



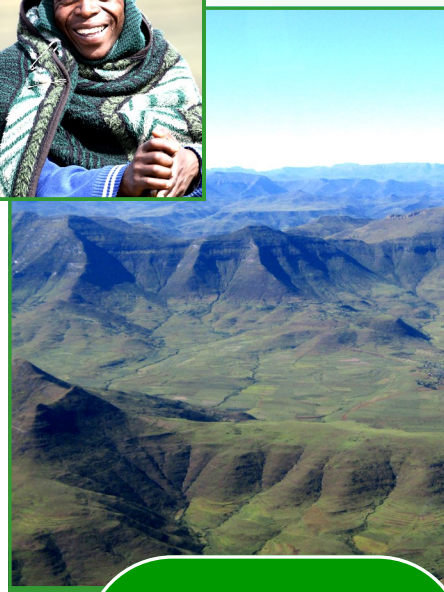
SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme



The GEF Small Grants Programme

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The GEF Small Grants Programme in Lesotho Results in OP 6



The GEF Small Grants Programme in OP 6

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the GEF, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and it is executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Grants are made directly to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) including national and local Non Governmental Organizations with priority for Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Farmers Associations, Scientific Community, Women Groups and Youth and Children Organizations and other recognized community entities.

The SGP recognizes the key role CSOs play as a resource and constituency for environment and development concerns. These entities should be involved directly or indirectly in natural resources management and other activities that support livelihoods, empower communities and most importantly contribute towards environmental protection.

What's our story?

SGP in Lesotho started financing projects in 2008 and has succeeded in funding and providing technical support for more than 50 projects implemented by more than 40 CSOs country wide. The grant making has generated lessons that informed grant making in Operational Phase 6 (OP 6). For OP 6, SGP has adopted a landscape/seascape approach to better focus grant-making and promote strategic programming and clustering of small grant projects with the aim to achieve greater impact and lead to synergies and opportunities for scaling up.

Our priority landscape in OP 6?

Following a consultative process, the Senqu River Basin is prioritized for SGP intervention in OP 6. This is in recognition of the ecosystem features:

- ◆ global significance in terms of the GEF SGP focal areas,
- ◆ opportunities for community action and integrated approaches,
- ◆ potential for synergy with GEF full size projects and other programmes and government initiatives in the landscape.

However, **up to 30%** of available grants can be availed for strategic projects outside the priority landscape.

Eligible Activities?

SGP grant-making in OP6 was guided by 4 "strategic initiatives" which are multi-focal in character. These are presented in the diagram on the next page.

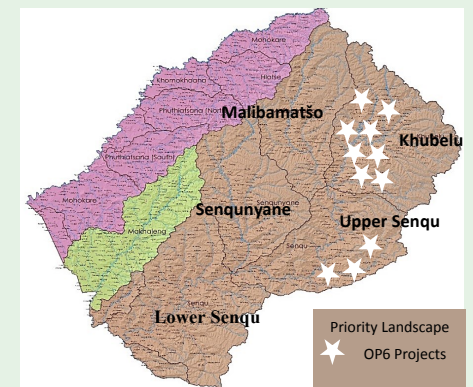
- ◆ Community Landscape/Seascape conservation
- ◆ Climate smart innovative agroecology
- ◆ Low carbon energy access co-benefits
- ◆ Local to global chemical management coalitions

Overview

The GEF SGP in Lesotho, through consensus by key stakeholders in Lesotho, is focusing its intervention in the Senqu River Basin as a priority landscape during the sixth Operational Phase (OP6). The Landscape, which is largely a mountain ecosystem, is home to sources of major rivers, the Maloti Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site - Sehlabathebe National Park (Lesotho Component of the Heritage Site), the Ramsar Site and the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and many more projects and natural and cultural heritage resources of national significance. Inhabitants of the basin are rural communities subsisting on rainfed agriculture, livestock farming with wool and mohair production as the mainstay of the economy; they are highly dependent on biomass for energy and have some of the lowest literacy rates in the country, with accessibility being one of the greatest challenges in the area.

The Interventions

The priority landscape was subdivided into five watersheds: Malibamatšo, Khubelu, Senqunyane, Upper Senqu and lower Senqu. In alignment to the salient features of the landscape, two watersheds were prioritized for Grant-making in OP 6: Khubelu and Upper Senqu, covering two districts namely, Mokhotlong and Qacha's Nek, with the funded projects largely located in Mokhotlong. Of the total resources allocated to the Country Programme for OP 6, the bulk was awarded to regular projects (66%) followed by capacity development projects (20%) and the COMPACT Project (8%), all within the priority landscape. None of the resources were awarded to projects outside the priority landscape. Project focus was by and large on sustainable land management with special focus on sustainable rangeland management and wetlands rehabilitation.



The Senqu River Basin and OP6 Projects Location



Environmental Protection

- ◆ Using the "*matsema*" approach, 6 CSOs in Mokhotlong District have cleared invasive shrubs from severely degraded rangelands, constructing rehabilitation structures thereby putting back more than 4,000 hectares of land back to productive use with the water table and water retaining capacity of wetlands all together covering more than 10 ha improved. Wildlife such as bush bucks spotted in community conserved areas where they have not been seen in a long time.
- ◆ More than 3,500 livestock farmers, both men and women, in more than 13 villages in Qacha's Nek and Mokhotlong were equipped with sustainable range resources management skills and are adopting sustainable land management practices.
- ◆ More than 100 herders are participating in a Green-A-Post Campaign in Mokhotlong to determine the most compliant group to: agreed range management plans, well protected wetlands and least invasive shrub invested cattle post area among other criteria.
- ◆ At least 9 km of fire belts constructed protecting more than 8,000 ha of rangelands and settlements from wild fires
- ◆ All interventions are contributing to the objectives of the Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM) a platform of 4 countries, including Lesotho, jointly managing the water resources of the Orange-Senqu River Basin.
- ◆ Grantmaking is initiated in the COMPACT project at Sehlabathebe National Park, the Lesotho component of the Maloti Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site. Local communities are upbeat about being drivers of the programme.

Capacity Development and Social Inclusion

- ◆ 8 CBOs assisted to develop project proposals through planning grants
- ◆ A capacity development grant awarded for mentorship of 8 small CBOs resulting in improved reporting and project management
- ◆ More than 50 CSOs, local farmers and local authorities participated in dialogues with policy and decision makers to deliberate on threats to mountain ecosystems, challenges facing mountain communities managing the ecosystems with the Voices escalated to the global level at the 2018 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.
- ◆ Jointly with the UNESCO National Focal Point, accessed a capacity development grant for the Sehlabathebe Community Conservation Forum (CCF), an entity representing the local community in the management of Sehlabathebe National Park. The CCF is now a registered entity.
- ◆ More than 100 herders are participating in a "Green-A-Cattle Post" campaign, to highlight the critical role played by this group in sustainable land and water management. The Campaign is run in partnership with Department of Range under the Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation, GROW and Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation. A documentary is being developed to capture the Campaign.
- ◆ All 8 grantees being mentored by GROW under a capacity building grant, have received training on planning and reporting, budget tracking and compliance, leadership and conflict resolution, fire management, with the result that projects delivery and reporting have improved significantly and there is increased networking among the grantees. Three of the grantees in Qacha's Nek received training on beekeeping from a fellow grantee.
- ◆ All in all more than 3,500 people, majority being women followed by men and youth, have benefitted from SGP interventions in OP 6: though trainings, awareness campaigns, Matsema, improved rangelands, livestock prophylaxis resulting in marked reduction in mortality rate of lambs for example, and many other initiatives.