

BAYLOR FOUNDATION LESOTHO



2023



Global Health
Network





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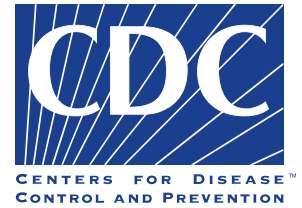
THANK YOU



Global Health Network



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



ELIZABETH GLASER
PEDIATRIC AIDS
FOUNDATION

NETWORK IN ACTION

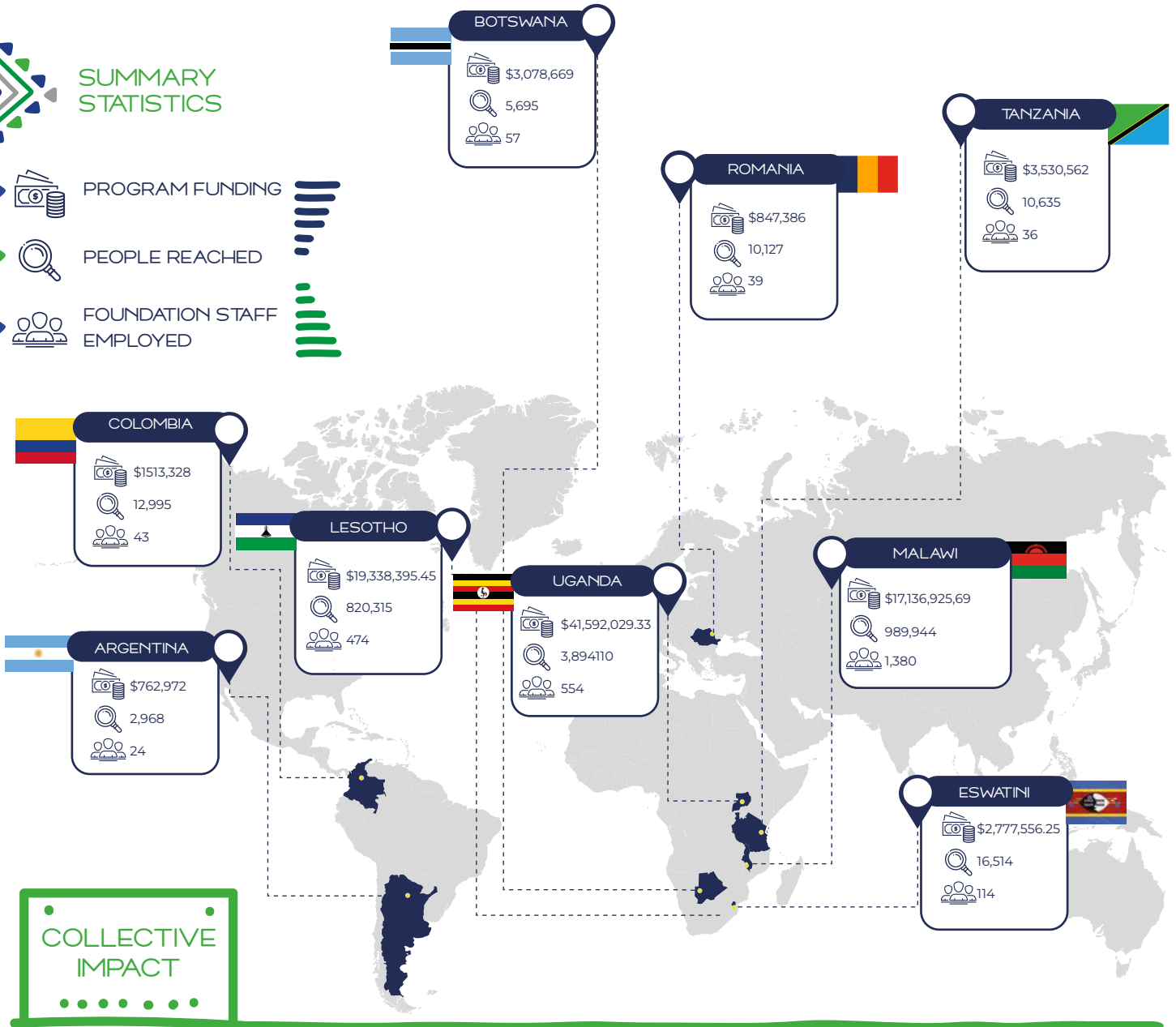


Global Health
Network



SUMMARY STATISTICS

- PROGRAM FUNDING
- PEOPLE REACHED
- FOUNDATION STAFF EMPLOYED



COLLECTIVE IMPACT



\$90,577,823.72
Total Network
Funding



2,721
Total Staff Employed



5,763,303
Total People
Reached



14,163
Total Health
Personnel Trained

As implementing partners of the Texas Children's Global Health Network, each foundation collaborates and shares knowledge for the purpose of collectively solving complex health problems both locally and globally.



FOUNDATION BACKGROUND

Established in 2005, Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation Lesotho (Baylor Foundation Lesotho) is a local non-governmental organization born from a collaboration between the Baylor College of Medicine International Pediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI) in Houston, Texas, USA, and the Lesotho Ministry of Health. The foundation's inception was significantly supported by the Bristol Myers-Squibb Foundation's Secure the Future initiative, which provided the initial funding for the construction and outfitting of the foundation's first health facility. This facility was officially inaugurated by His Majesty King Letsie III on December 1, 2005, coinciding with World AIDS Day.

