



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



A Letter from the Executive Director

My first few months as Help Lesotho's Executive Director were inspiring, challenging, and motivating. Having worked with Help Lesotho's Founder, Dr. Peg Herbert, for nearly 15 years, the transition was smooth. I know the team, I know our programs inside and out, I know many of our donors and their motivations for being involved, and I know the challenges faced by people in Lesotho that drive our work.

Many people in my generation change jobs on a near annual cycle. For many, it comes down to a constant search for **meaning**. For finding something that aligns with values and that feels important. Working with Help Lesotho provides meaning in spades. Our structure of raising funds and spending those funds ourselves allows for an intimate connection to the 'why' of every decision we make. This level of meaning is precious, and it is why so many of us – staff, board members, and donors – remain involved and committed.

Help Lesotho is in the second year of our 2022-2027 strategic plan. Our priorities include:

- Scale up our visibility and impact in the area of mental health.
- Increase partnerships and foster increased local partner cooperation.
- Deepen the impact for the 25,000 people we reach every year.

Thank you for being part of this meaningful journey.

Kate Lambert
Executive Director





Program Statistics

Total people reached



23,545



597

1-on-1 psychosocial support conversations

2,048

People reached through *intensive* programs

21,497

People reached through *non-intensive* programs



658

Participants involved in leadership/activism/pay-it-forward activities

Participants who completed Grief & Loss modules



778

365

Participants who accessed testing



112

HIV Testing

253

STI Testing



Beneficiaries' Gender




58% Girls / Women

42% Boys / Men



Items Distributed

In 2023-24 we distributed the following items to those most in need:

	202 Pairs of Shoes		242 Work Books
	37 Blankets		89 Young Mother Small Business Starter Packs
	140 Hygiene Kits		208 Packages of Vegetable Seeds
	40 Baby Boxes		6,420 Condoms
	414 Food Parcels		37 Pairs of Gum Boots

Breaking Down Barriers

Through our Student Sponsorship Program, we were thrilled to cover school fees for 250 high school students. Without this support, these young learners would have been unable to continue their education. High school in Lesotho is costly, making this sponsorship life-changing for many families.





Social Media Round-Up



Views	Reach
--	69,716
Interactions	Link clicks
774	--
Views	
Followers vs. non-followers	
This data is currently unavailable. Please try again later.	
Interactions	
Reactions	710
Comments	45
Shares	18
Saves	1
505	322
14	2
0	9

Young mothers from Pitseng were thrilled to receive chickens that will help provide their families with a constant source of nutritious protein, as well as provide an income for them. This post reached nearly 70,000 people!

Grandmothers in Thaba Tseka were filled with joy and gratitude as they went home with new mattresses. Remarkably, this post resonated far and wide, reaching nearly 900,000 people—our largest audience ever!



Views	Reach
--	898,475
Interactions	Link clicks
7,472	1
Views	
Followers vs. non-followers	
This data is currently unavailable. Please try again later.	
Interactions	
Reactions	7,107
Comments	334
Shares	29
Saves	2
4.9 K	2.7 K
23	13
1	1



Participants of our **Leaders-in-Training (LIT) Program** gather for some fun, team-building games after an intense module on Grief and Loss - one of the most impactful sessions of the 6-week program.

Participants of the LIT and Computer and Life Skills programs united for an event where they had the opportunity to test for HIV/AIDS, donate blood and attend a cancer awareness/prevention session.





Program Highlights



Bo-Nkhono trying on glasses at our Pitseng Centre - what a beautiful sight!



Having fun while heading home from school! We can't get enough of these mountain views.



Students were invited to a fun-filled day of exploring S.T.E.M with a special focus on robotics.



Winter arrived in Lesotho bringing with it more snow than we've ever had at our Centres.



A group of young mothers and grandmothers came together for an engaging and informative session on parenting!



Participants of our **Herd Boy Program** were so excited to receive new blankets, gum boots and socks with the funds raised from our annual golf tournament.



Our Amazing Partners



Our edu-tainment group, **GIRL4ce**, joined forces with **SheHIVE** and the local community in Khanyane to celebrate Human Rights Day and the end of the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence.



We had the honour of hosting a special celebration on World Children's Day (Nov 20) in partnership with **UNICEF Lesotho**. The theme was **#ForEveryChild**.



UNFPA Lesotho and **Help Lesotho's** 'Adolescent and Youth Service Delivery' project in Quthing.



Funded by **PWRDF**, our 'Safer Communities' project equips community leaders, police officers and health providers to combat gender-based violence and create safer spaces for women and girls.

