

News from the DLN

Generalforsamlingen 2008

Den 12. april afholdt DLN igen generalforsamling. Denne gang i Odense med deltagelse af 20 medlemmer. Bestyrelsens årsberetning blev fremlagt af formanden.

Mødet blev afholdt i en meget positiv ånd, og der var en god stemning under hele mødet. Der var også plads til drøftelser og input til næste års arbejde i bestyrelsen. Mødet sluttede med en italiensk middag.

Det blev desuden bestemt at næste års generalforsamling vil finde sted i Odense, da den geografiske placering giver mulighed for flere at deltage.

Den valgte bestyrelse er:

Helga Halck Højsager, formand

Karen Steffensen, kasserer

Bodil Mathiassen, sekretær

Anne Andersen

Signe Hedegaard og Anders Foghsgaard, suppleanter



The new EC

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Annual General Meeting 2008

The 12th April DLN AGM was held again. This time it was held in Odense and 20 members attended the meeting. The yearly rapport was done by the chair of the Executive Committee. The meeting was held in a good spirit and there was a nice atmosphere during the whole day. There was room for discussions and new input for the EC work in the year to come. The meeting ended with an Italian dinner.

It was decided that next years AGM will take place in Odense as well. The central geographical place makes good opportunities for more people to attend.

The newly elected Executive Committee is:

Helga Halck Højsager, Chair

Karen Steffensen, Tressurer

Bodil Mathiasen, Secretary

Anne Andersen

Signe Hedegaard and Anders Foghsgaard, substitutes

Minutes in full can be read on the homepage: www.lumela.dk under AGM's

EFTERLYSNING

Karsten Lund har meddelt bestyrelsen at han ikke mere kan varetage opgaven med at udgive vores nyhedsbrev Lumela. Heldigvis har Anne påtaget sig opgaven i samarbejde med Peter Rathmann.

Vores hjemmeside, derimod, er der ikke nogen fra bestyrelsen, som kan overtage. **Derfor søger vi blandt vore mange medlemmer en, som kunne tænke sig at hjælpe DLN med at vedligeholde og opdatere vores hjemmeside.**

Hjemmesiden har indtil nu givet os en del henvendelser, så det er vigtigt, at vi stadig kan være synlige i det offentlige rum.

Henvendelse til helga@halck.dk og lad os få en snak om, hvordan vi kan etablere en overgang fra Karsten til dig.

Election at the Annual General Meeting of DLN

By Karina Ruby, DLN board member



April 12th in Odense we had the AGM of DLN 2008. Many of our members turned up and contributed to the discussions and the planning of the next year. I have now served for two



periods, i.e. 4 years, as a member of the DLN-board, and I have decided not to run for another period. That decision is a difficult one for me. I have very much enjoyed the work for DLN and the cooperation with the other board members. It has been very interesting and rewarding to follow and be part of the development of our organisation, and I really think DLN has developed satisfactorily since the foundation in 2002. We have established a partnership with the NGO Rural Self-help Development Association (RSDA) in Lesotho, completed one project with RSDA, and we are now working on setting up a new project with RSDA. Individuals and organisations both in Denmark and Lesotho are now approaching DLN frequently, and we generally manage to support them one way or the other. It is very interesting and satisfactorily. Nevertheless I have decided to take a break from the DLN work because of lack of time. I have too much work and in-service course in connection to my paid job. I am happy to realise that Anne Andersen is going to replace me as the new board member. I wish her and the rest of the board good luck and fruitful work!

DLN and RSDA are working on a new proposal

By Karen Steffensen

It is a long time since RSDA and DLN started planning for a new project and work on a proposal. We received the first draft from RSDA last year, and when Karina Ruby and I visited RSDA in July 2007, we discussed the draft. Early 2008 DLN received the second draft and Anders Hedegaard and I took it to our advisors, Projektrådgivningen. The intention of the project is to support the same group of farmers in their efforts to organize them selves and to enable them to advocate and influence the local government. A part of the project is also to provide a revolving fund and technical support to the farmers. We submitted the proposal 1st of April to Danida and waited for the response. At the end of June we received the message that our proposal was refused. The project is regarded as relevant, but has some weaknesses. We have to start again and continue the work and we have arranged a new meeting with our advisors to discuss the refusal and the way forward. We are now hoping to meet the next deadline 1st October.

