

News from the DLN

The last issue of Lumela.dk this year is on the street – or more correct - on the web. It has been the 10th anniversary of DLN and a lot has happened especially in the first part of the year. It shows that DLN really is alive and a lot of energy and effort are made by the active people running this small organisation.

Christmas is soon here and the New Year 2013 will take its beginning.

AGM 2013 is held in Aarhus on the 16th Marts.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all readers of Lumela.dk



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News from the Board

By Helga Højsager and Anne Andersen
After an eventful visit from Lesotho, celebration of DLN's 10 years of existence and a lot of work to write a new application in collaboration with DPE, DLN has now submitted an application to the Project Fund.

Nyt fra bestyrelsen

Af Helga Halck Højsager og Anne Andersen
Efter et begivenhedsrigt besøg fra Lesotho, fejring af, at DLN har eksisteret i 10 år og et stort arbejde med at skrive en ny ansøgning i samarbejde med DPE, har DLN nu indsendt en ansøgning til Projektpuljen. Projektet vil

The project will focus on DPE's organizational development and work to strengthen citizen participation in political and legislative branch processes. This project will create a space for citizen participation in the preparation of the national budget in Lesotho through the mobilization and training of citizens and local authorities in 8 areas. The project title is: "**Public Participation in budgetary processes**". The result of the application is expected by 14 December. Keep an eye on the website www.lumela.dk when the response will be published. DLN hopes it will be positive and if so, will start at the beginning of the new year.

There has this year been work on a new DLN brochure. It is now finished, but still only in Danish. Do you know a good place to put a small stack, you are welcome to request some at: dln@lumela.dk, or by contacting one of the board members. See DLN's website www.lumela.dk

DLN holds its annual general meeting in March in Aarhus. Do not miss that nice day when you will also have a say in what DLN is to work with next year. Please mark your calendar on 16 March 2013. A program will be sent out when the time is approaching.

In this brief report, the Board wishes all members and readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

DLN's tour of Lesotho autumn 2013

By Lisbet Kristensen

DLN is in the process of planning DLN's next tour for people who are interested in Lesotho.

This time I consider including a few days in

fokusere på DPEs organisationsudvikling og arbejde med at styrke borgerdeltagelse i politiske og legislative processer. Dette projekt vil skabe et rum for borgerdeltagelse i udarbejdelsen af nationalbudgettet i Lesotho gennem mobilisering og uddannelse af borgere og lokale autoriteter i 8 områder. Projektets titel er: "**Public Participation in budgetary processes**". Resultatet af ansøgningen forventes senest den 14. december. Hold øje med hjemmesiden www.lumela.dk, hvor responsen vil blive offentliggjort. DLN håber på det bliver positivt og i så fald vil processen starte i begyndelse af det nye år.

Der har gennem dette år været arbejdet på en ny DLN-folder. Den er nu færdig, men endnu kun på dansk. Kender du et godt sted at lægge en lille stak, er du velkommen til at rekvirere nogle på: dln@lumela.dk, eller ved henvendelse til et af bestyrelsesmedlemmerne. Se DLNs hjemmeside www.lumela.dk

DLN holder sin årlige generalforsamling i marts i Århus. Gå ikke glip af en hyggelig dag, hvor du samtidig har indflydelse på, hvad DLN skal arbejde med det næste år. **Sæt kryds i din kalender lørdag den 16. marts 2013.** Et program vil blive sendt ud, når tiden nærmer sig.

Med denne korte beretning vil bestyrelsen ønske alle medlemmer og læsere en rigtig glædelig jul og et godt nytår.

DLN's rundrejse i Lesotho efteråret 2013

Af Lisbet Kristensen

DLN er i fuld gang med at planlægge DLN's næste rundrejse for folk der er interesserede i Lesotho.

Denne gang overvejer jeg at inkludere nogle

South Africa.

The preliminary schedule is:

We fly to Maseru and stay over in Maseru for 2 nights. We take a city tour and a trip to the holy mountain Thaba Bosiu with the new open-air museum, which is under construction there.

Then we head to Ramabanta where there is a lovely guesthouse, located in a small village. This is a chance for a visit to the village mission and school.

Next stop is Semonkong - with Lesotho's highest waterfalls Maletsunyane, located far away in the beautiful mountains. Here we take a single night before we drive on towards the National Park Sehlabathebe by a completely newly built road across the country (this part of the trip is dependent on when the road is finished).

