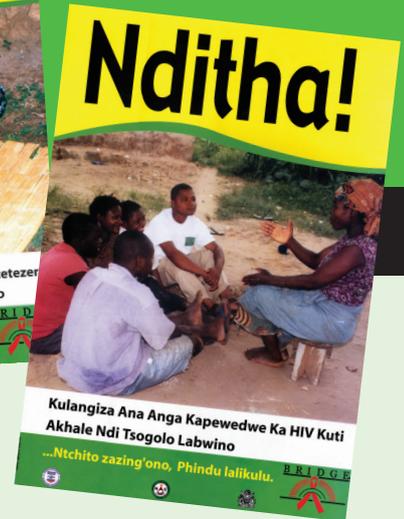
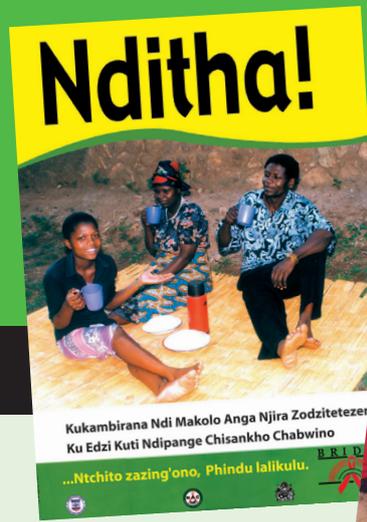


With an estimated 70,000 new infections each year, Malawi needs a wide range of interventions to fight the HIV pandemic. In response to this need, the Malawi BRIDGE Project aims to reduce new HIV infections in the country by engaging Malawians to protect themselves against HIV, assisting stakeholders in moving from talk to action, and helping communities create a more hopeful future.

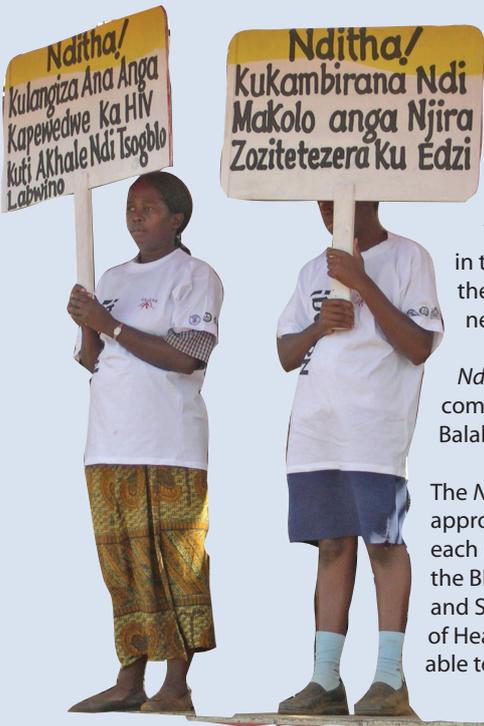
BRIDGE



# Nditha!



The *Nditha!* campaign is a multi-media effort that combines nationwide radio programming with targeted print materials and community outreach to underscore the message that Malawians can prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS. Funding for the *Nditha!* campaign is provided by USAID.



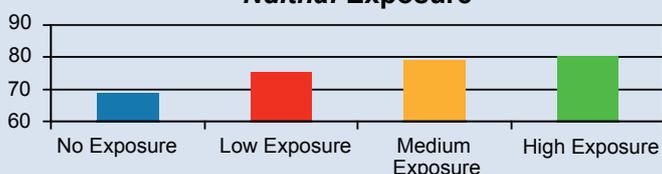
The *Nditha!* campaign is based on formative research findings conducted by the BRIDGE project. Although this research demonstrated high knowledge and awareness of the "ABC" messages (abstinence, be faithful, or use condoms), prevention efforts are impeded because many Malawians feel they have little control over their lives and they do not believe there is anything they can do to prevent HIV infection. Prevention efforts are further hampered by the lack of open communication around HIV and AIDS issues and relative lack of personal risk perception.

The goal of the campaign is to reinforce feelings of confidence and self-efficacy among Malawians in their ability to prevent HIV and AIDS. (*Nditha!* means "I Can" in Chichewa.) The campaign highlights the many "small do-able" actions that people can take right away to foster an environment of openness and support that will lead to greater adherence to the "ABCs."

