



**Ministry of Education and Training  
Kingdom of Lesotho**

## **LESOTHO EDUCATION SECTOR HIV AND AIDS POLICY**



**October 2011**



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## Foreword

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has been leading the education sector's contribution to the national response to HIV and AIDS since they were declared national disaster by His Majesty King Letsie III in 2000. The development of an **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** confirms the commitment and determination of the Kingdom of Lesotho to address the impact of this disease on its education system. It also acknowledges the central role that the education sector has in the national response to HIV and AIDS.

According to UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on education, an effective education sector response to HIV and AIDS is comprehensive and addresses the following important dimensions; provision of quality education for all, curriculum that has age-appropriate, scientifically accurate HIV and AIDS related content, training and support of teachers and other education staff, strengthening of policy and management systems and provision of support for learners, teachers and education staff. This policy thus provides an inclusive framework for a comprehensive education sector response and is designed to involve everyone in the education sector. It applies to learners, employees, managers, employers and other providers of education and training in all formal and non-formal learning institutions, at all levels of the education system in the Kingdom of Lesotho. It also provides the basis for a broader understanding between sectors and should facilitate a coordinated multi-sector response, as well as strengthen partnerships between service providers inside and outside Government.

The overarching goal of this Policy is in accordance with the Lesotho National HIV and AIDS Policy of 2006 and is intended to mobilize the participation of every stakeholder in the sector in an inclusive, comprehensive response. Specifically, the goal of this Policy is to prevent the further spread of the epidemic; to provide and facilitate treatment, care and support services; and to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS on education through the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of this response, at all levels of the education system.

The set of guiding principles which the **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** provides are also in accordance with Lesotho's National HIV and AIDS Policy and National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan (2006-2011) and conform to international conventions, national laws, policies, guidelines and regulations. These principles are non-negotiable and provide the basis for the interpretation of this Policy as well as a reference point for implementation. The Policy proposes that every education institution in Lesotho should develop its own HIV and AIDS Policy and Code of Conduct for learners and teachers. These important institutional documents should therefore be derived from the **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** and guided by the principles it contains.

Clearly, the success of any policy lies in its sustained implementation. In order to meet this challenge, a detailed implementation plan will be developed, describing the roles and responsibilities of every stakeholder and setting out an ambitious schedule for action. It must be stressed that without effective implementation, the Policy will have no effect and fail in its goal – an outcome that cannot be countenanced under any circumstances. For this reason, the MOET commits to providing leadership in the implementation of this Policy and enjoins all stakeholders in education and HIV and AIDS to accord the implementation of the **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** the highest priority, to monitor its implementation and report on the progress on a regular basis.

  
**Mamphono Khaketla (Ph.D)**  
**Minister of Education and Training- Kingdom of Lesotho**

## 1 PREAMBLE

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the wider education sector in the Kingdom of Lesotho have a particularly important role to play in responding to, and reversing, the impact of HIV and AIDS. MOET is the nation's largest employer and leads a sector which plays a unique and sustained role in the lives of Lesotho's young people. Thus the education sector has an obligation to protect its own employees, and help the so-called 'generation of hope' to maintain their HIV-negative status. Education has a unique capacity to influence the lives and attitudes of the Basotho, provide the knowledge and skills required to safeguard those uninfected by HIV and counsel and support those learners, teachers and support staff infected and affected by HIV.

To place this challenge in context, Lesotho has one of the highest levels of HIV infection in the world. It is faced with particularly complex socio-economic and geographic difficulties, which make comprehensive response to HIV and AIDS difficult. HIV-prevalence is highest among the 15 to 49 years age-bracket (23.6% in 2008), and HIV is more than twice as prevalent amongst young women as young men of similar age<sup>1</sup>.

The development of a comprehensive **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** now consolidates the issues of direct concern to this important sector, and provides a dynamic and flexible thematic guiding framework for response, monitoring and reporting. This policy was developed through the interactive involvement of a wide range of education sector interest groups and stakeholders and will be refined and regularly reviewed through a national process of on-going consultation. Importantly, this **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** draws on, and is in accordance with, Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2015, Lesotho National HIV and AIDS policy as well as international conventions, national laws, policies, guidelines and regulations. Its development has been informed by regional best practice and mirrors the key issues of concern to the southern African region. Most significantly, it is the outcome of a consultative process involving representatives of Lesotho's education sector, and is therefore sensitive to the particular cultural and social context of the Kingdom of Lesotho. In this way, the **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** formalizes the rights and responsibilities of every person involved in the education sector, directly or indirectly, in respect of HIV and AIDS impact and response.

