

# HIV COUNSELING



## Autor

Hello my Name is Zinthatu and I do the HIV Counseling. It has been absolutely amazing adventure with its ups and downs. But most importantly it has been a real learning curve to all the projects. Each of them in their unique way but I have to say: "It is always my pleasure to work with people and putting change to them." I would still choose doing it over and over. All the projects have become part of my life and are in my heart now.

## Report

During the past 6 months Zintathu, the HIV and AIDS counsellor, has been busy implementing the following projects. Clinic visits, home visits, giving Sanitary towels, School visits, cataract project, workshop with the homebased cares and support groups also Community awareness and 1 soccer events.

## Clinic visits:

I have been actively busy with 2 clinics which I am visiting twice a week, doing HIV counseling. I have been giving education to people who are regularly coming to the clinics. I educate about HIV/AIDS and encourage people to get tested for HIV. I have seen so much progress with the people as they now understand that HIV/AIDS is a disease that lives in the human body. Many people are not taking action to test, as most of them are afraid of knowing their status. I also educate a lot about HIV treatment. Most of my clients, do not really understand what the treatment is doing to their bodies. Most of them default due to lack of information. So after I have explained that the medication is used to hinder the HIV virus from making copies of itself. Then people start asking questions like: "What happens when they don't take medication? What does the medication do to the body, if you take it for many years? If one drinks medication well, does it get to the point where one can stop the treatment? Is it true that one loses their mind when taking treatment? (Hallucination). So I answer these questions to everyone in the clinics and I see the reaction of the people. Sometimes I ask questions more like playing games, where I give out prizes like our Hygiene soaps or Sanitary towels and Pamphlets. Those small booklets have information about HIV/AIDS and some have information about ARV treatment.



### One to one Counseling:

I have also done individual counseling. After I do my classes I go to my tent, where people can ask me personal questions or want individual counseling. I offer them medical advice and do referrals to the clinics or trauma center, for those that have been traumatized. People that want to test for HIV/AIDS, come to the tent for pre-counseling. I help them to get ready to get tested. I make sure that they know firstly what is HIV, how HIV is transmitted and how to live a healthy life when HIV positive. After they have understood that, I talk about ARVS the anti-retro-viral drugs. When I see that one understands I send them to the nurses for HIV test, where they get a finger prick test. Then they come back to me for post counseling.

Further on it depends on the results of the individual. For an example if the results are positive I offer pamphlets to read further and offer to be their treatment supporter, together with the family, when they are ready to disclose. I also encourage to join support groups in order for one to know that they are not alone.

Number of people got HIV education in group.	600
One on one counselling	110

### Soccer awareness:

I gave an introduction of HIV/AIDS at Tshani village where there was soccer events. Because it was a youth event I talked about the difficulties of being a teenager and how exciting it is sometimes as there are more opportunities, choices and free time. And also how it could be overwhelming because there are many choices to make and a lot of pressure to do things that they might feel not ready to do.

#### Transcape NPO HIV Awareness Soccer day

May 2017

### Focus and Motivation:

On the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2017 Transcape NPO organized and hosted an HIV and AIDS awareness soccer day which was held in Mankosi at Mdumbi soccer field. The motivation behind combining the sport together with the awareness and education is that a big number of young people attend these events. There were some fun netball games held for the girls while the soccer was going on. We had a good attendance ( +- 300 people) on the day, from all walks of life, from young to old. The youth really identify with the soccer day as it is a big part of the community and they can all come out and supported their teams. This way we were able to get our message across.

**Soccer:**

In the Mankosi area are eight 8 soccer clubs that are active. We decided to invite four 4 of the teams to the tournament to see what the response was going to be. There will be a bigger two day tournament with all the Mankosi teams in the near future. The teams invited were:

- Mdumbi Raiders FC
- Young Chicos FC
- Ngoyini FC
- Gedede FC

Each team was subject to a R300.00 entry fee to be legible to participate, the money would be used as prize money to incentive the players and it created real excitement amongst teams.

There was an officials- and referees-workshop set up the week before the tournament, to ensure all the rules were clear. In the community is usually a lot of fighting between players, coaches, spectators with the referees. So this workshop was paramount in running a successful event.

The playing field was extremely overgrown and we employed Invulendlebe Brush cutting services to cut and clear the soccer pitch. This money is going directly back into the community as it is a local guy called Sibongile Masiso who started his own small business.