Hundreds of Pitseng High School students attended the launch of the new Anti-Bullying Club, funded by **Sawabona Africa**. The club provides a safe space for support and promotes initiatives to encourage reporting bullying, addressing its impact on mental health and school performance.





Engaging Boys and Men in the Fight for Gender Equity



Fostering gender equality means engaging everyone in the fight for change—including boys and men. We work to empower them with knowledge to uphold the rights of women and girls by challenging cultural norms about gender roles and actively addressing the pervasive culture of gender-based violence (GBV). Our approach is multifaceted and has **four main goals**.

1

Challenge harmful cultural norms: We address deeply rooted gender norms in Lesotho perpetuate inequality and contribute to widespread gender-based violence, with 86% of women and girls reporting experiences of abuse—a figure that is likely higher due to underreporting. Focusing on healthy communication strategies offers boys and men a safe space to express themselves with words, promoting change and reducing harm.

2

Be champions of women’s rights: Programming helps boys and men recognize harmful behaviors and become champions for women’s rights and legal protections. Beyond awareness, the program highlights the personal and communal benefits of gender equity, showing participants how thriving families and communities uplift everyone.

3

Foster healthy relationships: Educating boys and men about gender equity creates a foundation for healthier, more respectful relationships that benefit families and communities. Having the foundation to build healthier relationships within families and peers is of vital importance to the way they will carry themselves in the future and how they will act with their own partners and children.

4

Become role models: Our programs empowers boys and men to lead with empathy and equality, inspiring others through their actions. Boys and men develop internal motivation to be leaders for positive social change, contributing to a society where respect and equality pave the way for everyone to thrive.



Canadian Events



As always, we had a blast at our annual golf tournament at the Larrimac Golf and Country Club. This year, we raised funds to support our **Herd Boy Program**. Golfers made donations to purchase items like gum boots and blankets!

It was a busy year for Pearl Bees! These events bring together students and workplaces to raise funds and support for the **Pearl Program**. Highlights include the annual Pearl Bee at Turnbull School, where nearly 100 children crafted bracelets for sale on our website, and two Pearl Bees hosted at Remax Ottawa offices.



We attended a Women's Day Event with RE/MAX Hallmark agents and brokers. We had the opportunity to speak about our **Pearl Program** and raise funds through the sale of a special Women's Day bracelet.





Help Lesotho in the Media

Our 'Get a Job' workshop helps youth enhance their employability with improved CVs and interview skills. We're were thrilled to have the program was featured in Lesotho's *Public Eye* newspaper.



'M'e Palesa got passionate while on air at PC FM 95.6 as she spoke with listeners about addressing gender-based violence as part of our Safer Communities project.

Help Lesotho founder, Dr. Peg Herbert, was featured in the Queen's Alumni Review in honour of her retirement.

"I'd like people to realize that whatever they can do is good and, cumulatively, small things can make a massive difference." - Dr. Herbert



Despite strides in reducing suicide stigma, Lesotho continues to grapple with the world's highest suicide rate. For 20 years, we have been dedicated to supporting good mental health, reaching over 25,000 individuals in need every year. Read more about our mental health programming on the following page.



Scaling Up Mental Health Support

When it was reported in February 2024 that Lesotho has the world's highest suicide rate, it was a heartbreaking statistic—but not a new concern for us. Since day one, Help Lesotho has prioritized mental health as a core part of our programming, recognizing its correlation to poverty, HIV/AIDS, food insecurity and unemployment.

Understanding the Mental Health Crisis

Lesotho faces a severe mental health crisis, exacerbated by high HIV/AIDS rates (around 20%), widespread poverty, and limited access to care—especially in rural areas. Stigma further prevents many from seeking help, leaving individuals without the support they desperately need.

Our Approach:

- **Building Resilience:** A key component of Help Lesotho's programming is to help individuals build their resilience. By teaching effective coping strategies for dealing with stress and adversity, individuals can feel empowered to manage their mental health proactively and overcome their obstacles.
- **Open Communication:** Creating safe spaces for individuals to talk about their feelings and experiences is crucial. Support groups and counseling sessions provide these opportunities.
- **Positive Relationships:** Building strong, supportive relationships within communities helps to reduce isolation and provides a network of care.

Below are some of the graphics and real stories from Help Lesotho participants we used during our campaign, *'From Darkness to Light'*.





Providing Support in the Winter Months



In response to the harsh winter conditions faced by our beneficiaries in Lesotho, our **Winter Support Drive** aimed to provide essential supplies to help families stay warm and safe through the cold months. As the coldest country in Africa, Lesotho experiences temperatures as low as -18°C.

Scenes from our Pitseng Centre after an unusual amount of snowfall. Nestled in the mountains, this centre can experience especially harsh winters.



