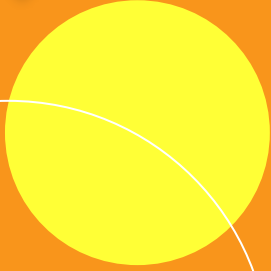


2024 AGRICULTURE COLLEGE SPORTS GALA REPORT





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SAYWHAT extends heartfelt gratitude to the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization, and Irrigation Development, Department of Education for their unwavering support and partnership throughout the years. This enduring alliance has allowed SAYWHAT to seamlessly engage with students by providing essential Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information and services during the Agricultural Colleges Sports Galas (ACSG), a collaboration that traces back to SAYWHAT's introduction to Agriculture colleges in 2003.

A special note of appreciation goes to the dedicated planning committees for orchestrating a truly remarkable Sporting gala. We are deeply thankful to the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC) and Chegutu Hospital for their steadfast presence, braving all conditions to offer vital SRHR services. Our sincere appreciation also goes out to the peer educators spread across the eight participant Agriculture colleges for their outstanding efforts in mobilizing their peers to access and receive valuable SRHR information and services, a skill that is crucial in such pivotal events.

Together, these collaborative efforts have not only elevated the Agriculture Colleges Sports Galas but have also significantly contributed to promoting the well-being and empowerment of young people within the agricultural college community.





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Students And Youth Working on Reproductive Health Action Team (SAYWHAT), a dynamic Public Health Social Movement Organization, has been instrumental in championing the health and empowerment of youth in higher learning institutions, ensuring their comprehensive access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). With student leadership at the forefront, SAYWHAT is committed to engaging students and youth in advancing global targets for improved SRHR at national, sub-regional, and pan-African levels.

The 2024 Agricultural Colleges Sports Gala (ACSG) provided an exhilarating platform for peer educators to connect with students from eight agriculture colleges and ignite awareness about SRHR services. Themed "Empowering Agri-Champions: Cultivating Sustainable Futures through Sports and Health," the event served as a vital catalyst to empower students to SRHR information and services, breaking through barriers that hinder their access to comprehensive SRHR services.

SAYWHAT's ACSG Objectives:

1. Share information on SRHR and trending public health issues with students and the community.
2. Promote access and utilization of SRHR services and commodities among young people.

To captivate and inform, engaging and youth-friendly activities were infused throughout the event. An information village, featuring the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC), Chegutu Hospital, and SAYWHAT, provided a rich tapestry of SRHR and contemporary public health information. Peer educators took center stage, disseminating materials, conducting condom demonstrations, and fostering open dialogues, creating a vibrant and safe space for discussions on individual and collective responsibilities in maintaining sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

The excitement continued with drama and music competitions, where eight participating agriculture colleges showcased their talent while imparting essential messages on SRHR. A thrilling quiz show tested students' knowledge levels, offering an opportunity to raise awareness and provide accurate information on SRHR and other contemporary public health issues. The culmination was the "Mr and Miss Health Lifestyle" beauty pageant, a dazzling showcase of talent advocating for youth-friendly services, inspiring students to embrace ideal SRHR services within their colleges.



1. INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe has achieved remarkable progress in reducing HIV incidence, with a staggering decline of over 50% in the past decade. The 2022 incidence stood at 0.17%, marking a significant decrease in new HIV infections across all age groups. Notably, new infections among adults decreased by 7%, and among children by 9% from 2021 to 2022. Additionally, the number of new HIV infections among people aged 10-19 decreased by 6%, and by 7% among those aged 15-24. This positive trend aligns with a decrease in adult prevalence from its peak of 26.5% in 1997 to 11% in 2021. Despite this progress, young people still face challenges accessing reproductive health services, particularly in agricultural colleges where information on reproductive health and rights is limited.

Diving into the exhilarating 2024 Agriculture Colleges Sports Gala (ACSG), the significant event was hosted by Chibero College of Agriculture and was themed **"Empowering Agri-Champions: Cultivating Sustainable Futures through Sports and Health."** This dynamic theme emphasized the importance of fostering confidence, life skills, and a healthy lifestyle for students within the agriculture colleges. The participating colleges, including Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College, Esigodhini Agricultural College, Mazowe Veterinary College, Mlezu College of Agriculture, Rio Tinto College of Agriculture, Gwebi College of Agriculture, and Shamva Agricultural College, engaged in an array of spirited sports competitions such as football, netball, volleyball, pool, darts, tug of war, and athletics.

