LESOTHO

Fragile State: NO
Conflict-Affected: NO
Refugee Camps: NO. There were refugee camps in Lesotho, primarily due to refugees fleeing apartheid in South Africa. Since the end of apartheid, however, the number of refugees has dwindled to virtual nonexistence. (Delphine Marie “Lesotho marks the end of an era for apartheid’s refugees,” August 26, 2002, UNHCR at http://www.unhcr.org/3d6a139e4.html)
EFA-FTI Partner: YES
Special Status: N/A
On-Track for EFA by 2015: YES, “Over 90% of children enroll in school at some point, although not always at the intended age, and Lesotho remains on track to have near universal primary enrollment by 2015” (Appraisal Report 2009)

Analysis:

Lesotho has shown strong progress in reforming its educational system to ensure education for all by 2015. It began phased-in implementation of free universal primary education in 2000. This resulted in a significant increase in enrollment, which has now stabilized, but continues to increase at a steady pace. In 2003, Lesotho achieved gender parity, meaning that traditionally low male enrollment matched female enrollment for the first time. Since that time, however, male enrollment has continued to increase relative to female enrollment.

The rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence among teachers and students is the principal challenge affecting Lesotho’s education sector. Life expectancy at birth in Lesotho is approximately 36 years and the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is at 23%, the third highest in the world. The impact on the education sector is severe, resulting in high rates of teacher attrition and teacher and student absenteeism.

To address this shortage, Lesotho has continued to aggressively recruit teachers and introduced a new teacher career structure to aid in both recruitment and retention. As a result, the pupil to teacher ratio has fallen to approximately 1:35 (2008), yet the percentage of qualified teachers has dropped by approximately 20%, from 78% in 1999 to 58% in 2008. The mountainous areas are particularly affected by teacher shortages, as it is difficult to recruit and retain qualified teachers in the hardship areas.

Lesotho’s education sector is also affected by its harsh climate and mountainous terrain. Schools can be inaccessible or students may have to traverse long distances to reach them. This reality increases the importance of structurally sound school facilities, the accessibility and proximity of the buildings to where students live, and school feeding programs to encourage both enrollment and attendance.

A third important issue to highlight is the alignment of the curricula at all levels of the education sector with national needs. In its Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2005, the Government of Lesotho (GoL) expressed concern that the curricula is too academic and provides students insufficient preparation for career opportunities in Lesotho. However, because of the urgent need to focus on teacher shortages and facilities construction, it seems that this challenge may not get due funding or focus. This is particularly true of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and tertiary education in Lesotho. Additional research may be needed to determine whether, without short-term focus on curricula alignment at all levels and TVET, students maturing through the education sector will leave the country to seek employment or continued educational opportunities, resulting in brain drain.

Advocacy issues:
- Teacher recruitment and retention in hardship areas
- TVET education
- Alignment of education curricula (at all levels) with industry need

### POLICY AND PLANNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Facts</th>
<th>Priority Policies and Reforms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Basic education constitutes 10 years</td>
<td>1. <strong>GoL principally focused on the following:</strong> early childhood education, school construction, teacher recruitment and training, HIV/AIDS awareness, education quality improvements (Endorsement Report 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>2000:</strong> GoL begins phasing in free primary education</td>
<td>2. <strong>Budgetary reality:</strong> as of 2005, approx. 90% of total expenditure on education went to teacher salaries, school feeding program, and capital expenditures for school construction and improvements (Endorsement Report 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Priority Policies and Reforms

- **Medium Term Education Sector Plan:**
  - **Expand Early Childhood Education facilities annexed to schools,** although Appraisal Report 2009 expresses some disagreement with details of GoL’s focus
  - **Major policy changes to primary education:**
    1. Revision of the legislation to make primary education both free and compulsory.
    2. Introduction of a policy on repetition, aimed at reducing unnecessary repetition, by limiting repetition to 5% in Standards 3–7, and eliminating repetition in the first two grades.
    3. Continued improvement of the infrastructure through provision of additional classrooms in overcrowded schools, renovating or replacing the most sub-standard classrooms, and provision of furniture and textbooks.
    4. Improvement in teacher supply and quality, including (i) redistribution of teachers and provision of incentives to attract qualified teachers to difficult schools; (ii) reduction of the number of unqualified teachers; and (iii) improved performance management of teachers including measures to monitor teacher attendance and behavior.
    5. Revision of the curriculum to reduce the number of subjects from 11 to 6, with a stronger focus on literacy in English and Sesotho, numeracy, and life skills.
    6. Removal of the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) as a terminal selection examination, and replacement of it with a system of formative assessment at all levels aligned with the new curriculum.

