Mohapi Mohapi is a 15-year-old disabled orphan living with his 78-year-old grandmother (one of the three orphans she cares for). He was labelled as rude and disrespectful, a bully with a bad attitude who was not interested in learning at school. Some may consider his situation to be difficult, if not impossible. However, through assistance provided by Help Lesotho, his attitude and behavior have been transformed.

The Building Local Capacity for the Delivery of HIV Services in Southern Africa (BLC) Project in Lesotho, sponsored by USAID, aims to improve the quality of sustainable community-based care and support services for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). In the district of Thaba-Tseka, Help Lesotho fulfils this objective by providing psychosocial support sessions to OVC, along with their caregivers. Topics covered include HIV and AIDS, self-esteem, communication, child rights, team building, and peer pressure.

Mohapi attributes some of his previous attitude to his lack of self-confidence. “I could get easily discouraged by peers,” he states. Through the support sessions offered by BLC, Mohapi declares, “I now have self-confidence; no one can discourage me.” His grandmother Makhotso also sees a difference. “He is now able to spend time reading and doing schoolwork at home. He consults where he does not understand.” An introvert by nature, Mohapi has learned to openly discuss issues with his grandmother and friends, and is a member of the AIDS Action Club at his school.

“All quotes have been directly translated from Sesotho

Help Lesotho is one of 12 organizations that receive USAID-funded small grants in Lesotho. Help Lesotho is focused on providing psychosocial support and skills training to orphans and vulnerable children and their caregivers. Since 2011, their work has reached more than 3,600 beneficiaries.

For more information contact:
Building Local Capacity Project (Lesotho)
1st Floor, NBC Sechaba House, Alliance Park
Four Bowker Road
Maseru, Lesotho (Next to Maseru Toyota)
Tel: +266 22 316 096

Building Local Capacity Project (Regional Office)
Ditsela Place
1204 Park Street (Cnr Park and Jan Shoba Streets)
Hatfield, Pretoria, South Africa
Tel: +27 12 364 0400; Fax: +27 12 364 0416
blcsouthernafrica@msh.org; www.msh.org

This publication is made possible by the generous support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement GPO-A-00-05-00024-00. The contents are the responsibility of The Building Local Capacity for Delivery of HIV Services in Southern Africa Project and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.