

## Agricultural Colleges Sports Gala Report 2023

**“Back in the game: Leading the way to a healthy future.”**

**Kushinga Phikelela Agricultural College  
Marondera, Zimbabwe**

**13-17  
March 20  
23**

“

*...our distinct history and relationship with Kushinga Phikelela actually gives us a reason to reaffirm our calling to see generations of healthy young people and the youth in zimbabwe and beyond.*

”

**Dorcas Chikorova - 17 March 2023**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization and Irrigation Development, Department of Education has continuously, over the years, maintained Students And Youth Working on Reproductive Health Action Team (SAYWHAT) as their all-weather partner during Agricultural Colleges Sports Galas (ACSG), availing the former an opportunity to interact with students through the provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information and services, a partnership dating back to SAYWHAT entry in Agriculture colleges in 2003.

SAYWHAT would like to thank the planning committees for coordinating a resounding Sporting gala.

We are grateful to the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC) for braving the weather and offering much-needed SRHR services.

Our deepest gratitude goes towards peer educators dotted across eight participant Agriculture colleges for mobilising their peers to access and receive quality SRHR information and services, a skill necessary in such key events.



# CONTENTS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES SPORTS GALA	3
2. INFORMATION VILLAGE	4
3. EDUTAINMENT	6
3.1 QUIZ SHOW	6
3.2 DRAMA AND MUSIC	6
3.3 MR AND MISS HEALTH LIFESTYLE	7
4. SPORTS RESULTS	8
5. AWARD CEREMONY	9
6. OUTPUTS	10
7. CONCLUSION	11

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Students And Youth Working on reproductive Health Action Team (SAYWHAT) is a Public Health Social Movement Organisation (PHSMO) that has, over the years, contributed to the existence of healthy and empowered youth in institutions of higher learning who thoroughly enjoy their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). Students have primarily led SAYWHAT's work in tertiary institutions through its leadership structures at the tertiary institution level up to the national level. The organisation strives to ensure that students and youth participate in promoting the global targets and goals for improved SRHR at national, sub-regional and pan-African levels.

Young people need access to accurate information and services related to SRHR so they can make informed decisions essential for promoting the health and well-being of future generations. The 2023 Agricultural Colleges Sports Gala (ACSG) presented an ideal opportunity for peer educators to engage with students from eight agriculture colleges and raise awareness about SRHR services. The event was held under the theme **"Back in the game: Leading the way to a healthy future"** to mark the return of the ACSG after a hiatus due to financial challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic. SAYWHAT recognizes that agriculture colleges face various barriers that limit students' access to comprehensive SRHR services, such as the absence of college clinics, limited services within clinics, and inconvenient operating hours. Therefore, the ACSG served as a vital platform to reintroduce students to SRHR information and services. The event also facilitated networking and knowledge-sharing amongst students on how to overcome social constraints that hinder them from accessing their sexual and reproductive health entitlements.

SAYWHAT's ACSG Objectives:

1. To share information on SRHR and trending public health issues to students and members of the community.
2. To promote access and utilization of SRHR services and commodities amongst young people.
3. To launch SAYWHAT @20 celebrations.

Various engaging and youth-friendly activities were incorporated to effectively disseminate information and generate demand for services related to public health issues for students. An information village was set up with the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC) and SAYWHAT to provide information on SRHR and other contemporary public health issues. Peer educators interacted with their peers through dialogues, distribution of fliers, pamphlets, and condom demonstrations, creating a youth-friendly and safe space for discussion and dialogue on individual and collective responsibility to maintain sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

Edutainment was rendered through drama and music competitions conducted by eight participating agriculture colleges, with all their plays and songs touching on the theme of the Gala.



The event aimed to explore the benefits of services being offered by service providers beyond the sporting disciplines. Through drama, students expressed the challenges they faced in accessing SRHR services and information during the COVID-19 pandemic. The music competition not only acted as an interlude during the drama competitions but also allowed students to explore their musical talents while incorporating SRHR messages in their lyrics.