DLN connecting people in Denmark and Lesotho

1. Sidste nyt fra LCCU
2. Can trainee service period be done in Lesotho?
3. Cultural exchange of beer



Sidste nyt fra LCCU

af Ea Krogstrup, Maseru

Lydia Muso har venner over hele verden. Vi sidder i hendes nyopførte hus i Mazenod, mens hun udpeger, hvorfra i verden alle de nye møbler stammer. Både hendes eget hjem og det nye børnehjem er fyldt af donationer. Hun fortæller også, at hun i sidste uge modtog et opkald fra folk i Japan, der ønsker at komme og besøge børnehjemmet. Og at hun om et par måneder muligvis skal til USA for at fortælle om sit arbejde og om børns vilkår i Lesotho. Man forstår godt hendes internationale berømmelse, for hun laver et fantastisk stykke arbejde.

I mange år har Lydia stået i spidsen for Lesotho Child Counseling Unit (LCCU), der huser forældreløse børn og børn, som har været udsat for seksuelt misbrug eller vanrøgt. Børnene bliver anvist af politiet, og mens de opholder sig på børnehjemmet, arbejder hun på at finde deres slægtninge eller et andet egnet hjem til dem. Mere end 400 børn har ved hendes hjælp fundet et nyt hjem på denne måde. Indtil nu har hun haft børnene boende hos sig i sit eget hus, men om et par måneder står et splinternyt børnehjem med plads til 40 børn klar på en bakketop ikke langt fra hendes hjem.



I forgrunden resterne af fundamentet af det gamle hus, til venstre Lydias nye hus og bagerst til højre den container, der p.t. fungerer som kontor.

Vi er taget til Mazenod for at besøge Lydia og bliver modtaget med åbne arme. Hun får straks arrangeret, at vi skal overnatte, for mørket er ved at falde på og der er, ifølge Lydia, meget hyggeligere i Mazenod end inde i Maseru. Og der er hyggeligt. På det store tv i hjørnet

går Botswana TV klart igennem. Af og til trænger lidt støj fra vejen igennem, men ellers er der ikke meget, der vidner om den støvede, travle færdselsåre få meter fra huset. De ni børn, der i øjeblikket bor hos Lydia, sidder nyvaskede og spiser aftensmad i stuen; majsgrød, spinat, kød og kogt græskar fra haven. Stemningen er hjemlig og den yngste halvdel af delegationen, Ellen på 4 år, falder hurtigt i leg med de yngste.

Man skal dog ikke lade sig narre af den hjemlige hygge – de fleste af børnene har sørgelige historier med i bagagen. Da børnene er lagt i seng, fortæller Lydia om nogle af de besøg, hun har haft i løbet af ugen: Dagen forinden kom to kvinder til hendes hus med en 3-årig pige, der var blevet voldtaget af en nabo. De havde ikke penge til at tage til politistationen for at indgive anmeldelse, så Lydia måtte give dem penge til en taxi og venter nu på at høre nyt i sagen. Og tidligere på dagen kom en bedstemor, hvis barnebarn var blevet seksuelt misbrugt af sin barnepige, til Lydia for at få rådgivning.





Lydias arbejde er kendt og respekteret både i og udenfor Lesotho, men det seneste år har været hårdt. Den 18. marts 2007 brændte hendes hus ned til grunden. Ingen kom noget til, men Lydia mistede alle sine ejendele og var fuldstændig afhængig af venner og families hjælp og støtte i den svære tid, der fulgte. At vi her et år senere kan sidde i hendes nymalede og fuldt møblerede stue, skyldes udelukkende Lydias mange venner. Det er hos dem, at hun har kunnet låne penge til det nye hus, og det er dem, der har doneret byggematerialer, møbler og meget andet. Hendes store drøm om at få opført et børnehjem med plads til børnene og deres aktiviteter, til terapeutisk rådgivning og til administration, er ved at gå i opfyldelse. Drømmen var dog ved at briste, da taget og dele af bygningen brændte i efteråret, men om et par måneder flytter børnene endelig til det nyopførte hjem.