The **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** is also guided and governed by a set of principles which provide a reference point for every aspect of policy use and implementation. These founding principles will remain constant and inform future review of this policy, to ensure its consistency and responsiveness to the needs of the education sector. This **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** will also serve to consolidate the purpose and intent of related policies which address both response to HIV and AIDS and the function of the system itself. The implementation of this Policy will be complemented by a full spectrum of national and multi-sectoral policies that provide context and address the many cross-cutting issues involved.

Finally, in the context of this Policy, HIV and AIDS response is integrated into every routine function of the education sector's activity, and serves to reinforce standard operating and reporting procedures. In this way, the sector's response to HIV and AIDS can turn a crisis into an opportunity for sustained and systemic reform, which may be the most effective way in which the education sector can respond.

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<sup>1</sup> Lesotho UNGASS Country Report January 2008-December 2009, p.13

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**'Mota Sekonyela (MR.)**

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### 3 ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ART	Anti-retroviral therapies
BCC	Behaviour change communication
GIPA	Greater involvement of people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HTC	HIV testing and counselling
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IEC	Information, education and communication
IECCD	Integrated early childhood care and development
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training, Kingdom of Lesotho
MOHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
NAC	National AIDS Commission
OVC	Orphans and other vulnerable learners
PEP	Post exposure prophylaxis
PLWHIV	People/persons living with HIV
VCT	Voluntary counselling and testing
YFC	Youth Friendly Services

### 4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Educators	Professionals who impart knowledge and skills within the education sector; also referred to as Teachers.
Employees	Professional and support staff in the education sector at every level
Employers	Persons who engage others to perform certain tasks for payment of a wage or salary in the education sector
Family	Legal spouse and children
Learning Institutions	Places where formal or informal instruction is carried out following a prescribed programme or curriculum
Learners	Persons receiving education and training from a learning institution or programme, including pupils and students
Managers	Persons responsible for the management or direction of education
Providers of Education	All public and private providers of formal and non-formal education
Protective Devices	Male and female condoms and gloves providing a barrier to infection
Teachers	Professionals who impart knowledge and skills within the education sector
Vulnerability	A state of a child below 18 years, who has one or both parents neglecting or deserting him to the extent that he has no means of survival and is exposed to dangers of abuse, exploitation, and criminalization and is therefore, in need of care and protection

## 5 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The **Education Sector Policy on HIV and AIDS** applies to learners, employees, managers, employers and other providers of education and training in all formal and non-formal learning institutions at all levels of the education system in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

## 6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The principles that guide the **Education Sector Policy on HIV and AIDS** for the Kingdom of Lesotho are in accordance with the Lesotho National HIV and AIDS Policy and the National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2006-2011 (Revised), Education Sector Strategic plan (2005-2015), Public Service HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy and conform to international conventions, national laws, policies, guidelines and regulations.

This policy will be interpreted and implemented based on the following principles, in alphabetic order:

### 6.1 Access to care, treatment and support

- a) All infected and affected learners, educators and other personnel in the education sector, as well as their family, have the right to access holistic care, treatment and support.
- b) In line with current policy, identified needs and available resources, the education sector will work in partnership with line ministries and other agencies offering support and care including institutions, communities, private and public health care systems to facilitate access to care, treatment and support to infected and affected learners, educators and other personnel in the education sector as well as their families.

### 6.2 Access to education

Every person has the right to education. No learner will be denied access to education on the basis of his or her actual or perceived HIV status. In particular access to education will be facilitated for orphans and vulnerable children and those with special educational needs or disabilities.

### 6.3 Access to information

Every person has the right to relevant and factual HIV and AIDS information, knowledge and skills that are appropriate to their age, gender, culture, language and context and address vulnerability, HIV-prevalence and sexual behaviour.

### 6.4 Equity and protection from stigma and discrimination

Every person, whether infected, affected or vulnerable in any other way, has equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities, and will be protected from all forms of stigma and discrimination based on actual, known or perceived HIV status.

### 6.5 Fair labour practices

Every person, whether infected or affected, has the right to fair labour practices in terms of recruitment, appointment and continued employment, promotion, training and benefits. HIV testing as a requirement for any of the above is prohibited.

### 6.6 Gender responsiveness and sensitivity

HIV and AIDS affect women and men differently. Application of all aspects of this policy will be sensitive and responsive to the different needs of men and women, boys and girls, and interventions will recognise the special social and physiological vulnerabilities of the girl child.

## **6.7 Involvement of people living with HIV (PLWHIV)**

In accordance with the principle of greater involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS (GIPA) and wherever possible, PLWHIV will be involved in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the education sector's response to HIV and AIDS.

## **6.8 Prevention**

Every person in the education sector has the right to the knowledge, information and services required to ensure a safe environment and prevent HIV infection.