There is however, more to the electrifying event! The Students and Youth Working on Reproductive Health Action Team (SAYWHAT) injected an extra dose of excitement by supporting the gala with activities promoting Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information. The activities included engaging quizzes, captivating drama performances, a lively condomize campaign, and even a dazzling beauty pageant to encourage service uptake. SAYWHAT's objectives in participating in the gala were not only to share SRHR information and trending public health issues with students and the community but also to ignite a passion for access and utilization of SRHR services and commodities among young people. The initiative aimed to ensure a vibrant and healthy lifestyle for students in tertiary institutions, including agriculture colleges.

In essence, the 2024 Agriculture Colleges Sports Gala wasn't just about sports and competition. It was a vibrant celebration of holistic well-being and an opportunity to champion access to essential reproductive health services for young people in the agriculture college community.



1.1 Agriculture Colleges Sports Gala

The Agricultural Colleges Sports Gala is not your average sports event; it's a vibrant celebration that unites eight agricultural colleges and over 1000 sports enthusiasts in a spirited showcase of athletic prowess. This extravaganza is the ultimate battleground for colleges such as 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 year, these colleges take turns playing host to the ACSG, turning the spotlight on a range of sports including football, volleyball, netball, chess, and athletics. The competitions unfold over four electrifying days, culminating in a breathless final that sees students rally behind their colleges, vying for glory and the ultimate bragging rights. The college that clinches the highest number of gold medals is crowned the overall victor, with Esigodini Agricultural College consistently asserting their dominance on home turf.

In a historic twist, Gwebi College astounded the competition by clinching victory as a hosting college and defending their title in the previous edition, etching their name in the annals of ACSG greatness. This triumph not only set a record but also cemented their status as undisputed champions.

But the ACSG is more than just a sports showdown; it's a convergence of collaborators and organizations dedicated to youth sexual and reproductive health. It's a forum for networking and camaraderie among these stakeholders, recognizing the positive impact of sports on physical fitness and mental sharpness. With themed events such as "Building bridges towards reclaiming students' reproductive health through a gender-sensitive response" and "Run with pride, put health in every stride," the ACSG aims to champion proactive engagement in the well-being of young people, infusing the thrill of sports with a powerful message of holistic health.

In a groundbreaking move back in 2003, SAYWHAT spread its tentacles into the ACSG initiative, revolutionizing the landscape by kickstarting the dissemination of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information through its peer education program. As time unfurled, SAYWHAT's involvement burgeoned, culminating in a pivotal partnership with the ACSG with the goal to illuminate the importance of SRHR. While logistical constraints may have occasionally kept SAYWHAT from gracing every ACSG event, the torchbearers of SRHR information, trained peer educators from participating colleges, ensured that the message continued to resonate.

SAYWHAT's contributions have transcended traditional boundaries, spanning an array of engaging activities such as quiz competitions, drama face-offs, beauty pageants, edutainment sessions, pad campaigns, condom campaigns, and exhibition stands. These dynamic initiatives serve as a conduit for delivering comprehensive information, equipping students and young people to make informed decisions and access on-the-spot services through SAYWHAT's referral system.

In the past two years, SAYWHAT's far-reaching efforts touched the lives of over 2.5 million young people, imprinting the vision of nurturing generations of healthy and empowered youth. Their unwavering dedication has not only left an indelible mark on the ACSG but has also sown the seeds of a future where young people are armed with the knowledge and agency to navigate their sexual and reproductive health with confidence and clarity.



2. INFORMATION VILLAGE

Amidst the whirlwind of athletic excitement, the peer educators seized the spotlight, showcasing their unwavering dedication to sexual and reproductive health and rights issues at the Sporting Gala event. Picture this: the SAYWHAT stand, a beacon of knowledge and engagement, radiating amidst the sea of exhibition stands. Here, the dynamic SAYWHAT team of students orchestrated compelling dialogues, delving into pivotal topics such as consent, proper condom use, gender-based violence (GBV), and the thorny issue of drug and substance abuse (DSA).

The SAYWHAT stand wasn't just a static display; it was a bustling hive of activity, drawing students in droves to access top-notch SRHR information and services. The team's insightful dialogues captivated the attendees, unravelling the importance of correct and consistent condom use to thwart the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies. Through engaging methods, peer educators illuminated the significance of condom usage, empowering students to safeguard themselves and their partners.

The attraction didn't stop there! The SAYWHAT stand became a magnet for students seeking onsite services provided by the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC). The event reverberated with success, with the SAYWHAT team earning accolades for their exceptional strides in promoting SRHR education among the youth. The ZNFPC's provision of HIV self-testing kits and counselling sparked a flurry of interest, with students flocking to the tent to take charge of their health.

