



Lubuto Library Partners

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Local Nonprofit DREAMS Big for Zambian Girls

Lubuto Library Partners receives major grant to keep girls in school, prevent AIDS

WASHINGTON, July 26: Lubuto Library Partners (LLP), a small nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, DC and serving children and youth in Zambia, has been awarded a prestigious DREAMS Innovation Challenge grant to pursue an innovative strategy of AIDS prevention based out of its unique network of children's libraries in Zambia.

In seeking new approaches to address the alarming rise of HIV/AIDS infections among young women in Sub-Saharan Africa, the DREAMS challenge recognizes the unique position of Lubuto libraries in outreach to deliver mentoring and education programs that empower girls and young women in Zambia.

"Lubuto libraries are centers of community life, with thousands of children and young adults visiting regularly every year," Lubuto Library Partners founder and President Jane Kinney Meyers stated. "Young people come to our libraries seeking information, fellowship and enlightenment, which is what *lubuto* means in Bemba. The DREAMS grant will allow LLP to provide scholarships for schooling, establishing mentoring programs for both girls and boys, and equip them with the skills and information they need to be 'mentored, empowered, safe, determined, resilient and AIDS-free.'"

Selected as one of 56 successful applicants from a pool of over 800 to receive almost \$700,000 from the DREAMS Innovation Challenge, LLP will pursue five major strategies to keep girls in school and reduce their risk of AIDS:

- A crowdsourced scholarship program will cover school fees and related costs.
- Adaptation of LLP's effective mentoring programs to include role model, peer-to-peer, single-gender, and family mentoring programs addressing a range of psychological, social and economic issues that place adolescent girls at risk.
- LLP libraries will offer privacy and guidance to youth seeking sensitive sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence information in various formats, including books, online resources, film screenings, and presentations by health organizations.
- Family literacy programs will support young mothers in continuing their education.

- LLP libraries will provide a platform to AIDS research programs needing to reach out-of-school youth and other vulnerable groups, such as young mothers, children with disabilities, and children living on the streets.

“Zambian girls and boys have tremendous potential that remains untapped,” Meyers added. “Lubuto fills a critical gap by providing access to high-quality educational, informational and psychosocial support programs for these youth who might otherwise have no access at all. We’re thrilled to be able to add scholarships, new types of mentoring that will help keep girls safe in a variety of ways, and AIDS prevention education through the DREAMS grant.”

Lubuto Library Partners builds and equips libraries specially designed for children and youth across Zambia, with three libraries complete, a fourth nearing completion, and additional ones in the planning stages. Programs currently offered include literacy training in Zambia’s seven major languages, computer instruction, visual and performing arts, mentoring and outreach. The libraries are a model to be replicated throughout the region, and LLP’s DREAMS innovations are designed to be adopted by public libraries in other areas where the HIV infection rate of adolescent girls has been rising.

Many Zambian children, especially girls, receive little more than a few years of basic education due to financial barriers, an unsupportive family and community environment, inadequate access to health information, early marriage and/or pregnancy, and social marginalization. Many children are orphans or street children who have no support system to be able to continue their education.

DREAMS is an ambitious \$385 million partnership to help girls develop into Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored, and Safe women. DREAMS is delivering a [Core Package](#) of evidence-informed approaches that go beyond the health sector, addressing the structural drivers that directly or indirectly increase girls’ HIV risk, including poverty, gender inequality, sexual violence, and lack of education. The DREAMS Innovation Challenge is a partnership of U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Girl Effect, Johnson & Johnson, Gilead Sciences, and ViiV Healthcare. Visit [About DREAMS](#) more information on the DREAMS Partnership.

Founded in 2005, Lubuto Library Partners is an innovative development organization that builds the capacity of public libraries to create opportunities for equitable education and poverty reduction. Its mission is to enlighten and enrich the lives of children and youth in sub-Saharan Africa, especially those not in school and highly vulnerable. Learn more [here](#), and follow us on [Facebook](#).

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