



Beyond Zero support to the South African government response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The occurrence of the world-wide COVID19 pandemic has made Beyond Zero (BZ) to rethink the manner it operates. COVID19 has exposed the inadequacies within our systems as an organization and has challenged the depth of our networks and approaches in responding to this new pandemic. However, it has also provided an opportunity for BZ to reflect and look at strategic ways to strengthen its systems, in such a way that it achieves its desired outcomes.

The funding received was specifically used to:

1. Augment the DOH national response plan to scale up the screening and testing of communities for COVID-19 infections and contact tracing initiatives. A total of 50 temporary COVID-19 testing sites have been established in 10 priority districts where BZ is already implementing. The testing sites have been allocated trained health professionals to conduct COVID -19 screening of clients and sample collection for testing at no charge. Following the receipt of results, the team of tracers allocated to the sites assist the DOH teams with tracing and testing of close contacts of individuals testing positive for COVID-19. Beyond Zero procured gazebos, testing consumables and other mobile equipment and supplies necessary. Up to six health staff members are employed per site. The sites work in collaboration with the health districts in providing services in line with DOH policies and guidelines and the exact location of sites were determined by DOH officials in accordance with heat and vulnerability mapping outcomes.
2. Beyond Zero supported DOH with the urgent procurement of PPE materials and other supplies including masks, gowns, gloves etc. for health workers, hygiene products such as hand sanitizers for frontline workers, and IR thermometers. Other initiatives

supported are the training of health care workers, procurement and distribution of IEC materials for health staff, users and communities, strengthening of infection prevention and control measures, procurement of testing materials and reagents for NHLS, and with specimen transport and results logistics.

3. Adapt and strengthen community-based service delivery (i.e. mobile, door-to-door, health posts, safe spaces and peer-based) models to ensure uninterrupted provision of **CORE** interventions for key populations (AGYW, MSM, TG, SW, PWID) and people with TB
4. Strengthening **linkages and layering** of HIV and TB treatment, care and support including psycho-social support in line with National Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidelines
5. Strengthen occupational health and safety measures to minimize COVID-19 impact on essential services staff.
6. Work through national and subnational SANAC structures to engage and involve civil society and community actors to quickly adapt to the changes imposed by COVID-19
7. Educate and raise awareness among civil society including PLHIV/TB (GIPA) and communities on COVID-19 public health response and sustained essential service provision
8. Procure and distribute personal protection equipment (PPE) for essential services staff, and infection control products /services including decontamination services
9. Facilitate efforts to strengthen mental health and psycho-social support for frontline clinical and non-clinical health care workers
10. Support efforts to strengthen mental health and psycho-social support for COVID-19 affected individuals and households.
11. Support DBE to provide comprehensive COVID-19 screening, psycho-social support to learners and educators and provision of PPEs

This support is also aligned to the GF guidance for supporting COVID-19 activities, where support can be provided for:

- Infection prevention and control in hospital and other health facilities to prevent nosocomial infections, hence the community based approach,
- Sample transportation to laboratories and other investments in integrated specimen transport networks, and laboratory equipment for COVID-19 testing,
- Contact tracing and surveillance efforts in local outbreaks to strengthen community systems.

Table 1. Proposed implementation areas:

Province	Districts	Number of Sites
Eastern Cape	Nelson Mandela Bay Metro Oliver Tambo District Municipality Amathole Alfred Nzo Buffalo City	25
Free State	Thabo Mofutsanyana Mangaung	10
Limpopo	Greater Sekhukhune District Mopane Capricorn	15
Total		50