## **6.9 Privacy and confidentiality**

Every person has the right to privacy and confidentiality regarding their health, including information related to their HIV status. Therefore:

- a) No institution or workplace is permitted to require a learner or employee to undergo an HIV test.
- b) No person may disclose information relating to the HIV status of another person, without his or her consent.
- c) In the case of a minor the best interest of the child will guide decisions concerning disclosure.
- d) Every person has the right to know their HIV status and openness and disclosure are encouraged within a safe, supportive and accepting environment.

## **6.10 Safety and security in workplace and learning institutions**

- a) All workplace and learning institutions have a responsibility to develop their own institutional HIV and AIDS policies, based on the requirements of Education Sector and National HIV and AIDS Policies.
- b) All workplace and learning institutions have a responsibility to minimize the risk of HIV transmission by taking the appropriate first aid, including universal infection control precautions and PEP.
- c) There will be zero tolerance for sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation.
- d) All schools, institutions of learning and offices will be safe and secure.

# **7 FACTORS CRITICAL FOR SUCCESSFUL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

Factors critical for the successful implementation of the **Education Sector Policy on HIV and AIDS** for the Kingdom of Lesotho include the following, in alphabetic order:

## **7.1 Consultation and social dialogue**

HIV and AIDS policy, programmes and interventions will be developed and implemented in an ongoing consultation with employees, learners, parents, committees and all relevant stakeholders of the sector.

## **7.2 Culture and context**

Information, education, counselling, prevention, treatment, care and support will be sensitive to the age, gender, language, culture and social context of all persons in the education sector at all times.

## **7.3 Leadership and commitment**

Political, traditional and other leaders and managers at every level of the education sector will publicly and consistently support the policy and its implementation at every stage.

## **7.4 Learner participation**

Learners will be encouraged and supported to be active in HIV and AIDS awareness, advocacy and peer-education activities.

## **7.5 Mainstreaming**

HIV and AIDS will be mainstreamed into every policy, procedure, practice and programme to ensure its incorporation in every routine function of the education sector.

## **7.6 Partnerships**

While the education sector will be responsible and accountable for implementation of this policy it will at all times seek to develop effective partnerships to enhance the success of its implementation. Partners who engage with HIV and AIDS response within the education sector will be expected to align their interventions with the provisions of both Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy and the Education Sector HIV and AIDS implementation plan.

## **7.7 Personal responsibility**

Every person has a moral responsibility to protect him or herself, and a moral and legal responsibility to protect others from HIV infection. Intentional transmission of HIV to another person is a serious criminal offence and will be dealt with in terms of the laws of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

## **7.8 Research, monitoring, evaluation and reporting**

- a) Management decisions, wherever possible, will be evidence-based and informed by up-to-date and accurate research and information.
- b) All policy implementation will be monitored, evaluated and reported on a regular basis to provide accurate and relevant management information to the sector.

## **7.9 Resourcing**

MOET and its sector partners will mobilize and ensure the equitable allocation of resources to assure the sustainable implementation of the **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy**.

# **8 POLICY GOAL**

In accordance with the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2015, Lesotho National HIV and AIDS Policy of 2006 and Public Service HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy, the goal of the policy is for the education sector to prevent the further spread of the epidemic; ensuring access to treatment, care and support services; and reducing the impact of HIV and AIDS on education through the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of a comprehensive response at all levels of the education system.

# **9 ENABLING ENVIRONMENT**

## **9.1 Objective**

The education sector will provide an enabling and supportive environment in which a comprehensive response to HIV and AIDS is publicly and consistently endorsed and supported by leadership at every level.

## **9.2 Strategies**

### **9.2.1 Advocacy and leadership**

Advocacy and leadership will be provided to support the HIV and AIDS response.

Political and traditional leaders and managers, at the national and sectoral level, will be advocates for the education sector policy and positive role models, creating awareness and sharing information about HIV and AIDS impact and education sector responses. Specifically:

- a) MOET will ensure that managers and stakeholders in the education sector are knowledgeable and informed of the content of the Education Sector Policy on HIV and AIDS and committed to its dissemination.
- b) The education sector, its sub-sectors and partners will develop specific advocacy strategies to support implementation of this **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy**.
- c) MOET departments, sector and development partners, civil society, private sector and PLWHIV at every level are called upon to support the education sector's efforts in advocacy.

### **9.2.2 Policy development and review**

Education sector HIV and AIDS policy will be regularly reviewed and revised.

- a) Following approval of the National **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy**, MOET will resource, plan and action the policy implementation process at every level of the system, in accordance with the scope of policy application described in point 3 above.
- b) MOET will publish and disseminate to all stakeholders an Annual Report on the education sector's response to HIV and AIDS impact;
- c) The **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** will be reviewed as part of the Education Sector Programme on a regular basis.
- d) All other education sub-sectors, institutions and partners responsible for developing and implementing HIV and AIDS policies will also participate in the review of this policy and review their own HIV and AIDS policies on regular basis.

