

## WHO DRIVES RESETTLEMENT? THE CASE OF LESOTHO'S MOHALE DAM

Paul DEVITT

*Hunting-Consult 4 Joint Venture*

Robert K. HITCHCOCK

*Department of Geography, Michigan State University*

**ABSTRACT** The Lesotho Highlands Water Project, a joint development effort of the governments of Lesotho and South Africa, involved the construction of several large dams and other infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and power lines. The purpose of the dam and water transfer project was to provide water to the Gauteng region of South Africa and electricity to Lesotho. Phase 1B of the project, the Mohale Dam, resulted in the displacement of over 320 households and the inundation of villages, fields, and grazing lands. In line with the 1986 Treaty between the governments of Lesotho and South Africa, the project authorities provided compensation for losses suffered and put in place development projects in an effort to promote economic self-sufficiency. This article assesses the degree to which project-affected people in the Lesotho highlands were actively engaged in planning and decision-making regarding their own resettlement and rehabilitation, and the extent to which public participation contributed to their subsequent welfare.

**Key Words:** Lesotho; Dam project; Resettlement; Compensation; Development; Participation.

### INTRODUCTION

Most large dams are built to provide power or water to people other than those who have to make the sacrifices necessary for the dams to be built. The people who lose their land and perhaps their homes, their communities, their jobs, the graves of their ancestors, and the abodes of their spirits seldom enjoy the benefits, and suffer many of the inconveniences, of these projects. The resettlement and compensation of the losers have generally been regarded by the responsible authorities as an awkward necessity, to be undertaken at the lowest possible cost.

The water harnessed by these dams, and in some countries the land occupied by the project, are often, under the law, considered to be national resources to which the local residents have only secondary rights. For political and economic reasons, large dam projects are often regarded by their proponents and by governments to be in the national interest and therefore to take precedence over any local interests. Recently in Nepal, for example, the state corporation that was planning a new hydropower complex urged the people whose land and houses were to be expropriated to surrender them willingly and to accept modest levels of compensation because the project was necessary for the 'welfare of the nation'. (See the Feasibility Study for Arun III Hydroelectric Project, Lahmeyer International Joint Venture, Kathmandu, Nepal, 1992.)

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) is the second largest water

transfer and hydroelectric project in Africa today, the largest being the Chinese-built Meroe Dam on the fourth cataract of the Nile in Sudan. Costing an estimated US\$3 billion for the first two phases (1A – The Katse Dam, and 1B – the Mohale Dam), the project provides water from the Senqu River Basin in Lesotho, which is part of the much larger Gariep (Orange) River Basin, for the Gauteng region of South Africa (formerly Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand), and electricity for Maseru, the capital of Lesotho.

The Kingdom of Lesotho (formerly, the Basutoland Protectorate, one of 3 British Protectorates in southern Africa) gained independence on October 4, 1966. Landlocked and completely surrounded by South Africa (see Fig. 1), Lesotho (Fig. 2 & 3) is one of the smallest countries in continental Africa. It is 30,355 sq km in size, about the size of the American state of Maryland or the country of Belgium. It is also one of the poorest countries on the African continent, with a third of the population living on less than US\$1 a day. In the 1990s, approximately 40% of the Gross National Product of Lesotho was made up of remittances from Basotho mine labourers who worked in South Africa and a significant portion of the economy was dependent on agriculture. In 2009, according to the World Factbook, Lesotho had a population of 2,130,819 people. Largely



Fig. 1. Map of Lesotho.



**Fig. 2.** A Mosotho woman selling fish caught in Katse reservoir.



**Fig. 3.** A village and nearby fields above the Mohale Reservoir.

populated by a single ethnic group, the Basotho, Lesotho also has members of a number of other ethnic groups, including Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, Europeans, Indians, and Chinese.