If the road is not finished in time, we probably must give up Semonkong and take the southern route to Sehlabathebe, but this is also an exciting ride in a beautiful, mountainous area.

After a few days in the national park we drive out of Lesotho by Qacha's Nek or through Sani Pass.

Then we travel on to fly home from Durban or Cape Town.

If it will be Durban, we can see various "Mandela sites" around Umtata.

If it will be Cape Town, we can include a visit to Robben Island.

The tour will be 14 to 16 days with an opportunity to be in Cape Town / Durban at your own expense.

The price will be around DKK 20,000

Interested can contact Lisbet Kristensen mail: lisbetstjerneklar@gmail.com or tell 31 58 89

dage i Sydafrika.

Den foreløbige plan er:

Vi flyver ind til Maseru og overnatter i Maseru 2 nætter. Vi tager en byrundtur og en tur ud til det hellige bjerg Thaba Bosiu med det nye friluftsmuseum, der er under opbygning der.



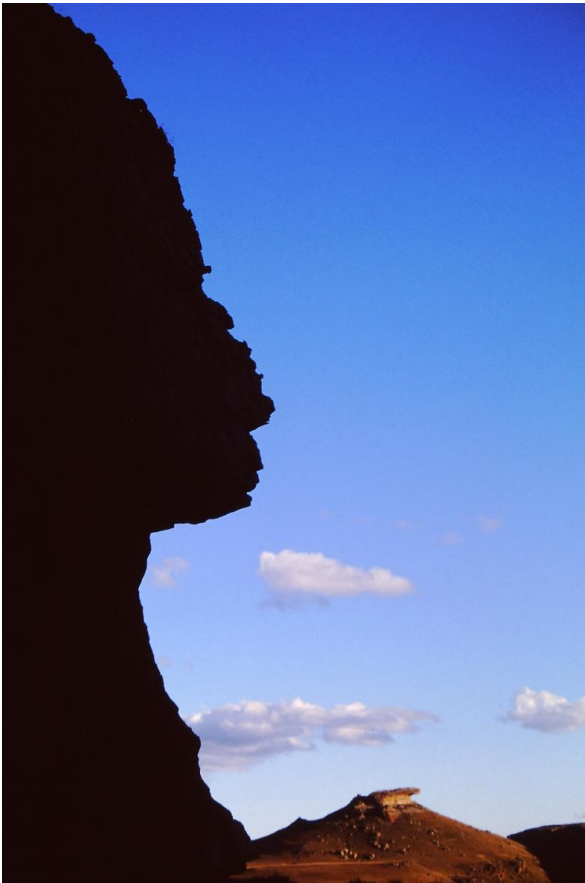
Herefter går turen til Ramabanta, hvor der er et dejligt guesthouse, der ligger i en lille landsby. Her er der mulighed for et besøg til landsbyens mission og skole.

Næste stop er Semonkong – med Lesothos



højeste vandfald Maletsunyane, som ligger langt ude i de smukke bjerge. Her tager vi en enkelt overnatning, inden vi kører videre mod Nationalparken Sehlabathebe ad en helt nyanlagt vej tværs over landet (denne del af turen er afhængig af, hvornår vejen er færdig). Hvis vejen ikke når at blive færdig, må vi nok opgive Semonkong for at tage den sydlige rute til Sehlabathebe, men det er også en spændende tur i et smukt, bjergrigt område.

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From Sehlabathebe National Park



Efter nogle dage i nationalparken kører vi ud af Lesotho ved Qacha's Nek eller gennem Sani Pass.

Herefter rejser vi videre for at flyve hjem fra Durban eller Cape Town.

Hvis det bliver Durban, kan vi se forskellige "Mandela-steder" omkring Umtata.

Hvis det bliver Cape Town, kan vi bl.a. se Robben Island.

Turen bliver på 14 – 16 dage med mulighed for at blive i Cape Town/Durban for egen regning. Prisen bliver på omkring 20.000 kr.

Interesserede kan henvende sig til Lisbet Kristensen på mail:

lisbetstjerneklar@gmail.com eller tlf. 31 58 89 29.

