

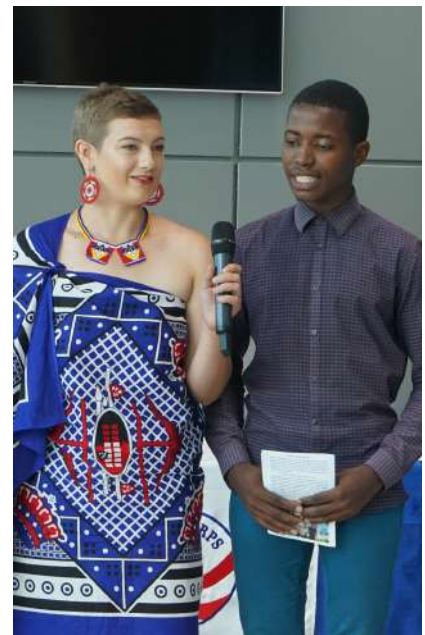


**Peace
Corps
ESWATINI**

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

www.peacecorps.gov/eswatini





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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Stakeholders,

I am pleased to present the 2019 Annual Report for Peace Corps Eswatini. In 2019, we had a total of 112 Trainees/Volunteers in Eswatini under the Youth Development, Community Health and Response programs.

We are thankful for the excellent cooperation and support given to our Volunteers over the past year by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini, ministry partners, NGOs and other community organizations.

In particular, we would like to thank the community of Nkamanzi and Timbondweni in the Manzini region for hosting our trainees for the duration of their Pre-Service Training.

I would also like to thank the staff at Peace Corps Eswatini who have been tireless in their efforts to prepare and equip our trainees for their service.

We hope that this report conveys a good measure of Peace Corps Eswatini's success in achieving development goals that are shared by the Government of Eswatini and by the Peace Corps.

We also hope that it does so in a respectful way of the culture and upholds the dignity of the population of Emaswati served by our Volunteers.

Siyabonga Kakhulu!

**GLEND A N. GREEN,
COUNTRY DIRECTOR**





ABOUT PEACE CORPS

Peace Corps is an independent United States Government agency that provides skilled Volunteers to countries requesting assistance around the world.

The agency traces its roots and mission back to 1960 when then Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country by promoting world peace and friendship. The reaction was both swift and enthusiastic, and since 1961, over 220,000 Americans have responded to this enduring challenge.

Peace Corps continues to demonstrate how the power of an idea can capture the imagination of an entire nation.

MISSION

To promote world peace and friendship by fulfilling three goals:



Goal 1

To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.



Goal 2

To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.



Goal 3

To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.



HISTORY IN ESWATINI

Peace Corps first arrived in Eswatini in 1969 to focus on building capacity in the education sector. Due to the immense progress in the country's school system, Peace Corps ended the program in 1996. In 2003, Peace Corps received an invitation to re-open its program, in order to focus on the increasing HIV epidemic at the time.

CURRENT WORK IN ESWATINI

Volunteers in Eswatini serve under:

Youth Development Engagement and Empowerment Program, Community HIV/AIDS Mitigation Project and Response Program.

VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT:

To develop a responsive health system that meets the needs of all people including people living with and affected by HIV in Eswatini focusing on:

- Increasing the number of health related services and interventions provided across the country;
- Increasing coverage of population for these services; and
- Reducing the household financial burden incurred at the point of access and utilization.

Volunteers with the appropriate skills are recruited and trained for 11 weeks living in a local rural community/inkhundla prior to serving the people of Eswatini. Volunteers are trained on safety & security, cross-culture, the SiSwati language, compliance with the local laws and technical skills that enable them to perform their assigned tasks.

Volunteers in Eswatini are placed in local communities and organizations with active local leadership engagement, and the presence of community counterparts who willingly serve as work partners to the Volunteers.

Volunteer assignments are for a period of 27 months. Response Volunteers serve for up to 12 months dependent on the assignment.

A young man in a school uniform is sitting at a desk, intently reading a book. The book is open to a page with the word 'COMMUNICATION' at the bottom. In the background, a person is visible through a doorway.

Peace Corps Programs



YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT,
ENGAGEMENT AND
EMPOWERMENT
PROGRAM (Y-DEEP)



COMMUNITY
HIV/AIDS
MITIGATION
PROJECT (CHAMP)



RESPONSE
PROGRAM

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (Y-DEEP)



The Youth Development, Engagement and Empowerment Program (Y-DEEP) was launched in 2018. Previously, it was known as the Youth Development Program since 2011.

The Youth Development Engagement & Empowerment Program (Y-DEEP) goal is to aid youth (ages 15-24) to effectively transition to becoming healthy, productive, and community engaged adults.

This program is offered through schools and community institutions. Y-DEEP programming focus on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS mitigation, employment, civic engagement and life skills. Y-DEEP also helps to build the capacity of its service providers to strengthen their youth development programming.



4260

*youth participated in
school-based life skills
development programs.*



LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION REPORT 2019

The Youth Development, Engagement and Empowerment Program (Y-DEEP) works in partnership with the **Ministry of Education & Training** to support Life Skills Education in secondary schools in Eswatini.

YDEEP Volunteers work with their counterparts to **co-plan and co-facilitate life skills education** within rural schools. Youth was trained in:

- Guidance and Counselling;
- Health Promotion;
- HIV and AIDS.



4260 youth participated

in school-based life skills development programs facilitated by 15 Volunteers in 21 schools.



41 Volunteers and their teacher counterparts were trained

on Life Skills Education and its facilitation by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), and received additional training on incorporating positive discipline strategies as an alternative to corporal punishment.



24 Site Support Agents Trained

by Peace Corps office who were from different cadres such as Bucopho, Ka-Gogo Centre Managers, actively engaged youth and Local Leadership.



21 Community Counterparts trained

on Project Design and Management.



A vast majority of the Volunteer family members received a host family orientation workshop aimed at sensitizing them about the Volunteer stay within the homestead and community as well as on the SODV Act.

COMMUNITY HIV/AIDS MITIGATION PROJECT (CHAMP)



The Community HIV/AIDS Mitigation Project (CHAMP) was launched in 2018. Previously, it was known as the Community Health Program since 2003.

The Community HIV/AIDS Mitigation Project (CHAMP) goal is to promote an AIDS-Free Generation through comprehensive HIV prevention and mitigation activities focusing on youth, ages 15-24.

Paying special attention to orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) and out-of-school youth. CHAMP supports these most vulnerable youth through health education and referral services.



