



STORIES of HOPE

SOUTH AFRICA

Small Grants Yield Big Dividends



With support from PEPFAR, Sello Mokhalipi assists a patient in the hospice ward at the Maboloka HIV/AIDS Awareness Organization.

“I assist patients who are on antiretroviral treatment,” Sello said. “They get motivated and find comfort in speaking to someone like me who is also on the antiretroviral treatment and is now better.”



Twenty-seven-year-old Sello Mokhalipi is a study in courage. Having lived with HIV for nearly 10 years, Sello knows first hand the pain associated with stigma and isolation. Today, with support from the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR), Sello is taking his message of hope and compassion to those in his community also living with HIV/AIDS. “I have always wanted to help people who are living with HIV/AIDS,” Sello said as he carefully assisted a patient to sit up. “I never imagined that I would one day be the one in need of the same help.”

When he tested positive in 1996, Sello was initially despaired because many of his friends and neighbors rejected him. Quickly resolving to live positively, he turned for help to a fledgling community group, the Maboloka HIV/AIDS Awareness Organization (MAHAAO). “It hasn’t been easy, but through the assistance and support from the organization, I regained my will to live and help others like me,” he said proudly.

Today, Sello is a support group coordinator at the MAHAAO, which is based in a small, rural community in South Africa’s North West Province. Serving a population without easy access to either a hospital or government AIDS clinic, MAHAAO works hard to accommodate the growing number of HIV-positive community members.

Through its Emergency Plan Small Grants Program, the U.S. Embassy in South Africa was able to help. MAHAAO received \$9,700 to facilitate staff training, purchase critical supplies, and extend its outreach program. “I am so pleased that we received the grant,” Sello said. “The training will help me better help those who are living with the virus.”

In 2005, South Africa’s Emergency Plan Small Grants Program awarded grants averaging nearly \$9,000 to 51 community-based organizations around the country. These grants are extending the reach of the Emergency Plan to grassroots organizations engaged in small-scale, but high-impact, activities.

The U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

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