VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAIN

"Does the government want development of people in the highlands? Or development of people outside, based on what they can get out of the highlands?" *Himalayan farmer*

As the pace of development accelerates in mountain regions, more often driven by the needs of urban, lowland populations and industry than by highland communities, so the social and physical environment is changing. The implications for the wider world are likely to be significant.

Panos has been working with community-based environmental, cultural and development organisations to record the oral testimony of local people, and to communicate their experiences and their understanding of the challenges ahead.

The project has involved local people as both interviewers and narrators. Ten collections have been gathered: in the Himalaya (**India** and **Nepal**); the Karakoram (**Pakistan**); the central Andes (**Peru**); the Sierra Norte (**Mexico**); Mount Elgon (**Kenya**); the highlands of **Ethiopia** and **Lesotho**; southwest and northeast **China**; and the Sudety mountains (**Poland**). Each booklet contains a selection of the interviews gathered in that locality. The full international archive holds the views and experiences of some 350 individuals, and represents a wealth of material – vivid, challenging, full of human detail and variety – to complement and illustrate other forms of research into sustainable mountain development. For more information on the themes, projects, participants, and the unedited but translated transcripts, visit www.mountainvoices.org.

Each collection is a snapshot, and does not claim to represent an entire mountain community. But the range of individual voices provides a remarkably comprehensive picture of highland societies, their changing environments, and their concerns for the future. The challenge is to meet national development needs without further marginalising mountain peoples. They are the custodians of diverse – sometimes unique – environments, essential to the survival of the global ecosystem. Further erosion of mountain people's ability to care for those assets will be the world's loss, not just theirs.

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ORAL TESTIMONY

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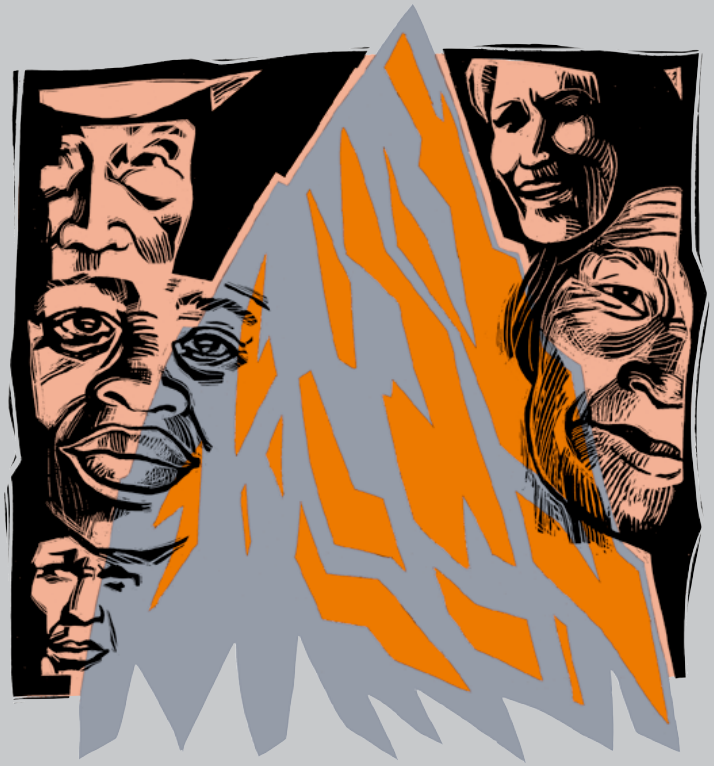
ORAL TESTIMONIES FROM THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS



VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAIN

ORAL TESTIMONIES FROM
THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS

The Panos Institute exists to stimulate debate on global environment and development issues. Panos' main offices are in Dakar, Kampala, Kathmandu, London, Lusaka, Paris, Washington.

Voices from the Mountain is a series of booklets published by Panos London's Oral Testimony Programme (OTP) as part of its international Mountains project. The OTP has been working through partners with a variety of highland communities for several years, involving local people both as narrators and interviewers. The aim is to explore the changing environment and culture of these regions through the direct testimony of those who live there; to raise awareness and understanding of the accelerating impact of development; and to communicate people's experiences and perceptions of the changes—social, economic and environmental—taking place as a result.

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Booklets are free to the media and resource-poor non-governmental organisations in developing countries. Copies otherwise are £5.00; bulk discounts available. For copies or further details, please contact oraltestimony@panoslondon.org.uk.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have been involved in gathering, translating, annotating and preparing the interviews for this booklet and the website, and especially Dr Motlatsi Thabane. But we owe the greatest thanks to those who freely gave their time and their stories.

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

The interviews are only a selection from those originally gathered. Extracts have been chosen for interest and to represent, as far as possible, the range of concerns, views and experiences found within the overall Lesotho collection. They have been edited, primarily to remove repetition or confusion (and questions). Similarly, some re-ordering has taken place. Square brackets indicate "inserted" text for clarification; round brackets are translations/interpretations; and three dots indicate cuts in the text. Words that are glossed appear in **bold** the first time in an interview; botanical terms are italicised and glossed where possible. All interviews have been translated, with varying levels of professional experience and in some cases from a local into a national language and then into English, so some misinterpretations may have occurred.

The numbering of the testimonies (eg LES 23) relates to the full collection: to view the rest of the material, unedited transcripts, more background information and any new developments in this project, please see www.mountainvoices.org.

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INTRODUCTION

"Our life here is the soil…we live a very good life." Motseki, a farmer and herder in his 40s, speaks for many narrators in this collection, who are proud of their self-sufficient mountain lifestyle. But the area where the testimonies were collected is to disappear under the waters of the huge Mohale dam, and several months after the last interview was gathered, the villagers were moved away from their mountain valley. The houses, fields, graveyards, grazing land and other private and communal resources described in these interviews are now deserted.

These highland communities found themselves at the centre of one of Africa's largest and most complex engineering projects. Lesotho—the only country in the world with all its territory above 1,000 metres—is entirely surrounded by South Africa, has little cultivable land and few mineral resources. Its most precious resource is water and its mountains form Southern Africa's most important watershed. Hence the billion-dollar Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP)—designed to divert water from Lesotho's Senqu/Orange River, via a series of tunnels and dams, to South Africa's industrial heartland. In return, Lesotho receives royalties from the sale of its water, and some hydroelectric power.

These testimonies were gathered from several villages in the Molika-liko area. Agriculture and livestock formed the mainstay of their existence, but until recently most of the men also spent significant periods of time as migrant labour in the South African mines. This was virtually the only option available to anyone wanting to earn cash. Recruitment of non-South Africans to the mines has now dwindled to almost nothing, and the main source of income became cannabis cultivation.

Themes

The villagers describe a way of life that for generations has altered relatively little. The most significant forces for change in recent times have been increasing exposure to the monetary economy, and the advent of the road—precursor to relocation and built as part of the massive LHWP. Agriculture, which allowed a reasonable degree of self-sufficiency, is a dominant theme, as are social institutions and the networks of mutual help and support that the community has relied on and takes pride in. In the face of imminent resettlement—some to lowlands and semi-urban areas; some to other highland communities—people talk of their feelings of powerlessness and vulnerability, their disappointment in the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA)—the body

responsible for implementing resettlement—and their fears for the future. The knowledge that their way of life was to change forever may have led some narrators to romanticise their current existence, but others acknowledge tensions and dissension within and between communities. Some narrators, too, talk of how social relations and attitudes were already undergoing change, and not always just along generational lines.

Not surprisingly, however, the most common cause of anxiety in these accounts is loss of independence. Many express foreboding as to how losing their land will affect not just their livelihood but also their self-esteem. Many of the men who once worked in the South African mines are wary of depending on wage labour, and of the finite nature of money. Mountain life might be frugal but with land, people felt, they always had a productive resource—and a crucial degree of self-reliance. They speak with pride of their environmental knowledge and how it has enabled them to adapt and survive in a harsh landscape. But they also know that because this knowledge is so locally specific—each mountain valley is distinguished by subtle variations of climate, soil and vegetation—it will be of limited use when they move elsewhere in the highlands. And for those moving to urban areas, it is all but redundant.

Partners and project

The interviews were gathered between November 1997 and February 1998, with the help of Transformation Resource Centre (TRC), Lesotho Highlands Church Action Group and Sechaba. The project was coordinated by Dr Motlatsi Thabane of the Department of History, National University of Lesotho. Interviewers were Thabang Tlalajoe, Soaile Mochaba, Matooane Letsoela, Moshe Tsehlo, Mohlolo Lehasa, Maliantle Moshabesha and 'Mateboho Phakisi. TRC has been working on social and economic development issues in Lesotho for more than 20 years. It is continuing the oral testimony work with the resettled, returning the interviews to the narrators and building on their information and insights to develop a second collection. By interviewing people in their new homes, some three years after relocation, those involved hope to gain deeper understanding of the process of resettlement, and in particular of its social and cultural impacts. A book is planned, based on the villagers' accounts and lessons learned, positive and negative. The aim is to inform resettlement policy and practice from the perspective of those who are living with the consequences. For more on this, please see Panos' website.

THE TESTIMONIES

Sebili

LES 17/17b

Sebili, aged 46, speaks with pride and affection of Molika-liko, the favourable climate and good pasture of the valley, and the mutually supportive relations with other villages. But above all, he feels, it is "the wisdom of living in this place"—the intimate knowledge of land, climate and plants, which has accrued over time—that will be lost when the community is resettled.

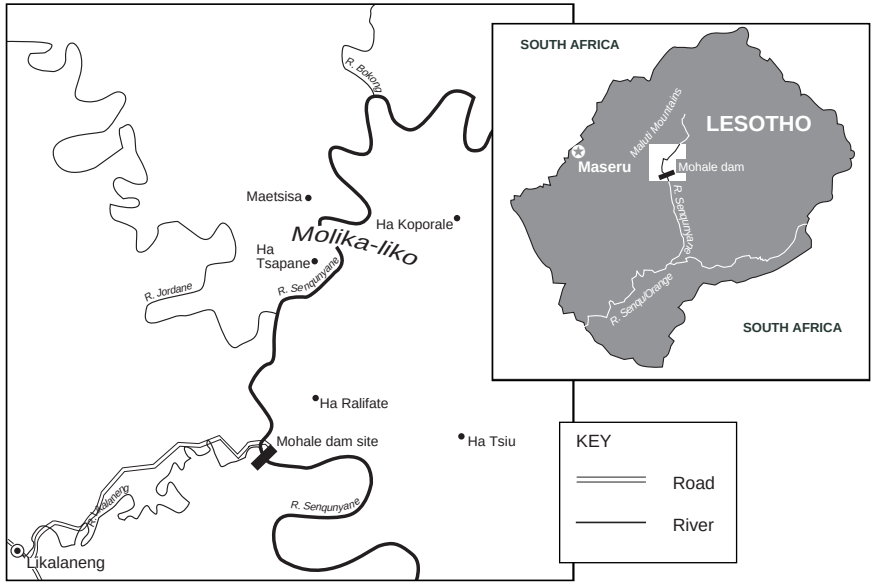
In the middle of the mountains you find a beautiful village, which is very appealing—in a depression, which is so beautiful. You see this valley is beautiful, ***ntate***. Even you, when you arrive, you see that this land is a special mountainous area. You know, we even plant sorghum here. It succeeds quite well. It is warm. But the sun in this place is fierce, because now there is no wind.

It is really a [sheltered] valley. Even the frost takes some time to arrive here. The snow falls but it usually snows on the high-lying area. Even when it comes down here, [it does not stay] because there is a lot of water. There are reedy areas. Snow is a thing that is afraid of water. It goes away quickly. And [there is] even the matter of a river which is close by. As soon as the sun shines it melts and runs away… Frost arrives here in the fourth month… On dates like the 15th, like that, as far as the 20th, it is there. But then our maize [crop] is past danger by then…

I can remember [my life as a young man] a little. Much, much earlier here, during the time of rains. It still rained a lot. Life here was still very good because, well, we did not even know hunger. When you went to someone's house you would find that sour milk was there, ***lipapa***…[was] there. This land was very good for crops but now it is…changing and is causing us hunger during these times of drought.

