

Capacity Development and Support Program (CDS)

Books for Africa Donation

June 2021



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1. Introduction and Background

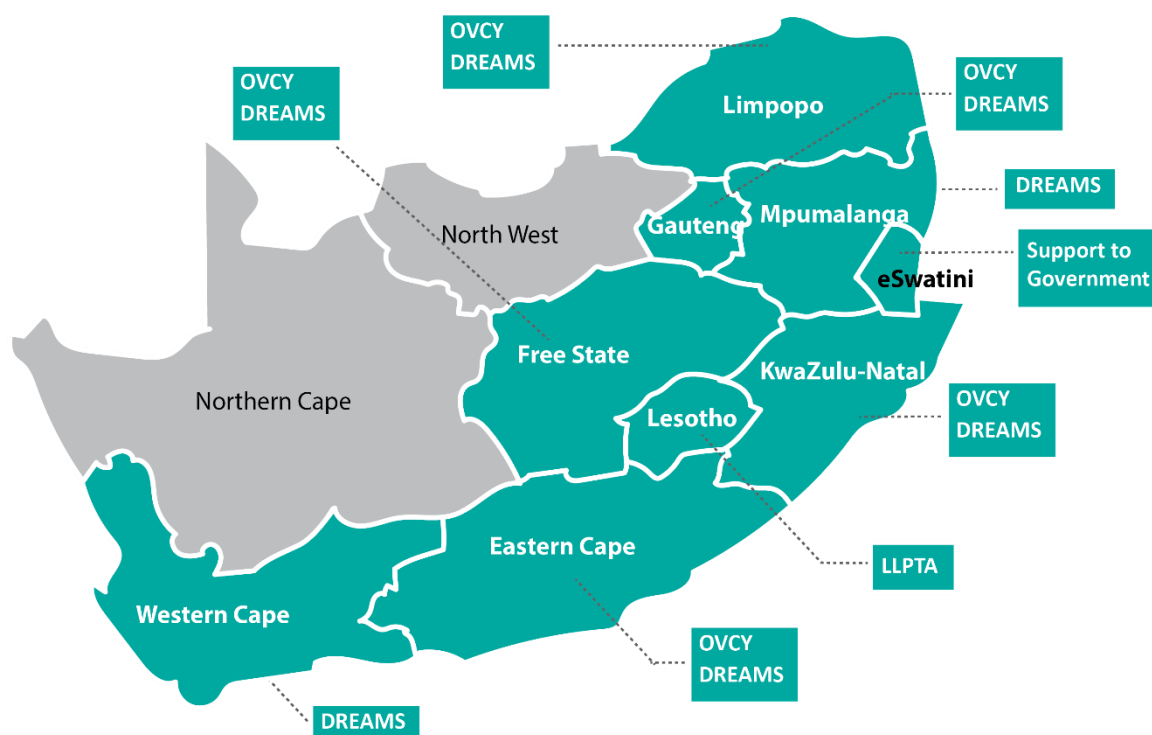
FHI 360 South Africa, through the Capacity Development and Support (CDS) Program, implemented orphans and vulnerable youth projects in COP 20, reaching more than 190 000 vulnerable youth across four provinces in South Africa. As part of their USAID/PEPFAR contractual obligations, and in support of holistic care and support for youths, CDS engaged Books for Africa to donate relevant books for OVCY implementing partners. Books for Africa supported CDS in donating approximately 40,000 books, which were used to establish libraries, play centers, resource centers and improve school resources for children 0- 17 years.

2. Capacity Development and Support Program

The Capacity Development and Support (CDS) project (2014-2024) under FHI 360 is funded by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through USAID. CDS contributes to the goal of mitigating the impact of HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and tuberculosis (TB) through technical and organizational capacity strengthening support to South African Government (SAG) and PEPFAR implementing partners.

