



loveLife

ASSESSMENT REPORT

IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR SIOC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST PROJECT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Sishen Iron Ore Community Trust partnered with loveLife to establish youth centres in Gamagara Local Municipality in Northern Cape and Thabazimbi Local Municipality in Limpopo. The established youth centres adopted loveLife's model which embraces young people's well-being through well-coordinated, community participation, primary health care, education, and other development services. To this end, Social-Economic Impact Management Advisory (hereinafter SIMA) Pty Ltd was contracted by loveLife to undertake an impact assessment of the SIOC-loveLife interventions at the youth centres for the period 2019-2021.

Purpose of the evaluation

The main goal of the assignment was to undertake an impact assessment for the SIOC Community Trust Project implemented from 2019 to 2022 in Northern Cape and Limpopo Provinces. In particular, SIMA Pty Ltd was to assess whether the objectives of the interventions resulted in the expected impact on the young people. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to determine;

- a) The nature of programme offerings of the Youth Centres
- b) Linkages of young people with opportunities through the Y-Centre programmes
- c) Quality of the health and Psychosocial support services for young people
- d) Educational support for young people
- e) Campaigns and Born Free dialogues on Gender-based violence, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy

Key findings

Based on the literature review, qualitative assessment (utilizing information from focused group discussions, and key informant interviews), and quantitative assessment of structured questionnaires, the following key findings were derived;

- a) The SIOC-loveLife programme interventions have contributed towards improving the performance of youth in schools, reduced their school dropouts, and subtly aided job preparedness,
- b) The SIOC-loveLife programme interventions have helped the youth to access health services, contributed towards a positive attitude towards HIV testing,
- c) There has been a reduction in youth pregnancies and enhanced the use of preventative methods among the youth,
- d) Sports activities have enabled the youth to move out of the streets, and decreased substance and alcohol abuse thereby helping to mitigate lawlessness,
- e) SIOC-loveLife programme activities have contributed towards creating good citizens, improved the relationship between the youth and their parents, and helped to support the fight against GBV
- f) The upskilling, learnerships and the Cyber Y centres' activities have prepared young people for job hunting and entrepreneurship.

Key Recommendations

1. Extension of the project with a proper exit strategy is recommended. There is a risk of eroding the gains made as funding sustainability is not guaranteed at the moment.
2. Develop a clear resource mobilization strategy for the Youth Centres and provide support for them to optimally fundraise from their networks they have established with potential donors.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AL	Active Lifestyle
ART	Antiretroviral
AgriSETA	Agriculture Sector Education Training Authority
AYFS	Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services
BCC	Boy Child Campaign
BFDs	Born Free Dialogues
CAT	Computer Applications Technology
COVID19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DoH	Department of Health
DSD	Department of Social Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FM	Facility Managers
FYC	Facility Youth Champions
gB	Groundbreaker
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GRD	Grade
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ID	Identity Document
KII	Key Informant Interview
KIOL	Kumba Iron Ore Limited
LED	Local Economic Development
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersexual
LLP	loveLife Programme
NDOH	National Department of Health
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PHC	Primary Health Centres
PREP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
RC	Right to Care
SAPS	South African Police Service
SANParks	South African National Parks
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STIs	Sexual Transmitted Infections
SIOC	Sishen Iron Ore Company
SIOC-CDT	Sishen Iron Ore Company- Community Trust Project
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
YACF	Youth Against Crime Forum
YC	Youth Centre

I. BACKGROUND

The New loveLife Trust South Africa is an established Youth Centred Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) with a primary focus on youth development and promotion of healthy and active lifestyles. Their interventions focus on HIV prevention (new infection) and promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, Active Lifestyle to ensure adolescent and youth are physically active to prevent obesity, non-communicable disease like hypertension and finally youth development.

I.1. SIOC Community Trust Project

The Sishen Iron Ore Company-Community Development Trust (SIOC-CDT) was established in 2006 by Kumba Iron Ore Limited to invest in the development of the communities in which the company operates. The Trust focuses primarily on beneficiary communities adjacent to the Sishen Iron Ore Company's (SIOC) mining activities in the Northern Cape and Limpopo and has invested significantly in community development projects aimed at ensuring sustainability beyond mining operations.

In 2019, SIOC Community Trust partnered with loveLife to establish Youth Centres in Gamagara Local Municipality in Northern Cape and Thabazimbi Local Municipality in Limpopo. The Youth Centres were to be established using loveLife's model that enhances young people's well-being through well-coordinated, community participation, primary health care, education and, other development services. In Gamagara local Municipality, the project was implemented in Deben/Debeng, Olifantshoek and Tsantsabane with the main YC being at Deben. Similarly, in Thabazimbi Local Municipality, the project was implemented in three communities namely Regorogile, Northam and Rooiberg with the main hub being at Regorogile.

Both communities are rural and in mining communities.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the assignment was to undertake an impact assessment for the SIOC Community Trust Project implemented from 2019 to 2022 in Northern Cape and Limpopo Provinces to assess whether the objectives of the interventions resulted in the expected impact to young people.

The aim of the evaluation was to determine the impact of the SIOC Community Trust project's programme interventions have had on the youth in terms of:

- a) Programme offerings of the Youth Centres
- b) Linkages of young people with opportunities through the Y-Centre programmes
- c) Health and Psychosocial support services for young people
- d) Educational support for young people
- e) Campaigns and Born Free dialogues on Gender-based violence, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy

3. EVALUATION METHOD

The evaluation period for this study was 2019 to 2023 and data for this impact assessment was collected across six sites namely Regorogile, Rooiberg and Northam in Thabazimbi Municipality and Deben, Olifantshoek and Tsantsabane in Gamagara local Municipality.

Key programme documents were reviewed to understand the programme objectives, targets and what had been achieved so far. This then informed the development of data collection tools.

Mixed methods were applied in data collection where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Qualitative data was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FDGs), Key Informant Interviews (KII) and in-depth discussions with respondents using open ended questionnaire and interview guides for FDGs. Qualitative data was collected from beneficiaries, implementers (groundBREAKERS and mPintshis), Youth Centre staff and from stakeholders/partners. Quantitative data was collected through an online survey using a standard questionnaire. Respondents for the online survey were mainly young people that had participated and benefited from project activities.

Online survey was conducted from July 24th 2023 to August 10th 2023. A total of 496 young people participated (296 from Gamagara and 200 from Thabazimbi). Qualitative data was collected from 25th to 28th July 2023 for Thabazimbi and 1st to 4th August 2023 for Gamagara. A breakdown of the respondents is provided below.

3.1. Survey

An online survey with closed-questionnaire was designed by the project lead data analyst. The questionnaire elements included some aspects such as the demographic- Age and Gender, and youth centre of respondent. In addition, the questionnaire included questions that directly relate to the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was administered according to youth centres with 150 sample for the main hubs (Regorogile and Deben) while 100 participants for each of the other four hubs were sampled. Respondents were young people who have or still participate in loveLife activities (beneficiaries). The collected responses were downloaded onto excel and analyzed using R Statistical Software packages by the lead data analyst.

As shown in Table I, a total of 497 participants took part in the survey. With Gamagara contributing 297 and Thabazimbi 200.

