

<b>Denmark Lesotho Network</b>	<h1>Lumela.dk</h1> <h2>DLN – Newsletter</h2>	<b>Nr. 8</b>  <b>November 2005</b>
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## News from DLN's Executive Committee

### Water tank project is on!

In September the first money were transferred from DLN to RSDA (= Rural Self-help Development Association). Within the next two years RSDA will provide training workshops on self-organising and support construction of 116 water tanks for farmers in southern Lesotho. The water tanks will be constructed to collect water from the farm-house roofs to enable them to irrigate their vegetable gardens. This is expected to prolong the period of self-sufficiency for the small-scale farmers in this very dry part of the country.

Two members of the DLN executive committee, Karen Steffensen and Karina Ruby, will soon travel to Lesotho to monitor the progress of the project. They will be in Lesotho from Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> till Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> where they will visit RSDA and the project sites to see how the starting of the project goes off. During the trip they will use the opportunity to meet with other DLN partner organisations and individuals. It's the intention of the executive committee to build stronger networks with our links in Lesotho. The trip will be by airplane to Johannesburg and by rented vehicle from Johannesburg to and in Lesotho. Accommodation will be in the guesthouse of TRC, one of the big NGOs in Maseru.

The monitoring will be on the conduction of workshops and tank construction, the planning of future work, the use of money, the quality of their work and their handling of obstacles. It is in the plan to make photos of already constructed tanks, sites for coming tanks, vegetables gardens before and after the water tanks. Besides the management of RSDA Karen and Karina will meet with consultants of RSDA and farmers in the villages to get an impression of the project from all levels of the organisation.

This trip is the first of three trips within the project period. We expect to send two DLN representatives also in Nov. 2006 and 2007.

*Karina Ruby, Nov. 2005*

### Annual General Meeting 2005

The Denmark Lesotho Network's Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2005 was held on September 17<sup>th</sup> in Horsens. With the participation of 16 adults (and 9 children) the meeting was held in a quiet and positive atmosphere with a few good discussions, about how to run the organisation and what it takes to make good development work. DLN has now 72 paying members. The most exciting news since last year is the successful work of DLN to get funding for it's first real project in Lesotho. The cooperation with Projektrådgivningen and RSDA resulted in a grant from the DANIDA Mini Project Fund to DLN with reference to support the water tank project in Lesotho through the NGO of farmers Rural Self-help Development Association (RSDA).

See Minutes from the meeting attached to this newsletter.

After the meeting Guest Speakers gave interesting presentations:

- Mr. Leif Frandsen from the Ghana Solidarity Group introduced a discussion about "How (means and ways) to maintain the contact and exchange between Ghana and Denmark?"
- Lesothos Ambassador to Denmark, Dr. Thekiso Glawin Khati introduced a discussion based on "Resent trend in developments in Lesotho".

Succeeding the AGM on September 17, 2005 the EC Members met and formed the committee as follows:

Chairperson: Helga Højsager  
 Treasurer: Karen Steffensen  
 Secretary: Karina Ruby  
 Member: Karsten Lund

1. substitute: Anders Hedegaard
2. substitute: Michael Hansen

You may notice that the committee continues without any changes comparing with the end of last year. However, as something new, the list includes two substitutes. Substitutes are welcome to participate in the EC work, but as substitutes not obliged to do so.

*Karina Ruby, Nov. 2005*

## News from members

### A party with Basotho atmosphere and great fun

After the DLN annual meeting all the participants went to the cantina of the Vitus Bering University. The party committee had prepared a party in an authentic basotho spirit.

Anne Andersen and Anna Marie Haslund accompanied by a mosotho student from "Vitus Bering" had spent all day in the kitchen or rather at the stove (we did not have access to the kitchen). By magic and hard work the result was a truly nice braii dinner – different kinds of meat, salads and not least papa and moroho.

The food was excellent and the mix of Danes, Basotho and a few other Africans were perfect to set the scene for an enjoyable evening.

At every table people were talking and I wonder if not a few memories were exchanged! Even the ambassador stayed and spent the evening together with us. It was pleasant to meet him also in the more relaxed atmosphere.

The young african students were dancing to the tones of Brenda. A few brave Danes also dared some steps at the dance floor but talking did most of the activities.