A quiz show was hosted for all participating colleges on SRHR and other public health-related issues to raise awareness of key services and information. The quiz show provided an opportunity to gauge students' knowledge levels in agriculture colleges after being exposed to the information village. It was also an opportunity to provide accurate information on SRHR and other contemporary public health issues.

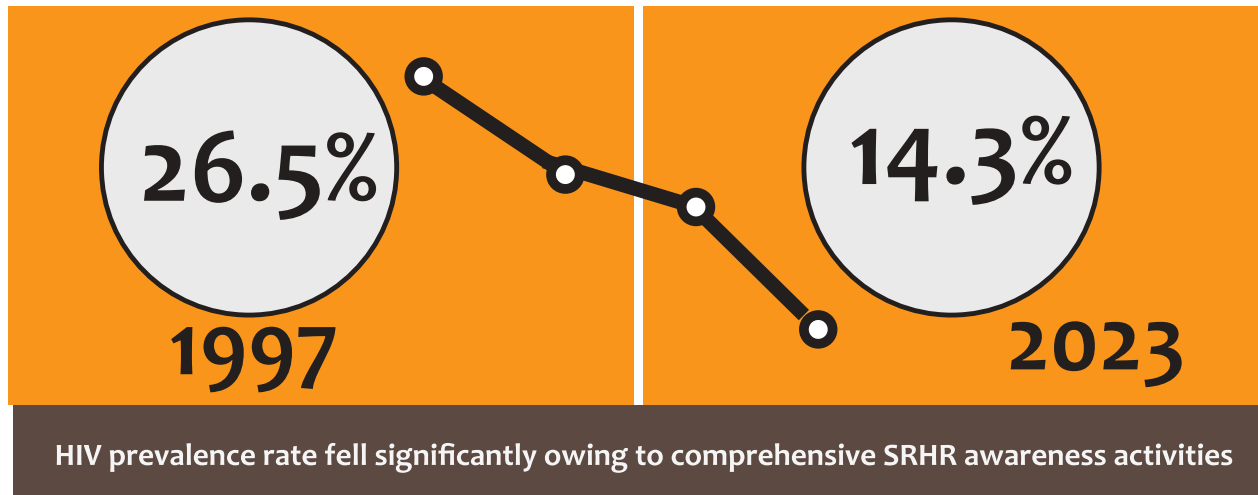
The beauty pageant dubbed "Mr and Miss Health Lifestyle" was the highlight of the Gala, which exposed young people to their talents while advocating for ideal youth-friendly services that students would want to utilize in their respective colleges.

The return of ACSG granted SAYWHAT an opportunity to launch their SAYWHAT@20 celebrations. This was a profound opportunity due to the long-standing ties between SAYWHAT and agricultural colleges in Zimbabwe dating back to 2003. Agricultural colleges were the first to open their doors to SAYWHAT during its inception, which was the first milestone in the development of the now twenty-year-old organization

# 1. INTRODUCTION



The drop from 26.5% in 1997 to 14.3% to date with regards to Zimbabwe's Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) prevalence has been attributed to access of accurate and comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information in various communities. Notably, the provision of quality SRHR services and commodities is of vital importance in responding to the challenges that young people face.



Students in agricultural colleges have less or limited information on SRHR as compared to their counterparts in Universities, Teacher Training Colleges, and Polytechnics. The limitation aggravates their plight of being exposed to a cocktail of challenges as they do not have accurate information on issues like Voluntary Medical Men Circumcision (VMMC), cervical cancer, screening, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and responses to gender based violence (GBV). Availability and access to services will ensure a healthy lifestyle for students in tertiary institutions including agricultural colleges.

## SAYWHAT's ACSG Objectives:



1. To share information on SRHR and trending public health issues to students and members of the community.



2. To promote access and utilization of SRHR services and commodities amongst young people.



3. To launch SAYWHAT @20 celebrations.





Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College was the host of the Agricultural Colleges Sports Gala (ACSG) 2023 edition. The sports gala ran from the 13th to the 17th of March 2023 under the theme **“Back in the game: Leading the way to a healthy future.”** In attendance were eight agricultural colleges; Chibhero College of Agriculture, Esigodhini Agricultural College, Gwebi College of Agriculture, Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College, Mazowe Veterinary College, Mlezu College of Agriculture, Rio Tinto College of Agriculture, and Shamva Agricultural College. As per tradition, the colleges competed in various sporting disciplines that include but not limited to soccer, netball, volleyball, athletics, and darts.