Table I. Summary of survey respondents per municipality

Gamagara			Thabazimbi		
Deben	Olifantshoek	Tsantsabane	Regorogile	Northam	Roiberg
126	96	75	108	46	46
Total		297	Total		200

3.1.1 Demographics of the respondents

The distribution of the respondents by age and gender shown in *Figure 1* illustrates that majority of respondents were below 24 years and comprise of mainly male and female. Some few

respondents belong to the LGBTQ+ category. On the other hand, *Figure 2* depicts the distribution of the respondents by age and Y-center. Many of the young respondents (< 24 years) are mainly from Thabazimbi and Deben Y-centers. Very few respondents from the Northam, Rooiberg and Olifantshoek Y-Centers participated in the survey.

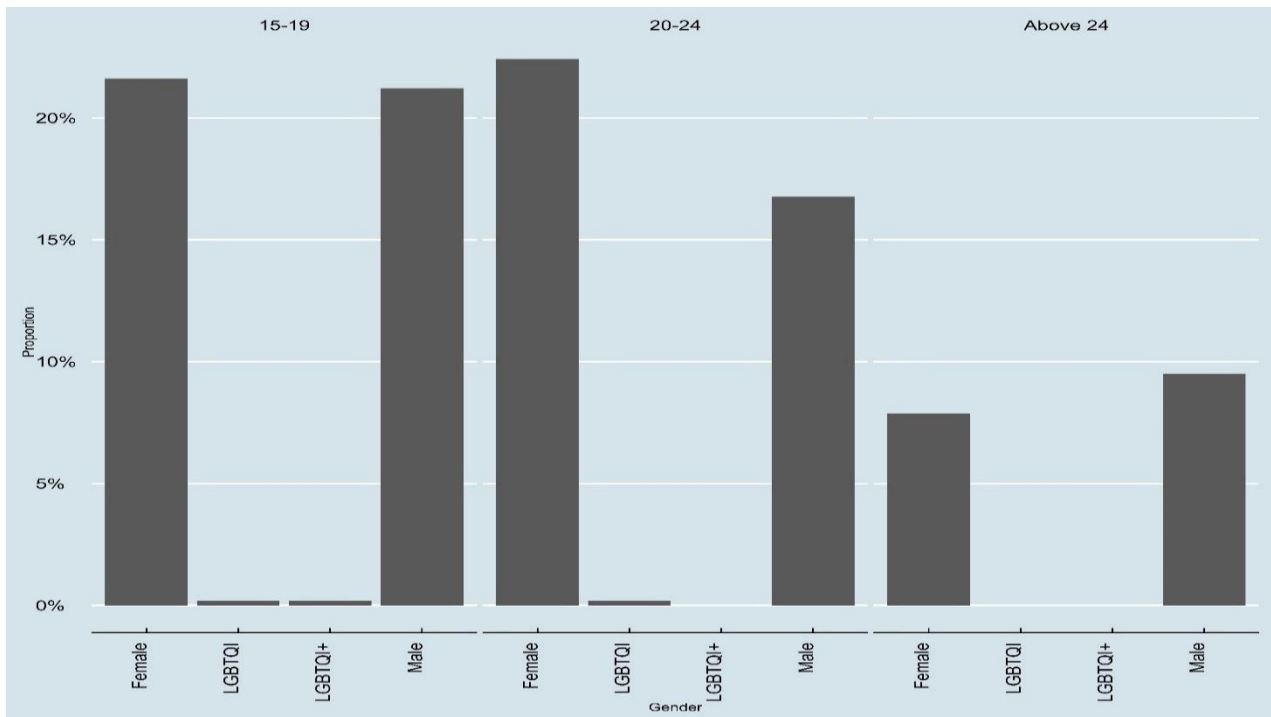


Figure 1. Proportion of respondents by age and gender

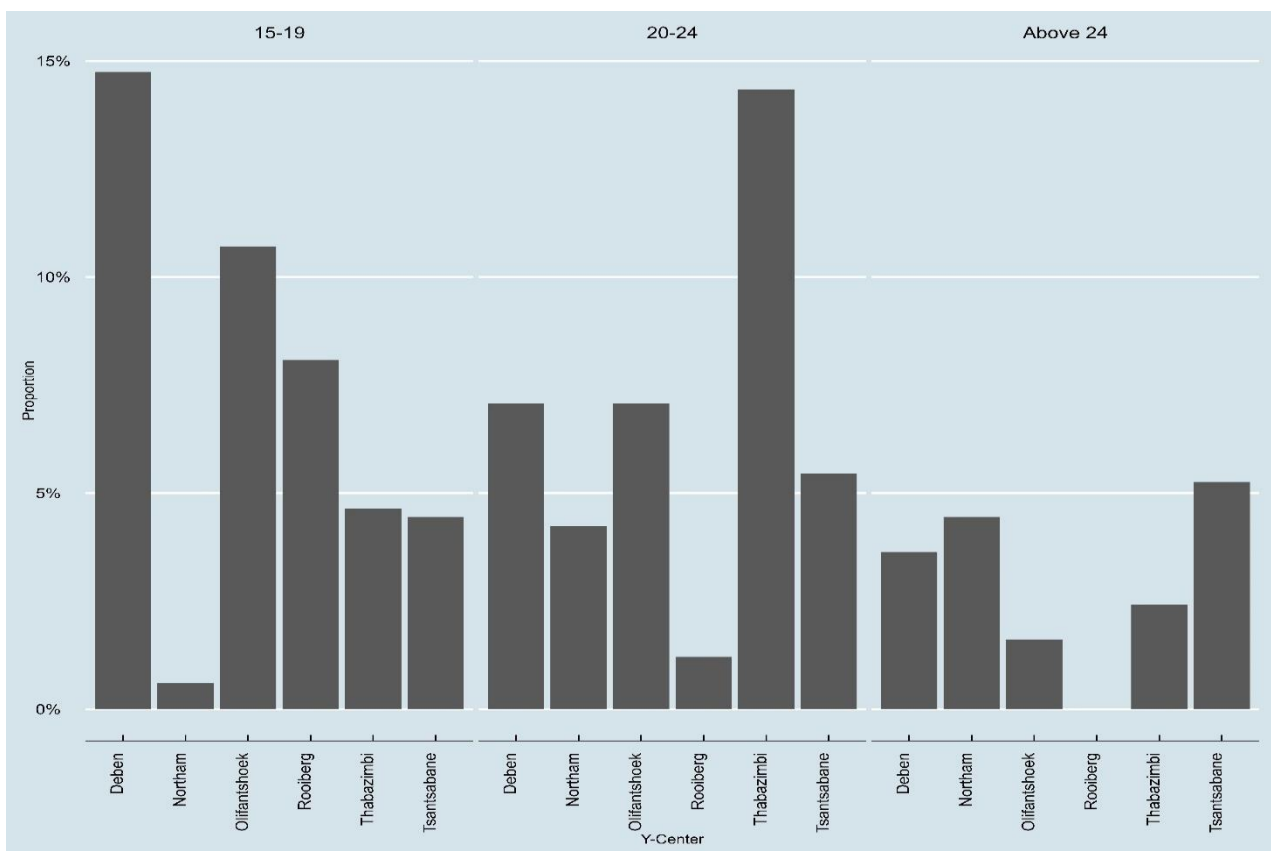


Figure 2. Proportion of respondents by age and Y-Center

3.1.2. Summary of survey responses

As shown in Figure 3, the impact of SIOC loveLife programmes (hereafter LLP) on education construct is generally positive. In particular, 92% of the respondents strongly agree that the LLP has helped improve the school performance while 53% of the respondents indicated that the LLP has helped prepare the youth for job hunting. On the role of LLP mitigating school dropout, about 42% of the respondents seemed to be undecided while 40% of the respondents generally averred that LLP has contributed towards reducing school dropout.

