

<b>Denmark Lesotho Network</b>	<b>Lumela.dk</b> <b>DLN – Newsletter</b>	<b>Nr. 5</b> <b>February</b> <b>2005</b>
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## **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.

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**Homepage: [www.lumela.dk](http://www.lumela.dk)**

## **News from DLN's Executive Committee**

### **DLN is fundraising for Rural Selfhelp Development Organisation**

*by Karen Steffensen*

Rural Selfhelp Development Organisation (RSDA) is working with farmer groups within Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek Districts where living and farming conditions are extreme due to drought and soil erosion. Every raindrop is precious. The farmers need to harvest and conserve rain water for irrigation in order to extend their production period. For this purpose they are planning to build water tanks out of mainly locally available materials. The farmers have started collecting stones.

However cement, wire mesh, pipes and gutters are also needed and this is where DLN comes in. RSDA, Anders Hedegaard (former MS-development worker) and I are working on a proposal for funding from Danida's Mini-Project Fund. Through DLN's membership of 'Projektraadgivningen' we are given valuable advises on how to go about it and we are so far very optimistic about the outcome.

The deadline for the proposal is 1st of April and we will not know until June whether we succeed.

*Karen Steffensen lived in Lesotho for five years and worked as a development worker for Berea Agricultural Group in T.Y.*

## **Fundraising for Lesotho Child Counselling Unit (LCCU).**

*By Helga Højsager*

At the moment their application is handed over to the DLN project group for making on a proposal for funding from Danida's Mini-Project Fund.

LCCU is applying for support to run three workshops in different places in Lesotho to improve the awareness about the vulnerable children's rights and as an addition to educate a group of people who will be able to protect and counsel needed children in their various fields.

We expect to have completed the proposal before the deadline in June.

## **News from Lesotho**

### **Phase II of Highlands Water Project Expected to Start Soon**

*MASERU, Feb 2005 Mopheme-The Survivor*

The feasibility study of Phase two of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project is expected to start at the end of April, 2005, Minister of Natural resources, Dr. 'Mamphono Khaketla has announced.

According to the Mopheme-Survivor newspaper, Dr. Khaketla made the announcement at a recent joint meeting of the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and the Lesotho Tunneling Society.

"We are expecting to get proposals for the study by the end of February and for the actual work to start at the end of April, Dr Khaketla is reported as having said. The study is expected to take two years.

Phase Two entails construction of the Mashai dam, which is expected to be the largest in the entire Project and would supply water to the Katse dam through a 30 kilometre tunnel.

## **The Prime Minister Visits Ireland**

*MASERU, Feb 2005 Lesotho Government Online*

The Prime Minister Mr.

Pakalitha Mosisili will be in Ireland on a two-day official visit from February 16 where he is also expected to officially open the Lesotho Embassy in Dublin.

The Prime Minister's delegation, which also includes the Minister of Tourism, Environment and Culture, Ms. Lebohang Nts'inyi, left Lesotho on February 14 and will be joined by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Monyane Moleleki, currently attending the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) Meeting in London.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister's visit is at the invitation of his Irish counterpart, Mr. Bertie Ahern who visited Lesotho in 2000.

The two countries started their development partnership in 1975 and Lesotho has since enjoyed a consistent and solid programme of assistance from Development Cooperation Ireland, formerly known as Ireland AID. Ireland is now a leading bilateral donor with financial support in excess of M70 million in each of the past three years, the statement said.

## **Programme aims to improve food security and community resistance to shocks**

*JOHANNESBURG, Feb 2005 Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)*

The Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-SAFE) has launched a new programme in Lesotho, aimed at alleviating food insecurity by promoting rural livelihoods and increasing productive assets, the organisation said.

"C-SAFE members World Vision, CARE and Catholic Relief Services will implement a food-for-assets programme in six vulnerable districts. Around 14,500 households will receive food resources through projects designed to restore agricultural productivity and infrastructure, and develop local capacity," Paul Kinuthia, World Vision Lesotho, was quoted as saying in a statement.

'Food-for-assets' is the use of food as an incentive for creating community and household assets. In Lesotho these will include community and household (kitchen) gardens, water harvesting structures and canals, as well as training in conservation farming, erosion control and agro-forestry.

