

December 2014



SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme

LESOTHO

Programme Brief

"Effectively support the creation of global environmental benefits and the safeguarding of the global environment through community and local solutions that complement and add value to the national and global level action"



The GEF-SGP is a corporate programme of the GEF, funded by GEF and implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF implementing agencies and executed by UNOPS

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The GEF Small Grants Programme in Lesotho

Background

The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) is a corporate programme of the GEF, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the GEF implementing agencies, and it is executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The GEF SGP, which was established in 1992, and started its operations in Lesotho in December 2007, is now entering its sixth Operational Phase (OP 6). Overall guidance to the Country Programme is provided by a National Steering Committee (NSC) comprising representation from civil society, academia, National GEF Focal Point, convention focal points, the private sector and the UNDP Country Office for Lesotho, with more than 50% coming from the civil society (CSOs). The NSC is guided by a Country Programme Strategy (CPS), a living document linking global and national goals, developed through a consultative process and reviewed periodically to align it with GEF priorities and those of Lesotho as outlined in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP). In gearing up for GEF 6, the CPS will be reviewed to align it with the GEF 6 strategic priorities.

The National Vision recognizes the importance of promotion of a culture of good care for land and the environment, and the role of communities as resource users and civil society organizations (CSOs) as partners in environment and natural resources management. These are the entities through which GEF SGP channels funds for community environmental protection initiatives that do not only generate environment benefits but also generate livelihood support benefits.

The Grant Making Process

The Lesotho Country Programme is in its 6th year of operation and has gone through 6 grant making cycles with an average of about 40 concept papers submitted in response to calls for proposals

issued through local newspapers and the mailing list of the SGP Secretariat in Lesotho.

Efforts have been augmented to assist eligible entities to develop well designed projects that fit the GEF criteria as a basis for the monitoring and evaluation process. This is done through the proposal development process from

SGP Goal in GEF 6

"Effectively support the creation of global environmental benefits and the safeguarding of the global environment through community and local solutions that complement and add value to the national and global level action"

project concept development, field appraisal through to full project proposal formulation.

The Programme has continued to make use of every opportunity to publicize SGP interventions, including among other things facilitating participation of SGP grantees in a radio programme titled "Sports and Climate Change" aired by a local radio station through its partnership with the Lesotho Council of

NGOs, and other programmes on the national radio and Television; and through official project launches organized by grantees.

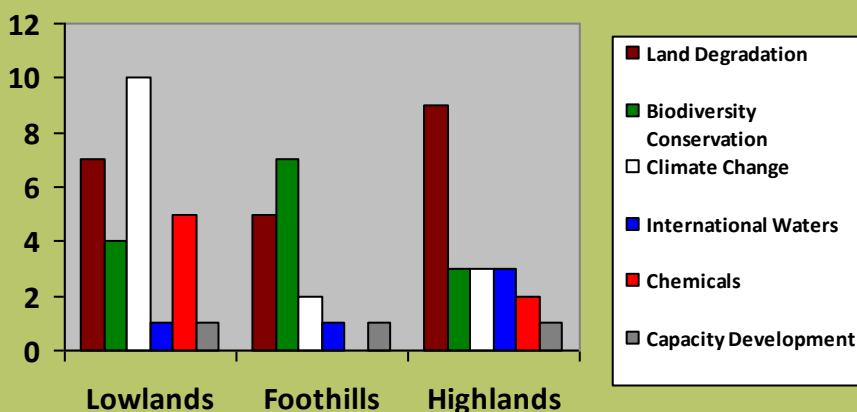
Deliberate effort continues to be made to fund capacity building projects to enhance the impact of the Country Programme Portfolio results.

The GEF –SGP Lesotho Project Portfolio

There has been a steady growth of project portfolio during OP5. The portfolio grew from **17 in OP4** to **49 by December 2014**, bringing the total amount of funds awarded in grants, to CSOs, to more than USD 2 million. With more awareness being created about the environment and the challenges facing the country and more CSOs being aware of and accessing the SGP, grant awards are now distributed across all focal areas, though still skewed towards land degradation and biodiversity conservation. Climate change mitigation, chemical management and wetlands rehabilitation projects are trickling in slowly.

Grantee composition is still biased towards NGOs closely followed by CBOs with research institutions coming last as apart from the government Agricultural Research Department there is the National University of Lesotho. It is worth noting that among the NGO and CBO categories, we have women's

Project Location by Region by Ecological Zone



The GEF Small Grants Programme in Lesotho cont'd

groups, youth led, youth and children organizations and farmers associations. One capacity development project bringing together all the SGP grantees together was organized in the form of a Best Practice and Knowledge Fair.

The Chart above gives a summary of the portfolio of projects, their distribution by focal areas and across three ecological regions namely, mountains, foothills and lowlands.

The Portfolio of Projects and Results Achieved

Grant making started in earnest in 2008. As highlighted in the Country Programme Strategy (CPS), environmental problems occur countrywide and urgent intervention is required in all the ecological regions of Lesotho. It was on the basis of this that the CPS validation workshop recommended that the Programme be implemented countrywide for all to benefit. Nonetheless, every effort was made to align projects thematically and focusing on strategically selected areas. This was informed by the following considerations:

(i) The majority of rural and vulnerable communities live in the mountain region and depend heavily on natural resources for subsistence. The mountain region is also host to biodiversity of global significance and wetlands which are sources of major river systems in Southern Africa. The region was therefore given priority for *biodiversity conservation and rehabilitation and protection of wetlands and rangelands*.

(ii) The lowland and foothill regions which comprise arid, semi-arid and freshwater ecosystems will also be considered. These regions being the most densely populated, less vegetated and generally suitable for crop farming, have complex environmental degradation problems hence the regions were prioritized for *integrated land and water management and waste management and pollution control*.

A set of some project profiles from the country portfolio is presented in the pages that follow. The rest of the project

profiles will be presented in the next Programme Brief.