The LHWP contains two of the larger dams in Africa (for a list of some of the large dams in Africa and some of their impacts on human populations, see Table 1). Co-financed by the governments of Lesotho and South Africa, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the World Bank, the European Investment Bank, a number of private banks, and Africa export credit-backed commercial loans, the LHWP generated a substantial portion of the country's budget, with benefits generated for the country as a whole and costs born primarily by the people and habitats in the highlands (World Bank, 2007).

Over the past several decades or so the ethics of the occupation by the state of farmers' land, their villages, burial sites and other features of their landscape 'in the cause of the greater good' has received widespread attention, especially with reference to the construction of large dams (Lawson, 1982; Wiest, 1995; Dorsey et al., 1997; World Commission on Dams, 2000; McCully, 2001; Khagram, 2004; Morvaridi, 2004; Scudder, 2005). For many years the most significant player

**Table 1.** Major Dams in Africa and Asia that have affected local communities

Name of Dam and Year(s) of Completion	River and Country	Numbers of Households of Individuals Displaced or Resettled
Akosombo Dam, 1965	Volta River, Ghana	84,000 people
Aswan Dam, 1902, 1912, 1934	Nile River, Egypt	hundreds of Nubians and others displaced
Aswan High Dam, 1970	Nile River, Egypt and Sudan	120,000 people (50,000 from reservoir)
Kainji Dam, 1968	Niger River, Nigeria	44,000 people
Kariba Dam, 1959	Zambezi River, Zambia and Zimbabwe	57,000 people (34,000 from reservoir, Zambia side)
Katse Dam, 1995	Malibamats'o River, Lesotho	71 households displaced, 2,700 ha grazing and 925 ha of arable land lost, 20,000 people affected
Kiambere Dam, 1988	Tana River, Kenya	7,000 people
Maguga Dam, 2001	Nkomati River, Swaziland	66 households (ca. 480 people) displaced
Manantali Dam, 1988	Bafing River, Mali	11,000 people (9,535 from reservoir)
Meroe Dam, 2008	4 <sup>th</sup> Cataract of the Nile, Sudan	70,000 people displaced, some left in desert with no support or facilities
Mohale Dam, 2007	Senqunyane River, Lesotho	325 households in Stages 1 and 2, 71 other households lost over 50% of their land; 1,125 ha of grazing land and 875 ha of arable land lost, 7,400 people affected
Roseires Dam, 1966	Blue Nile, Sudan	10,000 people displaced

Note: Data obtained from fieldwork and from World Commission on Dams (2000); McCully (2001); Scudder (2005) and the International Rivers Network, <http://www.irn.org>

in the funding of large dams in the developing world was the World Bank (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, IBRD). Often criticized for its role in support of large dams, the World Bank also played an important pioneering role in the development of social and environmental guidelines aimed at minimizing socioeconomic and environmental impacts (Scudder, 2005: 270–285). The World Bank's *Guidelines on Involuntary Resettlement*, which appeared originally in 1980 as "Social Issues Associated with Involuntary Resettlement in Bank-Financed Projects" (World Bank, 1980), and then later as part of its environmental policies in revised form (World Bank, 2004a), have become the basis of an internationally accepted code of practice (World Bank, 2004b; Cernea & McDowell, 2000; Scudder, 2005: 278–283). Virtually all proponents of big dam projects have until recently used this basic code of practice in project preparation. This to a large extent is because big dams usually require international financing, and the availability of funds from international agencies is dependent on compliance with these or similar criteria for involuntary resettlement. Over time, the operational policies of the World Bank regarding resettlement and environmental impact assessment were watered down, indicating an awareness by the World Bank that the earlier, more stringent, policies were often difficult to implement and too demanding on the limited resources of borrowers. Also, newly industrialising nations such as China and Brazil were building dams in other countries independently of World Bank finance and guidelines.

