



PHOTO & CAPTION

Working Together to Change the World



Photo: USAID/Anne Clayton

Performers shared messages about HIV prevention through drama, music and dance.

With 60 percent of new HIV infections in Tanzania occurring in the 15-24 age group, talking to youth about prevention is critical. While awareness of HIV/AIDS is high among youth (nearly 100 percent), that awareness rarely translates into changed behavior. In cooperation with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, USAID's Ishi campaign is addressing this gap. Ishi — which means "live" in Swahili — combines media initiatives with community activities to disseminate messages about abstinence, fidelity, condom use and voluntary counseling and testing.

Health workers and communications specialists worked together to develop messages on HIV/AIDS that were first used

in football matches, billboards, theater and community rallies. Then the campaign was scaled up and achieved national coverage with significant reach and recognition. Now the campaign has begun to place a greater focus on encouraging dialogue about HIV among youth, parents and community leaders.

Youth advisory groups have been established in each of Tanzania's 26 regions and Zanzibar to lead peer education programs and mobilize communities to participate in discussion groups, interactive dramas, sports teams and special events. Through these efforts, youth groups are able to engage their peers, create forums where they feel comfortable discussing HIV and ensure that the campaign remains "by youth, for youth, to youth."

"Working together, youth can change the world," was the theme of a three-day workshop conducted for 75 youth advisory group representatives to report on their successes and challenges, share ideas and receive training. The workshop culminated in a celebration on the Day of the African Child, which attracted thousands of young people from Dar es Salaam. During the celebration, a mobile unit was on site to perform testing, and group members shared HIV prevention messages through music, dance and dramatic performances, which were enthusiastically received.