The "kids gang" were spending the evening in the big hall. Most of their activities were carried out at the lift area and in front the television set watching Danish Junior Melody Grand Prix. Nicolai was the winning star. I think some of the children voted for him so supposing he deserved it.

Later in the evening Anna Marie challenged the party with a quiz. It was carried out in a way she knew from a restaurant in Maseru. I do not quite remember the rules but it was something about no visibly cheating allowed. There was a questionnaire concerning Lesotho and one concerning Denmark. The teams were mixed with Danes and Africans. Good ideas, cell phone lifelines, fantasy and knowledge were used to get the right answers. At the end two teams were very close. Extreme tension filled the room.

What made the result was the winning team's answer to "how must water does Lesotho export to South Africa?" They answered "a lot" which was the most exact answer that night.....

All in all a very fun and amusing evening. Thanks to the party committee!

*Inge Lund, Nov. 2005*

Dear member. You are very welcome to participate with an article, an opinion or just any comment on the work of DLN. Just send it on e-mail to someone in the information group:

Karina Ruby: [karinaruby@bigfoot.com](mailto:karinaruby@bigfoot.com)  
Peter Rathmann: [petula.rathmann@mail.dk](mailto:petula.rathmann@mail.dk)  
Michael Hansen: [haslund@cool.dk](mailto:haslund@cool.dk)

## News from Lesotho

### **Economic diversification desperately needed**

The textile sector has been badly affected by currency fluctuations and increased competition from the East.

Lesotho has to diversify its economy if it hopes to achieve the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), confront a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and address widespread poverty, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In a recent review of the country's economic performance, the IMF said "persistent drought conditions, weakened external competitiveness, a continued worsening of the terms of trade, and job losses from the phasing out of textile quotas by industrial countries" had caused real GDP growth to slacken off.

The IMF's executive directors observed that "the further loss of trade preferences, declining revenues from the South African Customs Union (SACU), and contraction of inward remittances from migrant workers were likely to be durable economic shocks".

Faster economic growth was likely to depend on raising efficiency and broadening the production and export base. The IMF urged the authorities to implement "ambitious structural reforms aimed at restoring competitiveness and fostering private sector development".

Landlocked Lesotho has a population of just under two million people, of whom almost 50 percent live in poverty; it would have to achieve economic growth of 7.5 percent per annum to reach the MDG of halving poverty by 2015.

Real GDP growth decelerated to about 2 percent in 2004/05, from over 3 percent in the preceding two years, "mainly due to the impact of adverse shocks affecting manufacturing and agriculture", the IMF noted.

The slowdown in the manufacturing sector reflected the impact of currency fluctuations - the Lesotho maloti is linked to the South African rand, which has strengthened against the US dollar - since February 2002, and uncertainty regarding Lesotho's duty free access to the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

The elimination of textile quotas in January 2005, which had capped exports from Asian giants such as China and India to the US, also accounted for a dent in manufacturing sector output.

Three years of drought and the resultant decline in agricultural production had harmed the country's GDP, "as well as structural weaknesses, such as poor farming techniques, soil erosion, lack of water in the

lowlands, and lack of agro-financing", the Fund pointed out.

"Over one-quarter of the population is estimated to be in need of emergency food assistance," the IMF added.

Dr Adelaide Matlanyane, senior economics lecturer at the National University of Lesotho, told IRIN the country had to develop mining, tourism and agriculture to mitigate the impact of shocks to the manufacturing and agricultural sectors.

The textile sector faced too many challenges to rebound. "The volatility of the exchange rate, coupled with the fact that the opportunity we had was anchored mostly on arrangements we had through AGOA and the Multifibre agreement, and so on - I doubt the industry will recover. Most of the companies that were here in Lesotho had aimed to exploit those opportunities, but with all those [advantages] expiring I really don't see hope for sector recovery. Diversification is the only way forward, the way I see it," Matlanyane commented.

"The action being taken now is to look for alternative commodities for export. The commodities we are looking at in the agricultural sector are fruits and vegetables that are drought-resistant," she explained.

*19 Oct 2005 Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)*

## **Food aid needs could rise as lean season approaches**

Funding shortages continue to bedevil food aid distributions in Lesotho as the country grapples with yet another year of shortages.