[Neighbouring villages] understand each other well. We support each other well. I can easily leave from here to go and plough in partnership over there. It is a thing that is well supported. Well, even when they have apprehended animals we still talk to one another… There were never any problems [between us]—ever since I developed eyes (awareness). Sometimes it happens that there are little quarrels…but there's no fighting and spilling of blood.

I like it [here] a lot… The people of [all those places] buy food from here… If you were to go into the houses of people who have planted, you will find that, right there at my home, you will find



bales—maybe four—still there, in [storage] there. From this same year's harvest… I have one field of my own, but then, truly I usually plough in partnerships. Right here with the old people here, or here, with people who do not have cattle. Or those who are needy in the hands like the handicapped, like that…

Water—it is [found] here, by the marsh where there are reeds. We get water from there. Seedlings are still grown in the village here. They are going to be planted there in the fields. You will find that maize has been planted. Cabbage has been sown on the lower side. Now, things like wheat especially, you can see for yourself also as you are walking by the fields here… Maize is especially liked because it is the [staple] food.

The things that are going to be lost [when we resettle] are many, [above all] the wisdom of living in this place will be lost… Things like [wild] vegetables which we are now used to, and we know their places, where they grow… As to a certain medicine, when I want it I know where to find it. Or when I plant a vegetable here, how do I plant it, in what month? [I know] what time to look for them and when they will germinate and sprout, and so on.

Laurent (M, 47 years) *LES 8/8b*

The reason [I went to the mines] was that I wanted to provide for myself, on my own. I should work for myself and I should not expect my parents [to provide for me]–so that I should be able to say: this cow is mine, which I have bought for myself. I should not expect a parent to set one aside for me. If...you're herding your father's [cattle], he will set one aside for you once a year, and that would be the end of it and you would [not] have any [more] set aside for you. You will have to wait for that one to calf. Now a cow is something that takes a long time to calf. Now when I work for myself, perhaps in a year I find that I can buy two cows; I find that I have five sheep.

"Our grass is not hard"

It is true that there is not a lot of grass here, but the cattle here are used to it because they do not climb steep areas, and we do not know what it is to skin a thin cow here…

Our cows grow old here and they have seven calves. [Usually] it is difficult for a cow to have seven calves, *ntate*. A cow ends up [in the course of its lifetime] with four calves but ours here, it has seven calves and its teeth would even get ground down in the mouth here. Now our grass is not hard, you can see it, it is *'mokuru*. *'Mokuru*, you know even in winter, once it feels a little rain it immediately starts growing again; now our cattle are used to this *'mokuru* and this *lesuoane*, especially—even in winter it does not dry up…

The wild animals were not ones that were dangerous to human beings. Those were never there. Animals that were always here were springboks, steenbok, bucks and hares… They are of benefit to us because we once protected them a lot, so that they should not be killed… Springboks I no longer see. Now these steenboks and these bucks, they are the ones that we protect a lot so that they should not be shot at. A lot of people have bought guns from the government. They should leave them alone so that we can show the children, so that they should know them—and the hares. Now sometimes they try and set dogs on them but we are still trying to show the mistake of doing so…

A mining accident

When I was working as a miner and still in Vaal Reefs, I used to take the morning shift... When [the evening shift] was supposed to light [the explosives], it happened that there was a fire. It happened that all the charges in those holes exploded. Those people—we collected them in pieces. We did not know whether this one was white or that one was black…. They made a grave that was bigger than this house, so much so that the family of the deceased could see their

Seedlings are still grown in the village here

names only—and they went there, year in, year out. They sometimes slaughter a certain number of cattle there and they offer a prayer. It is still there, that grave. It is big. They were buried in one place, because it was not known how the parts of the bodies could be separated.

Lipholo LES 1

Lipholo, who is 67, was described by the interviewer as "walking lamely, with knees covered by orange plastic knee caps". As a young man, he left Molika-liko to work in the South African mines, where the problem with his legs began and forced him to come home. Since then he has earned his living by transporting cattle and goods, farming and basket-making.

I started herding calves at the age of nine and after that I herded cows. After a spell, I went to school but during school vacations, I stayed at the cattle post until school re-opened… [My parents] could not even write A—but my father had that love to educate his children. My parents actually forced me into formal education: A, B, C, D.

I married and went to work in the mines. We carried on our life like this until I experienced problems with my legs… I developed a fungal infection they call *litsere*. When it is like this, I feel so much pain that I have to take off my shoes. These days, the condition of my feet is such that they cannot stand the rain, heat or cold. I have to be where conditions are mild…

I came back home and got a job issuing permits for people who wanted to sell their animals. But still the sickness persisted. The life we led here was to transport cattle, using donkeys and horses. We [also] collected parcels [and transported them] from Ha Fako to Marakabei for a small payment. When you used a donkey, you would receive 7 shillings—which in present terms is 1 **rand** 40 cents… Sweets, soap and maize—we transported these items by donkey, cattle and horse to Marakabei to be sold…

The farming life

We live on agriculture. We do not grow sorghum because we cannot afford to guard produce against birds. There are too many birds in the valley and growing sorghum means keeping watch from when the grain starts to form until you harvest and thresh. This has led to growing wheat, maize, lentils, peas, beans, rye and potatoes. It has been like this since I was born.

In the old days, we sold maize, wheat, rye, peas, beans and

"I started herding calves at the age of nine"

potatoes at the retail store to get a few pounds according to how much they weighed. Beyond this, we sold wool…or cattle so as to help the family at the time when everything from the fields was finished…

Harvests were very good, especially wheat, but peas yielded good harvests as well. The soil had good nutrients then. Even now, the soil still yields good harvests, though not as good as in those years… If you have not kept your own [seeds], you go to the cooperative or to your neighbours. There were no cooperatives [in the old days] but you could still get seed from neighbours. You could exchange, buy with money or sheep, and be able to plough.

There was drought but not this bad. It used to be *pula ea litloebelele, pula ea likhomo le batho* (it rained in sheets; it rained cattle and people). You would not run short of water along the slopes; you would not go far before getting to a spring to quench your thirst. When there was drought, we would wait for God's help and nothing else. Those crops that would not stand drought would

Makibinyane (M, 40s) *LES 3*

I depend mainly on agriculture like most people in this village. We grow maize, sorghum and different vegetables. We also have wild vegetables to supplement our diet in case of severe drought. Basically, we are self sufficient in this village. The surrounding villages often come to our village for food and we sell them whatever surplus we have.

The planners planned, and we are not part of the planning

wither and die. Those that survived until it rained would still make up for those that perished. At present, there is so much soil erosion that in most places you see bare rocks where nothing can grow.

"When need arises"

We do not normally grow crops specifically for sale, but we do sell whatever we grow, should need arise. There are people who eat and sell rye but others use it as fodder. Vegetables are grown for consumption but are still sold. In this area winters are harsh, [so] vegetables are normally dried for future use. This is also done with wild vegetables.

All dried vegetables are sold and cannabis is the only crop grown [exclusively] for cash. There is actually no formal market [for cannabis] except to sell to smugglers who visit this area. [Other crops] we sell among ourselves. [In the past] our diet consisted of ***papa***, ***maqebekoane***, ***mochahlama***, porridge and beer…

When need arises I can still send my wife to places like Likalaneng to buy maize meal or buy grain in the neighbourhood… [My wife] only makes brooms from grasses or brews beer to sell. She sometimes sells bread to passers-by and neighbours. There is no market here and she therefore travels to the lowlands to sell brooms…

[In the old days], to manage our grazing areas, small stock would be taken to the cattle posts in the mountains. Cows that did not have very young calves would also be taken. About six milking cows would be left at home and part of the range would be set aside for their grazing. After some time, when those taken to the mountains were brought back, the range would have improved and all the livestock would graze together. The chief and his elders…[controlled] grazing. This arrangement was good because there was good grass but there was [one] arrangement we did not like. This arrangement was that the chief's livestock would still roam in the enclosed areas and he would only send a few to the cattle posts…

There are village level communities elected to manage development and control illegal grazing… [These days] there has been a lot of mismanagement because certain mountains are closed to grazing and some opened. This means all livestock would use one area, even those from as far as Lesotho (the lowlands). When those in the mountains are brought back, they are also allowed into small areas that are used up in no time. When the rain falls, these areas are eroded. This is the change I see these days and it is not to be called improvement but soil erosion.

Tsatsi (M, 70s) *LES 15*

When we were growing up…we just lived on wild plants and we were helped by these people who were [traditional] doctors. There was no clinic here, not even a European doctor. These things are appearing now of late, when we are already old, when we are old like this [*takes off his hat to show his grey hair*]… [Traditional doctors] are many, they help out. They are still very useful to the nation. Because even injections, they know [how to do] them.

Plants for medicinal and practical use

There are medicinal plants such as *sesepa-sa-linoha*, *poho-tsehla*, *manolo*, *telonina*, *seoelioetla moelela*, *lesokoana*, *tsikitlane* and many others like *peo ea basali'*, *morarana oa*, *ou mangope* and *monokotsoai*. For fuel we have *kolitsana*, *lengana*, *taraputsoe*, *motantsi* and *nyofane*. There are also types of grasses we use. There is *roro*, *thita-poho* and *mosea* which we use for making ***liroto***. My father used them and I also learned and I still make baskets and ***lisiu***. I make a living out of this. There are many other plants to make good use of. They use *thita-poho* for making brooms, while I [use it to] make baskets. I use *rohoroho* for roofing just like many things you can use *mosea* for.

There are quite a lot of [traditional doctors]. There are some right here in this village… Their service is different from the Western one in that their charges are high and they do not actually cure the disease but talk of ***thokolosi***. The traditional doctors always talk of *thokolosi* without necessarily curing the real sickness while the Western doctors actually cure it without talking about *thokolosi*.

I have only heard that in so and so's household the *thokolosi* was cured. To me, these are fables, because up to now I have not seen or experienced it. Occasionally I have bad dreams, which some people attribute to *thokolosi*… They would say a…white-complexioned woman who went to your house is responsible for bewitching you—or a certain old man… They say the problem with my legs is caused by witchcraft whereas I have always thought it has been due to working in the mine, just as the Western doctors said—I developed the problem working in muddy conditions underground. Traditional doctors say I once ran somewhere, or across somebody's field, chasing cattle—but in fact… I [always] used to guard my cattle from venturing into people's fields—and they say the owners took some soil from my footprints [to use in witchcraft].

"Foreigners in a foreign land"

We need help from anywhere because we never thought that some day we would move out of this place—but because we are nothing, the planners planned and we are not part of the planning… I see

this [resettlement problem] quickening the pace to my early death… I also see compensation as being very little because if you use 20 cents out of 2 rand, that money is gone. With this state of affairs, you are left confused as to what to feed your children on…

We have already made our choice [of location] as the project asked us to. We are going in different directions and each one has hope that wherever he would go, he would get relatives to help him in times of need. For instance, he would need to be able to sharecrop because he would not own any fields. It is a sad state [of affairs] to leave behind fields—our fathers' fields—because we had hoped that our children would also use them. We are very concerned about how our children will live without access to the fields.

In this village, we have always been helping one another—but resettling in different locations, when things go badly, one would think of those people we used to share problems with. The host people will also not receive us kindly, saying we are bigheaded because we have so much money that the project gave us. We appeal to the project to help us make our life comfortable in our new homes. This is essential because as individuals we would be foreigners in a foreign land.

'Manthatisi

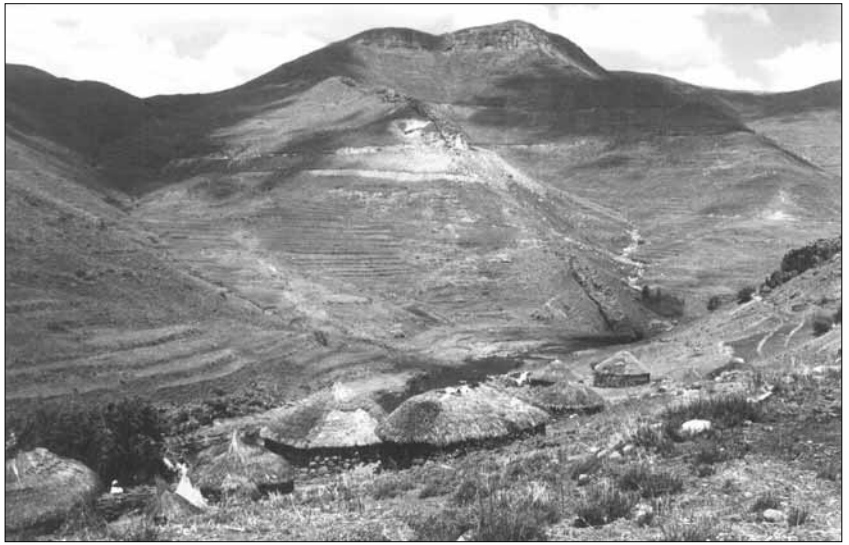
LES 23

'Manthatisi, 38, sees the dam project as having brought some benefits as well as problems for the community. She mentions in particular the building of roads and bridges, and employment opportunities for young men. She also views the impending resettlement with equanimity since she is not moving far and will go somewhere similar to her present location, Ha Koporala.

