

# Documenting Good Practices in South Africa's Health System

*Sharing what works*

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Good Practices Repository Launch

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# Introduction

## What is a Good Practice?

- Districts in South Africa frequently face staff shortage, limited budgets, high patient loads, weak infrastructure, and data quality challenges.
- **Yet they still find creative, low-cost solutions that improve service delivery.**

- A **Good Practice** is a solution, often frugal, that improves health outcomes or system performance.
- Supported by data or evidence of improvement.
- Feasible using routine district resources.
- Sustainable beyond donor funding.
- Transferable or adaptable across districts.

### **The Problem:**

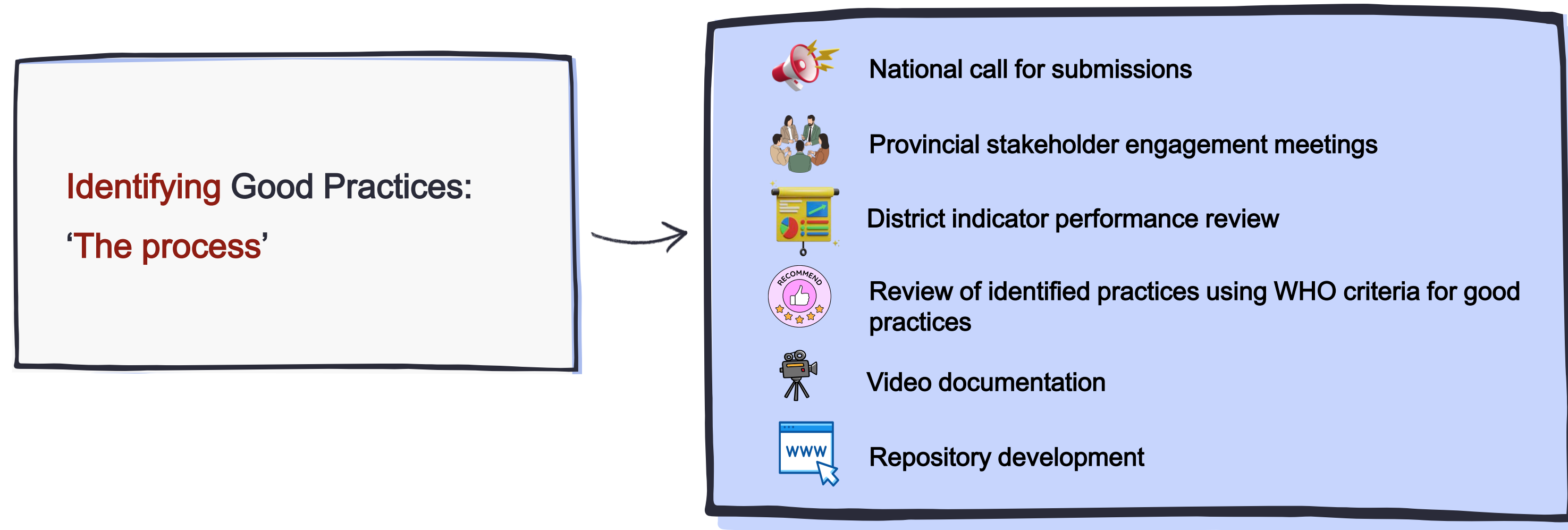
- Most innovations and good practices remain undocumented, resulting in isolated pockets of excellence.
- Valuable lessons are often lost when staff move on, projects end, or districts do not have mechanisms for sharing their experiences.

# Documenting Good Practices



Health Systems Trust launches the documentation of Good Practices in South Africa's Health System, building on the foundation established through the 2013 Good Practices publication.

**Aim: To identify, document and share Good Practices across South Africa's public health system.**



DOCUMENTING GOOD PRACTICES

in the Public Health Sector of South Africa

*From Policy to Practice*

tiragatso-llwaelo ee maleba  
KUSHUMELE KWA VHUDI  
Inqubo enhle tiragatso-llwaelo ee maleba  
UKWENZA KUHLE Go dira gantle  
Inqubo enhle Good practice  
umzekelo omhle Mirho lowanene  
GOOD PRACTICE Kusebenta kwelizinga lelisetulu  
umzekelo omhle Goeie Praktyk

# Identifying Good Practices:

## The template

<b>1</b>	<b>PROBLEM</b>	Identify and describe the problem being addressed
<b>2</b>	<b>INTERVENTION</b>	Describe the proposed solution to the problem
<b>3</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION STEPS</b>	Describe the methods or steps taken to address the problem
<b>4</b>	<b>KEY ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	List key outcomes and successes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quantitative data (measurable results)</li><li>• Qualitative evidence (perceived benefits)</li></ul>
<b>5</b>	<b>LESSONS LEARNED</b>	Describe challenges and lessons learned which can inform replication in other contexts

