



Vulnerable Children & Youth

A large number of children and adolescents in South Africa – particularly girls – are vulnerable and live in extremely difficult socio-economic and family circumstances. Despite many gains made in the HIV/AIDS response in the last decade, children’s access to services continues to lag behind that of adults, making them disproportionately vulnerable to health and social inequalities. NACOSA uses a community systems strengthening approach to create a circle of support around vulnerable children and youth and their families, improving their wellbeing, economic security, social connectedness and access to services.

The NACOSA Orphans and Vulnerable Children Community Systems Strengthening Programme, currently funded by USAID and PEPFAR, provides direct support to over 30,000 children, facilitation of community dialogues and circles of care and support to create awareness, action and change for children, their caregivers, the community and organisations. The programme also offers sexual and reproductive health information to adolescents through the Vhutshilo intervention; a caregiver and adolescent communication programme called Let’s Talk; economic strengthening interventions through ASPIRES; HIV testing services (HTS) and adherence support.

STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS

NACOSA works through implementing organisations providing capacity assessments, technical assistance, mentoring and capacity building training and support. The programme

includes technical skills training for community care workers, child care forum members and an accredited qualification in Child and Youth Care Work and HIV Testing Services. The model has been extensively tested through NACOSA’s experience of managing OVC programs, including a large OVC program funded by the Global Fund.

“Orphaned children are at high risk for HIV.” – Department of Health

CHILDREN & YOUTH

30,000	children and adolescents reached
44	implementing organisations
R136m +	investment by USAID and PEPFAR

Partner in the Unfinished Business of Paediatric and Adolescent HIV with **Elma Foundation**, FHI360’s **ReACH Project**, **DREAMS** and **ASPIRES** in KwaZulu-Natal.

PACKAGE OF CARE

The programme offers an integrated package of care, capacity building and support based on local mapping and needs assessments, including:

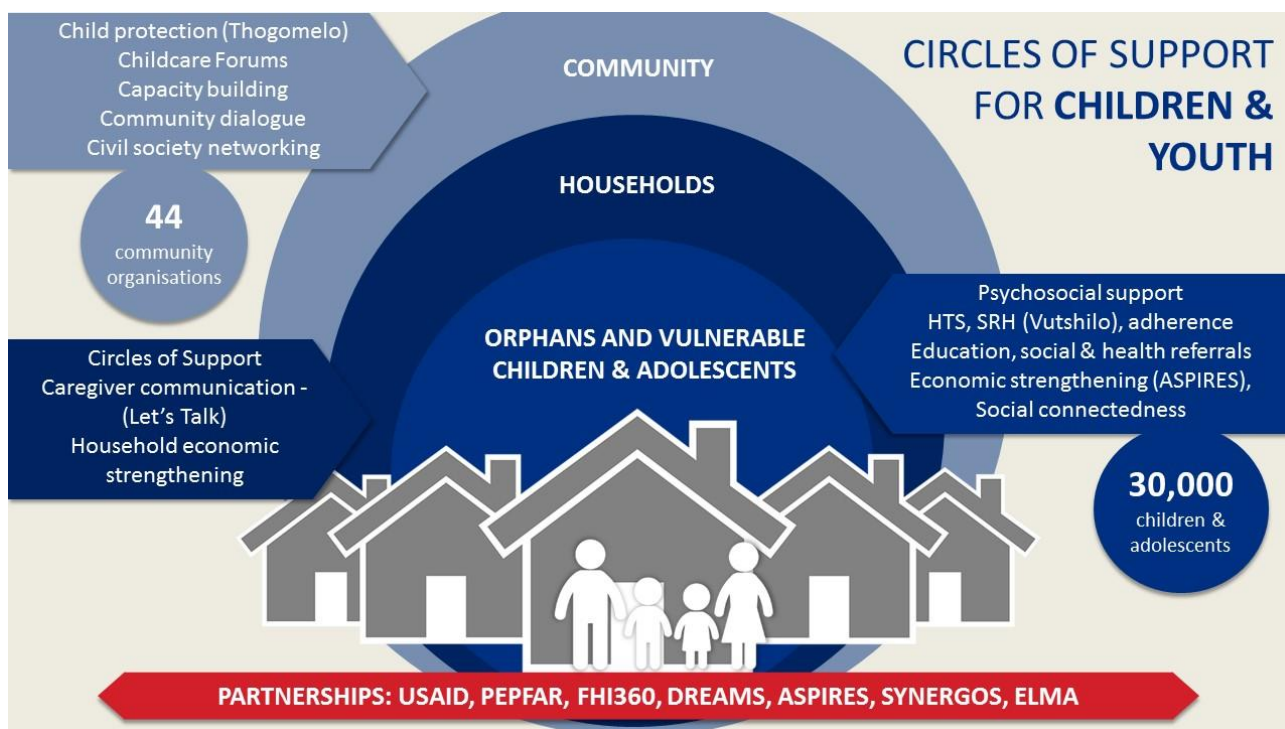
- **Home visits** to vulnerable children and households by care workers
- **HIV prevention and life skills** for children aged 10-17
- **Economic strengthening** activities to support the HIV prevention program for children aged 10-17 using the ASPIRES model.
- A **caregiver-adolescent communication programme**, called Let's Talk.
- Community-based **HIV testing services (HTS)** and antiretroviral therapy (ART) adherence support for HIV positive children and adolescents.
- **Child protection support** to OVC using Thogomelo Child Protection training.

- **Linkages and referrals** to health and social services.

NACOSA's community systems strengthening model of implementation takes a social-ecological (child – family – community) approach and is designed to ensure buy-in, cost-effectiveness through economies of scale, shared responsibility and commitment and aims, wherever possible, to promote sustainability.

"We as communities need to give children skills and keep them safe." – Nstiki, Sinako OVC Programme

We work with partner civil society organizations, government departments, services and facilities as well as other donor agencies in districts to deliver a quality package of care to vulnerable children and youth, their care givers, families and communities.



NACOSA was recently contracted by FHI 360 to implement the ReACH project in KwaZulu-Natal, also funded by USAID and PEPFAR. The project combines a comprehensive package of prevention interventions, strengthening caregiver capacity, improving access to and retention in services, with capacity building and technical assistance to implementing community based organisations.

NACOSA – NETWORKING HIV AND AIDS COMMUNITY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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