My father was disabled in the mines. He made his living by building houses. That is why he could not also look after animals… When I was to do standard six, my sister-in-law had an accident. My mother took her to the hospital in Maseru. While they were [there] the boy who was looking after the animals also had an accident. He too was taken to Maseru to be hospitalised… So I had to look after the children and the animals. So I had to withdraw from the school. During that time, my husband-to-be arrived and we got married…

"The field I trust"

[We rotate crops] so that the soil does not get tired of the same crop. When I had planted maize in all of them, I used to fill a bale but I did not count the number of bags that filled the bale… I copied [this



"In the middle of the mountains you find a beautiful village"

method of farming] from my parents. They have practised this system since we were children. So I liked it and applied it in my own fields...

We…have just been stopped from ploughing our best field that manages to feed the whole family… It is within the area that will be covered by the water… [That is] the field I trust. There are others I don't trust that much. They are on a plateau, where the soil is not very good. They do not give me enough crops... My vegetable garden has been taken already. I am no longer using it… It was equal to an acre.

I am trying to make something like [a vegetable garden] though the animals destroy whatever I have planted because it is not fenced… We buy [seeds] from bigger shops like that one in Ha Selikane. The vegetable seeds cost 2 ***maloti*** for a teaspoon-size packet… It will take me quite a long time [to prepare my plot] because I have to buy a fence. As I told you that I am not working as well as my husband, it will take me about one to two years before I can use it.

"We just wish, but we cannot afford it"

There is one [spring]…supplying the whole of this village. It works very well, but the problem is that it hits the rock, so it is not easy to dig it deep down [and] it collects a lot of water. The water keeps on

Mamookho (F, 30s) *LES 22*

We get our water from the springs. They are not protected… We are poor, we cannot afford to buy cement. We have just done it the cheap way, we have built stone walls around them. I would like taps… We have a lot of water… We are surrounded by four springs here. Two of them dry up during droughts, or I should say three dry up. There is one that supplies the whole village even during drought… [The river] is very important. When water is finished everywhere, we wash our clothes in that river. Our animals also drink there.

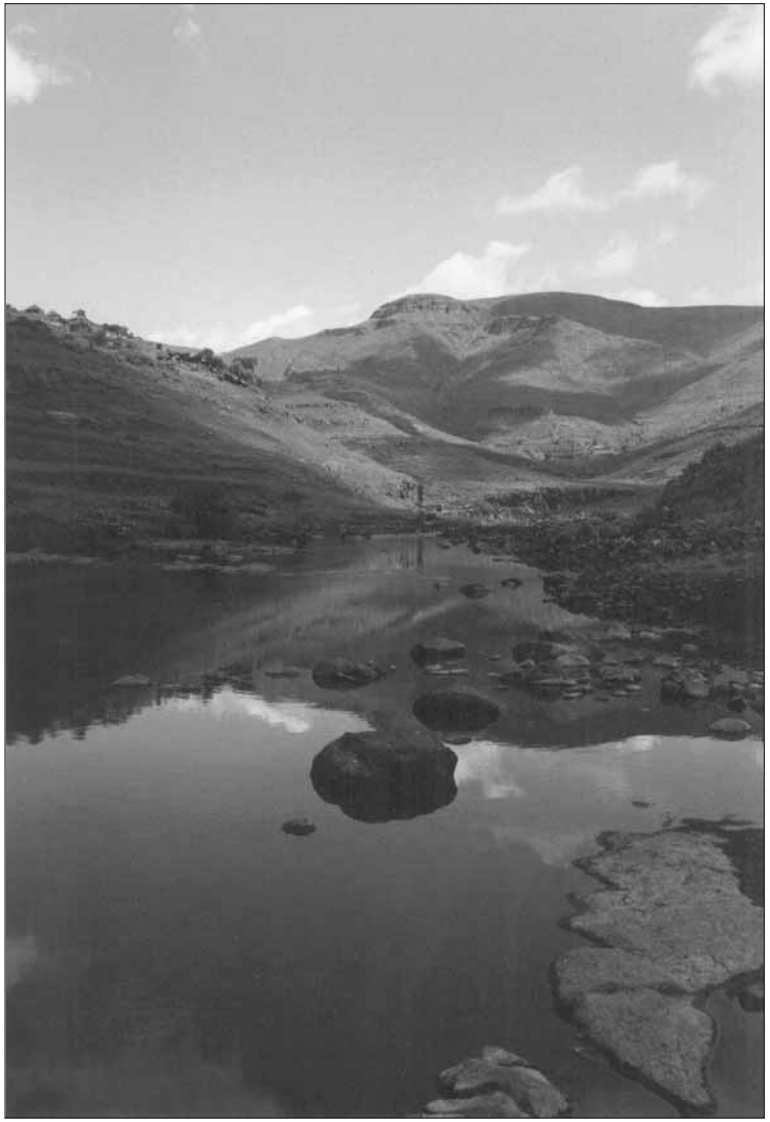
flowing away so that when we are many, the water gets finished and we have to wait for it to collect again, but people do not have to wait for a long time as the spring is powerful. It is covered. We have just left an opening to let us draw some water…

We would like very much to cover it in a proper and advanced manner. Our problem is money for buying cement, which is needed to do the work well. Actually we have to join hands—contribute some money to buy cement—but since we are not employed, that seems to be impossible. We just wish, but we cannot afford it. Sometimes children and adults suffer from diarrhoea. We do not know if the cause is the water we drink.

[When there is an epidemic] we usually go to Likalaneng dispensary. They ask questions and also advise us to try to get a better water supply, such as water from taps. They also tell us that in summer, when there are flies, we are in danger of diseases that spread, so we need toilets in order to reduce these transmitted diseases such as typhoid.

[Toilets are] necessary. Our problem in the past was that there were no roads coming here, so if one thought of making himself a toilet, it was a matter of carrying sheets of corrugated iron on the head for a long distance or hiring men to go and carry a ready-made one on their shoulders for a long distance, which was very expensive…

We have long been asking for a road. Even our husbands, while they were working in the mines, they wanted so much to join hands and build a bridge, but all in vain. **LHDA** has come to our rescue because of the water they are looking for… If I go to Maseru now, I return the same day. In the past…I had to go [the night before] to a village nearer to the road, [then] in the morning wash myself and wait for a bus. When I reached Maseru, I did my business and [then] I had to ask for accommodation from somebody's house. [I had] to spend the night there so that I should wake up early in the morning to go and queue for a bus coming back home…



This big river is the Senqunyane… It is important to those people who are living nearest to it, because they do their washing there. But with us, it just gave us problems because when it was overflowing, we were unable to go to the other side of it, because

Our husbands are no longer working in the mines

there was no bridge. Sometimes we had to cross it the previous day and spend a night on the other side if [someone was] sick or we had a dead person whose body had to come home… To me [that river] was just a troublemaker. Well, these days the problems are over because of the bridges.

"Our sons are employed"

[My husband] is doing nothing now. We are helped by our son who left school at standard five. He got a piece job with LHDA, though people…objected to him being employed when he is unmarried. They said he was too young to work… The chief, together with his committee, complained that the boy was never on the list of those who sought jobs. It is true I didn't give them his name to be listed because he was then at the cattle post, but when he came home he found that his companions were working with LHDA. He also went to queue for employment and he was lucky to be employed…

This project has brought a great change in our lives… There may be some problems here and there, like in any other things in life. But generally our lives have changed. Though our husbands are no longer working in the mines, our sons are employed by the project—they are helping us. Our children manage to buy clothes for themselves, which we could not afford if they were still looking after animals like my son was. If it were not because of this project, my son would look after somebody's animals to get money for clothing. He is now helping his father who is unemployed… People who are affected by the project are usually promised jobs, but it is just a promise that is never kept. Some whose fields are taken have been employed, but people like us with big vegetable gardens, which are also taken, our husbands' names never appear in the list of those…to be offered jobs…

Many people are hungry and therefore need work. So I don't mind when people are employed. The only thing that does not satisfy me is that most of these people come from outside our area. Our people here are just watching them work and they do nothing. We are told that these people are "experts", they know this and that. It is not fair… After the chief of the place complained to the officials of the project about the employment of the outsiders, many local people got employment.

Thabo (M) *LES 25*

What I like most in the mountains here is pasture, and water, which benefits the animals. We do not struggle to get water, we do not struggle to get grass for the animals. Even drought does not get to be too severe. Water does not get finished that quickly. That is what I feel happy about [here].

"About moving…I have accepted it"

Actually there is nothing I will miss when I leave this place. There is nothing special here which I will not find where I am going. This includes wild vegetables and firewood… I will not be changing place completely. We are still going to a place we are quite familiar with—the same [kind of] place, same chief. It is just changing of positions. Anything that helped me while I was living here will still be helpful when I am at a new place. Coming to my opinion about moving, I can just say I have accepted it. Whether I like or not, we simply have to accept…

We have learned from people who have been moved already. They are given money, which is called compensation. This money covers many things like houses, fields, **kraals**, gardens and others. The houses that are built for them are also very beautiful, though we do not know whether they are strong enough to stand up to rain and wind. I personally don't like [what has happened to these people], but what else can one do? It has come to our lives, we simply have to accept it.

Mokete

LES 11

Mokete, from Ha Ralifate, is in his 60s. Lacking formal schooling himself, he insists that education is the key to opportunity and employment and complains that his sons refuse to take this point seriously. He talks, too, about the breakdown of respect between age sets, saying that people nowadays "all behave as though they are of equal age".

Ach, town life is heavy. If you don't have money you have no means of eating. You live by going to work—when it rains, whether it is cold…[or] hot—you will go to work. If you do not go to work you do not have the means to eat. Here at home [in the mountains] the means are many. I use soil, I sow. There will germinate vegetables, maize, potatoes, pumpkin… I eat and become full.

I do not buy food. I will collect wood and make a fire, the pot will boil. In town there is a big problem. Paraffin, ***lijelello***; you will not buy a pair of trousers even if you have been hired and are working, never! Not at all! That money…you are working for—it is for the owner of the ***ma-line***, and paraffin, and *lijelello*… [Town life] is the life of a poor person…

We used to plant maize that was called *lehalesbere* and yellowish *borotho*. Now, the **father of Ntahli** came up with that [variety of] maize which he called *mantsa-tlala*, this one that is called "the stalk is hairy". It is this one that I see all over the country; and it has no

Education can't be stolen from you

taste at all… If you give a child two cobs of it, they will eat just one. The second one—you will see them already [just] playing with it. That one of ours, that one called *lehalesbere*, they could even have five cobs and still be eating. That was because it was tasty.

Social change

The people of old used to drink ***joala***… When they had drunk it I used to see them as very happy people in those times. They were people who enjoyed a lot of peace… Right now, father, mother, son and daughter they all go to the *joala* bar… You find that when they come back from there, they are drunk, the [husband and wife]. The father fights the wife, the son fights the father, and there is no one to stop the other—the family has become a place of people of similar age; they all behave as though they are of equal age… This [modern beer] is not *joala*—it takes respect out of a person.

Earlier, a child—if they were drunk they were beaten. These days the children are no longer beaten because the mothers are controlling the fathers in the families. If a father were to try and show this child a mistake he has made, the mother…[shouts back]. The old man will even keep quiet and stop scolding [the child]…

What caused this thing? I see that it is the love that has no boundary to it, because now this woman, when I say that I love her, I now say "This is your house, here you shall do each and every thing [you like]." Even when she is doing each and every thing, when she gives instructions here I keep quiet…

There were no [paid] jobs [in the past]. At times of hoeing like this, people used to hoe in the fields here in ***matsema***… Even if you were a person wanting to dig stones to build a house, they would go there, they would make ***letsema***… [Now] they no longer go, they now say you should hire them.

