



# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## JULY 2024



## UPDATES

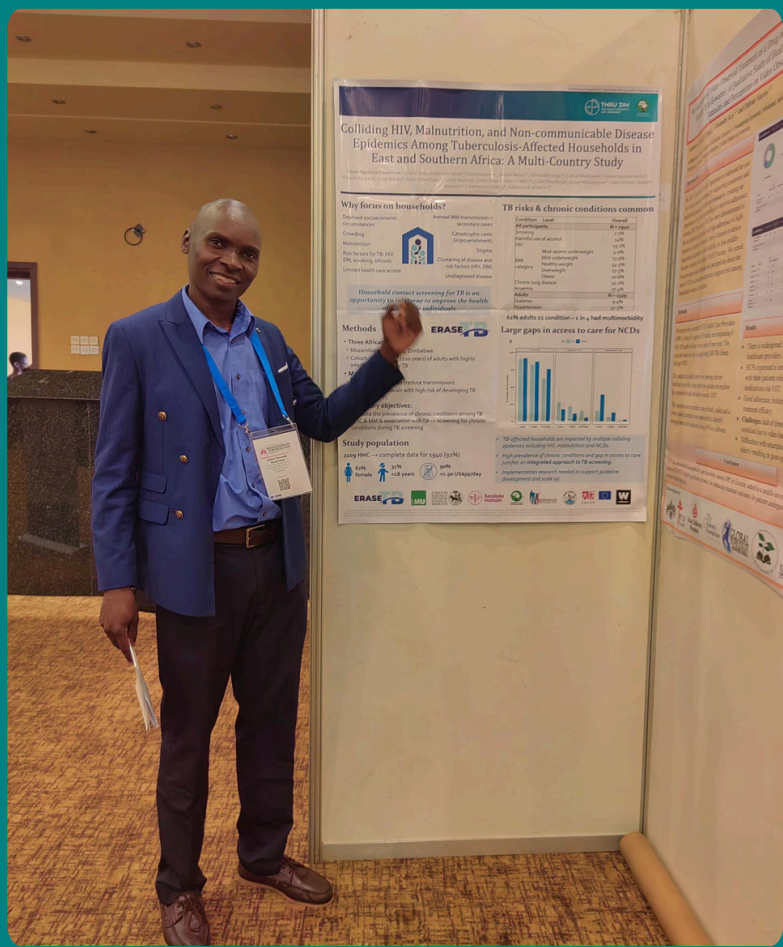
### ERASE TB shines at the Innovation in TB conference in Uganda

The ERASE-TB team, represented by Edson Marambire and Leyla Larsson, attended the Innovations in TB Conference in Kampala, Uganda, from July 3-4, 2024.

Edson delivered an oral presentation titled "Prediction Models for Mycobacterium tuberculosis (Mtb) Infection Among Adolescent and Adult Household Contacts in High TB Incidence Settings." The research evaluates a new risk score within a cohort of TB household members across three East and Southern African countries as part of the ERASE-TB project. He also presented a poster on "Colliding HIV, Malnutrition, and Non-Communicable Disease Epidemics Among Tuberculosis-Affected Households in East and Southern Africa: A Multi-Country Study," highlighting the prevalence of HIV, nutritional disorders, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) within tuberculosis-affected households across the region.

Leyla Larsson presented findings from her first PhD output, investigating longitudinal trajectories of individuals from TB-affected households. Her presentation, titled "Body Mass Index Trajectories and Association with Tuberculosis Risk in a Cohort of Household Contacts in Southern Africa," examines household-level nutritional status, evaluates the association between baseline and evolving BMI and TB risk, and describes the longitudinal trajectories within the context of the ERASE-TB study.

The presentations underscored the critical intersection of TB with other significant health challenges and emphasized the importance of innovative approaches in high TB incidence settings.



