

News from the DLN

Read the report from the Project visit 16th – 26th July 2007, where RSDA and DLN are winding up the Water tank and Capacity Building Project. The report is written by Karina Ruby and Karen Steffensen and is available on www.lumela.dk

Vand det meste af året

Af Jørgen Skovsted

Karen Steffensen kom hjem fra Lesotho midt i august – glad i sindet. Glad for, at hun har været med til at søsætte et projekt i det, hun kalder for sit "andet fædreland". Måske føles det som en dråbe i havet, men enhver dråbe er livgivende i et land, hvor det kun regner en mindre del af året.

116 vandtanke står nu rundt om i landsbyer i Lesotho som det håndfaste bevis på, at frivillige lokale beboere og danskere i fællesskab har skabt bedre vilkår for at dyrke og høste grøntsager. Fremover kan 116 familier i Lesotho få frisk grønt i størstedelen af året, hvis de er dygtige til at gemme på vandet.

Karen Steffensen fortæller:

"Jeg kunne se her i begyndelsen af august, at flere familier havde grøntsager i haverne omkring huset. Kål, gulerødder og bladbeder.

Om vandet kom fra de opstillede vandtanke, eller beboerne havde hentet det fra drikkevandet, kunne jeg ikke vurdere. Faktum er i hvert fald, at nu kan de pågældende familier forsyne sig selv med friske grøntsager – også om vinteren."

Når Karen Steffensen omtaler Lesotho som sit andet fædreland, skyldes det, at hun tabte sit hjerte til befolkningen i Lesotho, besotho'erne, igennem et fem et halvt års ophold fra 1996-2002. Her var hun som gartneritekniker udsendt af Mellemløst Samvirke for at hjælpe skoler med at blive selvforsynede med afgrøder, sådan at eleverne kunne få mindst et godt måltid om dagen. Det var under dette lange ophold, at hun blev så begejstret for de åbne og varme, men også fattige besotho'er, at hun siden hjemkomsten var sikker på

Water most of the year.

By Jørgen Skovsted

Translated by Karsten Lund

Karen Steffensen came home from Lesotho in the middle of August – jolly in her mind. Jolly because she had been part of the launching of a project in what she call her "second fatherland". It might feel like a drop in the ocean, but any drop is life giving in a country where it only rains a small part of the year. 116 water tanks now stand in different villages in Lesotho as the hard evidence that volunteer local citizens and Danes in cooperation has created better conditions for growing and harvesting vegetables. In the future 116 families in Lesotho can get fres veggies the larger part of the year, if they are good at economising with the collected water.

Karen Steffensen tells:

"I could see here in the beginning of August that more families had vegetables in the gardens around their houses. Cabbage, carrots and moroho.

Whether the water had com from the water tanks or had been fetched by the drinking water I could not tell. But it's clear that the families can supply vegetables enough for their household even in winter.

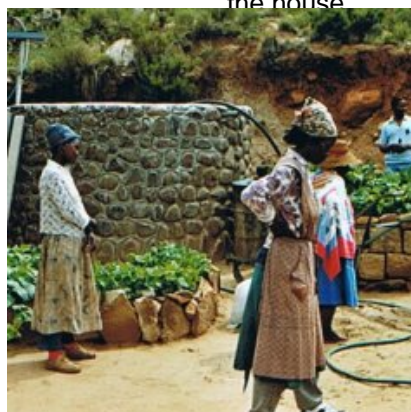
When Karen Steffensen talks about Lesotho as her second fatherland it's because she lost her heart to the Basotho during her stay in Lesotho from 1996 to 2002. She was send by Danish Association for International Cooperation as a Development Worker working as a gardener. She was there to help schools become self sufficient with vegetables so the students could get at least one solid meal a day. It was during this long stay that she became passionate for the openness and warmth of the



at vende tilbage. Og vendt tilbage har hun. Siden 2005 har Karen Steffensen været tre gange i Lesotho for at følge op på "sit projekt". Som projektansvarlig for et DLN-støttet vandtanke-projekt, skal hun nu efter sidste besøg lave en evaluering. Karen Steffensen fostrede sammen med andre danske ildsjæle og den lokale ngo-organisation RSDA (Rural Selfhelp Development Organisation) ideen om at få opført et antal vandtanke til farmere på landet. Farmer kalder man sig, når man blot har et lille stykke jord rundt om familiens hytte.

