



YOUTH HIV/AIDS CAMPAIGN IN TANZANIA

Introduction

ISHI: to live. This is the name in Kiswahili of a communication campaign that is directed to Tanzanian youth to help them understand the risks associated with HIV/AIDS and to help them learn ways to prevent it.

ISHI was designed by young people themselves and was first launched by the Prime Minister, Hon. Frederick Sumaye, in Dar es Salaam in November 2001. It was subsequently launched in Dodoma in December 2001 and in Iringa in January 2002. The Campaign is implemented under the auspices of TACAIDS and is directed at young men and women between the ages of 15 and 19. A major goal is to expand the campaign to reach and involve young people throughout Tanzania through a sustained



The Prime Minister, Hon. Frederick Sumaye launching the ISHI Campaign

nationwide campaign. However, sustaining an important campaign such as this requires support and additional resources from the government, international donors, NGOs and the private sector.

Since its launch, ISHI has reached and involved young people through captivating radio spots, attention-grabbing billboards, lively football matches, and entertaining as well as educational road shows.

HIV/AIDS and the Youth in Tanzania: Some Key Facts*

Young people in Tanzania are at greater risk of contracting HIV/AIDS because they become sexually active at an early age.

- By the time they are aged 19, 87 percent of boys will have had sex;
- Fifty-two percent of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are sexually active. Their attitudes about HIV/AIDS point out that, although they are aware of the deadly disease, they do not feel vulnerable to it.
- The majority of youth believe they are at no risk of HIV/AIDS infection and continue to practice unsafe sex;
- Only 5.4 percent of boys and 6.3 percent of girls believe they are at personal risk of contracting HIV;
- Among sexually active boys between the ages of 15 and 19, 71 percent have never tried a condom;
- Only 18 percent of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 report using a condom.

The ISHI Campaign: Giving a Voice to Young People

The overall campaign objective is to increase the number of young men and women who believe they are at personal risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and to motivate them to adopt protective behaviours. To help them understand that they might be at risk, the key message is "You cannot tell by looking," meaning that you cannot tell if a partner/lover is HIV positive by their physical appearance, and any young person could be at risk if they practice a risky behaviour. The desired action is for youth to wait until they are more mature before they have sex if they are not sexually active, and/or to use a condom every time they have sex if they are sexually active. All of the messages were designed by the youth and are upbeat and positive so that each message appeals to the audience and resonates with them. For example, if you realize you can't tell by looking and either wait or use condom every time you have sex, *you will realize your dreams*. You will literally live – ISHI.

ISHI Components

There are several components to ISHI that reach youth through various channels but with consistent and appealing messages. These components attract a high percentage of youth such as football matches, road shows and radio programs, and are supported by an advocacy program directed to journalists to support the campaign by increasing press coverage on the subject of youth and HIV/AIDS in the English and Kiswahili media reaching the youth.

Mass Media

Mass Media Elements Include:
Radio and TV spots featuring young people with key campaign message that have reached thousands of youth in Dar es Salaam and upcountry and are regularly broadcast on youth-oriented radio stations.

Billboards placed in high-density areas in Dar es Salaam which serve as visual reminders of the key messages. The bill boards will be in place until June 2002 and can be extended even further.

Print ads used to support the initial phase of the campaign;

Thousands of posters used to promote the football matches carrying key campaign messages.

Street banners with campaign messages that reinforce key messages at football matches, road shows, and other events.

Youth Football League

More than 40,000 attended the ISHI football league matches comprising second and third division teams that were played in Ilala, Temeke and Kinondoni Districts of Dar es Salaam. The matches were played in high-density areas with each match



Players during one of the ISHI football matches

* References

1. National AIDS Control Programme epidemiological reports, 1999
2. Central Bureau of Statistics and Macro International (1999). Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey
3. Central Bureau of Statistics (1999). Tanzania Child and Reproductive Health Survey.



attracting an average crowd of 3000. An enter educate format was used during these matches to involve the audience and to promote key campaign messages. At the finals, presided over by retired President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, the top team was awarded a trophy elaborating ISHI theme in the presence of a crowd estimated at 10,000.