- **Increase access to Secondary Education**
  1. Additional capacity in secondary schools through (i) construction of new schools with donor support, and (ii) construction of additional classrooms at overcrowded schools.
  2. Lowering the cost of access to secondary education through rationalization of fees. Combined schools currently charge a standard fee of 500 Maloti per year. In other public secondary schools, fees range from 1,400 Maloti to 7,600 Maloti. Analysis by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) suggests that the higher fees are unjustified and that schools can afford to operate with reduced fees.
  3. Increasing opportunities for access through a pilot “half way house” providing low-cost boarding facilities for students who live a long way from the school for 5 days per week during term time.

- **New teacher career structure and policy to improve quality:**
  1. Introduction of a teaching career with a series of promotional steps, known as “competency breaks”, requiring teachers to demonstrate competency and performance to gain promotion to the next level. This will be accompanied by improved access to professional development opportunities.
2. Provision of an opportunity for older teachers with qualifications far below the current standard to retire early.
3. Provision of a financial incentive for qualified teachers to locate in designated difficult schools.
4. Appointment of all school principals on fixed term contracts, renewable only if agreed performance standards are met.
5. GoL also committed to reducing the administrative delays in processing teacher appointments and providing initial payment.

ESP 2005:
• Priority areas of focus (ESP 2005):
  ➢ Improving access and equity
  ➢ Improving quality and relevance of education
  ➢ Institutional and professional capacity building
  ➢ Improving partnerships
• Strategic Objectives (ESP 2005):
  ➢ Transforming education for national and regional development goals with specific reference to social, cultural and economic and technological development
  ➢ Transforming curriculum content and improving relevance, quality and teaching methodologies with the needs of learners in focus
  ➢ Transforming the role of the state and education system structures and functions for facilitating active participation of stakeholders in the lifelong learning processes
  ➢ Building capacity in educational leadership, management, research and information systems
  ➢ Strengthening partnerships with NGOs, civil society and development partners at community, and national, regional and international levels.
• Basic Strategies (ESP 2005):
  ➢ Reviewing policies and legislation, focused on rights of disadvantaged groups and creating a culture of lifelong learning
  ➢ Increasing financing and investment in education
  ➢ Developing national, sub-regional and regional institutional capacities
  ➢ Reviewing curricula and validating African indigenous knowledge systems, values and skills
  ➢ Improving capacities for educational change
  ➢ Improving the teaching and learning environment, by developing materials, methodologies and social learning environments that are feasible, sustainable and relevant to the African learner
  ➢ Adopting appropriate and cost-effective technologies, including reducing the dependence on imported materials and increasing the use of the oral tradition
  ➢ Promoting and supporting Africa based educational research
  ➢ Developing genuine and sustainable partnerships

Contextual Challenges
• HIV/AIDS pandemic — leads to high attrition in teacher supply; 22% infection rate among teachers (ESP 2005; Endorsement Report 2005)
• Weather (specifically in mountains) affects school enrollment/attendance (ESP 2005; Endorsement Report 2005; Appraisal Report 2009)
• Men are traditionally herdsmen (Endorsement Report 2005)
• Proximity to South Africa and high pay scale there creates strong draw for qualified teachers to leave Lesotho for positions in South Africa
- Retention of male students complicated by draw of work in South African mining industry

### EPM Challenges

- MOE implementation capacity (ISR 2011)
- Overall teacher shortage and growing shortage of qualified teachers (ESP 2005; Appraisal Report 2009)
  - Need for more teachers at primary level being met through use of unqualified teachers — although pupil to teacher ratio dropped to 1:35 as of 2008, the percentage of qualified teachers dropped from 78% in 1999 to 58% in 2008 and continues to drop; this in turn affects quality (Appraisal Report 2009)
- Quality at all levels (ESP 2005)
- Efficiency at all levels (ESP 2005)
- Insufficient capacity to accommodate all Standard 7 students in first three years of secondary education (ESP 2005)
- Higher education — expensive and course offerings not well-aligned with national needs (Appraisal Report 2009)

### Successes

- GoL shows strong financial commitment to education — between 2001 and 2009, government expenditure on education ranged between 20% and 26% of total government expenditure, and between 12% and 15% of GDP (Appraisal Report 2009)
- As of 2008, GoL paid teachers bonuses or hardship allowances to teach in rural schools, but success of policy is unclear (Education for all Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO 2008)
- New teacher career structure, with an associated performance management system, is being introduced. (Appraisal Report 2009)
- Textbooks have been supplied on a 1:1 ratio for English, Mathematics, Sesotho and Science for all primary grades, with the exception of Mathematics texts for Standards 1, 2 and 3 (Appraisal Report 2009)

### Worth Noting

- Most schools are owned by religious institutions although almost all teacher personnel are government employees being recruited through the Teacher Service; as government employees teachers are required to follow government regulations and standards — important quality control point but unclear if effectively utilized by government to raise quality; follow-up research could include extent to which this hampers innovation (ESP 2005)