Basotho, so passionate that she knew she would return. And indeed she has returned. Since 2005 Karen Steffensen has been in Lesotho tree times to follow up on "her project". As project responsible for the DLN supported water tank-project, she has to make a final evaluation.

Karen Steffensen initiated the idea of making water tanks for farmers with other Danish enthusiasts and the local NGO RSDA (Rural Selfhelp Development Organisation). In Lesotho a farmer often is somebody with a very few hectare of land around the house.



Kun sommerregn

Hidtil har farmerne kun kunnet dyrke grøntsager nogle måneder om sommeren – som på den sydlige halvkugle jo falder i vores vinter – fordi det stort set kun regner i disse måneder fra oktober til marts. Derfor har hele ideen med vandtank-projektet været at opsamle regnvandet i de våde måneder. På den måde kan farmerne vande grøntsager i større dele af året.

Karin Steffensen fortæller om selve projektet: "Vandtankene skulle opføres lige opad hytterne, så regnvandet fra tagrenderne kunne løbe direkte ned i tankene, som så fik påsat en hane.

Tankene er ca. to meter høje og kan rumme 9 m³ regnvand. Det er så op til farmerne at gemme så meget vand fra sommermånederne, at de kan vande udover den hidtidige høstsæson."

Projetet begyndte i september, 2005, og med de bevilgede en million kroner fra Minipuljen (under Danida) i hånden, kunne de lokale allerede samme efterår begynde at opføre vandtanke. De første ca. 10 stod færdige ved årets udgang. Kun fire måneder senere var alle 116 vandtanke opført ved lige så mange familier.

For at komme i betragtning til at få en vandtank, skulle basotho'erne selv gøre en indsats. Skaffe sand og sten, som ofte skulle transporteres langvejsfra. Men når farmerne havde fået fat i disse ingredienser, kom de lokale ngo'ere, der var med i

Only summer rain

So far the farmers has only been able to grow vegetables a few months each summer – summer in the southern hemisphere is during Danish winter – because it only rains between October and Marts. So the idea with the water tanks is to collect rainwater during the wet season. This way farmers can irrigate their vegetables most of the year.

Karen Steffensen tells about the project: "The water tanks must be build in conjunction with the huts so that rainwater from the roof gutters can run directly into the tanks. In the bottom of the tank is fitted a water tap.

The tanks are approximately 2 meter high and contains 9 m³ rainwater. Then its up to the farmers to save so much water from the summer months that they can irrigate beyond the regular harvest season."

The project took of in September 2005, with a grant of one million Danish kroner from the Minipuljen (a Danida fund). With this money in hand local farmers could start building water tanks already the following autumn (Spring in Lesotho). The first 10 tanks where ready by the end of the year. Only four months later 116 water tanks had been build by 116 families.

To get into consideration of getting a water tank, the Basotho should make the effort of collecting sand and stones themselves. Materials that often had to



projektet, med cement og rør samt tagrender, og så var det bare med at gå i gang.

Selve opførelsen af tankene stod uddannede lokale murere for. Typisk tog det tre dage at blive færdige med en vandtank, og i disse tre dage skulle familierne sørge for mad til håndværkerne. Sådan var aftalen.

Sure miner

Ingen projekter uden konflikter. Sådan er det også i Lesotho. For ikke alle interesserede nåede at komme med tidsnok. Farmerne havde måske nok fået samlet sten og sand, men for sent, og derfor kunne de ikke komme i betragtning. Det gav en del sure miner.

Andre farmere fik ikke tagrenderne i tide. Derfor byggede de selv nogle primitive tagrender af noget tagmateriale – det gav også noget bøvl. Men overordnet set har vandtank-projektet været en succes – ikke mindst hos de 116 familier, der har været med, og som fremover kan flerdoble deres grønsagshøst.