The projects aim to address Lesotho's major obstacles to agricultural production, such as severe soil and land degradation, lack of suitable land and crop husbandry practices, and inefficient use of improved seeds, fertilisers and pesticides. Food-for-assets focuses on establishing these community-owned assets, as well as building skills and improved

understanding (so-called 'human assets') to improve household food security, C-SAFE explained.

Last year Lesotho appealed for international assistance after being plagued by drought-related problems, food insecurity and high unemployment. Delayed summer rains have had the most severe impact in the southern region of the country, where 70 percent of arable land has not yet been planted. An adult HIV prevalence rate of 28.9 percent is exacerbating the already precarious situation.

With almost half the 2.1 million population requiring some form of food assistance, the programme, which is funded by US Agency for International Development (USAID), will address the problem of chronic food insecurity and strengthen resilience to future shocks in the most vulnerable communities, C-SAFE noted.

Over the last month 9,948 mt of USAID food, including maize meal, pulses and vegetable oil arrived for distribution to food-for-assets participants, who are now commencing activities.

"In Lesotho it is vital that we invest in a programme that not only meets emergency food aid needs, but simultaneously addresses the problems that underlie those needs," said Patrick Diskin of the USAID Office of Food for Peace. "This programme seeks to do this by using food aid to support projects that will reduce people's vulnerability to food insecurity in the future."

The C-SAFE Lesotho programme will be implemented until September this year.

## **Lesotho to Identify Areas Most Vulnerable to Climate Change**

*MASERU, The Lesotho Government Online, Feb 2005*

A National Adaptation

Action Plan on Climate Change (NAAPCC) team, an initiative of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, is to assist the Lesotho identify areas and regions most vulnerable to climate change with a view to effecting appropriate remedies.

Interviewed on his return from the signing of the Kyoto Protocol, the Director of the Lesotho Meteorological Services, Mr Ts'eliso Sekoli, said consultations with people around the country revealed 13 areas which need to be addressed, including the need for an early warning system, the promotion of irrigation and land reclamation.

The consultations are intended to be the basis for projects in the 13 identified areas. The projects are to be selected on the basis of those best suited to individual communities. They are to be financed UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and implemented by the relevant ministries.

This was part of the country's plans to ensure compliance with the Protocol with the assistance of the NAAPCC, especially designed to help the 49 least

developed countries of the world. It is a multi-sectoral body made up of government ministries and NGO's.

## **Women and Youth Football Development Gets Off**

*MASERU, Feb 2005 Lesotho Government Online*

A positive step was taken in the women and youth football development programme of the Lesotho Football Association (LEFA) on February 15 with the holding of a four day workshop to kick start the programme.

Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) instructor Ben Koffie and assistant development officer Sonnyboy Sithebe will facilitate the workshop, attended by teachers, youth development officers and district sports coordinators from the 10 districts of the country.

The programme, expected to start in March, envisages regional and district Under 12s, 15s, 17, and 20s football teams to be established.

Koffie urged local football administrators to organise inter-regional and inter-district competitions to ensure a spirit of competitiveness exists. District sports coordinators should be in charge of organising such competitions with the assistance of the Director of Football Development Mafole Sematlane.

People should not use the lack of facilities as an excuse for not playing football, as African countries have produced quality players who featured in Europe despite having started playing on poor pitches, he said.

The Project is fully sponsored by the world football governing body to the tune of M1.5 million for the next four years.

## **Efforts to reopen textile factories underway**

*JOHANNESBURG, Jan 2005 (IRIN)*

At least one of the six clothing and textile factories in Lesotho which closed down in December 2004, is expected to reopen early next month, a senior government official told IRIN this week.

About 7,000 clothing and textile workers' jobs were under a cloud when the factories, some of them believed to be facing "cash-flow problems", failed to reopen early this year.

"We are also trying to help at least another two factories - in the form of export incentives - to reopen next month as well," said David Rantekoa, permanent secretary for trade and industry.

The government hopes to save at least 5,000 jobs if the three factories become operational again. The factory set to open next month will provide 500-600 jobs, while the other two employed 1,200 and 3,300 workers respectively.

The tiny mountain kingdom of Lesotho is dependant on the largely Asian-owned textile and clothing industry. According to the Lesotho Clothing and Allied Workers Union (LECAWU), the industry employs 56,000 workers.

Labane Chokobane, an economist at the University of Lesotho, commented: "The textile and clothing industry, which comprises more than 500 companies, is the mainstay of the country's industrial development.