### **9.2.3 Support for implementation**

Policy implementation will be regularly monitored, evaluated and reported.

- a) Implementation of the Policy will be supported by guidelines developed by MOET in consultation with districts, schools, tertiary institutions and other sub-sectors
- b) The guidelines will be distributed and supported by appropriate training and development for key personnel.
- c) Monitoring and evaluation systems will be developed and implemented to track and measure the progress and impact of the policy implementation process at every level.
- d) Monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation and its impact will be reported every quarter and will be widely disseminated and accessible to the entire sector.

## **10 PREVENTION**

### **10.1 Objective**

Every person in the education sector will acquire the knowledge and information on HIV prevention, develop appropriate life-skills and apply this to create a safe environment that prevents further HIV infection.

### **10.2 Strategies**

#### **10.2.1 Information and awareness**

Information on HIV and AIDS will be provided.

- a) Accurate information and materials on HIV and AIDS will be made available and accessible to all schools and institutions. This will include information on the use of condoms, when developmentally appropriate, for learners.

- b) MOET will ensure that there is an enabling environment for learners to use and act on the information, knowledge and skills that they receive in schools and institutions.
- c) Information, education and communication (IEC) activities will be gender sensitive and age appropriate. IEC activities will be delivered in a language and form that is appropriate for all including people with special educational needs.
- d) Appropriate school and institutional personnel will be trained in HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health, counselling and support.
- e) Awareness training will be conducted for education sector personnel, school and institution communities.
- f) Guidance and counselling and other HIV and AIDS life skills activities will promote values and beliefs on sex and sexuality that are consistent with the level of the epidemic in Lesotho and the culture and orientation of the beneficiaries.
- g) Multiple channels of communication including traditional and modern media will be utilized in disseminating HIV and AIDS information and skills.
- h) Cultural practices and social attitudes which increase the risk of HIV infection will be discouraged.

### **10.2.2 Curriculum**

Education will be provided on HIV and AIDS to all learners and staff.

- a) Learners, employees and key stakeholders will participate in the development of all educational materials and programme plans for HIV and AIDS intervention activities.
- b) Views of parents and the community will be considered along with the needs of the learners when developing HIV and AIDS activities for the school-age population.
- c) Teacher education curriculum (pre-service and in-service) will prepare educators and teachers to respond to HIV and AIDS within their own lives and as professionals, to build positive attitudes and skills for HIV and AIDS prevention and control amongst all their learners.
- d) Through in-service and pre-service programmes, educators and curriculum developers will be trained to effectively integrate HIV prevention information into lessons and the curriculum.
- e) HIV and AIDS and Life Skills Education will remain a compulsory subject in all schools in line with the learners' level of development.
- f) Information about HIV and AIDS, character development and life skills will be integrated into all appropriate curriculum areas and subjects at all levels of schooling.
- g) Appropriate teaching and learning resources for HIV prevention, which are gender sensitive, will be developed to support HIV and AIDS curriculum programmes.
- h) While the Ministry's first choice for prevention is abstinence, learners will be given proper information about sex, the risks associated with sexual activity and how they can protect themselves.
- i) Peer education programmes will be developed and implemented to support the school curriculum.
- j) MOET in consultation with other stakeholders will train peer educators in various methods to deliver appropriate HIV and AIDS prevention messages.
- k) Schools will reach out into the community to encourage participation by parents in school HIV and AIDS activities, to strengthen the links between the school and community and to disseminate HIV and AIDS messages to the community.
- l) Schools will be encouraged to have co-curricular activities such as theatre groups, ANTI-AIDS clubs and Boys and Girls Education Movement clubs, as a way of continuously raising awareness and providing information on HIV and AIDS issues

### **10.2.3 HIV testing and counselling (HTC)**

HIV counselling will be provided.

- a) Learners and staff will have access to guidance and risk-reduction counselling provided by trained and competent persons as part of the life skills education in schools.

- b) Training will be provided to increase the number of professional counsellors and improve the knowledge of the existing trainers.
- c) Each learner from the age of 12 years old onwards will have access to voluntary HIV testing and counselling and be given advice on the risk for HIV, pregnancy and STIs.

HIV testing will be available:

- a) HIV testing will be voluntary, confidential and anonymous.
- b) No child may be tested for HIV except when this is in the best interests of the child and consent has been given by his/her parents, guardians or other nominated authority.
- c) Only organisations accredited by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare will be permitted to conduct HIV testing in schools but will also require the consent of MOET to do so.
- d) Heads of education institutions and sections will encourage and promote the use of HTC and other HIV and AIDS services.
- e) Where learners below the age of consent are tested within the school setting and found to have HIV, the agency providing the test will ensure that such learners receive sufficient post test support from parents, guardians, teachers and family members.