News from Lesotho:

From: Informative:

Goodbye LSMHP... Hello IDAL

Written by Administrator
Wednesday, 14 November 2012

LSMHP 20th anniversary celebrations signal new beginnings for people with mental disability in Lesotho
The Lesotho Society of Mentally Handicapped Persons celebrated its 20th anniversary in style with two events taking place on 1st and 3rd November. The focal body for intellectual disability in Lesotho turned 20 with a bang, unveiling a new name, website (www.idal.org.ls) and ambitious plans to build a state-of-the-art multipurpose center for people with disability. In

line with internationally accepted terminology, LSMHP shall now be known as the **Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho (IDAL)**.

"20 years ago, a group of frustrated parents started LSMHP to support each other and change the system on behalf of our children. Back then, we knew very little about issues of advocacy, psycho-social support or running nationwide programs for vulnerable children. Many things have changed since then and we thought it fitting to celebrate 20 years of achievement by unveiling our new identity and our visions for the future," commented Palesa Mphohle, Chairperson and founding member of IDAL.

These changes were announced at a gala dinner event held at the Lehakoe Club on 1st November. The event was attended by over 50 representatives from government, private sector, civil society and international organizations including the guest of honor, the Hon. Minister of Social Development.

The event was designed to celebrate IDAL achievements over the past 20 years and to solicit support for the building of its new Multipurpose center in Maqhaka. The center will include accommodation, kitchen, leisure and conference facilities which will provide respite care for parents of children with severe disabilities, vocational and skills based training for disabled and non-disabled individuals and lodging/venue facility rental for third party organizations. The project is estimated to be worth M33 million.

"We were very pleasantly surprised by the amount of support we have received for this center so far. There is a gaping need in our society for a facility such as this. Looking after a child with severe disability is a full-time job and one with little acknowledgement or reward. This center will allow parents and grandparents to leave their children in the hands of experienced caregivers for periods ranging from a few hours to a few days so that they may take care of their own personal needs. It will also be a hub of learning, activity and leisure for people with and without disability and will contribute to the long term financial sustainability of our organisation," commented Palesa Mphohle, Chairperson and founding member of IDAL.

The gala dinner elicited pledges of support from individuals and organizations, including skills, monetary support and building materials.

The euphoria of the 20th anniversary continued after the gala dinner with a public "Family Fun Day" celebration which took place on 3 November at the Lehakoe Club. The event was attended by over 100 people, mainly children with disabilities and their families. The guests were treated to hip hop and modern dance performances, a jumping castle, tunes from DJ Flames and a picnic lunch.

"We received an overwhelming amount of support from local businesses, without which we would not have been able to put on these two events. We would like to thank our supporters including Square One Computers, Bensons Butchery, Spur, Scooters Pizza, Sun International, Ocean Basket, Lesotho Durham Link, Wholesale Meat Supplies, Malebo Transport, Living & Loving English Medium School, ITM Transport, Moon & Sun Transport, Station Off-Sales and Mr. Matete," concluded Ms. Mphohle.

From: Public Eye Online

Massive 83% salary hike for transport sector

[Leaders/Features](#) | [Pepper](#) | November 19, 2012 8:14 am

...But there is no such joy for textile workers and domestic workers



By Billy Ntaote

MASERU—The newly-gazetted minimum wages show a massive increase for certain sectors such as transport and construction, while for some workers—among them housemaids and those in the textile industry—the adjustment would not be making much difference to their income.

The new wage-structure indicates what employers are legally obliged to pay as minimum wages, and is effective for one year beginning October 1, 2012. In addition to the textile, transport and construction sectors, the wage-structure also includes the wholesale and retail, hospitality, cleaning, funeral services, and small business sectors. Domestic and general workers, artisans and security guards are also covered in the structure, which is determined by the Minister of Labour and Employment, in consultation with the Wages Advisory Board (WAB). The WAB is a 26-member organisation chaired by the principal secretary in the Ministry of Labour, and comprises trade union leaders, employers and officials from the labour ministry.

According to the gazette, the highest increase was in the transport sector, where heavy-duty drivers with less than 12 months continuous service, received a 66-percent salary increase and those who have served the same employer for more than a year, were awarded a whopping 83.34 percent hike.

This means the former's monthly salary was increased from M1717 to M2850, while for the latter, it shot-up from M1909 to M3500.

The construction sector had its wages increased by between 16-32 percent, while the lowest increase was in the textile industry at 9 percent.

Public Eye has since learnt the new wages have been well-received by the respective unions, save for those representing textile industry workers.

According to Mr Tšeliso Ramochela, president of the Lesotho Labour Council—an umbrella body of almost all the country's trade unions—the new wages were fair "to a great extent".