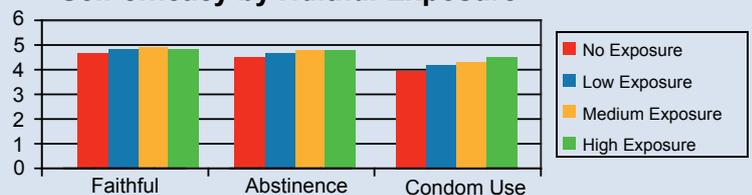
*Nditha!* messages are heard on MBC, Capital FM, Power 101 and TransWorld Radio. Posters and community outreach events focus on Lilongwe, Blantyre and the eight BRIDGE emphasis districts: Balaka, Chikwawa, Kasungu, Mangochi, Mulanje, Mzimba, Ntcheu, and Salima.

The *Nditha!* campaign is changing the way Malawians, think, feel, and act. Using a phased, targeted approach while maintaining an overall theme provides continuity, generates ongoing excitement with each new release of materials, and gives the audience messages to build on. *Nditha!* was developed by the BRIDGE project (a collaboration between the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs and Save the Children US) in partnership with the Top Advertising Agency. Colleagues from the Ministry of Health, Health Education Unit, the National AIDS Commission, and local NGO partners provided valuable technical assistance on the development of the final campaign creative materials.

Knowledge (% correct) about HIV/AIDS by *Nditha!* Exposure



Self-efficacy by *Nditha!* Exposure



Research results from all three phases show that increased exposure to the *Nditha!* campaign in its various media can be linked to better knowledge of the facts around HIV and AIDS, as well as self-efficacy to enact HIV prevention behaviors including abstinence, mutual fidelity, and condom use. Data for this analysis comes from the BRIDGE end of project survey.

# THE THREE PHASES

## Phase I

Phase I was designed for a general Malawian audience and included small, do-able actions that anyone could do to feel a greater sense of efficacy to prevent the spread of HIV. *Nditha!* activities were conducted with men, women, and young people through district-level open days, youth magazines, radio, women's group activities, and road shows to promote interactive learning.

## Phase II

Bambo Wachitsanzo ("Great Guy") is the second phase of the *Nditha!* campaign. The main goal of this phase is to encourage Malawian men to take responsibility for and invest in their families by practicing mutual faithfulness to prevent HIV. Research showed that men have lower levels of perceived risk, are more likely to have multiple partners, generally have more control in relationships and are subject to norms that may put them and their partners at risk. As a result, Phase II was designed to put special attention on men – to build their efficacy not only to protect themselves, but also their partners and families.

The campaign highlights small do-able actions that men can take to help them demonstrate their involvement in their families and communities, and promote adoption and adherence to mutual faithfulness to help prevent HIV/AIDS.



## Phase III

The third phase, which is built around the idea of increased risk perception, was launched in the first month of 2007. Formative research identified several key audiences at particularly high risk who can have a strong impact on the future of the epidemic if their behaviors change. As a result, this phase is designed to target specific audiences with messages to help them assess their specific risk factors and develop plans to minimize them. These audiences include:

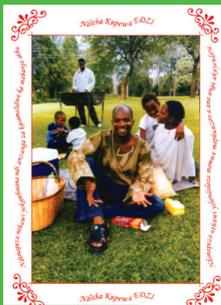
Pregnant women: the risk of transmitting HIV to their unborn child

Older men: the risks associated with HIV transmission through alcohol abuse and intergenerational sex

Younger women: the risks from engaging in transactional or intergenerational sex, and

Community leaders are also targeted with messages to help them influence members of these high risk groups and others to minimize risks associated with HIV.

One key addition to the campaign materials for Phase III is a scratch-card risk assessment tool. Each line contains a question for the bearer to ask him or herself about his/her behavior. They then scratch off the circle covering their answer, yes or no, revealing a thumbs up or thumbs down. Any thumbs down indicates a risky behavior, and the back of the card contains suggestions of actions they can take to minimize the risk. 90,000 of these cards were printed to be distributed at community events and through local NGO partners of the BRIDGE Project.



*The Bambo Wachitsanzo certificate has proven to be a successful tool in the men's campaign – promoting dialogue between a man and his family on the characteristics and actions that can make him a Bambo Wachitsanzo.*

## Stories from the Men's Campaign

**"The introduction of Bambo Wachitsanzo activities by the BRIDGE Project has changed men in my community. I have been inspired and my work to transform my fellow men has been simplified. Most men now easily understand the importance of supporting their wives,"** says Leonard Chingwalungalu.