#### **10.2.4 Access to reproductive health services**

Learners and personnel will, where appropriate, have access to reproductive health protective devices and services.

- a) Condom dispensing and distribution will be the responsibility of Health Centres.
- b) Youth Friendly Services (YFS) including health corners, peer counselling clubs and recreation facilities will be established to cater for all including learners with special needs.

#### **10.2.5 Safe Education Environment**

Teaching and learning environments will be safe and health-promoting.

- a) All schools will strive to become child-friendly and health-promoting.
- b) Staff, school committees/boards and learners will work together to create an environment free of stigma and discrimination, exploitation, sexual harassment, bullying, abuse and violence.
- c) Institutions will ensure the protection of learners and other staff from HIV infection, as well as the rights of the infected and affected.
- d) Heads of education institutions will ensure systems and measures are in place to guarantee a safe teaching and learning environment, particularly in hostels and other accommodation.
- e) The heads of all education sector workplaces will be responsible for ensuring a safe working environment and minimizing the risk of accidental HIV infection in the workplace.
- f) Teachers and students in every school and institution will be trained in universal infection control precautions and will be conversant with referral procedures for PEP.
- g) Basic first aid kits will be maintained in every school and institution.

#### **10.2.6 Partnerships**

Partnerships will be established and strengthened.

- a) Partnerships will be established with relevant government ministries and faith-based, community-based and non-government organisations to provide information, prevention and counselling services for learners.
- b) Partnerships will be established with community-based youth groups to support access to information and peer-education.

## **11 TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT**

## **11.1 Objective**

An education sector in which all infected and affected individuals can access treatment, care and support.

## **11.2 Strategies**

### **11.2.1 Treatment, care and support for learners and employees**

The education sector will seek to create an environment that promotes and supports the delivery of treatment, care and support services to both learners and employees.

- a) MOET will establish partnerships to facilitate access to appropriate treatment, support and referral services.
- b) The education sector will create an enabling environment free of stigma and discrimination.
- c) The education sector will work with organizations representing People Living with HIV (PLWHIV) to facilitate openness and promote positive living strategies in the sector.

### **11.2.2 Guidance, counselling and psycho-social support**

Guidance, counselling and psycho-social support services will be strengthened.

- a) Guidance, counselling and psycho-social services at workplaces, schools and educational institutions will be strengthened to provide adequate and appropriate support to orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners, teachers and other education personnel.
- b) Care and support in the educational setting will involve establishing age, gender, culture, language and context sensitive mechanisms to address the psycho-social needs of affected and infected individuals.
- c) An enabling and non-discriminatory environment will be created in which learners will be encouraged to test and disclose their status, and to seek help and support.
- d) MOET will strive to ensure increased access to care and psychosocial support for orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners.
- e) MOET will design and implement an effective system to address the health and emotional needs of the increasing number of infected and affected teachers as well as orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners, through, *inter alia*, the facilitation of cost effective, manageable care and counselling facilities and services.
- f) MOET will seek to extend access to counselling services, and training in psycho-social support, particularly for lay practitioners, according to the accepted professional standards.

### **11.2.3 Information and awareness**

Information will be available and awareness promoted.

- a) Educators and employees will be trained to provide a supportive environment offering care and support.
- b) Counsellors and care-givers will be trained to provide counselling and support for learners and employees infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, sexual assault and abuse.
- c) The Education sector will provide information on reproductive health services, and facilitate referred access to these, as well as to treatment for sexually-transmitted infections, tuberculosis and other opportunistic infections.

### **11.2.4 Care and support for infected and affected learners**

Care and support will be available for infected and affected learners.

- a) The Education sector will make alternative learning arrangements, wherever necessary, for infected and affected learners to continue their education.
- b) The role of nutrition in educational attainment is recognized, and the education sector will endeavour to ensure that adequate nutrition is provided to those in need within schools and institutions.

- c) MOET will promote the establishment of schemes targeting orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners that include education bursaries, scholarships and other material support.
- d) MOET will promote the training of appropriately-aged learners to initiate and manage income-generating activities.

### **11.2.5 Gender and child protection**

Children will be protected.

- a) MOET will develop and distribute guidelines for the protection of learners against all forms of gender discrimination and abuse, including gender-based violence in the school setting.
- b) Special attention will be given to the protection of children in relation to child labour and where they are compelled to care for siblings and adults.
- c) Support will be provided to learners to enable them to complete their education.

### **11.2.6 Mobilization of support**

The education sector will mobilize support for orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners.

