BLC uses *Inside Story* to reach more than 19,000 youth with HIV prevention messages in Angola

Close to 70% of Angola’s population is under the age of 24 years. Angola’s 2010 Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices survey among people aged 15-24 years revealed that 43% of young people have had sex by the age of 15, and only 51% of male and 38% of female youth know that condom use is a method for HIV prevention. These knowledge gaps highlight the need for innovative HIV prevention messages among Angolan youth.

To address this need, the USAID-funded Building Local Capacity for Delivery of HIV Services in Southern Africa Project (BLC) is using *Inside Story*, a full-length feature film, as an HIV prevention tool. BLC has screened the film with more than 19,000 individuals in Angola, including at schools, colleges, police stations, youth clubs, churches, and cultural associations. To reach a larger audience throughout the country, Angola’s national public television channel, TPA, plans to show the film later in 2014.

Created for an African audience, *Inside Story* incorporates animated sequences showing HIV traveling through the human body at different stages of infection with the story of Kalu, who is infected with HIV before moving from Kenya to South Africa to play professional soccer. To reinforce the film’s messages, BLC and its partners facilitate post-screening discussions using trained facilitators and materials to provide information on HIV transmission, prevention, testing, and treatment.

BLC has engaged in private-public partnerships in order to rapidly expand and diversify the number of individuals reached with the film in Angola. This has resulted in screenings with the Army Academy in Luanda and workplaces such as Esso Exploration corporate offices and drilling platforms. Esso Exploration has in turn screened the film with its sub-contractors and coordinated screenings with oil companies such as Sonangol and BP (formerly known as British Petroleum).

Dr. Margarida Setas-Ferreitas, Regional Advisor for Community and Public Health at Esso Exploration, reports that while it is challenging to convince employees to stop work for two hours to watch the film and participate in the post-screening discussion, they have had excellent attendance at each screening, with employees asking where they can get tested for HIV as well as requesting to take the film home to show it to family and friends. BLC has trained 20 employees at BP, Esso, and Sonangol to facilitate post-screening discussions.
One of the provinces BLC has focused on is Bié. This heart-shaped province in the center of the country has a population of nearly 1.8 million people and has the highest HIV prevalence among Angola’s 18 provinces, at 5.8% among pregnant women and 3.2% among the general population. Its HIV prevalence has increased steadily over the past decade: the prevalence was only 1% in 2004.

One of the screenings in Bié was at the Polytechnic Institute of Kuito in September 2013. A total of 920 youth aged 13-18 years old viewed the film. Guillerme Isaac, youth club leader at the school, said, “I feel excited to transmit HIV prevention messages through...this movie. It captures and attracts youth's interest; it makes them relate to and support Kalu’s story: they are by his side in the fight against HIV and AIDS in his personal life. It encourages young people to have a dream to pursue in their lives. This to me is the most important thing.”

Lourdes Francisca, a 17-year-old female student at the Polytechnic Institute, commented, “If all girls were sensitized as Ify is, HIV infections would be sharply reduced among the youth. I want all my girlfriends to be capable of choosing what direction their lives will take. Ify shows trust and wisdom, and I see her as Kalu’s salvation. Her love for him makes her forgive him, and transforms their HIV-positive status into an incredible love story.”

*Inside Story* was produced in 2011 by Quizzical Pictures, a leading South African production company, for the Discovery Learning Alliance with the support of PEPFAR, USAID/RHAP, Chevron, Discovery Communications, Access Bank, the South African Department of Trade and Industry, SEACOM, and UNAIDS. The film is being distributed around the world through satellite TV, free-to-air broadcasts, digital platforms, DVDs, theaters, and facilitated screenings to ultimately reach an audience of approximately 300 million people. *Inside Story* is available as a free download in English, French, Portuguese, and Swahili at: [www.insidestorythemovie.org](http://www.insidestorythemovie.org).

*All quotes translated from Portuguese*

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