Differentiated HIV Service Delivery: Optimizing Person-Centered HIV Services in Lesotho

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BACKGROUND

Lesotho joined the CQUIN network in 2022; with DSD coordinated by the HIV/TB Technical Working Group (TWG). Recipients of care (RoCs) are represented on the TWG; however, there is a need to enhance their engagement through periodic community satisfaction surveys, sensitization on available of DSD models, and stronger RoC participation in coordination activities. Key 2023 successes include the development of a health sector HIV/TB strategic plan that includes DSD strategic objectives. Key priorities for 2024 include finalizing the DSD manual, developing a national DSD scale-up plan, training health care workers on DSD models, and rolling out revised M&E tools.

DSD IMPLEMENTATION

Figure 1: DSD Model Mix: Results *vs. Projections*

Conventional = more-intensive models, including but not limited to those for people initiating ART and people with AHD
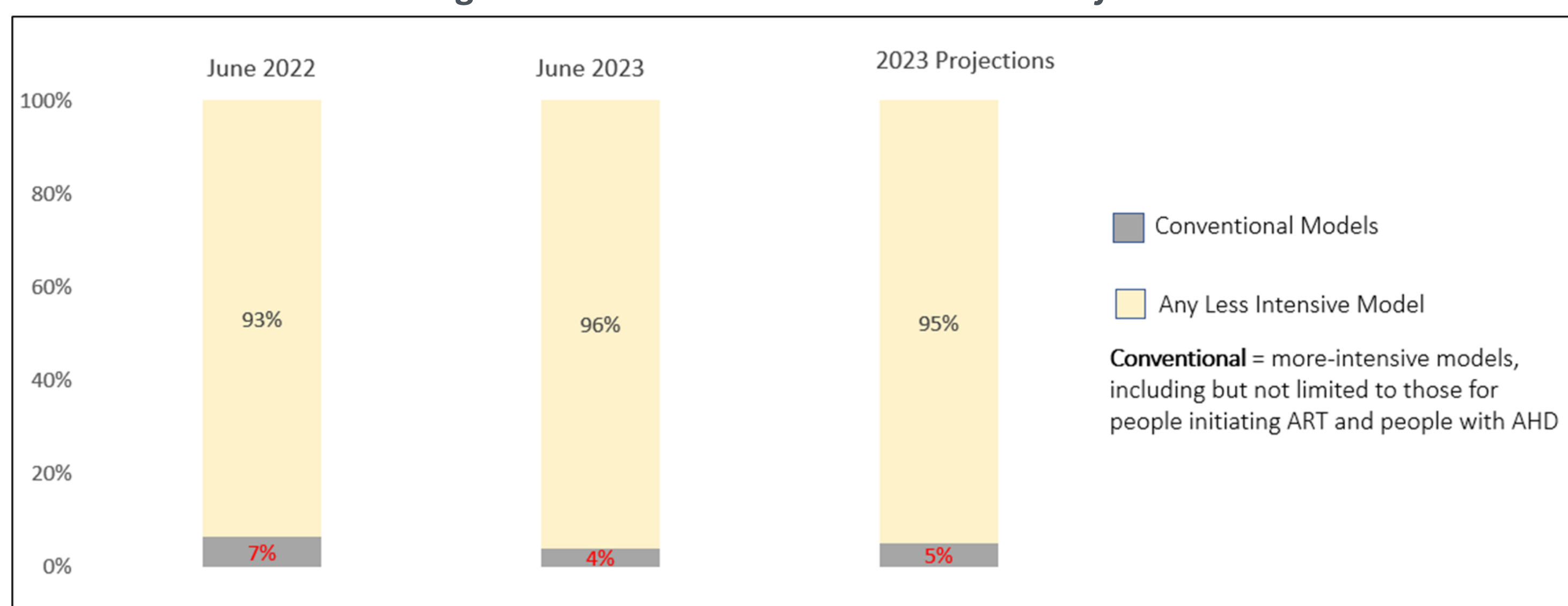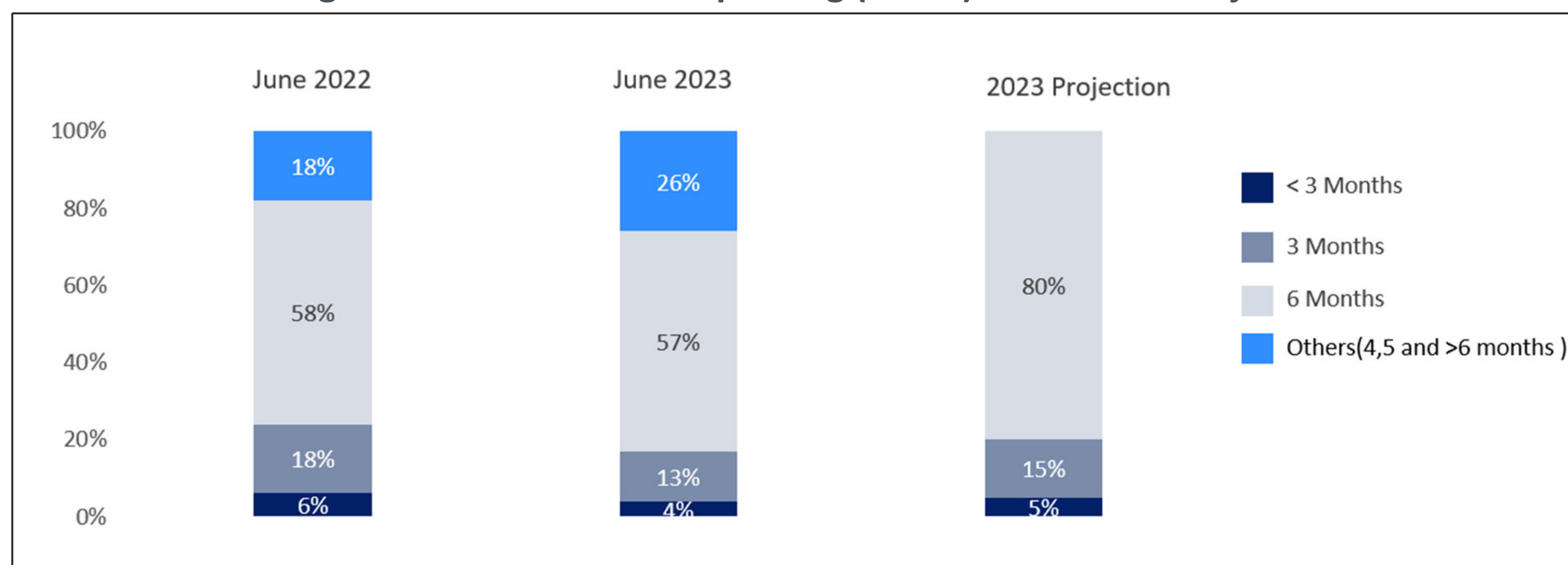
Figure 2: Multi-month Dispensing (MMD): Results *vs. Projections*