74

*nurses in 8 facilities were
trained in Supply Chain
Management*



SUPPLY CHAIN REPORT 2019

The Community HIV/AIDS Mitigation Project (CHAMP) program works in partnership with the Ministry of Health, NERCHA and HIV prevention organizations in Eswatini. Annually, Nursing Sisters from the Peace Corps community clinics are oriented on the CHAMP program and trained as supervisors of the work that volunteers will be conducting in their clinics.

CHAMP Volunteers work in collaboration with Ka Gogo Centers and community based workers to promote HIV prevention and mitigation among:

- out-of-school youth,
- young men and boys,
- AGYW and
- OVCs.



19 Volunteers and their nurse counterparts were trained

in supply chain management and logistics improvement in the health facilities by Ministry of Health, Pharmaceutical department.



74 nurses in 8 facilities were trained

by their volunteers and counterparts in Supply Chain Management



37 Volunteers and their Health Service Providers were trained

on the National Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health training manual in order to promote an enabling environment for youth through the establishment of youth-friendly spaces in clinics.



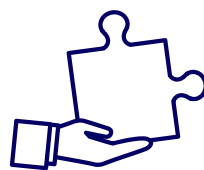
12 Facilities improved their supply chain logistics management practices

Within these facilities, Volunteers have successfully establish or strengthen existing support groups and teen clubs for youth living with HIV and AIDS in order to promote their care, treatment, and overall wellbeing.

RESPONSE PROGRAM



Peace Corps Response program recruits experienced professionals to undertake short-term, high-impact and specific assignments with local organizations. Response Volunteers bring valuable skills and experiences to projects in places where they are needed most. Response aims to strengthen the two existing frameworks: projects while nurturing new partnerships with government ministries, NGOs and the private sector. Recently, the program has expanded the Advancing Health Professionals (AHP) portfolio to focus on Health Systems Strengthening and Academic Instruction.



12

*partner
organizations served*



RESPONSE REPORT 2019

RESPONSE Volunteers work alongside local professionals sharing knowledge and skills to help build the capacity of the organization and teach in colleges and universities.

RESPONSE Volunteers are strategically placed with training institutions, government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community organizations.



19 Response Volunteers served in 16 different positions

These Volunteers served in the following roles: Marketing & Communications Specialist; Nurse Educators; Human Resources Specialist; National Capacity Building Specialists; Software Developers; Strategic Information Specialist; Media Specialist; Social Work Lecturer; Data Management and Informatics Specialist.



12 partner organizations served

UNESWA; EGPAF; Young Heroes; PELUM Eswatini; SANU; HMIS FEI Systems; Baylor College of Medicine; High School for the Deaf; Eswatini GLOW; BRO Eswatini & Peace Corps Eswatini.



Their work is so great, the turnaround time has greatly improved and also new interventions on the system has been introduced and working perfectly ever since they came. They have made our work easier as trainers in the regions of the country. The users are also very happy and grateful about the quick turnaround time on issues they raise during training, mentoring and those that they forward through the feedback platform on the system.

-Ministry of Health CMIS Project Trainer



This opportunity has been enlightening as it enables exchange of information, ideas and even presentation of the work that needs to be transferred to students, enabling a great practical and evidence based practice in the University. Their presence has brought diversity and I believe a great learning period for all of us especially the lecturers and students.

-Southern Africa Nazarene University



PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY PLAN FOR AIDS RELIEF (PEPFAR)

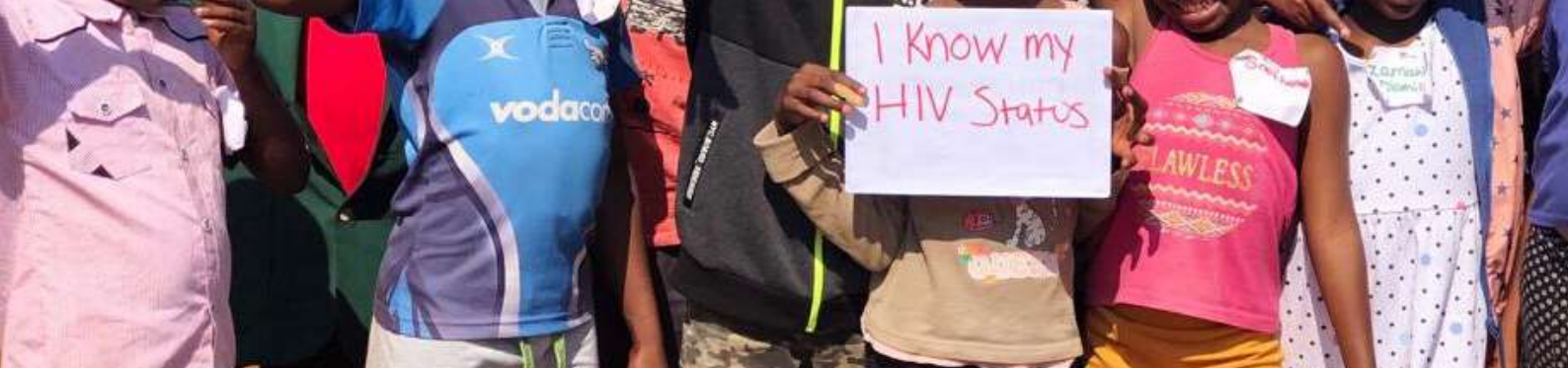


Peace Corps' role in PEPFAR took on heightened significance in 2012 with the launch of the "PEPFAR Blueprint: Creating an AIDS-Free Generation." As we move toward an AIDS-free generation, the Peace Corps continues to do its part by Volunteers partnering with host county and local government to enhance the capacity of organizations and promoting an understanding of the epidemic and encouraging the adoption of healthier behaviors.



5133

*of priority population was reached to
promote the adoption of HIV prevention
behaviors and service uptake*



PEPFAR DATA IN 2019

Peace Corps Volunteers play a significant role in the PEPFAR target to **PROMOTE AN AIDS FREE GENERATION, 95-95-95 for treatment goal.**

WHAT DO VOLUNTEERS DO ACROSS THE 95-95-95?



OF ALL PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV WILL KNOW THEIR HIV STATUS

Volunteers are trained on targeted testing strategies to promote knowing your status. They will refer individuals to PEPFAR-funded facilities and partners for testing.



OF ALL PEOPLE WITH DIAGNOSED HIV INFECTION WILL RECEIVE SUSTAINED ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY

Volunteers strategically work with people living with HIV. They are working to ensure adolescents have clinical facilities that are youth friendly.