The past summer's drought left many without the resources to store food for the cold months when crops go dormant. As a result, grandmothers and child-headed households struggled to meet basic needs.

Pictured: Our team distributing food parcels.





Real Lives Changed



Lipalesa is a bright young woman and recent graduate of the **Leaders-in-Training (LIT) Program**. She is an entrepreneur in slow/sustainable fashion who cares deeply about protecting the environment. Of the LIT program she says:

"Programs like this bring youth together, help us to find our place to start to lead changes." - Lipalesa

84-year-old Nkhono Masaietsa is a participant of Help Lesotho's **Grandmother Program**. Her journey is a testament to resilience. Despite facing immense loss (7 of her 10 children have passed away), she remains a primary caregiver and supportive role model for 4 of her grandchildren.

"I feel so supported now. I am telling [others] everything I can about the things I learn here." - Nkhono Masaietsa



29-year-old Mokheseng is a volunteer with the **Smart Kids Program**, which provides after-school support in the form of tutoring and educational games.



"I have more than two years volunteering in the program which is my greatest pride. My self-esteem is boosted from regularly standing in front of my group of adolescents whom I offer academic support to. I am currently a health counsellor and I enjoy conducting group sessions mostly because the Smart Kids Program equipped me with public speaking skills." - Mokheseng



Long-Term Impact

The impact of Help Lesotho’s programs extends far beyond the individuals we support. Alumni carry skills like self-esteem, resilience, and leadership into their lives, uplifting their families and communities. By leading with confidence and empathy, they create positive change. Below are two examples of the long-term impact our programs can have.

‘Masehlon’**s** journey with Help Lesotho started in 2016 through our **Computer and Life Skills Program**, soon after joining **GIRL4ce**.



After three years with the group, she completed **Leaders-in-Training** and our Get-a-Job workshop, which she credits for helping her land a job.

She’s now pursuing a diploma in occupational health and safety while running a business selling air fresheners to fund her school fees and transportation. She knows with the skills she learned, she has been able to impact so many lives both through performance and outside of GIRL4ce.

"I know I have impacted a lot of lives through GIRL4ce performances."

Mashaile, a devoted father to a 7-year-old and a newborn, is a powerful example of the long-term impact of our programs. After joining the **Intergenerational Dialogue Program** in 2019, he learned the value of strong communication across generations. Through the **Positive Parenting Workshop**, he's built essential skills and is committed to growing as a parent.

"Fathers should be active parents just as much as mothers. I want to build a good relationship with my children."





A Look at Our 2023-2024 Financials



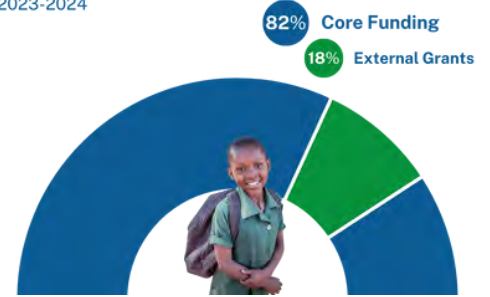
Accredited
IMAGINE CANADA

Since 2014, Help Lesotho has been proudly accredited by the Imagine Canada Standards Program.

The Program awards accreditation to charities and non-profits that demonstrate excellence in board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, staff management and volunteer involvement.

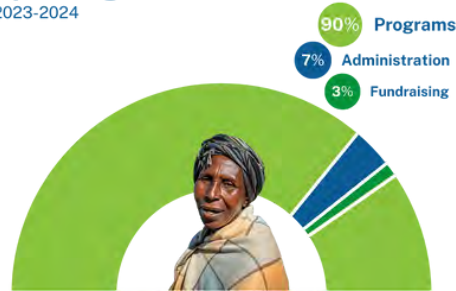
Funding Sources

2023-2024



Spending

2023-2024



Total Expenditures (CAD)

July 1 2023 -
June 30 2024

July 1 2022 -
June 30 2023

Programs

\$1,391,345

\$1,536,071

Administration

\$99,612

\$136,262

Fundraising

\$45,029

\$37,911

Help Lesotho's 2023-2024 financial statements were audited by Vaive and Associates Professional Corporation.

\$1,535,986

\$1,710,244

Help Lesotho's 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Thank you to our dedicated Board of Directors who make our work possible!

Kathleen Lauder, Board Chair

Mary Dawson, Governance Committee Chair

Margie Hooper, HR Committee Chair

Dave Johnson, Finance & Audit Committee Chair

Zaida Bastos, Program Committee Chair

Bill Austin, Director

Amy Weber, Director

Susan Richardson, Director

John McLoughlin, Director