It has become the normal practice for detailed plans to be made for the resettlement, compensation and rehabilitation of communities and families affected by dam projects (World Commission on Dams, 2000; Scudder, 2005; Cernea & Mathur, 2008). However, when these and plans for the engineering and other aspects of the project have been approved by the funding agencies and finance is committed, there is a strong tendency for work on land acquisition and construction to commence with alacrity, while implementation of the resettlement, compensation and economic development programs becomes mired in bureaucratic procedures, difficulties in obtaining political approvals, and scarcity of able or willing people to get on with the job.

One common reason for this is that the engineering works are invariably contracted out while the resettlement program is to be carried out in house, by civil servants or staff of the agency implementing the project. The staff designated to perform these tasks are rarely experienced in this type of work, and few are prepared to spend the required long periods in the field with the affected communities. The proponent is usually a government department or parastatal organization with an engineering remit and staffed largely by engineers, such as an electricity or water corporation, or an irrigation authority.

Many such organizations now have their own 'environmental divisions', normally established at the behest of one of the international funding agencies. But the environmental divisions of large engineering corporations tend to be dominated by engineers and by the engineering priorities of the organization as a whole. They often lack any real autonomy in the important realm of responsibility for making and implementing decisions and are, in reality, the 'poor relations' within the authority. Their most conspicuous and time-consuming occupations are the writing

of reports and memos and attendance at meetings and conferences; few are capable of actually implementing a full program of resettlement and rehabilitation.

Prime requirements of the resettlement implementation agency are flexibility, responsiveness, creativity, and compassion for those who can do little to help themselves in the face of the overwhelming changes imposed on them. While many individuals are endowed with these qualities, they are generally not characteristic of large official agencies, especially if they are charged with heavy engineering responsibilities and tight schedules.

The responsibility for a politically sensitive social program such as resettlement therefore sits uncomfortably in a government or a parastatal institution, and yet there is usually a powerful reluctance to contract that work out to a professionally competent body in the same way that the engineering works are given out on contract. Indeed, there are few independent professional bodies with practical experience of this kind of work. There are many who have prepared resettlement plans, but few who have actually implemented them. Nevertheless, there are good reasons for governments to be strongly engaged in resettlement programs for they are ultimately responsible for the outcome, or at least will be held responsible. The civil service, whatever its weaknesses, is the most durable of national institutions and where investments are to be made in capacity building it makes sense to do it here.

The physical resettlement program is the easy part, and one which is familiar to an engineering – oriented organisation, as it consists largely of construction works – roads, water supply and other services, building houses, transport of materials and people, etc. The restitution of livelihoods, social structures, and a sense of belonging in the new place is, however, a venture fraught with uncertainty. Even specialists with long experience in this field expect and invariably find innumerable problems and set-backs, especially in the rehabilitation of the weakest and most vulnerable people.

As a result of these factors the involuntary resettlement of established rural populations to make way for a big dam is usually disastrous for at least some of the people concerned, hardly less painful and disruptive than war or flood. Attempts to soften the blow of forced removals by resettling whole communities, with a view to providing mutual support in re-establishing the normal activities and relationships of the rural families, have seldom worked. Resettlement is usually the occasion for a dispersal of traditionally cohesive communities. The very poor, the elderly, and the disadvantaged often cannot or do not wish to make a new life in the place designated by the planners for them.

The strong, the wealthy, and the enterprising may actually welcome the opportunity provided by compensation payments and resettlement entitlements to move out of an economic backwater and seek their fortunes elsewhere, free of the encumbrance of dependent relatives. Some may remain in the resettlement areas designated for them if the economic opportunities are sufficiently attractive, or even at the dam site itself if they can find work on the construction contracts, but equally they may take their chance to improve their lot by moving to a city. Even this positive outcome may have its darker side, as neighbours and kin who cannot follow them are deprived of their energy, ideas, and enterprise.

The idea that a resettlement program can be undertaken as a development program has become a part of the standard phraseology of project preparation, but to what extent does it reflect the actual intentions and actions of the authorities, and can the re-settlers themselves use the opportunities provided by compensation and other entitlements to improve their own lives?