"The industry, which contributed 10.51 percent in 2003 towards Lesotho's GDP [Gross Domestic Product], is also the country's biggest foreign exchange earner. The closure of companies in the industry, which is the country's biggest employer, will impact on foreign earnings and will drastically affect the balance of payments," he added.

According to LECAWU's deputy general-secretary, B. Shaw Lebakae, the end of quotas for cheap imports to the United States from Asian countries would cause more foreign factory owners to consider relocating their businesses from Lesotho.

The foreign-owned firms originally set up shop in the country to take advantage of its preferential access to the US market.

While the government estimates that half the country's two million population live in poverty, independent studies say more than 70 percent of Basotho are unemployed.

## **New trade regime threatens economy**

*JOHANNESBURG, Jan 2005 ( IRIN)*

About 7,000 clothing and textile workers face a bleak year after three factories in Lesotho failed to reopen after the festive season.

The impact of the closures on the tiny mountain kingdom, one of the least developed countries in the world, will be significant.

Deputy general-secretary of the Lesotho Clothing and Allied Workers Union, B. Shaw Lebakae, told IRIN that the end of quotas for cheap imports to the United States from Asian countries would cause more foreign factory owners, originally from Asia, to reconsider the location of their businesses.

Although Lesotho still enjoys duty-free access to the US market under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), goods manufactured in countries

like Lesotho will probably be more expensive for US importers than goods from countries like China, which are able to achieve superior economies of scale, Labakae added.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) means access to US markets will no longer be restricted by quotas from 1 January 2005.

"Given the end of quotas and the WTO allowing China and India back into the market [unrestricted, except by general rules and disciplines embodied in the multilateral trading system], we believe most of the foreign-owned textile companies in Lesotho will relocate back to their original countries. They were in Lesotho to utilise AGOA and [get around] those ATC quota restrictions," Lebakae explained. "All these companies come from the East, as does the fabric and the yarn used in Lesotho."

AGOA, which has been extended until 2007, benefited Lesotho's economy. "Before AGOA there were around 20,000 people employed in the textile industry; with AGOA we have 56,000 people employed in the industry," Lebakae pointed out.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently noted that the textile and clothing industry had been the key engine of growth in Lesotho's small economy. But the country is facing mounting challenges, including increasing global competition as export quotas for textiles and clothing are phased out, a decline in miners' remittances from South Africa, the fragile food situation, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Lebakae said one of the three factories was placed under liquidation in December, while the other two closed for the holiday period and have simply not reopened.

The government of Lesotho has offered various incentives to foreign investors in the textile sector, and authorities are to address the latest closures soon, an official of the Lesotho National Development Corporation told IRIN.

The main repercussion of the closures "is, as usual, a loss of jobs", the official commented. "The minister is going to make a press statement tomorrow. We know one factory had financial problems - we don't know why the others have not opened, because when we closed for the holidays they had applied for additional factory space. We are still trying to get into contact with these guys to find out why they have not reopened."

Lebakae believes that, with the end of the ATC, the Asian giants are "going to compete with least developed countries [such as Lesotho] and it's of great concern. A lot of people are going to lose their jobs - even the informal sector will suffer".

He noted that "in terms of salaries, textile factories pumped Loti 40 million [US \$6.7 million] into the economy, so we think it [the closures] will have a very negative economic impact".

## **Church of Later Day Saints Donates 500 Wheelchairs**

*MASERU, Lesotho Government Online, Feb 2005*

The Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints has donated 500 wheelchairs to the Lesotho National Federation of Organizations of the Disabled (LNFOD). The donation is to be presented to patron of the organization, Queen 'M'aSenate Mohato Bereng Seeiso on February 22. LNFOD chairman, Mr. Mikia Malulela said 78 of the chairs will be delivered to the Leribe district immediately after the presentation to the Queen, as per the request of the donors, who wanted the chairs distributed countrywide. Leribe was the first of such distributions.

The Federation would present the chairs to the Leribe District Secretary who in consultation with Members of Parliament from the district, would see to the equitable distribution of the chairs as they have been involved in the coordination of lists of people with physical disabilities.

LNFOD was established in 1989 to protect human rights of people with disabilities. It is the mother body of the Lesotho National league of the Visually Impaired Persons, National Association of the Deaf in Lesotho, Lesotho Society of the Mentally Handicapped Persons and Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled.