Road Shows

The ISHI artists comprising entertainers popular with the youth reached young people in the community through performances that



A road show in one of the neighbourhoods

entertained as they educated in the densely populated neighbourhoods of Dar es Salaam. These included skits and dance dramas that promote dialogue on HIV/AIDS among the target audience by creating an atmosphere conducive to discussions on behaviours surrounding HIV/AIDS. Close to 40,000 were reached during road shows that were held in Dar es Salaam, Iringa and Dodoma

Musical performances/concerts by groups and artists popular with the youth were mounted before football



Entertainers perform during one of the road shows

matches and at half time and after the matches to capture the youth attention and to reinforce the ISHI core message.

Education Materials

More than 85,000 brochures whose central message revolve around increasing the number of youth who believe they are at personal risk of contracting HIV/AIDS were individually handed out during football matches and at the road shows. The audience was motivated to reflect on the messages in these materials through question and answer sessions that carried prizes and were hosted by popular artists during these events. Other materials disseminated include 4,000 t-shirts and caps, 10,000 event posters, and 2000 bumper stickers. Fifteen thousand brochures promoting VCT were disseminated at football matches.

Media Advocacy

The media advocacy have helped enhance the role of the media as an important partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Within two months after the launch of the campaign, there were more than 40 articles carried by the newspapers on the ISHI campaign and its key messages. In addition to preparing a press kit for journalists, participation of the media has been enhanced through:

- An orientation workshop that helped strengthen the capacity of journalists to report more accurately on HIV/AIDS.
- An ongoing media competition designed to increase the media content for young people between the age of 15 and 19 in the English and Kiswahili press.

Preliminary Results

Preliminary results from exit interviews at the football matches and the road

shows demonstrate both a high level of recall of campaign messages among attendees and positive associations between message exposure and outcomes related to safe sex.

Key findings from exit interviews

- More than 90 percent of respondents were able to identify the specific campaign messages of Ishi, "you can't tell by looking," and "wait or use a condom."
- Sixty-four percent of boys and 67 percent of girls with a high level of campaign exposure were aware, without prompting, that both condoms and abstinence can help a person avoid AIDS or the virus that causes AIDS, compared to 48 percent of boys and 40 percent of girls with low levels of campaign exposure.
- Seventy-two percent of boys and 80 percent of girls with high exposure reported an intention to delay sex, stop having sex, or start using a condom. In comparison, only 64 percent of boys and 60 percent of girls with low levels of campaign exposure reported similar intentions.

Next Steps

Attitudes and behaviors take a long time to develop and take an even longer time to change. Young people need to hear and see messages over a long period of time through many channels before any substantial change can occur. And since this campaign has run in only certain areas of Tanzania, there needs to be a concerted effort to expand the campaign so that young people all over the country can be exposed to it over a period of time.

Coordination and Partnerships

■ **Oversight.** This first-ever national behaviour change communication campaign is managed by Healthscope Tanzania, Ltd on behalf of TACAIDS.

■ **Core Management Team:** Healthscope Tanzania Ltd manages the

campaign with Tanzania Women's Media Association and other youth groups involved in community mobilization.

■ **Key Collaborating Partners:** Amref, Africa Alive!, Population Services International, the

Anglican Church, TAYOA, Africare, Marie Stopes, Tanzania, UNAIDS, Africa Youth Alliance, Iringa NGO Network, US Peace Corps and many other youth health and service providers have provided input and support for ISHI

■ **Technical Assistance:** The Johns Hopkins University Center for

Communication Programs through its Population Communication Services Project, provides technical assistance.

■ **Funding:** Main funding has come from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with additional

support provided by Ireland AID. Private sector co-sponsors who have donated media time and placement include ITV, DTV, East Africa FM, Clouds FM and Monier Billboards International. Several donors have expressed interest in supporting the campaign.