Baylor Foundation Lesotho operates its Children's Clinical Centre of Excellence (COE) in Maseru, the capital city of Lesotho, as well as five Satellite Clinical Centres of Excellence (SCOEs) in five of the 10 districts, namely: Qacha's Nek, Mohale's Hoek, Leribe, Butha-Butha, and Mokhotlong. In 2012, we launched an adolescent clinic specifically for those 14-20 years of age, located on Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital's premises. The basic operations of all the centres are funded by the Government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Health. Since its inception in December 2005, Baylor Foundation Lesotho has seen enormous growth in every area of its operations.

The services offered have expanded from pediatric and adolescent HIV testing, prevention, care, and treatment to include other support services, including outreach and psychosocial support services; tuberculosis (TB) screening, diagnosis and care; adult HIV services, including testing, care and treatment, Post Exposure Prophylaxis and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP, and PrEP, and cervical cancer screening; holistic support for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC); education support; and economic strengthening. Furthermore, we offer services in all districts, including those in which we do not have clinical sites, through donor-funded projects. Baylor Foundation Lesotho has expanded remarkably through donor funded projects such as ETHICS, LEADR and KB (USAID), ALPEC, CoHIP-SEC (CDC), PROTECT, PINCH, C19RM (Global Fund), TB GAPS, and FIND.



Mission

To provide high-quality, high-impact, highly ethical pediatric and family-centered healthcare, health professional training, and clinical research focused on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, malnutrition, and other conditions impacting the health and wellbeing of children and families worldwide.

Vision

To ensure universal access to care, treatment and support services for all HIV-infected and affected children and their families throughout Lesotho; support prevention of new infections; and equip healthcare providers with knowledge and skills to manage common pediatric illnesses.

Values

Personal integrity and accountability, client-centered approach, respectful service delivery, compassionate and confidential services, organizational accountability for operational excellence, client and partner satisfaction, employee and organization development, financial health, and infrastructure maintenance



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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This was an exciting year for the Foundation, with continued growth in our programmatic scope. While we continued to focus on implementation of existing projects, this year we were privileged to receive a new award from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) focused on community-based prevention programming and HIV Testing Services (HTS) for adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), following a highly competitive application process. In addition, after the successful closeout of the USAID-funded Expanding TB and HIV Clinical Services (ETHICS) project, we were successful in competing for follow-on funding through the Lesotho Local Entities Advancing and Driving Health Responses (LEADR) award from USAID. We continue to grow in the role of a national leader in implementation of clinical services at facility and community levels, as well as in community-based prevention and support services for AGYW and orphans and vulnerable children (OVC).

Over the last year, the Foundation's services and approach evolved to embrace community-based service delivery models more broadly, particularly through the expansion of comprehensive prevention programming for AGYW funded by CDC. We have also begun to focus more on district and community health systems strengthening initiatives through the LEADR project, while maintaining support for the COVID-19 response and preparedness for emerging public health pandemics more broadly. As the nation settles in to a sustained COVID-19 response, we continue to support the Government of Lesotho to ensure that all Basotho are educated about, screened for, and appropriately vaccinated against COVID-19.

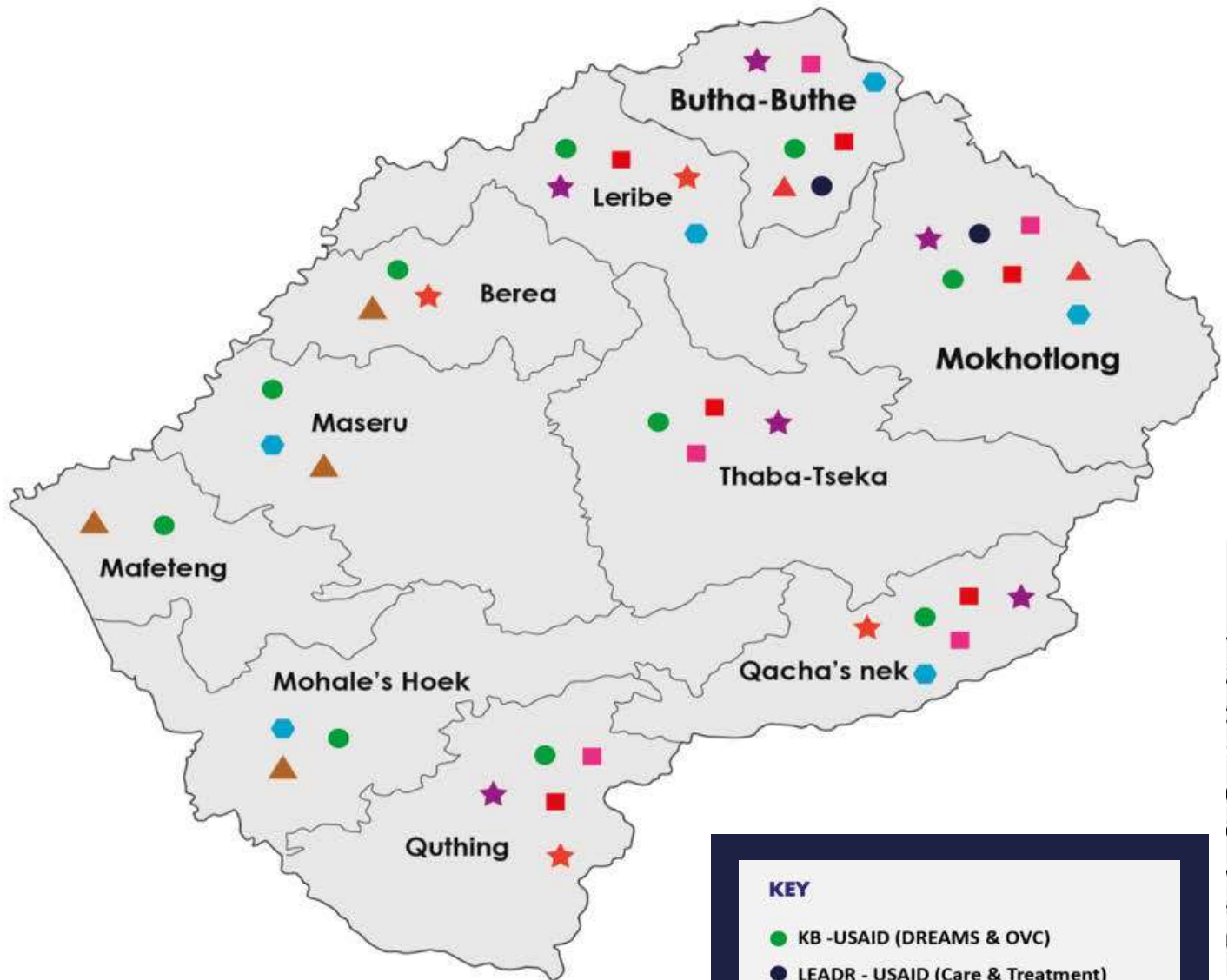
In the upcoming year, the Foundation will settle into implementation of the new CDC-funded award while wrapping up implementation of AGYW and PMTCT programming funded by The Global Fund. We will continue to look for opportunities to expand our