# Identifying Good Practice: The WHO criteria

A Good Practice should at least reflect the four required criteria and any other one of the important criteria

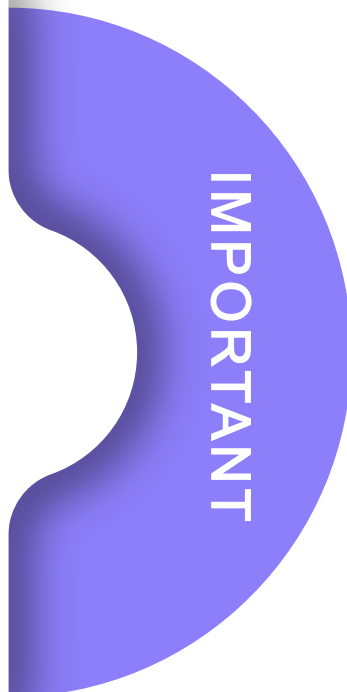


**EFFECTIVENESS**  
Achieve measurable results / show stakeholder-reported benefits

**EFFECIENCY**  
Produce results with reasonable resources and time

**RELEVANCE**  
Address priority issues / health problems

**ETHICAL SOUNDNESS**  
Respect the rules of ethics for dealing with human populations and data, information and resource management.



**SUSTAINABILITY**  
Can be implemented over a long period of time (+2 years) without additional resources

**SCALABILITY**  
Potential to be replicated elsewhere in the country.

**EQUITY**  
Address the needs of vulnerable populations.

**STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**  
Multi-stakeholder collaboration, active involvement of communities, government departments, etc.

**INNOVATION**  
Introduces novel, creative or unique approaches that introduce added value to health systems and service delivery

# Identifying Good practices: Overview of findings

## Call for submissions and stakeholder engagement












HEALTH THEME	GOOD PRACTICES (n)	PRESENTED IN THE REPORT (n)
Health systems strengthening and capacity-building	15	4
HIV, TB and related interventions	14	3
Digital health and innovation	8	2
Governance	4	1
Community engagement and outreach	4	1
Non-communicable disease (NCD) management	2	2
Knowledge translation	2	0
Maternal and child health	2	1
Surveillance and outbreak management	2	0
Research governance and co-ordination	2	1
Data management	2	1
Human resources	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>16</b>