OF ALL PEOPLE WITH DIAGNOSED HIV INFECTION WILL RECEIVE SUSTAINED ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY

Volunteers work with counterparts to promote viral loading testing.

TARGET POPULATION: ESWATINI YOUTH AGED 15-24



of priority population was reached with the standardized, evidence-based intervention(s) required that are designed to promote the adoption of HIV prevention behaviors and service uptake.



of priority population was reached with the standardized, evidence-based intervention(s) required that are designed to promote the adoption of HIV prevention behaviors and service uptake.



referrals were made to individuals needing services.



HIV-positive individuals received care and support services that promote positive living and/or treatment adherence.



Individuals completed an evidence-based intervention integrating gender norms.

BOYS REACHING OUT (BRO) ESWATINI



BRO Eswatini is a Peace Corps program geared towards cultural uplifting by encouraging boys and men within the kingdom of Eswatini to be partners in their communities and society with girls and women. BRO was established in Eswatini in 2014.

BRO Counselors and club members have forged a way forward, learning the lessons and teachings of the BRO pillars including: male identity and self esteem, men's health, sexual reproductive health and HIV, preventing drug and alcohol abuse, fatherhood, relationships, gender equality, preventing violence and abuse, preparing for your future and making change then taking action.



601

*BRO
Club Members*



BRO ESWATINI REPORT 2019

BRO Eswatini aims to impart life skills, positive male identity, gender equity, HIV prevention, and positive parenting skills to club members while instilling tools and confidence to conduct respectful relationships and become positive role models in their communities. BRO supports males in Eswatini society through ***“Broadening Minds, Redefining Manhood, and Obtaining Success”***

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 5 Regional camps

To promote more grassroots approach focusing on gender equality and HIV prevention

- Bushfire schools festival & Festival

BRO engaged in activities/dialogue with youth around healthy masculinity, gender equality, and how to advocate for change.

- BRO Club Visits

Community leaders ,club members were met, club sessions observed, counsellor and volunteer interviews, testimonials were recorded, and club photos were taken

601

**BRO Club
Members**

98%

**Clubs without
Volunteer
Support**

52

**Trained
Counselors**

43

**Active
Clubs**

“

Being with BRO has made me think differently. Men and women should have equal opportunities, I see the importance of men knowing their HIV status as a man and that males should visit the clinic more. I'm no longer afraid to make presentations. In the future I want to be a counselor or nurse to just provide help to people. - Lindelwa Mkhabela. BRO Club member. form 2

”



UNFPA

BRO ESWATINI UNFPA FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Date	Activity	Total Cost
April 2019	5 Regional camps preparation and supplies	8 500
May 2019	Bushfire schools festival & Festival	6 000
May 2019	Peace Corps NGO Resource Fair	4 000
June 2019	BRO Outreach in Hhohho & Shiselweni Regions	4 700
June 2019	Mahlanya Soccer tournament	9 600
September 2019	New counselor Training	7358
September 2019	Purchase of startup kits for new club counselors and BRO material promotion	19 375
September 2019	Review of BRO long term Objectives	7 240
		E 66773

1. 5 Regional camps preparation and supplies

To promote more grassroots approach to a former national favorite, BRO held 5 community camps (one in each region, two in manzini) focusing on gender equality and HIV prevention to a total of over 120 males. The aim of the transition from national to community is to maximize community contribution, increase the number of boys able to attend, and strengthen counselors' PDM & event implementation skills.

2. Bushfire schools festival & Festival

After an agreement to collaborate with House on Fire for Bushfire Festival 2019, 5 BRO members engaged in activities and dialogue with a wide spectrum of adults and youth totaling to over 150 participants around healthy masculinity, gender equality, and how to advocate for change. For high school youth during the Schools' Festival BRO conducted the Gender stadium activity to allow both girls and boys a chance to hear testimony from each other uninterrupted.

3. Peace Corps NGO Resource Fair

BRO would like to ensure that more counselors build relationships with and knowledge of these organizations by attending the Peace Corps NGO Resource Fair scheduled for May 17, 2019. The objective of this activity was to provide an opportunity for 20 BRO Counselors to network with NGOs that can support club and community engagement across the nation.

4. BRO Outreach in Hhohho & Shiselweni Regions

BRO aims to continue the outreach that was started in 2018, by conducting two more national events in the 2 regions during the month of June, specifically in Pigs Peak and Nhlanguano, where a BRO Peace Corps Volunteer Director and two BRO Club Counselors discussed the merits of BRO and made themselves available to interested individuals to learn more, both verbally and through documentation such as the BRO & GLOW stakeholders report. The stakeholder report detailed the accomplishments of the GLOW and BRO projects and will continue to be utilized by Senior Counselors and PCVs to advocate for the BRO initiative. **25 total copies were be distributed.**



UNFPA

BRO ESWATINI UNFPA FUNDED ACTIVITIES

5. Mahlanya Soccer tournament

Under the theme, *“knowing your HIV status is part of being a man,”* clubs in the Manzini region invited neighboring clubs, local youth and community members to attend the tournament. At the tournament, there were **3 soccer matches by 3 BRO Club Member teams with a total of 50 club members and over 100 community members**, participating to music, facilitation by advocates of health and fitness, speeches by community members and club members, music, TuneMe representatives and HIV testing. The soccer tournament aimed at helping BRO work towards having all club members know their HIV status, teaching men the words to advocate for visiting clinics and building the self-esteem of club members as they bring resources and engagement to their communities.

6. New counselor Training

BRO lead a New Counselor Training after having identified 5 individuals from 5 different communities who were interested in starting BRO Clubs. This training was entirely facilitated by our newly certified BRO Trainers. Over two nights the 5 BRO Trainers lead the 5 new BRO Counselors in learning about the BRO Pillars, requirements of a successful club, specific lessons on HIV, GBV and Gender Equality and more.

7. Purchase of startup kits for new club counselors and BRO material promotion

For these clubs to be optimally successful in imparting life changing attitude and behavior change, 5 new clubs were equipped with a complete BRO Club Kit, BRO promotional materials and an updated version of the BRO Manual. Additionally, 20 other clubs received the updated manuals and promotional materials

8. Review of BRO long term Objectives

To ensure that these clubs are being well managed and represented in BRO's yearly project planning, 2 PCVs and 10 Senior Counselors were selected to speak for all Club Counselors. While together, BRO PCV leaders and Senior Counselors, reviewed BRO Eswatini's long-term objectives, the success and challenges of the BRO Trainers and responsibilities for club data collection and distribute and review club check-in responsibilities.