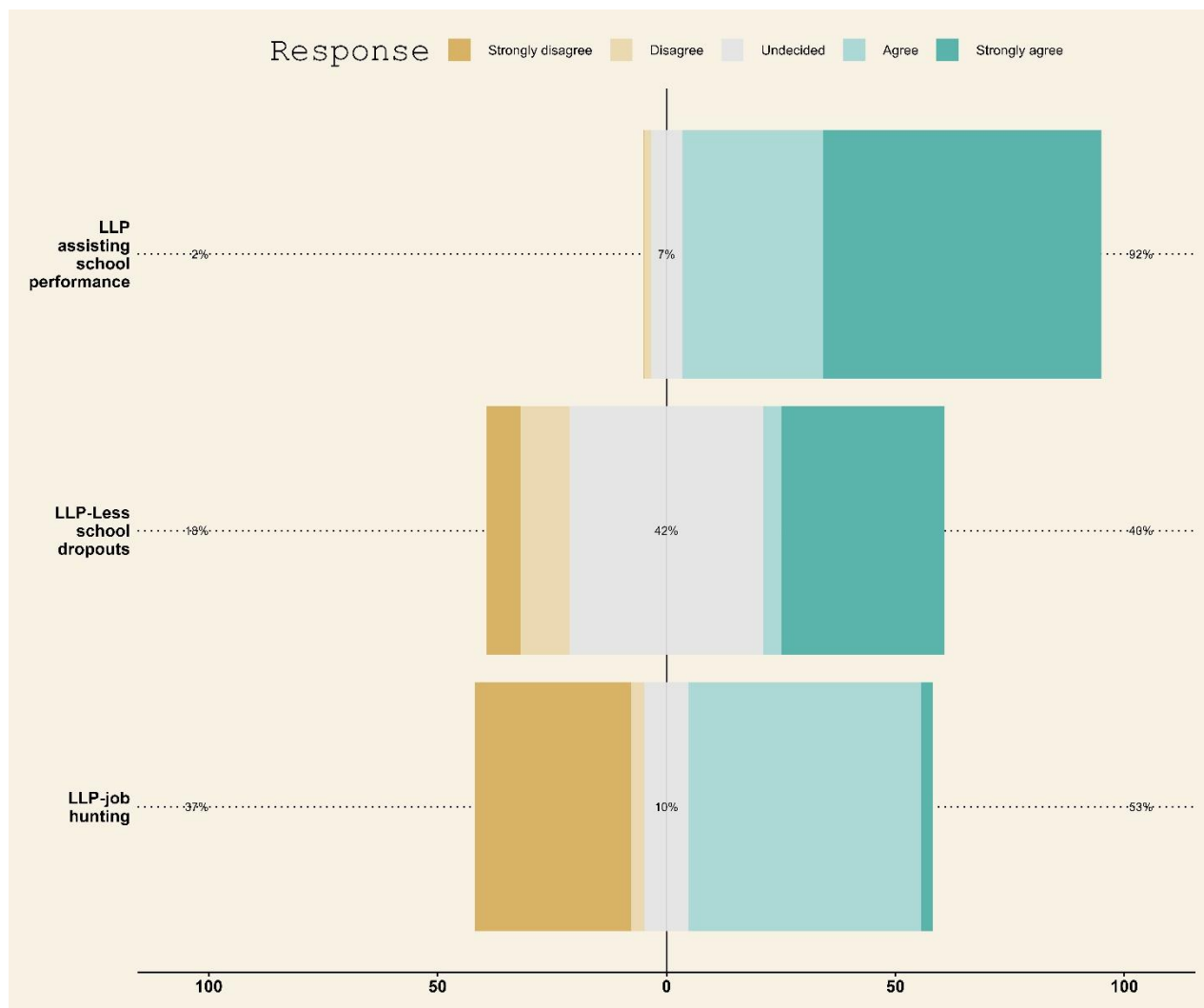


Figure 3. Summary of survey responses on the impact of LLP on education

Assessment of the impact of LLP on the provision and access to health services suggests that the respondents strongly agree (up to 28%) that there LLP has enhanced access to health services and generally more than 50% agree to having access to health services, improved attitude to HIV testing as well as reduction in teenage pregnancy and increased uptake of preventative methods.

