

<b>Denmark Lesotho Network</b>	<h1>Lumela.dk</h1> <h2>DLN – Newsletter</h2>	<b>Nr. 7</b>  <b>August 2005</b>
--	--	--

## 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)  
DLN's address is: Denmark Lesotho Network, C/O Helga Højsager, Asylgade 16, DK-5000 Odense C, Denmark

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

## News from DLN's Executive Committee

### Projects: good news about funding for water tank project

A few days ago DLN received the final consent from Bevillingsgruppen (= Funding Committee) that the funding has been granted 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). The funding is going to be about 960,000 DKK, which is something like three quarter of a million Maluti. The money will cover most of the costs of the project; RSDA will find about 92,000 DKK from other sources.

The project will support the building of 116 water tanks in the two southern districts of Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek. 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.

The project is expected to start off already in September this year and will end two years later in September 2007. During this period DLN will follow the project closely and monitor it's progress. DLN-member Anders Hedegaard (former development worker with RSDA) and the executive committee will have a close collaboration on this project.

## **Annual General Meeting 2005**

The Denmark Lesotho Network's Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2005 will take place on **September 17<sup>th</sup>** in Horsens. It is going to be something you don't want to miss. There will be guest speakers at the AGM and in the evening there will be a great party – a Lesotho stile party! Maybe even with participation of a few Basotho guests. The AGM will be at 13:00 – 17:00 and thereafter the party will begin and go on until late.

Soon information about the party will be to find on the homepage of DLN: [www.lumela.dk](http://www.lumela.dk)

## **DLN to meet with Lesotho Embassy in Copenhagen**

Lesotho's Ambassador in Denmark, Dr. Thekiso Gladwin Khati, has invited representatives from Denmark Lesotho Network for a meeting that will take place August 10th at the Embassy in Copenhagen.

The informal meeting is an opportunity to make a personal encounter and exchange ideas on topics of obvious mutual interest in Lesotho. Already, DLN has invited the Embassy to participate in the DLN Annual General Meeting in Horsens, Jutland September 17th.

To visit the embassy from DLN are former MS-Director in Lesotho, Claus Loschenkohl, and former information worker Peter Rathmann

## **News from members**

### **Beautiful gate.**

In May 2004 we gave an introduction to the work we have been doing in collecting money to Beautiful Gate in Maseru, Lesotho. In this issue of DLN' newsletter we once again will give a short update on the progress we have been involved in regarding funding from Denmark to Beautiful Gate - [www.beautifulgate.org](http://www.beautifulgate.org)

In August 2004, the people behind Beautiful Gate were able to buy a piece of land in Ha Thetsane and initiated the construction they had dreamed of for a long time – new facilities for children in need in Lesotho. The Centre will be the new home for abandoned and HIV/AIDS affected children as well as a training centre for discipleship, leadership and HIV/AIDS related training within the community.

Number of residence at Beautiful Gate on 30th June 2005 was 20 children/babies. During the 4 years of existents Beautiful Gate have up until the 30th June had 98 babies sent to their home. Baby 100 arrived on July 1<sup>st</sup> and that story will be told in their next quarterly report.

Beautiful Gate is like other NGO in lack of funding. The building project is costly and in order to raise funding, we realized that another flee market in Sevel (our village), could not do much. Instead we established contact with two possible donors in Denmark, who were willing to help Beautiful Gate in financing the building project- or at least some of it!

The first donor is the local club of Soroptimist, based in the Danish town Skive. Soroptimist is a global voice for women in 120 countries through awareness, advocacy and action. A world-wide organisation for women in management and the professions.

Soroptimist International strives for the advancement of the status of women, high ethical standards, human rights for all, equality, development and peace through international goodwill and understanding and friendship. Soroptimist International is committed to service to local, national and international communities with active participation in decision-making. ([www.soroptimist.-danmark.dk](http://www.soroptimist.-danmark.dk))

The second donor is the Peter Brask-Nielsen Fonden (Fund), a fund supporting women and children in need. Applications were posted and a lot of communication was done via telephone, e-mail and snail mail.