Challenges

By virtue of it being a people centered Programme targeting the most vulnerable and less advantaged, and also venturing to go to even to the never reached places, it is bound to get some challenges. The following are some of the challenges that the Programme had to tackle since its establishment:

Challenges

- ◆ The CSO network in Lesotho is generally weak, particularly those organizations involved in environmental protection work. These CSOs require a lot of monitoring, guidance and mentoring
- ◆ The majority of grantees have never accessed any donor funding before and need a lot of coaching and mentoring; compliance is a major challenge for them
- ◆ Lack of access to ICT limits communication and access to information and knowledge and dissemination of results
- ◆ Non-compliance to agreed reporting schedules and formats
- ◆ CSOs thrive on very limited donor funding which is being sought by all including the CSOs, government and others. High demand for the limited SGP resources
- ◆ High turnover in CSOs which impacts negatively in project performance and sustainability of projects results over the long term
- ◆ Programme interventions are scattered too thinly on the ground with the result that it may take long for a significant impact to be realized. This is a valuable lesson that will inform strategic directions for SGP Lesotho in OP6

Some notable quotes:

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the SGP Team for their commitment to the Programme. They have on several occasions left their comfortable offices in Maseru to reach out to even hard to reach places to ensure that all get equal opportunity in accessing the limited resources.

Mathaba 14/02/2014

The SGP provides a rare opportunity that we should all cherish and we should use these resources put at our disposal wisely, and in a transparent manner. We should start thinking of ways to sustain the results achieved beyond SGP as like all other Programmes it will, one day, come to an end.

Minister for Tourism, Environment and Culture - Hon 'Mamahele Radebe 13/02/2014

The University does not enjoy a lot of funding to pursue ground breaking research that can take this country out of this state of ever increasing poverty and unemployment rates. We have the expertise and we are available and willing to get into partnerships for research that can generate jobs for the youth of Lesotho. The SGP has ignited a glimmer of hope, we can only hope that others will follow suit.

Dr. Mosotho George - 18/07/2013

We never thought we would see the day when we would enter the UN House without fear of being looked down upon. We thought the UN was for the rich and educated. The UN is our home we can visit the SGP at anytime without fear of being turned back.

Matumelo Mpota - 15/11/2014

Table below gives a brief summary of the results achieved thus far

Focal Area and Portfolio Characteristics	Results Achieved
<u>Biodiversity Conservation</u> * Preservation of agro-biodiversity * In-situ and ex-situ conservation of biodiversity resources * Preservation of cultural heritage	* San rock art caves at Mokema and Ha Baroana protected and access controlled to preserve the heritage resources and to contribute to ecotourism * Community Botanical gardens established at Tšenekeng in Semonkong, in Tšehlanyane National Park and at Ha Baroana; establishment of plantations of different species of aloes that are used for herbal remedies and cosmetics production in Mokhotlong and Makhaleng * Preservation of the gene pool of local chicken breeds and grain crops; and promotion of their use and production * Restoration of wetland and of rangelands
<u>Land Degradation</u> * Demonstration of sustainable rangeland management practices and wetlands restoration * Integrated watershed management, river bank protection and conservation farming	* Former sheep stud rangeland in Mokhotlong revived and sustainable range management demonstrated and supporting a viable dairy project; * Wetlands being restored (18 in Semonkong, 8 in Setlekeetseng, 1 in Mokema, 3 in Makhaleng) and there is already marked improvement in their condition and a very positive attitude from the local communities * More than 50 ha of land countrywide protected with conservation works and marginal lands under productive use—such as fodder production
<u>Climate Change (Mitigation)</u> * Reduction of GHG emissions and energy access * Reduction of pressure on biomass and energy efficiency	* Demonstration of renewable energy technologies - solar for powering a hatchery (replacing a diesel generator) and lighting for an indigenous chicken farm in Tebang—Mafeteng; powering of audiovisual equipment and establishment of local climate change platforms; water pumping; demonstration of bio-energy technologies through production of biogas from waste water in institutions and algae from sewer treatment ponds * Awareness about climate change and mitigation strategies and promotion of fuel efficient stoves (900) to reduce biomass harvesting for energy and in-door pollution and indigenous and fruit trees planting in Seforong, Patlong and Malealea
<u>International Waters</u> * Integrated watershed management and wetland restoration	* Soil and water conservation works preventing possible sedimentation of the upper reaches of Senqu/Orange river within the Khubelu catchment * Restoration of wetlands feeding the Maletsunyane falls, one of the highest single drop waterfalls in Southern Africa
<u>Chemicals</u> * Safe handling and use of agro-chemicals and integrated pest control management * Reduction of solid waste burning and promotion of safe waste disposal	* 30 extension workers, 50 lead farmers and 3 umbrella farmers association from Mafeteng and Mphahle's Hook equipped with skills for safe handling of agro-chemicals and conservation farming; and through them more than a 1000 farmers have been reached through campaigns * Alternative dipping techniques (8 mobile spray tanks for 8 woolsheds) to minimize environmental contamination while also reducing defaulting rate piloted in Mokhotlong * Waste paper and plastic recycling in selected schools through sale to local recyclers and manufacturing of glazing tiles for sale to households * Relocation of a dumpsite with potential to contaminate the head waters of Senqu/Orange river in Mokhotlong
<u>Capacity Development</u> Showcasing of SGP supported interventions and promotion of networking	* More than 40 CSOs have been capacitated to engage in community environmental protection initiatives and these CSOs and others that are not SGP grantees converged together with experts to showcase environmental protection innovations and share experiences in the presence of policy makers and donors

Some Project Profiles from the Country Programme Portfolio

Title: Preservation of the Unique Gene Pool of Lesotho's Indigenous Chickens
Grantee: Rural Self-help Development Association
Location: Ha Notsi, Mafeteng
SGP Contribution: USD 32,660
Co-Financing (cash & in-kind): USD 91,363
Project Duration: 2009 - 2011
People Served: Farmers Associations in Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek
Focal Area: Biodiversity Conservation

Context

Biodiversity loss is a global environment problem that affects livelihoods of people of the world. For Lesotho loss of the gene pool of village chicken poses several significant problems such as lack of disease resistance, the genes of which are available in village chickens. These chickens, a significant buffer against poor nutrition and poverty reduction for subsistence farmers, have foraged freely in villages without requiring expensive feed and building their immunity to most local diseases since the first missionaries brought chickens to the region. Local farmers are increasingly opting for introduced/exotic breeds over village chickens. Introduced species offer greater weight-gain, larger eggs and are more readily available; however, they are more susceptible to disease and have greater ongoing costs. Lesotho has several suppliers of introduced species, in particular the Potchefstroom Koekoek.

Project Description

The overall objective of the project is to conserve the gene pool of indigenous/village chickens and to provide a buffer against poor nutrition. This the project achieved this by establishing a breeding and demonstration site in 2009, creating awareness on socio-economic and environmental value of indigenous/village chicken and capacity building and dissemination of chickens through the *pass-on-the-gift system*. The pilot demonstration set out to keep and maintain the true to type Basotho chicken found in and outside Mafeteng district in order to expand the gene pool. Through SGP facilitation, additional resources were secured from the Japanese Aid to enhance project results by enhancing the solar pv system and water harvesting to meet the energy and water needs of the farm.

Environmental Impact

- Greening of breeding operations by replacing diesel generator with solar energy to power the hatchery and lighting for the breeding farm, which is not connected to the national electricity grid
- Increased number of households keeping village



chicken thereby enhancing preservation of the gene pool of village chicken

Socio-economic impact

- Increased number of households keeping village chicken (more than a 1000 beneficiaries)
- More than 500 villagers in the vicinity of the farm also supplied with clean water
- Farm now has over 500 village birds with multitudes queueing for eggs and live birds for own keeping

Policy Impact

- Department of livestock services working closely with NGO and tapping from the research an knowledge generated
- Impact of other poultry initiatives augmented. The village chicken are surrogates for popular Koekoek chicken which do not brood
- Villages within the buffer zone benefiting from vaccination campaigns
- Partnerships created among government, civil society organizations and donor agencies.

Title: The Implementation of Tšenekeng Communal Botanical Garden (Semonkong) in the Mountainous Rural Areas of the Maseru District.
Grantee: Serumula Development Association
Location: Semonkong, Maseru
SGP Contribution: USD 36,759
In-kind Co-Financing: USD 36,758
Project Duration:
Number of People Served:
Focal Area: Biodiversity Conservation

Context

In the rural settings of Semonkong, against which the botanical garden project is premised, the majority of people is unemployed and depends mainly on subsistence agriculture. Also there is generally high dependence on use of traditional medicine, a situation that results in over-harvesting of many herbal plants therefore leading to threats of biodiversity loss.

Project Description

In order to address these social and environmental challenges, SDA proposes to facilitate the implementation of a conservation programme *in situ*; by establishing a community botanical garden. The project identifies as key areas; issues pertaining to training and capacity building of rural communities to enhance sustainable natural resources management. It focuses on empowering the communities to conserve their biodiversity resources and demonstrate, using simple practical and adaptable methods, that man and nature

can co-exist. In addition to addressing specified environmental obligations outlined in the proposal document, the project promotes implementation of income generating activities for poverty alleviation.

Environmental Impact

About 1.5ha of degraded land has been rehabilitated, some natural habitats restored making the Tšenekeng Community Botanical Garden part of the network of smaller gardens spread across various ecological zones in the country serving as an important herbarium for multiplying and preserving the red data biodiversity resources. Some legally protected species found in the garden include the pineapple flower, spiral aloe and pelargonium.

Socio-economic impact

Twenty people equipped with skills in nursery management, plant propagation, & garden maintenance.

Nursery-based seedling production for sale: This activity involves propagating medicinal and ornamental plants and vegetable seedlings for sale to the community. This project holds potential for success because availability of farming inputs (vegetables seeds &

seedlings) to most farming households remains a serious food security challenge, especially in the remote areas of Semonkong like Tšenekeng. Production of herbal teas is also being considered.

Policy Impact

Contributes in a small but critical way to increase in the coverage of protected areas in the country and in the preservation of red data biodiversity resources.



The spiral aloe growing lavishly in Tšenekeng

Some Project Profiles from the Country Programme Portfolio *cont'd*

Title: Conservation of the Natural Heritage of Ha Baroana Rock Art Centre

Grantee: Ha Baroana Rock Art Centre

Location: Ha Baroana, Thaba Bosiu

SGP Contribution: USD 40,237

In-kind Co-Financing: USD 39,053

Project Duration: 2012–2014

People Served: 4 villages surrounding cave

Focal Area: Biodiversity

Context

The Ha Baroana Rock Art Centre, a national heritage site established by the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC) is in the midst of very dense grassland, as a result the site is prone to wild fires. The result of the fires is loss of the rich natural heritage that is found in abundance on site. Uncontrolled harvesting of the indigenous plants for medicinal use is also a threat to the biodiversity resources that have not been documented.

The major attraction to the site is the *san rock art*. Trespassing by animals and tourists who physically touch paintings threaten their existence. The floor surface of the cave is sandy, so trampling

causes dust that further reduces the quality of the rock art. The Centre is not connected to the national electricity grid, with the result that documentaries and films about the Centre cannot be shown to tourists.

Project Description

The overall objective of the project is to preserve, improve and sustain the natural heritage found at the Centre for the benefit of the current and future generations. This will be achieved through:

- Preservation and protection of the cultural heritage found in the area by protecting and controlling access to the San Rock Art cave (main tourist attraction) found in the area
- Control of veld fires to safeguard the integrity of the natural vegetation found in the area
- Electrification of the Centre to enable full operationalization of the services on offer
- Augmentation of the trout fishing component to enhance ecotourism activities

Environmental Impact

The entire Baroana Rock Art Centre covering 25 *ha* has been designated as a botanical garden and documentation of the flora found in the area is in progress. To preserve the *san rock art*, the cave has been fenced off to control access and the entire cave floor paved to minimize dust. A PV solar system has been installed to power the audiovisual equipment to show films and documentaries about the Centre and to provide lighting to the entire Centre for security.

Socio-economic impact

The Centre was established and developed by the MTEC and later handed over to the local community for joint management and enhancement of the involvement of local communities in nature conservation. The Centre has been assisted to register as an NGO whose management is predominantly youth from neighboring villages. The youth, herders and local authorities have undergone a series of trainings to empower them with skill so sustainably manage and run the facility profitably under the MTEC mentorship.

Policy Impact

The tourism sector is identified as one of the key sectors with potential to take the country forward in this endeavor. The Baroana project aligns itself with the NSDP strategic objective of *protecting, conserving and managing cultural heritage resources*.



Title: Tlokoeng Valley Biodiversity Conservation Project

Grantee: Environmental and Sustainability Education Network of Lesotho (ESENEL)

Location: Tlokoeng, Botha Bothe

SGP Contribution: USD 47,946.00

In-kind Co-Financing: USD 59,020.00

Project Duration: 2012–2014

Number of People Served: Eteleng Thaba Khubelu Association, local community, local schools

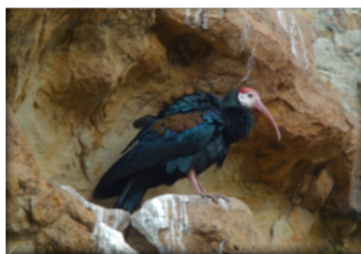
Focal Area: Biodiversity Conservation

Context

Populations of the Southern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus calvus*), a species which is confined to Lesotho, the eastern parts of South Africa and the western parts of Swaziland, have been steadily declining. The species has been classified as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red Data Book. Threats to the Southern Bald Ibis included habitat loss, human interference at breeding sites, and, in Lesotho in particular, the use of Bald Ibis parts for traditional medicinal and ceremonial purposes. ESENEL worked in partnership with a bird specialist from South Africa, members of the local community, local schools and local government departments.

Project Description

Working in partnership with an Ornithologist from South Africa, Dr. Johan Van Niekerk, ESENEL ventured into reducing threats to bird populations, and the Bald Ibis in particular, by educating the local community and developing eco-tourism activities as an alternative livelihood



Young Bald Ibis

option. The project also aimed to relieve anthropogenic pressure on the wetlands, due to competing uses and limited knowledge and valuation of their ecological significance. This was achieved through awareness creation and training about environment and nature particularly birds and wetlands in Tlokoeng, threats to these resources and strategies to conserve them and monitor their status.

Environmental Impact

A lot of interest in birds particularly the Southern Bald Ibis, has been generated. Educational trails involve learning about owls, Southern Bald Ibises, the Landscape, wetlands, *Protea* forest and a variety of bird species found in the valley. One hundred and thirty eight (138) species of birds have been identified in the area and their status and breeding patterns determined. The Southern Bald Ibis is a permanent resident roosting and nesting in two sites; plans and strategies for their protection are in place. There is an observable increase

in both species variety and bird populations in Tlokoeng; and a significant decrease in bird killing incidences. There is also significant improvement in knowledge with regard to wetlands.

Socio-economic impact

Etelang Thaba Khubelu, a local association, has been assisted to register to further strengthen the organizational structure for nature conservation and to boost ecotourism as a livelihood support strategy. Thirteen herders/herd boys and about 20 youth from the community have been trained in as facilitators and as tour guides. This team has facilitated numerous educational trails for the local community. Economic returns from environmental protection initiatives usually take long to be realized, while the community is very eager to see and enjoy the benefits of their conservation efforts.

Policy Impact

The project is contributing directly to the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. This initiative is contributing immensely to the protection of the world's bird population and species variety.



Some Project Profiles from the Country Programme Portfolio *cont'd*

Title: Improved Stoves-Improved Livelihoods-Improved Environment (ISILIE)
Project No: LSO/SGP/OP4/Y2/ORE/2009/09
Grantee: Technologies for Economic Development (TED)
Location: Seforong, Ha Sekake and Malealea
SGP Contribution: USD 47,000
In-kind Co-Financing: USD 47,000
Project Duration: 2012 – 2014 (2 years)
Number of People Served: ≥ 900 households
Focal Area: Climate Change (Land Degradation, Biodiversity)

Context

Lesotho is one of the 49 Least Developed Countries. Its mountain grasslands are exceptionally rich in biodiversity, characterized by high endemism and unique habitats which make it one of the world's 20 mountain biodiversity "hotspots". Almost 90% of energy consumption (cooking and space heating) in rural areas is sourced from indigenous biomass consisting of shrubs, wood, crop residues and animal waste. Areas for firewood gathering are scarce and remaining patches of indigenous trees and shrubs are not properly managed. Three villages namely, Ha Sekake (Qacha's Nek), Seforong (Quthing) and Malealea (Mafeteng), were identified by the project as being severely degraded and in need of urgent action.



Project Description

The main objective is to reduce pressure on biomass by increasing cooking and heating efficiency and improving conditions of food preparation and house heating through promotion of fuel-efficient stoves. Key activities include creation of opportunities for rural communities to efficient-

ly use the remaining biomass and engage in biodiversity conservation by among other things re-introducing indigenous shrubs in degraded areas, cutting down harvesting rates, thereby allowing the vegetative cover to regenerate. In the long run this will contribute to improving the carbon sinks towards mitigation of climate change impacts and achievement of improved livelihoods and improved local and global environment through up-scaling the dissemination of firewood-saving ARC/SSM household stoves in rural areas in Lesotho.



Environmental Impact

The project has created opportunities for more than 900 households to engage in sustainable use of biomass and biodiversity conservation, thereby allowing the vegetative cover to regenerate. On their own initiative and as a pre-requisite for participation in ISILIE, target communities are planting indigenous shrub varieties in designated areas, an initiative supported by the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation. Stacks of fuelwood that are a norm for rural households were not observed in beneficiary households, during a monitoring visit, a phenomenon which is yet to be re-confirmed over the coming years.

Socio-economic impact

For 900 households that have stoves, exhaustion of CO₂ causing in-door pollution and fuelwood/shrub gathering are slowly decreasing. Beneficiaries indicate that stoves have relieved women and girls from time consuming fire wood collection and that cooking is not as hazardous and cumbersome as before. The 900 households have each contributed M50 for the stoves, money that goes into a revolving fund for income generating activities.

Policy Impact

Project contributes to the national strategic objective of increasing energy conservation, safety and access to alternative energy products and efficient technologies.

Title: Demonstration & promotion of clean energy technologies and water harvesting techniques for improved household vegetable production

Grantee: The Bana Project of Lesotho
Location: Ha 'Masana-Mazenod, Maseru
SGP Contribution: USD 29,586
In-kind Co-Financing: USD 29,951
Project Duration: 2012 – 2013 (12 months)
People Served: more than 400 orphans from 7 villages
Focal Area: Climate Change Mitigation
Context

It has come to the realization of Basotho that climate change is for real. Weather patterns have changed with the result that community livelihood strategies have been disrupted, particularly agriculture which sustains the majority of Basotho. Climate change is linked to deforestation; greenhouse gas emissions from biomass burning and other sources such as coal and petroleum based fuels. The Centre reckons it is also contributing as it depends on biomass to meet the cooking energy (open fire) needs of its feeding programme. Another challenge facing the Centre is disposal of sewer from its ablution facilities (pit latrines) and collection and efficient use of water.

Project Description

The Centre has decided to go green by adopting and demonstrating environmentally friendly renewable energy technologies by harnessing solar energy and bioenergy to meet the cooking and water pumping needs of the Cen-

tre. The children that are being taken care of by the Centre are being exposed to these technologies, hygiene and cleanliness, waste management and tree planting and how these activities contribute towards climate change mitigation.

Environmental Impact

Awareness has been created about general hygiene, cleanliness and renewable energy technologies. A bio-digester has been installed at the Centre to demonstrate solid waste management through use of organic waste to generate energy. The bio-digester is fed by waste from the piggery farm and the Centre's latrines and all organic waste generated at the Centre and around. The cooking energy needs of the Centre are met with the generated gas which has replaced open fire cooking. A solar water pumping system has been installed and the Centre is selling water to the community in the project vicinity.

To promote safe and efficient use of water, a roof water harvesting system has been installed to cater for the Centre's horticultural needs and this is complemented by the organic fertilizer from the bio-digester.



Socio-economic impact

Grantee membership has since grown from 35 to 58 members. Members who had dropped out had run away from the pressure of maintaining the weekly feeding programme for more than 400 orphaned and vulnerable children out of their own pockets. The relief is a result of income from the sale of water, the piggery project, fuel wood collection/buying bottled gas and savings made from electricity for water pumping. Members of the organization have acquired skills on pig farming. They have been able to raise 10 piglets 8 of which have already been sold to local butcheries with two kept to continue with the production. To enhance sustainability of the piggery initiative, breeding services are provided to the pig farmers in the vicinity, who in turn pay back the services with 2 piglets per service.

Policy Impact

The project is contributing to improvement access to and promotion of affordable renewable energy options. Over and above access to energy, the Bana Project, which is taking care of over 400 orphaned and vulnerable children, is complementing government's efforts to provide livelihoods to now more than 220,000 orphaned children countrywide.

Some Project Profiles from the Country Programme Portfolio *cont'd*

Title: Adoption and Promotion of Renewable Energy Technologies through Construction of a Biogas Digester at Matelile Community Development Centre (MCD C)

Grantee: Matelile Tajane Community Development Trust (MTCDT)

SGP Contribution: USD 22,678

In-kind Co-Financing: USD 15,258

Project Durations: 2009 - 2010 (12 months)

People Served: Matelile and Tajane local communities and others who use the Centre's conference facilities

Context

The Matelile community depends on biomass for fuel for cooking and heating in an area that is very dry with the result that it is badly eroded. Gas and paraffin which are alternatives have become increasingly expensive and unaffordable to the majority of the community members with the result that even more people have now resorted to biomass for fuel. The Centre as well has to look for alternative and affordable sources of energy to meet its daily cooking and heating needs.

Project Description

The Trust intended to encourage and assist its members to construct biogas digesters at their households as a way of reducing the number of people who depend on biomass for energy thereby destroying the environment. The technology

was also intended to address the sanitation problem in the villages. The Trust has constructed a biogas digester at the Centre for production of biogas to demonstrate and promote renewable and environment friendly energy technologies that can be adopted as alternatives to biomass and other sources that damage the environment through land degradation and air pollution. As part of the demonstration, the Centre uses the biogas to meet its cooking requirements; the treated residual water for vegetable production at the Centre.

Environmental Impact

Sewage disposal is a thing of the past and as a result the volume of sewer to the treatment Centre is reduced; negative attitude towards use of sewer as a source of energy is slowly going away; and the number of institutions adopting and demonstrating renewable energy technologies and general awareness about these technologies is increasing.

Socio-economic impact

Costs to meet energy needs of the Centre have been reduced resulting in the savings being used to improved livelihoods of more orphaned and vulnerable children and households that are supported by MTCDT than before. Through its connections, the MTCDT has now installed three green houses for vegetable production and the fertilizer from the bio digester is contributing immensely to the production.

Policy Impact

The intervention has demonstrated a technology for turning waste into energy and creating awareness about renewable energy technologies. This initiative has generated a lot of interest which lead to installation of biogas digesters in two other institutions.



Title: Promotion of Renewable Energy Technologies

Grantee: Good Shepherd Centre for Teenage Mothers

Location: Ha Makujoe, Sehlabeng - Maseru

SGP Contribution: USD 14,000

In-kind Co-Financing: USD 32,504

Project Duration: 2013—2014 (12 months)

People Served: on-campus community and those coming for health care services

Focal Area: Climate Change (*Mitigation*)

Context

The Good Shepherd Centre for Teenage Mothers and Health Care Centre, a non-profit making organization run by Roman Catholic Sisters, is missioned to provide charitable services primarily to vulnerable women and children and other poor people. The Centre has been instrumental as a demonstration facility for small scale projects on agriculture and food security focusing more on planting forest and fruit tree, broilers, piggery and crop farming with the community. Challenges include management of animal waste generated from its agricultural projects coupled with poor sewage (from its various facilities) disposal methods which included among other things transfer of waste from filled-up pit latrines to pits dug within the campus; dependence on bottled gas, coal and wood for energy (hostel for teenage mothers, early childhood centre, convent, kitchen and the health centre); operations that carry risks of environmental contamination .

Project Description

The overall objective of the intervention is to promote environmental conservation through alteration of operations that contaminate the environment and also emit greenhouse gases and demonstration of environmentally friendly renewable energy technologies. Project activities included:

- Creation of awareness, among Makujoe Community, about key factors contributing to climate change Demonstration and promotion of good waste disposal methods and renewable energy technologies through installation of a biogas digester at the Centre.
- Reclamation of the contaminated land on campus
- Promotion of land reclamation and tree planting in the Makujoe Community

Environmental Impact

The risk of environmental contamination resulting

from unhygienic sewer disposal has been eliminated and a renewable energy technology demonstrated through installation of a biogas digester at the Centre. The amount of coal and wood burned to heat water for the teenage mothers hostel has been reduced significantly. The contaminated land is being rehabilitated and put back to productive use.

Socio-economic Impact

The Centre is no longer 100% dependent on bottled gas, wood and coal for energy. The savings made from use of biogas can now be used to meet the other needs of the Centre

Policy Impact

The intervention contributes to the country's programme on access to energy and promotion of renewable energy technologies



Left-Right: Digester during construction and at completion; Good Shepherd Sisters and Teenage Mothers listening attentively during the Awards giving Ceremony to honor those who have supported the Centre.

Some Project Profiles from the Country Programme Portfolio *cont'd*

Title: Wetland Restoration and Conservation Project

Grantee: Katleho 'Moho Association

Location: Semonkong - Maseru

SGP Contribution: USD 33,374

In-kind Co-Financing: USD 19,956

Project Duration: 2009—2013

People Served: Communities from Ha Lesia, Ha Meteketa, Ha Lesala, Ha Moahloli & Ha Phallang

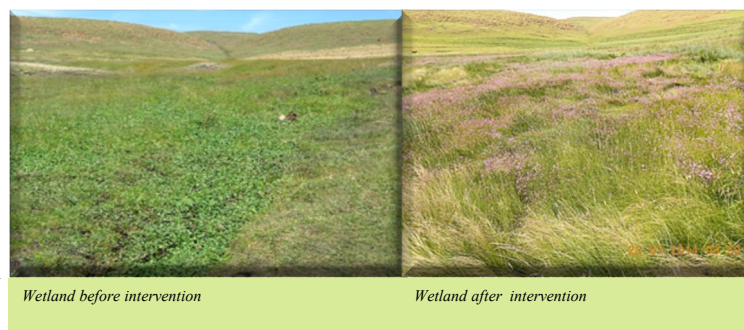
Focal Area: Land Degradation, International Waters

Context

Semonkong is endowed with abundant water resources and lush grasslands which are fast disappearing. The rich biodiversity that thrived in the wetlands is also disappearing. This can be attributed to rapid population growth, urbanization, climate change (intensive drought), overexploitation of the natural resources, overgrazing, soil erosion, and general collapse of traditional management practices. Natural springs, rivers and streams that are main sources of Maletsunyane waterfall, a national monument, are drying up with the result that the waterfall is slowly losing its natural beauty. Water for domestic use is also getting scarce.

Project Description

The main objective of the project is to restore the hydrology of the critical wetlands in order to improve the quantity and quality of water within the 'Maletsunyane catchment'; and to establish



Wetland before intervention

Wetland after intervention

are now in the process of recovery, with notable improvement in vegetative cover and plant diversity; and significantly improved water table. Construction of ponds for livestock drinking have reduced trampling significantly. There is also a noticeable change in attitude among local communities towards wetlands.

Socio-economic impact

A local Lodge owner has built a Craft Centre and put it at the disposal of local communities. Livestock owners are already cutting grass, in a controlled manner, from the wetlands for stallfeeding, while others are harvesting the grass for making handicrafts for income generation. The crafts making component is yet to take root to make the most of the tourists who frequent the Lodge.

Policy Impact

NSDP advocates for reversal of land degradation and desertification and improvement of watershed management; and also for increasing biodiversity conservation and promoting sustainable use, objectives that are in alignment with those of the KMA intervention. It is in view of the work done by KMA that the newly established Division of Environment and Energy Statistics always involve the KMA when they carry out wetlands assessments to keep track of the status of wetlands in Lesotho.

Title: Makhaleng Eco-Tourism and Conservation Initiative

Grantee: Thaba Putsoa Range Development Organization

Location: Makhaleng Ha Simeone - Maseru

SGP Contribution: USD 45,250

In-kind Co-Financing: USD 44,250

Project Duration: 2013—2014 (12 months)

People Served: Ha Simeone community

Focal Area: Land Degradation

Context

The landscape of the Ha Semione is characterized by vast grasslands and wetlands, uniquely shaped sandstone overhangs and rock features, natural rock, a high diversity of indigenous plants, streams of pristine water as well as the powerful Makhaleng waterfall. The wetlands of the Makhaleng especially at Ha Semione are degraded due to overgrazing, veld burning and overharvesting of the grasses found on wetlands. Another common phenomenon is digging trenches and planting willow trees to drain the wetlands and make way for crop production. River bank erosion is also a problem threatening the limited cropland.

Project Description

TPRDO set out to coordinate the restoration and maintenance of the productive potential of the wetlands and fresh water springs of Makhaleng through sustainable rehabilitation and management approaches. With support from the Departments of Environment, Forestry and Land Reclamation and Water Affairs, a series of training workshops on various aspects of sustainable

environment management were held for the community of Ha Simeone – more emphasis was put on wetlands restoration and protection. Demonstration activities on some of the threatened wetlands river banks formed part of the awareness raising and training sessions.

Environmental Impact

There is general awareness about wetlands and their importance in recharging ground water resources and streams and rivers. There is still a perception though that wetlands are a threat to cropland and if left untouched they may take up all the land! Willow trees that had been planted in wetlands have been uprooted and trenches that had been dug to drain the wetland have been plugged. Awareness has been created and a positive attitude towards wetlands is slowly emerging. More support from the relevant government ministries is required to keep the momentum going.

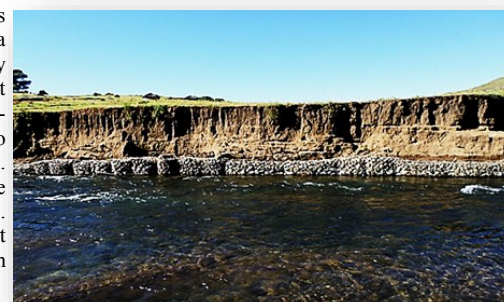
Socio-economic impact

TPRDO is led by youth (young women) whom at the time of project development had just graduated from university and were unemployed. With support from elderly members of the organization they were able to mobilize the local community, local authorities and solicit support from various government ministries to demonstrate and initiate environmental protection activities to safeguard cropland and the natural heritage of Ha Simeone. These youth have been

empowered to mobilize resources and project management.

Policy Impact

The initiative is contributing to protection of water sources through wetlands restoration and protection, and prevention of river bank erosion. This is in alignment with the national programme on conservation of the national water resources.



Some Project Profiles from the Country Programme Portfolio *cont'd*

Title: Demonstration and Promotion of Sustainable Rangeland Resources Management in Mokhotlong

Grantee: Liphamola Dairy Farmers Association

Location: Sheep Stud - Mokhotlong

SGP Contribution: USD 26,313

In-kind Co-Financing: USD 33,135

Project Duration: 2012—2014

People Served: Mokhotlong Town and neighboring villages

Focal Area: Land Degradation

Context

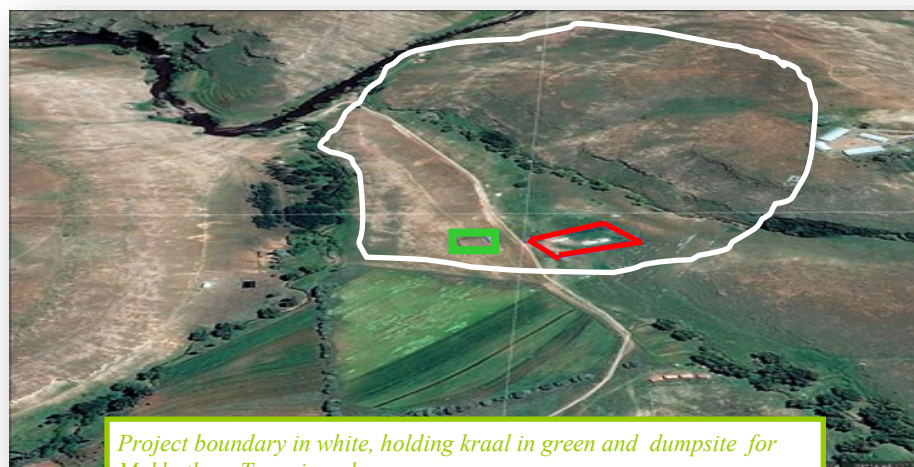
Mokhotlong is a mountain district whose land use/land cover is predominantly rangeland and the population relies largely on agriculture for subsistence, with wool and mohair production being the mainstay of the district's economy. Land degradation and biodiversity loss are rife due to overstocking and overgrazing and the rugged terrain which is prone to excessive runoff hence soil erosion is a major problem. Mokhotlong once had a sheep stud covering about 10ha, where good quality sheep were bred and sustainable rangeland management demonstrated. The area is located in the catchment of the proposed phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project within the Orange/Senqu River Basin. On closure of the sheep stud more than 10 years ago, the land has been neglected and left to overexploitation by the neighboring communities. The problem is further complicated by the fact that a dumpsite for Mokhotlong Town is located within the project area along side a rivulet that feeds Mokhotlong river, a tributary of the Senqu River, and adjacent to the holding pan.

Project Description

The main objective of the project is to demonstrate and promote sustainable management of rangeland resources; and to contribute towards maintenance of the integrity of the mountain ecosystem. In pursuance of this LDFA, supported by the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation (MFLR), set out to restore the sheep stud by rehabilitating the paddocks that were almost non-existent and grass re-seeding. Education, training and awareness campaigns on sustainable land husbandry practices in livestock and crop farming, with special focus on rangeland resources management, featured prominently during project implementation. The project area has been sub-leased to the grantee by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) in support of the move to improve milk production in the district.

Environmental Impact

More than 10ha of degraded land has been rehabilitated and put back to productive and sustainable use. Vegetative cover has improved significantly resulting in recovery of biodiversity and improvement of the carrying capacity of the rangeland. It can also be argued that with more vegetative cover there will be reduced soil loss. Farmers from neighboring villages, particularly 45 who participated in training workshops and grass re-seeding/ fodder production campaigns have expressed interest to start grazing schemes in their villages which will result in more land being put under good management. These farmers are al-



Project boundary in white, holding kraal in green and dumpsite for Mokhotlong Town in red

ready in contact with the MFLR in that regard. With regard to the dumpsite, in collaboration with MAFS, the Office of the Town Clerk, the District Environment Officer and the District Council, it has been resolved that the dumpsite be relocated to a more suitable area that has already been identified and is being prepared before the waste can be moved to the new area. The dump site is being rehabilitated in preparation for establishment of an orchard. Awareness campaigns on safe disposal of waste and the impact of unsafe disposal on the environment have been kicked off.

Socio-economic impact

Awareness campaigns that reached more than 2000 villagers in five villages around the project site have resulted in a significant reduction of incidences of trespassing in the sheep stud. The LDFA's dairy project got off to a good start, with demand for milk far exceeding supply. The 5 Brown Swiss dairy cows, purchased out-of-pocket in 2013 have already calved bringing the total number of cows to 9, with 3 more calves on the way. The LDFA is working very closely with MAFS and farmers in South Africa to determine the suitability of the breed and the optimum feeding regime. Awareness about sustainable range resources management has been created in five villages around the project site with more than 2000 people having participated in workshops, pitsos and demonstration campaigns. Other farmers in neighboring villages are willing to set aside part of their farm land which is largely marginal for fodder production as opposed to crop production.

Policy Impact

As stipulated in the NSDP, reversal of land degradation, desertification and improvement of watershed management is one of the strategic objectives for reversing environmental degradation and adapting to climate change. LDFA's initiative is no doubt in the right path to demonstrating that this NSDP objective can be achieved.



