



DENMARK LESOTHO NETWORK



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# DLN – DPE PROJECT EVALUATION

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Report

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## List of abbreviations

AIDS- Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome

CBO – Community Based Organisations

CP – Community Parliament

DLN – Denmark Lesotho Network

DPE – Development for Peace Education

HIV – Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus

LCN- Lesotho Council of NGO's

LNFOOD – Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

OVC – Orphans and Vulnerable Children

TRC – Transformation Resource Centre

## 1. Description of DLN/DPE Program in Lesotho

This project is the continuation of phase 1 project which was informed by limited public participation, poor interaction between local councils and communities and inadequate attention on gender issues. Currently the project is implemented in eight (8) areas within six community councils targeting all local communities and helping poor and marginalized groups such as women, orphans and vulnerable children as well as people living with HIV and AIDS. In addition to this, the project is aimed at building the capacity of DPE management, secretariat and field staff in order to strengthen its capacity as a strong civil society actor and finally to enable DPE to broaden and deepen its public participation interventions.

The project's main goal is: Public participation in policy and decision-making is institutionalized and embraced by policy-makers, legislators and communities. This is to be realized through the following outputs:

- a) DPE has built the capacity of District and Community Councils to facilitate participatory and gender sensitive budgeting process at district and community level (district and council development plans)
- b) DPE has facilitated public participation in legislative and policy processes (e.g. Peoples' Tribunal, Community Voting)
- c) DPE staff are trained (competences regarding promotion of public participation debate and skills supporting activities/work responsibilities of individuals or groups)

## 2. Purpose and Description of survey exercise

This report details the process and results of the DPE end of project evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation exercise was to gather and analyse qualitative data regarding the DPE intervention activities and implementation through focus groups and structured interviews. The evaluation, both process and final product, reflects the perceptions of project participants and other key stakeholders. The report provides a snapshot of program implementation through the voice of those most affected by the intervention.

The evaluation process was designed to maximize organizational learning. It was also intended that the results of the evaluation should feed directly into the planning and

implementation of for future similar interventions, by providing lessons learned and recommendations for modification and improvement.

This evaluation was conducted using both focus group and key informant interviews. Three (3) focus group discussions and thirty-seven (37) key informant interviews were conducted as part of the evaluation exercise, so far. Of these key informants 14 are councillors, 16 were community leaders who were not part of the focus groups, 3 NGOs and 4 Government actors. Focus groups consisted of both male and female participants interviews and emphasized the following main themes:

- knowledge assessment of DPE,
- CBO registration and participation in community parliament,
- community parliament institutionalization and accountability,
- sustainability prospects

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Sampling

The evaluation was conducted in the all the six project districts, including Mhales'hoek, Qacha'snek, Berea and Mafeteng. The evaluation team planned a total of 3 focus group discussions for the community members. This plan was successfully achieved. The concern with this is the fact that some key informants were interviewed by phone, and others seemed. As a result of that the number expected to form a normal focus group discussion was a little bit compromised. The focus group respondents comprised of the representatives of the CBOs. In the Senekane council the councillors had a council meeting. As a result, they were found together at the same time. This helped increase the number of councillors from that one council

#### 3.2. Participants

In addition, the consultant interviewed 15 key informants, including 4 government departments, Ministry Water, and Ministry of Public Works. Key informants from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also interviewed and these included, LCN, Lesotho National Federation of the Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD), and Transformation Resource Centre (TRC). The councillors formed a big part of the interviewees as 10 of them were interviewed as part of the key informants. Attempts to meet the more government departments were not successful.

### 3.3. Limitations of the evaluation

The focus group and interview methodology utilized in the evaluation was intended to provide feedback to program staff and decision-makers in the voice of the program participants and relevant stakeholders themselves. This represents a novel and useful approach to program assessment. However, given that the evaluation was purely qualitative in nature, it also presents some substantial limitations. Those limitations are highlighted below:

- a) While the sampling methodology used attempted to select project participants from all project geographic locations, sampling for qualitative data is inherently different from sampling used for the purposes of statistical data analysis. The sample is not statistically significant, nor does it intend to be. Instead, the purpose of the evaluation exercise was to begin to understand trends in the program interventions by listening to participants.
- b) Like with any qualitative data, the results are subject to the individual reviewer's or writer's interpretation. Every effort was made to analyse the information collaboratively through the participation of several reviewers/analysts who discussed and analysed the data before putting pen to paper. Despite these checks, the final product is the result of subjective interpretation and not statistically rigorous analysis.
- c) Similarly, the results of the evaluation underwent a process of synthesis that may have watered down or lost some of the original content of the interviews.
- d) In spite of the limitations, the methodology applied and findings are dependable and reliable and can be comparable with other similar studies. Again, the findings can firmly guide the DPE programming and general decision making.