"All the sectors, except textile, are satisfied with the minimum wages gazetted for 2012/2013. The construction sector was trailing behind the others, but has now received a huge increase," said Ramochela.

The textile industry, according to the gazette, was awarded a 9 percent increase that would see the least-paid worker now earning M908 a month—up from the previous M833.

Textile factory workers had been calling for a minimum wage of M2020, or at least M1380, but according to the Minister of Labour and Employment Mr Lebesa Maloi, the disharmony among rival unions had seen workers failing to speak with one voice when it came to negotiating for better wages, hence the comparatively low increase.

Maloi told a press briefing held in Maseru on Wednesday this week: "After due consideration of the probability of many textile factories closing shop due to high wages and the responsibility to protect already existing jobs in the market, we found it wise to gazette a 9 percent increment.

"Unions and employers had already failed to agree on a minimum wage for the 2012/2013 year and during the last negotiations, workers' representatives were asking for an increase of at-least 10 percent, while employers were offering 8 percent. That is why we ended-up with 9 percent."

Maloi dismissed unions' accusations that the coalition government had failed the workers by allegedly siding with employers on the increase, which they have condemned as too little. In the last increase, the textile industry received a 7 percent increase, which raised the monthly pay from M775 to M833.

"We have not failed anyone; the unions themselves have failed to unite so they could use the country's collective-bargaining laws to negotiate for higher pay," Maloi said, adding the increase was also based on the advice of the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC)—a parastatal tasked by government with, among others, attracting foreign investment into Lesotho.

"Again, we based ourselves on the findings of the LNDC that showed (unreasonably) higher wages would see factories shutting down and investors moving to other countries that have cheaper labour and lower running costs, and we didn't want to drive investors away.

"Government is aware and acknowledges that wages in the textile industry are very low, but we should be given more time to look into the issue. All we are asking for is patience and time for us to work on the labour laws as promised in my party's election manifesto (the Lesotho Congress for Democracy) that we would improve conditions for workers through the formulation of better regulations."

From: [Review decision](#)

[Workers fume over nine percent increment](#)

15 Nov 2012

By [Mantoetse Maama](#)

MASERU — The nine percent wage increment announced by the government has triggered anger among factory workers who accused the coalition government of betraying them. Under the new wages structure the lowest paid worker will take home M908, up from the previous wage of M823 a month, according to textile union leaders. An angry Mampho Seetsa, a worker

at one of the factories in the Thetsane industrial area, said the coalition government had betrayed them.

"When they wanted our votes they told us that this country is very rich but today they are saying we should know that they are not our employers so they cannot make a final decision on our wage increment," she said. "During their (election) campaigns they said this country is getting a lot of money from the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and the sale of diamonds. "Today they are saying we must go to our employers. This is not fair, they deceived us."

The textile sector, which is the second biggest employer after the civil service with 35 000 workers, was the scene of fierce campaigning in the run-up to last May's general election. Prime Minister Thomas Thabane who was then heading the main opposition All Basotho Convention (ABC) party, the then ruling Democratic Congress party, Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) party and Basotho National Party (BNP) all went head-to-head as they sought to secure votes from the key constituency.

Lerato Mankimane, said the ABC, LCD and BNP that now make up the coalition government, had "agreed with us during their campaigns that our wages were not enough to meet our basic needs". "If they have increased our wages by nine percent what this means is that they have only added M81 to our salaries. "With this increment I can't even pay rent, transport and school fees for my children or buy food," she said. "The coalition government had promised to change our lives for the better. Do they think they are doing so by giving us a nine percent increase?"

"We have also been told there won't be free education next year. How are we going to pay school fees for our children because the high school fees have also been increased?" Mankimane said the government's promise to reduce poverty and end crime might fail to be realised as workers will not be able to send their children to school. Factory Workers Union project coordinator, Daniel Maraisane, said the salary increment was a disappointment. "As workers we are not happy with the current increment because it is not even close to our proposed percentage," Maraisane said.

"We are against this agreement, the minister was supposed to use his power during the negotiations but he failed." "If he failed to convince the employers about our proposed increment of M2 020 during the negotiations he should at least have considered the experts' figures," he said. "International Labour Organisation (ILO) had proposed M1 415 while the Central Bank of Lesotho had estimated M1 396. "The two experts were neutral and we believe they should have at least considered their proposals if they didn't want to take ours."

