

Summary of key data from the findings of the HIV and AIDS and Gender Baseline Study in Lesotho

QUANTITY OF COVERAGE	% LESOTHO	% REGION
HIV coverage compared to total	19	3
HIV mentioned	36	36
HIV central focus	37	64
WHO SPEAKS		
Women and men - all topics	44 (F) / 56 (M)	39 (F) / 61 (M)
Person affected by HIV	3	4
Women and men affected by HIV	100 (F) / 0 (M)	59 (F) / 41 (M)
People with HIV	2	4
Women and men with HIV	100 (F) / 0 (M)	44 (F) / 56 (M)
Traditional & religious groups	8	5
Women and men traditional and religious groups	15 (F) / 185 (M)	18 (F) / 82 (M)
Civil society, NGOs, INGOs	26	28
Women and men in civil society, NGOs and INGOs	53 (F) / 47 (M)	47 (F) / 53 (M)
Experts	15	12
Women and men experts	35 (F) / 65 (M)	36 (F) / 64 (M)
Officials/UN agencies	43	42
Women and men officials/UN agencies	39 (F) / 61 (M)	31 (F) / 69 (M)
Other	3	5
Women and men other	33 (F) / 67 (M)	40 (F) / 60 (M)
TOPICS		
Prevention	38	41
Who speaks on prevention?	31 (F) / 69 (M)	42 (F) / 58 (M)
Treatment	9	16
Who speaks on treatment?	45 (F) / 55 (M)	37 (F) / 63 (M)
Care	15	13
Who speaks on care?	75 (F) / 25 (M)	52 (F) / 48 (M)
General	8	19
Who speaks on general?	14 (F) / 86 (M)	27 (F) / 73 (M)
Impact	9	5
Who speaks on impact?	(F) / 69 (M)	35 (F) / 65 (M)
TYPES OF STORIES		
News & briefs	86	78
Cartoons, images, graphics	2	2
Editorial & opinion	2	4
Feature & analysis	5	10
Feedback	1	3
Interview, profile & human interest	4	3
WHERE DO STORIES COME FROM?		
International	11	13
Regional	4	8
National	39	54
Provincial	5	6
Local	41	19
WHO TELLS THE STORIES?		
Original story	70	77
Guest writer	1	5
Agency	29	18
WHO REPORTS ON HIV and AIDS?		
Overall	59 (F) / 41 (M)	45 (F) / 55 (M)
Who reports on what?		
Prevention	50 (F) / 50 (M)	39 (F) / 61 (M)
Treatment	70 (F) / 30 (M)	56 (F) / 44 (M)
Care	88 (F) / 13 (M)	57 (F) / 43 (M)
General	75 (F) / 25 (M)	39 (F) / 61 (M)
Impact	54 (F) / 46 (M)	39 (F) / 61 (M)
Other	45 (F) / 55 (M)	50 (F) / 50 (M)

LESOTHO

HIV and AIDS and GENDER BASELINE STUDY



The Southern African Media Action Plan



on HIV and AIDS & Gender

The Lesotho HIV and AIDS and Gender Baseline Study is part of the Media Action Plan (MAP) on HIV and AIDS and Gender, led by the Southern African Editors' Forum (SAEF). A team of local consultants led by Tom Mapesela, director of the Media institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and Secretary of the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network, conducted the monitoring. The MMP, which leads the monitoring sub-sector of MAP analysed the data and produced the quantitative results. Gender Links (GL), which leads the policy sub-sector of MAP edited the qualitative research and wrote the report.

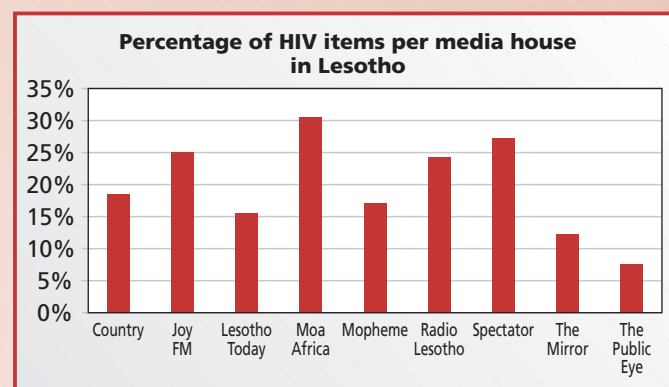
Lesotho has an HIV and AIDS prevalence rate of 29%. The first recorded cases of HIV were amongst foreigners and HIV was dubbed "koatsi ea bosolla" or the disease of foreign lands. Many people believed and continue to believe that Basotho people are immune to contracting the virus. The Lesotho government has encouraged its citizens to undergo HIV tests. In 2004, the Prime Minister publicly undertook an HIV test.

The monitoring included 118 media houses in eleven Southern Africa countries, for a total of 15 days staggered over a period of one month between October and November 2005. Monitoring in Lesotho covered 8 media houses. The key findings are summarised in the table at the back of this pamphlet.

KEY FINDINGS

Lesotho has the highest overall proportion of HIV and AIDS coverage: In Lesotho 19% of all stories in all media monitored focused on or mentioned HIV, compared to the regional average of 3%.