Lydia ved de sidste tegn fra branden i oktober....

Næste dag tager vi en taxi med nogle af børnene op til det nye børnehjem. Der er fredfyldt i middagsheden, og håndværkerne er i færd med at lægge sidste hånd på bygningen. Lydia inspicerer fremskridtene og er meget tilfreds. Det er virkelig en smuk bygning - samme farve som den røde jord og med et traditionelt tag af strå. Lydia har selv bestemt, hvordan bygningen skal se ud. Da jeg spørger, hvor hendes kontor skal ligge, bryder latteren frem på byggepladsen; hun har nemlig glemt at tegne et kontor til sig selv. Håndværkerne siger, at det er typisk Lydia at glemme sig selv. Jeg kan kun sige, at for os, der har mødt hende, så er det svært at glemme både hende og hendes arbejde.

Limpo, Modise, Jabi, Rethabile og Morosi får sig et æble i skyggen af det nye børnehjem.





Lydia, Jabi og Ellen på trappen foran det nye hus....

Can trainee service period be done in Lesotho?

By Karina Ruby, DLN board member

A Danish nursery teacher student wants to include practical experience from Lesotho in her education, but her nursery teacher-training college is hesitating to approve her plans. Mette Frahm-Rasmussen wants to go to Maseru and do practical work with children as part of her education. She is now trying to find an institution in Maseru to host her for some month. She is also collecting information from former Danish students, who did their practical experience in Lesotho. Denmark Lesotho Network has assisted her by linking her up with relevant people and contact data. We wish her good luck and hope she will succeed and be able to go to Lesotho very soon. DLN is always happy when Danes want go to the small and often unnoticed mountain country in Southern Africa. Most of them come back with a positive experience in their mind and will forever keep Lesotho and the Basotho in their heart.

Cultural exchange of beer!

By Karina Ruby, DLN board member

One example of an individual approaching DLN is the beer collector Marc Elsborg in Hammel. He is collecting beer from all over the world. His target is to collect two beers from every beer



producing country in the world – one for the collection, and one for tasting. About 5 month ago he emailed DLN to ask for help. He lacked two examples of a beer from Lesotho, since beer brewed in Lesotho cannot be purchased in Europe. The DLN board knew of some members who were going to travel to Lesotho within the coming months and asked them to bring home two Maluti Beers. In January Anne Andersen brought home the two cans of Maluti for Marcs Beer Collection. In DLN we have a broad interpretation of cultural exchange!

To all formerly Lesotho-visitors: see and remember this beautiful beer can:

<http://www.marcsbeercollection.com:80/> under The Collection you can find Africa and Lesotho

Rejseaktiviteter

Lesotho-tur med DLN en realitet

18 personer er tilmeldt, og vi kan gennemføre turen i oktober, når ferskentræerne blomstrer

Af Bodil Mathiasen

Den planlagte tur til Lesotho i oktober 2008 er en realitet. 18 personer har meldt sig til rejsen, som er en enestående chance for at opleve et land, der endnu ikke er et udpræget turistmål. I oktober er vejret mildt, det er forår på de sydlige breddegrader, og fersken- og abrikostræerne blomstrer.

Nogle af deltagerne har tidligere boet og arbejdet i Lesotho, så for dem vil det unægteligt blive et spændende gensyn. Andre skal for første gang besøge Afrika.

Planen er stadig at bo nogle dage i Maseru i starten og derfra tage på udflugter og besøg til projekter, skoler, tale med lokale NGO-folk og få et indtryk af livet i hovedstaden. Vi har planlagt at besøge nogle af DLNs kontakter, blandt andre RSDA-bønderne i Mafeteng-området.

Turen varer 10 dage, og det er selvfølgelig begrænset, hvad vi kan nå at se. Men vi skal til Mohale Dam, Thaba Bosiu, Morija, Ramabanta og Semongkong.

Inden afrejsen fra Johannesburg håber vi at få tid til at besøge Apartheidmuseet.

På vores hjemmeside www.lumela.dk kan du læse flere artikler om turisme i Lesotho.