Education is for life

It was said that I knew a lot about how to herd. But the [cattle] are not here now. If I had been educated, education would still be here. Now the [livestock] wealth has gone… I always tell the children

Mampaleng (F, 78 years) LES 26

These children are taught even things we consider older people's secrets. As a result we are not able to tell them what is good and bad… They are taught about how they were created by *Molimo*. [In the past] we were happy that our children were going to have the wise people's education which would help them to work with both their hands and heads. However, we have been disillusioned because instead they know things that we did not intend to teach them. Now we are failing to make our children do things we want, because of this education.

Thabo (M) LES 25

The problem that I see with people who are educated is that there [are] too many of them. The population has grown and even when you try to go and look for a job with that education of yours, you will find there [are] too many people who are queuing [for] a job like that one that you are looking for. Now in the manner that I see it, maybe it is to waste time that you should go for too high an education. But the main thing is that you should know how to read and write.

this—these boys, these ones—but they are useless. I say: "Now that God shows that he has convinced your parents that they should send you to school…if you could only hear and be educated—if you could see what goes on in other places." I went to Bloemfontein once and found a young child working as an inspector…I found that the Europeans were afraid of him. He was a child but he was an inspector, because he had…listened to [his parents] when they said "We want to educate you." He would even die with that education. There is not a person who could steal it. Now when you have reared animals, or many things, we come there and steal them. Education can't be stolen from you, ***ntate***. Never.

Modern over-medication

Now the European doctor, when you arrive there, they will inject you with a needle, they will give you ***panados*** and medicine for a common cold. In the morning they keep asking you—if you are in hospital—"How is it?". When you say, "It is all right" you just keep being given a pill, and on and on. And a pill does not cure you. Now a Sesotho doctor will give you that medicine and one that will make it possible for you to eat. If you are unable to feed yourself they will feed you with their own hand.

"We will not have an easy life"

My feelings here on being made to emigrate [are that] there is nothing we can do because…[the authorities have] spoken, and in fact we cannot do anything because the country is the King's. And those who came to him and it was agreed, it is true [the South Africans] had asked for water, and even we could not do anything

Mampaleng (F, 78 years) LES 26

Today's education…tells us to have two children, claiming that we cannot afford to raise more than two children. Though we are told this, the government does not assure us that these two children will live longer. It is well known that God will always take his [own]–and who will you be left with if he takes the only two children you have? Our parents brought us up as many as we were, but God took others and eight were left, four boys and girls.

Here is a place where I have lived well

to this water because it comes and it passes, going down there without us stopping it to use it. Now, there they have found a benefit that they should stop the water and go and work with it.

Now that they are making us emigrate [from] here, and are taking us to those places…we cannot have an easy life…[like] the one here, where we still are. No, never. I have chickens here, right now, outside here. If you were to look at these chickens of mine, you would find that they are having an easy life, because I have planted trees there, they have gone into the forest. Even the hawk does not find their chicks. Now where we are going, it is just a plain unsheltered place.

'Maseipati

LES 12

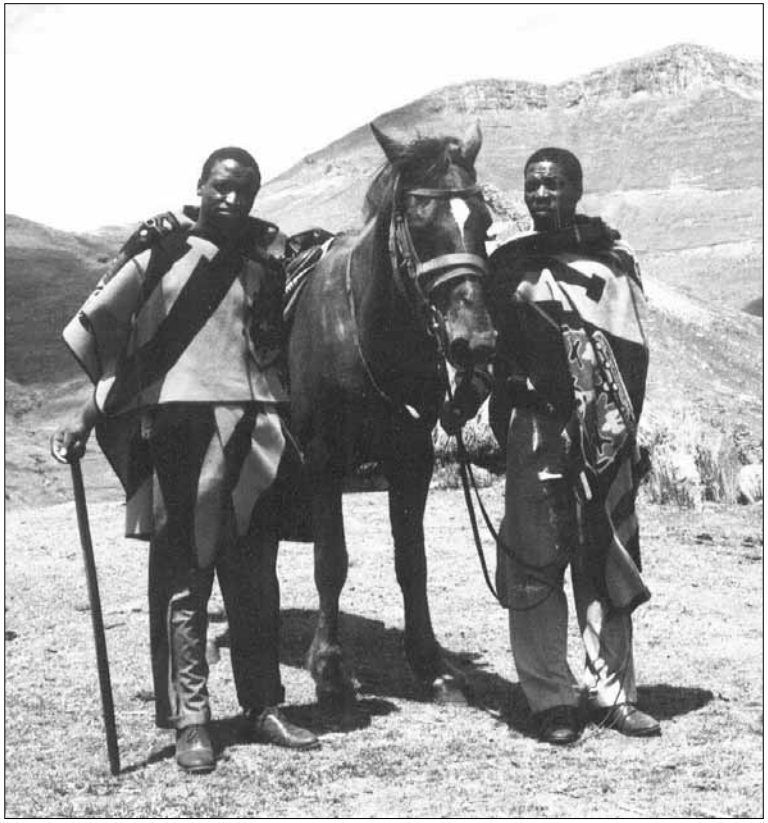
'Maseipati, from Ha Tsapane, does not know her age but points out that when the Paramount Chief Letsie II died (1913), she was a young woman. She describes the rain game and dances of her youth, how she made baskets and other goods from local grasses, and how comfortable her life has been. She fears resettlement: "I feel that the beat of my heart will be in the direction of this place where my life was."

Here where I have built is a place where I have lived well… I was ploughing, I was eating and getting full in the stomach. I was planting each and every single crop in the fields. I was getting wild vegetables that have been created by God on the ground and I was being full in the stomach. I was living comfortably in this land where we are being removed from today… Each and every crop, we plant each and every crop—peas, beans, wheat, maize… pumpkins, potatoes—every single thing…

I seldom buy [food from shops]. When I feel like that thing, I would buy a small packet, and then I would knead a little—or ask the children to knead for me. Now as for me, I just crush this maize of mine—I, a Mosotho… I heat water and when it boils I knead this

Tsatsi (M, 70s) LES 15

[The aged] in the village here? Their work was to make these hides supple and sew *matata*. They also made these blankets supple, *mokhahla*. It was their job. They also made [garments] for the women... In those days people used to wear clothes made of hides. People did not wear these things of the Europeans… When time went by and when people started going to the shops there appeared these types of woollen blankets called *masolanka*. They appeared and spread. People even started throwing away these blankets made of hides, and then they started seeing these hides as something which was of no use.



Woollen blankets of many and varied designs are worn throughout Lesotho.

dough and then I grind it… I stir, I stir, I make ***lipolokoe***, I mould loaves on the grinding stone there…

We work. We work because we still get *loli* from there. A thing called *loli*—do you know it?… If it was nearby I would get it for you and show you. We cut *loli*…at the river there, with a sickle. We also cut *mosea*…

We weave a thing called ***sethebe***. You weave it and you sell it to those who do not know how to weave. You weave ropes…you split this *loli* and you twist it and you make ***motlhotlo***, this thing that strains ***joala***. You make *motlhotlo* with that grass of God, that one, and then you sell and you get money, do you hear me?… [The men] also cut *loli* and then they go to weave hats… The tasks for men are many. They also weave ***lisiu***…

Women would ululate, men would dance

[My husband] has gone to the clouds. He was a person who made hats. He did go to the mines for a while…[then] he fell ill and left the mine and just stayed at home and wove *loli* [into] hats and sold them.

I did not attend [school]. In my family there were no boys and I was herding animals belonging to my family… As for church, I used to go… My grandfather, who was old—the father of my father—would say: "I will remain looking after [the animals] and you should go and make an appearance there."

"It would just be joy"

[The dances] were ***mehobelo***, do you know it? And ***mokhibo***? It was *mehobelo* and *mokhibo*. We [women] would ululate, men would dance and dart about… It would just be joy. People would perform ***masokoaneng***; sometimes people would leave in large numbers and go and fetch the ***lesokoana*** from [another village] and come running here with [it]…

When the sun is standing (at times of drought)…the women perform the rain game and the men climb the plateaux. They go to look for the animals.… When they come down, having killed these animals, they sing such a big ***mokorotlo***. When they go to the river there and it is going to be thrown into the water—this little animal—the women come ululating, coming from *masokoaneng*. Then you will see a lot of God's rain...

Resolving conflict

[Conflict is] a thing that is brought to an end. The chief reprimands—if one of [the parties] were to go the chief, the chief will call them and reconcile them. If they forgive one another, it will be the end of it.

In the earlier days, when we were still growing up, differences were not things that came to an end. It would still happen that there were differences between father and son, they would fight. Now [the offender] will be reprimanded and it would come to an end… One would say to the other: "Forgive me"… Or the family—if they do not go to the chief—those [members] of the family would be assembled and [the parties] would be reconciled…and then it would be that they forgave one another and it would come to an end…

Nathnael (M, 61 years) *LES 19b*

When maybe you have some difficulty and you quarrel with somebody, you have to meet with that person, and if you realise that you do not agree then you will go to the chief: "Hey, chief, it looks like we do not see eye to eye with so-and-so for such and such reasons. Now can you bring us together?" Now they will work together on this issue, and if it continues they will forward it to the higher-ranking chief. He will also bring them together to hear this issue.

"A rock on my heart"

As for this land, I liked it with all my heart. I like it because I was eating and getting full, I was ploughing and planting each and every single crop. This place where I am going, what am I going to eat? Who will give me a field?… I feel that the beat of my heart will be in the direction of this place where my life was. It will remain as a rock on my heart when I think of the place I am being removed from. There was nothing that used to torment me, I was living with joy and peace. Now I will be a ***molopitsi*** in other people's villages.

Mohlominyane LES 14/14b

Mohlominyane, 61 and a headman of his village, Maetsisa, describes a number of survival strategies he has used in the course of his life. Like other narrators, he stresses the importance of the cash income derived from growing and selling cannabis.

When you work, you catch a grasshopper straight to the mouth (you lead a hand-to-mouth existence). We do not have the means that you are able to have money to put in a bank on account. When you get [some money] you are going to buy food, you clothe yourself from it, you clothe the children from it…

As for us, we live on cannabis here. I live on cannabis here. Me, I do not steal and in fact I will even die without ever having stolen. I live on cannabis. I sell cannabis. On the twelfth month I harvest, I sell. When I finish selling this cannabis of mine, I take my child to school. That is my aim; that is my life.

I once worked at the **place of gold**…from 1951 to 1952. I was in Free State North, at 'Maletsoai—there at Odendaal. I worked there for nine months… I spent two years as a driver of a ***'makalanyane***… [Later] I became a foreman… On the fifteenth contract, I filed for a discharge at the end of it…feeling that I wanted to come home…

[The problem] was colour discrimination, that thing. In fact the Boers used to beat up people at that time. Europeans used to beat up people. Right now it is much better… Even now if you were to see these children, they get money in an astonishing manner. I sometimes regret and say, "***Banna!*** I wish I was working in the mines now." Now they have [stopped recruiting] here in Maseru…

"We live in a very difficult manner"

[Thieves] do not break into the houses. They take these animals of ours… Self-protection here is very difficult because we do not have ***melami***. They arrive, they arrive with AK47 guns… ***Ntate***, we live in a very difficult manner...We try to unite [against them] but even that is just with ***melangoana***, which are of no use. They come with dangerous things and we run away from them when they appear. They arrive and take [the animals], and you will not see them because it is at night…

By knowing one another we still help one another. Just like you see me having done some work here, they helped me in the way that they came to my aid by collecting wood here, knowing of my wife and her illness. [But] as for [elderly people], they live in a terribly pathetic way. So much so that I do not know what I can say. I do not have the means as to what I can give them, the sadness that you cannot know. My aunt, she is right there now, there at the end of the village. She is a ***sekoka***, who hardly knows how to live, who remains sitting in the house…

Thabang LES 2

The importance of herding and agriculture, including the cultivation of cannabis ("our main source of income"), is the main preoccupation of Thabang, 57. Leaving Molika-liko will mean leaving behind his father's field, which has been crucial to his family's survival.

