



Herd boys at newly built night school show their school work to Tumisang Leduma, Sentebale Country Director, December 2014.

RETHABILE has lost both parents and is a herd boy from Lesotho's remote highlands of Mokhotlong. He was 11 when his mother passed away. With the need to provide for his sister he left school and started herding livestock, known as a herd boy, to earn money.

Rethabile's day consisted of searching for new pastures for the animals. At night, they were brought into a homemade pen at the cattle post, where he slept in a stone hut.

Tortured by the loss of his family and his uncle's decision to renegotiate his employment contracts, so payment went to him rather than Rethabile, life was tough, he was stripped of any self-worth and felt society had let him down.

Fortunately, Rethabile heard of Sentebale's herd boy night schools, and after a day's work he walks to school where he receives a basic education and learns life-skills.

Following class, a hot meal is served, often the only one of the day, and there is a chance to interact with the other herd boys. Rethabile also receives counseling as well as testing for HIV and first-aid training.

Now 19, he has not only regained his literacy and numeracy skills, but is addressing his problems, in particular the loss of his parents and treatment by his uncle. He has gone as far as to challenge his uncle on his employment contract and renegotiated his agreement so he benefits from his labour.

Rethabile's progress has not stopped here, he has become a true advocate of night school and a leader within the community advising other herd boys on their employment contracts so they benefit. In the future, he would like to see many more herd boys attend night school so that they can learn skills needed by the community.

Strengthen access to education, including life-skills and livelihoods training for herd boys

HERD BOY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Lesotho's herd boys are a marginalised section of the community. The tradition of tending livestock in the mountains prevents many of them from attending school. The programme aims to give these disadvantaged boys the chance to make a better future for themselves through giving them access to primary school education, as well as vocational and basic skills training.

Key statistics

- 30,000 herd boys estimated in Lesotho.⁶
- Almost one third of herd boys have never received a formal education.⁶

Programme activities

- 526 herd boys have benefitted from the schools and their different activities, providing literacy, numeracy and education.
- 184 attended the training on sexual reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.
- 11 stakeholder meetings were held where livestock owners and community leaders committed to supporting herders' education and nutrition.
- A total of 137 herd boys from three night schools attended a week long first aid training.
- Procured and distributed 1,000 different basic English books and dictionaries to begin teaching English in night schools.
- Established and trained school management committees to ensure effective running of four new night schools.

Key achievements

- Registered 300 herd boys who can then receive birth certificates; 170 have received them so far and were registered for identity cards.
- Introduction of English language in herd boy schools.
- In Marakabei, the local chief volunteered to lease out his five acre plot of land to the Good Shepherd School for free; 81 participants committed themselves to plough the field for food production and to raise income.
- Reports from the local police show a reduction in village crime in areas where herd boys have attended night school.

Challenges to be addressed

- Some employers still do not allow their herd boys to attend evening lessons.
- The movement of livestock sees herd boys being in the high areas for 5-6 months, disrupting their learning progress.



Prince Harry catches up with Mpolokeng during his visit to Lesotho in February 2013

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I love being in school, reading and playing with other students, but I hate being called to the staff room and being told off for being naughty... I am very grateful to Sentebale. Without this sponsorship my future would be bleak. **MPOLOKENG**

MPOLOKENG is 16 years old. When she is not at school she lives with her four siblings in a child-headed household. In 2004, Prince Harry met Mpolokeng and her mother. Sadly, not long after his visit, Mpolokeng's mother passed away to AIDS-related illness.

Since 2004, Prince Seeiso has kept an eye on the young family ensuring they had access to the necessary support they needed, and today through Sentebale's secondary school bursary programme, Mpolokeng attends Mokhotlong High School, allowing her to continue her education.

Give increasing numbers of Lesotho's most vulnerable children the opportunity to achieve a secondary school education

SECONDARY SCHOOL BURSARY PROGRAMME

With the support of key partners, Sentebale provides bursaries to some of Lesotho's most disadvantaged children – those without the necessary family structures to care for them – to cover the costs of attending secondary school so they can reach their full potential.

Key statistics

- On average, 63% of 15-24 year olds in Lesotho have not completed secondary school education.⁷
- Secondary school enrolment in Lesotho is just 37% for females and 23% for males.⁸
- 37% of school children in Lesotho believe that children living with HIV should not be allowed to attend school.⁹

Programme activities

- Sentebale maintained the number of secondary school bursaries awarded at 256 children (156 girls and 100 boys). This including enrolling 17 new students into the programme.
- In addition to the standard package of the bursary, which includes tuition, examination and book fees, many children required additional support, which included: transport funds for 74 students, school shoes for 89 students, hygiene packs for 177 students and further food allowances for three children.
- A further 112 students were given additional financial support to pay examination and tuition fees.
- 198 home assessments for new applications were carried out.

Key achievements

- 47 students sat external exams; 25 out of 30 passed their Junior Certificate (JC) and 11 out of 17 passed their Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC), with one 1st class, three 2nd class and seven 3rd class results.
- A week-long life-skills training workshop was held for 63 sponsored students; the aim was to address drugs and alcohol use, violence, sexual and reproductive health, HIV and AIDs and dealing with peer pressure.
- Three students who completed high school are receiving tertiary sponsorship; two are in first year at the National University of Lesotho and one is at a college in South Africa.

Challenges to be addressed

- Delayed career guidance leaves students under-informed on career choices and the options available to them.
- There has been a large increase in applications as the need to support many students in Lesotho remains a challenge.