The tiny country needs food aid for more than half a million people despite a bigger maize crop this year, while the loss of farming skills due to HIV/AIDS is mounting.

"Right now, we are in a position to assist between 250,000 to 300,000 in need and that is a fair effort, given the limited resources we are working with," World Food Programme (WFP) deputy director Mads Lofvall told IRIN on Tuesday.

"We would have preferred to assist all those who need help, but so far it appears that those who are not receiving aid are either surviving on left-over stocks from last year or are drawing on other coping mechanisms," he added.

Lofvall said the UN food agency would remain vigilant, especially during the "lean period" - from December to the March/April harvest - as the number of people in need could increase.

Prices usually rise during the lean season, when maize is scarcest in the market and people have consumed their own reserves.

"It is important to note that Lesotho is a country which relies quite heavily on remittances, and that income is fairly irregular. Also, the recent closures of textile mills have seriously impacted on household incomes. If these retrenchments continue, it is likely to add to the level of vulnerability," he warned.

The agency would keep a close watch on food security reserves as the lean period approached, because a high rate of HIV infection - close to 30 percent of adults - and AIDS mortality among the farming community had also slashed food output in recent years.

Lofvall highlighted that a funding shortfall had necessitated a dramatic reduction of the 100,000 orphans previously receiving assistance.

"We had no option but to reduce aid to just a third of that number, which was a difficult decision," he noted.

As WFP gears up to assist up to 10 million people facing food insecurity across southern Africa, the agency has gone to great lengths to impress upon donors the need for speedy action.

Last week WFP Deputy Executive Director Sheila Sisulu said WFP was racing against time to ensure that sufficient food aid was delivered to the six worst-affected southern African countries, including Malawi, to prevent mass suffering before next April.

"Hunger doesn't have to be inevitable in Africa," Sisulu noted, "but once food needs start to peak it will be too late for many of the weakest, especially children, and the cost of saving lives will escalate significantly".

*18 Oct 2005*

*Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)*

## **National Coalition on Corruption Formed**

A National Coalition on Corruption, planned to include all sections of society in the fight against graft, is to be set up in 2006, according to the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences' (DCEO).

The envisaged coalition is to perform an oversight function without interfering with the DCEO's investigations. Mobilising community action against corruption as well as serving as an advisory body to the DCEO, it is hoped that the coalition will also influence legislation on corruption and related matters, DCEO spokesperson, Mr. Litelu Ramokhorro, said.

It will be made from a representation as wide as possible including the public, the private sector and government.

As part of preparations for the establishment of the coalition, the Anti-Corruption Steering Committee (ACSC) will hold a two-day workshop from November 3 in Teyateyaneng, to re-examine and finalise proposals for its formation.

Issues expected to be raised at the workshop include the experiences of some key stakeholders in the fight against corruption, drawn from the public sector, private sector and civil society, as well as lessons learned from cases on corruption from the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.

*28 October 2005*

*Lesotho News Agency (LENA)*

## **Commonwealth Speakers and Presiding Officers in Maseru this Week**

The Parliament of Lesotho will host the tenth Conference of Commonwealth Speakers and Presiding Officers in Maseru from November 2 to 5 this year.

Deputy Clerk for the National Assembly, Mrs. Rethabile Maluke said the conference will provide a forum for Commonwealth speakers and presiding officers to share views on strengthening these democratic institutions.

Discussions will include the role of parliament in promoting peace and resolving conflict in Africa; its role in fighting corruption; and the role of reforms in strengthening democracy.

A total of 18 Commonwealth countries will take part in the conference, to be officially opened by the Prime Minister Mr. Pakalitha Mosisili, Mrs. Maluke said.

The Ninth Conference, at which Speaker Ms. Ntlhoi Motsamai was elected the Chairperson of the Standing Committee, was held in Mauritius in 2003.

*01 November 2005, LENA*

## **Without Famine Lesotho is Disaster Free**

Without the famine that has put Lesotho in a very vulnerable position, the country is disaster free, Minister in Prime Minister's Office Mr. Mokone Lehata, has maintained.

Talking to Local Authority structures in Leribe, the Minister said Basotho must intensify food production to eradicate the chronic dependency syndrome afflicting the country and which has caused acute famine.