ESWATINI GIRLS LEADING OUR WORLD (EGLOW)



Girls Leading Our World (GLOW) is a global project initiated by Peace Corps Volunteers and local counterparts to empower young girls and improve the status of women around the world. GLOW was established in 2010.

Through club and camp activities, Swati EGLOW Mentors utilize a life skills curriculum that includes sexual and reproductive health education, career planning /entrepreneurship, decision-making skills, and self-esteem building to empower Swati girls to make informed and healthy decisions for their lives.



601

*EGLOW
Club Members*



ESWATINI GLOW REPORT 2019

In 2019, after years of growth the GLOW counselors have decided to begin the transition to become an indigenous NGO, re-branding the initiative to, Eswatini GLOW (EGLOW) and themselves as EGLOW Mentors.

EGLOW aims to create a safe environment where young Swati girls and women can be empowered in accessing health facilities, enforcing the right to education, and making informed decisions politically, socially and economically. EGLOW seeks to nurture and mold the Swati girl child as an emerging leader.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Formalized EGLOW Constitution**

EGLOW elected and trained executive board members

- **The People' Market & All Natural Expo**

These were two successful income generating projects

- **16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence (GBV) Community Dialogues**

7 EGLOW representatives were trained by SWAGAA and they educated their respective community club and had 3 community SODVA/GBV events

805

**EGLOW Club
Members**

94%

**Clubs without
Volunteer
Support**

93

**Trained
Mentors**

43

**Active
Clubs**

“

To be a EGLOW girl means You have supporters around you, you can share whatever is happening inside. - Nothando Zwane, Club member, form 1

”



UNFPA

EGLOW UNFPA FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Date	Activity	Total Cost
May 2019	MTN Bushfire Schools Festival	11 3800
November/December 2019	16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Community Dialogues	2000
November 2019	Printing of EGLOW Prevention Package (100 copies)	6730
November 2019	Printing of GLOW T-shirts	7500
December 2019	World AIDS Day	63620
		E 79850

1. MTN Bushfire Schools Festival

EGLOW participation at the Music Festival consisted of a booth at the Bring Your Fire Zone, a space to present to attendees the shared tenets of the festival and the year's overall themes: child protection, self-expression, gender equity, celebration of identity. The booth featured "DIY" demonstrations that included skincare and hair care tutorials, celebration of Black Girl Magic, and fielding general questions about the EGLOW program. Nearly 350 attendees were engaged in activations and booth visits. Group activations addressed sexual reproductive health and HIV prevention.

2. 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Community Dialogues

EGLOW had 7 EGLOW mentors trained by SWAGGA on the significant SODVA law and have taken the responsibility to educate their respective community clubs. Community SODVA dialogues result in counselors and mentors guiding their club members through the law's components to make sure participants understand the definitions of each offense: stalking, assault, incest, etc.

3. Printing of EGLOW Prevention Package (100 copies)

EGLOW prevention package were printed to equip counsellors with training resources to empower EGLOW girls in knowledge of HIV prevention methods and promote risk reduction behaviors for target groups including adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), service providers, Peace Corps Volunteers, and OVCs through clubs and camps. Additionally, the aim was to also increase skills of EGLOW Mentors and Peace Corps Volunteers who implement positive youth development activities, using approaches that specifically target evidence-based HIV prevention and mitigation, as well as sexual reproductive health.

4. Printing of GLOW T-shirts

FY 19 leftover funds were used to print 150 EGLOW T-shirts in order to promote the visibility of EGLOW in communities and also serve as an incentive for new EGLOW club members to join these clubs in their communities.

5. World AIDS Day – December 2019

World AIDS Day 2019 was commemorated through Walk the Nation events with mural painting messages on schools, community walls, bus stops, and NCPs. The messages were sustainable reminders of the risks of HIV and teenage pregnancy. Peace Corps proposed to support the mural painting in 20 of the rural communities that we serve. To continue to send the message of HIV prevention and healthy living.



BRO Eswatini

Club Activities





*EGLOW Club
Activities*



GRASSROOT SOCCER (GRS)



Grassroot Soccer (GRS) is an adolescent health organization that leverages the power of soccer to educate, inspire, and mobilize youth in developing countries to overcome their greatest health challenges, live healthier, more productive lives, and be agents for change in their communities. Using soccer as the hook, GRS engages adolescents in making healthy decisions through Three C's: an adolescent-friendly and evidence-based health Curriculum, the supportive influence of local mentor and role model Coaches, and a fun, inclusive, and positive Culture.



423

*Participants
were reached*



GRASSROOT SOCCER (GRS) REPORT 2019

Summary of 2019 Activities

Program Overview:

- Build Personal Connections with the youth
- Create & Protect Safe Space an environment that encourages players to honestly & openly discuss sensitive, personal, and challenging issues
- Sharing Information about HIV & AIDS as honestly and accurately as possible and more.

423

**Participants
were reached**

21

**Camps were
hosted by
Volunteers**

16

**PCVs reported
on camps**

44

**Counterparts
& Volunteers
were trained**

Data Source: VRT

“

Grassroot Soccer has been a fun time to be with my friends and also learn more about myself and how to take care of me for the future. - Youth Participant

”



GIRLS FOR HEALTH ESWATINI (G4H)

The Swazi Girls4Health Discussion Guide is an interactive tool designed for interpersonal communication (IPC) with Adolescent Girls & Young Women (AGYW) aged 15 to 24 in communities in Eswatini. The aim of the discussions is to provide comprehensive knowledge about HIV and AIDS and increase awareness of HIV risk, learn about strategies to reduce risk, take action to reduce one's own risk and increase knowledge on financial literacy.



232

*Participants
were reached*



GIRLS FOR HEALTH (G4H) REPORT 2019

Summary of 2019 Activities

Program Desired Outcomes:

- Increased correct and consistent condom use
- Increased uptake and adherence to ART for those that test HIV positive
- Reduction of multiple concurrent partners
- Reduction in gender-based violence (GBV) and more.