Det bedste for tankene ville være, hvis der kom låg på, men det har der ikke været råd til i projektet. Så det er op til farmerne selv at få fat i dem, for det ville forhindre alger, myg, larver og andet utøj i at havne i vandtankene. Det er vigtigt – ikke mindst fordi nogle af de lokale ind imellem kan finde på at bruge vandet i tankene som drikkevand – selv om det på ingen måde er meningen. Der findes fællesbrønde i landsbyerne.

Men det er en meget tilfreds dansk ildsjæl, der nu kan se tilbage på resultaterne af to års godt samarbejde med den lokale organisation RSDA: "Nu kan en del af familierne tilmed sælge nogle af afgrøderne til andre landsbybeboere eller til supermarkeder. Det giver dem pludselig mulighed for at tjene lidt penge, men det giver dem også en større selvbevidsthed."

Organisering skal der til

Af Jørgen Skovsted

En af de erfaringer, som Karina Ruby kan give videre til landsbybeboerne i Lesotho er, at man skal organisere sig, hvis man vil opnå noget.

Andelsbevægelser og fagforeninger ligger i baghovedet, når man skal give gode råd til fattige farmere, der er vant til at kæmpe sig igennem tilværelsen på egen hånd.

be carried over long distances. When farmers had gathered these components RSDA brought cement, pipes and gutters, and then it was ready for building. The construction of the tanks was done by skilled local bricklayers. It typically took about three days to construct a water tank. During the working days the families provided food for the bricklayers. That was the deal.

Angry minds

No project without conflict. This was also the case in Lesotho. Not all interested managed to get in consideration in time. Farmers might have collected stone and sand, but too late to come into consideration. This created a few angry minds.

Other farmers didn't get the roof gutters in time.

They constructed some primitive roof gutters themselves – this also gave a little quarrel. But seen holistically the water tank project has been a success – not least by the 116 families who participated and whom in the future can more than double their vegetable harvest.

The best for the tanks would be if a lid was fitted on top, but the project budget did not accommodate for this. It's up to the individual farmers to get hold of a lid to keep out alleges mosquitoes, insects and other dirt. This is important, especially because there is a risk that somebody might drink the water even though this isn't supposed to happen. Drinking water should be collected from the regular drinking water source.

It's a very satisfied Danish enthusiast who looks back at two wonderful years of cooperation with the local NGO RSDA: "Now some of the families can even sell some of their crops to other villagers or to the supermarkets. This suddenly gives them a chance to earn a little money and gain some more self-consciousness."

It takes organising

By Jørgen Skovsted

Translated by Karsten Lund

One experience Karina Ruby can pas on to village people in Lesotho is that it takes organising to achieve things. The coop movement and trade unions come to mind when advice is to be passed on to poor farmers, who struggle through life on their own.

Karina Ruby has been part of the water tank project



Karina Ruby har som Karen Steffensen været med i vandtank-projektet, og har via sine to rejser til Lesotho indenfor de sidste par år holdt forbindelsen til det land, som også står hende nær. Som udsendt ergoterapeut boede hun i Lesotho fra 2000 og tre år frem, og under dette ophold fik hun på egen hånd set, hvor skoene trykker i det fattige land. Og der var ikke langt fra tanke til handling – derfor er Karina Ruby i dag en engageret støtte i nuværende og kommende projekter i Lesotho.

with Karen Steffensen and on her two journeys to Lesotho, within the past two years; she has kept ties to the country that's close to her heart. From 2000 and the following three years she was posted as occupational therapist in Lesotho. During this stay she had a first hand view of some of the hardships in a poor country. The way from thought to action wasn't long – hence Karina Ruby engages in support to present and coming projects in Lesotho.



Udvikling

Selvom Lesotho hører blandt verdens fattige lande, står landet ikke i stampe. Karina Ruby fortæller, at hun tydeligt fornemmer, at der sker små fremskridt, når hun genser landet med mellemrum:

”Man ser for eksempel flere og flere mobiltelefoner, fordi landet er blevet bedre dækket af sendemaster. Det betyder meget for den lokale befolkning, som bedre kan komme i kontakt med slægtninge, der er flyttet til de større byer eller måske arbejder i Sydafrika.

