

Capacity Development and Support Program (CDS)

Books for Africa Donation

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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 18, that reached in excess of 179 000 vulnerable youth across five provinces in South Africa. As part of their USAID/PEPFAR contractual obligations, and in support of wholistic 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 roughly 40 000 books, which have been utilized to establish libraries, play centres, resource centres and improve school resources for youths ranging from infants through to 24 years.

2. Capacity Development and Support Program

The Capacity Development and Support (CDS) project (2014-2024) is an FHI 360 managed and implemented project, funded by USAID South Africa under the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). 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 four provinces: KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Eastern Cape. In COP 19 CDS expanded into Southern Africa and started implementation in Lesotho and eSwatini.

Program Objectives and Components

The CDS project has the following strategic objectives, in support of orphans and vulnerable children and youth (OVCY) programs, DREAMS school-based and AGYW HIV and violence prevention programs, as well as NGO capacity development and specific South African Government technical advisory placement opportunities:

1. Support the provision of sustainable high-quality services in HIV and AIDS in South Africa through strategic approaches that address specific needs with practical and pragmatic business plans for implementation
2. Develop sustainable institutional capacity and increase the effectiveness of local partners to achieve expanded and high-quality services
3. Enhance local sub-partners' capacity in treatment, care and prevention, including support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC)

Orphans and Vulnerable Children and Youth (OVCY) Programs

CDS currently implements three separate OVCY projects, seek to contribute to the achievement of the 95-95-95 goals to achieve epidemic control and an AIDS-free generation by responding to the social, economic and emotional consequences of the HIV and AIDS on children, their families and the communities that support them. 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 18 CDS managed 14 sub-awardees to implement the three OVCY programs; reaching in excess of 179 000 youths.

Table 1: Three CDS OVCY Projects:



Early Childhood Household Stimulation	ReACH	Bridge
Focus on 0 to 9-year-old youths and caregivers	Focus on 10 to 17-year-old youths and caregivers	Economic strengthening focused OVCY project focused on 15 to 24-year-old youths
22 921 youth	75 987 youth	77 000 youth

i. Early Childhood Household Stimulation (ECHS)

The goal of the ECHS initiative is to improve the well-being of vulnerable children between 0-9 years of age and their caregivers by mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS, reducing their risk and vulnerability, and increasing their resilience and likelihood that they will grow up to be healthy, educated and socially adjusted adults

ECHS uses a family-centred case management approach to meet the individual and specific needs of families and their children. The key components of the ECHS model include: case finding, home visiting, playgroups or caregiver circles of support activities to facilitate age-specific child development, health and social protection interventions, referrals and linkage to high impact HIV services, including HIV testing, linkage to anti-retroviral treatment, adherence support, viral load monitoring and follow up of treatment defaulters. HIV negative beneficiaries are referred to HIV prevention services to ensure they remain HIV-free.

The ECHS project is implemented in Mpumalanga, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. The partners implementing ECHS program are:

- **mothers2mothers (m2m)** - Mpumalanga
- **HOPE worldwide South Africa (HWWSA)** – Gauteng
- **Kheth’Impilo (KI)** – KwaZulu-Natal
- **The Valley Trust (TVT)** – KwaZulu-Natal



Image 1: HOPE worldwide children receiving Books for Africa books

ii. Reaching Adolescents and Children at their Households (ReACH)

The ReACH project seeks to improve the well-being of OVCY by mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS, reducing their risk and vulnerability, and increasing their resilience and likelihood of growing up to be healthy, educated and socially well-adjusted adults.

The ReACH program is implemented in Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape. The following partners are implementing the ReACH program:

- **Vukuzithathe** – KwaZulu-Natal
- **Small Projects Foundation (SPF)** – Eastern Cape
- **NACOSA** – Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal
- **Choice Trust** – Limpopo



Image 2: ReACH program youths receiving books in Maphata Village

iii. Bridge Project: Support, Prepare and Engage Vulnerable Youth

The goal of the Bridge Project: Support, Prepare and Engage Vulnerable Youth is to improve the health and economic security of vulnerable youth by addressing the socio-economic factors that mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS, thereby reducing their risk and vulnerability, and providing them with structured support during their transition to becoming healthy, educated and socially well-adjusted adults.

