

REPORT of
DLN monitoring/evaluation visit to Lesotho 2007
by Karen Steffensen and Karina Ruby



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Project visit 16th – 26th July 2007

RSDA and DLN winding up the Water tank and Capacity Building Project.

DLN visitors were:

Two members, Ole Bech and Claus Bo Jensen and two board members, Karina Ruby and Karen Steffensen.

16th of July - Arrival

We arrived to Johannesburg in the morning and found the 4*4 vehicle we had rented. From Gauteng we drove cross the Freestate towards Lesotho through the dry and brownish winter landscape. The temperature is pleasant and just before sunset we arrived to Maseru and to our accommodation at DED guesthouse. However the place was fully booked, no rooms were available for us. The problem was solved by help from RSDA. They had found a place in the outskirts of Maseru on main south, Phomolo Guesthouse, where we could stay.

17th of July - Meeting to agree on programme of the week

17th of July is King Letsie III's birthday and a holyday in Lesotho. Nevertheless The director Me Thulo and Nt Sekete and had agreed to meet with us at the RSDA offices at 2 pm to discuss and agree on the programme for the week.

We agreed on a programme where we would have only one day for field visits and we would spend two days in the office winding up the project and also on the last day we would discuss the ideas of the new project and agree on the way forward. RSDA was preparing the launching of a new project with UNcfc (UN common fund for commodities) and a Dutch organisation (GART) the following week. We were invited for that event.

18th of July - Field visits

Our day started 8.30 at RSDA's office where Darren, an Australian development worker introduced himself to us. As soon as everybody was ready we went off for Mathebe village in two vehicles. The project manager, Mr Mathaba, Ms Keneuoe and two animators were going to guide us and facilitate the communication in the villages.

It was our third time to visit the Mathebe farmergroup. We already knew that the past growing season had been dry and most crops had failed and now there was very little water in the tanks. Despite that we saw vegetables in the gardens and the farmers said that they had food, and some of them were even able to supply some food to orphans and elder people in the village.

We split the farmer group into two, Karen interviewing one group, and Karina interviewing the other group. The purpose of this was to get as much information as possible from as many different group members as possible.



One subgroup said: The group leader, Matsepo Rantaitane has attended the 2 workshops on 'Governance and Leadership Development' and she thought that the workshops have given her some guidance to follow as a leader. She also mentioned that her group is developing a sort of manual for other groups on how to organise themselves.

The other subgroup said: Mathebe farmers feel lost since January because of no rain at all, but they try to produce vegetables anyway. Last year was good; they produced beetroots, carrots, spinach, cabbage, tomatoes, potatoes, green and red peppers, and chilli in their individual gardens. Last year they were self-sufficient all year until December, and they even managed to sell to schools, other villages and the market in Mafeteng. People from Mafeteng came with their transport to buy



vegetables in Mathebe. In the subgroup 2 members have water tanks, and they find the tanks make a difference. They use the tank water for the garden and the animals, and they fetch water for household at the communal tap. One husband to a farmer attended the workshop together with the group leader, and he reported back to the group about production of vegetables and potatoes. The group leader had reported about how to strengthen the group. No one attended the workshop conducted by LCN, but they got feedback. The Mathebe farmer group started in 1997 or earlier. Mr. Tebelo was the group leader from the start of

the group. The group is organised with a chairperson, a chair assistant, a secretary, a secr. assistant, a treasurer and advisors. It has been the same people all the time, they re-elected them all. They have annual elections. Because of the present drought they have no food now, and they survive from food packages from another project. They don't have seeds and no plan for how to produce next year. They don't know what to do. They didn't manage to secure seeds. They wish to produce pigs, because they think there is a good market for pigs. As it is now they don't have money to buy pigs or to feed them. The chicken production they have now is not performing too well, because they don't have food for the chicken because of the drought. A positive thing that has happened in the village is, that they think the death rate has gone down. They believe it is because they produce their own food and more nutritious food now, and have more variety of food. They feel the HIV/AIDS infected people stay alive longer, because of this knowledge that they have from workshops.