scope of community-based prevention programming targeting AGYW as we expand our experience in this area. In addition, we will undertake primary delivery of OVC services in two districts of the country under the Karabo ea Bophelo (KB) project, further enhancing our technical expertise as an OVC implementing partner. We also anticipate significant expansion in research programming focused on childhood and adolescent tuberculosis, with the official launch and scale-up of the CDC-funded TB GAPS study as described in the report.

As in previous years, rapid growth in personnel and programming brings the challenge of integration of new staff into the Foundation, ensuring that they understand the organization's mission, vision, values and goals, as well as strengthening compliance to the organization's policies and procedures and enhancing efficiency of support systems. In addition, in the setting of a limited funding landscape under the Government of Lesotho, we will continue to face the challenge of resource mobilization for sustainability and expansion of our programming. Programmatically, we anticipate continued challenges in reaching vulnerable adolescents and young people with high-quality services utilizing client-centered approaches, and planning for the transition to more sustainable service delivery approaches as the country seeks to sustain HIV epidemic control.



AREAS OF OPERATION



KEY

- KB - USAID (DREAMS & OVC)
- LEADR - USAID (Care & Treatment)
- PROTECT - TGF/PMU (AGYW)
- PINCH - TGF/PMU (PMTCT)
- ★ C19RM - TGF/PMU (COVID-19 Response)
- ★ ALPEC - CDC/EGPAF (Care & Treatment)
- Baylor Lesotho Clinical Sites - MOH
- ▲ CoHip SEC – CDC (DREAMS)
- ▲ FIND TB – (Multiple Donors)

Donor Funded Projects



Karabo ea Bophelo

Baylor Foundation Lesotho Karabo ea Bophelo (KB) is a five-year program funded by USAID, with planned implementation from October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2024. Its main aim is to support the Government of Lesotho to expand access to and uptake of multi-sectoral interventions across all 10 districts to prevent new HIV infections and reduce vulnerability among OVC and AGYW. The Foundation implements the program in collaboration with six partner organizations, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Lesotho Network of People Living with HIV & AIDS (LENEPWHA), Centre for Impacting Lives (CIL), Lesotho Inter-Religious AIDS Consortium (LIRAC), Society for Women and AIDS in Africa Lesotho (SWAALES) and Care for Basotho Association (CBA).



Objectives of the KB program:

1. To enhance capacity of families and communities to support OVC.
2. To increase uptake of health, HIV prevention, care and treatment services among OVC and AGYW.
3. To reduce sexual violence and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) amongst OVC and AGYW.
4. To enhance utilization of HIV-sensitive National Case Management System; and
5. To upscale demand for COVID-19 Vaccination



Project achievements:

During the last year, KB has implemented different interventions following core approaches used under OVC and Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS Free, Mentored, Safe (DREAMS) components and yielded the following results.

- 87,201 project participants, contributing to 94% of the overall target (93,064), were reached with OVC services. Of these participants, 18,813 (22%) were caregivers, while 68,388 (78%) were children. The project provided OVC and their households with services geared towards improving family health, safety, schooling, household stability, and economic stability, reaching 65,971 OVC and their caregivers with OVC comprehensive services using the HIV sensitive case management approach.



- KB continued to support management of the Child Helpline by placing 10 staff members to run the helpline 24/7 (on a rotational basis). A vehicle was also provided to attend to emergency and crisis cases and conduct outreach activities to popularize the Child Helpline. The Child Helpline social workers continued to provide telephone counselling to callers through the call tracking system. A total of 571 calls were received and recorded in the tracking system; out of these, 25 were classified as critical cases that were referred to the relevant stakeholders for provision of appropriate services and interventions.
- KB engaged Data Care to develop and test the Social Service Workforce App in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports, Arts, Culture, and Social Development (through the Department of Social Development). To ensure functionality and effective use of the application, KB procured a server for hosting the app, 221 tablets for social workers to access the app; payment, and subscription of 5 years of SSL certification for the domain. The app and hardware were officially

handed over to the Ministry by USAID's Deputy Country Director and received by The Honourable Minister of Gender, Youth, Sports, Arts, Culture, and Social Development.

- TKB reached a total of 47,727 AGYW with HIV prevention interventions such as HIV Prevention Education, GBV and VAC messaging, Social Asset Building, Financial Education and Condom Promotion through DREAMS programming.
- KB enrolled 3,000 children (2,000 AGYW and 1,000 OVC) in the Education Subsidies Program. The project pays for school fees, boarding fees, and educational materials such as stationery, hygiene packages and school uniforms.

