



AFRICA CENTRE FOR HIV AND AIDS MANAGEMENT

A HOPE Project Initiative
of Stellenbosch University

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PROJECT



Saving lives
through education
and prevention



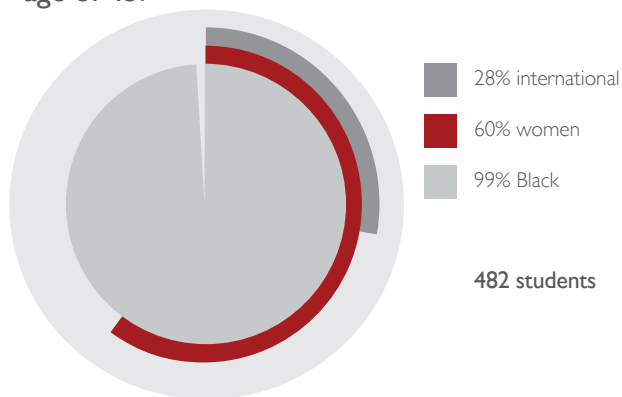
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Purpose of the initiative

The Africa Centre for HIV and AIDS Management at Stellenbosch University uses teaching, research and community interaction to motivate behaviour change and raise awareness of the realities of HIV and AIDS on the continent.

In the first and largest academic programme on HIV and AIDS Management of its kind in the world, the Africa Centre develops highly-skilled people in a multidisciplinary approach encapsulating behavioural, educational, social and cultural factors that affect HIV and AIDS transmission, prevention and treatment in the workplace and in the community; and emphasises individual responsibility.

The programme started in 2001, and was strongly encouraged by the then Deputy President of South Africa, Mr Jacob Zuma. Prof Jan du Toit (a lecturer at Stellenbosch University and current Head of the Centre) and Dr Olive Shisana (first Director General of Health of the democratic South Africa) launched the initiative with a first intake of 65 students. The Africa Centre for HIV and AIDS Management currently trains 482 students (28% international, 99% Black and 60% women), covering a wide range of employed, high-level professionals with an average age of 43.



The Centre hosts the most recognised World AIDS Day event in the country for mass awareness of HIV and AIDS annually on 1 December. Movers and shakers of the South African medical and arts communities, the business sector, politicians and representatives from non-government organisations (NGOs) rub shoulders at a professionally produced musical extravaganza aimed at creating awareness (available on DVD). Complementary to this event, the message about HIV and AIDS education and prevention is spread to thousands of semi-literate and poor rural communities, as well as companies, schools, parastatal organisations and faith-based communities via educational theatre.

Why donate to the Centre?

The Africa Centre for HIV and AIDS Management offers a highly-rated academic programme for senior managers in the workplace, particularly aimed at educators, doctors, nurses and health professionals. Participants also include directors of Health, Education, Human Resources and professionals from NGOs and municipalities across South Africa and various other countries. Although students speak a number of different languages, the programme is in English. Students utilise an online learning platform and a satellite broadcast system, and attend summer school at the Stellenbosch University campus. The academic programme is primarily promoted through student successes and by word of mouth. For the most part, assignments require application in the students' workplaces and thus effect change within their immediate environment. The academic programme has had an impact on an estimated 12 million people over the last 10 years through the vast number of graduates who apply their new knowledge in their areas of work and community.

The Africa Centre's community interaction pillar is highly successful. It employs educational theatre to teach people about HIV and AIDS and encourages the use of condoms, monogamy and abstinence, and motivates participants to get tested. The community interaction aspect is done through the annual *South African Artists for AIDS Awareness Concerts*, as well as the Annual World AIDS Day Gala Concert. Both are the largest and longest-running HIV and AIDS awareness events in the country. The educational theatre is primarily aimed at impoverished, rural and peri-urban youth and implements a strict monitoring and evaluation protocol on all productions. The Africa Centre boasts with a very high ratio (70%+) of its audiences who test for HIV after a performance. It recently developed partnerships in community health projects with the National and Western Cape Health departments, as well as Johns Hopkins University in the United States.