In its contribution to generations of healthy young people, Students and Youth working on reproductive Health Action Team (SAYWHAT) supported the sporting gala with SRHR information and activities for young people that include quiz, drama and music competitions as well as a beauty pageant to create demand on service uptake.



## 1.1 Agricultural Colleges Sports Gala

The ACSG is an annual premier sports extravaganza that brings together eight agricultural colleges and over 1000 sports enthusiasts competing in various disciplines. The event serves as a platform exclusively for agricultural colleges, including Esigodini Agricultural College, Gwebi College of Agriculture, Rio Tinto College of Agriculture, Mlezu College of Agriculture, Kushinga Phikelela Farmer Training Center, Magamba Vocational Training Centre, Chibhero College of Agriculture, and Shamva Agriculture College. Each college takes turns hosting the ACSG on a rotational basis.

Traditionally, the ACSG features a range of sports such as football, volleyball, netball, chess, and athletics. The competitions span over a period of four days to a week. The climactic final day of the ACSG showcases the ultimate matches in all disciplines, with students passionately supporting their respective colleges in pursuit of victory and, of course, the coveted bragging rights. The overall winner is determined by the college that secures the highest number of gold medals. Esigodini Agricultural College, known for their remarkable achievements, has consistently maintained their dominance on their home turf.

In the tournament's history, Gwebi College achieved a remarkable feat by becoming the first hosting college to secure victory and successfully defend their title in the previous edition. Their triumph set a record and solidified their position as champions.

The ACSG is not only a platform for sports competition but also a gathering that brings together various working partners and organizations focused on youth SRH. It serves as an opportunity for networking and interaction among the stakeholders. Sporting activities are widely recognized for their positive impact on physical fitness and mental acuity. The themed sporting events within the ACSG aim to promote young people's health by encouraging proactive engagement in matters related to their well-being. Some of the previous themes include "Building bridges towards reclaiming students", "reproductive health through a gender-sensitive response" and "Run with pride, put health in every stride."

SAYWHAT joined the ACSG initiative in 2004, initially disseminating SRHR information through their peer education program. Over time, SAYWHAT expanded its involvement and became a partner supporting the ACSG while spreading awareness of SRHR. Although SAYWHAT may not have been present at every ACSG due to various reasons, trained peer educators from participating colleges ensured the dissemination of SRHR information.

The organization's involvement has encompassed a range of activities such as quiz competitions, drama competitions, beauty pageants, edutainment, sanitary pad campaigns, condom campaigns, and exhibition stands. The initiatives ensure that students and young people receive comprehensive information that empowers them to make informed decisions and access on-the-spot services through SAYWHAT's referral system.



## 2. INFORMATION VILLAGE



During the Sporting Gala event, the peer educators had a wonderful opportunity to showcase their exceptional work and dedication towards SRHR issues. Among the various exhibition stands, the SAYWHAT stand stood out for its engaging and informative approach towards raising awareness about SRHR issues. The SAYWHAT team of students conducted thoughtful and insightful dialogues with the attendees, focusing on crucial topics such as consent, proper condom use, GBV, and drug and substance abuse (DSA).