Before we left we were given some sandwiches and drinks by Mr Mathaba.

When we came to the next village I realized that Thibella was the group, which we failed to meet last year. In Thibella they have access to water from a pump. They collect the water in containers and put it into the tanks, when there is no rain, therefore they have a little more water in their tanks. All group members are producing vegetables, even those who have no tank. Also in Thibella we split ourselves and divided the group in two to get more information. The leader of Thibella group had not attended the workshop on Leadership and governance. She was newly elected by the group.

The group leader is Ms. Manyatso Sebatana. Not all members of the Thibella farmer group live in Thibella village, some members are from other villages.

Also in Thibella they suffer from the present drought. They would like to have hosepipes to collect water from the mountain, because now the water passes through the donga (= eroded gorge), and they can't get it to the village. In this group 5 members have water tanks from 2005. They say the tanks make a difference, but now they have to collect water from the communal tap because of the drought. Last year they produced spinach, beetroots, carrots, tomatoes, onions, potatoes, green beans, green peppers and pumpkins. It was the same 3 years ago. They know about farming from RSDA and other projects. They don't know when the group started; it is a long time ago. They started with 5 members, and now they are 23. They have changed the group leader this year, but it used to be the same person for many years. Now they believe that everybody has to take part, and they should all try to be the group leader for a while. They voted for the new group leader this year, because they find her strong. The committee of the farmer group has a group leader, a leader assistant, a secretary, a secr. assistant, a treasurer, a tr. assistant and 2 members. They have election every 3 years.

For the future the group would like to get hosepipes, poultry and pig production. Right now they have no poultry, because they slaughtered them to get meat. They have no pigs. They also don't have seeds for next season, so they will try to buy some, but they do not have enough money. Last year was also dry, but not as dry as this year. They were self-sufficient for about 4 months. The members find that they got a lot from RSDA. They got tanks, learned about improved plots, and learned how to run a group. It all helped them to be able to produce more, so that they don't need to buy as much food as before, and they can even sell to others sometimes. They would like to get assistance to make new things.



After Thibella we went through Mafeteng and continued to Tsitas Nek where we met the federation representing 33 groups. They had a meeting and we were given a chance to put forward some questions to them. What they told us was not much different from what we had already heard from other farmers. They find the self-sufficiency a little bit better than before, and they produce more different types of vegetables than before. Some farmers can produce to sell now and not only for consumption as before. The production season has been prolonged after getting the water tanks. All



the 33 representatives had attended the LCN workshop, and they find that they learned important things, such as bookkeeping, management, how to elect a committee to lead them. When we asked about gutters some discontent emerged, and a more heated discussion started. We got the impression that the gutters are still a problem. People are not satisfied, but what exactly the problem is, we are not sure of, as the debate was not translated to us. For the future they would like to have tanks for all members, hosepipes, gutters, milking

goats and pigs. The last 4 years they have tried to make fundraising to be able to run projects. They find that they have been quite successful, but they expect to become more successful from now on because of the training in the workshop in Mohales Hook. They would like to get loans to be able to start new things, and they believe that they can be able to pay back. They discussed how long time they would need to pay back a loan, and all different opinions ranging from 3 months to 3 years came up. Mainly they believe in making success if they can have water and pigs.

19th July - Meeting at RSDA Maseru office for clarification of project issues

Mr Mathaba and the bookkeeper Ms Matheboho were there to discuss with us whatever needed to be clarified. From both sides we had issues, which had not been dealt with, and we had to remind each other or explain why things were different than expected.

Ms Matheboho requested a response to the auditors report. We promised to send one.

At our arrival we had received a final report from RSDA and we used the report as a starting-point for our discussions.

