

Statement on blockages to condom access during the World Cup

By *moderator*

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HIV/AIDS organisations who are members of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) welcomed the FIFA statement regarding access to FIFA controlled fan parks and stadia that appears to have been released on June 6th. However we would like to point out the following inconsistencies in the statement.

1. We welcome the efforts by FIFA through its Festival of Hope and its Centres of Hope in reaching vulnerable children and youth. However, the Festival of Hope is a once-off activity that will take place during a defined period of the tournament and outside of the FIFA controlled fan fests and stadia and will reach a relatively small number of people. It will not directly reach the millions of people within FIFA controlled spaces during the duration of the tournament itself.
2. We are happy to confirm that as of June 7th 2010 a process is underway to get the service provider accreditation to ensure that condoms are supplied to the stadia on an ongoing basis for the duration of the World Cup. But questions remain concerning delivery schedules; the frequency of the delivery and access to the controlled areas.
3. Concerns remain regarding the accessibility of condoms within the fan fests. We reiterate that in some instances City Health Departments (Cape Town and Durban) have been informed that no condoms or HIV-related information may be distributed within the Fan Fests. We are informed that a small number of NGOs that have been given space within the fan parks and fan fests but have been told that they may not disseminate socially relevant messages within the the fan fests and FIFA controlled environments.
4. Indeed two HIV and health promotion organisations have had to pay hundreds of thousands of rands to purchase space to have their public service announcements broadcast into the Fan Fest for the duration of the tournament. Owing to their budgetary constraints this is limited to one or two fan fests and not across all fan fests. In our view this is not acceptable.
5. While it is noted that the commercial supplier Durex will be flighting condom promotion messages within the fan parks the cost of Durex condoms is beyond the reach of many South Africans who will be frequenting the fan parks and its distribution is limited. In South Africa the governments CHOICE condoms are distributed freely and so to are socially marketed condoms (Trust and Lovers Plus) which are supplied at a lower cost than the Durex condoms. In our view condom promotion needs to be highly visible and cater for all markets as the fan fests will be freely accessible to all persons.
6. It is unfortunate that the statement by FIFA alludes to it having been in touch with the CEO of the SANAC as no official meetings have taken place between the CEO of SANAC, the concerned organisations, FIFA or the LOC to prepare for the World Cup. While a process of dialogue was undertaken prior to the World Cup there is still no confirmation that any of the SANAC approved partners will be allowed to distribute HIV-related materials within the fan fests.

Neither FIFA or the LOA have responded to our concerns other than through the media. So we reiterate our questions to FIFA and the LOC:

- Is there approval for condom and health information distribution at all FIFA controlled fan parks by the DOH and SANAC?
- Does this approval extend to all of SANAC's civil society affiliates who are part of the SANAC Sports and Entertainment Sector?
- Is there going to be promotion of condoms and HIV testing, endorsed by FIFA and the LOC, during the world cup ? in order to take advantage of millions of people who will be watching the football? How will this be done?
- Is there easy access to information about HIV/AIDS for fans, such as contact details for the AIDS Helpline?

We wish for the success of the World Cup. But we also wish for an HIV free generation and that FIFA would join hands with local AIDS organisations to exploit the opportunity that the World Cup presents to greatly strengthen and deepen our response to HIV/AIDS. It is not yet too late. But it soon will be.

Issued by:

AIDS Consortium, Community Media Trust , Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa (Brothers for Life), National Religious Association for Social Development, Peri-Natal HIV Research Unit, Reproductive Health Research Unit (RHRU), Right to Care, SA HIV Clinicians Society, Section 27, Society for Family Health, Sonke Gender Justice Network (Sonke), Soul City, Treatment Action Campaign.

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