The resonance of the event extended beyond the surface, delving into the heart of young people's health awareness. The surge of students seeking HIV testing underscored a powerful narrative - one of proactive health consciousness and a resolute commitment to knowing one's status. The resounding requests for SAYWHAT to spearhead projects in agriculture colleges reverberated, underscoring the hunger for sustained SRHR awareness. The absence of regular trainings flagged a crucial concern, signalling the need for increased support to bolster the dissemination of SRHR-related information, thus safeguarding students' health and well-being.

In a final flourish, students were urged to harness the power of SAYWHAT's toll-free line 577 as a lifeline for reporting GBV cases, accessing SRHR services, and combating DSA addictions among other health-related challenges. The event was not just a fleeting spectacle; it was a testament to the indomitable spirit of youth empowerment and the unyielding resolve to sculpt a future brimming with informed, resilient, and healthy young minds.



3. EDUTAINMENT

SAYWHAT organized a smorgasbord of evening events during the Gala, each with a vibrant tapestry of entertainment and education. From the intense battle of wits at the quiz night to the riveting drama performances, the atmosphere crackled with energy and purpose. The condomize campaign, a beacon of empowerment and awareness, stood as a testament to SAYWHAT's innovative approach to disseminating crucial information. And of course, the much-anticipated beauty pageant added a dash of glamour and panache to the proceedings.

These meticulously planned events were not just about fun and games; they were a masterful blend of enjoyment and enlightenment, aimed at enriching the students' experience and banishing idle moments. As the curtains closed on the Sports Gala, it left behind a trail of indelible memories, etched in the hearts and minds of the students, promising to be cherished for years to come.



3.1 QUIZ NIGHT

In a bid to put participants' knowledge of sexual reproductive health and other crucial SAYWHAT thematic areas to the test, the sports gala played host to a series of quiz challenges that blended healthy competition with a quest for knowledge. Teams representing various agricultural colleges engaged in an intellectual battle, tackling questions spanning sexual reproductive health, contraceptives, puberty, and a spectrum of other pertinent public health topics. These brain-teasing battles not only kindled a spirit of competition but also served as a platform for participants to immerse themselves in the subject matter, showcasing their grasp of these vital themes.

Reflecting on the results of the previous year's Agric Sports Gala Quiz Competitions, held at Kushinga Phikhelela Agriculture College, it became strikingly evident that young people in agricultural colleges were grappling with a dearth of information on sexual reproductive health. This knowledge gap was

attributed to a lack of extracurricular activities and clubs within these institutions. Fast forward to this year's competitions, and the picture remains largely unchanged, underscoring a substantial information void within agricultural colleges concerning sexual reproductive health and other pivotal SAYWHAT programming areas.

These findings paint a compelling picture of the urgent need to bridge the information gap and kindle a brighter, more informed future for the youth in agricultural colleges. The quiz competitions, while a testament to the participants' commitment to learning, have shone a spotlight on the critical importance of bolstering access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health education and SAYWHAT's key thematic areas. It's a clarion call to action, signalling the imperative of nurturing a generation equipped with the knowledge and understanding to navigate the complexities of sexual reproductive health and make informed decisions.

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, this event highlights the importance of awareness on SRHR and public health, especially among students in agriculture colleges.

3.2 DRAMA NIGHT

The Agricultural College Sports Gala shimmered with the vibrant creativity of the students, with the drama competitions stealing the spotlight. Each participating team poured their artistic prowess into crafting short skits and plays that delved into critical sexual reproductive health-related issues, such as consent, gender equality, and reproductive rights. The performances captivated the audience, seamlessly blending entertainment with education to convey crucial messages.

Under the theme "The Unspoken Battles behind the Mask," the drama competition aimed to shine a spotlight on the underlying issues contributing to drug and substance abuse, as well as the profound consequences it carries. The event served as a melting pot of talent, drawing theater groups from eight Agriculture Colleges, each weaving poignant narratives that provided invaluable insights into this pressing social issue. Emotions ran high as the performances peeled back the layers of hidden struggles faced by individuals grappling with addiction.

Among the compelling drama pieces, one college unveiled a gripping tale centered around a young teenager ensnared by drug abuse due to peer pressure and personal turmoil. The play masterfully depicted the emotional turmoil the young man faced behind the mask of addiction, laying bare the heart-wrenching loss of relationships, trust, and self-identity. It underscored the critical need for support systems, rehabilitation, and proactive awareness to prevent others from succumbing to a similar fate.