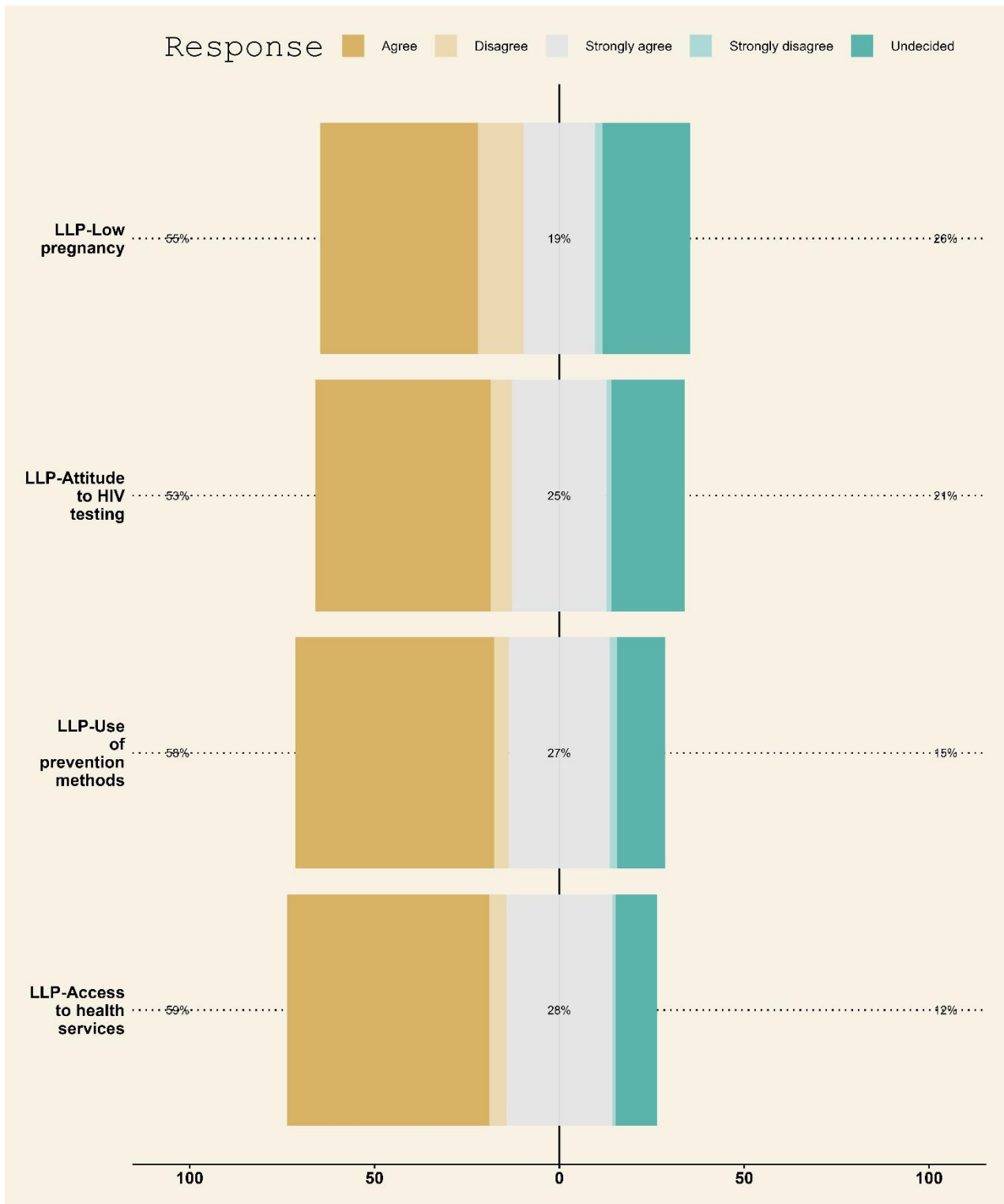


Figure 4. Summary of survey responses on the impact of LLP on health services

A multi-regression analysis is performed on three selected dependent variables i.e., a) the impact of LLP on creating law abiding youth, b) job preparedness, and c) improved relationship between the youth and parents. As given in *Table 2*, there are statistically significant (shown in bold) correlation between the dependent variables and independent variables.

Table 2. Summary results from a multi-regression analysis

<i>Predictors</i>	LLP_law			LLP_prep_jobs			LLP_youth_parents		
	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	0.16	-1.35 – 1.66	0.840	1.65	0.74 – 2.57	< 0.001	-0.07	-0.93 – 0.78	0.868
LLP sch Perf	-0.12	-0.40 – 0.15	0.383	0.05	-0.12 – 0.22	0.580	0.12	-0.04 – 0.28	0.131
LLP sch drop	0.39	0.23 – 0.55	< 0.001	-0.11	-0.21 – -0.01	0.038	0.06	-0.03 – 0.15	0.195
LLP at2hiv test	0.19	0.05 – 0.32	0.008	0.13	0.05 – 0.22	0.002	0.02	-0.06 – 0.10	0.613
LLP access2hs	-0.08	-0.24 – 0.08	0.315	0.11	0.01 – 0.20	0.029	0.09	0.00 – 0.18	0.040
LLP prevention meth	-0.03	-0.19 – 0.12	0.687	0.09	-0.01 – 0.18	0.080	0.23	0.14 – 0.31	< 0.001
LLP lowpreg	0.17	0.03 – 0.30	0.014	0.01	-0.08 – 0.09	0.886	0.02	-0.05 – 0.10	0.545
LLP sports off streets	0.28	0.08 – 0.47	0.005	0.16	0.04 – 0.28	0.007	0.08	-0.03 – 0.19	0.162
LLP lowdrugs	0.17	0.10 – 0.25	< 0.001	0.02	-0.03 – 0.07	0.422	0.00	-0.04 – 0.05	0.901
LLP GBV	0.17	0.03 – 0.30	0.017	0.00	-0.08 – 0.09	0.972	0.12	0.04 – 0.19	0.003
LLP youth parents	0.02	-0.14 – 0.18	0.806	0.06	-0.03 – 0.16	0.207			
LLP prep jobs	0.04	-0.10 – 0.19	0.560				0.05	-0.03 – 0.13	0.207
LLP law				0.02	-0.04 – 0.07	0.560	0.01	-0.04 – 0.06	0.806
Observations	495			495			495		
R ² / R ² adjusted	0.230 / 0.213			0.129 / 0.109			0.185 / 0.166		

3.2. Key Informant Interviews, in-depth discussions and Focus Group Discussions (Qualitative Data)

Qualitative data collection was triangulated through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with youth (beneficiaries) and implementers and Key Informant Interviews (KII) with youth centres' staff and stakeholders.

KII were held with loveLife staff/YC staff and coordinators for each of the 6(six) sites. A total of 12 loveLife staff were interviewed from these sites. Furthermore, the research team held FGDs with implementers (groundBREAKERS and mPintshis) from all the sites except Rooiberg in Thabazimbi. A total of 63 (sixty-three) implementers participated in the discussions.

Additional qualitative data was collected from FGDs with youth(beneficiaries) from all the sites except Rooiberg and Northam. A total of 34 (thirty-four) youth participated. KII were conducted through face to face meetings and telephonically with selected stakeholders. A total of 17 (seventeen) stakeholders participated. They included primary health care centres (Clinics) (4), Schools (1), Department of Social Development (2), South African Police Service (SAPS) (1), Correctional service (1), National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) (1), Municipality (1) and Community members (6).

Table 3. Summary of qualitative data contributors per youth centre

Respondents	Gamagara			Thabazimbi			Total
	Deben	Olifantshoek	Tsantsabane	Regorogile	Northam	Rooiberg	
KII with Y Centre staff/coordinators	2	3	2	3	1	1	12
Number implementers in FGD	15	11	12	16	9	0	63
Number of beneficiaries in FGD	13	7	5	9	0	0	34
KII interviews with stakeholders	4	0	5	6	1	1	17
	34	21	24	34	11	2	126
	79			47			

Content analysis of qualitative

Data from KII and FGD was captured manually on questionnaires and also transcribed. Content analysis of qualitative data from open ended questions was done through data familiarisation, generation of codes (color and numbers), establishing commonalities (trends and themes), confirming themes and quantifying themes. Content analysis on perceptions utilized a hybrid approach of reading to establish patterns. Coding is the systematic searching through data to identify specific observable actions or characteristics. In this study, it involved breaking down the evidence into parts and gradually building up the whole. These codes helped to identify features and patterns.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

The evaluation team reviewed project documents including business plans for both Gamagara and Thabazimbi sites as well as monthly and quarterly reports for the project. The team concluded that targets were met and superseded in some instances. A total of 411 implementers (groundBREAKERS and mPintshis) were recruited and trained in Thabazimbi. In Gamagara, this number was 130. While both locations targeted 30 implementers, Thabazimbi recruited more (411) because the level of attrition was high. Both sites had implementers leaving and had to replace them. This is a good and bad thing at the same time. Good in the sense that the implementers left because they found new jobs after training and exposure they received from loveLife while bad in the sense that implementation of project activities was disrupted.

For Thabazimbi, a total of 94,849 youths had been reached by project activities, 5360 through social media, 16,556 through COVID-19 screening and 27,076 had been reached through the loveLife please call me number promotion. A total of 16 implementers had attained learner's licence while one had acquired a driver's licence.

In Gamagara, 26 147 youths were reached by project interventions, 1300 through COVID-19 screening, and 157 through loveLife please call number promotion. Thirty-nine implementers had passed their learner's driver tests and 16 had acquired driver's licence.