Besotho'erne er kendt for at flytte meget rundt. Derfor kan en mobiltelefon bevare forbindelser, trods store afstande.”

Også vejnettet bliver gradvist udbygget. Man kommer lettere rundt i det bjergrige landskab, hvor vejene ofte bliver bygget af arbejdsløse, der får mad fra det offentlige, så længe de arbejder.

Til gengæld er der en anden del af udviklingen, der går den forkerte vej. Sygdommen AIDS griber fortsat ind i hele samfundet på en så gennemgribende måde, at gennemsnits-levealderen i Lesotho indenfor de sidste ti år er faldet fra tæt ved 55 år til under 40 år! En tragedie i et land, hvor arbejdskraften fra de 15-35 årige forsvinder mellem hænderne på til de tilbageblevne.

Development

Even though Lesotho is amongst the poorest countries in the world, the country isn't at a stand still. Karina Ruby tells that she clearly senses progress every time she visits the country:

“You see for example more and more cell phones, because the country mobile coverage has improved. This means a lot to the local population, as it has become easier to get in touch with relatives who have moved to bigger cities or those who work in RSA.

Basotho are known to move around a lot. In those cases cell phones keep people in touch despite great distances.”

Also the road system is gradually expanded. Getting around in the mountainous landscape is becoming easier. Roads are often being build by unemployed who are getting food from the government as long as they work.

However there is another part of development that's going terribly wrong. The disease AIDS has its devastating impact on society. The average life expectancy has fallen from 55 years to under 40 years within the past ten years! This is a tragedy in a country where the workforce between 15-35 years smoulders away from the remaining generations.



Karina siger om den dødelige sygdom:

"Ofte ser man begravelses-optog i landsbyerne. Så ved man, at den frygtelige sygdom igen har kostet liv.

Der er faktisk sådan, at foreninger og organisationer skal have ekstra mange suppleanter, for man ved aldrig, hvor længe folk i den bedste alder lever".

Karina says this about this deadly disease:

"You will often see funeral processions in the villages. That's often means that the terrifying disease has taken its toll again. It's actually so bad that NGOs and organisations need extra alternates, because you never know when people in their best age passes away.



Organisering

En del af vandtank-projektet har været undervisning og organisering. Undervisning af farmerne i at få mere udbytte af deres afgrøder via vandingen og organisering for at kunne påvirke myndighederne. "Vi har jo arbejdet sammen med den lokale organisation, RSDA, som er professionelt styret. Det vigtige undervejs har været at videregive vores erfaring med organisering, som vi kender det i Danmark. For uden at gå sammen får man ikke sine krav igennem.

Så den del af u-landsstøten vil vi gøre endnu mere ud af i det kommende projekt, som vi er ved at formulere sammen med RSDA i Lesotho. Vi skal støtte afholdelse af kurser og undervisning af farmerne i, hvordan de kan opnå bedre forhold, når de organiserer sig. Demokrati i hverdagen – det er det, vi kan påvirke, håber jeg", siger Karina Ruby. Hun er derfor med til at formulere det kommende projekt, som RSDA i Lesotho sammen med de danske støtter, håber kan få opbakning fra Minipuljen under Danida fra årsskiftet.

Organising

A part of the water tank project has been teaching and lobbying. Teaching the farmers how to be getting a bigger outcome of their crops by irrigation and lobbying to influence authorities. "We have cooperated with the local organisation RSDA, who has run the project very professionally. To us one of the important things has been to pass on our experiences with organising the Danish way. This is because: without unity you don't get it your way.

This part of the third world support we will emphasise in a coming project with RSDA in Lesotho. We will support the running of courses and training of farmers in achieving better conditions by organising. Everyday democracy - that is what we can stimulate I hope" says Karina Ruby. This is why she participates in formulating the coming project that RSDA will carry out in Lesotho with the support of Minipuljen under DANIDA from the turn of the year.



