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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HIVSA secures USAID Grant to Empower Children and Adolescents Affected by HIV in North-West Province

Johannesburg, April 2024 - HIVSA is excited to announce that it has received a significant grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). This grant will support HIVSA in implementing the "Children, Adolescents and Families in the HIV Epidemic in the North-West Province" (CAFHE) program.

HIV and AIDS continues to have a major impact on individuals and on community structures in South Africa, including families. The North-West Province has one of the highest HIV prevalences in South Africa. It is further challenged by severe poverty, a huge surface area housing a scattered community, and limited human resources. The Southern and Bojanala regions have the highest HIV ANC prevalence rates in the province (31.1% and 30.4% respectively, the provincial rate being 26.7%)

The HIV and AIDS pandemic affects all children, because it changes the nature of the society in which they live. The quality and availability of health, welfare and education systems are deteriorating because of demands created by this epidemic. Research conducted by Delport (2007:48) indicates that some social workers in the North-West Province handle more than 200 foster care placements per year.

Adolescents are highly vulnerable to HIV acquisition than adult because of the transition stage of their development and the need to adapt to the rapid biological, physical and structural changes in their lives. Adolescent girls remain a high priority towards ending the HIV epidemic. Prevention programmes must address gender inequalities driving excessive risk among adolescent girls by engaging men during early stages of adolescence around harmful gender norms related to HIV. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the adolescent component of national HIV programmes to improve the effectiveness of the HIV response especially for out of school and unemployed youth.

In line with other studies the current findings show that adolescent orphans were more likely to be HIV positive. Evidence suggests that orphans, whether single orphan or double orphan are at greater risk of being HIV-positive partly due to distal risk factors such as socio-economic vulnerability, psychosocial distress, poor family functioning, and sexual abuse and partly due to proximal sexual risk factors such as number, type and concurrency of sexual partnerships.

"This five-year award underscores the U.S. Government's commitment to enhancing the health, well-being, and protection of children and adolescents affected by HIV. By partnering with HIVSA and building up local community-led organizations, we aim to strengthen services and systems critical for a sustainable response to HIV in the region, both during this award and long after it's finished. Together with the South African Government, we can empower communities and advance our shared goal of ending AIDS by 2030," said USAID Southern Africa Mission Director, Leslie Marbury.

Company Registration Number: 2002/006774/08 | PBO Number: 930016997, NPO Number: 141-568 |
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The CAFHE program, awarded to HIVSA in March 2024, will operate in collaboration with the North-West Department of Social Development across three districts: Ngaka Modiri Molema, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, and Bojanala Platinum. The primary objective is to enhance access to comprehensive and preventive services for children and adolescents, while also bolstering the social service system to ensure an effective response for families.

Key objectives of the CAFHE program include:

1. Increasing access to comprehensive and preventive services for children and adolescents aged 0-17 and their families.
2. Strengthening the capacity of local partner organizations for effective program management and stakeholder engagement.
3. Enhancing the capacity of social service workforces at provincial, district, and sub-district levels to respond to the needs of children, adolescents, and families in high HIV burden districts.

The complexities of HIV and a rapidly expanding HIV programme mean a growing need to form strategic partnerships. HIVSA will collaborate with 27 local community-based organizations across all three sub-districts to deliver comprehensive services to orphans and vulnerable children, with a specific focus on those living with HIV. Additionally, partnerships with key stakeholders such as provincial departments of Social Development and Health, as well as District Support Partners like the Aurum Institute, will support the achievement of national and global HIV targets.

Yashmita Naidoo, CEO at HIVSA, expressed gratitude for the USAID grant, highlighting its potential to expand HIVSA's impact and empower children and adolescents affected by HIV. The funding aligns with HIVSA's longstanding partnership with USAID, which has supported HIVSA's efforts in HIV/AIDS prevention since 2012, including the current implementation of the Preventing HIV/AIDS in Vulnerable Populations (PHVP) program in Gauteng province.

For more information about HIVSA and its programs, visit <https://www.hivsa.com/>

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About HIVSA

HIVSA is a not-for-profit company that was established in 2002 as well as a strategic partner of the Gauteng Provincial Departments of Health and Social Development. HIVSA empowers individuals, community workers and organisations



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by developing their capacity and resilience to effectively address socio-economic and health issues in the context of high HIV and AIDS burden with the ultimate vision of creating an HIV free generation.

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