- a) The education sector will mobilize community support, and seek funds and technical support from development partners, NAC, civil society and private sector, for the provision of treatment, care and support services for orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners.

## **12 IMPACT MITIGATION**

### **12.1 Objective**

To reduce the HIV and AIDS vulnerability of those individuals and groups not prioritized by education sector Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support and Workplace programmes.

### **12.2 Strategies**

#### **12.2.1 Orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners**

OVC numbers and needs will be regularly monitored and addressed.

- a) MOET will form an impact mitigation team which will focus on policies, strategies and activities on the mitigation of HIV and AIDS impact with special emphasis on orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners and the responsibilities of educators.
- b) All schools and educational institutions will be responsible for the identification and registration of vulnerable, infected and affected children, and those who are chronically ill and will ensure that this information is kept confidentially.
- c) These records will be proactively shared with relevant sectoral and non-sectoral partners to ensure the provision of comprehensive support to these learners through the mobilization of multi-sectoral response.
- d) MOET will develop the capacity of all schools and educational institutions to identify and assess the needs of these learners and ensure, as far as possible within their capacity and resources, that these learners are able to continue with and complete their education.
- e) All schools and educational institutions will track the successful transition of orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners, from each level of education and training to the next appropriate level.
- f) Schools and educational institutions at every level will give special attention to factors that affect the performance of these learners and find ways to assist them.

### **12.2.2 School and institutional flexibility**

Schools and educational institution programmes will be flexible in accommodating the needs of vulnerable groups.

- a) Schools and educational institutions will be flexible in the design and scheduling of their classes and programmes to accommodate the needs of learners who are orphaned, vulnerable, infected or affected or otherwise educationally marginalized.

### **12.2.3 Integrated early childhood care and development (IECCD)**

IECCD providers will endeavour to accommodate orphans and other vulnerable, infected and affected learners.

- a) Early childhood care and development programmes will ensure they cater for the needs of orphans and other vulnerable, infected and affected learners to compensate for any lack of care and support in the home environment.

### **12.2.4 Non-formal programmes**

Non-formal programmes for the vulnerable will be available and accessible.

- a) Non-formal programmes, including those for orphans, vulnerable, infected and affected learners, will be available and accessible, and will include life skills and HIV and AIDS education.

## **13 HIV AND AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE**

### **13.1 Objective**

A workplace characterized by non-discriminatory labour practices, sensitivity and responsiveness to HIV and AIDS, free of risk and stigma for all education sector employees and clients.

### **13.2 Strategies**

#### **13.2.1 Workplace practices**

Human resource management policies and practices at all levels of the education system will address the issues of HIV and AIDS.

- a) In terms of the Labour Code (Amendment) Act, 2006 and Public Service HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy, education sector employers will, in consultation with their employees or their representative organisations, develop and implement a workplace programme on HIV and AIDS aimed at:
  - prevention of new HIV infections;
  - protection of employees from discrimination and stigmatisation related to HIV and AIDS;
  - provision of care and support for employees who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS; and
  - management of the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in the sector.
- b) Education sector employers will periodically, after a period not exceeding one year, review their workplace programme on HIV and AIDS in consultation with their employees or representative organisations.
- c) Equal opportunities will be provided for all employees living with HIV, including equal access to employment positions as well as the opportunity for all employees who are HIV positive to continue employment if they are medically fit and capable of achieving reasonable performance standards.
- d) All related government, legislative and ethical guidelines and policies, including codes of conduct and practice, will be made available and implemented, in terms of which:

- any employee refusing to teach or interact with learners, colleagues, and clients on the grounds that they are living with, or perceived to be living with HIV, will be disciplined and sanctioned; and
  - any learner refusing to study with fellow learners or to be taught by an education sector employee on the grounds that they are living with, or perceived to be living with HIV, will be disciplined and sanctioned.
- e) The education sector will review current policies, codes of practice for recruitment and deployment of staff procedures, to ensure compliance, and further ensure that partners and spouses are not posted apart unless there is no alternative.

### **13.2.2 Information**

Employees will have access to accurate HIV and AIDS information, prevention, testing and counselling programmes in all workplaces in the education system.

- a) Appropriate training, education and awareness programmes for all employees, on HIV prevention, will be developed and implemented that focus on behavioural change.
- b) Heads of all education sector workplaces will ensure that all those within the education sector are fully aware of, well informed and educated about HIV and AIDS.

### **13.2.3 Employee Wellness**

All education sector workplaces will, in collaboration with their partner organizations, facilitate access to holistic care and support for employees living with HIV, to ensure that they are able to continue working for as long as possible.