## 4. Findings

This section presents the major findings of the evaluation conducted in the period July 2017. The findings are guided by the project objectives and will thus be presented as such. Specifically, this section is divided into five major sections;

- i) Including knowledge assessment of DPE,
- ii) CBO registration and participation in community parliament,
- iii) Community parliament institutionalization and accountability and

- iv) DPE capacity assessment, and sustainability prospects.
- v) The final section highlights recommendations for the improvement for future similar intervention.

#### 4.1. Knowledge of DPE activities:

For all the respondents that participated as key informants and focus groups interviews conducted, every participant was aware of DPE and its activities. Most of the interviewees have participated in the collaborative preparations for community parliaments or participated in community parliament which most of the time is led by DPE. To be specific out of the 13 key informants interviewed 12 indicated to have attended or at least know about the community parliament. The NGOs would most of the time take significant part in the preparation of communities for Community Parliament while the government sectors would more involved with DPE when they are supposed to be preparing to respond to community issues raised at community parliament sittings. The CBOs and councillors are by default supposed to be directly interacting with the DPE as the main focus of DPE is community capacity building through CBOs and community councils. The communities appreciate interventions like being helped with constitutions, conflict resolution training and setting up of conflict resolution committee within the council. They also got trainings on how to run their CBOs. All the government respondents had participated in least at two community parliaments organized by the DPE. The main reason stated for attending was to interact with the communities and get their concerns on issues related to their departments. For Ministry of Works, while they value community parliament, the issues raised about roads are relation to grade D roads which are under the Ministry of Local Government. Therefore, these results indicate that DPE is well recognized and received by the different stakeholders. However, there is lack of continuity in other departments. For instance, the Ministry of Local Government is lately not attending the community parliament, though they are still invited. This might be as result of regular change of leadership in government departments. The chief of ha Senekane, who is also a councillor, claimed that as a result of DPE's trainings on dialogue to resolve disputes, violence has reduced in his village. This was echoed by community members from Lebakeng, Senekane and Seforong.

#### 4.2. Public participation in the council planning process

This section presents the views of the respondents with regard to effective implementation of the CP which serve as a core activity of DPE. To understand the perceptions of the respondents on CP, the consultancy team introduced the topic by asking whether they find value to the CP, and public participation. How they have used CP in their different departments and organizations. The study indicated that all the respondents were indeed putting more value to CP model and have used it in different ways in their organizations and ministerial planning. The councillors have expressed their appreciation to DPE intervention through encouraging public participation in different ways. They mostly say they gather the people's opinion through public gatherings and incorporate that in that Council plans. Councillors gather community members' views through public gatherings known as "lipitso". There are those who even lead their community members to prioritize their needs. Then as a council they draw up the plan. Feedback on what has been incorporated is disseminated through the same lipitsos. There is no consistency in this. There are councillors who voluntarily interact with their community members, while others only meet the community when such meetings are initiated by DPE. This was mentioned in the focus groups.

The councillors on the other hand, differed on how they view the importance of DPE. There are those who claim that DPE is very important their day to day work as councillors. They say their community members understand governance issues and this eases their job. Other councillors on the other hand, were not very clear on how their work is affected by DPE in their areas.

Community members on their part also appreciate the interventions of DPE. They say DPE has helped them develop constitutions, and most have registered, while others are still waiting for their registration process to complete. DPE has also trained the CBOs on the roles of committee members. They have trained on their rights and how they relate with the councillors. This has improved their interaction with the councillors because they know they kind of service they deserve to get from the councils. They say DPE has improved their interaction with the councillors. Thus, increasing their participation in governance issues. The CBOs have also been trained on budgeting, and conflict resolution. The Senekane community think the development of the development of the conflict resolution committee is working wonders for their CBOs and council at large.



