



SOUTH AFRICA & LESOTHO



Country Snapshot

	South Africa	Lesotho
Population:	51 million	2 million
Life expectancy at birth:	52 years	45 years
Adult literacy rate:	88%	82%
Access to improved water source:	93%	78%
GDP per capita:	US\$9,757	US\$1,541
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births):	48	63
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births):	400	960
HIV prevalence:	18.1%	23.2%

PROGRAM OVERVIEW Within the borders South Africa, otherwise known as the “Rainbow Nation,” also lies the Mountainous Kingdom of Lesotho. Despite the World Bank status of Lesotho and South Africa as middle income countries, many people still struggle to meet their basic needs and are locked into poverty.

CARE has operated in South Africa since 1993, starting with voter education just prior to the first democratic elections. CARE has a longer history in Lesotho, contributing to its development since 1968. The two offices merged in 2001. Despite the range of differences between these two countries, South Africa and Lesotho share many of the same causes and manifestations of poverty and inequality. Both countries have very high rates of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB), and a lack of livelihood opportunities for the chronically vulnerable, which disproportionately burdens the youth and women and girls.

Over 47 years in Lesotho and 21 years in South Africa, CARE has worked with communities, the private sector, government and local organizations to combat poverty and social injustice. Over the years, CARE has successfully helped people improve their livelihoods through conservation agriculture, village savings and loans, food security, economic empowerment, social enterprises as well as access to clean water, prevention and treatment of HIV and TB services and strengthening local civil society organizations and governance.

CARE will close its office in Lesotho in March 2015 and hand over to a newly-created local NGO, Care for the Basotho, as part of its commitment to support local civil society. CARE will continue to advocate the issues of the chronically vulnerable in Lesotho at regional and global levels. CARE South Africa focuses on mining and development, supporting a regulatory framework, active citizenry and local governance as well as responsible business practices to benefit poor women and girls and communities affected by mining.

Mining and Development

The important and mostly negative impacts of the mining industry affect the environment and people's livelihoods, and can cause social ills, displacement, conflicts, and other issues that occur in communities affected by mining. Because of this, CARE's efforts to have a greater impact in South Africa and the surrounding region (including Lesotho) have been renewed, and we are working towards offsetting the effects of environmental and social damages by creating positive contributions to communities, advocating for the whole industry to have a more positive impact on vulnerable women, girls and their families. CARE is working through three domains:

- 1) A regulatory framework that is inclusive
- 2) Citizen participation & committed leadership
- 3) Responsible business practices

In these arenas, CARE is an honest broker and convener of various perspectives, maintaining its solidarity with poor communities. All of this is through the principles of good governance of accountability, transparency and active participation. CARE's Advisory Board in South Africa reflects the focus on mining and development.

Capacity building for Local Community-Based Organizations in Primary Health Care and HIV/AIDS

South Africa has the highest number of people living with HIV in the world and Lesotho is amongst the top three countries with the highest HIV prevalence rates. CARE

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focuses on prevention programs and strengthening healthcare provision for those affected by HIV/AIDS, including sex workers, mineworkers and other marginalized people. In partnership with community organizations, CARE strengthens referral linkages to HIV/AIDS counselling and testing services that are available, and improves the overall capacity of local organizations to expand home and local care, particularly for poor women, orphans and other vulnerable children.

Economic Development

CARE supports programs aimed at the economic empowerment of low income and marginalized communities. In many of CARE's projects, vulnerable and poor families are supported in running highly effective village savings and loan groups to generate income and a "safety net" for the poor.

Village Savings and Loan programs work with women from the community, who make weekly contributions to their savings group. Then, with training from CARE staff, they make loans to one another to start or grow their small businesses. Decisions regarding how to use the funds rest entirely with association members. Experience shows that these programs lead to better nutrition, health and education for children, as well as enhance women's participation in public life.

CARE aims to help enhance agricultural production and productivity by teaching farmers conservation agriculture, taking into account climate change. In order to respond to serious nutritional needs, CARE expands community gardens projects and home-based cultivation of vegetables and other foods.

CARE has also worked in social enterprises, connecting poor women to private sector for commercial success.

Major Donors

- Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)
- United Nations Population Fund
- Rural Finance Intermediation Fund
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- Private donors

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