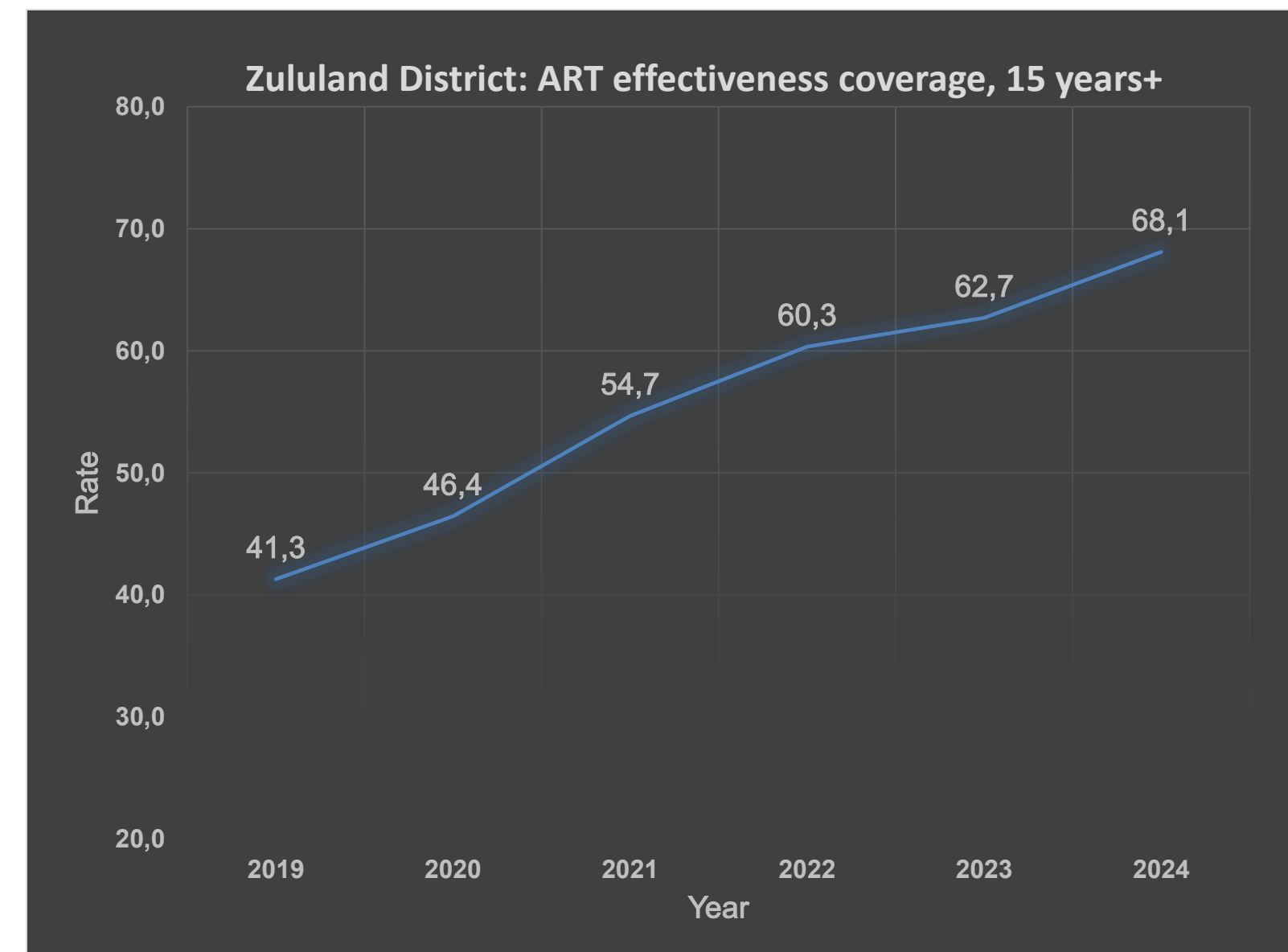


# Identifying Good practices: Overview of findings

## District indicator performance review

TABLE 5: Health indicators that improved over five years in various districts

DISTRICT		HEALTH INDICATOR
 Buffalo City Metro Zululand	Eastern Cape KwaZulu-Natal	ART effectiveness coverage, 15 years+
 Buffalo City Metro	Eastern Cape	Clients remaining on ART
 Alfred Nzo City of Tshwane	Eastern Cape Gauteng	TB symptom screening (under 5 years)
 Alfred Nzo City of Tshwane	Eastern Cape Gauteng	TB symptom screening (5+ years)
 Bojanala Platinum Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti	North West North West	Medical practitioners per 100 000
 uMkhanyakude Vhembe	KwaZulu-Natal Limpopo	Measles 2nd dose (1 year)
 Chris Hani Zululand	Eastern Cape KwaZulu-Natal	Mother postnatal visit (within 6 days)
 Oliver Tambo	Ehlanzeni Mpumalanga	
 Oliver Tambo	Eastern Cape	Pharmacists per 100 000



# Identifying Good practices: overview of findings

From Innovation to scale-up: The Delivery Optimisation of Antiretroviral Therapy (DO ART) story

## Scale up and impact

### Transition to routine care

- Services expanded to rural communities, workplaces, colleges, informal settlements, and disaster-affected areas.
- Over 50 000 individuals tested in 2024/25
- Achieved 94% ART initiation rate, and retention rates between 98% and 100%.

## Provincial adoption

### KZN DoH

- Expanded services to hard-to-reach and underserved populations districts such as eThekweni.
- Integrated into routine provincial HIV programme activities.

## Pilot implementation

### HST DO ART Demonstration project

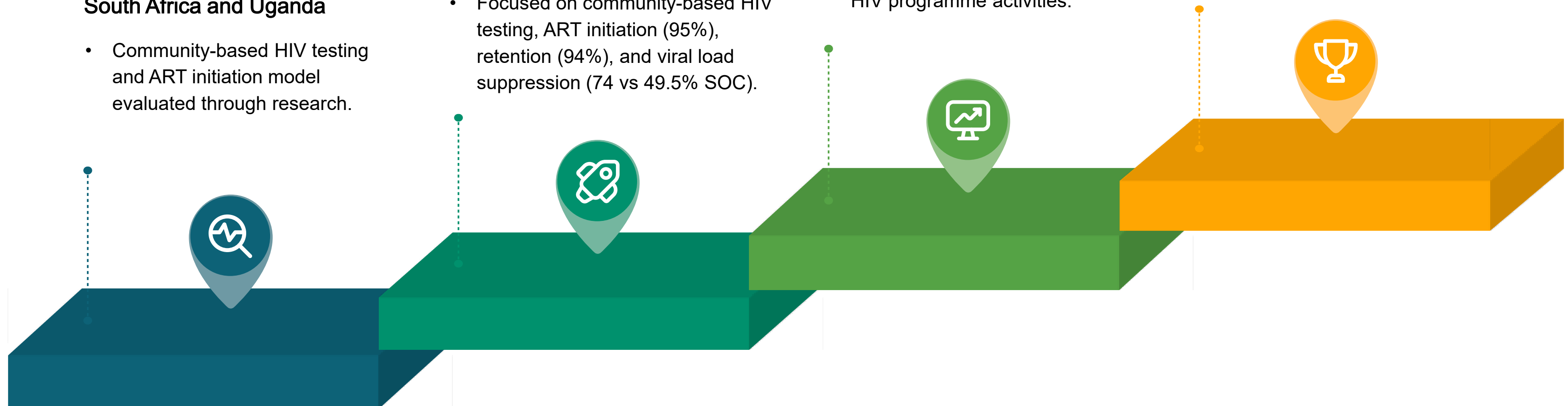
- Real-world settings: Implemented in Umlazi and Nongoma.
- Focused on community-based HIV testing, ART initiation (95%), retention (94%), and viral load suppression (74 vs 49.5% SOC).

