

# CDS support to DREAMS implementation in South Africa

## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT (CDS)

The CDS project (2014-2019), funded by USAID/South Africa, contributes to the goal of mitigating the impact of HIV, STIs and TB by providing capacity strengthening to civil society organizations and the South African Government, increasing their effectiveness in achieving expanded and high-quality services.



DREAMS Ambassadors at a leadership camp in October 2016

Despite significant progress in addressing the HIV epidemic globally, adolescent girls and young women remain one of the most vulnerable populations to HIV infection, particularly in East and Southern Africa. In South Africa, there are more than 2,300 new infections among those aged 15-24 years each week.<sup>1</sup>

In response, the South African government is partnering with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Girl Effect to reduce new HIV infections in adolescent girls and young women in South Africa. This effort targets adolescent girls aged 10-19 both in and out of school, orphans and vulnerable children aged 10-19, young women aged 20-24, and male sexual partners aged 20-49.

## COUNTRY OVERVIEW

For more than 25 years, FHI 360 has been working as a strategic partner to the Government of South Africa and South African civil society. We have implemented a wide range of technical assistance projects at national, provincial and community levels to strengthen policies and programs that prevent the transmission of HIV, provide high-quality HIV care and treatment, strengthen nutritional assessment and counselling and support, improve reproductive health, increase access to family planning, and strengthen partners' technical and organizational capacity.

## WHAT IS DREAMS?

The objective of DREAMS, an initiative in 10 sub-Saharan African countries, is to help adolescent girls and young women become **Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe**. It delivers a core package of interventions that combine evidence-based approaches that go beyond the health sector, addressing the structural and social drivers that directly and indirectly increase girls' HIV risk, including poverty, gender inequality, gender-based violence and a lack of education. The USAID-funded Capacity Development and Support (CDS) project is a technical partner to ensure the successful implementation of this two-year initiative, and will support the achievement of the DREAMS goal of reducing new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women between the ages of 15-24 years by 40% within two years.

CDS is supporting DREAMS implementation in all five priority districts in South Africa, including eThekweni, uMgungundlovu and uMkhanyakude in KwaZulu-Natal province, and the City of Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni in Gauteng province. These priority

<sup>1</sup> UNAIDS, 2013.

districts, with specific sub-districts, are targeted as those with a high burden and transmission of HIV.

## CORE ACTIVITIES

CDS is partnering with South African organizations to implement several core activities under DREAMS. These include:

- **School-based HIV and violence prevention** in the City of Johannesburg
- **HIV testing services and condom promotion and provision** in eThekweni and uMkhanyakude
- **Community mobilization and norms change, post-violence care and psychosocial support** in uMkhanyakude, eThekweni, and the City of Johannesburg

A key component of the DREAMS initiative is the layering effect – provision of a package of services customized to each individual's need, with a strong linkage and referral system among service providers. CDS is providing monitoring and evaluation technical assistance and encouraging establishment of strong relationships among stakeholders for a cohesive, effective approach. In addition, CDS is supporting the following:

- **Research studies** on the characterization of male sex partners of adolescent girls and young women, and provision of pre-exposure prophylaxis to young women at high risk of HIV infection
- Adaptation and application of **evidence-based curriculum** including Vhutshilo 1 and 2, and Let's Talk
- Coaching and mentoring of girls as **DREAMS Ambassadors** to represent the DREAMS initiative in their communities

## A DEEPER LOOK

CDS has held two DREAMS Ambassador Leadership Camps with adolescent girls and young women aged 13-24 years. These camps have empowered the Ambassadors with the skills and capacity to contribute to the DREAMS initiative.

*DREAMS Ambassador voices:*

"It was such a great experience because I found myself – who I am and who I want to be. I learned that you should not let the past determine your future, and anything is possible if you just believe in yourself."

"In order to lead others, you need to know how to lead yourself first and know what you want and what you stand for. In that way you will be able to become a role model in your school and community."

Read more about DREAMS at: [www.pepfar.gov/partnerships/ppp/dreams/](http://www.pepfar.gov/partnerships/ppp/dreams/)

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### About FHI 360

FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research, technology, communication and social marketing – creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 70 countries and all U.S. states and territories.