My first wife cheated on me when I was in the mines by being involved in a love affair with another man in my absence. So the only option for me was to marry again. With my second wife we are doing OK. It's only that she spends most of her time in Maseru looking after my children.

My father relied solely on agriculture. This included relying on wool and mohair and production of wheat and maize… My family never bought food except when there were low yields caused by droughts. When yields were OK, we never bought food. There was also plenty of livestock, you can even see those **kraals** over there… I keep cattle because I plough with them. Horses are a mode of transport here and donkeys are also useful because they are used as carriers.

Wool and mohair are another source of income

The best animals are sheep and goats because one is able to sell wool and mohair annually and also because they are able to increase in numbers more quickly than other livestock. This is so because both kinds breed twice a year. Cattle are also of great importance because they are used for ploughing. People here do not consider milk to be important [for income] because it is not even sold by those with cows.

We cultivate maize, sorghum and beans… During a good season we produce more maize and wheat, of which the surplus is sold. Wool and mohair are another source of income…

The other important thing, which is our main source of income, is cannabis. People always come here to buy it from us, and it helps us a lot because with it we are able to pay our children's school fees and maintain our families… Even during Christmas our children are able to have new clothes, such that an outsider may even think we are employed.

Maize and other crops cannot match the amount of money we get from cannabis. I even prefer to sell cannabis than to work in the mines because I get a lot of money from it. I know for sure that if I can sell two bags of cannabis I will be able to pay school fees for my kids and still have something left for maintaining the family.

Let me tell you this. Cannabis is illegal and people are afraid of being caught. In the past my father used to cultivate cannabis just for smoking, not commercial purposes. Now people cultivate it only for commercial purposes. At first people cultivated it together with maize but now we even cultivate it in our house surroundings. You cannot see it now because we could not cultivate it because of a lack of rain. But if you go down by the fields, you can still see some.

"We all survived because of that field"

We were promised a lot of things [by the **LHDA**] such as farming centres where we would be trained in vocational skills—including commercial livestock farming, poultry [farming]—and they even told us that those interested in keeping goats that produce 5 litres of milk would be helped. It was the first time I had heard of a goat that can produce 5 litres of milk and I was so shocked.

Now all these promises are no longer mentioned. Now the talk of the day is that you are leaving next year in February. No more promises… We are then told there will be some money that will be given to our new chiefs and village development councils where we are going and we wonder why that money is given to those people and not to us…

These herbs are our medicines

My memories of this place? Firstly, my father's big field down the valley which was a source of food for the whole family throughout my childhood. All my brothers and sisters knew we all survived because of that field. This is to say we grew up feeding on that field. Among all my brothers and sisters, I am the only one who is still alive. This field has also been of great importance to my family as a whole, in the sense that my son and I consume food from this field. It is so big that it allows us to grow different crops on it at the same time.

Before I forget, there is this issue of natural vegetation which we are to leave behind and this supplies us with medicine. When a child is sick, one quickly digs up the necessary herbs and these herbs are our medicines, especially when our bodies are now used to them.

Khethisa

LES 24

Khethisa, now 40, remembers his days as a herd-boy, when he first developed his knowledge of local plants and herbs. As a traditional healer, he uses them today to treat villagers for ailments of mind and body. He says the environment surrounding his home in Maetsisa is still rich in medicinal plants and that he takes care to ensure they regenerate; elsewhere many have disappeared because they were harvested "unsparingly".

While we were growing up, that is myself and those I grew up with, we were herd-boys. When herding livestock, we used to milk the cows in the pastureland during the day and we drank the milk. We would simply suck [the cows] as they went about. Besides this, I think that our other activities included digging out edible roots of some wild plants such as *montsokoane*, *tsoetta*, and *mputsoe*. In this way we kept living fairly well, or even by eating *monakalali*. Apart from this, we would make clay models of cattle. As boys, we would also stay at the cattle post since we were unable, because of looking after the livestock, to receive any proper schooling as such.

I suppose another kind of life we may talk about is…this very life of mine [as a traditional healer]… I dig medicinal herbs for people. Apart from this, I just live by farming the land. When we have had a good harvest, I am able to take a bag [of grain] and sell it to someone. Indeed I am still able to serve the [villagers]… Their problems are many—[for some the problem]… of falling down; for others…the sickness of insanity; for others…swallowing poisoned food. For others, the problem is that of dreams and other things. I usually treat them in the *sethuela* way.

Those of my age went to the place of gold

[Herbal] roots, which in localities like the Free State are [only] obtained from distant places, here in this area are available… We know that in the lowlands *khonathi* was possible to find only a long time ago. Perhaps it is no longer found because it was dug out quite unsparingly. Probably this is so for other [herbs] known for their usefulness. These seem to have completely disappeared from the lowlands while they can still be found here at Molika-liko. A person simply proceeds into the **veld** to dig out this edible root if he knows [where to find] it… It is an edible root which is used as a medicine. That is to say it is a ***pitsa*** for women…

Also the spiral aloe [was used to treat barrenness], and is found here while all other places no longer have it. And another [species] is also still found here at Molika-liko. We do not have any problem finding these. Even when one realises one is going to be faced with some food shortage, one way [to deal with this] is just to proceed to those trees over there, dig out six of those aloe plants, and then go to the lowlands. I go to sell them, and return home, having purchased some food for the children…

[The plant] does not get finished up when we dig it out. When we find that here there are six or three growing together, I take one and I go to look for another elsewhere. The one that I notice to be rather too exposed while it is yet too young, I return its roots into the soil so that it may thrive once again.

Motseki

LES 20

Like several other narrators, Motseki, who is in his 40s, compares the lowlands—where "the thing that matters is money"—unfavourably with Molika-liko, where the soil's productivity, and careful grazing and farming practices, allow people to live "a very good life".

It sometimes happens that when you have not been to a place, you desire to know it. Even if…your parents satisfy [all your needs], you will still want to go to the **place of gold** sometimes. Some people do not have fields and are forced to go because of the difficulties of their families, [when] it was found there was nothing in the house.

Those of my age, they all went to the place of gold. As for me, I went on herding and in fact I was not even thinking of going to the place of gold, until I was given permission: "***Monna!*** Now it is apparent that you are of the age when you can marry. Marry!" It happened that a girl was requested for me…[and] I fetched her. At that time…it was still my parents who clothed me, who did each

Here no-one plants with manure or fertiliser

and every thing for me. Now I felt that, well, I was no longer satisfied that I should be clothed [by them] together with my wife. It happened that they released me and I went, truly. I started going to the place of gold in 1975.

"We live by agriculture"

Our life here is the soil, we live by agriculture. We cultivate the fields, we plant maize, we plant wheat, we plant beans, peas, cannabis, *harese*. We are already eating the ***lehoetla***, of peas. By the third month we will be harvesting wheat and by the fifth month we will thresh it… Immediately it is harvested they start brewing things like ginger beer… they cook wheat bread, things like that. Now, this [first] month…we have already started harvesting new cannabis, [which continues growing] until the second month when it ends completely. Which means now we already have money [from the sale of] cannabis…

We plant crops to eat—but even these we sell, too, and we make a little money, like that. You will find that sometimes we harvest four bales or five, depending on the size of field… Maybe someone from the lowlands…comes with a bag of sorghum. You exchange this one of wheat with him. Or maybe you take this wheat down and you are going to sell it in the lowlands… [The crops that grow well here] are maize and wheat… Peas also succeed but you will find that a person cannot often make a bale of them…

The chief, when he speaks, he says the land is used up and there are no longer any places [to farm]… One year we sow maize, in the other field it would be wheat, another [year]…we change them… [If] you now plant only one thing in the field for up to three or four years, it no longer comes out well… On occasions, when it is said that [the crops] have not done well, truly I still come out with maybe four bags from that one field… [We manage] very well… My children…have already been to those high schools…

Most places we go to, you will find that these people who harvest a lot…would have used manure or animal dung or whatever. But here at the place of Molika-liko there is not even one person who plants with manure or fertiliser or anything like that. The crops here grow high, they are up to here [*gestures*]. And ever since we started the practice of sowing in lines our harvest grows in a wonderful way, whereas in years of old we were people who just sowed by hand (broadcasting)… We collect seed for ourselves when we sow these fields of ours—we do not buy it.

Drought [is] the only thing that bothers us, nothing else. Snow, when it is there, it does not destroy anything. No, it does not cause damage because it falls during winter, usually when we have already harvested. Sometimes it falls while we are harvesting but then it does not do that much harm. The damage might just be to the animals. The animals might die when they are still up the mountains there, but not in large numbers even then… Here at Molika-liko, here it does not last even two days. This place, ***ntate***, it is as if it were not a place of the mountains. The snow of here wakes up, having piled up here, or it would fall at night and settle… But by this time (around 10 am)…here in the valley it is no longer there; it would remain on the mountainsides… The sun sets and…the following day there is already nothing on the mountainsides and we are already just herding well…

We collect seed; we do not buy it

The warmth that is here, again it is not like that of the mountain area. Our animals succeed better than those from many places because it is warm. It is like the lowlands here, yet it is in the mountains. The soil does not even need to be improved...

Controlling grazing

In summer like this, the animals have left and they have gone to the plateaux there. And then it would be that we suspend [grazing] here…and now this grass which is at home will grow again…it becomes plentiful… The small part of [the herds] that has remained—those cows that have just calved—will be given an area big enough for them… Now at some point—like the fourth month or the fifth—they come down, those [cattle] that are at the animal posts… When they come, they will be given another place. Not that the whole place will be made available for grazing. When people see that, no, it looks like it is finished, they close [the place to grazing] again and then they open another place at another time, and by now it is already winter…

Who looks after the animals? [It could be] a person who has no children, who is [still] a boy, or [someone like] me, having been born alone, having no children or elder brothers. It has always been the case from the beginning that we lived by hiring other people's children and, even as it is right now, I still just live by them, the children of other people. I would have a herder for cattle, I would have a herder for sheep, each and every year… When the year ends—one, I pay him with a cow, one wants sheep—I take out 12 sheep—the other one wants money, I take out money that is equivalent to those sheep…

Ach, there is nothing that we do, *ntate*, truly, except for our caring [for the soil]. To make sure that we look after this soil of ours, when you have harvested, you have to turn the soil in

We plant in the fields; we do not buy food

winter… [But] the life of the lowlands requires a person to be working. Both the father and the mother have to work to avoid hunger… [Here] whether you work or you do not work, you are still able to get [food and other necessities] in the manner in which I have already explained from this agriculture of ours.

Now where there is no agriculture, the problem is that you will be bound, *ntate*—in the morning, in the evening, a child must run to the café or to the shop and bring that small amount of flour. There is not even this black [cast iron] pot there, *ntate*. The thing that matters there is money…you go and buy paraffin there [for the primus stove]… Here, it is ten times better because people still cook inside the house, wood is collected here. Paraffin—you may have it here at some time but even then it would just be a thing for when you have visitors who are in a hurry and you [use] a primus to cook things quickly. But here people still collect wood, plant in the fields. We do not buy food in tin containers or in those packets…

Life here is much better than in the lowlands… When [an elderly person] does not have relatives and then, let us say, he or she does not have fields—they are still able to plant for themselves here. Sometimes when they do not have animals, they will talk to a person who does and they will plant in halves (sharecrop)… The elderly of here do not need money. Actually they do not struggle… And we are not persecuted by those [police] pick-up vans; the police do not bother us. When you hear me so insistent on this matter about the life of the lowlands—there is one man…[who] said something that made me think seriously. He said he does not like the life of the lowlands. Among many things, he does not like it because the people there live on this flour that is "put under the armpit" (carried in paper packets). Now, here [in Molika-liko], *ntate*, we live a very good life.

Moleleki (M, 61 years) LES 16

In town there, if you are to eat you must eat with money. You must find money. It is said that there is something called a piece job. You take it that day and you go and work at a person's place. In the evening, when you knock off, you come back with s*okanyana*; you come and you buy food. Tomorrow, when the night ceases, you are once again gone: you are going to hunt [for work] again. Now when you come back from there, sometimes you have not succeeded in finding anything. Now there in town it is very cruel, because on the day that you have not found [work], how are you going to sleep?

Now here…it is still better, because if you have an animal you can manage; a person might say, "Let us plough there." When you have an animal you manage, and can eat with your children. In the mountains here, I am happy with [life] because if I come to you, [if] I arrive and say my children went to bed hungry, in situations like that we have made each other accustomed to the fact that you give me some flour and I go and eat with my children. I will still pay you back at some point when I have gleaned [the fields]. Now there in the lowlands, there is no such thing.