The responsible authority in Lesotho set out with the declared intention to conduct a model resettlement program, learning from the experience of its own and others' actions. When detailed planning for the resettlement and rehabilitation of residents in the Mohale dam basin began, the project authority had just completed construction of the first dam of the LHWP, at Katse, some 50 km from Mohale in the mountains (for a discussion of some of the lessons learned from Phase 1A of the LHWP, see Maema et al., 1997). The Katse experience, it was generally acknowledged, was one that had its limitations and therefore was not to be repeated at Mohale.

In spite of a massive commitment of funds, expertise and other resources, over a period of a dozen years to date, the outcome of the resettlement program for the Mohale Dam has been a mixture of success in some respects and failure in others. In some crucial respects the outcome is unknown and will probably never be known except by those whose lives were most directly affected.

In accordance with current norms for involuntary resettlement there was an explicit commitment by the authority to engage the affected communities in the planning and implementation of their own removal and re-establishment in new places of their choice. Elaborate arrangements were made and new institutions were set up to facilitate this participative operation. They certainly enabled the affected people to participate, and the authority to interact with them, but at several important points the differences in outlook and approach between officials and locals proved unbridgeable; as a result, there was a standoff and mutual mistrust arose.

This paper aims to illustrate, by means of the Mohale Dam case study, how a resettlement, compensation and rehabilitation program, which was to have been carried out 'by the book' (the 'book' at that time being the World Bank's operational directives<sup>(1)</sup>) actually fared. The responses of the officials in the project authority and of the affected communities to one another, and of both to the project itself, are described in some detail. These interactions took place in a context of mutual expectations, conditioned by the prevailing social and political norms, the changing forms of land tenure in Lesotho and the World Bank's requirements for the active participation of the people in the design and implementation of their own compensation and resettlement program.

The paper also describes the events which led to the affected communities themselves taking the lead in preparing for their own resettlement, urging the authorities which had imposed this necessity upon them to act promptly in support of their plans. The response of the authorities to these demands, and the consequent necessity to make decisions and take responsibility for its own actions varied. At certain times it would respond directly and sensitively; at others it would freeze in a posture of immobility and alarm, allowing only those operations to proceed which would avoid the actual obstruction of the contractors'

access to the work site, which would have resulted in the contractors claiming heavy damages against the project authority.

The paper begins with a description of the LHWP. It goes on to describe the ways in which the people affected by the project were consulted and how they took part in the relocation and resettlement process. It concludes with a consideration of some of the direct and indirect impacts of the Mohale Dam on the people of the highlands, those people who were relocated or resettled because of the project, and their hosts in the villages and towns to which people from Mohale moved.

### THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS WATER PROJECT (LHWP)

The LHWP, as conceived originally, involved the construction of five large dams, all in Lesotho. It also consisted of transfer tunnels, roads, and facilities for power generation and distribution. The first large dam built, Katse Dam (part of LHWP Phase 1A) on the Malibamats’o River, is the highest dam in Africa (180 meters in height). It was completed in 1995 and dedicated in 1996. The second large dam, the subject of this paper, Mohale Dam, part of Phase 1B, is located on the Senqunyane River (See Fig. 4). The Mohale Dam is the largest rock-filled