Finally Beautiful Gate ended up with a 30.000 Maloti donation. Soroptimist Skive donated 10.000M and Peter Brask-Nielsen Fonden donated 20.000M. At the time the donations were transferred to Lesotho, six out of eleven buildings had reached roof height so the money was allocated to finish walls and roofing. Lately we have received photos, showing that things had happened and one building has been roofed.

This brief summary is just to let you know, that we are still doing our best, to let progress happen in a country we left almost 4 years ago.

*Malene & Klaus Brask-Nielsen, August 2005*

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

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

### **Qacha's Nek Celebrates King Letsie III's 42nd Birthday**

Basotho in their thousands, both from Lesotho and South African towns and villages neighbouring Qacha's Nek, celebrated King Letsie III's 42nd birthday at the Melele football ground in this eastern Lesotho town on Sunday, July 17.

On arrival at the Melele sports ground, King Letsie III started off by taking the Royal Salute, and then went on to inspect the 145 members of the A, B, C and HQ companies of the LDF's Light Infantry battalion. Also shown is part of the thousands of people who attended the celebrations.

The local community, including business, presented the King with a horse and a Brown Swiss cow as birthday presents. These were handed over by the Prime Minister, Mr. Pakalitha Mosisili and the acting Principal Chief of Qacha's Nek, Chief Halekhethe Makhaola.

Government Secretary, Mr. Tlohang Sekhamane announced that the celebrations were being held national on a rotational basis, as part of the decentralization of official activities to give Basotho a chance to witness and be part of celebrations of this calibre.

The day was marked in Mokhotlong last year and will be held in all the districts each year until the King's 50th birthday in 2012, when they will be back in Maseru.

Among activities to mark the day included the military pipe band, cultural and choral music by different groups from Qacha's Nek and Pietermaritzburg in South Africa.

*The Lesotho Government Online*

18 July

## **LESOTHO: Numbers of people in need increasing, WFP/FAO**

JOHANNESBURG, 22 Jun 2005 (IRIN) - Declining agricultural production and incomes have combined with HIV/AIDS to undermine the ability of Lesotho's poor to cope with external shocks such as drought, said a joint World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organisation report.

The recent WFP/FAO crop and food supply assessment mission conducted in Lesotho found that the country was facing a "triple threat of increasing chronic poverty, rising rates of HIV/AIDS and weakened government capacity".

According to the Vulnerability Assessment Committee, 548,000 people will have "a significant food deficit between June 2005 and March 2006", and will require about 20,200 mt of food aid.

"Domestic cereal production in 2004/05 is estimated at 119,000 mt, consisting of 92,129 m of maize, 16,442 mt of sorghum and 10,339 mt wheat," the assessors said.

While production showed an improvement of about 15 percent over last year's, it was about 84 percent of the five-year average.

"Lesotho's cereal production appears to be on a downward trend, especially in the main producing districts of Berea, Butha-Buthe, Leribe and Maseru. This is cause for concern and should be fully investigated. Endemic soil erosion, weather-related disasters and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic are likely to be major underlying causes," the report observed.

The 'triple threat' has taken a heavy toll, particularly on the households of the rural poor in Lesotho, "who are faced with a limited number of coping strategies to respond to the intensifying hazard".

A UN Country Assessment found that 59 percent of the population are living below the poverty line, and about 40 percent of the population of Lesotho fall into the 'ultra-poor' category.

"Studies indicate that HIV/AIDS is a leading factor in the drastic reduction of household income for much of the population. Against this background, falling agricultural production, trade constraints, and collapsing employment opportunities combine to increase the vulnerability of poor households to food insecurity," the UN agencies noted.

HIV/AIDS had become not just a health issue for the government, "but rather a development issue with social, economic and cultural implications".

World Bank estimates predict that Lesotho's GDP will be halved by 2015, with HIV/AIDS having a clear effect on household food security.

Despite evidence of increasing need in Lesotho, aid agencies have struggled to run existing programmes aimed at assisting people affected by the previous year's crop failures.

"With food aid stocks and pipeline as of 1 April at 61,000 mt, there remains an uncovered deficit of 19,000 mt (6,000 mt of maize, 13,000 mt of sorghum) which need to be covered by additional donor assistance," the

report pointed out.

WFP's deputy country representative, Mads Lofvall, had earlier told IRIN that the agency had to suspend its operations throughout Lesotho towards the end of May due to a shortfall in funding.

