World Cup to Raise HIV/AIDS Awareness in South Africa

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South Africa will raise awareness of HIV/AIDS before millions of local and visiting soccer fans while hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup next June and July, IRIN reports. Health officials and activists met November 18 in Johannesburg to craft a plan.

According to the article, media reports have suggested the World Cup could exacerbate the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa. However, several speakers at the planning meeting considered the event an opportunity for HIV/AIDS education.

Stadiums, parks, hotels and bars are all potential venues for promoting and delivering HIV prevention messages, condoms, pamphlets, counseling and HIV testing.

The World Cup spans across 30 days and eight of South Africa's nine provinces, but several organizations intend to make their campaigns stretch throughout the entire year and reach people all over the continent.

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