# Pact's legacy in OVC and DREAMS programming

**pact** building local promise.

For more than two decades, Pact has worked with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and governments to improve access, quality and uptake of comprehensive community-based services for children and families affected by HIV. We have led the development and adaptation of context-specific packages, curricula and tools for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) programming to improve 95-95-95 outcomes for children and adolescents.

Across multiple countries, Pact spearheaded the scale up of community-based, family-centered HIV programming with governments and local partners, including household HIV risk assessment tools, bi-directional referrals and linkages systems and networks, OVC graduation benchmarks metrics, and enhanced community case management packages that optimize pediatric and adolescent HIV outcomes. In 2023, Pact provided over 600,000 HIV infected and affected OVC and their caregivers with services to improve their health and well-being.

> *Through our flagship OVC project, Adolescents and Children HIV Incidence Reduction, Empowerment and Virus Elimination (ACHIEVE), in 2023 Pact reached 43,365 children living with HIV under 18 years in six countries with impressive HIV cascade results of 99% known proxy status, 99% on ART and 97% viral suppression.*

Complementary to our OVC work, Pact has partnered with over 35 local organizations to address the foundational causes of HIV vulnerability among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW). Through our DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe) programming in seven countries, Pact worked with local partners and AGYW themselves to address the unique needs of AGYW more effectively, placing their participation and voices at the forefront. Since the inception of DREAMS, Pact has provided over one million AGYW between the ages of 10-29 years with evidenced-based HIV prevention services (i.e. primary prevention of sexual violence, sexual and reproductive health education, financial literacy, and education support) in Eswatini, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia.

## Advancing sustainable OVC and AGYW programming

Building this foundation bf technically strong and well-established OVC and AGYW programs, Pact is now leveraging our legacy of technical expertise and award management to accelerate the localization process. As the prime on the global USAID-funded ACHIEVE project, Pact has provided OVC and AGYW technical assistance and service delivery support to governments and local partners in 9 countries to optimize strategies and systems for the local context and build enduring local leadership.

Our capacity development initiatives have resulted in successful transition of numerous donor-funded award management roles to local prime partners, and we often continue targeted capacity development as a sub-partner to support the transition journey. In our 2024 sub partner roles, Pact is strengthening capacity of local prime partners to manage DREAMS programming in Zambia (CHEKUP) and OVC programming in Zimbabwe (SPACE) and eSwatini (Sabelo Sensha). Pact continues our role as a thought and implementation leader on OVC programs that expand equitable services for marginalized communities, such as our work with migrant families affected by HIV in the Dominican Republic (Building Resilience).

## Accelerating localization

Capacity development (CD) of stakeholders in community health and social welfare systems has been at the core of our OVC and AGYW programs. Pact uses a standard methodology with measurable tools to prepare local organizations for prime funding. We provide tailored technical assistance (TA) to enhance transition readiness and continue ongoing technical and organizational CD to local partners post-transition to support their inaugural management of OVC and DREAMS programming. Our menu of CD activities includes:

- Signature **CD** tools and innovations to strengthen local partners, and their subs (e.g., contextually adapted assessment tools, action plans, and measurement indices, including the Integrated Technical and Organizational Capacity Assessment (ITOCA) and Organizational Performance Index - Plus)

- **OVC response sustainability** (e.g. governance, coordination and oversight; costing models, management information systems, resource mobilization, strengthening networks, etc.)

- **Tailored support to strengthen sub-granting** (e.g., risk assessment, indirect cost recovery, etc.)

- Facilitating processes for **collaborating, learning, and adapting**, identifying and scaling best practices, and promoting innovations in-country, regionally, and beyond

**BOX 1**: Since the start of PEPFAR, international NGOs historically primed USAID-funded OVC and DREAMS awards in Tanzania. Under Pact's USAID Kizazi Kipya Activity (2016-2021), Pact strengthened the technical and organizational capacity of 45 local partners to manage OVC and DREAMS programs, opening the opportunity for USAID to localize the follow-on award. Under the global ACHIEVE project, Pact now provides ongoing technical support, coaching, and mentorship in technical areas, finance, procurement, grants, contracts, and compliance to two USAID Kizazi Hodari National Prime Implementing Partners and 13 National Implementing Partners implementing the project in 78 councils, including 12 with DREAMS and 10 with prevention interventions.

## Expanding technical expertise

Capitalizing on our extensive experience in community engagement, Pact's approach to ongoing technical expertise in OVC and AGYW programming starts with people at the center. Working with local partners, Pact engages community members to influence service design and tailor OVC and AGYW services to meet their needs. In Zimbabwe, Pact applied human-centered design to protype, test, refine and scale new youth-centered approaches. Pact has strengthened beneficiary engagement, accountability and feedback mechanisms with approaches such as Community Led Monitoring in the Dominican Republic, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Nigeria.