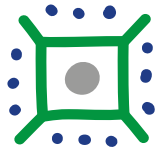
- To improve delivery of the Life Skills-Based Sexuality Education (LBSE) in schools, the project continued to support trainings of teachers, and implementation and monitoring of the curriculum in four districts: Maseru, Berea, Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek. A total of 11,004 learners were enrolled in LBSE classes during this reporting period. In addition, 19,025 learners enrolled in the past year were monitored.
- KB has 82 AGYW interns placed with various organizations. Some of these organizations have already shown interest in continuing with KB for either extensions on the current intern agreements or new interns to be placed with the organizations. Interns participate in a multi-day job readiness workshop.
- Under the HIV prevention and vulnerability reduction program, the project reached 225,364 priority populations including AGYW, AGYW sex partners, caregivers of OVC, including the broader audience of men and women in violence prone communities.
- To help create demand for the COVID-19 vaccine, activities were implemented to increase knowledge, awareness, and motivation of individuals to seek vaccination. 155 COVID-19 agents, supervisors and coordinators were trained on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, prevention, and control messaging, communicating the risks of COVID-19 and the importance of vaccination. The team successfully mobilised and delivered COVID-19 vaccine messages to 66,808 (42,719 females and 24,089 males), of which 57,529 were vaccinated.



Figure 3: Distribution of hygiene packs to learners

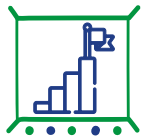
Figure 4: Baylor-KB bursary supported to learners in their school uniform

Figure 5: COVID 19 Message billboard mounted at Berea District

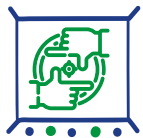


Expanding TB and HIV Clinical Services

In 2019, Baylor Foundation Lesotho was granted a fixed amount award (FAA) to implement the Expanding TB and HIV Clinical Services (ETHICS) Project in the two districts of Butha Buthe and Mokhotlong. In addition to the two districts, the geographic location of the award includes the Baylor Foundation Lesotho COE in Maseru and the SCOE in Mohale's Hoek. The ETHICS Project was launched in November 2019 and ended in April 2023. Lesotho Network of AIDS Services Organizations (LENASO) was engaged as a sub-recipient in the project.



Project Goal: Attain HIV epidemic control and sustained reduction in HIV transmission, morbidity, and mortality through saturation of HIV and TB prevention, care and treatment services in the highland districts of Butha Buthe and Mokhotlong.



Project Objectives:

1. Increase coverage of quality, comprehensive, integrated, and client-centered adult HIV and TB prevention, care, and treatment services
2. Increase coverage of comprehensive prevention of mother-to-child transmission, pediatric and adolescent HIV prevention, care and treatment services
3. Strengthen district level health systems to support the quality of the HIV and TB continuum of care that is coordinated within the national policy framework
4. Increased coverage of COVID-19 prevention, detection, vaccine access, and clinical service delivery.

Between July 2022 and March 2023, project activities included direct service delivery, onsite mentorship and supportive supervision visits to supported health facilities. ETHICS personnel also contributed to the development of national guidelines and dissemination of training on the guidelines. Cumulatively, the key highlights of the ETHICS project included:

- Four- fold increase in quarterly PrEP initiations; (125 at the end of March 2020; 461 at the end of March 2022)
- Steady increase in index testing contribution to positivity yield
- 99% of first antenatal care (ANC) attendees had a documented HIV Status

- Technical assistance in finalization of the National Guidelines for the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and Syphilis in 2020 and capacity building of healthcare providers.
- 100% ART optimization (DTG-based and LPV/r-based regimens), with rapid scale-up of the phased DTG transition plan to have all PLHIV including children on optimized regimens, reaching 99.7% of all adults and 72% of children on DTG-based regimens.
- High multi-month dispensing (MMD) coverage of 93% from a low baseline of 27%, with more than 6 months of MMD coverage at a high of 66%.
- Successful phased implementation of Advanced HIV Disease (AHD) support with a total enrolment into the AHD cascade of 560 clients receiving the AHD package of services.
- Scale-up of viral load (VL) monitoring with overall VL coverage at 96% and VL suppression at 98%
- Cervical cancer screening of all eligible women living with HIV (WLHIV) on ART reaching a high of 99% coverage.
- Rapid scale-up of TB preventive therapy (TPT) among people living with HIV (PLHIV) for those who ever completed TPT, starting with 27% coverage and ending with 94% coverage.
- Technical assistance in finalization of the National Guidelines on the use of ART for HIV Prevention and Treatment in 2022 and capacity building of healthcare providers.

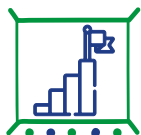


Figure 6: Nurse mentor providing health talk during a cervical cancer screening campaign in Butha-Buthe, Motete



Local Entities Advancing and Driving Health Responses

This year, Baylor Foundation Lesotho was granted an FAA to implement the Local Entities Advancing and Driving Health Responses (LEADR) project in the two districts of Butha Buthe and Mokhotlong and the Baylor Foundation Lesotho COE in Maseru and SCOE in Mohale's Hoek. The LEADR Project, a three-year award, was initiated on April 24th, 2023, with Lesotho Network of AIDS Services Organizations (LENASO) as a subrecipient to Baylor Foundation Lesotho in the project.



Project goal:

To support the government to deliver high-quality integrated prevention, care and treatment services that will sustain the reduction in HIV, TB, and COVID-19 transmission, morbidity, and mortality in Lesotho through the implementation of a comprehensive, person-centered approach in the Butha-Buthe and Mokhotlong districts of Lesotho.



