“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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VOICES
FROM THE MOUNTAIN

ORAL TESTIMONES FROM
THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS
"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... 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...
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, nate. 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...
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, nate. 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 … 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
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...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...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—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 itisane. 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...
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… venturing into people’s fields—and they say the owners took some soil from my footprints [to use in witchcraft].
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 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 big-headed 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.

'Manthatsi'

'Manthatsi, 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 Kpopora.

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 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
This big river is the Senquyane... 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 it was 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...
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麻烦maker. Well, these days the problems are over because of the bridges.

“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 the weather in this country. But there is nothing one can do. It has come to our lives, we simply have to accept it.

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Mokete

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

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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 lealeslie, 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 lesema... [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...
Here is a place where I have lived well. I start with 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 lolli from there. A thing called lolli—do you know it?... If it was nearby I would get it for you and show you. We cut lolli...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 lolli 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?... [Themen] also cut lolli and then they go to weave hats...

The tasks for men are many. They also weave lisiu...

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

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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...

“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
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, “Banani! I wish I was working in the mines now.” Now they have [stopped recruiting] here in Maseru...
and donkeys are also useful because they are used as carriers.

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... 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 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

The importance of herding and agriculture, including the cultivation of cannabis ("our main source of income"), is the main preoccupation of Thabang. 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.

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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

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 all 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 monsokoane, tssesta, 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.

Motseki

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...
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, hare. We are already eating the *lehoela*, 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...

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...
Nathnael

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 ...

“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 ... 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.
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 stokwels, 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.

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
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 boys also work in the fields, sometimes helping each other by exchanging information about the cannabis business while working in the fields, just to know who is making more money. It is healthy competition.

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

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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 chieftainship 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.
\'Malibuseng

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…

\'Malibuseng

[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
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 tsu 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.

Old people still... [follow] those traditions of theirs. They make lijo tsu balimo, and [there are] others who still follow traditions. At mekete en balimo, when they do them in the village, the neighbours...
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 who is tired of what we do for them, then we only say that he is not the one who is fighting. When people fight, they break 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.

Graves have a great significance, because when we dig for a person there we don’t 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 Badhoe people who believe in God, we believe in God; vetutu those who believe in heaven because we don’t want those people to suffer; and yet they are already dead—just like they say, earth to earth.
Lebeko and 'Matsapane

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... 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... 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
**Tekeyane** LES 4

Tekeyane 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, *henasis* 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.

“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 Nazareth. 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.
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.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Glossary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>balimo</td>
<td>spirits, the dead, ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banna</td>
<td>men, husbands, or an exclamation, “Man!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bury-me</td>
<td>literal translation of Sesotho name for burial associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bury-me-shilling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hlahla-se-mae</td>
<td>literally, a plant with tricks—cannabis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ho hata maeto</td>
<td>(literally, to walk over/measure land area by taking footsteps); the ploughing of someone's field following their death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>joala</td>
<td>locally brewed beer; can be used for beer generally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kakana</td>
<td>pipes dug into the ground and used for smoking cannabis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kraal</td>
<td>livestock enclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lebollo</td>
<td>initiation/circumcision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lehoetla</td>
<td>autumn season/harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lesokoana</td>
<td>communal labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lesokoana</td>
<td>stirring stick; plant (see Botanical glossary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LhDA</td>
<td>Lesotho Highlands Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lihalefote</td>
<td>(literally, halves) sharecropping—two or more people sharing the expense/tasks involved in cultivating one partner's field, and sharing yields equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lijedlO</td>
<td>tasty food to eat with bland food such as papa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lijo tsalalimo</td>
<td>food for the ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likhobe</td>
<td>cooked grain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>linjalo</td>
<td>the site of the graves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lipapa</td>
<td>plural of papa; food generally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lipolokoe</td>
<td>steamed loaves of bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liroto</td>
<td>baskets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lisiu</td>
<td>large grain storage baskets or silos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mabollo</td>
<td>initiation rites (plural of lebollo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma-line</td>
<td>low-rent urban housing, built in rows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'makalanyane</td>
<td>underground train in a mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maloti</td>
<td>(literally, mountains); unit of currency in Lesotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>magsebekeane</td>
<td>round steamed loaves of bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masokoaneng</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

spirits, the dead, ancestors men, husbands, or an exclamation, “Man!” literal translation of Sesotho name for burial associations literally, a plant with tricks—cannabis (literally, to walk over/measure land area by taking footsteps); the ploughing of someone's field following their death locally brewed beer; can be used for beer generally pipes dug into the ground and used for smoking cannabis livestock enclosure initiation/circumcision autumn season/harvest communal labour stirring stick; plant (see Botanical glossary) (literally, halves) sharecropping—two or more people sharing the expense/tasks involved in cultivating one partner's field, and sharing yields equally tasty food to eat with bland food such as papa cooked grain the site of the graves plural of papa; food generally steamed loaves of bread baskets large grain storage baskets or silos initiation rites (plural of lebollo) low-rent urban housing, built in rows underground train in a mine (literally, mountains); unit of currency in Lesotho round steamed loaves of bread 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
mekte ea: feasts of the ancestors
balimo: sticks carried by Basotho for ornamental as well as for fighting purposes
melani/ori melangana: light beer
mohahlala: blankets made of roughly tanned hide, worn by boy initiates
mokhulo: 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
molepitsi: beggar
mona: man, husband
motjotjho: a strainer made of grass, used to make beer
father of Ntahli: Chief Leabua Jonathan, former prime minister (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
pitsa: 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 (literally, 5 cents; small change)
sokanyana: a club (usually women’s) in which members take turns to give “parties” at which other members buy food and drink
stokvel: evil spirit possession
veld: elevated open grassland

BOTANICAL GLOSSARY
borotho: variety of maize, broad and soft
harese: barley
hlahla-se-maee: literally, a plant with tricks
kolitsana: variety of tree known for the quality of melami made from it
lehalesere: variety of maize, strong and hard
lengana: South African wormwood
lesokoana: variety of plant; also stirring stick
leseamane: variety of grass
leli: plant used for weaving hats, ropes, mats
mantsa-tlala (literally, “the expeller of hunger”): variety of maize
manola: grass used to weave brooms, mats
’mokuru: variety of grass
monokotsa: variety of berry
morarana ea: black bindweed
motantsi: local plant
peo ea basali’ (literally, seed of women): plant used to treat infertility in women
poho-tsehla: bitter wortel
roro/rohoroho: grass used for roofing
soeloele moeela: wild plant with very sweet edible roots
sepaile: wild plant with very sweet edible roots
taraputso: (literally, “soap of the snakes”)
tha-poho: grass, large and coarse, used for making brooms
bisikiti: variety of plant

Zea mays
Hordeum vulgare
Cannabis sativa
Rhus divaricata
Artemisia afra
Alepidea serrata
Carex davata
Dolichos angustifolia
Wahlenbergia
Danthonia
Drakenbergis
Xysmabolium
Ficinia gracilis
Rhynchosia totta
Xenellium thulungii
Albuca trichophylla
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Eragrostis gummiflua
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