



Tonderai Mapako Presents at the ISBT 2012 Congress in Cancun, Mexico



Mr D. A. Mvere and Tonderai Mapako, at the poster session during the ISBT 2012 Congress, Cancun, Mexico

Tonderai Mapako, a PhD student with T-REC, attended the 32nd ISBT 2012 Congress in Cancun, Mexico to make a presentation about his research topic: risk modelling of blood safety in Zimbabwe. Through the poster presentation, Tonderai provided initial findings about 'HIV prevalence in first-time and repeat blood donations in Zimbabwe; implications on blood safety'.

By looking at the trends in first-time and repeat blood donations, the data indicates that the current policy of National Blood Service Zimbabwe (NBSZ) of not using first-time donations is an effective HIV risk management strategy. HIV seropositivity relative risk is 3.1 for first-time versus repeat blood donations (p-

value < 0.0001). Although there are no documented effects on blood donation in Zimbabwe, ethical questions are being raised of implementing such a policy (discarding first-time donations). As Tonderai argued, more work will be done to consider the cost effectiveness of this risk management strategy, given that about 20 per cent of the donations are collected and not used. A full manuscript for publication will be developed shortly.

Tonderai is registered to carry out this research with University of Groningen, The Netherlands and is based at National Blood Service Zimbabwe (NBSZ). He was introduced to the ISBT Working Party on Transfusion Transmissible Infections Diseases (WP TTID) subgroup on Cost Utility Analysis. This will go a long way in assisting him to participate in the ongoing projects within the Working Party and make substantial contributions about the sub-Saharan data on various aspects in risk modelling and cost utility analysis. The networking that occurred during the congress will further strengthen international collaboration research work.

T-REC (Building research capacity of blood transfusion services in Africa) is funding and supervising four African PhD students to research priority topics in blood transfusion in Africa. The aim of the T-REC PhD programme is to train experts who can become leaders in transfusion research. The students were selected for their skills and enthusiasm to develop a long-term research career in blood transfusion in Ghana or Zimbabwe.

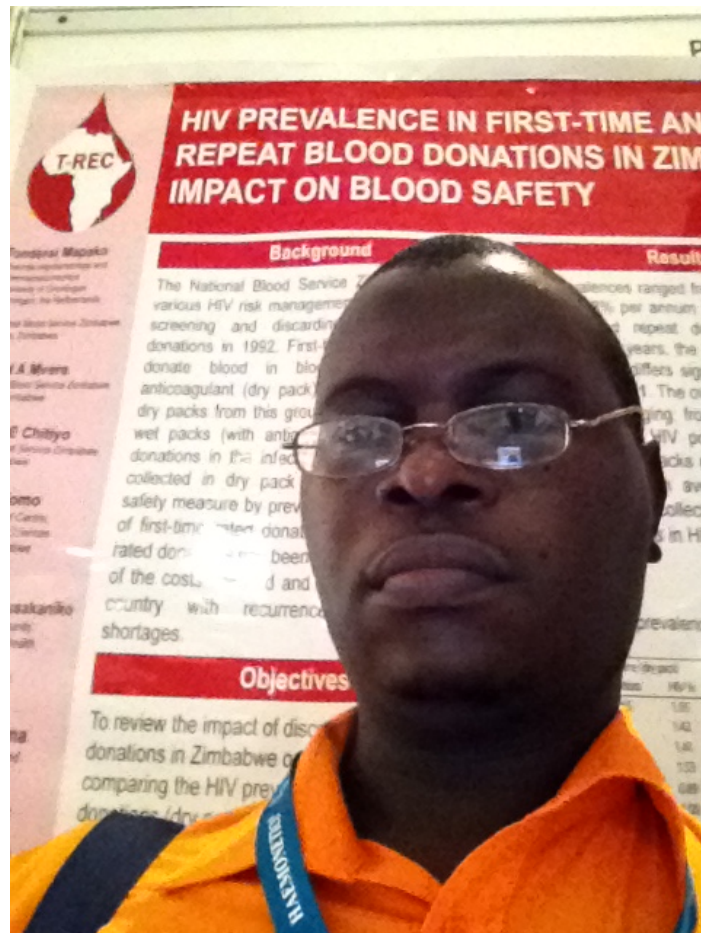
Thank you to ISBT for their ongoing support to T-REC and our efforts to build research capacity for blood transfusion in Africa. ISBT sponsored the flights, accommodation and registration fees for Tonderai to attend the meeting in Mexico. The T-REC consortium gratefully acknowledges such assistance from ISBT and we hope the partnership will grow stronger.



Dr Clive Seed from Australia Red Cross, on visit to the T-REC poster at the ISBT 2012 Congress in Cancun, Mexico



A congress delegate from Brazil, on visit to the T-REC poster at the ISBT 2012 Congress in Cancun, Mexico



Tonderai Mapako with his poster