232

**Participants
were reached**

17

**Camps were
hosted by PCVs**

15

**PCVs reported
on camps**

36

**Counterparts
were trained**

Data Source: VRT

“

My counterpart and I are aware that getting young people to be excited about any sort of lesson on a Saturday can be a tall task, so we spend a lot of time finding ways to make sessions as engaging as possible. - Peace Corps Volunteer, Lauren

”





*Girls for Health Activities
Facilitated by Volunteers*



EXTENDERS

After Volunteers complete their two year service, they have the option to apply to extend their service with a local NGO for 13 months. Below are our Volunteer extension partners in 2019:



UNIVERSITY RESEARCH Co., LLC



ICAP

GLOBAL. HEALTH. ACTION.

Columbia University
Mailman School of Public Health



building
local
promise.



Baylor
College of
Medicine



Peace
Corps
ESWATINI

LUBOMBO
Health Research Unit



Brianna Dickinson, G15

Organization: Eswatini Girls Leading Our World (EGLOW)

Job Title: Peace Corps Volunteer Leader

I work as an liaison and bridge between Peace Corps Staff, Stakeholders, Peace Corps Volunteers and EGLOW initiative's executive board, mentors, and girls. For programming, I work with Peace Corps Staff and EGLOW Mentors to coordinate the sessions and activities related to clubs and community camps. On a national level, I assist in brainstorming and planning EGLOW's participation in internationally recognized days such as IDGC, 16 days against GBV Awareness and World AIDS Day. I work to increase the efficiency while beginning the standardization of EGLOW as they begin the process of being an indigenous NGO. I am assisting in creating leadership infrastructure (i.e. Executive board, regional leaders) and formulating how to better track EGLOW's outcomes and behavior change.



Samantha Cade, G15

Organization: P.S.I. (Population Services International)

Job Title: HIV Communications Support Specialist

Within my role at P.S.I, there are a variety of projects within the Marketing and Communications department. Collectively, these projects share the same goal of better promoting and ensuring access to P.S.I services and resources, via social media platforms or in-person functions, for the emaSwati people. When working within the office environment, I am constructing or revising documents, even data bases, which are implemented for P.S.I. operations and its respective partners. As of most recent, I am a part of the HIV self-testing distribution team, to visit Swati communities on a weekly-basis with the responsibilities of disseminating and educating people on this important novelty. I now have better insight into the existing health-care structures and protocols within Eswatini, as well as discernment into my own professional desires within the global health field.



Simmone Deane, G15

Organization: URC (University Research Co., LLC)

Job Title: Associate Improvement Advisor for HIV and NCD Integration

In effort to improve the holistic nature of the care that HIV positive patients receive, I will be working with facilities and healthcare workers throughout Lubombo to improve the Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) services and care that is offered to those patients. The focus will be on diabetes and hypertension prevention and mitigation, as well as improved nutrition. I will work closely with the facilities to improve their capacity while fostering a mentorship relationship as they work toward integrating these services. I will also work with community ART groups to improve nutrition. Additionally, I will organize and/or facilitate trainings as needed, while also creating awareness and advocacy campaigns to relevant NCDs and issues. Lastly, I will be working with Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) to ensure a smooth integration of HIV and NCD prevention, case finding and treatment.



Nate Allen, G14

Organization: Pact

Job Title: Technical Program Officer

Support and monitor Pact and eleven partner local NGOs on their educational supportive services geared towards supporting OVC and adolescent girls throughout Eswatini. One of my main tasks is to monitor and support Pact's block grant program which seeks to support adolescent girls educationally by giving schools three years' worth of tuition of participating girls' in the form of in-kind items the school needs. This project has me working with partnering NGOs as well as the schools in which the block grant project is being implemented to ensure that the school has received the in-kind items and is using them appropriately and that the girls enrolled are receiving the support they need to ensure they progress academically.



Tatiana Dozier, G14

Organization: Lubombo Health
Research Unit/Good Shepherd
Hospital

Job Title: Research Officer

My role is to support the public health registrar and colleagues undertaking research and service development via the Lubombo Health Research Unit, Good Shepherd Hospital, and Lubombo regional primary care facilities ('clinics') and communities. This involves participating in a range of research activity, in addition to administrative and supportive functions in the development of the LHRU as a regional, collaborative unit. Currently, my main focus is ongoing implantation and evaluation of a research study investigating "out of facility" births in Lubombo. This will include leading on the operational delivery of this research, including data collection, interviewing participants, working closely alongside stakeholders and working with the Public Health Registrar to analyze documents, and disseminate findings and recommendations.



Vibushan Sivukumaran, G14

Organization: Baylor International
Pediatrics AIDS Initiative

Job Title: Lab Technician/ Research
Assistant

My third year with Peace Corps has allowed me to take on a wonderful experience at Baylor International Pediatrics AIDS Initiative (BIPAI) through their Tuberculosis department. As an aspiring doctor, working at BIPAI allows me a more in-depth role as a lab technician and a research assistant. Both roles go hand in hand as I assist in running diagnostics for different patient samples in the lab and then capture the data to be used for research purposes. One example of my role comes from a project looking to secure a less invasive method for capturing bacteria sample in children with probable TB. Its groundbreaking work that could help bring a more stable method to diagnosis TB within children and also help coordinate a more fulfilling experience for the child too. I am excited to see how I can continue to contribute to BIPAI and gain perspective on global health.



Nicole Zender, G14

Organization: ICAP

Job Title: Technical Program Officer

I support the Swaziland Clinical Research Site (CRS) in maintaining up-to-date regulatory files. Contribute to developing and updating study workplan. Assist in monitoring study enrollment curves and planning and executing of consumable clinical supplies procurement. Assist in maintaining calibration and maintenance logs of major and minor equipment. Assist in updating site SOPs and assembly of study report packages (e.g. to IRBs) as needed.



Alison Kemp, G14

Organization: Peace Corps Eswatini

Job Title: Peace Corps Volunteer
Leader - Communications &
monitoring and evaluation

Improving data collection tools and reporting, writing communications materials, and supporting other volunteers are the main activities in my fourth-year extension. I am also involved with annual updates to the Community HIV/AIDS Assessment Toolbox, a PC Eswatini manual of data collection tools; improving monitoring and evaluation training sessions for trainees and volunteers; the HIV committee; assisting with other programming presentations; and compiling volunteer stories for the annual report.



Gini Doucet, G13

Organization: Peace Corps Eswatini

Job Title: PCVL - Stakeholders &
Partnerships

I facilitate the Resource Fair for new PCVs, Professional Advisory meetings and liaises with other organizations especially NERCHA to support national events such as World Aids Day, as an active member of the HIV committee I contribute to the prevention of HIV among our target group with national events.