The Bridge project is implemented in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. The following partners are implementing the program:

- **Future Families (FF)** – Gauteng
- **Grassroot Soccer (GRS)** – Gauteng
- **NICDAM** – Gauteng
- **AIDS Foundation of South Africa (AFSA)** – KwaZulu-Natal
- **Youth for Christ KZN (YFC)** – KwaZulu-Natal



Image 3: Future Families youths receiving Books for Africa books

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 potential 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 18. The first quarter of COP 18 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 three different OVCY projects was placed with Books for Africa on March 1, 2019.

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 40,000 books to FHI 360. The shipment of 1 120 boxes were received in South Africa early July 2019. The books were transported to Johannesburg where the courier company sorted the books for final distribution. All books were distributed to the 14 implementing partners middle of July. All boxes were tracked and signed for by the implementing partners, to ensure all boxes were distributed and received as planned. Number of books/boxes were allocated to each implementing partner proportional to their total OVCY targets for COP 18.

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

All OVCY Partners	Estimated Books	Boxes
Kheth'Impilo	2 200	56
mothers2mothers	3 143	80
The Valley Trust	943	24
HOPE <i>worldwide</i> South Africa	2 514	64
Small Projects Foundation	3 314	80
NACOSA KZN	4 400	112
NACOSA E.C	5 657	144
Choice Trust	1 886	48
Vukuzithathe	2 514	64
Future Families	2 110	64
NICDAM	2 744	84
Youth for Christ KZN	3 081	93
AIDS Foundation of South Africa	3 081	93
Grassroots Soccer	3 755	114
Totals	41 342	1 120

The number of books/boxes per book category, distributed to each implementing partner, was allocated as tabulated in tables 3 – 5 below;

Table 3: ECHS implementing partners book category allocations:

Name of Partners	Kheth'Impilo		mothers2mothers		The Valley Trust		HOPE <i>worldwide</i> South Africa	
	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books
Primary Junior/Leisure	42	1650	60	2358	18	708	48	1884
Primary Junior/English Reading Skills	7	275	10	393	3	118	8	314
Primary Junior/Leisure Mondo	7	275	10	393	3	118	8	314
Totals	56	2200	80	3143	24	943	64	2514

Table 4: ReACH implementing partners book category allocations:

Name of Partners	NACOSA KZN		CHOICE		SPF		Vukuzithathe		NACOSA E.C	
Subject	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books
Secondary/Adult Fiction	21	825	9	354	15	588	12	471	27	1062
Secondary/ English Literature "WV"	7	275	3	118	5	196	4	157	9	354
Secondary/ English Literature	14	550	6	236	10	392	8	314	18	708
Primary Senior/Leisure	35	1375	15	590	25	980	20	785	45	1770
Primary Senior/English Reading Skills	28	1100	12	472	20	784	16	628	36	1416
Primary Senior/Mondo	7	275	3	118	5	196	4	157	9	354
Total	112	4400	48	1888	80	3143	64	2514	144	5657

Table 4: Bridge implementing partners book category allocations:

Name of the partners	AFSA		Future Families		NICDAM		GRS		YFC	
Subject	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books	Boxes	Books
Post-secondary/Social Science	6	135	4	90	5	112	7	157	6	135
Post-secondary /Business & Eco	6	135	4	90	5	112	7	157	6	135
Post-secondary /Medical & Health	2	45	2	45	3	67	4	90	3	67
Post-secondary /Science & Engineering	2	45	2	45	3	67	4	90	3	67
Post-secondary /English Comm	6	135	4	90	5	112	7	157	6	135
Secondary/Adult Fiction	24	944	16	628	20	784	7	1100	24	944
Secondary /Math "WV"	6	236	4	157	5	196	7	275	6	236
Secondary/Math	6	236	4	157	5	196	7	275	6	236
Secondary/English Literature	12	472	8	314	10	392	14	550	12	472
Secondary/Social Studies	2	79	2	79	3	118	4	157	3	118
Secondary/Science	2	79	2	79	3	118	4	157	3	118
PS/Math	6	135	4	90	7	157	7	157	4	90
Post-secondary/Computer Science	6	135	4	90	5	112	7	157	6	135
Post-secondary/Social Science	6	135	4	90	5	112	7	157	6	135
Secondary/Health	3	118	2	79	2	79	3	118	2	79
Secondary/Sports	4	157	2	79	3	118	4	157	3	118
Totals	93	3081	64	2110	84	2744	114	3755	93	3081



Image 5: Books for Africa books on their way to NACOSA

5. Local book allocations

The different OVCY implementing partners used different allocation methodologies to allocate books to service points, youths or resource centres, dependent upon their own project designs and access to resources and space.