Nathnael LES 19/19b

Nathnael, aged 61 and from Maetsisa, mentions the decline in respect for elders as a regrettable social change. On the other hand, he says that traditions of mutual help and support are still strong.

The change of today is to do with agriculture, in that we plant in rows. It is different from the [method used] in the past. You see this planting in rows gives crops nutrients, especially because…you then cultivate and dig the soil and after you have cultivated you will weed and put more soil around [the plants].

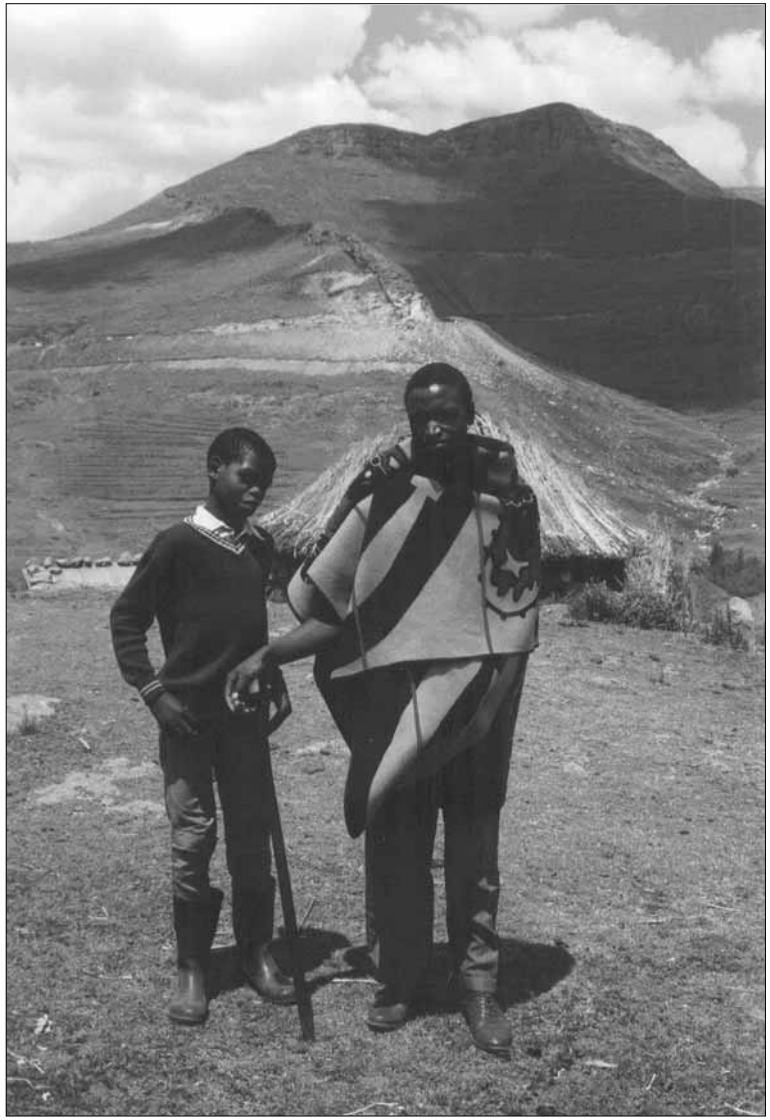
Also, with this plough of ours we take out the mouldboard so that it does not make the soil heavy, which causes the maize stalks to break. But when the maize is tall, if you want to put more soil around it, you will put in that mouldboard. Now you know that because this maize is tall it won't be covered by soil. Now, honestly, this way of ploughing is very useful, it has brought something very good for the crops… Many people from these villages around us… come and buy their crops here in our place… [This area of] Molika-liko is very independent as far as agriculture is concerned…

I have no fields that are mine alone. I plough ***lihalefote***… I do have animals… Sheep—I used to have them before. I used them for other purposes. What remains is cattle… Horses and donkeys help me in different ways, donkeys to carry loads on their backs…

I love [this place] very much because it is the place where I have lived for a long time, but agriculture is the first thing… The soil here is far better than that of the nearby areas. It is the one that, when it has been properly worked on…and rain comes and there isn't too much sun—which destroys the plants—then everything turns out well. We can say soil is the one thing that has made this place have crops in abundance.

"He does not listen"

The children of today are different from the children we were in the past. Well, these ones today, they have got very many things, so much that we suspect maybe there have been changes as far as reprimanding and upbringing are concerned, which is different from how we were brought up.



"The children of today are different from the children we were in the past"

There are many things that children do now. I suspect that their knowledge is too much because…when you see [a child] doing what is not good and you [say]… "Hey, my child, I see you doing something that is not very nice", you will see him as somebody who does not care about whatever you are saying… He is not interested in listening to an elder person when they reprimand him. Whether it is his parent or somebody else, he does not listen.

It is on very rare occasions that you can say [anything]. Let's say he is walking with somebody—a girlfriend—but when you see him he is not ashamed and he does not run away although you are an elder person. He won't even say "There is ***ntate*** so-and-so" or "There is an elder person", showing some embarrassment. They no longer do that; they just stand there. You will find that you are the one who ends up being embarrassed—you as an elderly person—and who moves out of the way, [whereas] they come dragging their feet there.

Honestly, *ntate*, we do try to reprimand, if it is a child that I know: "Here, when you do this, you are making a mistake."… If I see that this person can be reprimanded, [that] he understands whatever I am stopping him from doing, he will stop. But if he does not care and maybe he does not understand, I leave him alone.

Mutual help

Ntate, there are [jobs we do communally], like [preparing for] feasts… Maybe you want to make a feast, now you can inform us, then there will be cooperation. We can help that woman until the work is finished. Now, if you have some wood, well, you can inform the men: "Hey, gentlemen, I have some wood over there which needs to be brought home." Well, it still happens.

Yes, those are the kinds of assistance, maybe even something like a society…like ***stokvels***, to help. Well, we brew liquor, we help each other. Some of them are societies…like [for] Christmas, these women pay out money, maybe monthly, in a way that is agreed between them. When the day has come and they have finished their work, they take the money and share it among themselves…

This thing called ***ho hata maoto***, when a person has died—people will go to that field, whether it is with four or five spans of cattle, it does not matter. They will go there and plough that field until they have ploughed the whole field that day. Food will be cooked for that field and it will be eaten right there in the field until it is finished.

Mampaleng (F, 78 years) LES 26

None of [the children] respect elderly people. Their life is far different from ours. They do not even try to resemble our lifestyle. Anyway, maybe generations differ because even our parents used to complain that our lifestyle did not resemble theirs.

Makibinyane LES 3

Makibinyane, in his 40s, emphasises the friendliness of people in Molikaliko. He talks of the role of the chieftainess, as well as the importance to him of his cannabis fields. Although growing and selling cannabis is illegal, he justifies it on grounds of economic survival and points out that he is not committing a crime that harms anyone.

In the past things were very tough. For example, if you wanted to go to the hospital, you would have to travel on horseback for half a day to Maseru. Later we started going to Matsonyane, which is still far. Nowadays things are gradually improving. The **LHDA** and the government have built a road which has made our village accessible to many people. I can now go to hospital in Likalaneng, which is only one-and-a-half hours away on horseback. We also buy beer there. There is a post office as well and Lesotho Bank is going to open a new branch in the district in the near future.

We are ruled by Chieftainess 'Matsapane Tsapane but there is a democratically elected village council. The chieftainess acts in consultation with the council about the affairs of the village.

This village is blessed with another thing besides the soil fertility and the natural beauty of the place. We have wonderful people who are friendly and understanding. For example, right now we are sitting outside somebody's home but I am welcome here. We all know each other.

Occasionally the chieftainess calls a ***pitso*** to allow people to voice their opinions about many things they do not like in the village. The people are free. I truly love this place but it is a pity we are all going to be forcibly removed by the government in order to make way for the LHDA to build a huge dam, which is going to ruin the environment. As for us, we are going to be dumped in different places…

Schooling? No. I do not even know how old I am. I grew up looking after my grandfather's herd. Then I worked for some time in the mines of South Africa until I came back here to be involved in agriculture. I worked [in the mines] from 1974 to 1985. I worked at Habesfontein and Reifs mines.

Laurent (M, 47 years) *LES 8/8b*

As for this road, it has improved people's lives. As for us, we feel that we like it–if only we were not moving from here. We have suffered for a long time. Because [now] even when we have dead relatives, we now have a way of bringing them home, or even when a person is ill, we are able to put him [in a vehicle] and take him [to the lowlands].

"Now here in the mountains it is ten times better because people still cook in the house here, wood is collected here"

In 1985, there was a huge strike and all the Basotho miners stood united and decided not to go to work, unlike the Xhosas and the Zulus who continued to work and undermined our solidarity with the Batswana and Shangani. After this incident most of us came home but some remained in South Africa to work in the mines elsewhere…

Work and survival

Usually, when people get up in the morning, they perform their different tasks. The girls, before going to school, go and draw water from the wells, and the boys milk the cows. The women prepare breakfast before going to the fields and the men usually meet to discuss politics and then go to the fields. Occasionally we talk about the cannabis business while working in the fields, just to know who is making more money. It is healthy competition.

[I will miss] my fields, especially the cannabis fields. Nobody bothers me and I do not bother anybody. Selling cannabis is illegal and I know that, but I have no choice. I have to feed my family and pay for my children's school fees. When I sell cannabis it is not like I am intruding or invading somebody's property. It is not theft or murder, it is strictly business and I intend to continue it until I die.

'Malibuseng

LES 9

Aged 32, 'Malibuseng already has six children and speaks about the hard life that women lead. Having returned to her home village of Ha Tsapane to get married, after a brief period living elsewhere, she is reluctant to leave again and fears that they will not receive adequate compensation for the loss of their large and productive fields.

[I was born] right here at Molika-liko, Ha Tsapane. I was in class six and it happened that when I was supposed to go to the seventh one I eloped… [I now have] six children. I plough the fields, I hoe, I harvest… We plant maize, wheat, peas—even though…we do not plant [peas] year in year out because they are difficult to get—barley, beans. We eat; we sell them.

I like it [here] because I have fields, big ones where I plant a lot of food, which I am able to live on. I see that like now I produce a lot more harvest than my parents who were ploughing those same fields that I am now ploughing. Whether they were not able to plough in a satisfactory way, I do not know.

No demonstrations are done for us… We do everything for ourselves—by ourselves—we are not given instructions by anyone… [In the lowlands], people are saying they put in fertiliser. We do not use anything [like that]. We just plough, we put in seed there, we weed and see that we have weeded well. When we hoe, we no longer hoe heavily. It does not take a long time because in three weeks I have ploughed and I have finished those fields of mine. When I hoe, I might hoe a field for two weeks if it has been well weeded. [Then] I come and harvest that cannabis, which is in the midst of the maize—this cannabis, this ***hlahla-se-maele***… We just stay here with it. They will arrive—people who are looking for it—they often come and buy it. We do not go around [marketing] with it…

The [**LHDA**] tell us that they will compensate us… They say that, on the matter of our fields, an acre will be so much. Now, an acre—we do not know [what it is]…because we have not been shown it. Now these are not things that we can trust because we have not been shown how much an acre is…

Mamookho (F, 30s) LES 22

We just need somebody to encourage us to do something, whether from outside, locally, or even our chief–if ever he advises us to do something, we shall surely do it. We just need guidance… It may be [someone doing] an agricultural demonstration, or a nutritionist or any such person. None of them has ever visited us.

[My husband] worked in the mines for long years. We used to get money. There was never a time when you could say we were so short [of money] that you would go to bed hungry with the children… As for him, he is still struggling even now. Even though he has left this job in the mines, he still fetches horses from across there and makes them cross [the border] and comes and sells them.

