



### **WELCOME NOTE FROM CENTER:**

Welcome to the 9th Newsletter from the Center for Social Science Research on AIDS (CeSSRA), a collaborative training and research center, with collaborators from Case Western Reserve University, Makerere University, the Joint Clinical Research Centre, and Mbarara University of Science and Technology, SABRES/IDI/SPH, among others. The CeSSRA office is always open Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm. It is located in Seminar Room 7 in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Makerere University main campus.

The center's aim is to train social scientists to carry out social science research on HIV/AIDS collaboratively and also conduct a longitudinal study on the social context of HIV/AIDS treatment. Under the fellowship component, the Fellows are reviewing their individual mentoring plans and are concretizing their areas of research interest. They are currently participating in an ongoing research design course. Fellows continuously receive free-critique as they present their research work. This will enable them publish papers in scientific journals and prepare grantable proposals.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

A public lecture by **Dr. Noah Kiwanuka** will be held on **8<sup>th</sup> May 2009** at 1:00pm in Makerere University, Faculty of Social Science, Lecture Room 2. The topic will be "**HIV/AIDS Epidemic: An Update**" Dr. Noah Kiwanuka is a Lecturer school of Public Health Makerere University and a Senior Investigator Rakai Health Sciences

Program. He will also be discussing the current research on male circumcision and HIV.

### **RECENT EVENTS:**

CeSSRA sponsored a public lecture that was presented by **Dr. Achilles Katamba** on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2009 held at the Faculty of Social Sciences His talk was entitled: "**HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis Association.**"



**Dr. Achilles giving an explanation during the lecture**

Dr. Katamba is a Lecturer in the Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit, Department of Medicine at the School of Medicine, College of Health Sciences, Makerere University.

In his talk, Dr Achilles noted that TB is caused by microorganisms and is infectious. It can be acquired through inhalation and he emphasized that there should be good /proper behaviour such as covering mouths while coughing since it is very well known that it is an airborne disease. He further noted that people with HIV present with TB that is primarily found within the lungs and only 10% have tuberculosis in other parts of the body. The association of interaction between TB and HIV is at different levels, such as at the cellular levels and people with HIV have an increased level of acquiring TB, due to the immune suppression levels of the patient.

SABRES organized a seminar on 17<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2009 a workshop on Social and Behavioral HIV research Capacity Building. Dr. David Mafigiri was one of the presenters during this workshop.

### **Research Fellows' Meeting**

Mustapha Mubiru discussed his research proposal titled, "Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices towards Medical Male Circumcision as a Strategy for HIV/AIDS Control/Prevention." He explained that researchers and scientists have noted that parts of sub-Saharan Africa where circumcision is common, such as west Africa, have much lower levels of HIV infection while those in southern Africa, where circumcision is rare have the highest HIV infection. In order to establish this multiple observational studies have been carried out, which indicate that male circumcision is related to a reduced risk of HIV infection. As a result the World Health Organization and UN program on HIV/AIDS in 2007 recognized male circumcision as an additional strategy to preventing HIV.

Effective communication on male medical circumcision will be critical and will be an opportunity to reinforce message on the need for a comprehensive approach to prevention that encourage people to use more than one of the prevention choices available to them. This study will therefore investigate knowledge, attitudes and practices of male medical circumcision as an HIV prevention method.

In Uganda to confirm the association between male medical circumcision and low HIV prevalence, trial of 4996 HIV-negative men aged 15 to 49 years in Rakai, showed that HIV acquisition was reduced by 51% in circumcised men. The trial involved adult, HIV-negative heterosexual male volunteers assigned at random to either undergo circumcision performed by trained medical professionals in clinic setting or wait until after the end of the trial to be

circumcised. All participants were extensively counseled in HIV prevention and risk reduction techniques and were provided with condoms. After his presentation Mustapha received critique from the Participants present and Prof Charles Rwabukwali encouraged him to put in more effort because the above topic is a very sensitive one that would be of great interest to the public as a whole

### **UPCOMING FELLOWS EVENTS**

#### ***Research Design Course:***

The next research design session will take place at UMI at a date to be communicated later.

#### **OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS:**

An annual conference will be held by USHS between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2009 at the Golf Course Hotel, Kampala.

A manuscript writing workshop will be held in September 2009, organized by USHS. Dates to be communicated later.

The Annual African Regional Course in Research Methods in Reproductive Health & HIV/AIDS is to be held between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August 2009.

For more details visit their website on <http://www.rhru.co.za>

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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