In another moving portrayal, a different college brought to life the story of a resilient young woman who triumphed over her struggles with addiction, bravely rebuilding her life. The play artfully navigated the journey of recovery, delving into the challenges encountered during rehabilitation, the unwavering support of family and friends, and the profound significance of self-acceptance and forgiveness. Through this performance, a beacon of hope was lit, carrying the powerful message that recovery is attainable with unwavering determination and support.

Furthermore, an impactful act delved into the harrowing reality of drug addiction within a family dynamic. The play vividly depicted the trials faced by a middle-aged couple, John and Lisa, as they fervently sought to rescue their son from the clutches of addiction. It cast a piercing light on the tumultuous impact of addiction on family dynamics, the pervasive stigma surrounding seeking help, and the dire need for open communication and empathy within families grappling with addiction.

Collectively, the drama pieces presented during the drama competition under the theme "The Unspoken Battles behind the Mask" offered profound insights into the intricate tapestry of drug and substance abuse. Each performance skillfully navigated different facets, from the inception of addiction to the arduous journey of recovery and its reverberating impact on individuals, families, and society at large. The plays eloquently conveyed the potent message that addiction is not a personal failing but rather a consequence of underlying issues that call for empathy, unwavering support, and proactive awareness.

The drama competition achieved an extraordinary feat by illuminating the unspoken battles behind addiction and its far-reaching repercussions. Through their evocative and impactful performances, the theater groups and individuals involved made a resounding contribution to the ongoing dialogue surrounding drug and substance abuse. It is anticipated that the profound messages conveyed through these theater pieces will ignite positive change, nurture empathy, and cultivate a supportive environment for those grappling with addiction.

Kushinga Phikelela National Farmer Training College emerged as the dominant force in the category, with Mazowe Agricultural College securing the second position and Mlezu College of Agriculture claiming the third spot.

3.3 MR AND MISS HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE

The grand stage of the Mr. and Miss Health and Lifestyle Competition shimmered with a harmonious blend of elegance and purpose, reflecting the intrinsic connection between wellness and the tapestry of agricultural practices. Within the competition's three distinct categories, the spotlight shone brightly on the paramount significance of self-care and the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle, even amidst the unyielding demands of agricultural responsibilities.

The Environmental Advocacy, Talent Show, and Night Wear Categories served as vibrant canvases for the promotion of environmental sustainability, igniting a fervent awareness of farming-related initiatives and



campaigns. Here, participants didn't merely showcase fashionable attire; they adorned themselves in garments that echoed the resounding ethos of farming, cultivating a profound tribute to the interwoven relationship between agriculture and the natural world.

Attire became a vibrant narrative, weaving a tale that ranged from the timeless allure of traditional farming outfits to modern interpretations that reverberated with the essence of sustainable farming practices and the fervent guardianship of natural resources. Each ensemble painted a vivid picture of reverence for the earth, a nod to the custodianship that lies at the heart of agricultural pursuits.

The pinnacle of the competition unfurled in the form of the Initiative Presentations, where participants unfurled the banners of their proposed endeavors, each an impassioned clarion call for the propagation of environmental sustainability within their respective institutions. Here, the air crackled with the electricity of ideas, as each presentation unfolded like a tapestry of dedication and vision, weaving a compelling narrative of commitment to a sustainable future.

The stage became a pulpit for the proponents of change, with the Sustainable Agriculture Education Program emerging as a beacon of enlightenment. Participants fervently championed the implementation of educational programs that would sow the seeds of understanding, nurturing a generation of environmentally conscious farmers who would carry the torch of sustainability forward with organic farming, permaculture, and agroforestry.

The symphony of initiatives crescendo with a resounding call for Waste Management and Recycling Campaigns, a clarion call to champion comprehensive recycling programs within their institutions. Participants fervently advocated for proper waste segregation, the reduction of single-use plastics, and the transformative power of composting, breathing life into the very soil from which sustenance springs.

Amidst this vibrant tapestry, the theme of Tree Planting and Biodiversity Conservation emerged as a lush oasis of hope, as participants fervently championed the restoration of ecosystems and the combatting of deforestation. Their fervent desire to create green spaces within campuses and surrounding communities echoed with the promise of biodiversity, improved air quality, and natural habitats for local wildlife.

The crescendo of change found its apotheosis in the call for Water Conservation and Sustainable Irrigation, where participants became the architects of a watery symphony that sought to minimize waste and foster efficient water management in agricultural practices. Their vision encompassed rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, and water-efficient practices, each a ripple in the grand tapestry of sustainable living.