Project Objectives:

1. Increased coverage of high-quality evidence-informed comprehensive and people-centered HIV and TB prevention, diagnosis, care and treatment services
2. Increased access and uptake of quality prevention, detection, vaccination and clinical services to mitigate the impact and reduce transmission of emerging public health pandemics, including COVID-19
3. Strengthened district and community health systems using a primary health care approach to sustain epidemic control of HIV, TB, and other infectious diseases beyond activity implementation.

Between April 24th, 2023 and June 2023, initial activities included recruitment and onboarding of district and site level personnel, introduction of the project to the Ministry of Health (MoH) and District Health Management Teams (DHMTs) from Butha Buthe and Mokhotlong districts. Direct service delivery, onsite mentorship and training, along with joint supervision visits, also resumed.

Key performance highlights were:

- 447 clients were initiated on PrEP, 84% achievement against a target of 535
- 223 clients were newly identified as HIV positive
- 246 new clients were enrolled into care
- 205 clients were new and relapsed TB cases, with 42% TB/HIV co-infected
- Overall viral load coverage was 94% and viral load suppression rate was 98%



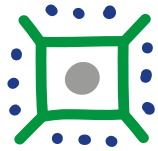
Accelerating Lesotho's Progress to Epidemic Control

Accelerating Lesotho's Progress to Epidemic Control (ALPEC) is a five-year program funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), under which Baylor Foundation Lesotho is a sub-recipient to Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF). This program is a follow-on to the previously described STAR-L program and is currently in its third year of implementation. The ALPEC program started in January 2021 and will end in September 2025. The project is being implemented in the four districts of Leribe, Berea, Quthing and Qacha's Nek. Baylor Foundation Lesotho contributes towards the following objectives:

- Expanding HIV case identification through a mix of targeted approaches for different priority populations and linking them for same-day ART initiation,
- Expanding recent infection surveillance systems at all supported HIV testing sites,
- Expansion of differentiated models of care for stable and unstable patients to improve retention, adherence to ART, and clinical outcomes,
- Expanded TB case identification and treatment, and increased uptake of TPT for all eligible PLHIV
- Expansion of biomedical prevention services, specifically PMTCT and PrEP
- Strengthened technical and management capacity of MOH district level services and facilities to implement and monitor quality of the HIV response across the continuum of care.

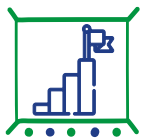
The program performance below was achieved from October 2022 to June 2023;

- 37% of index clients tested were children; 11% of them tested HIV positive.
- 17% of Inpatients tested were adolescents; 7% tested HIV positive.
- 38% of clients reached with HIV Testing Services (HTS) were adolescents and 6% tested positive.
- 164,742 clients were screened for TB; 4,202 presumptive TB cases were identified and 534 (12%) tested positive for TB and were enrolled into care.



Comprehensive High Impact Community-Based HIV Prevention, Testing and Treatment Initiation for sustained Epidemic Control in Lesotho

Baylor Foundation Lesotho was awarded a cooperative agreement to implement the Comprehensive High Impact Community-Based HIV Prevention, Testing and Treatment Initiation for sustained Epidemic Control in Lesotho (CoHip-SEC) Project in the four districts of Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek. The CoHip-SEC Project was launched under PEPFAR on September 30th, 2022, with an end date of September 29th, 2027. The Lesotho Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS (LENEPWHA) is a sub-recipient to Baylor Foundation Lesotho in the project.



Objective:

Integrated Programming of DREAMS Core Package of Interventions for AGYW and their Sexual Partners.



Service provision:

- HIV Risk Assessment and HIV Prevention Messaging
- Enrolment of AGYW into DREAMS
- Routine / Rapid HIV testing services (HTS) including HIV Self Testing
- Provision of Contraceptive Method Mix
- Condom Promotion & Provision
- STI Screening & Linkage to Treatment
- GBV Screening, Referral, & Linkage for Post-GBV Care
- Facilitate & Track referral linkages (ART, PrEP, STI treatment, counselling, post-GBV care)

Between October 2022 and June 2023, program start-up activities included recruitment and onboarding of personnel, project introduction to the Ministry of Health (MoH), District Health Management Teams (DHMTs) and other implementing partners. Implementation of project activities started at the end of February 2023.

Key achievements include:

- 607 adolescent girls and young women were enrolled in DREAMS
- 27,475 HIV self-test kits were distributed
- 10,947 AGYW received contraceptives
- 70,234 condoms were distributed

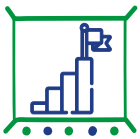


Figure 7: DREAMS facilitator providing information on available services for AGYW



Providing Prevention and Treatment for Young People

Providing Prevention and Treatment for Young People (PROTECT) is a 2-year, 9-month project funded by The Global Fund, through Ministry of Finance Project Management Unit (PMU) under the NFM3 grant cycle. It started in July 2021 and will end in March 2024.



Project Goal

An AIDS-free population of adolescents and young people (AYP) through community-based HIV testing and SRH services.



Objectives:

- Accelerate demand creation for services in the community,
- Offer HTS and family planning services in the community,
- Provide and link patients to ART.

The PROTECT project provides community-based services in six districts: Mokhotlong, Butha-Buthe, Leribe, Thaba-Tseka, Quthing and Qacha's Nek. The following services are offered: HTS, same day ART initiation, linkage to care, STI screening and management, TB screening, PrEP initiation, family planning (FP), Community Adherence Monitoring and Refill Assistance (CAMARA) groups, as well as cervical cancer screening to newly identified HIV positive AGYW eligible for screening.

