

first things first  
get tested

# 2011 CAMPAIGN FEEDBACK



In association with partner organisations

**FPD**  
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**Innovative Medicines**  
South Africa

**health**  
Department of Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**HESA**  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
SOUTH AFRICA

**HEAIDS**  
HIV/AIDS EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

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# PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR PROVISION OF HIV COUNSELLING AND TESTING OF STUDENTS AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

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## BACKGROUND

IMSA joined Forces with FPD to promote the national HIV Counselling and Testing campaign, by encouraging students to support HCT campaigns at HEI'S across South Africa.

### The project also provided For:

- Increasing testing resource and building sustainability at institutions through training counsellors and testers
- Mass pre-and post-test education with the support of an interactive DVD produced for this programme
- The engagement of testing partners to handle large groups using HIV rapid finger prick tests.
- Promotion of regular testing and motivating students to commit to "knowing their HIV status, stopping the HIV stigma and fighting the HIV epidemic".

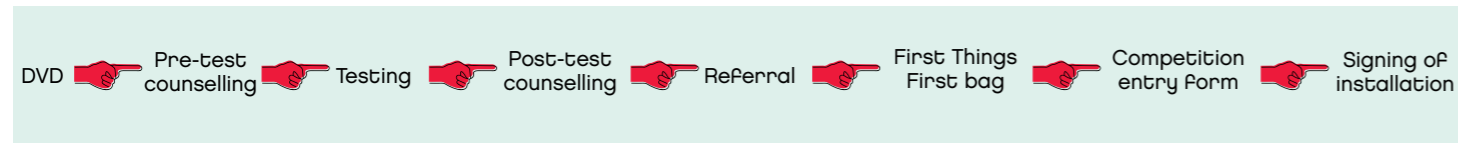
## RESULTS

- 17 universities (23 campuses) activated the campaign
- 21000 students were tested of whom 6375 were First years
- 12200 had never been tested for HIV before
- 529 were counselled but not tested
- 5000 were screened for tuberculosis

### Feedback on campaign From students (3 campuses)

Feedback indicated that the principle motivation for being tested was to know status, followed by interest in the campaign. 99% of students would encourage their friends to be tested. The campaign was generally considered to be a success (93% rated the campaign between excellent and good)

## TYPICAL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS ENVISAGED FOR TESTING DAYS ON CAMPUS



## METHODOLOGY

All HEI's were invited through Higher Education South Africa (HESA) and the Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme (HEAIDS) to participate in the programme. Testing of First year students was incentivised by a competition (First prize was a Toyota Yaris). Testing was voluntary and no one seeking testing was turned away.

Campaign activations were organised in conjunction with HEI health centres. Activation teams, including representatives of IMSA, FPD, testing partners, PR and a mobilisation specialist, managed on-site activity. A balance between standardisation of campaign and flexibility to accommodate individual university needs was a priority.

### The following were separately addressed with each campus.

- Ethical considerations
- HIV Rapid Test kits identified - to be approved by NICD
- Permissions to run the campaign on campuses
- Physical security of testers and students
- Timelines agreed
- HEI institutional support required:

- Activation of the campaign on the HEI on the agreed date
- Preparation and distribution of goodie bags for those tested
- Creation and "manning" of pledge walls and competition entry form boxes
- Transportation of campaign elements to and from each testing site
- Analysis of feedback from the HEIs, key stakeholders and those tested

## CONCLUSION

The First Things First public private partnership added value and created awareness in fighting South Africa's number one health challenge. The outcomes include:

- Development of a theme and HCT campaign methodology for students (Full set of campaign elements)
- Support for institutional capacity to upscale HCT services at HEIs
- Creation of an impactful video specifically for the student population – now available in the public domain at [www.firstthingsfirst.co.za](http://www.firstthingsfirst.co.za)
- Testing of 21000 students – 58% of whom had never been tested before

### Some valuable lessons were also learned:

- Support from the tertiary institutions is key in linking students with the campaign
- DVD screening should be driven by the tertiary institution and should take place before the activation starts
- Teamwork and accountability of all parties is essential
- Competition management across campuses is resource-heavy

Knowledge gained, results achieved, relevant documentation and intellectual property developed for the First Things First campaign are available in the public domain with a view to making a sustained difference in the HCT field.

The development of a model on how mass HCT campaigns at educational institutions can be structured offers exciting applications in other institutions. The DVD made is a valuable HCT resource.

## WAY FORWARD

Through this campaign, IMSA has forged a channel for reaching a critical demographic in the fight against HIV/AIDS. That there is merit in extending the programme to the broader South African student population with the support and cooperation of Government departments.



Students at the Wits launch pledge: "... to know our status, to stop the HIV/AIDS stigma and to contribute to the struggle against HIV/AIDS". Feedback from one student was: "This campaign will make a huge difference and together we can stop AIDS. Thank you for the excellent work to build a healthy world free of HIV and AIDS"



Students at Fort Hare University gather in front of the pledge wall with their "goodie bags" containing the First Things First interactive educational DVD. The campaign went to all provinces where there were Higher Education Institutions and went to as many campuses as we could reach.



North West University students line up for testing at the mobile units set up for the campaign.



Students at the Vaal University of Technology read the First Things First educational flyers in while they wait for their HIV tests. Banners were used to brighten up the testing sites and let students know where the testing was happening.



Students gather at the Limpopo University testing site and get ready to be tested. First Things First went to both rural and urban campuses.



The pledge wall was strongly symbolic as tested students committed to a principled way forward. This photo taken at UCT shows the signatures of commitment.



Promoters in Stellenbosch, wearing FTf red T-shirts and eye-catching pointed hands, directed students to the testing sites and handed out promotional pamphlets.

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[www.firstthingsfirst.co.za](http://www.firstthingsfirst.co.za)

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