

## **World Cup for World Peace: Global Social Responsibility**

“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”  
Mother Teresa

The 2010 World Cup of Soccer will be held in Africa for the first time in history: an exciting proposition, but an uncertain one, given the way Africa’s various socioeconomic challenges, notably its HIV infection rate, raise the question of how organizers of the event might responsibly attract attention not only to the game of soccer but to the massive health challenge facing the Cup’s host continent.

It is not yet clear how the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), governmental and nongovernmental sectors, tourism agencies, grassroots workers, and local and international soccer fanatics are preparing for a socially responsible World Cup in 2010. The question of responsible World Cup organization and promotion is especially important considering the context of HIV in South Africa and neighboring countries, where 20-40% of national populations are living with HIV, often in conjunction with adverse poverty.<sup>1</sup> With FIFA-sponsored development initiatives like “Win in Africa with Africa,” “Developmental GOAL Program” and “Football and Peace,” a dialogue is definitely occurring between global soccer affiliates and local grassroots initiatives. But will this conversation have an impact on the central community need of South Africa, HIV education?

We propose in summer 2007 to produce a number of short videos, based on interviews we conduct in South Africa and neighboring countries. These videos will describe the current development context in sub-Saharan Africa and, as the world’s eyes turn toward Africa for World Cup 2010, suggest innovative and culturally sensitive approaches to soccer-oriented HIV education, particularly for women and girls among “at risk” young people.

We plan to conduct and videotape in-depth interviews and focus group sessions with various stakeholders: the staff of grassroots initiatives, FIFA and corporate affiliate representatives, professional athletes, health/HIV experts and officials, community members in which initiatives are based, and soccer players themselves. We will use the film footage from the interviews to create multiple short (five to ten minute) videos targeting specific audiences. One video will be directed toward FIFA and corporate sponsor affiliates, to provide an account of development initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa three years before the 2010 World Cup. Another video will target those prepared to undertake development initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa.

The design of our project will require us to be highly mobile over a twelve-week period in summer 2007. Site locations will encompass several cities in South Africa and surrounding countries. Our project will begin in June 2007 in Cape Town, where we have established contacts with HIV experts and local soccer enthusiasts.<sup>2</sup> Under the direction of Kirk Friedrich, South Africa managing director of the program Grassroot Soccer (GRS), we will travel to GRS programs in various locales around the country, including but not limited to Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. We plan to spend the first four weeks in South Africa, then travel to GRS headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia, where we will conduct formal and informal interviews and focus groups with GRS staff and volunteers, youth participants and other stakeholders. We hope to use our current contacts at GRS and an affiliated organization, Sports for Life (SFL), to develop further contact with less established, soccer-oriented HIV/health/education development initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa.

We will divide the remaining eight weeks between Zambia, Lesotho and Namibia, with two weeks in each country. We will also make a layover stop at the FIFA world headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland to

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<sup>1</sup> UNAIDS. Global Report on HIV/AIDS. 2005. <http://www.unaids.org/epi/2005/>.

<sup>2</sup> Specifically the faculty of the Stellenbosch African Centre for HIV/AIDS, with whom we worked closely during our studies in 2006.

conduct interviews with FIFA representatives and present our data to them.<sup>3</sup> Upon return to the United States at the close of the summer, we will compile and edit our digital and observational data using the resources of the Northwestern University MediaWorks Center. Ultimately, we will use our established contacts in various sectors to distribute and screen our film compilations.

We bring academic and on-the-ground experience to bear on this proposed venture. As students of global health with backgrounds in history and cultural anthropology, we are both dedicated to careers in fighting for social justice in the global health arena. Both of us have lived in South Africa for several months in 2006, where we studied the country's public health system and the HIV pandemic as part of a Northwestern University-sponsored program at the African Centre for HIV/AIDS at the University of Stellenbosch and the University of the Western Cape School of Public Health. Outside of the classroom, we spent most of our time volunteering at local township clinics in Gugulethu and after-school tutoring and sport programs in Khayamondi. Following studies in Africa, Jama conducted a three-month community-based photography project among isiXhosa-speaking youth living in a Children's Home in the rural Eastern Cape.<sup>4</sup>

Our background of intensive classroom and independent language training in Afrikaans and isiXhosa will enable us to better establish contacts with communities in South Africa that might otherwise have proven difficult. We will utilize paid interpreters for in-depth interviews in a non-English language and utilize our conversational language skills to establish contacts and demonstrate cultural sensitivity in local communities. Our combined experience traveling independently around sub-Saharan Africa is an invaluable asset to our preparedness for this project.<sup>5</sup> We also bring the perspective of two female athletes with an inherent interest in sport's relation to the rest of life.

In the South African locales we observed, we found both the domestic and internationally-sponsored HIV/AIDS education programs we encountered alienating and, often, culturally inappropriate. However, the global culture of soccer essentially appeals to everyone, even those living in extreme poverty and adverse conditions. Using soccer as a medium for HIV/AIDS education may provide an effective educational medium. With our interest, investment, and experience in South Africa, we see the 100 Projects for Peace undertaking proposed here as a unique opportunity to examine potentials for connections between global and local communities in the context of the fast-approaching World Cup.

The project will be completed by September 2007. However, the full effect of the project will be longer term, with distribution of the videos to targeted constituencies in Africa and the world soccer community as a lead-up to the opening of the 2010 World Cup. We hope that the 2010 World Cup can indeed provide a forum for intercultural understanding of local issues surrounding health, gender and poverty within this area of the world. We believe that these videos will help stimulate this progressive dialogue by utilizing the international culture of soccer, and by deepening the realization of our own individual roles and responsibilities as part of the global community, where ultimately, in Mother Teresa's words, "we belong to each other."

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<sup>3</sup> Confirmed with FIFA representative via phone- 4 January 2007.

<sup>4</sup> This project was sponsored by the Northwestern Undergraduate Research Grant Council (URGC) and Jama is currently working on a multimedia-based senior honors thesis in Cultural Anthropology.

<sup>5</sup> Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi.