



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

METSOALLE EA LESOTHO

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NOVEMBER 1992

UNDP Drought Relief for Lesotho



Southern Africa's worst drought of the century is taking a serious toll in this country, where it is estimated that between 120,000 and 170,000 people have been severely affected. Most of the maize crops have failed and the country is experiencing severe water shortages.

As a result of a pledging conference in Geneva earlier this year, where the international donor community was solicited for emergency assistance, it was determined that Lesotho would receive logistical backing from the national disaster coordinator's office and the Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organizations. This assistance will enable the country to maximize their efforts to organize, deliver, manage and monitor relief assistance. A UNDP consultant, logistical and administrative support, a vehicle, a computer and other equipment will also be provided.

(Information from UNDP UPDATE, Vol. 5, No. 16, 10 Aug. 1992.)

Southern Africa Drought Damage Widespread

The drought in Southern Africa is increasing to the north to cover an area which now includes Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Lesotho, Angola, Swaziland, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi, after predictions at the beginning of this year of bumper crops. The rains failed at a critical point in the growth of maize, and the loss of this crop in each of the countries by percentage of normal yield is roughly as follows; Zambia, 66%, South Africa, 66%, Lesotho, 70%, Namibia, 80-90%, Swaziland, 80-90% and Zimbabwe, 90%.

At a briefing of PVOs earlier this year on the drought damage, it was reported by a State Department official that while this is primarily a humanitarian crisis, where issues of emergency food aid, water shortages and disease outbreak are in the forefront, there are also political and economic implications for the region, most of which are negative. Relief efforts are underway, with the SADCC (Southern Africa Development Coordinating Council), the regional unit for economic cooperation and development, playing an active role.

(Information from MONDAY DEVELOPMENTS, a biweekly publication of InterAction, April 20, 1992, Vol. 10, Number 7.)

Lesotho Elections Anticipated

According to a recent communication from the Lesotho Embassy in Washington, D.C., the general election in Lesotho will be held on November 28, 1992. Although all citizens are being urged to participate in the election, it was decided recently that no special arrangements or provisions will be made to enable migrant workers to vote. It is estimated that there are approximately 125,000 Basotho Mine Workers in The Transvaal and the Orange Free State in South Africa, who together with teachers, health care workers, farmers, etc. make up a large number of people who work in South Africa and may not be in a position to leave their jobs for the purpose of voting. It is hoped that the improved network of

roads and liberal border post hours will make it possible for Lesotho Nationals to return home and cast their vote.

Another development in the political scene is the return to Lesotho in July of King Moshoeshoe II from a two year enforced exile in Britain, where he was sent by Major General Metsing Lekhanya after allegedly refusing to honour a decision by the Military Council. Lekhanya was removed in a bloodless coup in April 1991. It is not clear what King Moshoeshoe's role in Lesotho will be, though he has said that he returned to Lesotho to contribute to genuine democratization process and the "participatory process of governance and

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Update: FOL Supported Projects

MORIJA MUSEUM

FOL has been included in the list of Company Patrons to the Morija Museum and Archives as a result of its contributions. It has been reported by an FOL member who recently visited the Museum that it is a fine collection of artifacts and literary works from Lesotho's past and present. The FOL board was excited to see the names of so many FOL members who made individual contributions to the Museum as well. All indications are that this is a project well worth our future support!

CENTRE OF HOPE SCHOOL

The following letter was received by FOL in Aug. 1992:

Dear Mr. Brumburgh,

Pardon us for our long silence due to the long droughts which forced us to change, modify and cancel most of our programmes. As of now some schools have extended their re-opening dates, others will close early if the rains fail this year too, but boarders who have no homes will forever stay with us. The rivers have all dried up, crops have withered, animals are dying, foodstuffs are in short supply, the coldest winter months are still with us and these have forced prices to go up by about 100% due to this drought, the worst in our history. These adverse conditions have forced us to fall on our reserve funds to cater for our day-to-day running of the centre and now we are currently running a budget deficit. As we have nowhere to send our under-privileged children and also to cater to our small-scale animal husbandry project, we are appealing to your esteemed organization in the name of humanity to send us an Emergency Aid to help us feed the children in residence.

Thanking you in advance for your humanitarian aid to the children who find themselves in this condition through no fault of theirs.

Yours-In-The-Interest-of-Humanity,
Elizabeth Popi Marekimane
Founder/Director

The Board voted to donate an additional \$250.00 to the centre to supplement the \$250.00 contribution made earlier this year. It was requested that the centre again let us know how the money was utilized and also that they inform us as to what kind of specific aid they still need. Should anyone wish to make a further individual donation, it can be sent to Mrs. Marekhnane in care of The Centre of Hope School, P.O. Box 4387, Seaboleng 104, Maseru, Lesotho.

TRICKLE-UP

A letter was received recently from Mr. Daniel Delahanty, the TU Program Officer for Africa providing an update on program activity in Lesotho and information on how contributions are earmarked for specific businesses and organizations. From his report it appears that the program is "gaining momentum" in Lesotho and doing the kind of work with small businesses that we had hoped! FOL member Wade Dallagrana has agreed to be the Trickle-Up contact person from now on and will be handling those correspondences, reporting to the Board and providing updates for publication in the newsletter. Thank you Wade! (Anyone else who is interested in "taking over" one of our activities should contact Don Spicer immediately! Our organization can be so much more effective with an involved membership!)



UN STAFF EDUCATION FUND

Detailed profiles on the students we are supporting will be included in the next newsletter. In the meantime we have been asked to maintain the same level of support as last year for each student or to increase it to meet the rising school fees. The current average school fees/year/pupil is now closer to M1000 than the M750 it was when the program started. FOL has agreed to maintain support for these students as long as they achieve a first or second class pass and remain in the same financial situation. We will receive final marks for these students soon after the end of the school year in December.



LESOTHO HIGHLAND WATER PROJECT

FOL members David Harpman, Bill Phelps and Brad Rea have offered to coordinate their efforts to acquire more extensive information on the Water Project and be the FOL contact people. We hope to have a preliminary report for the next newsletter. Thank you David, Brad and Bill.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

It is with my apologies that I submit this abbreviated and long overdue issue of the newsletter. This issue was anticipated in mid-late summer and it is only now making its way to the hands of the membership...the rigors of summer with children at home and the anticipation of fall and the back-to-school rituals have consumed the time and energy of many of us! After struggling to get anything on paper at all, it was decided that we would produce an abbreviated newsletter now and put together another, more complete issue in December/January. In these pages you will find a brief update on recent events and conditions in Lesotho and a few notes on some of our projects there. The next issue will be published after the November elections (if held) in Lesotho and will include more detailed information about the political situation, the drought conditions and much more about the projects that our contributions are helping to support. We have received some wonderful biographies and photographs of the students we are supporting through the Scholarship Fund and will include some of that information. Since this is expected to be an especially substantive issue, contributions of time and written material to the newsletter would be greatly appreciated. Part of the reason for the delay between issues is the fact that there are not enough people involved in its production. Please write to me in care of FOL and offer your time. I will send you the information that needs to be written up and you can simply return it to me in the form of a newsletter article! I'm anxious to hear from you.....

We have reached the time of year that necessitates making a strong appeal to all FOL members to pay their annual dues. The Board will be writing cheques for the projects to which we have committed our support and it is important that we have the resources to back up these financial commitments. Please send your membership form and dues soon.

As always, your comments, contributions and suggestions are appreciated. Thank you to those members who have taken the time to send information and offer their time to FOL activities.

Salang ka khotso,
Lisa Labella Mitchell

ELECTIONS ANTICIPATED

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self-development." The King denies allegations that his return was intended to destabilize the current situation. King Moshoeshoe II's son, King Letsie III is now the country's official monarch, though he was never coronated and was only sworn in as King. Many Basotho still consider King Moshoeshoe II as the true King of Lesotho.

(Nov. 1- As this issue goes to print, it appears that the November elections have been postponed due to a "computer error." FOL will be in contact with the Lesotho embassy, but for the moment, it is unclear as to what the status of the elections is - ED)

(Information from The Mirror, Vol. 4, No. 34, July 24, 1992)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In Memoriam

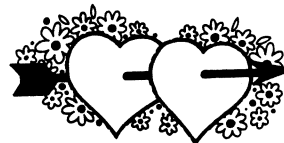
**Madge Ketchersid
PCV 1987-1988**

"She was a great volunteer, enjoyable travel companion and made the best chicken-n-dumplings in Lesotho!" Her husband Bill lives in Kissimmee, Fla, but I lost the address a while back."

Julie Jaurors
PCV 1986-1988

Welcome!

Eric Gerald Mauricio Brumburgh, adopted son of Scott Brumburgh (PCV 1967-69 Matelile) and Carolyn Long, born on August 10, 1991 in Asuncion, Paraguay, arrived in Chevy Chase, MD. on September 9, 1992. Congratulations to the whole family!



Congratulations!

Faith Mareck Kuhn and Francis H. Kuhn, Jr. on their marriage which took place on the yacht Tchaika, at sunset, off Waikiki, Honolulu, Hawaii, July 5, 1992!

Faith Mareck Kuhn
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Green Valley, Arizona 85614
or
47-220 Kamehameha Highway
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

Regrets

The Lesotho Ambassador to the U.S., 'Ntate Tseliso Thamae, was involved in a serious automobile accident in Lesotho in October. FOL is still trying to get the details about his condition. Ambassador Thamae remains in Lesotho for the present.

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