Short images of Lesotho

By Ole Bech

Karen Steffensen should go for an evaluation trip to Lesotho and she invited me. We rented a car in Johannesburg and drove to Maseru, the capital of Lesotho. The trip was 5-600 km and we drove in clear sunlight and the temperature was around 20 degrees Celsius. Around 18 o'clock we reached the border and here I experienced the first hint of what differences in culture I was to expect. The passport control was a lady in many coats in a ramshackle house and a man in plain clothes, who was walking around outside. We went through without problems and now were in Lesotho. Quickly we drove to Maseru, and after some difficulties we were quartered in Pomolo's guesthouse 6-7 km from the center of the city. The conditions here were similar to domestic standards,



but I wondered why there were iron fences around the house with strong iron doors and doorkeepers, that opened and closed the doors apparently around the clock.

One day we went for a field trip and visited two villages, which had built water tanks, which should be evaluated. As we came closer to the first village, the road got worse and worse, and the last kilometres we drove through an area without anything similar to road or even path! But the view all around was impressive. Very flat and with such clear air that you could see for miles, and all around the red soil.

We passed over bridges, but beneath it just looked like the earth had cracked in 3-4 meters depths. No water at all. Mathaba, project manager in RSDA and our guide told us, that it hadn't been raining since January. We should visit a family and all inhabitants of the village were gathered. They had been informed, that we came, and they were all dressed up, that is only the women were present. The water tank was empty and the place gave the impression of utmost poverty.

Indtryk fra Lesotho

Af Ole Bech

Karen Steffensen skulle på evalueringstur til Lesotho og inviterede mig med. Vi lejede en bil i Johannesburg og kørte til Maseru. Turen foregik i høj sol, og der var omkring 20 grader. Hen ad aftenstid mandag den 16. juli kom vi til grænsen og der oplevede jeg de første antydninger af, hvilke forskelligheder i kultur, jeg havde i vente. Paskontrollen var en dame i mange frakker i et faldefærdigt hus og en mand i civilt tøj, som gik udenfor. Vi kom igennem uden problemer og var nu i Lesotho. Hurtigt kørte vi til Maseru, og efter en del vanskeligheder blev vi indkvarteret i Phomolo 'gæstehus'. Forholdene her mindede om hjemlige kvaliteter,

men jeg undrede mig over, at der var store gitre med solide jernlåger, og at der var portnere, som åbnede og lukkede portene tilsyneladende døgnet rundt. Vi var på 'fieldtrip' og besøgte to 'landsbyer', som havde fået bygget vandtanke, som skulle monitoreres. Turen derud gik efterhånden som vi nærmede os ad dårligere og dårligere veje og de sidste kilometer kørte vi gennem et område uden antydning af vej eller sti til den første landsby. Udsigten var imponerende. Meget fladt og med en klar luft, så man kunne se fantastisk langt, og overalt den røde jord.

Vi passerede broer, men under dem så det bare ud som om jorden havde slået 3-4 m. dybe revner, der var intet vand. Af Mathaba, projektmanageren fik vi at vide, at det ikke havde regnet siden januar. Vi blev vist hen til en familie. Landsbyens beboere var selvfølgelig blevet orienteret om, at vi kom og modtog os i deres stiveste puds. Vandtanken var derfor tom og stedet bar præg af den yderste fattigdom.





We were shown around and everything was arranged for photography. There was a carrot with top hidden here and there, and it could accidentally be taken and tasted for the next picture and there were a handful of grain, which the female owner could grind between two stones.

Vi blev vist rundt og alt var veltilrettelagt med henblik på fotografering. Der lå en gulerod med top gemt her og der, som lige kunne tages frem, hvis et kamera var i nærheden, og der var lidt korn, som den kvindelige beboer kunne male mellem to sten.



A fantastic show, that went on with many laughs. According to Mathaba they had because of the draught dug up the pea seed from the field and eaten it. In a chicken pen were 4-5 small hens, and I couldn't imagine what they should eat. In the border of the place was the toilet, a little house, which was close to falling apart. All places you saw these little houses in various qualities, the best even with chimney, so-called VIP (ventilated improved pit latrine).