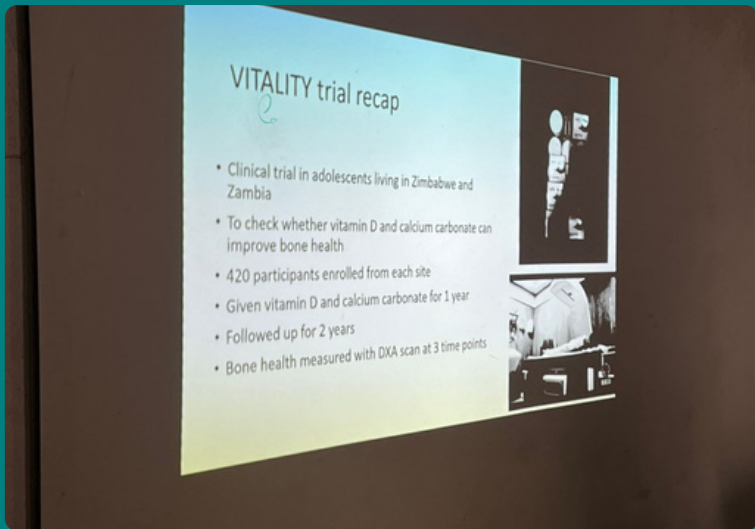


## Vitality trial hosts a participant advisory board meeting

The Vitality Trial hosted a Participant Advisory Board (PAB) meeting to update members on the trial's status since its completion in October 2023 and to learn their preferences for receiving updates on the trial findings. Acknowledging the large number of trial participants and geographical constraints, participants recommended holding smaller group meetings in specific locations and using several innovative technological approaches to engage young people.

Additionally, the trial leads had a successful discussion with the PAB to gather their opinions and perceptions about an exciting new study Artful Ageing, which aims to compare how children born with HIV age compared to those without HIV.

Participants shared their insights on the best methods for recruiting children in Greater Harare. Their input affirmed their trust in the Vitality study's focus on providing meaningful support to children living with HIV. Stay tuned for more details!



Participatory advisory board members share thoughts on community engagement



## Y-Check study carries out dissemination activities in Chitungwiza

Between July 24 and 30, the Y-Check study team disseminated results in Chitungwiza, where the study was conducted. The team visited four primary schools, two secondary schools, and two community hubs. Flyers served as the primary method for sharing results in both school and community settings. Additionally, a Y-Check video was distributed to further engage and inform the audience.

The Y-Check study revealed that 2000 adolescents aged 10-19 years participated in the study, and a total of 20 youths were screened, treated, and referred for health behaviors and conditions

Key findings shared include:

- Many young people in Chitungwiza are healthy and growing well, but 9 out of 10 had at least one health issue or unhealthy practice.
- The most common health issues were challenges at school and home (40%), suicide risk (13%), common mental health disorders (11%), oral health conditions (11%), anemia (12%), and high blood pressure (33%, 15-19 years only).
- Out of every 100 young people, 7 had vision problems, 3 were underweight, and 3 were obese.
- Some young people engage in behaviors that could negatively impact their health now and in adulthood.
- Young people who received Y-Check and attended referral health services showed improved health and well-being and were able to participate better in school.

Y-Check was found to be youth-friendly, and all services were provided for free. However, only 58% of referred young people attended their health appointments.



Participatory advisory board members share thoughts on community engagement



## Farewell to Dr. Salome Manyau

On July 30, 2024, THRU ZIM management and staff bid farewell to Dr. Salome Manyau, a pillar of the Y-Check program. Dr. Manyau's dedication, expertise, and leadership have been instrumental to the success of the Y-Check initiative. Her compassionate approach and unwavering commitment to adolescent health have left a lasting impact on the community. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors and are confident she will continue to make significant contributions to the field of health research.



Salome shares a lighter moment with colleagues at THRU ZIM

## THRU ZIM joins stakeholders' tour of UZ's Innovation Hub

On July 5, 2024, THRU ZIM joined other stakeholders to tour the University of Zimbabwe's (UZ) Research-Innovation-Industrialisation Hub, farm, and super-specialist hospital in Harare.

Dr. Rudo Chingono, THRU ZIM's Internal Training & Workshops lead, appreciated the hub's dynamic ecosystem, which effectively transforms academic knowledge into viable products, goods, and services. She said, "The tour provided a valuable opportunity to witness firsthand the university's effective strategies in bridging the gap between academic education and practical application."

The experience will be instrumental in supporting early-career researchers to put theory into practice more efficiently, enhancing their ability to contribute to healthcare advancements in Zimbabwe.

THRU ZIM appreciates the continued collaboration with the University of Zimbabwe.



Stakeholders at the UZ -Agro processing plant

# 5 MINUTES WITH...

## Tawanda Nyengerai

### **What do you do and when do you start?**

I am a Biostatistician and Epidemiologist. I apply biostatistics and data science tools to analyze data and give meaning to research output focused on implementation science and clinical trials. I currently work as a Data Analyst and I joined THRU ZIM on the 1st of July 2024.