At the end of 2006 the training of group leaders on lobby and advocacy had not yet taken place. In May a 5-day workshop on Governance was held by LCN for 20 group leaders, and later in May a 5 days Leadership Development workshop was held for the same leaders. This training was seen as more relevant for the groups taken into consideration the process the groups are in now. Both the Mafeteng federation and the Phamong federation are in the process of redrafting their constitution and in several of the groups they have undertaken a review of existing committee positions and by-laws. They need to strengthen their organisation of the groups, before they are ready to go further into lobby and advocacy. Mr Mathaba thinks the farmers are in a beginning stage of understanding what lobby is about. They have been sensitised about it. We seconded the decision. RSDA promised to get the workshop report from LCN and send it to us. We also would like to get a copy of an activity report of the one-day review workshop held for 37 farmers, (mentioned in the Final Report).

About the ongoing discussion on the gutters we tried to get a better understanding of the matter, and as far as we understood the decision to provide gutters only to those farmers, who were not able to fix gutters by them selves, was a decision in principle, not caused by lack of funds.

In order to evaluate the project we have to use the indicators set in the proposal. We requested the baseline survey, which is a precondition for measuring the self-sufficiency and the number of vegetables grown.

We agreed that RSDA is going to send us an evaluation report.

Mr Mathaba informed us that RSDA is interested in going into a project with revolving funds if possible. They believe it



could be a way forward for farmers, since it would be more sustainable than aiming at donations. RSDA has trained 11 farmer groups on financial issues to capacitate them to go to a bank and get a loan. The banks require a good banking record for at least 6 months, before they will give a loan. The group also need to make a business plan and a marketing plan. No RSDA group has been able to get a loan yet, but one group has tried.

20th July - Meeting at RSDA Maseru Office for project wind up and ideas behind new project

This meeting was reserved for the new project, but first Me Thulo informed us about the development of RSDA. The change of focus from pure food security towards focus on HIV/AIDS, children, orphans, children's rights. RSDA has moved into Berea district to support groups living with HIV/AIDS. RSDA wants HIV/AIDS to be included in all projects.

She also told us about the new project that RSDA and GART are going to launch. It is a dairy cow project intending to increase the production of food/milk. It is a 4-year project with UNcfc and GART, supervised by FAO, and it will be implemented in the two districts Mafeteng and Maseru. The project is about production of milk and connecting farmers with milk collection centres. RSDA is seeking to have at least 4 running projects to be able to pay for core costs. Now RSDA has projects with DLN, UNcfc, US-Aid, SIDA and for only one year at a time with CARE and FAO. The German main donor that RSDA had for many years left them in 2004.

The new project with DLN/RSDA has three elements:

1. Building capacity of small scale farmers to develop leadership, implementation and advocacy
2. Giving farmers access to a revolving fund
3. To establish 2 learning and demonstration centres

Ms Thulo finds there will be a never ending demand for water tanks, hosepipes etc. It is not possible to get funding for it all. From now on farmers will have to loan money from the group for building tanks. Now they can see the tanks from the DLN project, and it makes them all want tanks. The knowledge on how to build tanks is now there, which is a sustainable part of the project. Through loans people can get what they really want, and not all villages need to do the same projects. It is important to support farmers' own initiative.

The new project proposal is based on feedback from farmers on the first project and feedback from DLN about the importance of focusing more on capacity building and not service delivery. RSDA would like to go to a lower level and train the farmer groups directly. Now RSDA has trained the two federations, which are made up by representatives from all the groups. The information/communication between the 3 layers (RSDA, federations, farmer groups) needs to be improved to stimulate the information flow to go both ways. The federations should be really owned by the members. When they are well organised and communication is good, they are ready for advocacy.

We brought with us the message from the DLN board that we need RSDA to work more on the proposal before we take it to our advisors. We discussed the parts of the proposal that we did not understand, and we were in particular interested to know more about the revolving fund, but in general we find that the ideas are good, and the project builds on experiences from the previous project.

25th July – Launching of a Project

The 25th of July we attended the launching of “Strengthening the Productivity and Competitiveness of the smallholder Dairy Sector in Lesotho and Zambia”. The stakeholders of the regional project are the donor, Common Funds For Commodities (CFC), the Zambian NGO, Golden Valley Agriculture Research Trust (GART) and RSDA. The event took place at the “Manthabiseng Convention Center”.

