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JOINTED HANDS WELFARE ORGANISATION

NEWSLETTER



In this edition, we are excited to share an overview of the impactful activities that we carried out in May. Despite the prevailing restrained resources, our organization continues to show incredible resilience and has achieved significant success by leveraging funded activities to maximize our coverage and impact.

We are proud to report that in May, we reached a total of **3,289** community members through our comprehensive health education efforts across six districts. As a result, 160 people were successfully referred to health facilities for essential services which include HIV testing, STI screening screening and Family Planning services with 78 accessing those services. Additionally, our TB screening efforts in four districts led to the screening of **924** community members, thus ensuring active TB case finding at the community level remains a priority towards ending TB.

We remain grateful to you, our partners and stakeholders, for your continued support and collaboration as we work together to positively transform our communities!

Happy reading!

Welcome to our May Newsletter Edition!



Empowering Communities through Health Education.

In our ongoing commitment and efforts to improve community health outcomes, we worked with Community Health Workers (CHWs) to educate community members about HIV, Tuberculosis (TB), Gender Based Violence (GBV), Family planning, and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). This collaborative effort has, over the years, proved to be a successful and sustainable model in health response.

Through this initiative, we successfully reached **2,175** people in Mangwe, Umzingwane, and Shurugwi, empowering them with crucial knowledge about health issues and encouraging safer practices.

Of the **2,175** people reached, **63** were referred to various health services, and **48** of them successfully accessed the recommended services, which included:

- HIV Testing
- STI Screening
- TB Screening
- Family Planning Services

During this initiative, we distributed **340** condoms to promote safer sexual practices.

These health education sessions have significantly enhanced community knowledge on critical health issues. By increasing awareness and encouraging safer behaviors, we are strengthening community health-seeking behavior and outcomes.



Looking ahead, while we celebrate these achievements, we recognize that addressing the barriers to health service uptake remains crucial. By implementing targeted strategies, we look forward to further enhancing service accessibility and strengthening community health resilience. Our ongoing collaboration with CHWs will continue to play a pivotal role in this journey, ensuring that every community member has the knowledge and resources they need to lead healthier lives.

Community Engagement for strengthened Health education through Peer-to-Peer Initiatives



To strengthen health education and awareness, we facilitated impactful peer-to-peer health education sessions, reaching **1,114** community members across four districts: Kwekwe (**234**), Shurugwi (**375**), Zvishavane (**250**), and Chirumanzu (**255**). This initiative was designed to enhance community engagement and participation, empowering community members to share knowledge and support one another in health-related matters.

The peer-to-peer sessions facilitated open discussions on critical health topics, fostering an environment where community members could learn from each other's experiences. This approach not only increased awareness but also created safe spaces that encourage individuals to take proactive steps toward better health.

As a result of these sessions, **97** people were referred to various comprehensive health services, with **30** successfully accessing the support they needed. This demonstrates the effectiveness of community-led initiatives in breaking down barriers to healthcare, facilitating timely access to essential services.



We remain committed to strengthening health education through active community participation. By engaging community members in peer-led discussions, we are building a culture of health awareness and resilience, ultimately creating sustainable solutions that improve health outcomes across the districts we serve.



Development of Lung Cancer Guidelines, Algorithms, and Protocols



To promote access to early and quality lung cancer services, we recently convened a three-day workshop in Bulawayo to review, finalize, and standardize clinical guidelines, diagnostic algorithms, and care protocols for lung cancer management in Zimbabwe. This workshop also focused on the development of a Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) study protocol, which will serve as a valuable tool in assessing and addressing barriers to effective lung cancer management in the country.

The workshop was part of the key deliverables of the Hope for Lungs project, which is part of the MLCCP funded by the Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation.