The tournament format was a round robin where the teams play each other once and the two teams with the highest points will play in the final. It was an early start and the first match kicked off at 07:30 with Mdumbi Raiders and Young Chico's ending in a 1-1 draw. The level of the soccer that was played on the day was exceptional which was made more exciting by Mabona who is a local commentator ,who is filled with energy and knows the teams and players. The atmosphere was really fantastic, as in between games kids were seen dancing to the music that was playing over the Transcape PA system. The Results for the day were:

Raiders	vs	Chicos	1-1
Ngoyini	vs	Gedede	2-1
Raiders	vs	Ngoyini	0-0
Chicos	vs	Gedede	2-1
Raiders	vs	Gedede	3-1
Chicos	vs	Ngoyini	2-1

The final was contested between Mdumbi Raiders and Young Chicos. It was a tough game seeing Chicos FC coming from 2 down to claim the title 3-2.

The entire event was played in good and competitive spirits and all teams enjoyed the prize giving held afterwards. All the players and management were fed lunch on the day. This comprised of 25 Polony sandwiches, bananas, apples and 2 liters of concentrate energy drink which makes 10 liters for each team.

The results and prizes were as follows:

1. Young Chicos FC R1700.00
2. Mdumbi Raiders FC R1000.00
3. Ngoyini FC R300.00 and some training cones.
4. Gedede FC Food hamper worth R200.00



### HIV Awareness and Coucelling:

Our HIV Counselor Zintathu was there on the day. She held talks over the loud speaker to everyone in attendance. This was a great way to get information to all the people especially the youth. She handed out pamphlets and gave advice on Anti Retro Viral Treatment and where people could get in contact with Support groups.

Support groups are set up in areas of Mankosi where a group of HIV positive people get together for counseling and to offer support to each other when they are dealing with the Virus.

She also offered one on one counseling sessions in her tent where she counseled 10 people in total from ages 14 to 35. One of the soccer players came to the tent for questions about HIV and wanting to get condoms. It was really nice, as guys don't often come for counseling. He was really interested in testing and knowing his status.

On the day, Zintathu also gave out 12 packs of reusable sanitary pads to young school girls, this ensures that the girls would not miss school when they had their period and would feel more comfortable and confident as young women.

### Sponsors and Expenses:

There were some expenses, which we had to pay for in order to make the day possible. Some of these were once-off overheads which we will not have to outlay next time we hold another day similar to this one. We approached Ngqeleni Super Spar to assist in some food donations for the players on the day. They kindly sponsored refreshments and bread for the sandwiches that was given out to all the players on the day, this was a welcome contribution.

### Expenses:

Prize money	R2 400.00
Grass Cutting (once off)	R2 000.00
Food	R 643.00
Commentator	R 600.00
Speaker repair (once off)	R 480.00
Marking Paint for pitch	R 71.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>R6 194.00</b>

### Money In:

Team Entry Fee	R1 200.00
Food Sponsor	R 500.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>R1 700.00</b>
<b>Total cost :</b>	<b><u>R4494.00</u></b>

### Conclusion:

This was a successful day and I think the desired objective was achieved, with regards to the influence and awareness that it brings to the community. Transcape NPO will strive to fill the gaps and give people the knowledge they yearn, to enrich their lives.

## Sanitary towels:

I have been getting sanitary towels at the Happy Home in Mthatha. But I am happy to say that now the pads are being made by the local disabled home based care in the community that I am working on. This has really brought lot of development as now the community is supportive of them and also want to be there when I give HIV education. We bought 1 sawing machine and 1 overlook.

### From previous sanitary towels

I have distributed 70 packs of sanitary towels. In each pack there are 12 sanitary towels. So 1 person get 1 pack. This is very helpful as they are washable pads, people from the clinics have been asking for them even the nurses. They always want them for people that do not have money to buy them.

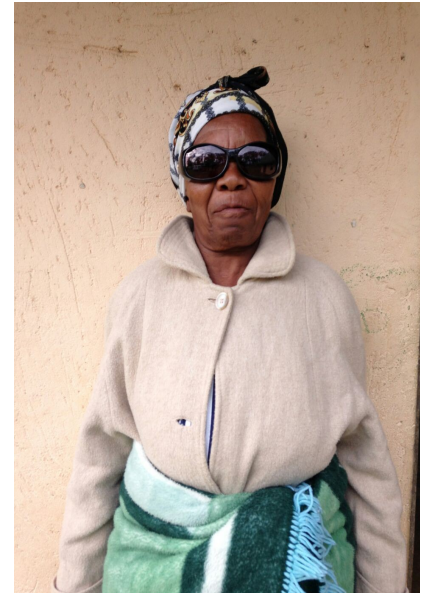
Sometimes I am even being approached by students from schools. It is now difficult to give them at schools, as there are lot of kids that need them.