## **Abuse of child domestic workers uncovered**

*MASERU, Dec 2004 (IRIN)*

The preliminary findings of a study on child domestic workers in Lesotho, forced onto the job market by poverty and HIV/AIDS, has uncovered the sometimes "highly abusive nature" of their relationship with employers.

Commissioned by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Youth Sport and Recreation, the survey "revealed the serious challenges imposed upon children, as they become more and more reliant on various forms of labour to sustain their poverty- and HIV/AIDS-stricken families," a UNICEF statement said.

"To secure a job and continued support to my grandmother and four siblings, I once succumbed to the luring of my employer who coerced me into stroking his penis in exchange for 100 Maluti (approximately US \$15) extra pay," the study quoted a 16-year-old orphaned domestic worker as saying.

"The silence surrounding these violations is enormous, abuses are often obscured and the perpetrators intimidate children into exploitative power relationships - they know their victims have no protection as a result of losing their parents," said Selloane Mokuku, the UNICEF consultant who



undertook the study.

The research was conducted in six of Lesotho's 10 districts, in some cases involving the use of diaries by the children to record significant emotions and events they experienced in their daily lives. Interviews and dramas were also employed to elicit information.

A diary entry by one child read: "The mother of the house was very angry with me one day because I had no time to cook food for the children. I was very sad and was denied food on this day - I felt like running away or killing myself."

Apart from sexual abuse, emotional and verbal abuse was also common, serving to undermine the dignity of the children, UNICEF said.

"These traumatising violations infringe upon a child's right to a peaceful childhood, free from fear, safe from violence and protected from abuse and exploitation. We have the obligation to set up, improve and enforce systems to uphold the rights of these children, and give them the prospect and confidence to report abuses, making sure they are followed up," said Bertrand Desmoulins, UNICEF Lesotho representative.

Lesotho is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children have the right to education and basic human dignity.

The study will be used to inform government policies, including the strengthening of an existing Child Protection and Welfare Bill.

Out of a population of 1.8 million, Lesotho had an estimated 70,000 AIDS orphans in 2002. Around 31 percent of people aged 15 to 49 are believed to be HIV positive.

*Check for news from Lesotho on the homepages of local media and the government:*

<http://www.lesoff.co.za/news> <http://www.publiceye.co.ls/> <http://www.lesotho.gov.ls/>  
<http://www.leo.co.ls/>

## News from around Lesotho

### **SP Property - Govt confirms race grouping**

*Source / Original Article:* [http://www.finance24.com/Finance/Economy/0,,1518-25\\_1659813,00.html](http://www.finance24.com/Finance/Economy/0,,1518-25_1659813,00.html)

The government on Wednesday confirmed it was looking at classifying land owners in South Africa in terms of their race and nationality, but said this was being done purely to help it gauge the pace of land reform.

A Beeld report earlier claimed existing land legislation is to be amended to allow information on race and nationality to be shown on owners' title deeds.

Speaking to Sapa, land affairs department chief registrar of deeds, Sam Lefafa, said a meeting of parliament's land affairs portfolio committee on Tuesday had declared the issue to be "fairly urgent". However, such information would "not necessarily appear on title deeds".

Referring to the Beeld report, Lefafa said "I never said (at the committee meeting) it would appear on title deeds". He said a "big review process" was currently underway within the department, and the issue of establishing who owned what land was one of the briefs.

On completion, the results would put government in a position to answer two frequently-asked questions.

"The first is the extent of foreign landownership in South Africa; and second is the extent to which blacks have acquired land.

"It is important to know how many black people have acquired land since 1994. It is necessary to know the extent of the impact of land-reform policies."

Lefafa said this was a "very innocent exercise" and a "purely government issue", aimed at providing it with such information. However, he also conceded it was contentious and of a "sensitive nature". "We will have to find ways to mitigate this".

On how information on race and nationality was to be obtained from existing title deed holders, he said: "We will have to be creative in that sense and interrogate our database."

According to the Beeld report, the amended legislation could be in place before the end of the year.

## News from members

Dear member. You are very welcome to participate with an article, an opinion nor just any comment on the work of DLN. Just send it on e-mail to someone in the information group:

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**KHOTOSO – PULA – NALA**