By early June the agency had managed to secure some funding and was planning to reach 80,000 people, out of the 240,000 it had initially planned to assist.

"We are having to make very difficult choices [about who gets aid]," Lofvall commented, "... as the number of orphans keeps going up and the number of HIV/AIDS patients keeps growing."

## **The Fight Is a Collective Responsibility - Clinton**

The entire nation has to regard itself as a central force in the fight against HIV/AIDS for there to be progress in this regard. Otherwise all efforts will have been in vain.

Former United States president, Mr. Bill Clinton, on a one-day visit to Lesotho on July 18, said the HIV/AIDS pandemic is the personal responsibility of every single Mosotho not only a certain institution.

In a media briefing at the end of his visit, the former president though many people may think the number of those getting anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment is still small, there is nevertheless great progress being made as compared to the time when there was none getting the drugs in the past.

He has heard of the impact of HIV/AIDS in this country even before coming, and has also been told of the situation of those suffering from this disease, but having been here himself; he thinks the Government of Lesotho has done a great deal in a short time.

Mr. Clinton stressed the importance of the entire nation taking this matter unto themselves and helping educate others about HIV/AIDS, so that all should in the end see the need to know their status and get further treatment where there is need.

*The Lesotho Government Online*  
19 July 2005

## **LESOTHO: New bill seeks protection of AIDS orphans and vulnerable children**

JOHANNESBURG, 24 Jun 2005 (IRIN) - Lesotho's parliamentarians gathered recently in the capital Maseru to deliberate upon a new Bill, which seeks to protect AIDS orphans and vulnerable children (OVC).

To date, the situation of children in the tiny mountain kingdom has been exacerbated by the serious gaps in existing legal and policy frameworks that are neither child-friendly nor work in the best interests of the child.

According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), more than 70 of the country's people die from AIDS-related illnesses every day, leaving behind a growing legacy of OVC with little or no protection and guidance.

"As Basotho people and Parliamentarians, we must invest in children today, or there will be no more adults tomorrow", Minister of Justice, Human Rights, Rehabilitation and Law and Constitutional Affairs, Refiloe Moses Masemene told the gathering.

The country's humanitarian crisis - fuelled by the dual impact of AIDS and

poverty - has reached such an advanced stage that it has awakened a collective recognition of the need to catalyse immediate, concrete and effective responses.

A recent UN country assessment found that 59 percent of the population are currently living below the poverty line, and about 40 percent of the population fall into the "ultra-poor" category.

However, UNICEF Resident Representative Dr Bertrand Desmoulins noted in a statement: "It should be emphasised that the pandemic has helped to focus more starkly on the plight of many other children, besides orphans, who are in need of special protection."

Stressing the need for "decisive action", Desmoulins cautioned authorities against debate that did not lead to concrete results.

Already in drafting for the past four years, the new Bill will make provisions on a number of issues for various groups of children who were never before regarded in child legislation.

It will cover family property, adoption, fostering, child friendly courtrooms and language, mechanisms for monitoring child rights and substance abuse.

"The Child Protection and Welfare Bill is an excellent tool and a monumental step forward to show the nation that we are not complacently watching our children suffer, while they struggle to survive but, that we are rising up to the challenge and pledging our support," Sefora Tsiu, of the Department of Social Welfare, confirmed.

Although well-received, UNICEF is concerned that the Bill risked the danger of becoming "just another paper work", while the situation of children continued to deteriorate.

The agency has called for the greater role of parliamentarians in influencing and monitoring national budgets and ensuring that sufficient funds are allocated and programmes are in place to effectively implement it.

"Parliamentarians have an obligation and are accountable to the people who elect them. The key sectors, civil society organisations and the UN system are willing to provide you with the necessary information, data and support to facilitate action and regular follow up on the well-being of Basotho children," Desmoulins confirmed.

© UNICEF/Giacomo Pirozzi  
24 June 2005

## **Public Private Partnership to Develop New Maseru Hospital**

The Government of Lesotho and the International Finance Corporation have signed an agreement for the latter organisation to advise Lesotho on the design and implementation of a public-private partnership to develop a new hospital in Maseru.

