

Jhpiego in Lesotho

Quick Facts

Estimated total population:¹
1.9 million

Maternal mortality ratio:²
620/100,000 live births

Infant mortality rate:²
74/1,000 live births

Under-five mortality rate:²
100/1,000 live births

Total fertility rate:¹
3.3

Contraceptive prevalence:¹
60% (modern methods)
60% (all methods)

HIV prevalence:³
23.6%

Births with skilled provider:²
61.5%

Sources:

¹ Population Reference Bureau 2015 World Population Data Sheet;

² UNICEF Information by Country Program, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/lesotho_statistics.html;

³ UNAIDS 2010 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic.

Background

A mountainous, landlocked country surrounded by South Africa, Lesotho faces the second highest HIV prevalence in the world. Lesotho's HIV/AIDS prevalence rate underscores the urgent need to effectively reinforce the health sector in HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment and support. However, like many other sub-Saharan countries, Lesotho suffers from a shortage of human resources in the health sector as a result of "brain drain" to other countries and low numbers graduating from health education institutions, as well as the impact of HIV/AIDS on the health sector. Nursing education institutions in Lesotho require an infusion of assistance to strengthen their capacity to train current students effectively while also expanding the overall number of nursing graduates.

Jhpiego has been working in Lesotho since 2008, helping the Ministry of Health (MOH) address the national HIV/AIDS epidemic. From 2010 to 2014, under the Maternal and Child Health Integrated Program (MCHIP), funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Jhpiego worked closely with the MOH to train providers to expand voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) services to 17 hospitals and facilities. Specifically, Jhpiego worked to: 1) support and strengthen MOH capacity to scale up VMMC services; 2) scale up facility-based services for VMMC and early infant male circumcision (EIMC) throughout Lesotho; and 3) increase demand for VMMC and EIMC services. Also under MCHIP, Jhpiego worked with the Christian Health Association of Lesotho (CHAL) and the Lesotho Nursing Council (LNC) to strengthen pre-service nursing education to ensure development of the health workforce to meet the needs of the population.

From 2011 to 2013, under the leadership of the East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community, Jhpiego (as a member of the Human Resources Alliance for Africa [HRAA] consortium) provided strategic technical assistance to strengthen human resources for health in Lesotho in partnership with HRAA, the MOH, Ministry of Social Development and their partners. Jhpiego focused on strengthening pre-service education systems for health- and social welfare-related professionals as well as health professional regulatory bodies and associations such as the LNC. Jhpiego also received funds from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to: 1) strengthen health service delivery for young adults and adolescents and begin to build momentum around EIMC in Lesotho; 2) conduct an assessment of VMMC client satisfaction; and 3) strengthen pre-service education for nurse-midwives in Lesotho to reduce preventable neonatal deaths. In addition, under USAID's Accelovate project, Jhpiego worked to scale up high-quality VMMC services in Lesotho as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention counseling and sexual and reproductive health care package for men and their partners.



Currently, Jhpiego is implementing three awards in Lesotho, as described below.

Current Program Highlights

Technical Support to Enhance HIV/AIDS Prevention and Opportunities in Nursing Education (TSEPO or “hope” in Sesotho) Project

Under this five-year initiative, Jhpiego is strengthening the Government of Lesotho’s capacity to respond to national priorities in health and HIV/AIDS and to contribute to the national target of reducing the number of new HIV infections. Specifically, Jhpiego is: 1) supporting the MOH to implement a VMMC and EIMC program for HIV prevention, focusing on providing services at 17 established fixed sites and numerous outreach campaigns; and 2) strengthening nursing education in collaboration with schools of nursing. The latter intervention is being achieved by expanding the primary health care clinical placement program to all six nurses’ training institutions and working closely with the LNC to strengthen regulatory capacity, including piloting VMMC/EIMC task sharing to nurses. Other partners for this project include the Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association and Lesotho Network of AIDS Services Organizations. Anticipated project results include: 250,000 VMMCs conducted by the end of the project; EIMC integrated into maternal, newborn and child health services, resulting in 50% of facility-born male infants receiving EIMC by the final project year; and improved capacity of the Basotho nursing system. Also under this project, Jhpiego is implementing a study to better understand the profile of male sexual partners of adolescent girls and young women aged 15–24 in DREAMS¹ subnational geographic areas in Lesotho. The DREAMS team plans to use this information to target and link male sexual partners to high-impact interventions (HIV testing, VMMC and treatment services) that can reduce HIV risk to adolescent girls and young women.