VOLUNTEER STORIES

Every Peace Corps Volunteer has a story to tell.
Here are a few 2019 stories shared by Volunteers.





My background and one of my passions is supporting children and people with disabilities, which is why I extended at Ekwetsembeni Special School in Mbabane. The school has 120 students all of which have some type of intellectual disability.

The project's goal was to establish a vocational skills activity at the school to teach them how to raise and care for egg laying chickens, something that can be easily replicated at home. The project serves as a public awareness campaign of the abilities of those with special needs as the eggs produced through the activity are sold at the local grocery store, OK Foods in Mbabane, as well, as are used by the local restaurant Pink Lotus.

Furthermore, the project was established using 100% locally sourced and donated money, supplies and labor which came as a result of building relationships and support



Ekwetsembeni School for Special Needs Chicken Egg Production Project

by Nate Allen, G14

from the Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Works, Ministry of Agriculture, Huawei Technologies, MTN, Eagle's Nest, Africa Chicks and other local private donations; including the 100 chickens that arrived after over a month of structural renovations. Monetary contributions totaled more than E 40,000 which doesn't include labor.

On average, the project's profit (income minus expenses) per month are approximately E 1,000. The profits of the project are reinvested into the project to ensure sustainability.



I worked alongside several teachers at Mbokojweni High School to organize the schools very first Senior Prom.

In the United States, a promenade dance, most commonly referred to as a prom, is a rite of passage for many high school students. This activity brought a piece of American culture to this small rural community in Eswatini.

I worked and five other teachers in the planning committee meticulously planned the event for seven months, raising money and collecting in-kind donations with the intention of removing the barrier of poverty as a reason students could not attend.



Mbokojweni High School's First Senior Prom Night

by **Kristy Louissaint, G16**

The result was an extraordinary event complete with a prom court, formal attire, professional makeup artists, professional photographers, a DJ, an Emcee, three-course meals, party favors, and a spectacular venue at Simunye Country Club.

A total of 55 students attended which included the entire senior class and their prom dates. Because of the fundraising and donations, not a single student paid to attend the event.



One of the first people that I met in Tikhuba was Delisile Mamba, and her and I connected instantly. She showed me around Tikhuba, talked about why she does community work and gave me a lot of hope and excitement to be living in Tikhuba.

A couple months passed and I mentioned to her about a training that I received about EGLOW (Eswatini Girls Leading Our World) and I instantly saw her eyes light up. She told me about how passionate she was to work with young women in our community. From that day on, Tikhuba EGLOW has flourished.

Within two months we got the community approval, by in and had our first meeting with 20 young women. From then on we had meetings twice a month and our girls group grew every time we met.



Tikhuba Community EGLOW

By Amy Watkins, G16

My counterpart and I worked together, but truly with my counterpart's passion it would not be the club it is today.

While we were teaching the female youth in our community about life skills, self-esteem and female empowerment, she was also able to start an income generating project for the girls of selling dish soap and bleach to our community by asking a community organization for donations.

I am truly in awe of the work that Delisile has done for EGLOW, and I am so honored that she is continuing the work of EGLOW without me.



Though it seems like a lifetime ago, I would say my biggest success story happened around early November. After a small but successful G4H in early September, my Counterparts and I decided the next G4H should happen farther into the community to reach a new set of girls. After some brainstorming we figured the best place to hold the next G4H would be the secondary school, and I agreed to go meet with the head teacher to negotiate the use of the school. That first meeting went extremely well, and the head teacher was excited to collaborate with me.

In fact, he requested that I teach all 50 girls currently schooling there. Working with the teachers and my counterparts we decided that the best way to work with all the girls would be to hold a morning and afternoon class of about 25 girls each. We would hold classes over 3 days (Friday, Saturday, and the following Friday).

Amanda, Bonsile, Nozipho, and I split the girls up into a morning and afternoon group. Both groups were taught the same lesson each day.

Girls for Health, Zondwako Community

By Rebecca Stewart, G16

Everyone took turns teaching lessons and facilitating games, we did our best to keep all the girls engaged and having fun.

The girls particularly seemed to enjoy the lesson where we shout out activities and the girls run back and forth to indicate whether or not the activity is high or low risk of contracting HIV. However, the moment that really made me feel this workshop was meaningful and a success was when we had to take extra time to answer questions because the girls had written so many. It was wonderful to be able to answer questions not only about HIV, but even on other STIs and pregnancy. We were able to graduate almost all the girls the next Friday.



My Site Support Agent introduced me to a SWAGAA sponsored women's empowerment group run by his sister, Zanele. Zanele would eventually become my running partner, language tutor, Project Design Management counterpart, and best friend.

The group consisted of women ages 15-24 who'd dropped out of school due to pregnancy, HIV infection, financial issues, or a combination of the three. While the group enjoyed the support they provided one another and the curriculum provided by SWAGAA, they were looking for a way to enhance their own economic status, leave abusive relationships, provide for their children, and return to school.

The previous year they had completed a savings program where individually they saved over E500 in a year. Confident in their financial literacy skills, they wanted to start a business.

SWAGAA sponsored women's empowerment group

By Molly Hancuh, G16

They approached me asking if Peace Corps had any grants available for them to start their business. Sharing that we did, I took Zanele to PDM training with me and together we applied for a PEPFAR VAST grant, which was later approved.

As part of the grant, Zanele and I taught 20 women financial literacy. We utilized a building donated by the local Roman Catholic Church and renovated it using a local contractor and with the advice of the agricultural teacher at the high school. The women also assisted in the renovation by gathering gravel, mixing cement, helping gather supplies, and helping with the labor.

Once the building was complete, chicken supplies were purchased from Crane Feeds and Khuba Traders, both located near Manzini. The women also worked with a local carpenter to get saw dust for the bedding. During the renovations, the women also created a business constitution and invested their own money into the renovation to prove their commitment to the project.

They elected a leadership committee of a chairwoman, assistant chairwoman, treasurer, secretary, and committee members to help run the business.

At the time of my last engagement with the women, they are currently waiting for additional funds from other non-governmental organizations to purchase the lay hens in which to open the business.





According to a recent World Bank study, about 24% of girls in Eswatini between the ages of 15-19 have had children or are currently pregnant. It has also been reported that 56.6% of youth in the country are living in poverty. These statistics are directly exemplified in the names and faces I see every day within my community. During the integration period, I consistently heard that two of the biggest problems facing youth in my community were teenage pregnancy and lack of income.