The Minister was presenting the Disaster Management Authority's new strategy in combating disasters. Famine can be overcome through commitment and an intensified production of food along with the proper use and utilization of land.

He challenged every Mosotho who has land, either a field or a garden, to effectively produce food, assuring people of government support starting from this cropping season.

The Leribe district's fertile land stands a chance of feeding beyond its borders if the proposed strategy is put into place.

The Minister is holding similar meetings with local authorities country wide and this was his first.

*07 September 2005, LENA*

## **Statutory Minimum Wages**

Statutory minimum wages for factory, retailers, hotels, construction, and domestic workers, with an increment ranging between two and ten percent will come into effect from October 01, Minister of Employment and Labour Mrs. Mpeo Mahase Moiloa has announced.

In a statement in the National Assembly on September 29, Mrs. Mahase-Moiloa said the increases have been based on 'different economic performance by each sector'.

The textile manufacturing sector has performed poorly due to a strong Loti against US Dollar in world markets. The world market has affected the developing countries negatively as they compete against more developed countries like China, India and Pakistan.

On the other hand, other sectors have performed well and therefore minimum wages in these sectors will be better compared to the textile manufacturing factories.

Despite the General Minimum Wage, employees can still negotiate for better wages through collective bargaining.

Mrs. Mahase Moiloa warned the employers who will fail to abide by the new improved wages that legal action would be taken against them.

*30 September 2005, LENA*

## **Debate on New National Flag**

The National Assembly started debate on a motion to change the design and colours of the national flag on September 28. Assistant Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Rehabilitation and of Law and Constitutional Affairs, Mr. Mothejoa Metsing said Members of Parliament should feel free

to debate on this in order to make it acceptable to Basotho.

Lesotho has traveled a rocky path, with many things being changed in the process, including the electoral model, in order to deepen democratic roots. The present Assembly consists of ten political parties.

He suggested that the Basotho Hat should be included, replacing the shield, knobkerrie and spear which he said symbolise violence.

However, Basotholand Congress Party (BCP) leader, Mr. Ts'eliso Makhakhe said instead of the Basotho Hat (Mokorotlo) which symbolises one mountain, Qiloane, a range of mountains should be displayed on the Flag including some black somewhere to show Pan Africanism and African renaissance.

The BCP Leader said the blue, green and white colours in the present flag should be retained as they represent interests and aspirations of the nation.

*29 September 2005, LENA*

## **Urban Planning a Problem, Dr. Sekatle**

Though Lesotho does not have slum dwellings in its urban areas, it has a serious problem of lack of urban planning, the Minister of Local Government Dr. Ponto 'Matumelo Sekatle has said.

In a statement in the National Assembly on World Habitat Day on October 6, Dr. Sekatle said lack of proper planning in many urban areas hinders such developmental progress as construction of roads and the provision of essential services like water, electricity and telephones.

Though the Government introduced Lesotho Housing and Land Development Corporation in 1988 to speed up low income housing provision, the Corporation seems to have been sidetracked and has become involved in something that was not its mandate.

The Ministry is consulting with those responsible for provision of houses such as contractors, banks and architects to join hands to meet Basotho half way towards addressing the housing problem, Dr. Sekatle said.

On the other hand, the Minister called on the members to also join hands in keeping a clean environment and preserving sources of water.

Dr. Sekatle also announced plans to build a dumping site at Tšoeneng near Rothe.

World Habitat Day is commemorated every year on October 01 since 1986.

*07 October 2005, LENA*

## **One Fifth of Patients on ARVs**

Lesotho has managed to put some 56,000 people on antiretroviral (ARV) treatment with 330,000 more still needing the treatment, the Minister of Health and Social Welfare Dr. Motloheloa Phooko, has announced.

Speaking at a press briefing on the last day of the World Health Organization Global Director of HIV/AIDS, Dr. Jim Kim's four day visit to the country, Dr. Phooko said these results show that a lot still has to be done in the fight against the pandemic.

The Minister said however that Dr. Kim had promised to help.

Dr. Kim's mission, the second to the country, was to assess initiatives Lesotho has taken to fight HIV/AIDS.