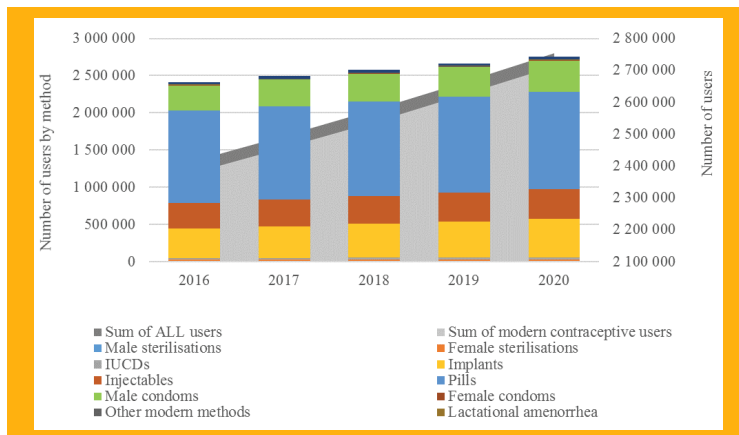
The SAYWHAT stand served as a hub for educating the students on how to use condoms correctly and consistently to prevent the spread of STIs, including HIV, and unplanned pregnancies. Peer educators used various engaging methods to demonstrate the importance of using condoms to protect oneself and one's partner. The SAYWHAT stand was a bustling place, with students flocking in large numbers to access the top-notch SRHR information provided by the SAYWHAT team.

Although SAYWHAT couldn't launch its 20-year anniversary celebration during the event due to the packed program of the ACSG, the peer educators played a critical role in spreading the word about the institution's 20-year anniversary. The peer educators mobilized their counterparts to the SAYWHAT stand to access the comprehensive and reliable SRHR information provided by the SAYWHAT team. The SAYWHAT stand became an attraction for all students, who eagerly accessed the onsite services provided by the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC).

The event was a grand success, with the SAYWHAT team receiving accolades for their exceptional work towards promoting SRHR education among the youth. ZNFPC provided HIV self-testing kits and counseling for those that needed more information on health care as far as HIV was concerned. Due to the HIV testing guidelines that focused on index testing rather mass testing, students were observed continuously visiting the ZNFPC tent one after the other. HIV testing was the most sought out service and notably, a lot of young people were disappointed when HIV test kits ran out before they could get the opportunity to know their statuses – a situation that was addressed in the days that followed.

The turn-out of young people is applaudable as it indicates that young people are taking a leading role in ensuring that they know their health status and lead healthy lives. The testimony of one can lead another to do the same ultimately, leading to generations of healthy young people as envisioned by SAYWHAT.

Dialogue on the low uptake of long-term contraceptives took place and over 50 female students were initiated on long term contraceptive methods. Most female students prefer the pill (control) as opposed to long term contraceptives that has low uptake due to myths of infertility before one bear a child.



### Trends in contraceptive use in Zimbabwe

In addition, female students shy away from taking contraceptives that have no secrecy for instance Jadelle that will have its rods visible on one's arm indicating one is sexually active. For most Zimbabwean societies, it is not acceptable for a student who is still under parental support to be sexually active. Students reported fear that Jadelle visibility may lead to parents/ guardians not taking it politely and in extreme circumstances ceasing their financial support upon noticing. As a result, a student would be forced to fend for their studies without parental support.

DSA was brought up in one of the dialogues and radio listening sessions. Most students indicated that DSA was common in agriculture colleges as most student's resort to it as a coping mechanism to bear with the heavy tasks and duties that come with their studies. Regardless of the pressure, some students indicated that opting for DSA is a choice and as students they should be aware of the need to be more assertive as the choices they make can make or break their careers in an already hard economic situation Zimbabwe is grappling with. Other students during the dialogue indicated that female students are susceptible to diverse effects of DSA as they can be raped while under the influence, as a result contract HIV and other STIs as well as being impregnated with no solid plan for the upkeep of the baby.

Numerous requests for SAYWHAT to implement running projects in agriculture colleges came from both students and college authorities. Even though SAYWHAT plays a pivotal role in raising awareness on SRHR in agriculture colleges; the absence of regular trainings indicated that dissemination of SRHR related information was scarce, a concern that was seen to affect student's health and wellbeing. Peer educators that are being trained by the National Aids Council (NAC) were appreciated, however there could be more that can be done to capacitate many more.

Lastly, students were encouraged to utilize SAYWHAT's toll-free line 577 if one has a GBV case to report or needs SRHR services, menstrual health management, Post-Abortion Care (PAC), child protection, mental health issues, DSA addictions, and other health related issues.

