

Increasing paediatric HIV case finding through paediatric index testing among two provinces in South Africa

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Author list

Ziyanda Makaba¹, Silinganiso Chatikobo¹, Ivana Beesham¹, Claire Serrao¹, Dhirisha Naidoo¹, Ayisolwainkosi Ncube¹, Refilwe Mosome¹, Goodman Ntshangase¹, Sandile Ndingi¹, Ntokozo Mkhize¹, Joshua Motlhamme², Nanana Hlatshwayo², Khanyo Hlophe³, Linda Dlamini³, Todd Malone¹

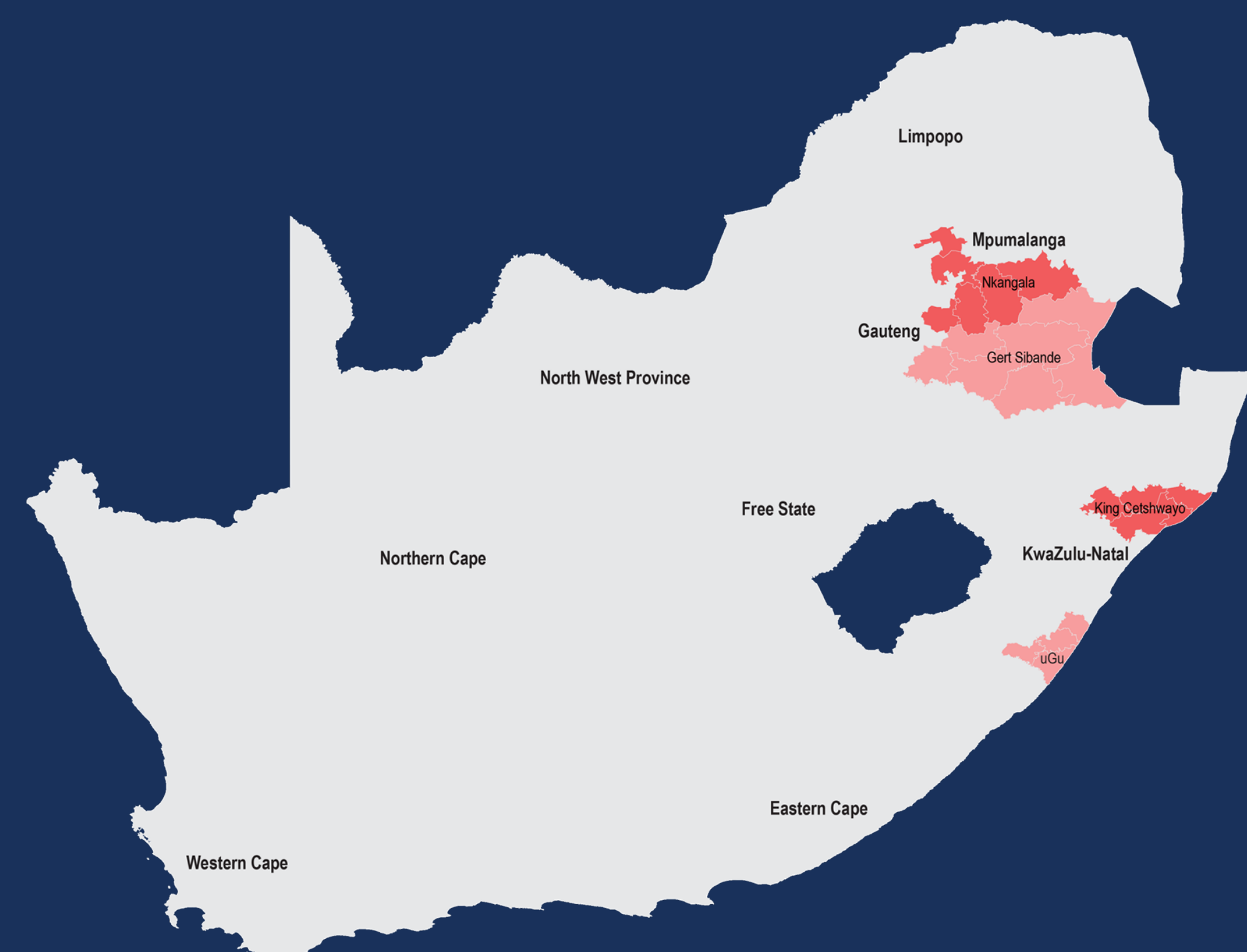
Affiliations

1. BroadReach Health Development, Cape Town, South Africa
2. Department of Health, Mpumalanga, South Africa
3. Department of Health, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Background

An estimated 8 000 children aged 0-14 years acquired HIV in South Africa in 2022. To identify children living with HIV, different HIV testing modalities are needed. This includes testing children elicited as contacts from HIV-positive index clients, known as paediatric index testing.