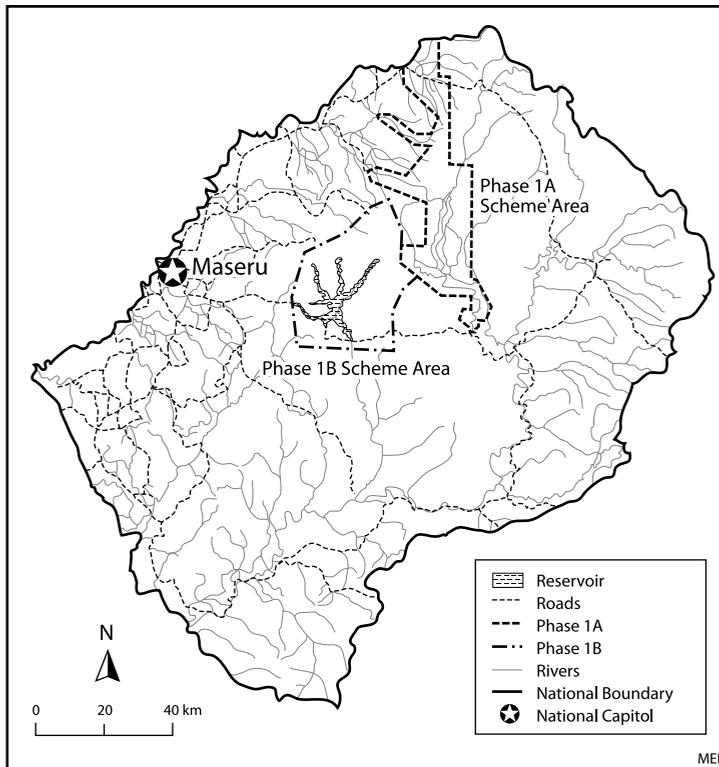


Fig. 4. Map of Lesotho showing the LHWP Phase 1A and Phase 1B Scheme Areas.

embankment dam on the African continent, 144 meters in height. It was begun in 1998 and completed in 2004. Tunnels enable the transfer of water between the dams and from the Katse Dam through the Maluti Mountains to other parts of the country and to South Africa. One of these, the Trans-Caledon Tunnel, provides water from Lesotho northwards to the Ash River in South Africa and from there to Gauteng, the industrial heartland of South Africa.

Lesotho traditionally has been divided into 4 physical zones – the mountains, or *Maluti*; the foothills; the lowlands, and the Senqu River Valley (Bawden & Carroll, 1968). These are significantly different agro-climatic regions. The Maluti (Maloti) Mountains of Lesotho, the so-called highlands, make up a significant portion of the country, some 61%, averaging between 2,100 and 3,000 meters in elevation. The Malutis can be seen as ‘water towers’ out of which rivers flow to the foothills and lowlands. The foothills, which lie at elevations ranging from 1,800 and 2,200 meters, make up 15% of the land area. The lowlands, averaging between 1,500 and 1,800 meters in elevation, comprise about a fifth of the country (20%) and are found primarily in the western and northern regions of Lesotho. The Senqu River Valley makes up 4% of the total area of Lesotho (Chakela, 1999). Arable land is found primarily in the foothills and lowlands as well as in the deep mountain valleys. Cattle, horses, donkeys, and small stock (sheep and goats) are raised in various parts of the country, with the mountains serving as summer grazing areas for herds from the lowlands and foothills.

The direct impact of the LHWP falls on the environment and the people of the mountains, where the dams and their reservoirs are. Some of the displaced people have remained in the mountains, concentrating on livestock production, while others have moved to the foothills to take advantage of the agricultural possibilities, or to the lowlands, where Maseru the capital city of Lesotho is situated, to find jobs or commercial opportunities. In both of these areas, host populations (the residents of the foothills and lowlands) have had mixed responses to their new neighbours, in some cases welcoming them and in other cases treating them with a certain amount of suspicion, in part because of fear of competition for jobs and scarce resources.

The Phase 1A Katse Dam displaced 71 families, most of whom moved upslope and remained in the vicinity. In the terminology of the LHWP, they were ‘relocated’. The term ‘resettlement’ was applied by the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) to families moving out of the area to establish themselves elsewhere. The affected families in Phase 1A were not given the option to ‘resettle’ elsewhere with project support and compensation. If they chose to do so, they were ‘on their own’. The relocated families were compensated for their land losses with annual deliveries of grain, equivalent to the crop they would have had from their inundated land. These deliveries were planned to continue for 15 years, after which time recipients were expected to have found new income-earning opportunities through LHDA’s rural development program which was charged with the promotion of agricultural, pastoral and other income-generating enterprises. This program, however, achieved very little. In 1995, as in previous years, it was able to spend only some 3% of its annual budget due to an acute lack of implementation capacity and perhaps to a shortage of commitment on the part of

the LHDA.