## Research study

### Barnabas *et al* 2020

### HSRC Randomised controlled trial, South Africa and Uganda

- Community-based HIV testing and ART initiation model evaluated through research.



# Documenting Good Practices

## Document and Share Good Practices: 'The outputs'






### 1. The Report



### 2. Five practices selected for video documentation

**Good Practices Project**  
HST Health Systems Trust - 1 / 5

↻ ↗

-  **Good Practices Project: Cervical Cancer Prevention, Access and...**  
HST Health Systems Trust
-  **Good Practices Project: The Vula App**  
HST Health Systems Trust
-  **Good Practices Project: Bridges of Hope**  
HST Health Systems Trust
-  **Good Practices Project: Tackling Antimicrobial Resistance in...**  
HST Health Systems Trust
-  **Good Practices Project: Tshwane Insulin Project**  
HST Health Systems Trust

### 3. The Repository



- An open access platform that captures documented validated good practices from all provinces and districts.
- Focuses on practical, working solutions that have shown measurable improvement in service delivery and health outcomes.

# Good Practices Repository

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.goodpractices.hst.org.za/section/5354-hiv-tb-and-related-interventions>. The page header includes the Health Systems Trust logo and the title "Good Practices Repository". A navigation menu lists "Articles", "For Authors", "Editorial Board", "About", and "Blog". A sidebar on the left contains a list of categories: "All", "Community Engagement and Outreach", "Data Management", "Digital Health", "Health Systems Strengthening and Capacity Building", "HIV, TB and Related Interventions", "Maternal and Child Health", "Non-Communicable Disease Management", and "All". The main content area features a large heading "HIV, TB and Related Interventions" and a featured article titled "Improving access to care through provision of comprehensive community-based HIV services in eThekweni and Zululand" by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health, dated May 21, 2026 SAST. The article includes a sub-heading "Improving access to care through provision of comprehensive community-based HIV services in eThekweni and Zululand" and a link to the "Abstract". The background image shows a building with the text "WE CARE!" on its facade.

## WHY do we need a Good Practice Repository?

- Innovations exist but remain undocumented
- Most DHS improvements sit in people's heads, reports, or isolated pilot sites.

## HOW will the Good Practice Repository work? (The Process)

- Submission portal
- Review and validation against the WHO criteria
- Thematic classification
- Online documentation and sharing

# Key lessons learnt



## Recognition

- Clear documentation of processes, outcomes, and sustainability measures increases the likelihood that practices are recognised, shared, and scaled.
- Many impactful interventions may be overlooked due to weak documentation rather than weak implementation.



## Sustainability

- Sustainability depended less on the novelty of interventions and more on integration into routine services and existing governance processes.
- Parallel interventions less likely to endure than practices embedded within routine health services.
- Local problem-solving is important in addressing district-specific challenges. BUT government leadership remains critical for legitimising, formalising, and scaling promising practices



## Barriers

- Limited capacity and skills or training in writing, monitoring, and reporting
- Absence of standardised templates or processes for documentation
- Siloed operations across provinces and Districts, and unwillingness to share
- Lack of incentives for capturing innovations
- Lack of dissemination pathways or platforms within the health system

# Where to from here?

The launch is not the end of the project: It is the beginning of an ongoing national effort to identify, document, share, and scale what works in improving health outcomes for South Africans.

## Expand

 Promote the repository nationally and increase awareness.

## Collect

 Encourage continuous submission and documentation of Good Practices – Via a periodic call for submissions.

## Share

 Facilitate learning across provinces, districts, programmes, and partners.

## Scale

 Support adaptation and scale-up of effective interventions across the health system.



# Explore the Repository



<https://www.goodpractices.hst.org.za/>



<https://www.youtube.com/@hsthealthsystemstrust>



# Acknowledgments

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