*22 September 2005, LENA*

## **LHWP Phase II Feasibility Study Launched**

Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) will boost the economy of Lesotho in many ways including opening up job opportunities and the improvement of infrastructure.

This is the view of Minister of Natural Resources Dr. 'Mamphono Khaketla after the signing of an agreement for a feasibility study of Phase II of the Project. South African Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Mrs. Buyelwa Sonjica, signed on behalf of her country.

South Africa needs enough water not only for the Gauteng Province but also for Limpopo which is now being plagued by water borne diseases.

The current study will be able to help them avoid mistakes experienced during construction of Katse and Mohale dams, Dr. Khaketla said.

The South African Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry in her turn, said the Project demonstrates that Africa as a Continent has woken up, that countries are now engaging themselves in such huge projects as the LHWP for the benefit of their people.

The Project will assist both countries achieve their Millennium Development Goals as they will be able to fight hunger and poverty, as well as develop the countries socially and economically.

Transformation Resource Centre (TRC) social worker Mothusi Seqhee, also present at the signing, asked that the interests of the affected communities, their well being as well as the environment be given priority during the implantation stages.

The signing ceremony was preceded by a meeting of Ministers responsible for water resources development in the Orange-Senqu River Basin in Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and South Africa.

The two year feasibility study will be undertaken by Consult International in partnership with Senqu Engineering, Environment and Development Consultants

*23 September 2005, LENA*

## **HIV/AIDS a Normal Disease, Nation's Response Isn't**

The fight against HIV/AIDS involves commitment from all circles of society, according to South African Supreme Court Judge Edwin Cameron, who lives openly with AIDS.

Guest speaker at the Law Society of Lesotho organised Justice Peter Mofokeng Memorial Lecture on October 13, Judge Cameron said HIV/AIDS is a normal disease like any other disease, but what is not normal is the nation's response to it.

This epidemic can be fought and won only if nations could normalise their response towards it. Nations are still fighting this losing battle so many years since the first AIDS case was reported, because in their own deepest minds, they still think of it as a contamination.

"By preventing AIDS through treatment," Judge Cameron said, "we give hope to all people affected by this epidemic. And when hope returns, the ignorance, fear and hatred will begin to subside, and by showing hope through treatment, we will also address the stigma that surrounds this disease."

What people need is a heartfelt, unified, emphatic, unconditional commitment from governmental leaders to set the pace so that people could



follow and fight this disease.

Chief Justice Mahapela Lehohla of the High Court of Lesotho echoed Judge Cameron's words, showing how AIDS continually depletes workforces around the world only because of the stigma that surrounds it.

He said the nation must realise the grim reality of this pandemic and as a result fight it in a brave and illusive manner which attacks and kills the young and the old, the rich and the poor as well as the powerful and the weak.

Law Society of Lesotho president Advocate Zwelakhe Mda expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the part Justice Mofokeng played in the fight for the protection of human rights in those days where there was no law that supported human rights in Lesotho.

Had he been still alive, Justice Mofokeng would have been found among those fighting for the rights of AIDS infected people. Judge Cameron had been invited to this lecture because HIV/AIDS positive people still suffer the abuse of their rights, advocate Mda said.

Justice Mofokeng died on May 13 1986.

*14 October 2005, LENA*

## **Senqu River Commission Meets in Lesotho**

A feasibility study agreement on Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project between Lesotho and South Africa is expected to be signed at the end of a meeting of Ministers responsible for water resources in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa at the Mohale Dam on September 22.

The four, will discuss developments and progress made by the Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM) since its formation in November 2000, according to a statement from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Also under discussion will be the possible establishment of a formal relationship between the ORASECOM Secretariat; the Watercourses States, the South African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat and the African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW).

The Minister of Natural Resources of Lesotho, Dr. 'Mamphono Khaketla and her South African counterpart, the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Mrs. Buyelwa Sonjica will sign the agreement on the establishment of the study on behalf of their governments.

The study is expected to start in October 2005 and will take two years to complete.

Consult 4 International in partnership with Senqu Engineering, Environment and Development Consultants (SEED CONSULT) have been awarded the contract to carry out the study.