Table 4. Number of young people reached in Gamagara local municipality

Indicator	Target	Attained
Implementers recruited and oriented with onsite training	30	137
No of young people reached by the Centre Program and Implementers (Head Count)	300 p Quarter	2351
Love4life/move4life challenge	600	1,005
Y-Centre Counselling	50	91
Condom Education; Awareness and Distribution	60,000	135,000
Health Talks	700	1633
Health Talks participants	12,000	18,500
Reached through Social Media.	N/A	0
COVID-19 Screening (clinic-based and events)	N/A	1,300
loveLife Please Call Number Promotion	N/A	157
BFD	8	12
Youth Festivals [sports Tournaments / Performing Arts]	4	7
Special Events	8	6
Campaigns	5	9
Campaign participants	1,000	2,567
Learners License	15	39
Driver's License	15	16
Sports and Recreation Tournaments	4	5

Table 5. Number of youths reached in Thabazimbi local municipality

Indicator	Target	Attained
Implementers recruited and oriented with on-site training	32	411
No of youths reached by the Centre Program & Implementers (Head Count)	800	44,314
Love4life/move4life challenge	75	4,547
Y-Centre Counselling	55	1,037
Condom Education; Awareness and Distribution	100,0000	946,966
Health Talks participants	18,000	35,504
Reached through Social Media.	2,000	5,360
COVID-19 Screening (clinic-based and events)	2,000	16,556
loveLife Please Call Number Promotion	2,000	27,076
Learners licence training and testing	16	16
Drivers licence training and testing	16	1
Youth Festivals	10	11
Youth Festival Participants	1,500	1,607
Performing Arts Festival	10	10
Performing Arts Festival Participants	1,200	1,542
Born Free Dialogues	20	26
Born Free Dialogues participants	1,000	1,413
Young Women Campaign	4	4
Young Women Campaign Participants	600	631
Special Events	16	23
Special Events Participants	2,400	3,138
Cyber Ys Participants	180	994
Sports tournaments	4	4
Occupational Health and Safety Training (OHS)	2	2
OHS Training Participants	60	61
First Aid Training	2	2
First Aid Training Participants	60	61

5. EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.1. Educational support for young people

In all the sites, loveLife partners with schools to implement interventions targeting learners. After school programmes are implemented where learners visit youth centres and are assisted with homework, research in their school projects, and taught basic computer skills. Learners also get to listen to health talks and participate in extra mural activities such as sports, dance and recreation. Implementers also visit schools where they give talks to address various social problems affecting youths in school.

Before loveLife programmes, many learners were dropping out of school due to poverty and social problems. Through referrals they receive psychosocial support and are able to go back to school. Programmes are also keeping drug users in school. A case in point is when a learner had dropped out of school because of lack of ID. The learner was assisted to get the ID and went back to school.

Feedback from the learners indicate that these interventions have helped them improve their school performance. They acknowledged that support with homework and research ensures that school projects get done well through the use of computers. They don't have smart phones and computers at home and even if they had, they can't afford data. They indicated that they learn more from the implementers as they are peers.

Furthermore, loveLife activities in school are fun. Entertainment activities do keep them at school (fun time at school). This makes learners want to go back to school hence reducing the drop-out rate.

“The other reason why the youth are motivated to stay in school is because when we advertise jobs here and the ones we share with them, the minimum requirement is matric or TVET certificate. They tell us that the minimum they want is to complete matric at least”.
Groundbreaker, Thabazimbi.

“Yes, they address bullying, they intervene when one misses school due to bullying. Some lads are discriminated against, loveLife implementers help build/boost confidence and advise them to remain in school.” Learner, Tsantsabane primary

Overall programme interventions are helping learners improve their school performance and to stay in school, reducing the rate of school drop-outs. Schools' reviews are positive. Learners have been assisted with homework, research and their mental health through psychosocial support. They have addressed bullying in schools. Feedback from the teachers indicate that implementers have assisted them with workload and the learners have improved understanding due to peer to peer coaching. Learners give feedback and bring their friends too. Implementers see this improvement from learners' homework books. The educators report back that the learners have learnt to respect, stopped bullying and have improved with their academic work. Educators call implementers whenever they need more assistance.

“The principal of Deben high school confirmed to us that the grade 11 and 12 learners are now submitting their homework and the performance in class is improving” Centre manager, Deben YC.

5.2. Linkages of young people with opportunities through the Y-Centre programmes

One of the objectives of the SIOC project is youth empowerment through training and skills development as well as linkage of youths to opportunities for development and employment. All youth centres were found to implement upskilling interventions to prepare youths for job hunting and establishment of their own businesses. All sites have Cyber Ys (computer centres) where youth are taught basic computer skills, prepare CVs, and conduct job searches.

All sites recruited youths as groundBREAKERS and mPintshis as implementers who are all on stipends. groundBREAKERS have a two-year contract on a regular stipend while the mPintshis are just volunteers. All have undergone training in various skills including learner's and driver's licence. This evaluation established that there is a high attrition of implementers, which to some extent may be viewed as bad and as good. Bad in that it affects the smooth programme implementation and good because due to the upskilling, implementers become more employable and are able to move on to better opportunities. Many former implementers (gBs) found jobs or have started their own businesses after upskilling. loveLife programmes give groundBREAKERS and mPintshis the opportunity to gain experience which gives them a competitive edge.

The programme has therefore helped youths improve skills and job hunting. Skills youth gain expose them to opportunities while the YCs reaches out to young people whenever there are opportunities.

Thabazimbi

Many young people have been upskilled and linked to opportunities. Some have started their own businesses. loveLife has partnered with National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), the Thabazimbi Local Municipality, AgriSETA and Department of Agriculture, and SANParks. Youths trained by NYDA, Agri-Seta and SANPARKS, will be linked to opportunities agriculture and tourism. Both the AgriSETA and SANParks have provided learnerships with beneficiaries receiving stipends. The partnership with the municipality has resulted in involving youths in Local Economic Development plans which is helpful in building and encouraging entrepreneurship among youths.

At Cyber Ys, youths are trained in basic computer skills, preparation of CVs and job applications. Implementers were also trained. They were trained in computer skills, driving and financial management among others. Many of them have since left as they got jobs.

Gamagara

The centres are designed to be a one-stop shop involved in advocacy, community engagement, capacity building, and linkages to opportunities. They identify opportunities and stakeholders for young people to be trained and offered practical experience. loveLife has forged partnerships with Solar Parks and Mines and Summit (local company).

The latter provides accredited courses in the hospitality industry, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) while Solar Parks and Mines use loveLife centres as recruitment bases. They send job opportunities to loveLife YC and place CV boxes at centres for young people to deposit applications.

“Look at me now. I’m a living example. I started here as an imPintshi and now I’m an admin in the program. In addition, the skills I learned have helped me to open a small business as well.” Programme admin, Tsantsabane.

A lot of the upskilled youths have found jobs in the local mines including those with driver's licences, while others are working as teacher assistants in

local schools. The centres have also implemented a campaign that helps grade 12 learners find admissions and bursaries to tertiary institutions using online portals.

5.3. Campaigns on substance abuse, petty crimes, teenage pregnancy, and GBV

Interventions implemented by loveLife to address substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and gender-based violence (GBV) include health talks in schools and in the community, community outreach, psychosocial support, referrals and provision of other support such as sanitary pads and food parcels for the very needy. loveLife also implements sporting activities of all codes and recreation for the youth to live a healthy and active lifestyle.

