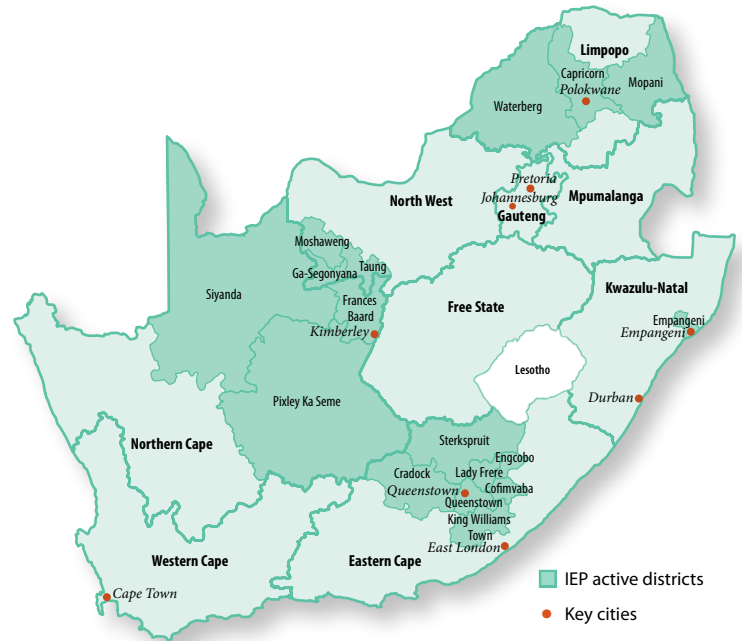




# Increasing Equity in Education in South Africa

The South African government has made significant efforts to overcome the legacy of apartheid education, committing itself to the dual goals of achieving high-quality education with more equitable access for all South Africans. Substantial investments have been made to achieve this vision; however, translating policies into improved school-level practice remains a major challenge. Since 1998, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has assisted the South African government to achieve these goals through the District Development Support Program (DDSP) and the Integrated Education Program (IEP), both implemented by RTI International.

From 1998 to 2003, DDSP worked toward achieving improved quality of primary education. As a follow-on project, IEP continues to provide a broad range of education assistance in furtherance of this same goal. Implemented by RTI from 2004 through 2008, in partnership with the national Department of Education (nDOE), four Provincial Education Departments, and



11 South African subcontractors, and in association with five higher education institutions, IEP's primary objective is to achieve improved student performance in numeracy, literacy, mathematics, and science in participating schools. Working in four provinces—Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, and Northern Cape—IEP has expanded its reach to more than double the number of schools in DDSP, building on gains and lessons learned. IEP's targeted results include enhancing teacher capacity, implementing the new national curriculum, improving education management and governance, integrating HIV/AIDS concerns, and supporting the nDOE. The program engages teachers, parents, and district officials associated with the 1,300 participating schools through a variety of program activities ranging from residential trainings to school cluster workshops and school-based support.



Teachers attending IEP training in Limpopo Province, South Africa.  
[PHOTO: John Burmeister, IEP Provincial Coordinator, Limpopo Province]

Students in IEP schools are showing substantial gains in both literacy and numeracy, as measured by periodic testing carried out by the project in grade 3. Results from testing in October 2006 indicated that composite literacy scores for students from IEP schools had increased 19 percentage points since the previous round of testing in October 2005, and numeracy scores had risen 11 points over the same period. These gains translate into improvement rates of up to 48%, well beyond the targets over baseline that had been set for the project. These improvements are also substantially higher than those for students from control (non-IEP) schools who were tested at the same time.

*(continued)*

## Working with Education Sector Stakeholders

IEP works with several stakeholder groups within the education sector, including teachers, education managers, and parents and community members. For teachers, the program focuses on increasing subject-matter knowledge in literacy, numeracy, mathematics, and science, as well as on developing and using student-centered methodologies, continuous assessment strategies, and classroom materials. More than 2,000 master teachers are targeted for residential training. School-based support and cascade workshops are provided to all teachers within IEP schools, where master teachers train additional educators in their schools and clusters. Pretty Hluyako, an IEP trainer, elaborates on the broad reach of cascade training: "Training one master teacher means training the whole cluster and the whole school. In the Bombeleni Cluster, the Foundation Phase master teacher trained both Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase teachers on designing learning programs. All the schools in that cluster now have well-planned learning programs because of one Foundation Phase master teacher." Foundation Phase includes grades 1–3; Intermediate Phase includes in grades 4–6.

The majority of stakeholders view IEP as a professional development opportunity and use it to minimize the gap between their skills and expected norms. Attendance by in-service teachers, principals, parents, and district officials in IEP training has been high—despite training sessions often held during long holidays and transportation costs at times borne by the trainees themselves. Pre-service training offered by IEP partner higher education institutions includes both degree and certificate programs for math and science teachers to advance their knowledge of both content and methodology.

To date, IEP has trained more than 1,800 in-service master teachers, who have provided training to an additional 2,737 teachers at cascade workshops. Through this training, substantial gains have been made in teacher content knowledge. The program also supports 408 pre-service teachers, who will complete their training and exams by 2008.

Education managers at the school level are trained in instructional leadership, including curriculum management, student assessment, and staff mentoring. Managers at the circuit and district levels receive assistance with the development and implementation of plans for school support. Through School Governing Bodies, which are made up of both teachers and parents, school



*Literacy is a focal point for improved student performance in the IEP.*  
[PHOTO: Paula Gains, *The Molteno Project*]

development plans are created and operationalized. All IEP stakeholders receive support in terms of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## Support to the National Department of Education

IEP cooperates with the nDOE through policy support and technical assistance on education finance and reform, education management information systems, and human resource planning. The objectives and expected outcomes of this assistance are set by the nDoE to add value and complement their current and future plans and objectives. The nDOE has been highly satisfied with IEP's contributions and achievements, noting that the technical assistance has brought insights into what is happening in the rest of the system and in other countries and contexts.

### For more information about this project, please contact

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