OUR PROGRAM: SWAZILAND

Working with Women, Children, and Families to Eliminate Pediatric AIDS

HIV in Swaziland

Approximately 200,000 people are living with HIV in Swaziland, including about 27.4 percent of the adult population. Of those, about 10,000 are children under the age of 15. (UNAIDS, 2013)

By the end of 2013, the rate of mother-to-child transmission of HIV was approximately 10 percent. (UNAIDS, 2013).

About the Swaziland Program

The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) began supporting the Kingdom of Swaziland in 2003 to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to provide HIV/AIDS care and treatment programs for those living with the virus. EGPAF’s work ensures that women, children, and families living with HIV have access to comprehensive, high-quality HIV services including HIV testing, counseling, treatment, and psychosocial support, particularly for children and adolescents, in multiple health settings.

EGPAF-Swaziland supports the Ministry of Health (MOH) GKOS MOH to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate programs according to epidemic patterns across the country. EGPAF-Swaziland also supports improved infrastructure for laboratory services and service delivery. EGPAF-Swaziland also works to strengthen health systems through procurement of essential HIV drugs and commodities; and to increase community engagement in prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, early infant HIV diagnosis and male circumcision. By December 2013, EGPAF was supporting PMTCT and HIV testing and counseling (HTC) activities in 144 sites in all regions across the country.

Key Program Accomplishments

Since 2004, EGPAF-Swaziland has worked with the Swazi Ministry of Health (MOH) to combat the national HIV epidemic by:

- Providing more than 181,000 women with PMTCT services.
- Testing nearly 162,000 pregnant women for HIV.
- Ensuring more than 70,000 HIV-positive pregnant women received antiretroviral prophylaxis (ARVs).

*Data cumulative from program start through December 31, 2013.*
**Key Projects and Activities in Swaziland**

EGPAF supports programs in Swaziland to improve the lives of the people through empowering communities on issues concerning their health, increasing the number of individuals aware of their HIV status, and eliminating pediatric HIV. These activities include:

- **Eliminating Pediatric AIDS in Swaziland (EPAS) (2011-2015):** The EPAS project aims to support the MOH's national plan to scale up access to PMTCT services to 100 percent of public health facilities and contribute to the virtual elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV by 2015. The objectives of the project focus on: ensuring universal access to PMTCT, including expanded delivery of services; sustaining high-quality, comprehensive, and integrated PMTCT services at GKOS health facilities; strengthening national health systems according to MOH plans for PMTCT; and ensuring the MOH's PMTCT policies, protocols, and guidelines are routinely reviewed and improved. Several initiatives work to close gaps in maternal, neonatal, and child health (MNCH), including increased primary HIV prevention, family planning, HIV re-testing during pregnancy, and mobilization of pregnant women for early antenatal care and delivery in health facilities. This five-year project is supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

- **Strengthening Facility Based HIV Testing and Counseling (HTC) Service in Swaziland (2012-2016):** The goal of this project is to strengthen and further scale up the accessibility of HTC services in all four regions, making HTC available in every health facility in the Kingdom of Swaziland. This project seeks to: support the MOH to encourage universal access to HTC within all health facilities; support implementation of routine HTC services; strengthen linkages and referrals to health facilities; and build the capacity of and strengthen health systems. Through this project, EGPAF is working to support the government of the Kingdom of Swaziland to achieve its goal of increasing the percentage of the population undergoing HIV testing each year to 55 percent of women and 45 percent of men by 2015, rising to 65 percent of women and 55 percent of men by 2018. This is a five-year project funded by PEPFAR through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- **Advancing Community-Level Action for Improving Maternal and Child Health & Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV (ACCLAIM) (2012-2016):** Project ACCLAIM seeks to increase community demand for, uptake of, and retention in MCH/ PMTCT services to improve country progress toward the elimination of pediatric HIV and AIDS. The project, conducted through the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD), is being implemented in Uganda, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe over four years. The goal of ACCLAIM is to: change HIV, maternal and child health (MCH), and gender-related health behaviors through community-based interventions that shift community norms and attitudes, thereby increasing the number of pregnant women accessing and completing PMTCT services; assess the behavioral and operational outcomes of selected community-based interventions and determine their relative effectiveness through strategic evaluation and operations research; and document and disseminate research results, tools developed, and lessons learned to facilitate widespread expansion of effective community engagement activities.

- **Improving Access to Essential Pain Medicines in Swaziland (2014-2016):** EGPAF-Swaziland partners with the American Cancer Society on a two-year grant through their Treat the Pain Program. The project supports the Pain-Free Hospital Initiative’s campaign to improve clinicians' knowledge and skills to assess and treat pain. EGPAF will support the secondment of a physician (pharmacist) to the Palliative Care Team within the Swaziland National AIDS Program (SNAP) and connect the physician to counterparts for training/mentorship on palliative care. Other strategic HIV service providers and community-based initiatives will also relay appropriate information and messaging about pain and its treatment to community members. The project reflects EGPAFs commitment to improving client access to integrated healthcare and palliative care services.

To find out more about EGPAF's work to eliminate pediatric AIDS, visit www.pedaids.org.