## 3. EDUTAINMENT



The Sports Gala organized by SAYWHAT featured a variety of evening activities that were both entertaining and educational. The activities included quizzes, drama, music, and a beauty pageant. The events were carefully planned to provide students with an enjoyable and informative experience that would help them learn new things in a fun and engaging way. Overall, the Sports Gala was a huge success and provided students with lasting memories that they will cherish for years to come.

### 3.1 Quiz Show

A quiz show was held to raise awareness on SRHR and public health related questions. The questions were sourced from the Quiz banks of SAYWHAT famous National Quiz Challenges. It was evident that there is a lack of adequate preparation or a huge information gap among the students in agriculture colleges compared to their peers in universities, teacher training colleges, and polytechnics. All participants got a question wrong about the act that governs termination of pregnancy in Zimbabwe highlighting the importance of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) implementing projects to address SRHR and public health issues. However, students in agriculture colleges seem to be left behind in this aspect.

After the quiz show, discussions revealed that students in agriculture colleges have little or no time for extra-curricular activities such as clubs leaving them with limited exposure to information that goes beyond their courses. Furthermore, poor mobile network connectivity in their institutions inhibits them from fully participating in online dialogues conducted on WhatsApp platforms by SAYWHAT. To bridge this information gap, students were encouraged to visit the information village during the sports gala duration for more SRHR and public health information.

The quiz show saw Mazowe Veterinary College emerge as the winner, followed by Rio Tinto Agriculture College, which beat the host Kushinga Agriculture College by a point. Overall, the event highlights the importance of awareness on SRHR and public health, especially among students in agriculture colleges.

### 3.2 Drama and Music

For the drama and music competitions students were tasked to come up with pieces that had SRHR and contemporary public health content. Most drama pieces were an advocacy tool for quality of health services young people envision to access on their campuses, health centers and college communities. The best performance in drama was from Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College, with Esigodhini Agricultural College taking second place and Chibhero College of Agriculture third.



Through the drama acts, one common scenario that was repeatedly brought up was the issue of transactional sex and blessers as a survival technique being used by female students to sustain themselves whilst they are in college. One outstanding issue related on the service provision was the absence of youth friendliness in the health centers as most of the agriculture colleges use community clinics.

Music did not only act as an interlude during the drama, but it availed an opportunity to explore the creativities of the young people in messaging SRHR and contemporary health issues through music. Chibhero College of Agriculture scooped the first prize with a song that narrated the ordeals the girl child went through during COVID-19 pandemic. The song narrated the story of a girl who was continuously raped by her guardian until she fell pregnant and is now with child, a reality that was met by many girls who suffered in silence and never reported such cases to relevant authorities. Mlezu College of Agriculture came second and while the host, Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College came third.

### 3.3 Mr and Miss Health Lifestyle

The beauty pageant ‘Mr and Miss Health Lifestyle’ had three categories where the participants rocked the ramp in their formal wear, farm wear and dinner wear. At the end of each category the participants were asked to respond to questions linked to SRHR and contemporary health issues. For example, what is menopause? Despite expectations that female participants would get this right, the lack of information gap was noted from most participants who failed to articulate comprehensive responses even in native language. The winners for Mr and Miss Health Lifestyle were from Mazowe Veterinary College and Rio Tinto Agriculture College respectively.





## 4. SPORTS RESULTS



The five-day-long gala ended with Gwebi Agricultural College emerging as the overall winner, sweeping up the most accolades in boys' and girls' soccer, volleyball, netball, athletics, high jump, long jump.





## 5. AWARD CEREMONY



The sports gala came to a thrilling close with an award ceremony that recognized exceptional performances from both individuals and teams. The event was graced by Professor Obert Jiri, Chief Director of Agricultural and Rural Development Advisory Services, who served as the guest of honour. In his speech, Professor Jiri praised SAYWHAT, a longstanding partner of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, for their commitment to promoting the health of students and for their partnership in organizing this successful event.



During the ceremony, Dorcas Chikorova, SAYWHAT's Head of Programs, expressed her gratitude to Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College for their unwavering support, describing them as an "umbilical cord" for SAYWHAT. SAYWHAT provided an impressive array of prizes including full kits, balls, and medals for the winning teams in soccer, volleyball, and netball. SAYWHAT's efforts were instrumental in ensuring that the sports gala was both successful and safe for all participants.