Strengthening Pre-Service Education for Nurse-Midwives to End Preventable Neonatal Deaths

Jhpiego is working with UNICEF, the MOH, CHAL and other stakeholders to strengthen pre-service education for nurse-midwives in Lesotho to reduce preventable neonatal deaths. Activities over a 12-month period include: 1) develop Newborn Training Guidelines for Training Institutions while maintaining global standards; 2) conduct assessments of gaps in newborn care skills at health centers and hospitals; 3) finalize a costed implementation plan; and 4) strengthen nurse-midwifery training institutions and clinical practice sites.

High-Impact TB and HIV Health Services for Miners

This project is designed to deliver targeted TB and HIV case finding, diagnosis and treatment services to mineworkers, ex-mineworkers and mining communities that are at high risk of HIV and TB but require innovative approaches to be reached. More specifically, this project seeks to: 1) use ongoing events and existing data from the Mineworkers’ Development Agency to conduct targeted active TB and HIV case finding among miners, ex-miners and their family members; 2) effectively link newly diagnosed HIV and TB cases identified in the community to ongoing care and adherence support, using technology to strengthen linkages innovatively; and 3) generate evidence related

¹For more information on the DREAMS initiative, see: <http://www.pepfar.gov/documents/organization/253956.pdf>.

to innovative approaches to screening, treatment adherence and the use of technology to better deliver TB services to the target populations. The goal of this project is to increase the number of high-risk individuals receiving high-quality, comprehensive HIV and TB care in order to improve their clinical outcomes. This project is being implemented jointly with the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and the Mineworkers' Development Agency (MDA). Jhpiego is providing clinical oversight and quality assurance to all community-based HIV/TB interventions. Jhpiego is also designing and leading the community-based TB and HIV screening efforts, including conducting training on HIV counseling and testing, TB screening, sample collection and linkage to care. In addition, Jhpiego is responsible for leading and ensuring the quality of data collection efforts.

Key Accomplishments

- Under the TSEPO project, VMMC services at 17 fixed sites and 119 outreaches, as in the preceding year, continued to be offered routinely twice per week and daily during the period of intensified service delivery. Jhpiego has supported the provision of 27,126 VMMCs in Lesotho, including 409 EIMCs. The total number of VMMCs provided to date by Jhpiego with USAID support reached a landmark figure of 100,000 in June 2015. By October 2015, the total cumulative achievement was 103,414, representing 32% of the country target (as per the national implementation plan) to reach 80% coverage with these much-needed services. Jhpiego has also completed over 1,000 procedures with the PrePex™ circumcision device as part of the active surveillance phase.
- Also under TSEPO, Jhpiego has strengthened pre-service education by placing 294 nursing and midwifery students in primary health care clinical practicum training. In addition, 59 nurse-midwives have been trained as preceptors and 18 nurse-educators have been trained on Student Performance Assessment and developing clinical placement documents and tools to aid with appropriate implementation and tracking of activities for both students and preceptors during clinical placements.
- Under Accelovate, from January to September 2014, more than 37,000 VMMCs were conducted at 17 Jhpiego-supported sites and an additional 46 outreach centers, building on the 43,000 conducted under the USAID-funded MCHIP program. In addition, as part of the introduction of EIMC in six selected hospitals, more than 333 EIMCs were provided.



Training with supportive supervision at Maluti School of Nursing with the Pre-service Education Project

Partners/Donors

Jhpiego's donors in Lesotho are USAID, UNICEF and Aquity Innovations (World Bank). Jhpiego also partners closely with the MOH, UNAIDS, LNC, CHAL, CHAI, MDA, Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association, Lesotho Network of AIDS Services Organizations and nursing pre-service and HIV prevention partners.

References

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