During this year: 71% (1,034) of AGYW were tested using conventional testing. 1,182 clients were offered HTS services and 148 clients were male partners.

- Of the 1,182 AGYW tested, 100 (8%) of AYP tested HIV Positive and 97% of them were initiated on ART.
- 74 of 208 (36%) partners elicited through index services were reached and offered testing.
- HTS screening through HIVST distribution reached 165% beyond the target. The set target was 6,075 and 9,874 HIVST were distributed; 51% (5,048) of HIVST distributed were assisted and 49% (4,826) were unassisted.

- 734 (36%) of 2,046 (target) clients initiated on PrEP. Clients were referred to the facility for continuity of care after initiation and the team offered community PrEP refill for those that were not comfortable going to the health facility.
- The project achieved 434% of the target for FP services. 3,560 clients were offered FP services of the 820 annual target set. The clients were referred to the nearest health facilities for their refills and mobile clinics offer community family planning refills to areas where they are not offered.
- 16,356 (100%) AYP screened for TB; 48 (0.29%) clients were TB suspects and referred to health facilities for investigations.
- 116,356 were screened for STIs, 175 (1.07%) of the clients screened positive for an STI and were put on treatment.
- In CAMARA groups, the annual target is 950 achieving viral suppression. 1001 of 1008 (99%) group members aged 10-14 years on ART were virally suppressed.
- The set target for cervical cancer screening on HIV positive female clients was 80 and the project reached 44 (55%) who were eligible for cervical cancer screening.

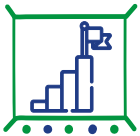


Figure 8: Mobile truck used to provide community services to AYPs



Protecting women, infants, and children from HIV

Baylor Foundation Lesotho is implementing the Protecting Women, Infants, and Children from HIV (PINCH) project which came into effect in July 2021 with a 2-year 9 months implementation period (ending in March 2024). The program is funded by The Global Fund and Baylor Foundation Lesotho is a sub-recipient to the Ministry of Finance PMU. It is implemented in the 5 highlands districts of Mokhotlong, Butha-Buthe, Thaba-Tseka, Quthing, and Qacha's Nek.



Project Goal

PINCH aims to support the national strategy to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV (EMTCT), reducing the rate from 8.73% to less than 5%.



Project objectives

1. Increase uptake of maternal-child health services, including PMTCT, as evidenced by increased ANC attendance, higher PMTCT coverage rates, and timely testing of exposed infants at 6 weeks of age.
2. Retention in care of HIV-exposed infants (HEI) and provision of treatment for all HIV-infected infants.

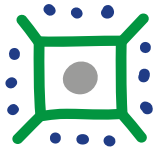
Achievements in this year:

- Overall performance of pregnant women who knew their HIV status at 1st ANC visit from July 2022 to June 2023 was 99.9% (7252) against the set target of 100%. HTS coverage among new ANC clients across all 5 PINCH-supported district per quarter was 99.8%, (1795), 99.9% (1646), 99.9% (2006) and 100% (1805) in Q6, Q7, Q8 & Q9 respectively.
- 100% of HIV-positive women who attended ANC received treatment to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV while the overall performance against the set population-based target was 95% (1166) over the last 12 months.

- The overall performance during the reporting period regarding initial timely testing of HIV-exposed infants is 88% against the set population target of 98%. 86% of infants received virological tests for HIV within 2 months of age in Q6, 74% was reached in Q7 90% in Q8 and 96% in Q9.
- 86% coverage was achieved for documented PMTCT Final Outcome.



Figure 9: Project IEC materials



COVID - 19 Response Mechanism

The COVID 19 Response Mechanism (C19RM), funded by The Global Fund through Ministry of Finance PMU, is aimed at assisting healthcare providers to communicate lifesaving information about COVID-19 and vaccination, combatting misinformation, identifying COVID-19 patients, supporting access to vaccines, and curbing the spread of the virus. The intervention is further aimed at providing mentorship and support to health care workers. The support at the community level includes COVID-19 screening in mobile clinics, and provision of health education by mobile clinic staff and Youth Mentors who are attached at the health facilities. The program further provides psychosocial support (PSS) to both healthcare workers and clients in distress; a psychologist provides services to healthcare workers (HCWs) and communities to help them cope with COVID-19 related stress and stigma. At the facility level, the intervention further includes the provision of COVID-19 screening and referral for rapid tests.

These interventions help promote continuity of essential outreach activities in the era of COVID 19 by:

1. Increasing COVID-19 infection prevention, control, and protection of the health workforce
2. Initiating epidemiological investigation and contact tracing
3. Promoting community awareness through risk communication and engagement

100% (16,356) of AYP were screened for COVID-19 and 48 clients who screened positive were referred to health facilities for further testing and management.



Figure 10: COVID 19 IPC Training for HCWs



FIND TB/COVID19 Project

Baylor Foundation Lesotho is a recipient of funding through FIND to support COVID-19 and TB service provision in the community, COE and the SCOE in Mokhotlong and Butha-Buthe.



The project main objectives are:

1. Improve and increase TB case-finding through linking communities to facilities for screening, testing and linkages to treatment.
2. Support development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) and guidelines on bidirectional TB/COVID-19 screening and testing as a standard of care for both TB/COVID-19 to improve case-finding and linkage to treatment for both conditions.