"A woman's life is a hard life"

They are many, the tasks that I perform: I go and collect wood, I plaster the house with mud, I cook, I cut the grass that forms the roofs of those houses. The one who makes the decisions in the household? It is the man…

[Being a woman] is difficult. It is a hard life, much harder than when I was a child. When I was a child I did not have many problems that I was thinking about… [Now] I agonise over [many problems]. If there are no matches, the children ask me for them. If there is no soap, they ask me for it. When the children are hungry, they want food from me... Even if you say the child should go to his father, he does not go, even when an exercise [book] is finished…

The [rituals] of ***mabollo*** have not come to an end. Even now, people have already gone for ***lebollo*** in that village up there. Most *lebollo* is for boys…[but some people have] excised girl-initiates… As for me, I do not like [these things]… If I can teach children school subjects, that is enough. I do not like [*lebollo*]. I do not know what use it is, what it can give me in return.

[As for elderly women], I always see them performing some duties. They help one another and they go to the fields. When we have done some ***matsema*** they also help us to hoe…

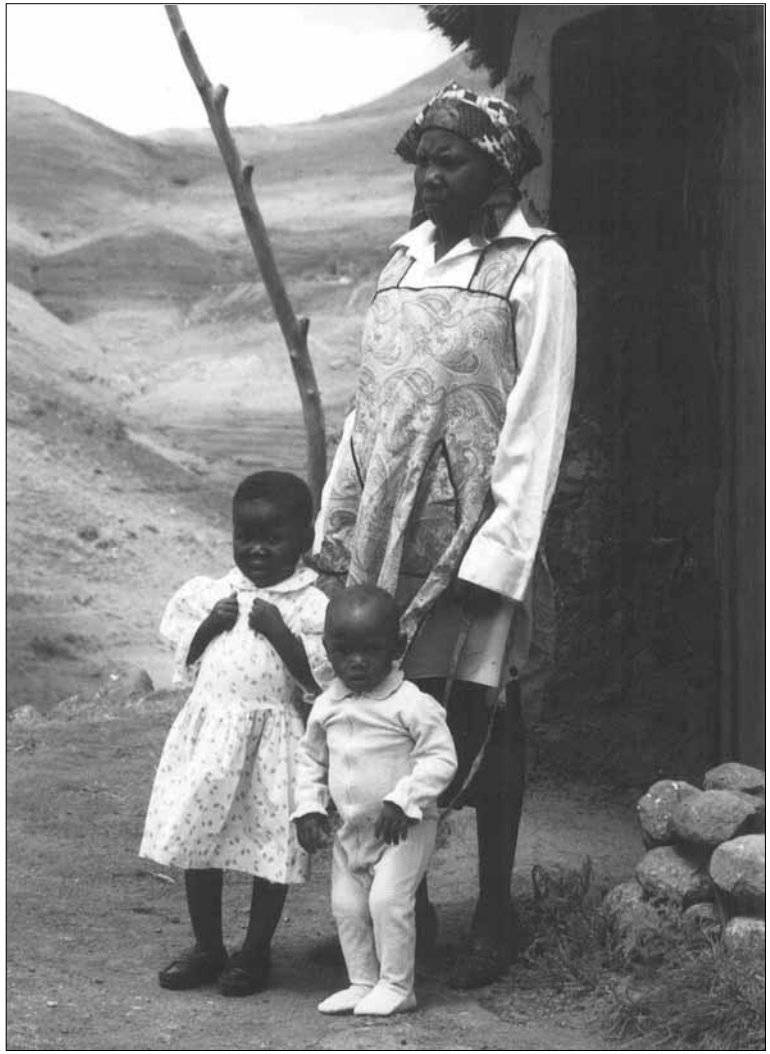
We live well together with [other villages]. We still help one

Matefo (F, 19 years) LES 5

I do not want my daughter to be initiated, because these initiation activities were done a long time ago and today life is quite different from the time when initiations were important. Now it is necessary that my daughter attends school and does away with initiation activities so that she finds good ways of living in the future.

Mamookho (F, 30s) LES 22

When we girls grew up, we played "houses" and there we cooked *likhobe* and we threshed some grass called *inolula*–it has some seeds–we made skipping ropes with grass and did many other things in our "houses". We cooked *likhob*e, we brewed beer, we were given wheat, which we ground and kneaded. We played mothers, and some were our children… [Girls' work was] to gather firewood, dry dung…going to the fields to hoe, harvesting and threshing. It was good work… I liked threshing. I actually went to the fields and threshed with cattle.



"Being a woman is difficult... When I was a child I did not have many problems"

another. They always come to help us with hoeing… A person would leave her home area and come and help me hoe like that; well, when I harvest, I would also see as to what I can give her.

I am still expecting that [these customs will continue]…but now I no longer have trust that they will happen. I am going to people

whom I do not know, whom I am not used to. Now I do not know how we shall act towards one another. Even the means of ploughing, as to whether it will be obtainable, it is no longer a thing that I know.

'Mepa

LES 21

Chief 'Mepa is in his 50s and lives in Molika-liko. He describes the roles and responsibilities of chieftaincy, which in his view are being undermined by the "chiefs of development", and says that traditions of mutual support are declining because of inadequate leadership. He also gives his views on the health-giving properties of cannabis.

I was born right here. I grew up here… Things of now have amazed me because they have changed, because here they are making dams, which we did not know [before]. Now for them to enter freely without the place being developed through its chief! [The dams] are being developed by these "chiefs" of development, which are there now. It is this thing that has placed me in a difficult position… Chieftaincy is not respected at all, things are being decided freely… If [a person] says he is a chief, it is agreed that he is…

It is not the same as in the past at all...because even the children are no longer ordered to do things. He won't respect you, whether you are his father or not, or whether you are calling him. They no longer have that obedience…

[People] no longer respect the laws we put in place, according to Sesotho custom: that whether or not a child has attended school, at least he should go for initiation. Now they no longer follow that way, those laws of initiation…

"In these present changed times"

When there was drought like now, we would ride on our horses and go to the plateau and then pray for rain and talk with God there. [Such customs] are no longer there. Now those that are still practised are few and they are practised differently… [Some people] still make ***lijo tsa balimo***, but it is not being made by all because there are changes. There are others who say there is no God. Among you young people they say there is no God, they do not know those things. They say these are things of the past.

You young people say there is no God

Old people still… [follow] those traditions of theirs. They make *lijo tsa balimo,* and [there are] others who still follow traditions. At ***mekete ea balimo***, when they do them in the village, the neighbours

"The elderly of here do not need money. Actually they do not struggle…"

still help each other… [If someone does not come to help] she is not regarded well in the eyes of the community because she does not have that love of unity… They will just look at her. It will be clear when she goes to the feast… They will keep quiet or…they won't have anything to do with her, but just go and eat that food.

Moleleki (M, 61 years) *LES 16*

[Graves] have a great significance, because when we dig for a person there we do not go where it is muddy, we look for where it is dry, while at the same time examining [the grave] to ensure that it is standing well… We Basotho are people who trust *balimo* a lot; even God, we trust him a lot; we trust those who are up [in heaven] because we do not want those people to suffer, and yet they are already soil–just like they say, earth to earth.

There are no ***matsema***, not unless you can organise ***sekoropo***… ***Letsema*** is still there if they actually want to help you, but they won't come like they used to, when they were obliged to come. It used to be good, there would be joy, they would drink liquor and do all those things, but they no longer dance like they used to do. They would dance and make something beautiful during the old *matsema*. Now if they have drunk liquor and they have weeded, they have no problem…

When there is a death...I [as chief] have to be informed and then I will tell people that they should attend the night vigil. I also have to be there, but if I am unable to attend I have to send a representative who will go there when the death has been announced like that. And the people will continue with the night vigil until they go and dig the grave and then bury the dead body… The law demands it, because the dead are the dead. He has died, so he deserves to be buried by these people. He is not only his family's responsibility…

It happens that they refuse [to help] and stay there, and then the family alone digs, in these present changed times. [This happens] when they do not understand and they do not have clear guidance from the chiefs… It is a lack of leadership...

Chieftaincy

This chieftaincy—I followed my father. My father was given it, yes, he fought for this place. He was given it by the Paramount Chief Letsie I…

Well, I am still around. I want to see to my duties of chieftaincy, as I am still trying… [When people fight] we intervene… The one

Tsatsi (M, 70s) *LES 15*

These chiefs who rule here now are far from the old rule. Is it not said that "a wolf is eaten at the chief's place" (any big matter is discussed or dealt with at the chief's place). As for now, there is no longer a wolf that can be eaten at the chief's place–a chief wants to live on you and finish you. [He thinks] you should pay tribute to him; he should use up this wealth of yours.

The whole area of Molika-liko buy their crops here

who has fought will be taken to court… [When someone has fought with someone else] I charge him or I reprimand him in accordance with peacekeeping… That one who has been attacked, if he asks to be compensated, I will pass him to the court of law where he will be compensated, not here where we practise Sesotho [law].... [Here] it is just to intervene, not to pass judgement. The one who is not satisfied goes to Likalaneng, the court of law.

The medicinal properties of cannabis

Agriculture here is very important because the whole of this mountainous area of Molika-liko comes to buy their crops here because of their beauty. I can say Molika-liko is [like] the lowland itself…

Besides agriculture, these people still live on this…[cannabis]. Even if they do not get anything from the fields, they still get small monies from the cannabis, so that children have something to eat.

People used to smoke from ***kakana*** and crush the cannabis. When they moved from that place they would praise their chiefs and they would be happy. Most of all, it makes a strong person—with muscles and bravery. If you are leading regiments and they smoke, you will notice their bravery. They see enemies and they feel they can beat them. It is not dangerous at all because it gives you energy…

Let me point out that when my horse has ***papisi***, I give it this cannabis. I put it in the dregs and it eats. Now it will get rid of this *papisi*. In fact you will find [the horse] very healthy, smooth and fat…

When the child is weaned, I take two small pieces of cannabis and put them there and the child will not cry, he will be quiet… They are cooked in a small tin and he drinks… He does not have any problem. He will grow up well and he will no longer care about his mother's breast. She won't even smear anything [bitter] on the breast; once he has drunk [the preparation], that's it. Again, I have not said everything about this cannabis… When you have a heart attack, and your heart beats fast, I put in…these seeds and you drink and the heartbeat slows, that's all…

There was a time when I…[grew cannabis], before I came to power. Now I do not… I am just watching over my people because I am their eye.

Lebeko and 'Matsapane

LES 6

*Lebeko was for some time chief of Ha Tsapane; 'Matsapane has now taken over her husband's role. Their description of the negotiations that have taken place prior to resettlement highlights how anxiety and confusion over complicated compensation packages has generated misunderstandings and mistrust between **LHDA** fieldworkers and the villagers.*

Lebeko: I was born right here and I am getting old right here. Yes ***ntate***, I grew up eating well, without buying potatoes or any other vegetables, without buying grain either, even now I still have plenty of food in my houses… My father was born here and he died here. Yes *ntate*, I am now left with my mother. My children? Due to lack of employment, they are just roaming about, not doing anything specific…

The grazing land has deteriorated due to the fact that we are not allowed to take our livestock to fertile land in the mountains early enough… We are only allowed to take our livestock into the mountains until February and we are forced to keep this livestock here at home…where there is nothing to graze on. We have given up [trying to tackle this problem] because when we approach our principal chief he tells us to go to the foothills and the foothills are surrounded by people's fields and it is not easy to have our livestock grazing there. When we try to go into the mountains our livestock is impounded. If only he would allow us to go into the mountains in October, our grazing land would still be fine.

Resettlement

I don't understand what these people are saying when they tell me I have to move because this thing does not register in my mind… In this village I live without any problems. Now when these people move me from here they are taking me to sufferings—that is when I really look at things. When you are moved from your home and taken to another place you will no longer be human because you are used to the life you had at your place of origin, where you lived well. For instance, when I move to the top of that mountain [*points to a mountain in the distance*] what field am I going to cultivate? Whose field? That is why I am saying these project people are just

forcing us. Especially these people who have signed these agreements, mainly the principal chief, have done nonsense…

These project people want us to leave but, as I hear, they are cutting down our house sizes. For instance, if you have a big house they build you a smaller house…

I think we are going to live a terrible life where we are going. Because if you want to go [higher in] the mountains it is cold. When you try the foothills, there are already lots of people. Where do you get your food? I can see that even their compensation is not satisfactory. I forget [how much it is]. Maybe my wife can remind me… There are some payments [for moving the graves]… Let me call my wife to explain more.

'Matsapane: They said they would give a person 3000 ***maloti*** when a person moves a grave…to pay for arrangements of reburial. But then, there is no change from this money, because this money is used to buy a cow and other necessary stuff for the occasion. These things are bought by the project people and they keep the change. You do not even see that money.