Reduction in substance abuse and petty crimes committed by youth

Thabazimbi

loveLife has partnered with schools, Thabazimbi Local Municipality, and community safety forum to address social problems facing youth including substance abuse and petty crimes committed by juveniles. The Community safety forum joins loveLife to visit schools to address social issues affecting learners both in primary and secondary school. During sporting events, loveLife provides equipment and mobilise youths for participation while the Municipality provides trophies and medals.

Sports activities and other loveLife programmes have contributed to the reduction of substance abuse and petty crimes committed by young people. Many youths are now occupied with sports and skills development. They fully participate in sporting activities which take place in the afternoons when some have come from school. Sports tournaments are organized by loveLife while local coaches play a critical role in mobilizing and coaching the youth. They organize technical clinics (coaching) for basketball and other sports with some of the youths excelling.

“one of the girls that went through our programme is now playing professional basketball. We don’t just train them, we link them to academies like the netball academy where they are scouted”. mPintshi, Thabazimbi

In addition, youths are getting skills that prepare them to secure jobs to address extreme poverty giving them hope. Through health talks in schools and during door-to-door campaigns, implementers interact with young people that would potentially be in trouble with the law and refer them to the Social worker for psychosocial support.

“I have a case study where an ex-drug addict confessed to me that he has changed and wants to also change six other addicts’ social worker, Thabazimbi.

Gamagara

“Young people are no longer going to police the station due to criminal activities but to certify their documents”. SAPS, Olifantshoek.

“Skills provided by loveLife gives youths a competitive edge when looking for jobs. A good example is my friend here (fellow GB). Before he joined loveLife, him and our other friend who had been trained by loveLife went for interview for the same job. Our friend got the job because of the skills he got from loveLife. Since then my friend here then decided to join us at loveLife. The stipend is small but the benefits are big”. Gb Olifantshoek.

In Deben, SAPS is a key stakeholder in fighting crime and is integrated into the program to encourage implementers to champion with the SAPS in fighting crime. loveLife implementers form part of the Youth Against Crime forum which uses the Youth Centres to mobilise the youth. The SAPS have a youth desk to fight crime to which implementers belong. The grounds man at the Deben YC is the current Deben chair of the Youth Against Crime forum. The YC has contributed a lot to the crime reduction. They arrange events and showcase crime issues among young people and as a result, crime has decreased drastically and prevented youth from getting into trouble with the law (Deben SAPS).

All across the three hubs (Deben, Tsantsabane, and Olifantshoek), sports and recreation programmes keep young people busy and prevent them from criminal activities. Implementers armed with sports equipment conduct street-to-street outreach in the communities. The YCs hosts sports tournaments and ultimately encourages young people to live active lifestyles, and also integrate it with health talks to promote active and healthy lifestyles. These programmes have contributed in removing young people from the streets. Indigenous games have been integrated.

In Olifantshoek, loveLife hosts events every Friday to keep youths busy and out of the streets. Most of the crimes in the area are mostly gang related fights that happen at taverns at night. Women don't feel safe in these taverns. Implementers engaged tavern owners to ensure no youths under 18 years access taverns. loveLife now has a good relationship with the tavern owners. According to a SAPS report released on the day of the evaluation in Olifantshoek during Women's campaign, young people are no longer going to the police station due to criminal activities but to certify documents.

Reduction in teenage pregnancy

Thabazimbi

It was difficult to establish whether loveLife interventions have contributed to the reduction in teenage pregnancy. However, an increasing number of young people continue to use contraceptives and condoms. Even parents are supporting their children with family planning while nurses engage in educating with the methods. But it is difficult with the statistics as the facilities are witnessing an influx from the neighboring North West Province hence the statistics could be mixed, however, at Regorogile PHC the numbers keep on fluctuating but last year (2022) and this year (2022) the numbers have gone down.

Peer pressure and substance abuse are the main contributors of teenage pregnancy in the area.

Gamagara

The implementers are role models for the youth and encourage young girls not to fall victim to teenage pregnancy. At the inception of the programme in 2019, teenage pregnancy was high in the communities. In addition, the Deben clinic didn't have contraceptives, and loveLife as a member of DoH forum advocated for their availability at the clinic. Contraceptives are available and when numbers were beginning to go down, they were slightly undone by COVID-19. In 2020, Deben primary reported 4 cases of teenage pregnancy and only 1 in 2021 while Deben high school reported 39 cases in 2020 and 16 in 2021.

“As a result of sports, one of our learners received a full scholarship. The learner excelled in soccer that he was offered a full scholarship by Diamond Field High School in Kimberly. One of the most prestigious schools in the province. He is now a role model.” Deben Centre

Due to poverty teenagers are getting pregnant as they seek help elsewhere from men. Some centres are offering food parcels, as well as sanitary packs. This has reduced vulnerability and teenage pregnancy.

The programme also strives to improve the communication between parents and children through Born Free Dialogues. They target parents because the more the parent knows about it the better communication transfer to their children. Health talks are helping with learners opening up about sexual activities while at the same time the health/sex talks help with clarity and educate them on how to protect and prevent teen pregnancy.

Reduction in gender-based violence Thabazimbi

The programme is helping reduce gender-based violence through psychosocial support and social behavior change communication. Survivors are encouraged to speak out and report GBV incidences. Through drama (role plays) during community events, survivors of GBV come forward. It has helped to change the narrative around GBV by addressing what has been normalized like physical abuse. The community members are beginning to be tolerant to the LGBTIQ community.

Some survivors are also referred to the Victim Empowerment Programme. Schools have recognized loveLife's work and sometimes they request for their intervention. They also share the love Life please call number for victims to call if they need help. However, there remains a knowledge gap in the community and more awareness is needed.

Gamagara

In Gamagara, there is a narrative that GBV occurs mainly among adults. Feedback from clinics support this narrative. But the programme is helping in decreasing GBV among youth. There's never been a report on young people GBV cases. GBV and teen pregnancy form part of all dialogues. To ensure that even LGBTQ+ are included in the program, they are invited in the programs and activities. They have been recruited as implementers.

SAPS and DSD are Youth Centres' partners. They do drama, messaging, and circulate psychosocial contact numbers for victims/survivors. They also run Boy Child Campaign which is used as a platform to groom and educate young boys to become better men in the society as a result young people report GBV cases to the police while implementers support the survivors in reporting the cases. Survivors are coming out and talking during community events and sometimes implementers intervene during school fights. According to SAPs, gangsterism in high schools which promotes GBV and bullying has been reduced through the loveLife partnership.

5.4. Improved relationship between parents and children

Thabazimbi

Some progress has been made in improving communication between parents and children but more needs to be done. Various activities have been implemented including Born Free Dialogues which have brought the elderly and youths together. Parental guidance is provided through young men's dialogues where mentorship happens. The Born Free Dialogues have also helped learners and teachers to

"Teenage pregnancy was on the high, but now it has dropped and is continuously going down. Before, there was no chance to go to the communities and talk about the family planning services but the implementers through outreach are doing it. I personally didn't want my child to go to the clinic for the family planning, but they have changed my mindset and I encourage her to visit". Nurse, Deben clinic

improve their communication. They helped teachers to understand their learners better. During BFDs with parents, parents do listen to children and apologize to them in some instances. However, the programme is struggling to bring many parents on board mainly because parents are involved more in livelihood activities in the mines and nearby farms. There is also a lack of interest among some parents.