Only 50 meters from the house was the graveyard, where more of the graves were quite new and where tombstones told, that the dead had not been old ...

Et fantastisk skuespil, som foregik i højt humør. Ifølge Mathaba havde man på grund af tørken gravet såsæden (ærter) op og havde spist dem. I et bur gik 4-5 små høns. Og jeg havde i hvert fald ikke fantasi til at forestille mig, hvad de levede af. I udkanten af grunden stod toilettet, et lille hus, som var på nippet til at styrte sammen. Alle steder så man de der små huse i meget forskellige kvaliteter. De bedste endda med en skorsten til udluftning. Kun 50 m fra huset var kirkegården, hvor flere grave var nye og hvor gravsten viste, at de afdøde ikke blev ret gamle.



When the interviews were done, we went on to the next village. There were waving and shouting as if it was close family that left.

We drove through an area with water at the bottom of a very high flat solid mountain, which rose in the distance. It was very fertile maybe because of the mountain, and some people were harvesting cabbage (here in the middle of the winter!). We were received the same way as in the first village, and this family was better off. Nearby there stood without clear motive a water tap by the side of a path, and it contained yes water! The family carried water in buckets from the tap to the water tank, which was close to the houses. One house was kitchen with tiles on the floor, where we could look inside. The other remained closed, and I guess it was private. On the roof there was a little solar panel. We could take pictures, and while I stood ready with the digital camera, a heavy lady took from her many clothes a mobile telephone with camera and started taking pictures of us!

While the inhabitants were interviewed, Mathaba and I took a walk. He told me, that the basoto had mobile phones and big multinational companies had invested in internet masts, so the whole country was covered, and they could be used for telephone communication as well. He showed me, that on the top of the mountain, there were houses and that people actually lived up there. If a person became ill, they had to carry that person on a stretcher all the way down because there were no roads. I would have liked to visit such a village up there to see how they went on. He also showed me the family's field, where there was a big amount of holes 20 x 40 cm with three pea plants in each hole. It was of course an effective way to use the water. Away from the houses a black pig was lying on the ground tied to a tree without anything to eat. Before leaving the family we were offered a portion of motoho, a fermented porridge of sorgum.

Da beboerne var blevet interviewet, tog vi videre til den anden landsby. Der blev vinket og hujet som var det den nærmeste familie, der drog af sted. Vi kørte gennem et område med vand for foden af et enormt bjergmassiv, som rejste sig i baggrunden. Det var meget frugtbart måske på grund af bjergene, og der blev høstet kål (her midt om vinteren!). Modtagelsen gentog sig og familien, vi besøgte her, var noget bedre stillet. I nærheden stod der ret umotiveret en vandhane, som indeholdt ja vand. Her tappede man nogle spande og transporterede det op til vandtanken, som lå noget højere, og hældte det i. Familien boede i to huse, hvoraf det ene var et stort flisebelagt køkken, som vi måtte se ind i. Det andet forblev lukket. Det var så nok privaten. Ovenpå huset var der en lille solfanger. Der skulle tages billeder og mens jeg stod med digitalkameraet, tog en kraftig dame en mobiltelefon med indbygget kamera ud af gevandterne og begyndte at fotografere!



Mens beboerne blev interviewet, gik Mathaba og jeg en tur. Han fortalte, at basotoer havde mobiltelefon og at store internationale firmaer havde investeret i internetmaster, så hele landet var dækket, og at de også kunne bruges til telefoni. Han viste mig, at oppe på bjergmassivet, som var fladt, lå der huse, og han fortalte, at der levede folk deroppe. Hvis en person blev syg, måtte vedkommende transporteres ned på bære, der var ingen veje. Det kunne have været meget spændende at besøge en landsby på et så isoleret sted. Han viste mig også familiens mark, som bestod af en stor mængde huller 20 gange 40 cm, hvor der stod to-tre små ærteplanter i hvert hul. Det var selvfølgelig for at kunne udnytte vandet optimalt. Et stykke væk gik en sort gris i en fortøjning uden antydning af noget spiseligt.