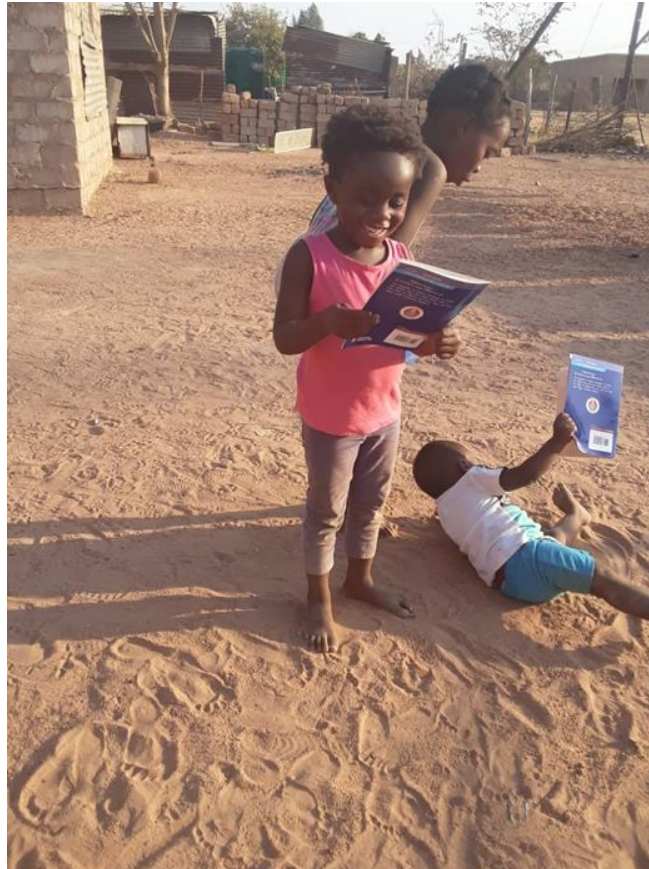


Image 6: mothers2mothers beneficiary receiving her first book ever

Early Childhood Centres and health facilities

The ECHS project focuses on various service centres, such as health facilities or community centres, as well as households and caregiver visits. The ECHS books were therefore distributed to an array of different points and often donated to caregivers to have available for household reading and ongoing infant and youth stimulation. The books were predominantly for child development, but also included cartoon books, children's poetry, children's stories, fairy tales and fantasy books, as well as biographies, historical, science and young adults' fiction to ensure the caregivers also receive much needed books.

- HWWSA and m2m donated numerous books to Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres
- m2m distributed several boxes to their local health facilities, Siyabuswa Community Health Centre (CHC) and Ackerville CHC, for Mentor Mothers and facility health care workers to establish play corners for beneficiaries coming for services at the facilities

- Field workers from each of the four ECHS implementing partners took books with to home visits to use during stimulation sessions and leave with households, as most of the households do not have any books
- All the implementing partners established or strengthened already existing resource centres in their own offices and care centres.



Image 7: HOPE worldwide facilitator conducting playgroup and reading sessions with the children

Resource Centres and Libraries

BRIDGE partners received math, English literacy, biology, social science, novels, fiction, psychology, medical and health books. The program supports the age group of 14-24 and the beneficiaries are taking the mentioned subjects at schools. Youths in this age group are best supported with specific resource centres where they can visit to read or borrow the relevant books. Specific resource centres included the following;

- YFC KZN identified their local schools and community centres to establish, or contribute to existing, libraries to ensure the youth in their projects access the relevant books in locations close to their homes
- AFSA have established their own resource centre at their community-based office, within the community where they implement the project. The centre has been set up with desks, shelves and books to support youths to study and read in a safe environment
- Grassroot Soccer chose to use several different opportunities to distribute their allocation. They identified three different schools, three orphanages and several child support organizations to help them establish or improve their libraries/resource centres. Childline and Afrika Tikkon are two organizations that open their libraries to the general community as well. Furthermore, they also established an internal library where their field workers can sign out books to use in the field and return for new books a week or two later.