Gamagara

The intergenerational Born Free Dialogues are improving the communication between parents and children. To get more parents to participate in this BFDs, invitation letters are sent via school. During the dialogues, parents open up and ask questions as well as young people open up on becoming sexually active. The dialogues bridge the gap between parents and their children and encourage talking about issues that affect them. They create a platform for them to freely talk to each other, however, some parents remain non-responsive.

5.5. Health and Psychosocial support services for young people

loveLife has a partnership with primary healthcare facilities where implementers are stationed at these facilities on daily basis to support staff in the implementation of Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services. The implementers hold health talks at facilities and assist in fast-tracking youths who come for services. They are also responsible for the recruitment of youths in the community and from schools.

Thabazimbi

Young people attested to visiting clinics for contraceptives and condoms and some are testing for HIV every month. They attributed this to the health talks and encouragement by the loveLife implementers as well as friendly service providers. They visit the clinics Monday to Friday, however, Thursday from 3 to 5 pm has been set aside for the Adolescents and Youth Friendly Services (AYFS) at the clinics. Services available to them include psychosocial support, Sexual Reproductive Health and HIV-related services including testing such as self-testing kits. They also test for HIV during community events where young people come in high numbers, and seek more information. High numbers are recorded at clinics immediately after events in schools and colleges. Implementers help with mobilizing in the community, schools and colleges and refer youths to clinics or the social worker for psychosocial support, also provide moral support when the young people go to clinics.

Facilities reported to conducting more HIV tests for those 15 years and above, but under 14 years remains a challenge as they need the consent of parents/guardians. Those who turn out positive and default treatment are traced by Right to Care, a partner NGO. However, PREP is not available at facilities due to Limpopo government policy. They advocate for preventative methods.

“Many (youths) are coming for testing and after that, they post on Facebook to encourage others. Me(name), I did go to Ma Korant at the clinic to know my status and you can also go there to know about your status”. Sr Korant, Deben Clinic.

Gamagara

At inception of the programme, it was a struggle due to lack of sexual health education and many youths were not exposed. Before loveLife, the rate of STIs especially syphilis was high while community members were apprehensive of family planning. loveLife programmes have helped communities to be more open. This is attributed to loveLife’s approach that started with training implementers who then got tested and embraced health services and then took the message to

the fellow youth to visit the clinic for services. The project has also made our clinic youth friendly hence clinics referrals from schools and implementers. All services are available at the clinic also due to loveLife's intervention in ensuring the clinic has contraceptives especially for youth.

The health talk helps educate young people and they also talk to older people as well. Young people are now open to talk to older people regarding HIV-related issues. The feedback from the facilities indicate an increased uptake of services especially from 10 years upwards. Youths visit clinics on Fridays as they have been set aside for AYFS to enable youths to access services. Girls take contraceptives from the clinics without telling their parents because they are afraid of them. The clinic has become a place of referral to provide sexual health services and have seen more young people come to the clinic more often for family planning. Previously only young females went to the clinic mainly because of pregnancy. Now both females and males are accessing services due to SRH education

Implementers bridge the gap between the patient and nurses. Some youths are not comfortable with the nurses but prefer opening up to the implementers. They assist the clinic staff and fast track the youth. This has seen the number of youths increasing at the clinic to access services mainly contraceptives. Some youth approach implementers at centres and get referred to the home-based auxiliary worker to help. Even school girls come out to seek help with menstruation.

3. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **COVID-19:** Project implementation was adversely affected by COVID-19 as most of the activities entail community outreach, door-to-door campaigns, mass events like sports tournaments, etc. Such events could not be undertaken during the hard lockdown. Some of the gains were then reversed like teenage pregnancy which went up in Deben schools during COVID-19.
- **Poverty:** The project sites in both Gamara and Thabazimbi local municipalities are rural and underserved. There is lack of running water and social amenities for sports and recreation. There is massive unemployment and therefore limited opportunities for young people. Upcoming artists and talented athletes are not exposed due to the lack of social amenities, especially sports and recreation. Consequently, young people are easy to engage in antisocial activities while adults participate less in loveLife programmes as they are more concerned with survival/livelihoods.
- **Cultural barriers:** While lovelife programmes are making progress in addressing cultural barriers, they still remain a challenge. There is a big knowledge gap regarding Sexual Reproductive Health and HIV in the community which can be attributed to culture. Culture contributes to the slow pace of the uptake of information and services. For instance, some community members find it disrespectful for youths (implementers) to talk to them about sexuality during health talks.
- **Lack of support from some stakeholders:** Some stakeholders like school teachers are not cooperating fully due to their lack of understanding of loveLife programmes. There is a need for marketing/publicity drive to create awareness on loveLife programme offerings. A formal arrangement with the Department of Education may help to get some educators to support the programme.

- **Lack of running water:** Water is the biggest problem in all the YCs but Regorogile is worst affected. The Centre is the main hub of the SIOC project in Thabazimbi, yet there is no running water. Hygiene is compromised as the centre is frequented by many youths yet toilets don't flush. There is a high risk of infection from waterborne diseases due to poor hygiene. It was reported that two staff members had fallen sick due to infection from poor hygiene and sanitation.
- **Load shedding:** There is no steady supply of power due to load shedding hence activities such as Cyber Y training are affected let alone administrative work.
- **Lack of space at the Y Centres:** This affects, Regorogile, Olifantshoek and Tsantsabane. The centres do not have enough space for recreational activities. Again, Regorogile is worst affected. The Centre is too small for all the activities of the project. The evaluation team observed overcrowding during the afternoon when youths visited for the various activities. The programme should consider providing additional space for Regorogile and Olifantshoek Youth Centres. This could be in the form of containers or expansion of the centres.
- **Lack of equipment:** At Regorogile YC, there is only one computer (laptop) for admin work. The social worker has to wait for her turn to use it. In this case confidentiality of clients is compromised. Furthermore, admin work is slowed.
- **No budget for refreshments during events:** Refreshments are not budgeted for some events. For example, BFDs and sporting events. BFDs are attended on average by 40 participants. Keeping participants in one place for two hours or more with no refreshments discourages future participation.
- **Sports centre at Regorogile:** The sports centre situated opposite the Y C belongs to the Municipality. It is used by the Youth Centre for sporting activities on a daily basis. However, it is also utilized by the community for Social gatherings that somehow promote substance abuse. Sometimes the ground is left littered with empty bottles of alcohol. The project may consider taking over the running of the sports ground.
- **Implementers are stigmatized through their work:** As an unintended consequence, loveLife is seen by ignorant community members as an organization that promotes promiscuity among the youth. Consequently, condom distribution poses a challenge for female implementers as they are targeted by men and made to feel uncomfortable.
- **Signing of registers:** People don't want to sign the registers. The data collection method is a problem, people especially the elderly are unable to complete the register and lose interest.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1. Concluding remarks

The impact assessment sought to answer questions on the adequacy, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact, and sustainability of the SIOC Project interventions.

7.1.1. Adequacy

How well does the SIOC project fit with the communities and the youth's needs?