### **Where can we find you in the office?**

You can find me in the Data office next to Tsitsi (Vakoma)

### **Who and/or what inspires you?**

The potential to positively impact communities and improve health outcomes through research and analysis motivates me to continue advancing in this field. I am driven by the desire to analyse data and uncover trends that can lead to improvements in health outcomes.

### **Why is being a Data Analyst important and what do you enjoy about it?**

Being a Data Analyst is important in making sense of collected data to benefit the public. I enjoy simplifying information for better understanding through graphical visualizations, descriptive statistics, and advanced inferential statistics. I also work on study designs, developing data collection tools, and managing collected data. I enjoy every part of the data analysis process, from collection, result dissemination and monitoring impact.



Tawanda Nyengerai



## PICTURE OF THE MONTH



Kate, Maureen, and Lydia crush the 10km  
UN health walk challenge

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Funding award for Mental health initiative**

We are thrilled to announce that Emma Wilson and Dr. Rudo Chingono have been awarded the **University College London - Grand Challenge of Mental Health & wellbeing pump priming funding**, running from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.

This discovery grant will support their work in creating a maternal mental health technical working group, co-developing a maternal mental health intervention for mothers with neonates in hospital, and launching a maternal mental health stigma awareness campaign. This initiative will be part of the NEOTREE study and aims to make a significant impact on the well-being of mothers and their families.

Congratulations to Emma and Dr. Chingono on this remarkable achievement!

## **MRC Applied Global Health grant award**

We are pleased to share that the MRC Applied Global Health has awarded a grant for the project titled: Protecting Mothers and their Infants through Screening and Comprehensive Management of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Antenatal Care in Zimbabwe (PROMISE). This initiative aims to enhance maternal and infant health by improving STI screening and management during antenatal care.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## **NIHR seeking advisors from low-and-middle-income countries**

The NIHR is looking for individuals from low and middle-income countries who have experience using health services in their regions to advise on global health research funding applications. If you have this experience and are interested in contributing to global health research, this could be a great opportunity for you.

For more information, visit [NIHR](#).

## **Stephen Lawn Memorial Fund Research Leadership Prize 2024**

We are pleased to announce that nominations for the Stephen Lawn TB-HIV Research Leadership Prize 2024 are open until 1 September 2024. This prestigious award honors early-career researchers who have made significant contributions to TB-HIV research.

The Prize includes:

- GBP 1,000 award and certificate
- Profile in The Lancet
- Invitation to the Stephen Lawn Memorial Lecture

For more details, visit [LSHTM](#).

## **PhD placement opportunity at Imperial college london**

The Global Development Hub Fellows Fund offers short-term placements at Imperial College London for PhD students from Least Developed and Lower Middle-Income Countries.

Program Details:

- Eligibility: PhD students from DAC List of ODA Recipients 2024-25.
- Duration: 2 to 4 months.
- Start Dates: 1st Dec 2024, 4th Jan 2025, or 1st Feb 2025.
- Completion Deadline: Before 31 Mar 2025.
- Support Provided:
  - Monthly stipend of £1,603
  - One-off £500 arrival payment
  - Return economy travel
  - Visa application fees

For more information and to apply, visit [Global Development Hub Fellows Fund](#).

# PUBLICATIONS

**Risk factors for STIs among youth in Zimbabwe:** A study by Dr. Kevin Martin highlights high STI prevalence, particularly among young women, those living with HIV, and the unemployed. Findings stress the need for integrated HIV and STI programs and addressing broader factors like mental health and employment

<https://sti.bmj.com/content/early/2024/06/12/sextrans-2024-056146>

## **The Y-Check protocol paper and study film**

Y-Check is a research program investigating the effectiveness of a novel intervention providing adolescent health and well-being check-ups in schools and communities in three African cities in Ghana, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/bmjopen/14/6/e077533.full.pdf>

Watch the study film for more information on the Zimbabwean study.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFfFAzAjuuE>

## **Public holidays in Zimbabwe**

We would like to inform you about the upcoming public holidays in Zimbabwe. Please take note of these dates and plan accordingly.

- Defence Forces National Day: Monday, August 12
- National Unity Day: Tuesday, August 13
- Unity Day: Sunday, December 22
- Christmas Day: Monday, December 23
- Boxing Day: Wednesday, December 25

You can also use this [link](#) to access the dates and sync with your calendar.

**Share your news, publications, pictures, announcements: [ellenchiyindiko@gmail.com](mailto:ellenchiyindiko@gmail.com).**

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# THANK YOU!