The Africa Centre is the recipient of the President's Award for Community Development for its work on its Eastern Cape projects during 1999 to 2004. The Executive Director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibé, is an Honorary Professor of the Africa Centre, a collaborating unit of UNAIDS. Sidibé appointed Prof Jimmie Earl Perry (the current Director of the Centre's Educational Theatre component) as the first UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador to South Africa.

The Africa Centre now needs to expand its services to meet increasing demand. This can be achieved by doubling the current student intake to continue intrinsic education on HIV and AIDS, and its extensive impact. To do so will require increased staff and additional facilities.

Scope of the initiative

- **Professional development and training:** The Africa Centre's Postgraduate Diploma and Master's programme improve the management of HIV and AIDS in the workplace and is attended by senior health and management level professionals from around the globe.
- **Education and outreach:** The educational theatre productions – based and scripted on the behavioural change and health belief model – perform regularly to Afrikaans- and English-speaking farming communities, municipalities and school children, while urban audiences and decision-makers enjoy high-end, inspiring musical awareness productions. Both provide non-judgemental, entertaining, educational and inspirational messaging in a myriad of languages and music that encourage audiences to begin and continue dialogue on HIV and AIDS; and to get tested.
- **Research:** Through academic programmes and other initiatives, the Africa Centre facilitates cutting-edge research on topics related to HIV and AIDS management.
- **Wellness training:** Employees of some of South Africa's largest government bodies and private companies are trained in awareness and health matters regarding the management of HIV and AIDS.
- **Mentoring and education:** The Africa Centre assists people involved in HIV and AIDS civil society organisations to improve their basic educational skills through a bridging programme that includes

Mathematics, English and computer education, and draws on the university's administrative and teaching resources.

- **A new complex for the Africa Centre in historic Stellenbosch:** A bigger, more efficient facility is planned to accommodate the growing needs of the Africa Centre. The first phase was completed in 2012. The outlay for this building amounted to R18 million. The second phase consists of a planned R30-million complex with an auditorium that can serve as a sustainable and productive community centre to accommodate the existing educational theatre. It will be a facility where frequent community and high-level dialogue and presentations on topics related to HIV and AIDS will be staged. Strategic Africa Centre partners will be housed in the complex making it a multifunctional complex for wellness, education and testing. Current services will thus be supplemented with access to information and social services for addressing alcohol and drug abuse, and women's issues. This will elevate the Africa Centre's involvement with the surrounding community and therefore allow greater connection between the Africa Centre and the community at large.

The complex will also have a lecture hall to accommodate the growing number of post-graduate diploma students each year.

The new Africa Centre will include conference and smaller breakaway rooms and safe underground parking. It is envisaged that the 300-seater facility will be able to sustain itself commercially and provide other NGOs and partners with a space to utilise for economic development.

Gift opportunities

The following are ongoing gift opportunities for investors:

- Naming rights to a Directorship in HIV and AIDS Management.
- Scholarships for students to study for the Postgraduate Diploma or Master's Programme, or to help fund their research.
- Naming rights to any of the venues that will be constructed in the new Africa Centre building.

Funding priorities:

- Expanding the educational theatre – not only with HIV and AIDS messaging, but also substance abuse and women and child issues – to the rural and isolated areas of South Africa where Afrikaans is most frequently spoken.
- Operational support for current activities of the educational theatre, as well as expansion initiatives, amongst others, salaries for the actors as part of the Centre's job creation and skills development initiatives.
- Planning, design and construction of phase two of the Africa Centre complex.
- Furnishings for the centre and electronic equipment for the auditorium.