Besides there were presents for the Danish, homemade beautiful clay pots with dried peaches and papi.

So we drove back towards Maseru and overall we saw small groups of 5 to 10 skinny cows or sheep with shepherd walk around without grass as far as the eye could see. Closer to Maseru we reached the small booths. Rickety constructions made of 5-6 pieces of wood with 5 apples and 5 oranges for sale. And similar places with cards for cell phones. And all places crowded with people. On a low wall in Maseru sat a woman with a carved piece of thin iron with 3-4 thin iron bars upon. Under the bars a little live coal and upon two corncobs. Grilled corncobs for sale! We stopped shortly to pay a visit to Lydia Muso, a woman who has dedicated her life to take care of orphans. She was able to house around 20 children with help from donations and support from the local bank. A fantastic woman with a clear purpose in her life! In the center of Maseru we went to a super market looking almost the same as in Denmark. Quality and order just like in Denmark. In a mobile telephone shop I saw a modern Nokia telephone. It cost 3000 Rand. Double the price we must pay in Denmark. In the evening we went out to eat and were served marvelous delicious food like in an expensive restaurant in Denmark, and the same service but half the price. But when the darkness falls it's not clever to be outside alone in the city. Therefore all the iron fences and -doors.

In Denmark we have rich and poor people, but the difference in Lesotho is far bigger. I don't understand what most of the people do for living and the streets are crowded all the time. And I felt it strange, that to the basoto we must have seemed very rich with our (rented) fourwheeler, digital camera and Adidas cap even though we were just ordinary people in Denmark. It also felt strange to me, that here it suddenly was me, who could not disappear in the crowd, if I felt it necessary. As a teacher of refugees in Denmark it sat their situation in a scary light, and I thought of how important it was to keep that in mind forever.

That was some short images from my trip to Lesotho. A country with a magnificent nature, which I very much would like to explore, an impressive indomitable view of life and a fantastic sense of spirit in the people I met which I very much would like to explore too and a country with contrasts, that can not be understood before experienced with ones own senses.

Inden vi forlod familien skulle vi nyde en portion Motoho. Desuden var der gaver til danskerne



Så kørte vi hjemad mod Maseru og overalt så vi små flokke 5-10 magre køer eller får inkl. hyrde gå, uden at man kunne se en eneste tot græs. Nærmere byen begyndte boderne. Vakkelvorne konstruktioner af 5-6 stykker træ med 5 æbler og 5 appelsiner til salg. Og lignende steder, hvor man kunne købe taletidskort. Overalt masser af mennesker. På en mur i Maseru sad en dame med et stykke bøjet jernplade med 3-4 stykker jerntråd på. Herunder nogle gløder og over på 2 majsolber. Grillede majsolber til salg. I byens centrum var vi inde i et stort supermarked. Næsten ikke til at skelne fra et dansk supermarked. Samme udvalg, samme orden. I en mobiltelefonbutik så jeg en moderne Nokiatelefon. Den kostede 3000 Rand! Vi var ude om aftenen og spiste fantastisk lækker mad ligesom på en dyr restaurant i Danmark. Men efter mørkets frembrud færdes man ikke alene ude i byen. I Danmark har vi rige og fattige mennesker, men der er mange gange større forskel i Lesotho. Jeg forstår ikke, hvad de fleste mennesker lever af og de er nærmest alle på gaden al tid. Og så det underlige, at vi må have forekommet basotoerne enormt rige med vores (lejede) firehjulstrækker, digitalkamera og Adidaskasket. For mig var det også meget mærkeligt, at lige pludselig var det mig, der ikke kunne forsvinde i mængden, hvis jeg skulle få lyst. For mig som indvandrerlærer satte det flygtninge i Danmark i et endnu mere uhyggeligt lys. Det var nogle korte glimt fra min tur i Lesotho. Et land med en storslået natur, som jeg gerne vil se meget mere til, en imponerende ukuelighed og et fantastisk humør hos nogle indbyggere, som jeg gerne lærte bedre at kende og et land med modsætninger, som ikke kan fattes, før de opleves med egne sanser.