In this grand theater of purpose and passion, the Mr. and Miss Health and Lifestyle Competition didn't merely showcase style and grace; it became a verdant garden of ideas, each bloom a testament to the unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability. The applause may have faded, but the echoes of change continue to reverberate, carrying forth the promise of a more sustainable and harmonious future.

The winners for Mr and Miss Health Lifestyle were from Rio Tinto Agricultural College and Esigodini Agriculture College respectively.



4. SPORTS RESULTS

POSITION	COLLEGE	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
1	GWEBI COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE	9	5	4	18
2	ESIGODINI AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE	7	3	7	17
3	KUSHINGA PHIKELELA NATIONAL FARMER TRAINING CENTRE	5	5	5	15
4	MLEZU AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE	4	5	3	12
5	RIO TINTO COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE	3	5	6	14
6	CHIBERO COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE	2	2	3	8
7	SHAMVA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE	1	5	1	7
8	MAZOWE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE	1	2	4	7



5. AWARD CEREMONY



The exhilarating sports gala reached its climax with an electrifying award ceremony that lauded remarkable performances from both individuals and teams. The distinguished presence of Professor Obert Jiri, the esteemed Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural Development, added a touch of grandeur as he graced the event as the Guest of Honor. In a moment of exceptional generosity, he extended an offer to cover the fees of a standout student who displayed exceptional prowess during the final soccer match between Gwebi College of Agriculture and Rio Tinto Agricultural College. His impassioned address resonated with a call for students to aspire towards becoming exemplary contributors to society, emphasizing the importance of furthering their education and striving for personal growth in the coming year.

During his address, Professor Jiri took a moment to commend SAYWHAT, a steadfast partner of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, for their unwavering dedication to promoting healthy lifestyles among young people, particularly students. He effusively expressed gratitude, acknowledging that SAYWHAT's support not only lightened the load but also infused the event with vibrancy. His words of encouragement urged the organization to persist in providing vital reproductive health information that is instrumental to the well-being of young people.

SAYWHAT's impactful involvement was manifested through an impressive array of prizes, including full kits, balls, and medals, which were bestowed upon the victorious teams in soccer, volleyball, and netball. The overall success of the gala bore testament to SAYWHAT's steadfast commitment to nurturing student health and well-being, permeating every facet of the event with their dedication. As the echoes of celebration and camaraderie reverberated, SAYWHAT stood proud to have been an integral part of this jubilant fête of athleticism and teamwork, eagerly anticipating the continuation of their partnership with Agricultural colleges in the future.



6. OUTPUTS

During the Agricultural Colleges Sports Gala, a commendable effort was made to disseminate crucial information on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Gender-Based Violence, mental health issues, Drug and Substance Abuse, and Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) to over 1000 students and young people from the community. This proactive approach aimed to empower and educate the youth on vital aspects of their well-being, fostering a culture of informed decision-making and holistic health awareness.

The distribution of 10,500 male condoms during the gala stands as a testament to the commitment to promoting safe and responsible sexual practices among the attendees. The proactive measure aimed to provide essential resources for safeguarding sexual health and well-being, aligning with the overarching goal of fostering a culture of informed and responsible decision-making.

Furthermore, the engagement with the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council during the gala resulted in 38 young people (16F, 22M) accessing HIV Testing Services (HTS), underlining the proactive steps taken to facilitate access to essential healthcare services. Additionally, 19 female students accessed short-term family planning pills from ZNFPC, reflecting a concerted effort to provide comprehensive reproductive health support to the students.

The provision of 290 HIV Self-Test kits (20 from ZNFPC and 270 from Chegutu Hospital) further underscores the commitment to promoting proactive health practices and facilitating access to essential healthcare resources. The initiative empowers young people with the means to take charge of their health and well-being, aligning with the overarching goal of fostering a culture of proactive health management.

The proactive dissemination of information and the facilitation of essential healthcare services during the gala reflect a commendable commitment to promoting holistic well-being and empowering the youth with the knowledge and resources necessary to make informed decisions about their health. These efforts stand as a testament to the dedication to fostering a culture of proactive health awareness and responsible decision-making among the youth.



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7. CONCLUSION

The Agriculture Colleges Sports Gala was a celebration of the agricultural community's dedication to sports and its vital connection to sustainable futures. Participants showcased their athletic abilities and teamwork, embodying the spirit of sportsmanship. The event underscored the significance of health and well-being in agriculture, urging future leaders to prioritize personal wellness. Additionally, it fostered valuable networking, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among agriculture professionals and stakeholders. By highlighting the convergence of sports and agriculture in addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainability, the gala made a significant contribution to empowering Agri-champions and advancing a more sustainable agriculture sector.





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