*20 September 2005, LENA*

## **Community Councils, Gateway to Scaling-up Fight Against HIV AIDS**

Records reveal and in effect attest to the fact that since the first AIDS case in the country was reported in 1986, Adult HIV prevalence has sky-rocketed from around 4 % in 1993 to 29 % in 2004; One in every three Basotho adults is in fact infected with HIV virus; 29 000 die annually; 100 000 orphans left wanting in a population of over just two million.

Available statistics reflect that Basotho's life expectancy dropped to 40

years during 2005 against the expected increase to 60 years in 2003 and as a result Lesotho is now conspicuous as the country with the third highest HIV prevalence in the whole-wide-world!!

But as unfortunate as these things happen, there is still a section of our society that stigmatises HIV and AIDS and surrounds it with all kind of myths and misconceptions, sometimes just to suit their ridiculous motives.

Some dudes out there still refuse to retreat from unsafe sexual relationships if not totally abstaining!

The statistics point out in no uncertain terms to the fact that HIV/AIDS is firing from all cylinders. Yet to some of the people these figures are just numbers, until lightning hits closer to home if not actually inside the home! It's only when they will wake up and smell the coffee!

There is some merit amidst the madness, however, as along the continuing efforts by the various good Samaritans in the fight against this deadly virus, the Ministry of Local Government together with partners UNDP, GTZ and many others including members of the public have not lagged behind.

A recent one-day workshop was engaged in quiet productive deliberations and shared experiences on how best to avoid duplication of efforts and redundancy of resources through multiple and parallel approaches and institutions and rather adopt the holistic and integrated approach of utilising Community Councils as the Gateway to fighting the scourge of HIV/AIDS successfully.

By their nature as the structure of local government nearest to the people at the grass-roots, where the close involvement and participation in formulating plans to improve people livelihoods, prioritising among competing demands, allocating resources on the basis of those priorities, Community Councils are indeed ideal and realistically indigenous planning tools in providing a basis for a systematic response to the pandemic.

Quiet productive suggestions and contributions transpired during the workshop and will be reflected in this column in the future. Trust me this approach got many tongues wagging!!

Therefore let us indeed turn the crisis into an opportunity, the problem into a challenge and the frustration into fulfilment as it should not mean to those living with this virus that they have signed their death warrants!!

Local Government for us all!!

*21 September 2005, Tankiso Sephoso - Ministry of Local Government*

## **Queen Launches the 2005 Morija Arts and Cultural Festival**

The theme of this year's Morija Arts and Cultural Festival challenges parents to engage in a self-assessment, examining whether they are still bringing up their children according to the traditional family norms and values.

Queen 'M'aSenate Bereng Seeiso, officially launching the 7th Morija Arts and Cultural Festival, which will be held from September 29 to October 2, 2005, urged parents, as key members of families, responsible for nation building and nurturing, to consider the festival not only as an entertainment event but, mainly as a platform from which the love of culture could be instilled in children.

It is through the Festival that the Basotho, especially the younger generation, get to know their origin, the Queen said, emphasizing the importance of the Festival. She called on the Basotho to turn up in large

numbers, and participate more actively than they did in past years.

On behalf of the Festival's management, Mr Mokoonya Chele said the nation is faced with a number of challenges that are a threat to its very existence. Among these are dysfunctional families, where strong values and loving relationships are overcome by unhealthy emotions, abuse and neglect.

This year's festival hopes to play part in nurturing a more positive outlook, and promoting transformation of attitudes and behaviour through a celebration of various aspects of the Basotho culture, he said.

*01 September 2005, LENA*

## **Children's Rights Bill Doesn't Support Disobedience**

Respect for children's rights does not mean for those children to disrespect their elders, according to Coalition of the Non-Governmental Organization (NGOC) Executive Director Mrs Phomolo Mohapeloa, concerned about misrepresentation of the organisation's fight against abuse of children's rights.

NGOC has been facing intense criticism from some sections of the community that their support for children's rights has promoted loose morals, with children becoming unruly and disobedient.

Many Basotho have raised their ire against the Protection of Children's Rights Bill, currently under construction, because of the section that bars corporal punishment, believing that children will not become obedient if they are not whipped or given severe punishment.

The organisation believes that children can be told about their mistakes without being subjected to severe punishment and is about to start a campaign in the media to try bringing over society to their side, Mrs Mohapeloa said.