God rejselyst!

Absolut sidste nyt! 3 personer mere har meldt sig til turen, så der nu er 21, der tager af sted!

LEGO til Lesotho

Af Anne Andersen

Længe havde jeg planer om at rejse tilbage og besøge Lesotho og møde mine gode samarbejdspartnere fra dengang min dagligdag foregik med at arbejde for Lesotho Pre-school and Day Care Association (LPDCA). Da billetten var købt, tænkte jeg på, hvad jeg kunne tage med til dem, og hvad der samtidigt kunne blive til glæde for flest mennesker i Lesotho.



LPDCA er en organisation, der arbejder med at uddanne pædagoger til børnehaver. I den uddannelse indgår der også leg og betydningen af leg for børnenes udvikling. Jeg havde set, hvor svært det er for en voksen mosotho at lægge det simpleste puslespil. Samtidigt vidste jeg, at LPDCA har et legetøjsbibliotek. Hvad var så mere nærliggende, end at supplere biblioteket? Derfor var det naturligt at tænke LEGO. Da det er børn under skolealderen, LPDCA arbejder for, var det Duplo, jeg synes, der er brug for.

Jeg skrev en mail til LEGO, hvor jeg forklarede, hvem LPDCA er, hvad de beskæftiger sig med, og at jeg havde arbejdet hos dem. Nu skulle jeg tilbage og besøge dem, og også se, om det var muligt at besøge et par af de børnehaver, som jeg var kommet i, da jeg arbejdede i Lesotho.



I lang tid hørte jeg ikke noget, og mailen var larmende tavs. Pludselig en dag kom posten forbi med en stor kasse. 11 kg Duplo. Jeg havde lige glemt at tænke over, at der er sommerferie i børnehaverne i januar, som derfor var lukkede. Heldigvis lykkedes det mig at finde ud af, hvor en af de pædagoger, jeg kendte fra gode gamle dage, nu boede. Hun arbejdede stadig i en børnehave, men i en anden, som var nybygget og stort set uden legetøj, så der var stor jubel over gaven, der bestod af 6 mindre æsker med Duplo. Det var meget svært for hende at samle det rigtigt, fordi hun aldrig havde haft LEGO mellem hænderne før, og fordi det at omsætte et todimensionalt billede til en tredimensionel ting, ikke var noget, hun havde prøvet.

Me' Makhasu i gang med at bygge et posthus efter et billede.

Så var det endelig tid til at besøge mine gode gamle kolleger, som skulle have de to store kasser med klodser. Der var stor gensynsglæde, og selv om kasserne ikke var til dem personligt, var de rigtigt glade for dem, og satte sig straks ned og skrev et takkebrev til LEGO.

LPDCA havde et meget mindre sted i Maseru, så legetøjsbiblioteket var stuvet ind i et



opbevaringsrum. I Leribe havde de stadig til huse det samme sted, så der kunne klodserne straks indgå i udlånet.

De fortalte, at de stadig tog rundt og underviste, så det nye materiale ville komme til at indgå i undervisningen.

Det var rigtigt dejligt at være dernede igen og mærke gensynsglæden. Det følte lige så godt som at komme hjem. Jeg er begyndt at spare op til en tur mere og tænke på, hvad jeg næste gang kan glæde og gavne med.

Me' Mamojalefa viser en af kasserne frem.

Anne Andersen, i Lesotho fra september 1998 til maj 2001.



Event

World Water Day in Lesotho

By Ea Krogstrup, volunteer, and Lebohang Chefa, Information and Communications Officer, Transformation Resource Centre, Maseru

World Water Day is celebrated across the globe every year on the 22nd of March. It is an initiative that grew out of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. States are invited to dedicate the day to implement the UN recommendations contained in chapter 18 (Fresh Water Resources) of Agenda 21 and to set up concrete activities as deemed appropriate in the national context. (www.worldwaterday.org)

In Lesotho the day was marked by an event at Tsekong in Mokhotlong organized by the Transformation Resource Centre (TRC). The event was intended to draw attention to a number of water-related issues, such as water governance, decentralization of water control and decision-making, public participation in decision-making, water politics and water rights.