### Key Issues

#### Early Childhood

- GoL is committed to Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (IECCD) as part of the pre-schooling process; GoL has developed national policy framework for IECCD (ESP 2005)
- As with other SSA countries, early childhood centers are concentrated in urban areas, with little access in rural or mountain regions; GoL not engaged in services delivery but in standards and policy setting, monitoring, and supervision (ESP 2005)
- Challenges identified by GoL (ESP 2005):
  - Inclusive access
  - Quality of IECCD
  - Capacity building and empowerment of stakeholders (private sector/NGOs) in service provision
  - Resource mobilization through improved collaboration and networking/partnerships
  - Sustainable organizational structure at national and district levels

#### Free Primary Education

- YES — (Constitution of Lesotho, Section 28)
  - GoL progressively assumed financial responsibility for books, stationery, maintenance, and utility costs at the primary level (ESP 2005)
  - Teachers’ salaries, materials, and other inputs covered by the government are paid only to schools that agree not to demand fees from parents (Avenstrup 2004)
  - Challenges experienced with phase-in approach: “some parents enrolled children in primary school early (since
preschool is not free). Others held children back to avoid paying fees in the next grade. In addition, dropouts returned to school and adults enrolled in large numbers. These inflated enrollments caused bulges in the system in the fee-free grades” (Avenstrup 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compulsory Education</th>
<th>YES — (Constitution of Lesotho, Section 28)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lifelong Learning</td>
<td>• GoL addresses lifelong learning and literacy as part of non-formal education (NFE) (ESP 2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• GoL has developed non-formal education policy goals that position GoL as facilitator and coordinator of in-country programming, rather than a service provider (ESP 2005)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• GoL objectives include (ESP 2005):</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Complete and approve the NFE policy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Establish a fully-fledged NFE department</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Develop a comprehensive NFE curriculum covering various issues such as agriculture, community development, entrepreneurship, environment, and health, including STIs and HIV and AIDS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Ensure that out-of-school youth and adults are enrolled in the alternative basic programs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Improve delivery capacity of lifelong learning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Create links with formal education programs in order to share existing infrastructure and expertise.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NFE sub-sector in Lesotho is underfunded and gap is expected to widen as NFE services extended to other areas of the country. Per ESP 2005, Lifelong Learning Services as envisaged in the Strategic Plan are 43% funded in the first year, increasing to 46% in 2009/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• TVET not well-aligned with country’s industry needs: “proposals to increase the market responsiveness of TVET through imposition of a training levy on employers and allowing employers to guide the use of the funds to address labor market needs have been delayed for many years, and have been unpopular with both employers and the TVET institutions” (Appraisal Report 2009); some success found with small pilot program that trains operatives and supervisors for the foreign-dominated garments industry (Appraisal Report 2009)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Literacy             | • Adult literacy rate is 82.2% (Isaacs 2007) |
|                      | • ESP 2005 envisions providing functional literacy education through non-formal education — see section above |

| Gender parity        | • **Gender Parity achieved, then tipped:** Lesotho achieved gender parity in 2003, although now there are more males enrolled than females for unexplained reason — perhaps fewer skilled labor opportunities for boys; females continue to progress farther in education (Appraisal Report 2009) |
|                      | • **Unique situation in Lesotho:** females enroll at high rates than boys, who tend to be animal herders; however, female enrollment is expected to drop at increasing rates due to females dropping out to care for sick (HIV/AIDS affected) (ESP 2005) |
|                      | • **National Gender Policy:** GoL committed to developing gender policy to encourage gender parity in teaching and school management and gender sensitivity of curricula (ESP 2005); unclear whether this was finalized and published |
|                      | • **Annual monitoring:** GoL monitors gender parity (ESP 2005) |