### 4.3. Community Parliament and its institutionalization

The public participation is taken further through what is known as community parliament. With these communities meet with the councillors and agree on what needs they think need to be passed on the central government. There is a district parliament first and then the national parliament where representatives from community members from different councillors and representatives from those councils get to present their needs to the senior officials from the government departments. These are in some cases ministers. The questions they have government departments are forwarded to those departments in advance with the help of DPE. This is so that they go to the community parliament with researched answers. The complaint is however that when their needs are eventually addressed they are not informed. They just see the works happening in their villages in response to their demands without being told about those. The councillors appreciate the Community Parliament as it, in the words of one councillor, “provides a direct access to the ministers” and convey their needs without the middle man which was almost impossible before this. They think community parliament is good ingredient for accountability because the current reviews which of the promises have been delivered. Community members say in CP they also get feedback on what has not been done, and reasons for that.

There is a general believe by both councillors and community members that the Senqu and Senqunyane bridges, the new police post are as a result of the community parliament. More training is recommended so that both councillors and community representatives go the community parliament with one. This is not the case in other councils. One councillor said DPE has taught them to separate between the responsibilities of chiefs and councillors. She said chiefs are responsible for welfare and security, the councillors are responsible for development. Whereas, chiefs used to think everything was under their jurisdiction. Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled (LNFOD) claim that that the **disability grant** which is part of the Social Protection initiative has been through community parliament.

### 4.4. Sustainability

There are community members who are confident that what DPE has taught them has been internalised and can be carried through even if DPE were to leave. There are others however who feel they still need DPE presence to guide them through.

Councillors are also torn on this. There are those who think they have learned enough. Others thought instead of leaving DPE would rather have representatives who reside in the villages and can be accessed any time there is need. One lady from Labakeng said there is still a lot to learn from DPE, so they should stay. There are community members who feel they are now in a position to even guide others on what they learned from DPE. LNFOD feel that given the nature of our communities, guidance of some will still need to be necessary. Their view is that poverty in the communities makes community members subservient to the rulers.

## 5. Conclusion

DPE is well known within the communities it works in. The communities have indicated appreciation of DPE interventions differently. While the communities have generally been appreciative of the DPE work in their villages through different activities, the Government and the councillors have not been unanimous on their responses. Some councillors think DPE through its awareness programs and trainings on human rights has made their work easier because they work with communities that know what they want. In the words of a councillor from Khoelenya, DPE has elevated them to a level where they meet policy makers face-to-face. On the other hand, there are councillors who think the communities are confused and end up interfering with their work.

The Government departments on their part while some attend the community parliament there does not seem to be a systematic synchronisation with what the community parliament and other DPE interventions are for. There are individuals within government departments who understand and appreciate the community parliament. Even with them they only go as far as the community parliament. They are in the dark about other DPE interventions. The extreme part is that when DPE gathers public opinion about reforms and bills that are tabled in parliament they get labelled as opposing the government. The rapid changes of government ministers and officials affects the continuity of cooperation between DPE and Government.

There seems to be confusion in other communities on the parameters of DPE initiatives. Some were expecting DPE to help with health tools for taking care of the sick in the village. They also expect to be supported with seeds, and birth certificates for OVC.

## 6. Recommendations for improvement

This section is made of recommendations from the key informants, focus groups and the consultant.

- 6.1. There are suggestions that for this culture of dialogue to spread, DPE has to reach most if not all councils.
- 6.2. DPE should not only be visible when there are big events like elections, and when someone killed or there are reforms coming
- 6.3. Meetings have to be alternated within the council so that other people get to know about DPE as well. In the meetings, public gatherings or trainings DPE hold the misconception on what DPE does and does not do has to be cleared through emphasis on DPE mandate.
- 6.4. Community members need to have some DPE logo or badge to identify with DPE. This does not only make them known, but it works on their motivation.
- 6.5. DPE should organise that the Parliament sub-committees go to the council level to meet the community members. This was once done when the Human Rights Commission was in parliament, and it was appreciated by the community members.
- 6.6. Preparations for CP start well ahead of time invitations. Several reminders should be made to encourage participation. This is in the light that government departments that used to be regular attendees like Local Government ministry have not been attending lately.
- 6.7. Preparations for CP would also help the community members representatives and councillors to have one word as they go for the CP.
- 6.8. Government should use CP as a platform to get local community members input either for development or for law making. This has been recommended by many who think community parliament is useful. It is therefore, recommended that while the government is still new, DPE should approach them and sell the idea of community parliament. This should not be foreign to many in government as most of them supported the efforts of DPE before being part of government.
- 6.9. Going forward community parliament should not only demand service but quality service, and there needs to be community monitoring component.