The SIOC project is an adequate way of tackling youths' problems of unemployment, access to health care services, school performance (and drop-out), substance abuse, sexual reproductive health, and HIV. With the communities being poor, families do not have access to computers,

smartphones and data. As a result, youths with these challenges are able to use the Cyber Ys for their school research, preparation of CVs, and application of jobs. The Y Centres also circulate job opportunities from local employers such as mines, and solar parks. Due to SIOC project, young people have been upskilled and as a result, some have secured jobs. These outcomes suggest that the SIOC project is duly suited for the communities they served.

7.1.2. Effectiveness

Is the SIOC project achieving its objectives?

The SIOC project is achieving its objectives of enhancing young people's lives through healthy and active lifestyles as well as preparing and linking them to job opportunities. Many youths are now accessing services from health facilities, school performance has improved, and significantly fewer young people are involved in substance abuse as they are kept busy with sports and recreation activities. They have been upskilled and feel ready for job hunting while others have already secured jobs or started their own micro businesses.

7.1.3. Efficiency

Are project interventions an efficient way of addressing the challenges faced by youth in the targeted communities?

The use of young people to tackle young people's problems has been an efficient way as young people relate well with their peers. The use of volunteers (groundBREAKERS and mPintshis) who are themselves from their communities creates opportunities and income for them. Furthermore, adopting a partnership approach enhances and widens options for opportunities. There is clear evidence that the project has leveraged on partnerships for more resources as well as referrals.

7.1.4 Relevance

Is the project doing the right things?

Young people want job opportunities. They want to be active with sports and recreation in order to realise their talents and also to enjoy themselves without which they may resort to anti-social activities. Some face health issues and require psychosocial support. The youth have clearly indicated that loveLife's SIOC project is indeed relevant given that it provides all this without which a big gap would be felt.

7.1.5. Impact

What difference does the intervention make? What emerging impacts that are attributable to the SIOC project have been identified?

The project is definitely making a difference among young people both in school and out of school. The SIOC project is based on the paradigm of co-creation and gender inclusivity as evidenced by the active participation of the gendered youth and project implementers. It is also impacting the life of older people as the project has helped to improve the relationship between parents and their children. There is anecdotal evidence that the rate of teenage pregnancy can be linked to access of SRH services at clinics and sporting and recreation have kept young people from the

streets and out of trouble with the law. Some of the youths have stable sources of income through jobs they secured while others feel job-ready.

7.1.6. Sustainability

Will the benefits last? Are the benefits of the SIOC Project sustainable beyond the project cycle?

The upskilling of young people and the information shared through project intervention will benefit communities beyond the project. The project has adopted a partnership approach and leveraged on resources from partners. The project has also generated interest from potential funders such as the National Lotteries Commission. Overall, the provision of health services and educational support is expected to inherently span the lifetime of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the SIOC project.

7.2. Recommendations

Based on the current impact study, the following key recommendations emerge;

- **Extend the project funding with an effective exit strategy.** The study uncovered that while the project is due to come to an end, a clear a sustainable exit strategy is not apparent. The project is in its fourth year but was interrupted by COVID-19. The communities are just beginning to experience the positive effects of the project and at the same time, the Youth Centres have not been able to mobilise resources to continue programme offerings which remain in demand by the youth. Exiting at the end of the current cycle would be detrimental to the gains made by the project. As a result, it is recommended that every effort be made to secure further funding.
- **Formalise the relationship with the Department of Education.** Currently, some educators are not supportive of loveLife programmes. There is therefore do doubt that formalising the relationship with DoE would strengthen the relationship with schools and allow educators to support the programme. Furthermore, the introduction of the programme in schools should be done by senior members of loveLife and not implementers alone.
- **Activate community awareness.** To inform on loveLife services including social behaviour change, robust communication on the value of healthy lifestyle including sports and recreation, the negative impacts of substance abuse, advocacy on prevention of GBV as well as good citizenry should be brought to the fore to all in the community. This community awareness will pave the way for securing parents' permission for youths participating in our programmes, and deal with misinformation on the brand loveLife.
- **Bursaries for technical skills.** Mines and Solar Parks have provided scholarships for university studies but the threshold is never met every year because fewer learners attain university entry marks. They should therefore consider funding young people to further studies in technical skills. The scholarship programme should be reviewed to accommodate

artisans/vocational skills as these are in high demand by not only the mines and solar parks but also have a vital value to the rural communities themselves.

- **Establishment of soup kitchens.** The Y Cs are located in marginalised communities. Sometimes learners go to school hungry. Providing food for the after-school programme will go a long way in reducing school drop-out as many learners go to school hungry. This will also encourage them to come to the centre after school and be assisted with homework.
- **Address water, hygiene, and sanitation issues.** The study uncovered that Regorogile, Deben, Olifantshoek, and Tsantsabane all have water challenges. This needs to be addressed urgently especially in Regorogile to improve access to good quality of water, sanitation, and hygiene. While a borehole is recommended with the provision of an alternative source of energy in either a backup generator or solar system, water harvesting options should be explored with the community to take advantage of the rainy season.

ANNEXURES

Annexure I. Qualitative Data Contributors

Name of Facility	KII/FGD
Gamagara, Northern Cape	
Deben Y Centre Staff	Floyd Mpolokeng, Centre Manager
	Suzan Vries, Programme coordinator
	15 Implementers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 groundBREAKERS • 10 mPintshis
Deben Y Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sr Johanna Korant, Deben CHC • Lloyd Sam, DSD • Audrey Visser, Educator Debeng Primary school • Warrant Officer Neil, Deben Police Station • Boniswa Jane Oor- Chairperson, Debeng Diamond Chamber
Deben Y Centre Beneficiaries	13 FGD (Participants beneficiaries)
Olifantshoek Y center Staff	Solomon Jood, Programme Coordinator
	Monica Orekeng, Project Administrator
	Carol-Anne Jooste, Social Worker
	11 Implementers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 groundBREAKERS • 6 Mpintshis
Olifantshoek Beneficiaries	7 FGD (participant beneficiaries)
Tsantsabane Y center Staff	Onnalena Sebiya, Project Administrator
	Elancia Williams, Social Worker
	12 Implementers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 groundBREAKERS • 7 Mpintshis
Beneficiaries	7 FGD (participant beneficiaries)
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ntebogeng Pheko, Manager, Tsantsabane Alcohol and Drug Service (TADS) • Inja Josof, Community member • Austin Jonkers, Community member

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinton Lottering, Community member • Mertin Eudohuizen, Community member • Paulsen Jerome, Community member
Thabazimbi Local Municipality, Limpopo	
Regorogile staff	Raymond Mofomme, YC manager
	Mitchel Makwakwa, Project Coordinator
	Tsegofatso Molefe, Social Worker
	Koketso ___ project admin
	14 Implementers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 groundBREAKERS • 8 Mpitnshis
Regorogile stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mokoko Molokomme, project manager, Thabazimbi Community Organisation • Khanye NK, Grade Monitoring Official, Department of Correctional Services • Ms Constance Sebonego, Educator, Ysterberg Primary School • Mr Madire Alfred Malepe, Thabazimbi Local Municipality • Ms Doreen Mogashoa, National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) • Sister Lebogang Mathebe, Regorogile Clinic
Beneficiaries	9 FGD participants
Northam Y C	MC Pilane, Line Manager, Northam Clinic
	9 Implementers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 groundBREAKERS • 5 Mpintshis
Rooiberg YC	Sister Lesedi Gladys Makgalatiba, Line Manager, Rooiberg Clinic