Central was of course the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), the largest water project being developed in Africa. The purpose of the large-scale project is to harness the water resources of Lesotho to the mutual benefit of Lesotho and South Africa, and today 3 out of 5 planned dams are completed and functioning. The project has significant social and environmental impacts and has been criticized by both international and national organizations for not properly addressing these impacts.

On this day, representatives of dam-affected communities from Ha Mohale, Ha Makhalanyane, Ha Matala, Ha Thetsane, Nazareth and Koma-Koma had traveled to Tsekong to share their experiences with the Tsekong villages, who are expected to be affected by phase two of the LHWP. Present were also the chairperson of Survivors of Lesotho Dams (SOLD), a spokesman for the Lesotho Highlands Water Commission, and a number of civil society organizations working with water-related and environmental issues.





The celebration took place on a hill with a spectacular overview of the area that in the future might be covered by water. The TRC group and representatives of the dam-affected communities had traveled by bus from Maseru. The bus could not reach the site, so from the main road we started walking over the grass-covered hills. One hour later we reached the site, where a tent was the only sign of the coming celebration.

Over the next 3 hours our group grew from app. 80 to hundreds of people. Some came in 4x4 vehicles, some on horses, some by foot. Women with babies, shepherds, old men wearing the traditional Basotho blankets, young people – all had they come to mark this day and listen to the experiences of communities that had already been affected by LHWP. When looking out over the naked hills and mountain tops it was difficult to understand where they were all coming from, since only a few small villages were in sight. But the group kept growing in size.



The program was varied, but central was of course the voices of the community representatives, whom had already experienced a resettlement process. They spoke about compensation and resettlement problems, about the discrimination they had experienced in their new communities,



about problems related to moving graves from their old villages to the new ones. The message from SOLD to the Tsekong communities was straight-forward: “Make sure you are not tricked into deals which will put you at the disadvantage!”

Mabusetsa Lenka Thamae from TRC addressed water rights and some of the – paradoxical - problems with providing clean water supplies to the resettled communities: “Access to water is a human right. That’s why we civil society organizations and the public advocate for free access to clean and portable water for the poor.”



In between the speeches there were impressive dance performances

Measured by the number of people who attended, the day was a great success. Even though the decision to build the dam at Tsekong has not yet been finalized, the event underlined an important point made by Mabusetsa Lenka Thamae: Communities are affected the minute they hear that a large-scale dam project might be imposed in their midst. From that moment on it is important to fight for their participation in the planning of the project – a role that TRC and SOLD are performing in Lesotho today. Through workshops, education on rights, advocacy and lobbying they are fighting for enhanced public participation and proper compensation in development projects like the LHWP.



Activities in Danish Government

Education for All

By Anders Foghsgaard, DLN substitute

UNESCO, the Danish Ministry of Education and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged 6. February a conference on the subject: Do we reach the goals? Referring to the EFA Report 2008 - Education for All by 2015 - Will we make it? The report can be seen on www.efareport.unesco.org.

The goals are the 6 goals made at the World Education Forum in Dakar, where 164 governments made a collective commitment. The 2008 report is a midway report.

The report contains 448 pages. Still it is possible to find Lesotho and get an idea of the situation in the field of education as it has developed in the period 1999 - 2005.

Since the compulsory education law was introduced in 2001 the change in the primary enrolment ratio has gone from 60 % (1999) to 90 % (2005). Hopefully it could be near to 100 % today ?? Special for Lesotho is, that it is the only country in Africa, where there are more female pupils than male pupils.

It is impressive, that the female participation in tertiary education in 2005 in Lesotho is so high:

- ✘ Science and Engineering: 55 % women (highest in Africa)
- ✘ Social sciences, humanities and health related: 58 % women (no. 3 in Africa)
- ✘ All tertiary education: 57 % (highest in Africa)

NGO Assembly 2008

By Anders Foghsgaard, DLN substitute

DLN was represented at the NGO Assembly 19. January 2008 invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the lunch the DLN representative had the opportunity to sit next to the Minister for Development Mrs. Ulla Tørnæs. The conversation included naturally the situation in Lesotho. The ministers last words were: "I shall remember Lesotho".



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

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