- a) MOET will establish an Employee Wellness Programme for employees, including their families that will:
  - provide on-going counselling and support to infected and affected employees;
  - provide information on positive living, including information on nutrition;
  - provide information on treatments for HIV and opportunistic infections, including information on ART;
  - provide information on, and referrals for, post-exposure prophylaxis following an occupational exposure or rape; and
  - build on partnerships with health service providers to ensure that those who need to access services can do so and are supported in their treatment programmes and have access to the appropriate drugs and treatment.
- b) MOET will provide a budgetary allocation to subsidize the provision of ART to its employees, their families, in line with the other Public Service Ministries, but recognizes that MOH, through their agencies and service providers, are the sole providers of such treatment.
- c) Sector employees are encouraged to participate in community activities that seek to promote health and development including poverty alleviation.
- d) The delivery of services among sector employees, their families will be based on professional standards and uphold the values of voluntary participation, safety and confidentiality.

### **13.2.4 Safe workplaces**

HIV and AIDS safe workplaces will be established at all levels of the education system.

- a) Every education institution in Lesotho will develop and display an institutional workplace HIV and AIDS Policy and Code of Conduct for teachers and learners, sensitive to local conditions but consistent with the Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy and its guiding principles. MOET will provide samples of such institutional Policies and Codes for adaptation and use.
- b) Occupational, health and safety guidelines will incorporate HIV prevention and care strategies.
- c) Condoms will be made available at the workplace.

- d) Education sector employees who accidentally contract HIV in the course and scope of their employment will be entitled to immediate post-exposure prophylaxis and follow-up in the form of compensation according to the prevailing laws of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

### **13.2.5 Protection from Sexual abuse and harassment**

Everyone in the education sector has a responsibility to protect each other, and particularly children, including those with special educational needs and the challenged, from all forms of sexual abuse, including harassment, sexual molestation, sexual exploitation and rape.

- a) Anyone within the education sector who exploits their position or authority over children or other adults, as well as instances where learners sexually entice educators and managers, will be subject to disciplinary procedures determined by sector policies and regulations.
- b) Sanctions for those who are found guilty of sexual abuse, including harassment, sexual molestation, sexual exploitation and rape will be developed and implemented, in conformity with the Codes of Conduct of MOET and the Public Service, and the laws of the Kingdom of Lesotho.
- c) Employers and managers within the education sector will have a responsibility to inform all employees of their rights, responsibilities and the sanctions applicable to sexually-related misconduct.

### **13.2.6 Ill-health and absenteeism**

All education sector institutions will actively promote every feasible means to maintain the health and performance of employees living with HIV. Employees living with HIV will continue to work as long as they are medically fit to perform their duties.

- a) If employees are unable to continue their normal duties on medical grounds, the normal rules regarding incapacity will apply.
- b) To reduce the negative effects of illness and incapacity on staff members and education delivery, sector management at every level will:
  - develop and maintain a data bank on absenteeism and sick leave patterns;
  - take steps to improve access of staff to medical care;
  - develop efficient systems for relief staff;
  - take steps to assure and improve retirement benefits and ensure more efficient processing of applications; and
  - monitor and assess sick leave provision, and where necessary, make recommendations for revision.

## **14 MANAGEMENT OF THE POLICY RESPONSE**

### **14.1 Objective**

Management structures and systems will be in place, and partnerships developed and sustained, at all levels of the education system, to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate quality education in the context of HIV and AIDS.

### **14.2 Strategies**

#### **14.2.1 Management and Coordination**

All levels of the national education system will establish and maintain HIV and AIDS management and support structures

- a) Dedicated management structures will be in place at the national and institutional levels of the education system, responsible for education sector HIV and AIDS policy implementation, direction, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

- b) HIV and AIDS will be mainstreamed into all management functions of MOET at all levels.
- c) The capacity of HIV and AIDS management unit and the Education Sector HIV and AIDS Forum will be strengthened and sustainably resourced to lead MOET HIV and AIDS response.
- d) The HIV and AIDS management unit will guide the implementation of the national education sector HIV and AIDS policy and provide leadership, coordination, technical support and reporting on the implementation of the policy.
- e) Education sector institutions and managers will actively participate in, and support, HIV and AIDS management and coordination structures at all levels, with particular emphasis on the planning, management and implementation of the policy and programmes.

#### 14.2.2 Planning

Management structures at all levels of the system will plan and budget for resources to support the implementation of the policy.

- a) Education plans at the national, district and school levels will include HIV and AIDS Policy implementation strategies.
- b) Special attention will be given to HIV and AIDS support in the planning and budgeting process.
- c) MOET will advocate for adequate resources to support implementation of the policy with Government, stakeholders and donor agencies.

#### 14.2.3 Human resource training and development

As part of the HIV and AIDS response, MOET will liaise with other ministries and organizations in human resource planning across the sector to ensure sustained education delivery.