This person-centered methodology serves as a cross-cutting tool for ensuring our technical approaches are context specific. Our menu of technical capacity strengthening activities includes:
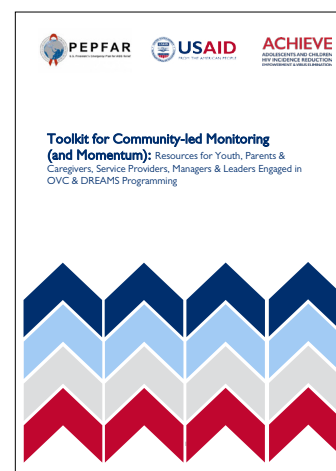
- **Improving the pediatric HIV cascade and other key well-being outcomes by enhancing and streamlining case management** through training (virtual/hybrid/in-person), job aids, standard operating procedures, guidelines and continuous service package refinements.

- **Differentiated packages** (e.g., children of key populations, HIV-exposed infants, children in mining, migratory populations, etc.) and supporting **differentiated service delivery**

- Graduation analyses, protocols, refining tools, advocacy with missions on benchmarks

- Developing/adapting and supporting scale up of **evidenced-based curricula** (e.g., South Africa, Eswatini, Tanzania, etc.)

- Improving **violence against children and gender-based violence prevention and response**, including through use of LIVES (Listen/Inquire about needs and concerns/Validate/Ensure safety/Support) approach and tools to better track cases and services, and child safeguarding policy development workshops and monitoring

- Developing and scaling **mental health interventions** (e.g., Zambia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Nigeria)

- Improving **economic strengthening packages** for caregivers and out-of-school older adolescents

> **BOX 2**: In Eswatini, under the USAID-funded Insika ya Kusasa project, Pact established Indabas, forums where AGYW directly engaged with local stakeholders and government representatives. In these gatherings, AGYW actively shared their experiences to influence policy and improve services aimed at addressing their unique challenges and needs.

## Strengthening social welfare systems

Our systems strengthening activities to enhance the enabling environment for maintained and expanded OVC and AGYW services. Our menu of activities in this area includes:

- Targeted **social welfare strengthening interventions** (e.g., policy, costing and financing, social welfare workforce, coordination, etc.)

- **Strengthening volunteer performance, management and retention** (e.g. Volunteer Engagement and Management Package, Supervision Checklists, retention strategies, etc.)

- **Upskilling supervisors** of community cadres (e.g. specialized trainings on supervision, mentoring and coaching techniques, and tool, etc.)

- Improving **clinical-community collaborations** and synergies through guidance and innovations (e.g. HIV Care and Treatment Facilitation Guidelines, Case Conferencing Standard Operating Procedures, etc.)

- **Management information systems** development, administration and roadmaps for transition

- Digitizing case management and developing **e-Case Management app**s (Eswatini, Dominican Republic, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Zambia) and **other digital tools**

- **Strategic information support** within the program, across partners, and at national level (e.g., learning agenda, data security assessment and improvement plans, improving data quality, etc.)

> **BOX 3**: The USAID-funded Government Capacity Building and Support (GCBS) project, implemented by Pact in South Africa (2013-2023), worked to improve direct service delivery to children and reduce the incidence of HIV and AIDS. With Pact's CD support, the Department of Social Welfare embedded interventions into their planning and budgeting processes, and implemented key policies, guidelines, models, and tools to strengthen and capacitate social service practitioners. These systems strengthening actions continued to be incorporated into a sustainability plan, fully embedding GCBS interventions into the Department's practices going forward. The Department transitioned from project-managed to Government-to-Government funding, ensuring that vulnerable children continued to be reached after program close-out.

## Selected Resources:

- Best practices in programming for orphans and vulnerable children and adolescent girls and young women: A compendium of interventions and lessons learned from the USAID Insika ya Kusasa project | Pact (pactworld.org)

- Best practices in programming for orphans and vulnerable children: A compendium of interventions and lessons learned from the USAID Kizazi Kipya project | Pact (pactworld.org)

- Best practices in programming for adolescent girls and young women: A compendium of interventions and lessons learned from the USAID Zambia Community HIV Prevention Project (Z-CHPP) | Pact (pactworld.org)

- ACHIEVE manages OVCSupport.org, a resource database focused on improving the lives of orphans and vulnerable children by connecting with the global community and providing the most up-to-date information on HIV and other adversities.

## For More Information

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Pact builds systemic solutions in partnership with local organizations, businesses, and governments that create sustainable and resilient communities where those we serve are heard, capable, and vibrant. On the ground in nearly 40 countries, Pact's integrated adaptive approach is shaping the future of international development.

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