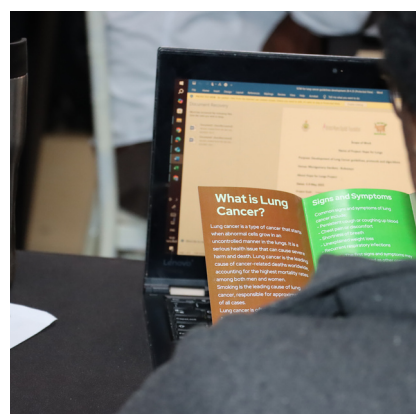
The workshop was led by the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC), and brought together a multidisciplinary team of stakeholders, including clinical experts, specialists, government ministries and departments, health institutions, academic researchers, traditional medical practitioners, and civil society organizations. This diverse representation ensured that the guidelines developed are reflective of the realities and needs of both healthcare service providers and patients, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration across the healthcare spectrum.



By collaborating with various stakeholders, the workshop aimed to ensure that the deliverables would be comprehensive and culturally relevant. The standardization of lung cancer care protocols is a crucial step in ensuring that all healthcare providers are aligned in their practices, which will ultimately lead to improved quality of care for lung cancer patients across the country.

Looking forward, the implementation of standardized protocols will promote a more coordinated approach to lung cancer management, minimizing discrepancies in care and enhancing patient outcomes. This will increase the effectiveness of lung cancer interventions, promoting early detection, timely treatment, and supportive care for patients and their families.

We extend our gratitude to all the stakeholders who were part of this workshop for their commitment to improving lung cancer management in Zimbabwe and ensuring that patient care remains at the forefront of our health systems.



Multidisciplinary Team Meeting on Lung Cancer Care.



Through the Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation funded Hope for Lungs project, we convened a multidisciplinary team (MDT) meeting composed of lung cancer experts at Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals to discuss two complex lung cancer cases.

This collaborative forum brought together **35** experts from oncology, pulmonology, radiology, pathology, thoracic surgery, palliative care, medical research, public health, and other relevant sectors, demonstrating the collaborative spirit needed for effective cancer care.

During the meeting, one of the cases was confirmed as a lung cancer diagnosis, highlighting the importance of timely and expert-driven assessments in managing such complex health issues. These MDT meetings serve as a vital platform for learning, allowing diverse experts to come together and share their insights and experiences.

This collaborative approach further promotes continuous professional development among different professionals. By creating a platform for experts to engage in dialogue and share knowledge, we are reinforcing the local capacity for lung cancer management and care, improving outcomes for patients diagnosed with this challenging disease.

The integration of diverse expertise in these meetings stresses the importance of a holistic approach to health care, especially in addressing complex and often neglected health conditions like lung cancer. By bringing experts together, we can ensure that patients receive comprehensive, coordinated care that targets all aspects of their well-being.



As we continue to strengthen health systems through initiatives such as these MDT meetings, we are committed to enhancing care for lung cancer patients and supporting the health professionals dedicated to this critical work. Together, we can improve lung cancer outcomes and build a robust framework for cancer management in our country.

Expanding TB Screening Efforts through Community Active Finding.



In a dedicated effort to active TB case finding, referrals, and linkages to care, we conducted TB screening for **930** community members including miners and members of mining communities. This initiative is a testament to our commitment to addressing TB in the high risk and hard to reach communities. Following the initial screenings, **45** individuals exhibiting symptoms indicative of TB were identified as presumptive cases and referred to the nearest designated health centers for further testing. While none of these cases were ultimately confirmed as TB, the exercise underscores the importance of early detection and proactive health watchfulness, and action.

Sustained community TB active finding is important in the ongoing fight against TB. By promoting early detection and facilitating timely referrals, we not only improve treatment success rates but also work to reduce the transmission of TB within our communities.

Operating with limited resources for TB response has not deterred us from making significant strides in expanding TB screening and control efforts. This cascade of activities highlights our progress in identifying and supporting presumptive TB cases, which is crucial for the achievement of the End TB goal.

Empowering Communities for TB Awareness, Advocacy and Accountability.



Responding to the current trends where information is easily accessible through online applications, we partnered with the Ministry of Health and Child Care to develop the OnelImpact Zimbabwe Application. Through this publication, we are happy to introduce to you the OnelImpact Zimbabwe Application. The OnelImpact Zimbabwe App is a Community-Led Monitoring solution that empowers people affected by TB, especially Key and Vulnerable Populations, to be knowledgeable about TB, and become active participants in the TB response.