Key achievements in the first 3 months of implementation include:

- Conducting 54 community outreach activities
- Identifying 30 patients with TB in the community and initiating them on anti-tubercular treatment (ATT)
- Successfully screening all patients presenting at facilities for TB/COVID-19
- Successfully linking 143 clients eligible for TPT to care



ADDITIONAL PROJECTS



Adolescent Program

Baylor Foundation Lesotho established an adolescent clinic on 1st June 2012 when Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital (QMMH) was opened. The adolescent clinic was integrated within this facility with the aim to provide holistic, adolescent-friendly services in a safe space where adolescents could attend independently and access a full range of services. From inception, youth aged 14-20 years were transitioned from the COE site in order to receive services from a dedicated space and team of professionals at the Baylor-Lesotho Adolescent Clinic.

Evidence indicates that ALHIV are underserved by current HIV services, with lower access to testing, ART coverage, viral load suppression (VLS) and high risk of loss to follow-up. Key adolescent populations and pregnant adolescents with HIV are particularly vulnerable. Ultimately, by providing adolescent-focused services the goal was to improve health outcomes.

As of June 2023, there were 829 active patients at Adolescent Clinic. This figure above has steadily declined from a peak of 1,562 patients in 2015, reflecting the successes of PMTCT programs in Lesotho as well as a successful transition of the age cohorts.

The Adolescent Clinic team works in a way that focuses on the needs of this critical group. Emphasis is placed on sexual and reproductive health services including FP, psychosocial assessments with the HEADSS assessment tool and provision of life skills, relationship counselling and mental health support. HIV knowledge continues to be reinforced throughout. The team is careful to be open, friendly, approachable and non-judgmental. The adolescents served give positive feedback and are reluctant to transition out of the clinic when they reach 20 years of age.



Adolescent Clinic Active Patients

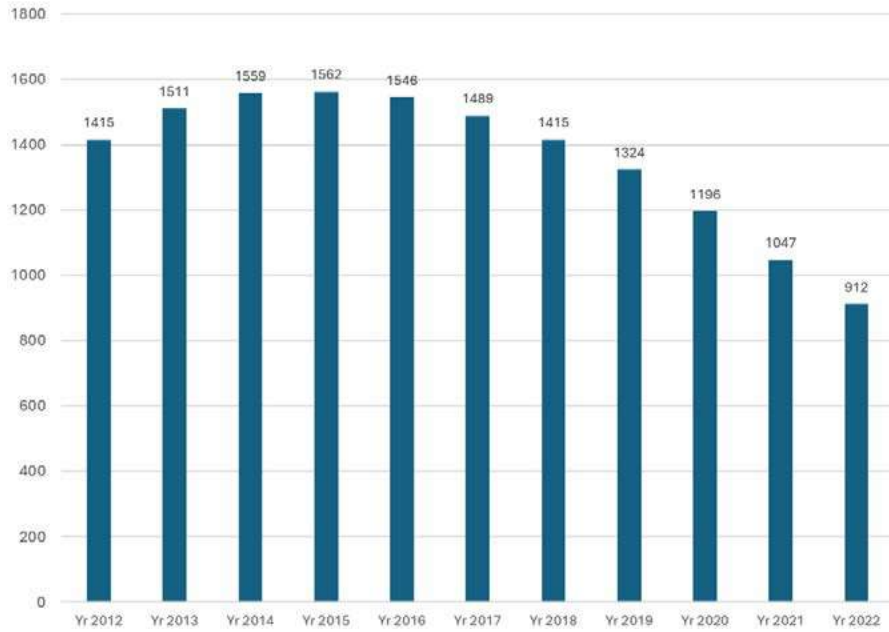


Figure 11: Tx Curr trends for adolescents in care



Adolescent Tx Curr: June 2023

■ Adolescent Females ■ Adolescent Males

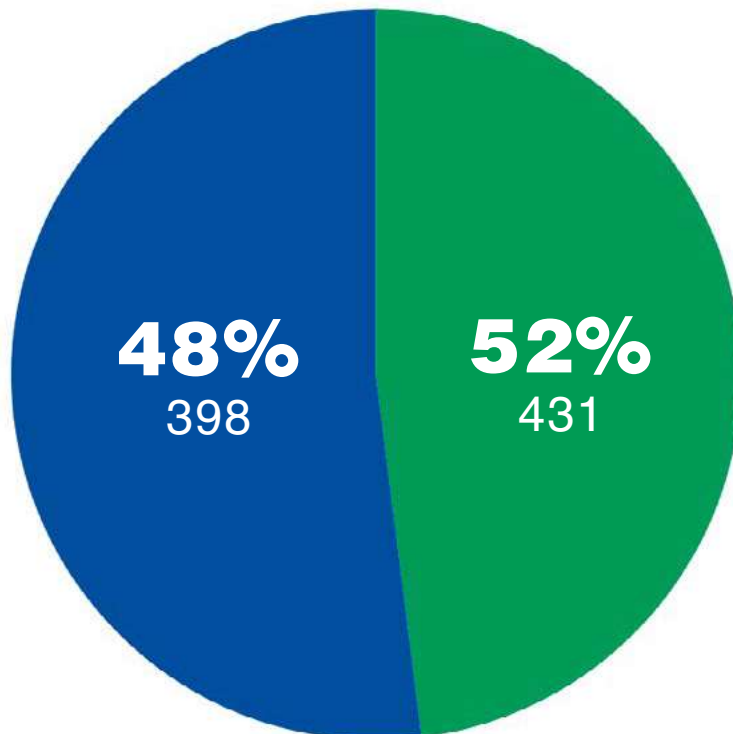


Figure 12: Gender disaggregation for adolescents in care



Radio Shows

From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, radio listenership increased amongst young people as most schools were closed and adolescents were home. Baylor Foundation Lesotho facilitates weekly one hour radio shows on a youth-centred radio station. The purpose of the show is to educate the public about the services provided by Baylor Foundation centres throughout Lesotho. Furthermore, Wise Youth support group members use this platform to share their life stories and make others aware of the importance of adhering to their ART treatment. Other topics discussed include PrEP, PMTCT, cervical cancer screening, STIs and other health related issues.