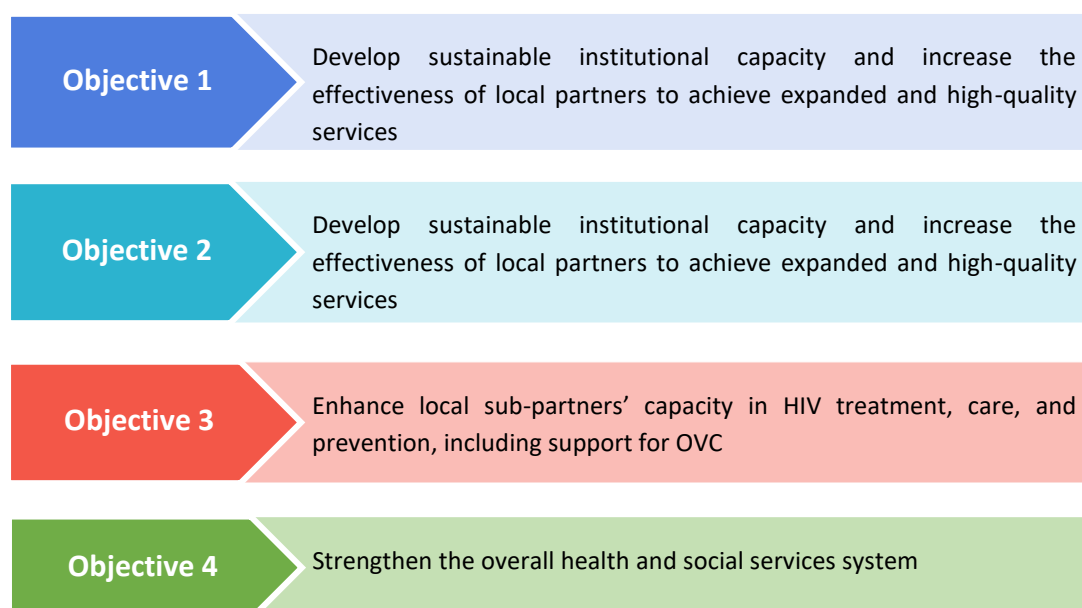
Geographic Overview

The CDS project is implemented in South Africa PEPFAR 3.0 priority districts with high HIV prevalence within seven provinces and in 2019, expanded and started implementation in Lesotho and eSwatini as the map below shows.



Program Objectives and Components

The CDS project has the following **strategic objectives**:



Orphans and Vulnerable Children and Youth (OVCY) Program

CDS currently implements the OVCY family strengthening program to contribute to the achievement of the 90-90-90 goals towards epidemic control and an AIDS-free generation. The goal of the CDS OVCY program is to improve the health and well-being of children and families by mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS, increasing children's resilience, and reducing their risk of HIV infection. In COP 20 CDS managed 8 sub-awardees to implement the OVCY program: reaching 190,125 beneficiaries. Below is a table showing the sub awardees who benefited from the donated books.

Table 1: Sub-awardees per Province and District

Sub awardee	Province	Districts
HOPE worldwide South Africa	Gauteng	City of Johannesburg- Region C
Kheth'Impilo	KwaZulu-Natal	Alfred Nzo, Chris Hani & OR Tambo
Vukuzithathe	KwaZulu-Natal	Harry Gwala
Small Projects Foundation	Eastern Cape	Buffalo City Municipality & Amathole
Choice Trust	Limpopo	Mopani

Future Families	Gauteng	Ekurhuleni and City of Johannesburg Region A
NICDAM	Gauteng and Free State	City of Johannesburg- Region C Lejweleputswa
AIDS Foundation of South Africa	KwaZulu-Natal	King Cetshwayo & Ugu

3. Books for Africa

Books for Africa is a non-profit organization dedicated to collecting, sorting, shipping, and distributing books to children and adults in Africa. With headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota, USA, and warehouses in St. Paul and Atlanta, Georgia, BFA's mission is to end the book famine in Africa.

The first meeting between CDS and Books for Africa took place in May 2018. The repeated donations were discussed with implementing partners and it was decided that an order of two containers would benefit the youths and the CDS program during COP 20. The first quarter of COP 20 was utilized to organize the administration, tax clearance, import, and sea freight of the two containers. The actual final order for age-specific books for the OVC project was placed with Books for Africa on March 1, 2020.

Books ordered were for ages in grades 1 to 4, grades 5 to 8, grades 9 – 12, and post-secondary books. Categories included leisure reading, English reading, social studies, science, math, health, sports business, and computer sciences, relevant to the different ages.