The director of RSDA introduced the invited guests to RSDA, and the director of GART introduced us to the Dairy project. The project aims to improve the productivity and marketing position of small holder dairy cooperatives in Zambia and in Lesotho by promoting improved and innovative livestock feeding technologies, improved milk quality and hygiene, milk processing and marketing.

RSDA farmers representatives from Thulane and Mafeteng presented their expectations.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Mr Lesole Mokoma represented the government, and the launching was chaired by the Principal Secretary.



After completing the work with RSDA we spent 3 days networking and meeting with other NGOs and friends of DLN in Lesotho.

18th of July – Meeting with Seamus McCarthy

Seamus McCarthy has a tour agency doing adventure trips in Lesotho. His parents runs a new lodge, Ramabanta Lodge, in the village Ha Ramabanta about midway between Maseru and Semonkong. It is the old Frasers trading post which has now been transformed into a nice and modern guest house. They try to work with the community as much as possible; to let locals build the houses, to buy vegetables from the locals, to employ locals etc. See more on the website:

<http://www.tradingpost.co.za/>

Seamus McCarthy has his own company organising tours for tourists in Lesotho. It can be anything from pony trekking, hiking, mountain biking, fly fishing, driving 4x4-trails, exploring bird life, mountain flora, village experience, visits to rock art and other cultural sights. Seamus McCarthy has tried to work with Ministry of Tourism but found them too slow and gave up. He is now doing business on his own. Soon more information will be available on:

<http://www.adventurelesotho.co.ls/>

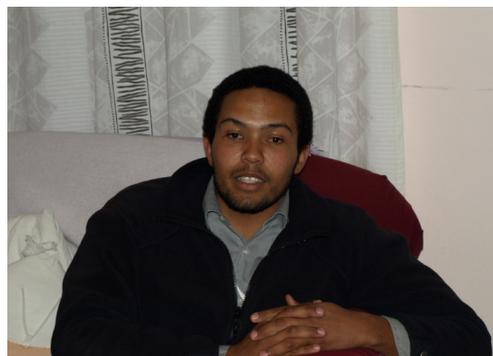
Seamus McCarthy informed us about his view on the development of tourism in Lesotho right now. It is his impression that government has focus very much on the commercial side. They are mainly trying to bring big busses of tourists into Lesotho, and to accommodate them in big lodges and to let them go and visit traditional tourist places. Government of Lesotho (GOL) puts money into tourism, but eco-tourism does not seem to be on the agenda of the government. There are different initiatives in progress to expand tourism in the country. In Mokhotlong hotels and lodges are being built. At the bottom of Thaba Bosiu a lot of small rondavels, a large parking lot and some more buildings are being constructed. Bokong Nature Reserve is about to do something, not really clear what.

Tshlanyane Nature Reserve is getting a 5-star hotel resort, which will open in 2008. Oxbow Ski Resort is having a difficult time, because they only make business 4 months a year when snow and frost is there. Oxbow Ski Resort keep changing owner and it is not doing too well on the financial side. GOL owns 40 % of it. The place looks like it tries to bring Europe into Lesotho with wooden cabins like in Austria etc.

Sehlabathebe National Park is going to be a trans-frontier park, one big park with land on both sides of the border. GOL is trying to sell Sehlabathebe, which they cannot really do, because land belongs to the king and cannot be sold. Maybe they will make a leasing contract for 40 years or so.

There has been lots of information from GOL to people about tourism; that people should not harass visitors, because visitors would bring money and growth of living standard to people. It worked for a while but people are now getting impatient because they have not seen the benefit of tourism yet. They feel it was empty promises.

Seamus McCarthy has noticed that wild life is coming back to Lesotho. The heard boys have stopped killing wild animals, which make the populations grow. That is very positive news.



20th of July – meeting with PELUM

We had a meeting with the director of PELUM Mr. Moshe at their office in Maseru. The meeting was informal and with the purpose of networking. Mr. Moshe informed us that BAG (Berea

Agricultural Group) and MADA (Machobane Agricultural Development Association) is supported by PELUM Lesotho. MADA is doing better now.