"They have not reconsidered the two weeks maternity leave that factory workers get. "We take this as discrimination because other organisations give their employees six to twelve weeks paid maternity leave while factory workers get two weeks maternity leave," he said. He said they are planning to take these matters to court.

Coalition government to increase school fees

15 Nov 2012

By [Editorial](#)

LAST week the opposition Democratic Congress (DC) party objected vehemently to the coalition government's decision to increase school fees. The DC said the increases which were announced in July will force many children out of school.

The DC has a point.

We would not be shocked if some students have already dropped out of school because of the huge increases.

Instead of being dismissive the government must take the DC's concerns seriously.

Any increase in the cost of education, no matter how small pushes some students out of school.

This is especially so in Lesotho where more than half the population live on less than US\$1.25 a day and unemployment is already around 45 percent.

We must remember too that this is a year when households had one of the poorest of harvests in recent years.

When a family struggles to put food on the table it normally sacrifices its children's education. Cognisant of this danger the previous government, despite its failings and weaknesses, actually reduced school fees last year.

Yet even at the previous fees there were already thousands of students who had been forced out school because they could not afford the fees.

The recent increase only makes the situation worse.

The government is trying to cover itself by pointing out that there were extensive consultations prior to the increases.

We wonder which parent could have supported an increase of 24 percent on school fees in one year when their salaries have not increased by more than eight percent.

We wonder which parent would have been enthusiastic about such an increase at a time when the majority are already grappling with shock increases in prices of food, fuel and electricity.

We have no doubt that if that decision is taken back to the parent it will be rejected outright.

Parents know that it costs money to educate their children but they also know that in a country like Lesotho the cost of education should not be so high as to force them to pull their children out of school.

The government must apply the same principle. Education cannot be a privilege of those who have the means.

The government must know that for thousands of children who come from poor families across the country education is their only way out of the shackles of poverty that has gripped their families for generations.

That is why Lesotho has the free primary education and the government sponsors students to study in local and foreign colleges. The huge increase in fees will certainly reverse the gains these two noble programmes have notched up over the years.

It doesn't make sense to make primary education free and secondary education prohibitively expensive.

It also doesn't make much sense to fund education at tertiary level while making secondary education, the very link between primary and tertiary education, too expensive to attain.

The increase will only make it harder for students to proceed from primary to secondary. While we understand that schools need money to operate efficiently we believe that an increase of 24 percent in fees is both exorbitant and runs contrary to Lesotho's goals of educating its people.

We also note with concern that the push for the increase came from school principals, most of whom have not proven that they are being prudent with the monies they are getting from students. Bear in mind that teachers' wages, the biggest cost of running a school, are already paid by the government in most schools.

We also know that money is being mismanaged in a number of schools across the country.

It is all good for the principals to complain about the lack of money but they must also learn to properly manage the small purse they have. Money is essential in running a school but using it properly is more important.

No matter how widely the government consulted before setting the fees 24 percent is just too much.

It's as good as shutting the door on children who want to learn.
Future generations will be poorer because a government decided to make education a privilege and not a right by pricing it beyond the reach of many.

Lesotho Times

NEWS WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

Hailstorm plunged Pioneer Mall into chaos

15 Nov 2012

By [Boitumelo Koloji](#)

MASERU — Lesotho's only up-market shopping centre, Pioneer Mall, was plunged into chaos last Friday when a hailstorm pounded Maseru forcing the roof to cave in.

Business was halted temporarily as water flooded some shops.

The *Lesotho Times* witnessed staffers battling to sweep water out of their shops.

Workers in one furniture shop said they had to move to another building which is still under construction after their shop was flooded.

The workers said the ceiling in their shop collapsed resulting in water flowing through the roof damaging some of their stock.

"However, we were able to quickly save a great deal of the furniture by taking out some of it," said one staff member who requested anonymity.

Thato Pekeche, the Pioneer Mall marketing manager acknowledged there was an "incident" at the mall but added the damage and disruption to business was minimal.

Pekeche blamed the flooding on the current renovations and extensions being done at the mall's new wing.

"We have people walking on the roof-top hammering and doing all sorts of work that strains the building, so it is no great deal that the building leaked as it did," she said.

Pekeche said they had not received any complaints or claims from their clients "because people are insured here . . . besides there was not much damage done to the facilities".

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 98677185, cell: +45 23880099, e-mail: karen.steffensen@mail.dk

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