With these issues in mind, my community counterpart and I attended a Peace Corps project design workshop where we brainstormed different ideas that could start tackling both teenage pregnancy and youth poverty. During our discussions, we noted there were already youth mobilized in a weekly savings group, so we decided to expand upon this existing structure. With this, our community Teen Club was born!

Health, Finances & Fun Teen Club

By Lauren Smith, G16

The club meets every Saturday afternoon, with approximately 20 to 30 youth ranging in age from 6 years to 24 years in attendance. The sessions start with those contributing to the savings group. They give their weekly savings to the club leaders, who then count and record the totals. Following the savings collection, my counterpart (a respected rural health motivator) and I teach a brief lesson.

Each week we alternate between using the "Swaziland Integrated Teen Club Curriculum" with its focus on sexual and reproductive health/HIV care and the "Youth Livelihoods: Financial Literacy" curriculum with its focus on money management.

The health lessons are specifically geared towards skills and topics that are proven to reduce teenage pregnancy, such as condom usage and the delaying of sexual debut. The financial literacy lessons serve the dual purpose of addressing the youth poverty problem, while also discouraging transactional sexual relationships (which are a major driver of teenage pregnancy in Eswatini).

As the club moves into its second year, our goal is to start an income-generating project. The youth will be able to use the money they have been saving, in addition to their new financial literacy skills to begin a successful jewelry business.

In the meantime, an essential piece that sets the Teen Club apart is how much fun we have in addition to learning.

My counterpart and I are aware that getting young people to be excited about any sort of lesson on a Saturday can be a tall task, so we spend a lot of time finding ways to make sessions as engaging as possible. There are always small incentives like cookies and sweets for attendees to snack on, and we play at least one or two large-scale games that get everyone running about and competing.

Although, the highlight is always the end, where we put on music and have a full-fledged dance party! Most of the time we dance to current popular Swazi or South African music, but occasionally I'll teach a few popular American dances and watch as everyone gets to let loose and become carefree.





I feel as if the stars perfectly aligned when I stumbled across a job posting looking for a marketing and communications Response Volunteer to serve in Eswatini, Africa. I felt that I met the qualifications to a T and I was ecstatic to apply. I was even happier when they offered me the position. I packed up my house, put my things into storage, left my job and prepared myself for service, but this was a journey you could never fully prepare for.

My job during my service was to work as the Communications and Advocacy Officer for a fledgling NGO that works in the environmental and agricultural sectors in Eswatini. Easy enough. I maintained their social media, website and blogs. I managed their media relations. I helped them write articles, newsletters, blogs, posters, fact sheets and other marketing collateral.

The Stars Align

By Amanda Clark, Response

This is the kind of work that I had enjoyed doing for the previous ten years. Marketing and communications was my life. It was my plan to teach my counterpart everything I knew. However, there was just one small hang up ...

She didn't really want to learn. I found myself working at a small, rural office at the end of a gravel road in the mountains. This two-person office didn't have the time, energy, or resources to learn what I came to teach. What a disaster! After months of trying to meet with my counterpart to teach her anything I decided to stop.

It became obvious that she didn't prioritize communications above other tasks. This hurt me personally because I personally love my work and I wanted to show my counterpart how a smart communications plan could help her NGO grow. Why would someone sign-up to receive a Peace Corps Response Volunteer if they are not going to take the time to learn anything? It just didn't make sense to me.

But then again, yes it did. This was a two-person office running an NGO that serves all of Eswatini. They were sinking! My counterpart was bailing water only for it to come back in faster than she could bale it out again. She never had time to think about communications or long-term planning and frankly she had been bailing water for so long she didn't understand why they needed a long-term plan. That's when my thinking changed. I helped them bale from time to time but I also gave them a long-term communication and marketing plan to show them that there is in fact light at the end of the tunnel. I worked hard on trying to keep positivity in the office and to have everyone to communicate with each other so we were not unnecessarily doubling up on work.

I had to change what I thought the goal of my service in my head in order to find success on the ground. When I first came to Eswatini I would have defined success as teaching my counterpart everything she needed to know about communications, marketing and branding to help her NGO grow. She was going to be able to do it all by the time I left.

However, what success looked like in real life was imparting little helpful tips to make communications easier and less time consuming. I helped the team hold their first monthly staff meeting. I showed her the correct sizes for social media graphics so that the images don't look stretched and I introduced her to the Twitterverse. Even though I was not able to teach my counterpart everything they needed to know to run their communications and marketing they got a few of the basics down and that is more than they knew before I came.

In the end serving as a Peace Corps Response Volunteer in Eswatini was like everything I thought it would be and nothing like I thought it would be all at the same time. There were days when I thought about giving up and going home. There were days when I seriously questioned the ethics of my organization. But there were also morning walks to work in the mountains when the clouds were still hanging low, the birds were chirping, as the sun climbed into the sky. You could see the outlines of the mountains in the distance and the tiny houses at the top of the peaks and scattered along the sides. There were lunchtimes where I showed my colleagues what celery is and they showed me pap. And then there were all the unlikely friendships I made along the way and the kindness that strangers surprised me with every now and then. Serving in Eswatini was a great all around experience both professionally and personally.

I recommend serving as a Response Volunteer to anyone who wants to learn and grow, but not necessarily in the ways that you expect or plan.



I volunteer at a High school that serves approximately 365 students. As Volunteers in the schools, we teach Life Skills and conduct a variety of clubs. Upon arrival to the School, the Junior Achievement Department at the school recruited me to assist with the Fifth form class. The staff and students of JA were highly motivated and created an income-generating project of Ottoman chairs made out of tires.

However, the project had become dormant with lack of sales; the class requested my ideas and strategies to ignite the business again. The students and teachers, created a quality product, which, had the potential for local and international sales. I first solidified the relationship with the class by purchasing a chair, to evaluate the product quality, production time and customer service. The lead students of the project were professional and worked at a standard of excellence.

I then invited the Junior Achievement teacher to accompany me at a Peace Corps training on developing small business projects.

Financial Literacy - Royal Teens

By Carole Reid, G16

At the workshop, I introduced the Junior Achievement teacher to our Peace Country Director- Glenda Green who coincidentally was a huge fan of the Junior Achievement program as she was an Alumnus of the program in America.

A mantra that I was consistently sharing with the Junior Achievement Teachers and students was **"Every moment is an opportunity"** so when our Country Director began to question the JA teacher about the product I gave him a quick nudge to remind him of the mantra I shared with them. The JA Teacher Mr. Mdluli immediately went into sales mode. The teachers excitedly starting promising the Ms. Green that her chair order could be filled within days ... I knew this was not true!