Mr. Moshe told us about the visit of Hans Peter Dejgaard to Lesotho last year, and that there has been no response from EU to PELUM. He had hoped that we could bring him some news about that, which we unfortunately could not. Mr. Moshe would like to know whether EU funds could be linked to PELUM. Also he would like to know what happened to the idea about Anders Hedegaards workplace looking for a partner in Lesotho, which we could not give an answer to.

Mr. Moshe informed us about the status of PELUM now. PELUM has become broader than earlier, and the head office is now in Zambia, (it used to be in Zimbabwe). PELUM Lesotho has been assigned to establish PELUM Swaziland, which they are now working on. The member organisations can use internet at the PELUM office, if they do not have their own internet connection.



We informed Mr. Moshe about our work with RSDA, and that we received a proposal from Serumula.

Mr. Moshe mentioned RSDA as one of the big and strong NGOs within the field of agriculture. Serumula is also a member of PELUM. They are operating in Semongkong, Butha Buthe and Leribe doing water harvesting, training, self organising of small farmers etc. Serumula is a membership organisation, have a board, and it is a strong organisation, membership driven. A strong leadership and some governmental experience mark the organisation.

Mr. Moshe could recommend an NGO based in Semongkong working with sustainable agriculture and climate change. They have 5-6 focus areas, they have a Skillshare DW, has an office in Maseru also, and they got M 28.000 from PELUM for a sanitation project.

PELUM Lesotho would like to be linked to someone in Denmark. Mr. Moshe would be happy if DLN would put some information on the DLN website and maybe a link to their website:

<http://www.pelumrd.org/>

23rd of July – visit to LCCU

In the morning hours we met with Ms. Lydia Muso at the compound of Lesotho Child Counselling Unit (LCCU) in Masenod. Lydia told us about the previous situation of LCCU and of vulnerable children in Lesotho in general. The purpose of the visit was networking.

Since our last visit at LCCU a few things has happened. Her house burned and nothing of it is left. It was the old house of her parents, so now she is left with only one house for her self and the 14 children staying at LCCU. They all sleep in one room with bunk beds, eat and relax in another room, and the office is in the container as usual. Ms. Lydia has planned to rebuild the burned down house by using some of the old bricks and by buying new stones from some orphaned children, who make bricks for a living.

The new building on the plot close to the airport is proceeding very well. It is funded by the Prins Harry Fund also called Sentebale ('forget me not') and Standard Bank, so far M 800.000, and they expect to move in by end of September - or at least before end of the year. We went to see the new house, which is about to get on roofing.

The new house will be able to accommodate 40 children, and Ms. Lydia is planning to employ 3 social workers, 4 housemothers, 1 preschool teacher, and 1 financial assistant. She plans to implement a prevention programme for young people, skills training, community work, vegetable production on a piece of land rented from orphaned children. A donor for running costs is not quite in place, but probably Sentebale will help with salaries. Professional staff should be paid M 4-5000 a month, and Ms. Lydia wants to employ professionals, who know how to work with abused children. She fears that it will be difficult to find properly educated people in Lesotho, she thinks of getting a DW from Europe to bring in skills.



The children should stay only 3-5 months at LCCU to be rehabilitated. Ms. Lydia is against institutionalisation, a stay in an institution should only be temporarily. The community should take care of each other, but modern times have destroyed the old habit of that. The common sense of responsibility has to be re-established through information and education of the communities. Ms. Lydia is of the opinion that unemployment basically is the reason for all the troubles in Lesotho. When people have no work, they have no money to buy proper food, no proper housing, they are not protecting their health, not taking care of their children etc. This flood of poverty and misery needs to be stopped to make life better for children.



Ms. Lydia tells us about some of the children she has taken care of recently. One young girl was forced to marriage, against her will; the young boy kidnapped her. Lobola (= marriage portion) was already paid and consumed. The girl managed to report to the police, the boys were put into prison, and the girl was handed over to Ms. Lydia. She has had 5 girls at LCCU, who was forced into marriage; they were from 11 to 18 years old. Ms. Lydia has a contact to a

psychologist at Queen II hospital, whom she can use as a supervisor to direct her in the work with traumatised children. She cannot refer children to the psychologist for treatment, but at least supervision is better than nothing. A way to monitor the effect of the work with children at LCCU is to measure their weight on a scale and observe their behaviour.