Through OnelImpact, communities can:

- Ensure quality, accessibility, and stigma-free TB care and support services,
- Connect with each other to strengthen the movement of TB-affected people,
- Directly engage with key decision-makers and stakeholders,
- Hold the TB response accountable for meeting the needs of all communities.

OnelImpact harnesses the collective power of people to drive an inclusive, equitable, and effective TB program that leaves no one behind.

Join the OnelImpact community to advance TB justice today!

Download Now!



*Scan me to download
OnelImpact Zimbabwe App*

Contributing to Data-driven advocacy through Community- Led Monitoring Surveys.



In a significant step toward fostering community engagement and promoting data-driven advocacy and decision-making, we facilitated a total of **1,690** Community-Led Monitoring (CLM) surveys in four districts: Mangwe (**325**), Umzingwane (**347**), Shurugwi (**572**), and Chirumanzu (**446**). These surveys have provided a crucial platform for direct dialogue with community members, allowing us to gather valuable insights into their experiences, needs, and perceptions regarding health services.

The feedback collected through these CLM activities is essential for informing health program adjustments and identifying gaps in service delivery. This initiative is anchored on the acknowledgement that by understanding the unique challenges and expectations of those we serve can help us to better prioritize areas for improvement and tailor our initiatives to better meet specific community needs.

This participatory approach not only enhances our ability to respond effectively to health concerns but also contributes to increased community participation in health initiatives. Engaging community members in this way fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among service providers, ensuring that health systems remain responsive, culturally appropriate, and sustainable.

The insights gained from these surveys are invaluable in shaping health programs and policies. As JHWO, we believe that empowering communities through active participation and feedback is a key factor in building resilient health systems. Together, we can make health services not only accessible but also aligned with the desires and needs of the communities.



Empowering Communities Through Internal Savings and Lending Schemes Training.

To foster community resilience and economic empowerment, we trained **50** Community Cadres on Internal Savings and Lending Schemes (ISALs). This training equipped community members with the knowledge and skills needed to train other community members and facilitate the formation of ISAL groups within their communities.

ISALS are instrumental in enabling community members to build savings and invest in income-generating activities. By pooling their resources, members can access loans that can be used for various purposes, including starting small businesses, funding education, and improving their families' nutrition and health. This collective approach not only helps individuals to create financial stability but also fosters a sense of community solidarity.

The importance of these efforts cannot be overstated. As community members learn to prioritize saving and investing, they enhance their ability to support their families in critical areas. In times of economic hardship, the resilience built through ISALS can be a lifeline, providing families with the resources they need to navigate challenges and improve their living standards.

We are proud to support these initiatives that harness the power of community-driven solutions. Through such initiatives, we are paving the way toward a brighter, more sustainable future for vulnerable and marginalized communities.





Community Economic Strengthening Through Internal Savings and Lending Schemes in Shurugwi

In a remarkable demonstration of community spirit and financial empowerment, women in Shurugwi are actively engaging in Internal Savings and Lending Schemes (ISALS). This initiative is a testament to the community's resilience and ability to address economic challenges through collaborative and self-driven approaches.

As demonstrated by testimonies from the ISALS group members, the ISALS program has proven to be a vital tool for enhancing household economic resilience. By pooling resources and providing one another with access to savings and credit, members are not only strengthening their financial stability but also enhancing their livelihoods and social support networks. The ability to save and lend within a trusted community framework allows individuals to seize opportunities for investment, cope with emergencies, and improve their overall quality of life.

Through their continued involvement in ISALS, these members are fostering a culture of mutual support and financial literacy, which is crucial in today's economic climate. This initiative empowers community members especially women, by providing them with the necessary skills to manage their finances effectively, encouraging responsible spending, and fostering a sense of community accountability.

Apart from financial benefits, members of these groups share deeper connections and support. As members share their insights and experiences, they collectively build a robust network, creating a supportive environment where knowledge is shared, challenges are addressed, and successes are celebrated.

We are grateful to be part of success stories from ISALS, where we are contributing to peace of mind and resilience within the communities we serve. Through our Economic Strengthening pillar, we remain committed to promoting economic resilience through initiatives like ISALS, recognizing that financial stability is a cornerstone for sustainable community development.