Condition of the rangeland before intervention



Condition of the rangeland after two years



Cows and calves as they enter the holding pan

Some Project Profiles from the Country Programme Portfolio *cont'd*

Title: Strengthening Community Actions and Responses Towards Land Degradation (SCARED)

Project No: LSO/SGP/OP4/Y2/ORE/2009/07

Grantee: GROW

Location: Khubelu Catchment, Mokhotlong

SGP Contribution: USD 31,650.00

In-kind Co-Financing:

Project Duration: 2009 - 2014

People Served: Makhabane, Molikaliko, Soloane communities

Focal Area: Land Degradation

Context

The Mokhotlong district, one of the three mountain districts, is home to several rivers and streams all of which are tributaries to Senqu (Orange) River, the largest and longest river in Southern Africa. Though the whole country makes up only 5% of the total Senqu basin area, it contributes over 40 % of the stream flow. The most severe ecological problem is the high rate of soil erosion caused by among other things overgrazing and unsustainable cropping practices which have turned once productive areas and pastures into bare and barren places. The effects of this deterioration are far reaching as locally derived means fail to satisfy households' basic needs; more pressure is placed on the natural habitat, as more people exploit it for their personal benefit.

Project Description

The project sought to curb degradation and reclaim 10 ha of highly eroded areas in the Senqu and Khubelu river catchments within the Molikaliko and Khalahali community councils. In collaboration with government ministries and other local stakeholders responsive training and awareness activities were developed and implemented to address land rehabilitation, sustainable land use and cropping practices. Due to the nature of the intervention's long term goal, the need for community ownership and involvement, capacity building of existing groups and entire community to sustain the initiatives featured greatly in the initial phase of the project.

Environmental Impact

Agricultural techniques like organic farming introduced by SCARED helped in improving the condition of cropland. Constructed structures, especially stone lines, diversion furrows and terraces help control and divert water away from fields leaving far-reaching results in terms of soil conservation. There is also a notable change in the condition of rangelands demonstrated by increased grass cover. Cropland that was abandoned because of uncontrolled runoff has been put back to productive use using acquired conservation farming techniques. Quite a few principles of agro-ecology have been put to practice in the intervention. A total of about 20ha of land has been protected from run-off.

Socio-economic impact

CBOs were established under SCARED and are engaged in income generation activities such as sewing and tree nurseries. Generated skills have allowed some members to improve their liveli-

hoods by doing small jobs outside the group. This was particularly the case with women who formed part of the sewing associations. Challenges on the other hand included the inability to secure markets for produced goods. Nonetheless, the school uniforms that are being made are donated to orphaned and needy children. Wool and mohair production is the mainstay of Mokhotlong. However, all of it is exported with very little processed in the country.

Beneficiary communities at Soloane and neighboring villages, both men and women, are undergoing a 6-week training on wool spinning. The training is provided by Elelloang Basali Weavers, a women-run cooperative in the Berea district specializing in tapestry weaving. On completion

of the coarse a partnership through which all the spun wool will be sold to the cooperative. Food preservation using solar dryers has also been introduced to the beneficiaries.

Policy Impact

Partnerships and linkages are being facilitated between wool and mohair producers and wool spinners. There was notable involvement of local authorities in the project area particularly at Soloane which may explain the high level of achievement.



Showcasing the GEF SGP Interventions and Recognizing those who Contribute

Every opportunity is taken to provide a platform for grantees to showcase their ideas and share experiences and exchange ideas. Notable events include, the 2013 Climate Change Expo organized by the UNDP CO jointly with the SGP; the 2014 SGP Best Practice and Knowledge Fair; the 2014 UN Day Celebration; individual project launches, ceremonial grant awards; and recognition of contributors to the implementation of the Programme in the country. Men, women, young and old, they all had something to share and something to take home.

The Climate Change Expo

Grantees, government institutions, research institutions and others came together to share their strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation. All got to appreciate that we all can do something no matter how small it may seem.

The Best Practice and Knowledge Fair

Grantees and other environmental protection practitioners came together to showcase their innovations and share experiences and ideas. Everyone had something to share and something to take home. The event was officiated by the Minister for Tourism, Environment and Culture and the UNDP Deputy Representative. Also present were the National GEF Focal Points, the GEF SGP National Steering Committee.

- ◆ There was visibility for the SGP and publicity for the good work being done by the local communities
- ◆ Authorities, decision makers and donors got to know about technologies and initiatives being piloted
- ◆ Exposure, innovation and knowledge exchanges, expert advice and a word or two of encouragement ignited a glimmer of hope and motivated all to do more

Ceremonial Grant Awards

Keeps UNDP Management and the Government through the Ministry responsible for environmental issues, MTEC, aware of community environmental initiative going on out there and raises their interest to know how these initiatives ended and how they can be sustained over the long term

Project Launches

Exciting time for the beneficiaries. Some do it at the beginning to solicit support and buy-in while others do it at the end to disseminate results and share experiences and publicize achievements

Recognition for Contribution to Programme Objectives

Be it the NSC volunteering their time and expertise to the SGP, the herders committing to conservation or those daring to do carryout projects that appear weird in the eyes of many, they all deserve a pat on the shoulder.

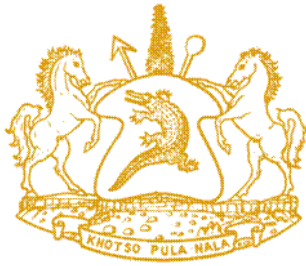


The GEF SGP National Steering Committee

A multi-sectoral Committee comprising representation government, academia, civil society and the private sector. The Committee provides overall guidance to Programme implementation and is responsible for project appraisal, selection and approval. It is a platform for promotion of multi-stakeholder dialogue. The commitment and its expertise are a great source of inspiration for the SGP in Lesotho. This portrays volunteerism at its best.

Over and above all they listen, they advice, they guide and mentor, and give everybody a chance to tell their story.





Government through the National GEF Focal Point which rests in the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture provides oversight and assurance that the GEF Small Grants Programme in Lesotho aligns itself to national policies



The GEF SGP is a corporate programme of the GEF, funded by the GEF to address threats to the GEF Focal Areas of Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change Mitigation, Protection of International Waters, Combating Land Degradation and Reduction of the adverse effects of Chemicals



The United Nations Development Programme implements the GEF SGP on behalf of the GEF Implementing Agencies. It hosts the Programme and provides Administrative and Financial management of the Programme.

GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME - LESOTHO

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