I encouraged the teacher to take the order and follow up when the ottoman realistically would be delivered. Back at school, I discussed with teacher and students how this opportunity could either propel the business to success or be there down fall based on how they were able the produce. Fortunately, this moment became the catalyst that changed the trajectory of the business to tripling in sales and orders but even more important the impact this special moment would have on the lives of the students. None of us could predict that this moment would lead to Students from the Village of Vele-bantfu meeting there Majesty - King Mswati III of Eswatini.

The weeks that followed would move fast for the teachers and students of Junior Achievement. I worked closely with them to develop more of a solid infrastructure to there business, marketing and Quality Control, I would register them in a vendors market created by Peace Corps EGLOW for upcoming income generating projects.

The hard work did pay off, when I received a call from Peace Corps per Instructions of Ms. Green informing me that the students were invited on behalf of PC to participate in the Countries National Trade Fair selling their product and making a presentation to the King. I shook with excitement when sharing the news with the young learners. They entire school was ecstatic as the news spread fast.

The day of the Trade show arrived and I must admit though excited for them I was also nervous. Luckily, we had a day full of sales, and presentations to customers that I could give them some last pointers on. We were now way into the afternoon and the King had not arrived. However, American Ambassador - Lisa Petterson and Prince Gija of Eswatini, visited our booth, the students presented with such grace and poise. They were elated and so incre-dibly proud of themselves that they presented well and was able to attain selfies. The students felt like super stars as many of the students from school traveled to support the learners and witness this great moment for the students.

Two of my students would be the main presenters, as they stood royally in there Blue school uniforms with the posture of Princes, I knew they were ready. The King approached and his face immediately expressed delight at the glimpse of the Ottomans. Country director Ms. Green began to explain Peace Corps and our connection with the Junior Achievement program in the schools where the students were from. The King gestured to the students demanding they present their product. As I had continuously tried to drill in the students minds, this was the moment, this was there opportunity.

Moreover, they rose to the occasion. I could not stop crying I was so proud and happy for them. They will forever be my Royal Teens.



One of the major issues shared by many in my community (teachers, nurses, neighbors) was teenage pregnancy. People worried for the community's daughters, but they didn't know quite what to do, especially since sex is such a sensitive topic. One of the people most adamant about doing something to help the girls was my counterpart, who herself had an unplanned pregnancy when she was younger. She wanted to do everything in her power to help other girls and young women avoid un-planned pregnancies. The idea on how to address this issue came when we attended the Peace Corps training for the Girls 4 Health (G4H) program and a new counselor training for EGLOW, which are programs aimed at teaching girls and young women about sexual reproductive health; HIV/AIDS prevention; and life skills training.

Our approach to starting these new programs in our community was that first, we reached out to the schools to see if the leadership would be interested. After the first term ended, we were invited to speak at the parent's meetings for the Primary and High Schools and explained the G4H and EGLOW programs to over 150 parents and community members. We also shared some basic information about the SODVA legislation, and were able to begin conversations and answer some questions about sexual offences and domestic violence. Many of the parents and the local leadership were very supportive of the programming, so we moved on to planning the implementation. We were able to hold one full G4H training with 20 girls over the holiday break. Later on in the year we were able to schedule a meeting at the High School to introduce the eGLOW club. There was a slight miscommunication with the students and every girl in the school, nearly 160, was instructed to show up.



Addressing Teenage Pregnancy

By Patrick Bankich, G16

We did our best to explain the program and give an overview and answer any questions, and then dismissed the larger group, asking only those interested in committing to joining to stay longer. 80 girls expressed interest in starting a club and they decided to hold a vote for club officers immediately. We held the elections, met with a teacher who had expressed interest in helping with a girl's club, and began planning how to structure the club such that the curriculum could be delivered in smaller group settings. I am hopeful that once groups are able to gather again, these girls along with staff will be excited to resume establishing the eGLOW club.



Alexis Tucker, G17
Y-DEEP Volunteer

During my integration period, one of the biggest goals I achieved was conducting an HIV Knowledge Questionnaire with all 10 of my Life Skills Education classes. This opportunity served as a HIV pre-test for our PEPFAR data reporting and I am proud to share that I received results from 350 students! I believe the reason that I got so many back was that at the end of this questionnaire there was a bonus question that allowed each student to ask any question they had about HIV. This would be answered and discussed anonymously amongst the class. In each of my classes I received a variety of questions that allowed for organic discussions to take place regarding transmission, treatment, and prevention of HIV.

One of the questions I received from several classes was, "can I get HIV by sharing a room or kissing someone" and "what do I do if I discover I have HIV or if my partner has it?" I felt good that I was able to provide my students with answers to these questions and that I could tell how beneficial this information was for my students. We talked about things like PEP, PrEP, prevention methods, and the way HIV can be transmitted. During PST I felt as if I had been given all of this valuable knowledge regarding HIV and this HIV Knowledge Questionnaire provided me an opportunity to share this knowledge.



Arin Young, G17
Y-DEEP Volunteer

The community of Hlane is a place that holds tight to family values and the power of communion over a good meal. As I began to integrate more and more into the community and in the school, I wanted to do what I could to help build relationships where ever I could. As a volunteer, I never wanted community members to see me as an outsider, but rather to see me as their own, as an extension of their family. In response to this known need, my counterpart and I decided to host a baking day at the teacher's quarters where five Form 2 students and I would bake together and then have time to talk and get to know each other.

In connection to Goals 2 and 3, this day was focused around connecting myself as an American volunteer with girls in the community and developing a sense of trust and respect with them. The five girls picked their favorite traditional dish to teach me how to cook. They taught me about the ingredients and the steps to make the food and then we all tasted the food together while they found music to play and taught me to dance. Holding their hands while I dropped to the floor then tried to lift myself back up, laughing with them at my lack of rhythm, and talking about the crumbs of the *Lidombolo* on the floor helped us all to connect as young women.

After having this day to be myself and relaxed with the girls while getting to know more about them and their culture, I found that they became more comfortable around me in the school environment. These girls would come up to me on their own each day and talk to me about their days, their classes, their friends, and more. This was a drastic behavior change after the first few weeks at school where the students were apprehensive around me. I found that day with the girls to be extremely beneficial to my success at building relationships with the students. This newfound ease with relationships will be helpful in the future when beginning programs and projects.



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