- a) MOET will ensure adequate planning and monitoring so that there is an adequate supply of appropriately skilled teachers and educators to meet educational needs in the context of HIV and AIDS.
- b) The education sector will ensure adequate structures, staffing and continuity of staffing for HIV and AIDS-related management and response functions.
- c) MOET will promote and recognize accredited HIV and AIDS-related training for staff at all levels of the system.
- d) The sector and its partner institutions will explore creative options, such as distance learning, information and communication technologies (ICT) and other techniques to:
  - increase quality of HIV and AIDS education;
  - maintain the quality of education when teachers and other educators are absent or suitable substitutes are not readily available;
  - increase efficiency of teacher and educator training.
- e) HIV and AIDS training will be appropriately adapted to the needs of all learners and staff in the sector. Cost-effective and flexible strategies, such as networking and peer education, should be enhanced and promoted as widely as possible.

The coordination of all accredited HIV and AIDS training programmes in the various sub-sectors will be the responsibility of the HIV and AIDS management unit and must aim at achieving more effective coverage of the sector and those target-areas of highest need.

#### 14.2.4 Partnerships

MOET will make deliberate efforts to establish, manage and sustain partnerships to assist and support its response to HIV and AIDS.

- a) MOET will recognize the roles and contributions of all its sectoral and development partners and encourage their participation in the achievement of the **Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy** goals and objectives.
- b) Through the development and maintenance of a partnership database, MOET will identify and work effectively with these partners to manage and mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS.

- c) MOET will facilitate the development of links with other social sector ministries and agencies to explore common interests and collaborative relationships. These links will specifically include agreement on joint responsibility and programming for IECCD, OVC, and other health-related, cross-cutting or multi-sectoral issues.

#### **14.2.5 Data Collection and Research**

The development of the policy and its implementation strategies will be informed by best practice research to monitor impact, trends and effectiveness of the policy.

- a) MOET will encourage and facilitate the collection and analysis of data on HIV and AIDS and the education system, in partnership with NAC, MOHSW and other relevant agencies including tertiary institutions within and linked to Lesotho.
- b) MOET will disseminate and share the results of any research on a regular basis within the education system and to all stakeholders.
- c) All external research and other organizations wishing to undertake HIV and AIDS-related research in the sector will be required to register such research studies with MOET; ensure that these are duly authorized and comply with accepted ethical practice; and provide copies of their findings for incorporation into a central information system in order to reduce duplication and enhance sector knowledge.

#### **14.2.6 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Key indicators for the successful Implementation of the policy will be monitored and evaluated and the information used for future planning, resource allocation and management.

- a) MOET will be responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system for the education sector, including identification of key HIV and AIDS impact indicators, and for benchmarking, measuring and monitoring these.
- b) MOET will train its planning unit in the design, development and implementation of an HIV and AIDS-sensitive Education Management Information System (EMIS), which will be administered at all levels of the system and use a common set of indicators.
- c) Accountable Focal Point Persons at every level and in every institution will be trained and be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of these indicators, and will report on these monthly, quarterly and annually to their supervisors.

## **15 ANNEXURES**

### **15.1 Legal and Contextual framework**

- a) Government of Lesotho National HIV and AIDS Policy; National AIDS Commission; February 2007.
- b) Government of Lesotho Coordination Framework for the National Response to HIV and AIDS; National AIDS Commission; 2007.
- c) Government of Lesotho National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2006 – 2011 (Revised); National AIDS Commission; 2009.
- d) Government of Lesotho Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005 - 2015; Ministry of Education and Training; March 2005.
- e) Government of Lesotho (Draft) Consolidated Education and Training Sector Policy Framework; Ministry of Education and Training; March 2007.
- f) Government of Lesotho National HIV and AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2006 - 2011; National AIDS Commission; 2007.
- g) Government of Lesotho (Costed) Lesotho National Action Plan for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children; Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; January 2006.

- h) Government of Lesotho (Draft) School Health Policy of Lesotho; Ministry of Education and Training; May 2005.
  - i) Government of Lesotho Public Service HIV and AIDS Policy; Ministry of Public Service; 2010.
  - j) Government of Lesotho; Labour Code (Amendment) Act No. 5 of 2006; Ministry of Employment and Labour.
  - k) Government of Lesotho; Know Your Status Campaign: National operational plan 2006-2007.
  - l) Government of Lesotho; Turning a crisis into an opportunity: Strategies for scaling up the national response to the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Lesotho (2003).
  - m) Government of Lesotho; National Action Plan on Women, Girls and HIV and AIDS, Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation (2006).
  - n) Government of Lesotho; Gender and Development policy, Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation (2003).
  - o) Government of Lesotho UNGASS Country Report; National AIDS Commission (2010)
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