Again it seems, on the issue of the fields, they have shown on paper that in five years they give you M37,000—but as we calculate this money per annum and per field, because it is M1,080 per metre per annum, we found out that about M53,000 goes to the project. Our main concern again is our compensation money because it is us who needs to be compensated, not the project.

So we are saying that we want all our money. Again they say that people who are moving [lower down] to Mohale will get M12,000. Those of us who are moving into the mountains will get less. But our point is that we have been affected in a similar manner and therefore we should be compensated in the same manner. Because even if they raise the issue of burial societies in the foothills [as] being different from the ones in the mountains, the reason is that the burial societies in the highlands could not buy things…due to lack of roads. But when roads are built we can also be like those in the foothills. That is our concern.

Tlali (M, elderly) LES 7

[The places that are special] are the graves, which I see we are going to be separated from and leave behind. Even the [dead] are going to rise against us and say "Are you going to leave us here so we are submerged by water?" They should come with us…[or they] will kill me because they would be saying that I left them to drown in that water.

Moleleki (M, 61 years) LES 16

Has it not been said that here it is going to be water? There is going to be a dam. Now the [people buried in the graves] cannot stay in that water because sometimes when…I need them, I must go there and talk to them. Or if they want something, or my child wants to see *lingalo*, it will not be possible to take them there… Now that is why we are saying that this responsibility [of the graves], we are going with it. So that I can show it to my children, where I have put this burden [so that] even if I were to die, you children should know that this is so-and-so's grave; this one here is so-and-so's.

Mampaleng (F, 78 years) LES 26

Ach! A person will always miss a lot of things about their original place; if there is anyone who can say they will not miss a thing in this place that person must be sick. Even a girl who has agreed to marry a boy takes a long time before she gets used to being away from her home. We are going to miss this place. We loved everything about this place. It being bad or good, we are used to it and we will really miss it. However, there is nothing we can do.

"They said the choice was ours"

I was telling them just now that the bricks they are using to build people new houses are of bad quality and should be used for partitioning indoors. I asked them where the good-quality bricks had gone. These low-quality bricks you are using will crack if there are strong winds, and the houses will fall… I am telling this builder from the project that I do not want the type of bricks they are using.

They wanted to disagree. I reminded them they said the choice was ours. Why do you now refuse the choices we make? As for me, I will not let them build me a house with those low-quality bricks.

Another point I forgot about the fields is that they did not take their owners along when they were measuring them… Earlier they had gone out to the fields with only one person from the village… They told me that they were only testing.

But after they had done that, they then swapped the fields around. For instance, my field was said to be yours, yours somebody else's and so on… After that they were no longer willing to come back. The people want them to come back, because they say there is no reason why they should be rushed to move when some things have not been settled.

The [LHDA] take some [people] on, on a part-time basis. Those who are employed are very few and some are being retrenched. Women are not employed at all. There are women from other villages sweeping the roads but not from mine. But we were promised that we would leave this place happy.

Tekenyane LES 4

Tekenyane is 74 and his deep sadness at the prospect of leaving Molika-liko is evident.

During my days as a herd-boy, I was herding my father's livestock during his days. He used to slaughter, and I would get meat and be satisfied... Once a month I would get sheep meat and yearly I got beef and also eggs... Also there was milk from the cows, which we consumed in the morning. There were wild vegetables like *sepaile*, *qhela*, *bobatri* and others, and potatoes, beans, *hensisi* and maize. In autumn we used to get *hehooetla*, which we never purchased…

We grow wheat a lot here. We exchange wheat or peas for sorghum with people in the lowlands so that we can brew beer for our feasts. Feasts like ancestral feasts, marriage feasts, or for weddings… We still do ***matsema*** here in my village even though some people need [to work] other people's fields for cash. A field owner who does not brew beer for a ***letsema*** will get people who go there to play and not work, but once there is beer, one can see progress within a short time, and people can work up to late in the afternoon, since they will be happy and dancing and singing.

"God is angry"

I think we have wronged our God somewhere, through our deeds on earth, because we do too many wrong things. We are jealous of one another. We don't love each other any more. And there is no longer any respect. Before, any parent would scold any child in the village if they see them doing wrong. These days we despise each other... I think this is what is causing the rains to stop... God is angry.

A group of villagers discusses the oral testimony project.

"All these I will miss"

There are certain things that I shall miss [about this place]. I will miss wild vegetables, which I get free. I will miss potatoes, which I had free. I will miss beans, maize, cow milk, which is also free. All these I will miss at Nazaretha. I will also miss free firewood. I have made coal with cow dung. I will miss these chickens, you can see them. I will miss my livestock **kraal**, my **rondavel**, my flat house, the chicken house where I protect my chicken. I will miss all these.

Tokiso LES 13

Tokiso, 36, is from Ha Tsapane and repairs radios as well as farming. Proud of his ability to fend for himself and support his family, he is full of foreboding about the loss of independence and self-reliance that resettlement is likely to bring. He fears he will become "a man who just sits", that ploughing fields will be just a memory, and that he will be tempted to steal.

My parents…had always been people who were [economically] weak. They lived by borrowing and then they would struggle, and then at some point—when the crop has been planted—it would be then that they would be able to repay that person.

I ended [school] at [standard] three… My parents could not afford [to keep me there]. And it was then that I lived on other people here. I lived by being hired. I was herding. They gave me a cow per year… I was herding right here in the village here, as well as further up in places like 'Mamachipisa…[which was] quite a long way away. That is, if I were to leave here at around 1 o'clock, like now, I would be there by 3 o'clock…

After I married I stopped herding and then I became a person who is struggling on my own by building and repairing radios… [I learnt] right here in my home village. I watched while people were repairing them. I kept hearing that "when it's like this, it's like this; when it's like this, it's like this… When the IC is burnt, it is like this; when the volume has gone down, it is like this"—and that's the way I kept learning those things, by just keeping on watching while they were doing repairs.

I went down to places like Maseru… I stayed there for three years. I was struggling to find ways of putting food in my stomach…

I think we have wronged our God

I will remain thinking about ploughing

I used to carry flour on my head. I found that life there [was hard]! Now I felt like planting here because I was already married and my children were dying of hunger and now—the whole thing of staying in Maseru—I found that the money was still very little, [coming in] from time to time… It made me complain. I found that being there, it was like "playing" (doing something that is worthless) because I was paying rent,

I also had to buy groceries [for myself in Maseru], I was also buying groceries this side [for my wife and children at home]. I found that I was staying there for "fun" and dying from those heavy [sacks of] flour…

"I can do things for myself"

The important things that I will not forget [when I am resettled] are finding work when I was still living here at home, especially the fact that I can do things for myself with these hands of mine… I build and I also roof…

We had joined associations such as **bury-me-shilling**; that is, these ones of uniting and helping one another when one person has a bereavement or if I have problems… [But] now we are being resettled, we no longer understand each other well [or get on] with the people of the village here. Because now one is going in one direction and one is going in another. [There may be] a misunderstanding of this kind: that I need to borrow an animal from someone who used to lend me one in the past, but now it happens that he will no longer lend me one. And then he will say that his animals are getting finished and I should take time to get some of my own. But how can I have them when I do not have the means?

[When I am resettled] I will remain thinking about ploughing, because when I am in another place there will be nowhere where I will plough. Now, at that time it will happen that I will have folded my arms and I would be asking myself as to who will help me? Who will at least give me some food? And then it will happen that nobody will help me. And then it will be that I am that man who just sits. I do not work most of the time, I am just sitting. And then it will happen that I will change and will end up stealing, as a result of thinking too hard about this agriculture of my home area here. That is the thing that will remain here in this heart of mine.

GLOSSARY

Every attempt has been made to gloss all the terms in the testimonies but finding the meaning for all words has not always proved possible.

balimo	spirits, the dead, ancestors
banna	men, husbands, or an exclamation, "Man!"
bury-me shilling	literal translation of Sesotho name for burial associations
hlahla-se-maele	literally, a plant with tricks—cannabis
ho hata maoto	(literally, to walk over/measure land area by taking footsteps); the ploughing of someone's field following their death
joala	locally brewed beer; can be used for beer generally
kakana	pipes dug into the ground and used for smoking cannabis
kraal	livestock enclosure
lebollo	initiation/circumcision
lehoetla	autumn season/harvest
lesokoana	stirring stick; plant (see Botanical glossary)
letsema	communal labour
LHDA	Lesotho Highlands Development Authority
lihalefote	(literally, halves) sharecropping—two or more people sharing the expense/tasks involved in cultivating one partner's field, and sharing yields equally
lijelello	tasty food to eat with bland food such as *papa*
lijo tsa balimo	food for the ancestors
likhobe	cooked grain
linǧalo	the site of the graves
lipapa	plural of *papa*; food generally
lipolokoe	steamed loaves of bread
liroto	baskets
lisiu	large grain storage baskets or silos
mabollo	initiation rites (plural of *lebollo*)
ma-line	low-rent urban housing, built in rows
'makalanyane	underground train in a mine
maloti	(literally, mountains); unit of currency in Lesotho
maqebekoane	round steamed loaves of bread
masokoaneng	the "rain game" in which women from one village go to another to steal the chief's *lesokoana* and women from the "host" village pursue the thieves to recapture the *lesokoana*

matata	blankets made of tanned hide
matsema	working parties providing communal labour
mehobelo	Basotho men's dance characterised by a rhythmic stamping of feet to a song
mekete ea balimo	feasts of the ancestors
melami/ melangoana	sticks carried by Basotho for ornamental as well as for fighting purposes
mochahlama	light beer
mokhahla	blankets made of roughly tanned hide, worn by boy initiates
mokhibo	Basotho women's dance characterised by a rhythmic moving of shoulders from a kneeling position, also performed to a song
mokorotlo	war song
Molimo	God
molopitsi	beggar
monna	man, husband
motlhotlo	a strainer made of grass, used to make beer
father of Ntahli	Chief Leabua Jonathan, former prime minister
ntate	(literally, father), term of respect for a mature man
panados	painkillers
papa	maize porridge, staple food
papisi	botfly (livestock disease)
pitsa	herbal treatment for barrenness
pitso	a meeting, gathering
place of gold	Johannesburg, or South Africa generally
rand	South African currency, also used in Lesotho
rondavel	round thatched house
sekoka	old sickly person
sekoropo	work for payment, casual labour
sethebe	a mat for putting food on, used especially for collecting flour as grain is ground
sokanyana	(literally, 5 cents); small change
stokvel	a club (usually women's) in which members take turns to give "parties" at which other members buy food and drink
thokolosi	evil spirit possession
veld	elevated open grassland

BOTANICAL GLOSSARY

borotho	variety of maize, broad and soft	*Zea mays*
harese	barley	*Hordeum vulgare*
hlahla-se-maele	literally, a plant with tricks	*Cannabis sativa*
kolitsana	variety of tree known for the quality of *melami* made from it	*Rhus divaricata*
lehalesbere	variety of maize, strong and hard	
lengana	South African wormwood	*Artemisia afra*
lesokoana	variety of plant; also stirring stick	*Alepidea serrata*
lesuoane	variety of grass	*Carex clavata*
loli	plant used for weaving hats, ropes, mats	*Dolichos angustifolia*
mantsa-tlala	(literally, "the expeller of hunger"); variety of maize	
manolo		*Wahlenbergia*
mosea	grass used to weave brooms, mats	*Danthonia drakenbergenis*
'mokuru	variety of grass	
monokotsoai	variety of berry	
morarana oa	black bindweed	*Galium wittbergense*
motantsi	local plant	
peo ea basali'	(literally, seed of women); plant used to treat infertility in women	
poho-tsehla	bitter wortel	*Xysmabolium undulatum*
roro/rohoroho	grass used for roofing	*Ficinia gracilis*
seoelioetla moelela	wild plant with very sweet edible roots	*Rhynchosia totta*
sepaile		*Sisymbrium thellungii*
sesepa-sa-linoha	(literally, "soap of the snakes")	*Albuca trichophylla*
taraputsoe		*Stachys rugosa*
thita-poho	grass, large and coarse, used for making brooms	*Eragrostis gummiflua*
tsikitlane	variety of plant	*Gazania krebsiana*

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