiration

Together with the ILO, the African Centre has just presented a successful workshop on the workplace management of HIV. It followed on a similar workshop in 2002 in Cameroon and was sponsored by Transnet and GTZ. In terms of the ILO's focus on government, employers and trade unions, it was attended by 54 delegates from these 3 groups from 17 countries. The Centre's director, Prof Jan du Toit, is optimistic that the expected outcomes will be reached. The main goal was the increased capacity of the delegates in creating a broad strategy for the effective implementation of the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, and in using the code to develop and implement HIV/AIDS policies and programmes. The workshop also aimed to improve their understanding of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the world of work, and gain commitment from the delegates to support HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes at the workplace. Further goals include an enhanced capacity for networking to contribute effectively to a national response, the promotion of public and private partnerships for access to care and treatment, as well as establishing mechanisms and networks for follow-up.



*Leleti Khumalo as Yesterday and Lihle Mvelase as Beauty.*

## Special film for World AIDS Day

This year's World AIDS Day focused on the ways the epidemic affects women. "We know women are more vulnerable to the virus, but also that we don't create enough opportunities for men and women to communicate about aspects in a relationship that cause this," says Monica du Toit, HIV coordinator at Stellenbosch University. "World AIDS Day should be a day on which people ask themselves whether we understand the risks and circumstances of others sufficiently". To illustrate this, the African Centre and the university's HIV programme joined forces in presenting a screening

of the film *Yesterday*, a striking portrayal of how HIV touches individuals. *Yesterday* lives in Rooihoeck, a village in Zululand. Her everyday life is not easy, and her husband works in Johannesburg, but she has a sunny nature, and takes great joy in her 7-year-old daughter, Beauty. The precarious balance of *Yesterday*'s life is threatened when she is diagnosed with HIV.

*Yesterday* is an unsentimental film that quietly builds an emotional force. The sure hand of writer/director Darrell James Roodt makes the film both authentic and compelling, telling a story of courage, compassion and hope.



AFRICAN CENTRE FOR HIV/AIDS MANAGEMENT

Newsletter compiled by Amelia Burger of Platform Communication & Training. Please send any news or events you want mentioned in a future newsletter or on the Centre's website to [aids.sun.ac.za](mailto:aids.sun.ac.za)  
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