

LESOTHO

Since 2006, efforts to build the capacity of the education sector for a scaled-up response to HIV and AIDS have been underway in the context of EDUCAIDS. Initial activities have focussed on advocacy and promoting understanding of the need for the education sector to be fully engaged in the national AIDS effort. The [Virginio Bruni-Tedeschi Foundation](#) partnership with UNESCO will increase the scope of programming by providing technical assistance to enhance the coverage and quality of effective HIV and AIDS education to children.

Activities

A consultation process took place in April 2008, involving meetings with 20 key stakeholders including partners from the Ministry of Education, the National Association of People Living with HIV, the National AIDS Commission, UN agencies, teacher unions, and teacher training institutions, to devise an implementation plan through the lens of EDUCAIDS, and to ensure strong national ownership of planned activities.

The key recommendations are:

- In partnership with the Ministry of Education, Lesotho National University, and the Lesotho College of Education, expand effective HIV and AIDS education for pre-service teacher trainers. The development of a teacher training manual will be a key component.
- With the Ministry's Curriculum Service, UNICEF and development partners, develop HIV and AIDS education materials for primary and secondary school learners.



Students participating at an English fair supported by EDUCAIDS, March 2008

With EDUCAIDS coordination in Lesotho previously managed by the UNESCO cluster office in Windhoek, and as part of the process to increase the capacity for HIV and AIDS education, a national project officer has been positioned to work in Lesotho to assist with effective implementation. HIV and AIDS prevention education packs aimed at specific age groups of children are now being developed with teachers and the curriculum team. On completion after the summer of 2008, principals and teachers will be trained on usage of the new materials to ensure effective and sustained implementation.

Lessons Learned

The gap between national education sector strategies on HIV and AIDS, and quality HIV prevention education at the school level can only be bridged when it is comprehensively implemented through key stakeholder participation, inclusion and ownership. The Virginio Bruni-Tedeschi Foundation partnership with UNESCO, in line with the EDUCAIDS framework, emphasizes improving the quality of education by supporting teachers, who are essential for addressing stigma and discrimination, and key to building Lesotho children's knowledge, skills and hope in relation to HIV and AIDS.