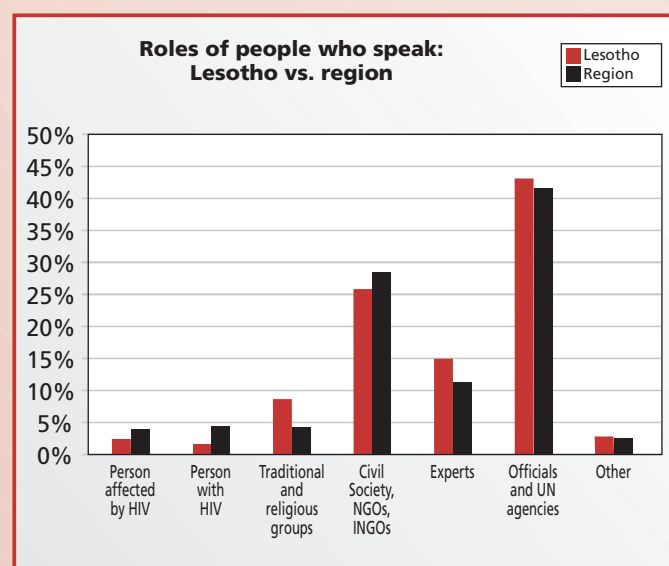
But there is considerable difference between media houses, with *Moa Afrika* having coverage of 30%; *Public Eye* less than 10%. Radio registered the most consistent coverage.



HIV and AIDS is better mainstreamed into coverage than in other countries: 37% of all stories monitored had HIV and AIDS as the focus of the story, while the rest (63%) mentioned HIV and AIDS. This figure suggests a good balance between mainstreaming HIV and AIDS into all coverage and covering it as a stand alone topic.

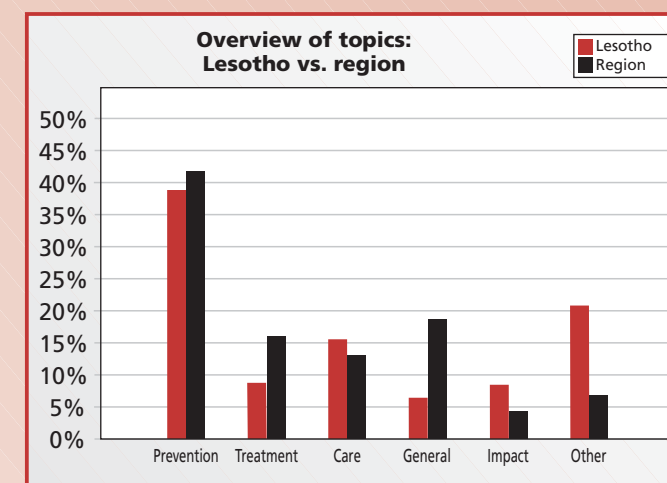
Male voices still predominate: Male voices still predominate, with 56% of all sources being male and 44% female, although this balance is better than the regional average of 61% male and 39% female sources.

People with HIV and AIDS are hardly heard: People with HIV and AIDS constituted 2% of all sources (compared to 4% in the region) with officials, UN agencies and experts constituting the majority of sources on HIV and AIDS.



Coverage in Lesotho tends to focus on prevention: In a trend similar to the rest of the region, 38% all coverage in Lesotho focuses on prevention.

Treatment, care and support get short shrift: The topic of care and support received 15% of the coverage, while impact only received 9%, despite the significance of these topics for women. Treatment also received only 9% of coverage.



Stories lack depth: In both Lesotho (82%) and the region (78%), the vast majority of HIV coverage is through news stories.

But there is a higher proportion of local stories than in the rest of the region: 41% of stories in Lesotho originate from the local level (compared to 19% in the region overall) with 39% coming from the national arena and 11% internationally.

And there is a relatively high level of original stories: In a trend similar to that of the rest of the region, 70% of stories from Lesotho are original stories written by journalists (compared to 29% obtained from agencies and 1% from guest writers). This indicates that resources are being invested by newsrooms in this beat.

There is a good gender balance on this beat: In Lesotho, almost 60% of the stories on HIV and AIDS are reported by women. This is higher than the regional average of 45% of female journalists.

Gender dimensions of the epidemic are not receiving sufficient coverage although there are some positive trends: With some exceptions, gender is not well integrated into HIV and AIDS coverage, much of which is classified in the study as either gender blind or unclear. Closer analysis of the topics showed that:

- ◆ In prevention, the role of men and boys, sex work and cross generational sex received little or no coverage. However, the subtopics that examined gender based violence (22%) and gender power relations (14%) received significantly better coverage in Lesotho, than in the region. The prevention of mother to child transmission (5%) and cultural practices (5%) also received higher coverage in Lesotho than in the region.

- ◆ In treatment, the focus of coverage was on medical advances and nutrition, which received similar amounts of coverage of 33% each, which accounted for two thirds of the total coverage on this topic.

- ◆ In care, support and the environment, home based care which has serious implications for women and girls, received no coverage. The role of men and boys in the provision of care also received no coverage in Lesotho. 50% of the total coverage in this topic focused on orphans and vulnerable children.

Polices, training and access to information can help to improve the quantity and the quality of coverage: Through the collaborative efforts of a number of organisations, MAP offers support to media houses that wish to develop HIV and AIDS and gender policies and integrate these into workplace as well as editorial practices. The training, ethics and information arms of MAP will buttress the policy support provided by GL and MISA.