*01 September 2005, LENA*

## **New University Council to be Inaugurated**

A new university council is to be inaugurated at the National University of Lesotho by King Letsie III, in his capacity as Chancellor of the University, at the Roma campus on September 12.

According to University Information Officer, Mr. Tšiu Tšiu, the 28-member council is expected to appoint a chairman and run the University for a three year period. The Council is responsible for the proper management of the University and is its chief policy shaper and maker.

Mr. Tšiu also announced that the World Bank, in association with UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, and the Southern African Aids Information Dissemination Service (SAFAIDS), will open a Development Information Centre at the University on September 14.

This partnership will provide the NUL with up to date publications of the above partnering institutions, both hard copy and electronic, as well as with computers and photocopying facilities, for use by the broader public.

The opening of the Centre will be followed by the launch of the first a series of Development Dialogue Seminars, to be led by the World Bank's Chief Economist for the Africa Region, John Page, whose topic will be "Shared Growth and Regional Integration".

In another development, the University will hold an Open Day on Friday 16

September 2005 to showcase its programmes and services to its major stakeholders. Activities will be held at the Roma Campus of the University beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 5:00 pm.

*09 September 2005, Lesotho Government Online (LGO)*

## **Heavy Storms Overwhelm Part of City**

Strong winds swept through five of the Maseru City's villages, leaving some houses without roofs and others with walls having caved in. The storm, which started around six o'clock in the evening, destroyed houses at Lithabaneng, Lithoteng, Ha-Seoli, Ha-'Nelese and Makoanyane.

So strong were the winds that even power lines were affected, transformers overturned and lines cut off. Some of the villagers have even reported dead domestic animals such as dogs, chicken and pigs.

Home owners had their bedding, clothing and food soaked by the accompanying hail storm. Mrs. 'Mamohaso Seleke, a victim, described how her five roomed house was swept off by the storm and how they were left with nothing to wear and eat, as all their food has been washed off and their clothes buried under debris.

'My children and I had to hide under the bed in order to protect ourselves from the rocks and corrugated iron that were flying all over like paper,' she said.

The Lesotho Electricity Corporation promised to do all they could to restore power as quickly as possible. The power outage in the area was

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because of the destroyed transformer, said Information Officer, Mrs. 'Mamphuto Jessie.

*08 September 2005, LGO*

## **Three Men Gun Down Mother-in-law for Alleged Witchcraft**

Three men have been arrested for the murder of the mother-in-law of one of them whom they accuse of witchcraft.

Officer Commanding Mohale's Hoek police, Senior Superintendent Mankatso Ntene said the 78-year-old woman of Qaqatu, in the district, was killed because one of the men, her son-in-law, believed she and her daughter, his estranged wife, bewitched him.

The men, from Qalakheng and Qaqatu are alleged to have arrived at the deceased's house on the evening of September 17 and shot her.

Police confiscated three firearms from the suspects.

Four people have been killed in different incidents so far because they were suspected of witchcraft, Senior Superintendent Ntene said.

*20 September 2005, LENA*

## **Illegal School Closed Down**

Two government run primary schools will be officially inaugurated at Bokang and Ha Makintane, in the Mafeteng district, on September 29 and 30, District Education Officer Mrs. Seriti Morojele-Dotoro has announced.

The announcement was made at a Heads of Departments meeting on September 6 that was also told about the closure of down Calvary English Medium School

at Paballong, in the district, that was found to be operating illegally. The school had been opened about a month ago, she said.

The school had not followed proper procedure and operated without the knowledge of the Department of Education. Members of public interested in opening private schools should ask for advice from the Ministry of Education and Training before they do so, she said.

*07 September 2005, LGO*

## **Good Advice to all Readers of Lumela.dk**

If you would like to read more in-depth going news stories from Lesotho, we highly recommend the website of former MS-partner Transformation Resource Center:

[www.trc.org.ls](http://www.trc.org.ls)

where you will find a summary of recent events provided by Professor David Ambrose from the National University of Lesotho.

This summary is excellent stuff for hard core connaisseurs.

Lumela

## **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](mailto:karen.steffensen@mail.dk)  
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