4. Distribution of Books

Books for Africa donated over 41,000 books to FHI 360. The shipment of 1,131 boxes were received in South Africa in early August 2020. The books were transported to Johannesburg where the courier company sorted the books for final distribution. All books were distributed to the eight implementing partners by May 2021. All boxes were tracked and signed for by the implementing partners, to ensure all boxes were distributed and received as planned. The number of books/boxes were allocated to each implementing partner proportional to their total OVCY targets for COP20. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown, some restrictions were imposed on the country which affected the distribution process.



Figure 1: Packaging of Books for Africa for implementing partners

The number of boxes and estimated books delivered to each CDS OVCY implementing partner is documented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Number of boxes and estimated total number of books per implementing partner

All OVCY Partners	Estimated Books	Boxes
Kheth'Impilo	8182	144
HOPE worldwide South Africa	2 514	100
Small Projects Foundation	3 314	144
Choice Trust	1 886	145
Vukuzithathe	2 514	100
Future Families	2 110	144
NICDAM	2 744	145
AIDS Foundation of South Africa	3 081	209
Totals	41 734	1 131

The number of books/boxes per book category allocated to each implementing partner is shown in table 3 below:

Table 3: Book category allocated per implementing partner

Subject	Implementing Partner															
	AFSA		Future Families		Kheth'Impilo		SPF		CHoiCe Trust		NICDAM		HWSA		Vukuzithathe	
	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books
Pjr/Leisure "	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	10	5	185	5	185
Pjr/ERS	13	480	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	6	221	6	221
Psr/Science	14	517	8	295	8	295	8	295	8	295	8	295	7	258	7	258
Psr/ERS	11	406	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	6	221	6	221
S/Science	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	10	5	185	5	185
S/Adult Fiction	3	111	3	111	3	111	3	111	3	111	3	111	3	111	3	111
S/World History	16	590	6	221	6	221	6	221	6	221	6	221	6	221	6	221
S/SVH	6	221	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	3	111	3	111

S/English Literature	8	295	8	295	8	295	8	295	8	295	8	295	4	148	4	148
Pjr/Math,	17	627	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258
Pjr/Science	20	738	9	332	9	332	9	332	9	332	9	332	12	443	12	443
S/Math	9	332	8	295	8	295	8	295	8	295	8	295	4	148	4	148
Psr/Leisure	11	406	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	4	148	4	148
Psr/Math "	12	443	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	6	221	6	221
S/Health	8	295	6	221	6	221	6	221	6	221	6	221	4	148	4	148
P/Art	17	627	3	111	3	111	3	111	3	111	3	111	7	258	7	258
Pjr/Health	9	332	9	332	9	332	9	332	9	332	9	332	5	185	5	185
Psr/Health	10	369	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	7	258	5	185	5	185
Psr/Leisure	5	185	6	221	6	221	6	221	7	258	7	258	5	185	5	185
Pjr/Leisure "	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	369	10	10	5	185	5	185

Below are examples of the distribution of books that took place among the implementing partners.

Figure 2: Future Families youth receiving Books for Africa books



Figure 3: Educators in KwaZulu-Natal receiving Books for Africa Book



5. Local Book allocations

The implementing partners used different allocation methodologies to distribute books to service points, youths, or resource centers, dependent upon their project designs and access to resources and spaces.

Figure 4: Beneficiaries and community stakeholders receiving Books for Africa in KwaZulu-Natal



Distribution to Resource Centres and Libraries

OVC implementing partners received Maths, English literacy, biology, social science, novels, fiction, psychology, medical and health books. The resource centers and libraries support adolescents aged group of 10-17 years. The youths in this age group are best supported with specific resource centers where they can visit to read or borrow relevant books. Specific resource centers included the following:

- AFSA has established their resource center at their community-based office, within the community where they implement the project. The center has been set up with desks, shelves, and books to support youths to study and read in a safe environment
- Future Families and NICDAM have both opted to establish libraries in their own decentralized, community offices, as well as donating books to local organizations working specifically with youths and children.

Figure 5: Children enjoying the Books for Africa in Empilweni in Ekurhuleni North



Distribution to Schools

Schools remain a safe space for children where many activities are implemented by the partners.