<p>| EMIS                 | • Quality of EMIS has experienced decline due to lost personnel: |
|                      |   ➢ Produces some reliable data, although more needs to be done to verify the data; also need to link EMIS with other data sources (e.g. HR records of Teaching Service Commission, salary data of Ministry of Finance) (Endorsement Report 2005) |
|                      |   ➢ “In recent years the quality and scope of the reporting has declined, statistical bulletins have been delayed, and data have been incomplete. No statistical bulletins have yet been produced for 2007 and 2008” (Appraisal Report 2009) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative Strategies and Programs</th>
<th>• ESP 2005 does not discuss options to use non-formal education to reach marginalized groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education for Conflict Mitigation</td>
<td>• Although Constitution refers to education as a tool to promote respect for human rights, ESP 2005 does not address using education for conflict mitigation or peace education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>• HIV Prevalence is 23.6% per 2009 UNICEF statistics; third highest in the world (Appraisal Report 2009)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Although Endorsement Report (2005) indicates that some donors are dissatisfied with level of specificity around combating HIV/AIDS problem in education sector</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Per ESP 2005, GoL’s strategic objective is to strengthen mitigation of HIV/AIDS in education sector, using following activities:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Has dedicated line items in Lesotho’s education sector budget</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Develop and implement the HIV and AIDS coordination program of intervention</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Establish the HIV and AIDS co-ordination unit and engage appropriate staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Incorporate HIV and AIDS issues in the teacher training and school curricula</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Implement improved HIV and AIDS workplace intervention guidelines in all schools</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Liaise with the Ministry of Health and the HIV and AIDS Commission to establish relevant structures dealing with HIV and AIDS in the education sector</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Conduct training programs for teachers, principals and school boards on addressing HIV and AIDS and its impact in the school environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Establish support systems in schools for children affected by HIV and AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>• Plan for developing special needs education is conspicuously absent from ESP 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECTOR MANAGEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Agency</td>
<td>• Ministry of Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other relevant agencies (Appraisal Report 2009):</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) — provides scholarships to students, mainly in post-secondary education and training courses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MoFDP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector Coordination Groups</td>
<td>• Unclear at this point through available literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring Frameworks</td>
<td>• “The MTEP provides a monitoring and evaluation framework with key indicators for each of the major sub-sectors, which can be used in annual reviews of the sector. A subset of these indicators is used in the performance assessment framework (PAF) associated with the poverty reduction support credit (PRSC), which provides finance to the Lesotho government” (Appraisal Report 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Non-state Actors</td>
<td>• Regional initiatives in which Lesotho has participated (ESP 2005):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Education and Training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ New Initiative for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Human Resource Development Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FINANCING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>GPE Information</td>
<td>• ESP endorsed in 2005 (World Bank 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPE Coordinating Agency</td>
<td>• Irish Aid (World Bank 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other donors: World Bank, UNICEF, World Food Programme, AIDS, UNFPA, WHO, JICA (World Bank 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPE Commitments and Disbursements</td>
<td>• Commitments (World Bank 2010):</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ 2006: $7.2M, traditional investment project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(aimed to support implementation of ESP, mainly through increased access and textbook provision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Amount</td>
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<td>--------</td>
<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$4.7M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$20.0M</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Disbursements:** Only $13.1M through 2010
- **2010:** A pooled funding mechanism has been developed (first time) to implement the second GPE/CF grant and Irish Aid’s allocations. Through this a decentralized procurement system is planned, which will build capacity at district levels.

### Other financing Information

- **IMPORTANT LINKS**
  - GPE Country Profile: [http://www.globalpartnership.org/partners/developing-countries/lesotho/](http://www.globalpartnership.org/partners/developing-countries/lesotho/)
  - World Bank Country Profile: [click here](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/format_liste1_en.php?Chp2=Lesotho)

- **KEY DOCUMENTS**
  - **Constitution of Lesotho**
    - Under the Constitution, GoL must adopt policies that ensure (ESP 2005):
      - Education is directed to the full development of the human personality and sense of dignity and strengthening the respect for human rights and fundamental freedom;
      - Primary education is compulsory and available to all...; and
      - Fundamental education is encouraged or intensified as far as possible for those persons who have not received or completed their primary education.
  - **Public Sector Improvement and Reform Programme Policy Framework (PSIRP)**
    - Education Sector Reform Program, focuses on improving and increasing access, quality and efficiency of the educational system and includes some commitment to decentralization (ESP 2005)
  - **Lesotho National Vision 2020**
    - Acknowledges importance of education sector and pledges to have a well-developed human resource base by the year 2020 (ESP 2005)
  - **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 2004/5 – 2006/7**
    - Sets five key objectives related to education (ESP 2005):
      - Expand and promote Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (IECCD);
      - Ensure that all children have access to and complete quality basic and secondary education;
      - Develop and expand Technical and Vocational Education Training to cater for the economic needs of the country;
      - Strengthen non-formal education programs; and
      - Increase access to tertiary education.
  - **Education Sector Plan, 2005-2015**
    - Endorsed in 2005
    - Includes policies, strategies, analyses, and financial projections for entire sector and each sub-sector
  - **Medium Term Education Sector Plan, 2009-2013**
    - Developed as an update to the ESP 2005 to (i) reflect progress since 2005; (ii) amend the plan to reflect changes in policy; and (iii) provide updated projections of enrolment and costs.

### FOLLOW-UP

- **Issues for International Discussion**
- **Misc. Follow-up Questions**
  - The 2005 ESP references a number of policies and initiatives that GoL planned to develop and implement — very aspirational in nature; curious as to where GoL stands currently against ESP targets and plans for policy development

### KEY CONTACTS
References