There is a new Child Protection Act coming up, it is not yet quite in place. Lesotho is now using an old act from 1980, which does not include HIV/AIDS-victims, handicapped children, child trafficking, neglect by parents, and sexually abused children.

In the afternoon we went with Ms. Lydia to see the place of 35 children staying alone in Maseru East. She discovered those children recently, and now she tries to help them. They make bricks to earn some money for food, using an old oven on the banks of Makhalida Dam, where there is a long tradition of brick production. Ms. Lydia helps them by sharing some of the LCCU food with them; she buys bricks from them and looks after them a bit. There are



sometimes a few unstable adults around the children, but they live miserable lives. They live in two small shanties, 4-5 children in one bed and some children sleeping on the floor. One day Ms. Lydia even found a 2-week old baby there, who had been left by someone.

23rd July – meeting with Mr. Thumelo Tsikoane

During lunch break we had a lunch meeting with Mr. Tsikoane at the university in Roma. He updated us on the political situation in Lesotho, which is a very much-discussed theme in the country these days. Since the election in February the situation in Lesotho has been more or less unstable.

After the election the seats in parliament were distributed with some seats to the ruling party LCD and some seats to the opposition parties. The opposition is of the opinion that the distribution has been done wrongly, and that the opposition should have had more seats. Especially in Maseru many people agreed with the opposition parties that government incorrectly has too much power. Many



voters from the urban areas voted in February for a new and surprisingly successful party, LCD mainly got their votes from the rural areas. In June there was a general strike, and after that the police implemented a curfew for one week. Lots of people think the curfew had not been necessary since the unrest had not been that bad. The curfew was said to be put in place to secure people's safety, but most people find it was overdoing. It caused the inhabitants and employers of Maseru a lot of trouble, because people could not go out between 6 pm and 6 am. Many people could not get to work in time etc. Several NGOs,

such as TRC and LCN, are working on the issue as watchdogs to raise a debate about the curfew being a violation of people's rights.

Mr. Tsikoane promised to deliver an article to Lumela.dk about the present situation in Lesotho. See Lumela.dk in November 2007.

24th July – meeting with SERUMULA

The purpose of the meeting with Serumula was to share information between our two organisations and to clear out expectations about each other. Serumula sent a proposal to DLN a few months ago, seeking support for a project of bringing water to a school. The member of DLN Anders Foghsgaard visited Lesotho in January this year and got in contact with Serumula. He wanted us to pay Serumula a visit and examine the possibility of DLN going into partnership with them. When we arrived to the Serumula office in Maseru West, we were welcomed as expected visitors from Danida. We met with the managing director Mr. Lebese Lekholoane and Mr. Thabo Nobala. We explained that we were not at all from Danida but from DLN, and then we explained about DLN.

Mr. Lebese informed us about Serumula. Serumula took over from Helvetas in November 2002, when Helvetas left Lesotho. They left buildings, vehicles and staff for Serumula, so it was more or less the same work that continued under a new name. There are 4 employed staff members in Serumula: The director Mr. Lebese Lekholoane, the development manager Mr. Thabo Nobola, the crop scientist Mr. ? and the accountant Ms. ? Serumula is working within the field of rural water supply in the 3 areas Butha Buthe, Semongkong and Phamong. Serumula is funded by Helvetas, FAO and Kellogg's Foundation, they get nothing from GOL.

Serumula is working with commodity association, in Semongkong seed production and wool/mohair, in Phamong mohair, in Butha Buthe crops and fruittrees. They try to work with government on PSP (Priority Support Programme), which is a programme by GOL supporting home gardens. They do training in crop production, leadership; they would like to do water harvesting in the southern part of Lesotho. Serumula does not give things for free, the community has to contribute with labour, materials etc. During the dry season Serumula would like to harvest water from springs, wells in the south, and they would need money for cement. Serumula wants to make young people interested in agriculture, will use Bethel near Phamong as training centre. FAO tried drip irrigation kits in the south, would be interesting to do more of that. Serumula is a member of PELUM.