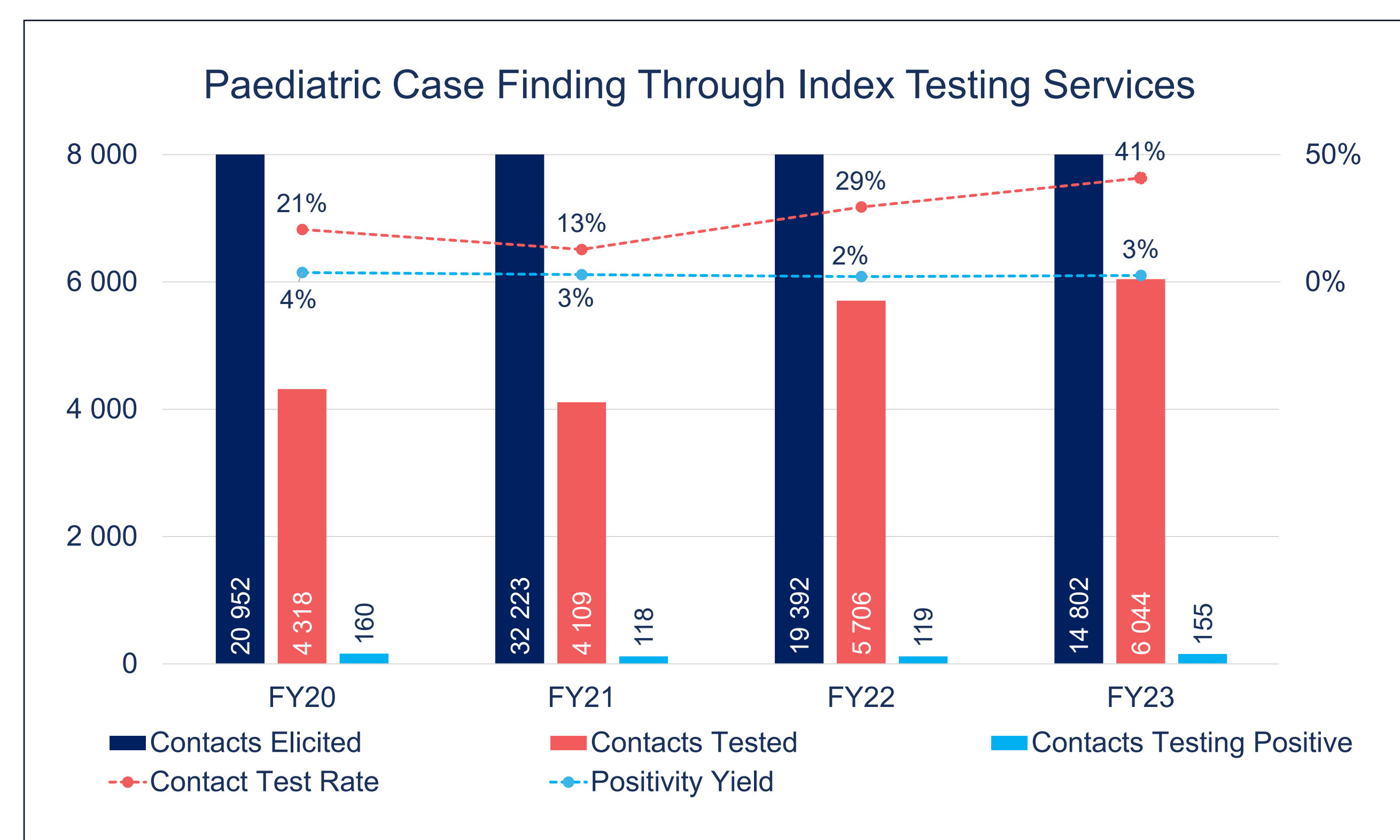
Description



- BroadReach Health Development, supported by PEPFAR/USAID, works with the Department of Health in two districts each in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal provinces in South Africa to accelerate efforts to end the AIDS epidemic.
- BroadReach provides technical assistance, mentorship, training, and direct service delivery.
- BroadReach supports paediatric index testing in facilities contributing the highest paediatric case finding gaps through monitoring of index testing registers, mentorship on tracing of elicited child contacts with no testing/tracing outcomes and collaboration with Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) partners.
- In addition, a bi-directional register was introduced to monitor contact tracing and referrals from communities to facilities.

Lessons learnt

- Index testing amongst elicited paediatric contacts increased from 13% to 41% between FY21 and FY23, reversing the previous downward trend, with the proportion testing positive ranging from 2-3%. Introduction of a register to monitor bi-directional referrals and tracing by OVC partners improved the tracing, testing and monitoring of elicited paediatric contacts.
- Training followed by ongoing mentorship for tracing of paediatric contacts without documented testing outcomes assisted with accurate documentation and improved reporting of paediatric index testing performance.
- Furthermore, direct service delivery by BroadReach to elicit paediatric contacts likely to have acquired HIV from index clients such as those with advanced HIV disease and returning to care after being lost to follow-up, improved paediatric contacts elicitation and testing.



Conclusion/Next Steps

Collaboration with partner organizations, documentation of bi-directional referrals and tracing attempts, the provision of training, mentorship and technical assistance along with direct service delivery all contributed to increasing paediatric index testing.

For additional information, please contact Dr Ziyanda Makaba
Email: zmakaba@brhc.com