Most of the OVC implementing partners have therefore strengthened or established school libraries, to ensure that youths can access these books. Some schools had established libraries, but failed to have any, or any substantial number, of books; these schools have been extremely grateful for these books

Figure 6: An Intermediate School in Ixopo Village receiving Books for Africa to fill up their previously empty library



Besides the common need for books at the schools, Choice Trust also identified several local community centers, health facilities, and orphanages to support reading corners, resource centers, and youth stimulation

6. How do books contribute to the success of OVC projects?

The CDS OVCY project focuses on truly vulnerable children in the communities. Each beneficiary enrolled in either of the OVCY projects comes from a household at risk or affected by HIV. Over 20% of all children are HIV positive themselves and more than half are either single or double orphans.

Education, retention in schools and reading/stimulation remains a crucial aspect of the services provided to these youth. The possibility to provide these youths with easy access to books, libraries, and resource centers is amazing and something that is most often taken for granted.

Most of the schools and communities do not have readily available books and libraries. Community centers are often sparsely resourced and health facilities have little to entertain or stimulate youths and children during long hours at a clinic.

Through the donation of these books over 190,000 beneficiaries including caregivers, now have better access to books and resources, stimulation, entertainment safe spaces, and knowledge. The following points highlight some of the successes the OVCY implementing partners experienced and observed following the receipt of the books.

- Caregivers can provide better/additional child stimulation by reading books aloud to children, stimulating their imagination, and expanding their understanding of the world.
- The books help them develop language and listening skills and prepares them to understand the written word.
- Child stimulation for the most vulnerable children is key in the OVC program and the books will enhance child development.
- Caregiver-child bonds develop as caregivers spend time with children and help them with language and cognitive development. The books and reading will help caregivers be the primary teacher in the child's life
- The donation of books strengthens relationships with schools, health facilities, and other stakeholders, which ultimately strengthens the outcomes of the OVCY projects
- Most of the beneficiaries are from truly disadvantaged communities with no libraries, resource centers, or access to technology; the donation of these books supports the youth to have resources to complement their school-work and complete projects as required

- Future Families emphasized that the donations from Books for Africa have allowed partners to give more to the beneficiaries in terms of their academic contribution; over and above the routine focus on health issues, HIV/AIDS, social issues, orphans, and gender-based violence. The books are a vital resource for students, researchers, and academics, keen on learning more about African and global history, health issues, social and cultural affairs, politics, and many other topics
- SPF also outlined that as they already run groups with their beneficiaries and do school performance tracking, students who are struggling at school were recommended to come to the library where their care workers try to assist beneficiaries with the subject they are struggling with. Saturdays are also used as library days where they can come collect books and do their research for their projects.

7. Comments and successes

Vukuzithathe donated books to Masakhane Women's Organization in UBuhlebezwe and received specific thanks: "Establishing and maintaining a sound relationship with stakeholders which has strengthened the collaboration and promoted the culture of reading in our communities."

Figure 7: Masakhane Women's Organization receiving their Books for Africa



In her appreciation remarks, the manager of Haya Ha fhulufhelo in Ekurhuleni North said, "I'm so excited at receiving these books. We are going to establish a mini library at this center and encourage our beneficiaries to read these stories. We might inspire a few of them to become writers or authors. These books will go a long way in opening up the minds of our children in this community"

A quote from uMyeka librarian "Thank you very much for the books, I did not expect this quantity, it will help a lot in the library as you can see, we have a lot of shelves that are empty due to a shortage of books", they also said that they are planning on initiating a school

magazine, they, therefore, asked for us to share the pictures with them so they put this on their school magazine.

Beneficiaries who received books at the Diepsloot office were excited and happy to receive books. They indicated that it would improve their reading skills. They even suggested that they should have a Spelling Bee competition to generate excitement in the community on reading widely.

8. Challenges and mitigating strategies:

Table 4: Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Challenge	Solution
COVID-19 Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The challenge of the COVID-19 restrictions negatively impacted the distribution of Books to beneficiaries. The process took longer than expected.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing partners worked closely with government, schools, and community stakeholders to distribute books to beneficiaries.
Establishing space to set up libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This challenge was addressed by creating a resource center using existing decentralized, community offices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books were shared to other exiting libraries which had no books on shelves
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members and volunteers assisted in setting up books on the shelves
Distribution of books/delivery of the books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers and volunteers were appointed from the organizations to deliver the books
Limited office space to store and sort the books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing partners accelerated their plans for sorting and distribution
Language barriers – for many beneficiaries English is a second or third language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregivers and volunteers were appointed to translate to the youth/beneficiaries