Clients who are newly initiated on ART, have high viral load, have advanced HIV disease (AHD), and/or who restarted ART after stopping for at least one month are eligible for one month of ART supply and are seen monthly at the health facility.

Less-intensive models include:

Community ART Groups (CAGs), outreach groups, Community ART Distribution, Bonolo Meds, virally suppressed, stable children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and teen clubs.

Of the 230 health facilities providing ART services in Lesotho, approximately 80% offer less intensive DART models. Most patients currently on ART (81%) are virally suppressed and qualify for MMD, receiving more than a 3-month drug supply. The national M&E system has revised its tools to include WHO-recommended DART indicators, which will be fully operational in 2024.

CQUIN ENGAGEMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Lesotho is part of the following communities of practice: DSD Coordinator's community of practice, AHD, dHTS, Differentiated M&E, Differentiated TB/HIV, DSD for key populations, and Community engagement.

In terms of country-to-country visits, Lesotho has been selected and prioritized for early 2024.

Key lessons learned include:
- Improving the M&E system can lead to improved reporting at the national level and improvement in overall scores.
- The scale-up of coverage and quality of DSD should be preceded by strategic policies and guidelines.
- Network countries have provided a platform for cross-country learning through the sharing of experiences and tools on DSD implementation.

DART CAPABILITY MATURITY MODEL TRENDS (2022-2023)

Figure 3: DART Capability Maturity Model Trends (2022-2023)

Figure 3 shows Lesotho's self-assessment using the CQUIN DART capability maturity model in 2022 and 2023. In 2023, Lesotho achieved the most mature stage (dark green) in **six domains** (policies, diversity, coordination, supply chain, KP, and TB/HIV domains), while nine domains (scale-up plan, training, M&E system, quality, impact, KP, MCH, FP, and HTN) remained in the least mature (red or orange) stage.

Of note: a health sector TB/HIV strategic plan with DSD strategic objectives has been developed, which resulted in improvement in the policy domain.

AHD CAPABILITY MATURITY MODEL SELF-STAGING

Figure 4: AHD Capability Maturity Model Results, 2023

Figure 4 shows results of Lesotho's recent self-assessment using the CQUIN AHD capability maturity model. In 2023, Lesotho achieved the most mature stage (dark and light green) in 44% (8/18) of the domains, while 17% (3/18) of the domains remained in the least mature (red) stage.

dHTS CAPABILITY MATURITY MODEL SELF-STAGING

Figure 5: dHTS Capability Maturity Model Results, 2023

Figure 5 shows results of Lesotho's recent self-assessment using the CQUIN dHTS capability maturity model. In 2023, Lesotho achieved the most mature stage (dark green) in 23% (5/22) of the domains, while 23% (5/22) of the domains remained in the least mature (red) stage.

NEXT STEPS / WAY FORWARD

DSD-related goals for 2024 include:
- Finalizing the DSD manual
- Developing a national DSD scale-up plan
- Training health care workers on DSD models and implementation
- Rolling out revised M&E tools to improve reporting
- Streamlining engagement with the private sector

What we want to learn more about in 2024:
- Facility and community-based DSD
- Meaningful engagement of RoCs
- VISITECT implementation for AHD
- KP programming
- M&E of DSD