## Cataract project:

At Cataract project I have transported 4 patients that got operated. 5 of them were referred to (NMAH). They were from different villages from Canzibe to Zithulele hospital. The grace vision organisation comes to Canzibe to identify all patients that have cataract, afterwards they give me a list to find the people from different villages. It is not always easy to track them but I always hang their names at the clinics, schools and also announce them at the community meetings. Some do have contact numbers which don't work. It is always a "happy project" because people go to operation some completely blind and some only see one side but

afterwards I can see the smiles in their faces. The groups are always very lively and happy on their way back. They are counting things, seeing colour and even sing.



### HOME BASED CARE and SUPPORT GROUPS:

We meet home based care and support groups each month to educate each other about the needs and challenges in the communities and villages . I always have education for them I take the educational pamphlets and any new medical information. It is very important and we found it very necessary for them to learn about sicknesses, medication changes, as most of them have been trained years back. Most of the support groups and community home based cares they are between the age of 35-56 years.

The past 6 months we had 6 meetings. We have been discussing a lot of the questions that are being asked by the people that we work for, our clients have question that they can't answer as some of the questions are not relevant anymore or they forgot about them. How does the HIV virus get in the body? What happens in the body? What Is Immune system, what is AIDS? What does HIV status mean? What is the main Cause that spreads HIV? How can I protect myself and family from getting HIV? Why must I wear condoms if both of us are positive? What do I do if I tested negative? What is the link between HIV and TB? How is it possible to get a negative child while both partners are positive? How can we get a negative child when one partner is positive and the other is not? We really have been working on these and also planned to have community awareness in august where we will be doing drama on the day and the whole community will participate by finding out what happens when we ignore all the above mentioned questions. We also visited 4 houses where there are defaulters and promise to take each full responsibility until they recover.



## Community awareness:

Gathering the community together every month, is always what makes the people from different villages aware of the fact that we are all together and our main aim is to beat HIV and AIDS. We want Zero new infection. So we do this awareness to make people aware, wake them, and remind them, that it shouldn't be possible to have people still getting HIV. We have improved a lot the past 6 months as people want to test and know their status. And what has been more amazing with this awareness was seeing teenagers that are living with their siblings that are infected and do not want to take treatment, they came now and asking for help. This has been one of my priorities to teach people that even if you are not infected but you are affected if your loved one is infected.

One of the amazing things, that happened at this awareness day we had on March 28<sup>th</sup> was that we gave out questionnaires and we had people working in groups to answer the questions.

First group they answered what the ARVS do to the body. Others, what happens if you do not know your status and there is HIV in your body, and also what happens in your body when you stop treatment? The community really enjoyed it because they made it more like a competition.

This strategy, I believe, they will always remember the answers from now on.



The other event was on the 15<sup>th</sup> June. It was very cold, but people came to participate. We were lighting candles in memory of those that died of HIV but fought it. It was for all those who discloses, so that those who are hiding in the dark and not wanting to take treatment could come forward. There were about 78 people. I could see people were moved as they all wanted to take full responsibility. We were all willing to end HIV/AIDS together. There were other stake holders as well HIV/TB care, social development, Department of health and support groups.

### HOME Visits:

I do home visits once a week. I visit the villages which struggle with the HIV virus the most. I met them at their nearest clinic and then I do follow up visits, when I go and see them at their houses. I focused on 5 households particularly in the last 6 month. It became very apparent that the families who stay closer to the road have better knowledge about their health status than the families who live far away from the roads. Excess to health care is vital for their education and social development.

It hurts me to see that these villages far from infrastructure have been neglected in all areas of education. There were a couple of villages which didn't have support groups nor a home based care group. I tried to motivate them to go to their nearest health clinic and get tested. I can see that they need much more attention from my side but it is so hard to get there without availability of a car.



Total number home visited	190
People seen and recieved education	288

### SCHOOL VISITS:

I have been educating 4 schools. I taught the scholars what HIV/Aids is and how you can get infected. I also encouraged them to test so they can know their status. I emphasized on the importance of taking their treatment if they are HIV positive. It has been really a success as all the kids have been really working together supporting each other. They even told me that even when they are going on school trips they keep on reminding each other to take their medication. I have been really impressed with how they have got to accept and learn more about HIV/AIDS. And they have now started to ask questions even at home when their friends and relatives are not doing well. They start talking to them and advising them to go for an HIV test.



Total number of kids received education	108
Total one on one counselling	16

I would like to thank all people in this world, who contribute to this dream coming true, from the bottom of my heart.

May God bless you!

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

Yours Zintathu Luvalo