News from Lesotho:

Lesotho tries to resolve post election tension

From: SANC News, September 27, 2007, 12:15

A three day congress aimed at resolving the post election conflict between political parties in Lesotho draws to a close in Maseru today. The congress was organised by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) and the Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental organisations (LCN).

The LCN's Executive Director, Seabata Motsamai, says political parties and NGOs will be expected to implement recommendations to strengthen democracy. He says since the election in February, various measures have been put in place to put an end to the conflict between the 19 political parties.

Lesotho sets a good example for Africa

From: SABC News, September 29, 2007, 16:15

Foreign observers and participants from African countries, including the DRC, Zimbabwe and Swaziland, say Lesotho is setting a good example for Africa. This is due to the constructive way in which it handles post election disputes. The delegate's comments follow a three-day conference in the Lesotho capital, Maseru, on post-election conflict.

It was agreed that there is a need to detect early warning signs of conflict. Electoral Institute of Southern Africa Director, Vincent Tohbi says, "We are here to tell the people of Lesotho that there are many ways of dealing with conflict. The conflict they're facing today is minor to what we experienced in the DRC, but they have to be precautious because those things can pre-empt serious turbulences in the country."

Ade Adefuye, the special advisor to the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, says that if this dialogue was applied in Zimbabwe and the DRC, the commonwealth would not have expelled Zimbabwe and fighting would not have happened in the DRC.



Lesotho: Commonwealth Supports University Education

From: allAfrica.com <http://allafrica.com/stories/200710101008.html> Commonwealth News and Information Service (London)
10 October 2007

Secretariat experts have devised a strategic plan to help Lesotho's National University identify areas of development, academic excellence and governance

The Commonwealth Secretariat is assisting the National University of Lesotho to improve the quality and quantity of its delivery of services.

The support follows a needs based assessment commissioned by the Secretariat to establish the issues, problems and concerns facing the university.

The report recommended the drafting of a new strategic plan which would tackle the issues through a process that is consultative and inclusive.

Janet Kathyola, Adviser on Southern Africa in the Secretariat's Governance and Institutional Development Division, said: "Strengthening the capacity of the National University of Lesotho will help it become an institution of academic excellence that responds to the human resource requirements of the Lesotho economy.

"This project is critical for the socio-economic development of Lesotho in that it will contribute to the nation's Vision 2020 pillar of "a healthy and well developed human resource base".

The objective is to improve access to programmes, relevance and quality of teaching and learning, raise the profile of innovation and research, prudent financial management, efficient governance, a modern physical environment and well supported students and staff.

The plan outlines the context within which the vision, mission statement and core values for the university were adopted.

Ms Kathyola added that with the implementation of the strategic plan "the university will become an institution for academic excellence in the Southern Africa region."

It is hoped that following the plan's implementation the university will realise its goal to make itself a high quality centre for teaching and learning.



What is Denmark Lesotho Network?

The NGO Denmark Lesotho Network (DLN) was founded in 2002 by former Danish development workers in Lesotho and other good friends of the tiny mountain kingdom in Southern Africa. DLN aims at supporting NGO's in Lesotho in their work to develop civil society. DLN uses its network of people and organisations in Lesotho to pinpoint beneficiaries of DLN's support – and to keep an eye on that funding is used according to agreements made. DLN wishes to enhance knowledge of the living conditions in Lesotho and to seek funding from foundations, business enterprises and organisations for actual projects in Lesotho.

Membership of DLN

Anyone, who can support the aims of DLN, can achieve a membership. Members contribute to support initiatives in Lesotho that develop and better living conditions in the country. Members will receive an electronic newsletter four times a year and be invited to DLN's annual general assembly. The cost of a membership is 100 Danish kroner yearly. For membership contact cashier Karen Steffensen, tel.: +45 97578252, e-mail: karen.steffensen@mail.dk

DLN's address is: Denmark Lesotho Network, C/O Helga Højsager, Asylgade 16, DK-5000 Odense C, Denmark

Homepage: www.lumela.dk

KHOTSO – PULA – NALA