The agreement was signed by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Dr Timothy Thahane and acting executive vice president of the IFC, Mr. Assaad Jabre at IFC headquarters in Washington in the United States on July 7.

The public-private partnership model spearheaded by IFC in Lesotho has been recognised by many governments as fundamental for mobilizing expertise, and using technology to improve infrastructure and deliver services efficiently and at an affordable cost, according to Dr. Thahane.

Mr. Jabre said governments are increasingly turning to the private sector to deliver projects in such key areas as transport, power, municipal

services, health and education.

Public-private partnerships have become an effective way to leverage private sector experience and capital to expand access to improved infrastructure and public services, he said.

The new hospital will replace the existing facility, the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, now over 50 years old, and serve as a national referral hospital.

*The Lesotho Government Online*  
11 July 2005

## **Business Against HIV/AIDS**

Local business has donated a CD4 Count machine worth M240,000.00 to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. The machine takes 250 tests a day.

Minister of Tourism, Environment and Culture Ms. Lebohang Nts'inyi presenting the equipment on behalf business people who she said, preferred to remain anonymous, revealed that this was in response to a request by the Minister, Dr. Motloheloa Phooko.

Dr. Phooko said it is the responsibility of every Mosotho to take part in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Assistance such as this one allowed the Ministry to open more clinics that deliver antiretroviral drug services in the country, he said.

*The Lesotho Government Online*  
13 July 2005

## **LDF: Eight Involved in 1998 Arson in Court**

Eight members of the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) charged with alleged involvement in incidents of arson during the 1998 political unrest are to appear before the Magistrate's court from October 10 to 14.

The accused are alleged to have taken part in the burning down of houses belonging to senior government officials during the 1998 political unrest.

Magistrate Mrs. 'Mafelile Ralebese said the case was being rescheduled to October because one of the Counsel for the defence, Advocate Lepeli Molapo, who had just joined the defence team, has ongoing matters before the court which he has to attend to first.

The postponement was also aimed at affording one of the accused time to settle his legal representation issues.

Mrs. Ralebese noted with concern that the case has been delayed for a long time. It is in the interest of justice that the case proceeds to its finality, she said.

The case is prosecuted by Mr. Gareth Justine Leppan, while the defence team is composed of, among others, Advocates Moloantoa Khasipe and Lepeli Molapo.

*The Lesotho Government Online*  
27 July 2005

## **High Court Now Has Three Female Justices**

The third female judge of the Lesotho High Court, Justice Nthomeng Majara (42) was sworn in by the Chief Justice, Justice Mahapela Lehohla at the

Royal Palace in Maseru on July 25.

The other two female judges are Justices Kelello Guni and 'M'aSeshophe Hlajoane. The swearing in of Justice Majara brings to 10 the number of Judges of the Lesotho High Court.

Justice Majara attained her BA Law degree in 1984, her LLB in 1992 and Masters in Law degree in 1997.

She has worked as a Lecturer at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and has also been a magistrate.

The ceremony was witnessed by King Letsie III, the Prime Minister Mr Pakalitha Mosisili, Judges of the High Court and other senior government ministers.

*The Lesotho Government Online*  
27 July 2005

## **Recycled Waste is Profitable**

Empty beer and soft drinks cans, plastic bottles and the national flower, plastic carrier bags, can be used in job creation and sustainable environmental development, says the WRAP.

The Waste and Resource Action Program (WRAP), a non-governmental organization established in 2002 to promote the potential of recycled waste, is currently engaged in a campaign to raise awareness about opportunities around recyclable materials.

The Programme's spokesperson, Mr. Motho Raphoka, said the campaign will involve the collection of all recyclable waste in the country, not only to make Lesotho a cleaner and better place to live in but also as a vehicle for poverty reduction and sustainable development.

WRAP studies show that there are more than 230 recycling companies in South Africa and that Lesotho can copy the same for both profit and job creation.

So far six district member societies (DMS) have been established in Maseru and are already working on collecting recyclable waste such as scrap metal; used beverage cans; used paper and plastic; used vehicle oil and others, to generate income.

The aim is for the programme to have covered the whole country by the end of the year and that by next year, 20 DMSs should be fully running in each of the 10 districts, Raphoka said.

*The Lesotho Government Online*  
14 July 2005

**KHOTSO – PULA – NALA**