- 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. One such organization is the SOS Children’s Village, outside Pretoria, which had a container specifically allocated as a library, but they were never able to source books for the container.



Image 8: The SOS Children’s Village container Future Families could help fill with books

Schools

The ReACH project youths are predominantly aged 9 to 17 and are all of school going ages. Schools remain safe spaces for these youths and many activities implemented by the implementing partners are hosted at the local school facilities.

- Most of the ReACH 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.
- NACOSA KZN has teamed up with Teenagers and Youth Health South Africa to roll out Book Reading Clubs in schools to encourage and motivate youths to read more
- Besides the common need for books at the schools, Choice Trust also identified several local community centres, health facilities and orphanages to support reading corners, resource centres and youth stimulation.



Image 9: Insingizi Primary School in KwaZulu-Natal had empty library shelves prior to the Books for Africa donation

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

The CDS OVCY projects focus on truly vulnerable youths and communities. Each youth enrolled in either of the OVCY projects comes from a household at risk or affected by HIV in some ways. Over 20% of all youths are HIV positive themselves and more than half of the youths 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 centres 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 centres 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 180 000 youths, as well as caregivers, now have better access to books and resources, stimulation, entertainment safe spaces and knowledge. The following points highlight some of the success the implementing partners get from receiving these books;

ECHS Program:

- 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 are key in the ECHS project 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



Image 10: HOPE worldwide caregivers received books at their group sessions

ReACH program:

- NACOSA in KZN outlined that the initiative has empowered young children and youth to grow and succeed. Many beneficiaries in the ReACH program experience difficulties with the English language because it is their second language. These books assist them tremendously on improving their language and communication skills.
- One of the schools had empty shelves before the interventions from Books for Africa
- The donation of books strengthens relationships with schools, health facilities and other stakeholders, which ultimately strengthens the outcomes of the OVCY projects

BRIDGE program:

- Most of the beneficiaries are from truly disadvantaged communities with no libraries, resource centres or access to technology; the donation of these books supports the youth to have resources to compliment their school work and complete projects as required
- Future Families emphasised that the donations from Books for Africa has 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
- Future Families 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.



Image 11: Grassroot Soccer youths receiving their books

7. Comments and successes

- In Foneni Village the ChoiCE Trust staff member started a book club with young girls in the ReACH project. The Principal and Life Orientation teacher at Mawana High School was so overwhelmed with emotions and offered that CHoiCE can use the school for all events in the community.
- Grassroots Soccer donated books to Afrika Tikku and received specific thanks: *“Thank you for supporting young people on their journey to empower themselves and create their own destiny. Your investment of books has brought joy, growth and dignity to many families across South Africa”*
- *“Our partnership with NACOSA will enable Teenagers and Youth SA to empower hundreds of children through the use of valuable reading materials”* – Mthokozisi Luthuli, Director: Teenagers and Youth SA
- 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.

- Dumehlezi principal *“Books are very expensive, we are very grateful that we are one of the schools you chose to donate to, you could have chosen other schools but you chose us we do not take this for granted, they will be very helpful to us as teachers and to the learners as well, the school does not have much resources”*. The principal went on to say they appreciate the role of YFC in their school.
- One teacher at NACOSA KZN commented that *“The arrival of these books has been God sent – we have been waiting for years to receive resources like this to help improve the reading and understanding of our rural children, thanks a million!”*

8. Challenges and mitigating strategies:

Challenge	Solution
Establishing space to set up libraries	• This challenge was addressed by creating resource centre using existing decentralized, community offices
	• Books were shared to other existing libraries which had no books on shelves
	• Staff members and volunteers assisted in setting up books in the shelves
Distribution of books/delivery of the books	• Drivers and volunteers were appointed from the organisation to deliver the materials
Limited office space to store and sort the books	• Implementing partners accelerated their plans for sorting and distribution
Language barriers – for many beneficiaries English is a second or third language	• Caregivers and volunteers were appointed to translate to the youth/beneficiaries