The story of **Lucky the Hero!**

It is a cold and misty day in Allandale, a low-income township near the farming town of Paarl in the Western Cape. At 08:45 about 50 nervous but excited women and children make their way towards the local recreational area – they have been invited by the South African Department of Social Services and Stellenbosch University’s Africa Centre for HIV and AIDS Management to attend a mini-musical. In addition they also get sandwiches and coffee, and can take part in a question-and-answer session – the morning promises to be entertaining and informative.

Lucky the Hero! is a 35-minute educational theatre production that was researched, written, produced and directed by Professor Jimmie Earl Perry from the Africa Centre. It has been running for six years with a crew of actors that are also trained peer educators in HIV and AIDS. The show has played to audiences at schools, churches, companies, parastatal organisations and farms, with audiences ranging from just 40 people, to as many as 1 800 people at the Human Rights Day celebrations in 2011 at Vrygrond, a poor community near Muizenberg in the Western Cape.

The play, *Lucky the Hero!*, is tailored to Western Cape communities and developed according to the health behaviour change model. Monitoring and evaluation take place before and after each performance to determine whether audience members are motivated to get tested, and what attendees have learned. At most performances free Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) are made



available by the Africa Centre's partners. "Millions of women, children and older men have no idea that they can live through HIV; that they can say 'no' to risky sexual behaviour; or that there is something called HIV/AIDS," says Jane Abrahams, Educational Theatre Coordinator.

Lucky the Hero! is the story of a man living in a farming community who tests positive for HIV. Lucky tells his best friend, Tokkie, about his HIV status and is shunned by his buddy. After receiving counselling and anti-retroviral medication from the local clinic, Lucky decides to take a stand and becomes a superhero fighting the disease in his community, where it is highly stigmatised. A radio-presenter provides factual information about HIV and AIDS while the audience follows the story of Lucky's best friend's sexual adventures and the *No Problems* farming community. In the end, the community is informed about the facts of HIV and AIDS, change their thinking about the disease to something both serious and liveable, and Lucky and Tokkie reconcile. Tokkie also agrees to change his risky behaviour. The end result is that the community stands together to fight the pandemic.

The production is professionally presented in terms of sound, sets, acting and singing. It is full of

humorous sexual innuendos, presented with swagger and colour. Lyrics of familiar pop songs are rewritten to enhance the story and cleverly infuse a strong message. The play is usually received with clapping, laughing and singing by the audience who enjoy engaging with the cast. Many audience members also comment that they greatly enjoy the show, have a better understanding of HIV and AIDS, and would go for testing.

According to data collected by the Africa Centre, some children in poor Afrikaans-speaking, rural and farming communities are sexually active by the age of eight years. This is primarily due to a lack of economic security and growing up in an environment where several families (sometimes four or five) live in one house; and there are few communal places with positive, active programmes where youngsters can congregate. Nothing happens in isolation in these communities: HIV and AIDS becomes cross cutting due to sexual promiscuity (usually to access money); rampant alcohol and drug abuse; and gang involvement. The disease cannot be separated from societal challenges and therefore multidisciplinary actions beyond testing are needed. The good news is that youngsters are becoming more aware and want to get involved with groups to develop themselves positively.



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A HOPE Project initiative

The Africa Centre for HIV and AIDS Management is an initiative of Stellenbosch University's HOPE Project, which creates solutions from science to solve some of South Africa and Africa's most pressing challenges. In essence, it showcases key research, teaching and learning and community interaction initiatives that serve humanity and build a better future by entrenching Stellenbosch University's tradition of academic excellence.

Through its HOPE Project Stellenbosch University supports five themes selected from the international development agenda: eradicating poverty and related conditions; promoting human dignity and health; promoting democracy and human rights; promoting peace and security; and promoting a sustainable environment and a competitive industry.

The HOPE Project initiatives are grouped under these themes. The Africa Centre for HIV and AIDS Management promotes human dignity and health, as well as human rights, but also supports a competitive industry through its teaching and research on the impact of HIV and AIDS in the workplace. The Centre's work is a prime example of how the University's academic expertise benefits the community and address national and international challenges.

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