Overall, the event was a resounding success, with SAYWHAT's commitment to promoting student health and well-being shining through in every aspect of the gala. SAYWHAT IS proud to have been part of this celebration of athleticism and teamwork and look forward to continuing its partnership with Agricultural colleges in the future.





## 6. OUTPUTS



- A total of 681 students (402M and 279F) were reached through information dissemination on SRHR, GBV, mental health issues, DSA, and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) during the ACSG.
- 50 female students were referred to ZNFPC for contraceptives such as the pill (oral contraceptives).
- 15 228 male and 346 female condoms were distributed during the ACSG.

All eight agricultural colleges participated in a competition that included music, drama, beauty pageants, quizzes, runway shows, talent performances, and interviews. A total of 104 participants, both male and female, from all colleges were educated on topics such as SRHR, DSA, Mental Health, and GBV through these categories. The ACSG provided a safe space for students to discuss and showcase their SRHR issues and challenges faced on and off-campus.



## 7. CONCLUSION



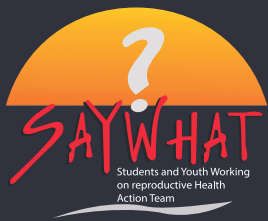
SAYWHAT played a critical role in the re-introduction of the ACSG post the COVID-19 pandemic. The sports gala was hosted by Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College from the 13th - 17th of March 2023. Through its information village and facilitation of edutainment activities that included quiz, beauty pageant, and dialogues, students and youth from Agriculture Colleges were sensitized on reproductive health, particularly the use of condoms and contraceptives to prevent STIs, HIV and unplanned pregnancies.

One issue that emerged from the dialogues that took place during the ACSG is drug and substance abuse by students and youth in Agriculture Colleges. SAYWHAT recognizes the proliferation of the drug and substance scourge, and its devastating effects on students and young people's public health. Notably, the menace of drugs and substance abuse has been trending not only in tertiary colleges in Zimbabwe but in secondary schools and communities. Recently, there have been reports of students and youth being arrested and expelled in the major cities of Zimbabwe, Harare and Bulawayo, at the beginning of the school year.

SAYWHAT remains vigilant in advocating for students and young people's health and rights and commits to raise awareness on the impacts of DSA amongst young people to increase perception of risk. Eager to see a generation of healthy and empowered young people, SAYWHAT Child Protection Unit will implement school-based awareness programmes and interventions such that students can make informed healthy choices. Additionally, students under the SAYWHAT Young Researcher's Initiative Program are also conducting research on prevention and legislation of DSA in the Southern African Region that will inform SAYWHAT's advocacy towards DSA awareness.


In addition to information dissemination, SAYWHAT focused on promoting access and utilization of SRHR services and commodities by young people. Students and youth who participated at the Gala appreciated the presence of ZNFPC who facilitated HIV testing and distribution of contraceptives. SAYWHAT commits to leverage its relationships and mobilize other service providers such as Populations Services Zimbabwe (PSZ), Populations Solutions for Health (PSH), National Aids Council (NAC) for upcoming events, such that an increase in young people's access and utilization of SRHR services can continue to be observed.

Overall, the 2023 ACSG partnership allowed SAYWHAT to bridge the knowledge gap pertaining to SRHR and public health concerns that students and young people from Agriculture Colleges often face in comparison to counterparts in Universities, Teacher Training Colleges, and Polytechnics. As SAYWHAT celebrates its 20th Anniversary, it appreciates that its journey began in Agriculture colleges and commits to training peer educators and facilitating HEALTH clubs in these colleges as in all tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe, ensuring health lifestyles for ALL young people.



2 DECADES OF CHAMPIONING  
 **SRHR**  
FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH.

---

 24 Jefferson Road, Logan Park, Hatfield, Harare, Zimbabwe  
Web: [www.saywhat.org.zw](http://www.saywhat.org.zw) / Email: [saywhat@mweb.co.zw](mailto:saywhat@mweb.co.zw)

 Saywhat  SAYWHAT  SAYWHAT