- 6.10. There needs to be proper training for DPE representatives so they do not usurp the councillors power
- 6.11. They wish CP could be at least twice a year. One councillor suggested that the community parliament be immediately after the budget speech so that the ministries and departments get the needs of the communities while they still have money. Some councillors hold the view that community parliament could be even better if the central government decentralize the development responsibilities to the council level. One NGO suggested that the community parliament has addressed the service delivery for some time now, and it should move on to demand the quality service. The NGOs suggest that DPE lobbies the government to use this as platform to get public feedback on their service delivery, and the bills being raised.
- 6.12. There is a general expectation that DPE would follow up with the government departments on promises made. If possible the follow-up on promises made in CP be built up in DPE budgets.
- 6.13. The DPE representatives in the villages have to get regular training so that they get clear understanding of what DPE stands for. These would in turn manage the expectations of communities on what DPE can and cannot do.

## Appendix 1

### List of respondents

#### 1. Councillors

<b>Name</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Sex</b>
Mathe-a-lira Masupha	Senekane	Male
Masehloho Sakoane	Senekane	Female
Tsepang Motselekatse	Senekane	Male
Rethabile Moabi	Senekane	Male
Musa Matjama	Senekane	Male
Matlaleng Hlalele	Maseru	Female
Maisaka Manyolo	Mapoteng	Female
Khopiso Tsiloana	Khoelenya	Male
Tlali Ratlali	Thaba-Tseka	Male
Liau Nkoka	Lilala	Male
Ramatheola Makhele	Seforong	Male
Mpiti Letsie	Mphaki	Male
Masebatso Mosotho	Senqunyane	Female
Mokhethi Mokhethi	Lebakeng	Male

#### 2. Government Actors

Malijane Litabe	Ministry of Water	Female
Ntai Lesenya		Male
Ntseliseng Mohapeloa		Female
Seboka Thamae	Ministry of Public Works	Male

#### 3. NGOs

Nkhasi Sefuthi	LNFOOD	Male
Seabata Motsamai	LCN	Male

Motseoa Moluoane	TRC	Female
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#### 4. Focus group 1

Matankiso Mokhahlane	DPE Rep	Female
Matankiso Motlamelle	Makoatlane Itjareng Group	Female
Makamohelo Shemane	Thusang Ka Lerato	Female
Limpho Mphole	Linokong Support Group	Female
Maramalitse Thuhloane	Lerato Support Group	Female
Maliphapang Monathane	Lerato Support Group	Female
Maleloko Motsamai	Mahlasipa Support Group	Female

#### 5. Focus Group 2

Mahopolang Tjobe	Ratanang Support group	Female
Malebona Malebo	Tau Support Group	Female
Mabakuena Tlali	Tau Support Group	Female
Malimpho Palime	Thusanang ka Lerato	Female
Malikeleli Thebe	Thusanang ka Lerato	Female
Mankala Lenkoane	Ipakeng Mohoang	Female
Malehlohonolo Ramaoto	Ipopeng Support Group	Female

#### 6. Focus Group 3

Makolitsoe Matasane	Thusanang ka Lerato	Female
Lepono Mohoang	Ipakeng Mohoang	Male
Mamotsamai Sesinyi	Linoko Support Group	Female
Mamotsabi Malebo	Ipakeng Mohoang	Female
Mathabo Mphole	Linoko Support Group	Female
Mabataung Mafereka	Mahlatsipa Multi-purpose	Female
Refiloe Mphole	Linoko Support Group	Female

Mokeke Khunong	Lekokoaneng Farmers Assoc.	Male
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Mamolemo Boobi	Seforong	Female
Mamotheo Lepheana	Seforong	Female
Matlali Mare	Seforong	Female
Mathakane Mahase	Seforong	Female
Motsamai Lephutha	Mphaki	Male
Mamoleboheng Mpanya	Mphaki	Female
Makopano Ntlaloe	Hloahloeng	Female
Mahlonepho Thota	Ha Seqhoke	Female
Maselloane Mapota	Ha Malatsi	Female
Mathealira Maluke	Lebakeng, Ha Ntsupe	Female
Robete Qoetha	Lebakeng, Ha Ntsupe	Male
Marorisang Sehloho	Lebakeng	Female
Mareabetsoe Makhoali	Lebakeng	Female
Nophomzele Manana	Lebakeng	Female
Malineo Monaheng	Boitelo, Lebakeng	Female
Lira Qhobosheane	Lebakeng	Male