We discussed the project that Serumula would like to do with DLN. They did not put a budget in the proposal but a rough estimate from Mr. Lebese was about M 800.000. The Dane Jens Vad, a resident of Lesotho, would be the technical advisor to Serumula on details of the project. We explained to Mr. Lebese and Mr. Thabo that a proposal of ½ page was not enough for us, we would need a proposal put into the format of Projektrådgivningens application form including a detailed budget and activity plan. As far as we could see and hear now the project would be a service delivery, not a development project. Funding a pipeline from a spring in the mountain to a school in the village would not be within the focus area of DLN. There would need to be a component of development, education, lobby and advocacy activities, organising skills etc. in the project, if it should be interesting for DLN to go into. We also said that maybe DLN is too small for Serumula, since they are used to work with big donors as FAO, Kellogg's Foundation etc.

Serumula will now think about our information and reconsider whether they want to send us a new and more detailed application for a project. We promised to email the PRNGO form to Serumula. The meeting ended with both parts knowing a lot more about each other.

24th July – meeting with TRC

The purpose of meeting with the director Ms. Matseliso Ntsoelikane of TRC was to network and to respond to their application to DLN from January this year. We explained that DLN is short of human resources and do not have the capacity to go into partnership with TRC right now. DLN find

the focus area of TRC relevant and in line with the vision of DLN. TRC is a lobby & advocacy organisation, more than a development organisation, and DLN believes that advocacy and lobby work is a necessity for development. TRC is supporting resettled people from the large dam projects in the Lesotho Highlands to claim their rights and get a proper compensation for their lost houses and land. TRC train people on advocacy, and TRC is using RSDA to train people on farming. To DLN a project with TRC could very well fit our work up till now. We also believe that TRC is a professional and well-organised NGO that DLN could cooperate with. We promised that DLN



would report to TRC if/when we have capacity to go into partnership with them.

Ms. Matseliso Ntsoelikane informed us about the good news that this year husband and wife will get the same status regarding land and children. Unmarried women are still minors/children when it comes to rights. The man owns the children and the land. TRC is educating people about these issues. TRC is now involved in the issues after the election, and TRC is of the opinion that the curfew is a violation of human rights. There was an incident recently where court would release some soldiers

from prison, but the army took the soldiers out by force. TRC is working with SADC; they are trying to get a win-win-situation. Ms. Ntsoelikane was on radio with a high-ranking person from the army trying to disarm the role of the army.

In their work with the rights of resettled people TRC is focusing on the Mohale Dam project. There could be relevant work to do with the Katse Dam resettled people too, but TRC does not have capacity to do both and has prioritised the Mohale Dam resettled people. People struggle to get their compensation, they get it late, and some got little land or no land in town even though they lost a big piece of land in their old village. Often the new neighbours believe that the resettled people are rich because of their nice brick houses. The new neighbours do not want to help them, do not accept them, don't want to bury their dead in the village. Sometimes the resettled people have to take the corpses to Maseru to get buried there. TRC also looks after the environmental and social consequences of the big dam project. The ombudsman has been very helpful, but he cannot force anything, only recommend.

TRC is funded by EED, a German church development organisation, for 10 years now, next year is end of the faze. EED is funding all TRC projects, but they expect TRC to find a certain percentage of their funding on their own, they should diversify funding. To get some funding through DLN could be one step on that ladder for TRC.

25th July – chat with Mr. Motsamai from LCN

At the launching of the new project with RSDA and GART at the Convention Centre in Maseru we had a short conversation with the coordinator of LCN, Mr. Motsamai. He is of the opinion that life has become a bit easier for NGOs, but they are still struggling financially. LCN is now involved in the monitoring of the issues after the election. LCN is involved in meeting with SADC, they try to make SADC mediate through the former president of Botswana. He is said to have very good skills as a mediator, and LCN hopes for a peaceful solution through negotiations and to avoid riots.