WhatsApp Hotline

The WhatsApp hotline gives people (including non-Foundation clients) a chance to ask questions about health services and any health-related challenges they face. Clients send questions via this platform at their own convenience; the PSS coordinator shares the questions to the relevant Baylor Foundation Lesotho health professionals for further guidance. Responses are then shared back to clients in a well-coordinated manner.



Teen Club/Wise Youth Private Facebook Group

In addition to utilization of messaging through radio slots and WhatsApp platforms, psycho-social support continues through a Teen Club and Wise Youth Facebook Group. Most of our clients have access to smart phones and use Facebook. One network provider in Lesotho provides Facebook on a free platform, making it accessible for everyone with a smart phone. Key features of the program include:

- The group is private; it is not accessible via standard Facebook search engine,
- Only members in the group can invite peers,

- Administrators and moderators must approve membership requests,
- Before being approved, requestors must provide identifying information to verify clinic enrolment.

The group includes a few Baylor Foundation Lesotho staff members who answer questions and provide guidance and clarification during discussions, allows for discussion on different topics, and addresses the concerns of members. It allows for continued education on HIV and other general health issues. The group has over 405 members currently.

In March 2021, the Foundation established a weekly one-hour meeting on Wednesdays at 20:00- 21:00 pm called 'Family Meeting'. The aim is to have discussions at a time that is convenient for most members. The topics for the Family Meetings align with the theme of the radio show.



Adult Volunteers Training

Adult volunteers are recruited from the Wise Youth group to help Baylor Foundation Lesotho staff with the overall running of Teen Club. They need training to execute their duties and to be role models for the younger members. We were privileged to host a training for adult volunteers in Leribe in May 2023 with 23 volunteers trained.



Caregivers' Day

Baylor Leribe SCOE held its first caregivers' day since resuming PSS events after the COVID-19 pandemic on 20th May 2023 in Leribe. One of the many activities during this event included talking about challenges that caregivers are facing with children on adherence to their ART and the challenges of adolescence, and information sharing sessions from organizations such as the Ministry of Social Development and projects such as KB. We also provided anti-human trafficking information, which has been on the rise since COVID-19, before closing the day with gangsterism, which is one of the growing problems facing adolescents and youth in Lesotho. Both topics were presented by the Lesotho Mounted Police with 73 caregivers and 91 adolescents in attendance.



Sebatatso Social Incubators Entrepreneurships Training

The rate of unemployment in Lesotho keeps on increasing year by year, with youth affected by high unemployment and poverty. There is a dire need for skills development of youth and a strong private sector that creates jobs. Sebatatso Social Incubators (SSI), a non-profit business development organization, collaborated with Baylor Foundation Lesotho to impart entrepreneurial skills to the Wise Youth group in Maseru. Some members of Wise Youth aspire to be entrepreneurs while some are already involved in entrepreneurship activities. The Entrepreneurship and Business Planning Training was organized for 5 days to instil a culture of independence through entrepreneurship. Prior to the 5-day training, a training needs analysis was carried out with 70 youth and training commenced in September 2022 at the Maseru COE.

The overall aim of the training was to help participants discover the qualities and skills they possess that will assist them to become successful entrepreneurs. It was also to introduce them to basic concepts in business planning and equip them with entrepreneurial skills. The plan is to continue these trainings at SCOEs.



Figure 14: Wise Youth members undergoing entrepreneurial training.



SUCCESS STORY

MANKONE CHABANA



“I attended every AGYW sessions held by KB. We had SILC groups where we were guided on how to save money and be able to use money profitably.”

My name is Mankone Chabana, aged 24. I am a Mosotho girl born into a family of four. I was born and raised in Maseru, Haletsane. I graduated from the University of Botho where I obtained my honors degree in Health Information Management. I eagerly joined the job market, but I quickly discovered the harsh realities of job hunting. After going four months without a job, I started to get angry at the lack of opportunities. The tunnel did, however, soon have a light at the end of it. Let me elaborate more on this. I have never had issues or found myself in issues pertaining to violence, divorce, poverty, and HIV/AIDS. However, I was always interested in learning more about them. A friend of mine invited me over to one of the interventions held by Baylor - Karabo ea Bophelo. Wasn't I impressed? Indeed, I was.

The topics talked a lot about HIV/AIDS Violence amongst AGYW (Adolescent Girls and young women). There I was, found myself attending different interventions held by KB, participating and asking questions where need be. My journey with KB started in January 2021; from that moment, I felt good about myself and proud for taking part in such activities. Sometime around February 2021, KB offered an Internship. I applied and thankfully got accepted; from that moment, I felt my life having a turning point. I was enrolled in DREAMS and offered an internship for 1 year at Baylor - Karabo ea Bophelo Maseru Hub. The benefits that came along with the internship program were really amazing. I attended every AGYW session held by KB. We had SILC groups where we were guided on how to save money and be able to use money profitably. I am confident to say my saving strategies have really improved and I am able to use my money wisely.

I was extremely happy and still happy for the opportunity. I am really thankful to God and KB for the opportunity. If it wasn't for KB, I would be home doing nothing or finding myself in situations that will not benefit or improve me at all. I want to thank KB for the experience, knowledge, and skills I got from the internship and AGYW groups for mentoring me to become determined, resilient, empowered, AIDS-free, mentored, and being a safe woman. I got placed under the department of Strategic Information where I consolidate, filter, concatenate, and remove duplicates using Excel. I also capture and clean Covid-19 vaccination data using Excel.

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