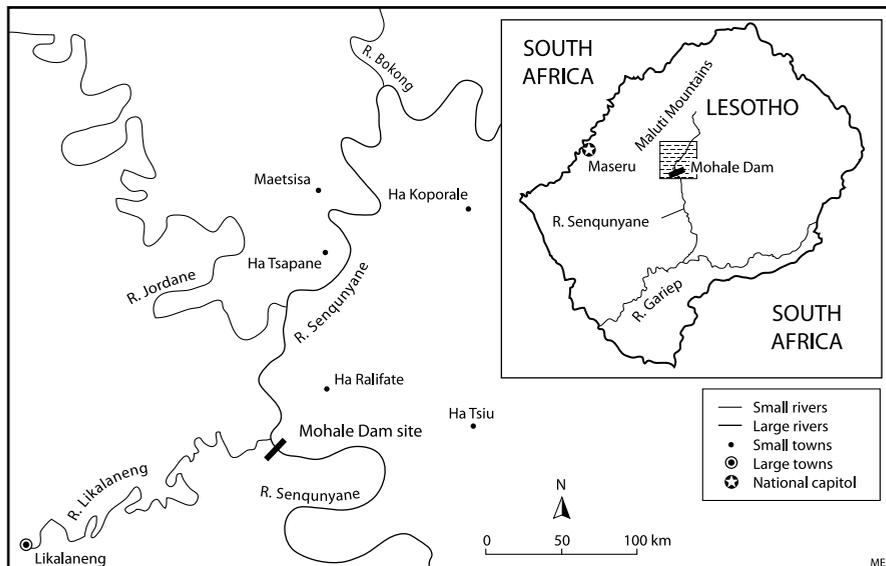
In the 1990s there was mounting dissatisfaction among affected families both with the compensation package and with the rural development program in Katse. Several major problems confronted the relocated families: most of their best land and natural resources had been inundated, there were few new and permanent jobs and other economic opportunities in the area. The rural development program had not yielded significant practical benefits, and they were not enabled to move away in search of better opportunities.

New houses were built for the displaced families by LHDA according to a set of standard designs. Although LHDA had almost a decade in which to prepare for resettlement a few months before Katse Dam was to be closed in October, 1995 and the water would begin to rise no new houses had been built and no one had been relocated. A crash program was instituted and contracts for the new houses were hastily let. Some houses were to be built in places without roads, where the cost of building to modern specifications, in a hurry, was very high. Some of the houses, which replaced traditional circular huts with stone walls and thatched roofs, cost as much to build as the current price of a large modern house in one of the opulent suburbs of Johannesburg/Gauteng. The new houses were, however, generally well received by their occupants and went some way to offset their complaints about LHDA's attempts to revive their damaged economy.

## THE MOHALE BASIN

The Mohale Basin is the term applied to the area most directly affected by the Mohale Dam and its reservoir. It includes the dam itself, the area inundated at full supply level, and the slopes of the Sequnyane Valley in the vicinity of the reservoir where the affected residents grazed their livestock. The catchment of the Mohale Basin (see Fig. 5) is 938 sq km in size ([www.lhwp.org.ls/overview.html](http://www.lhwp.org.ls/overview.html)). Most of the Mohale Basin, and especially its most densely settled part, were inaccessible by road until recently when the transfer tunnel access road was built. All human movement in and out of the area was by foot or by donkey and horse. This seclusion, and the fertile soils of an oxbow, encouraged a degree of food self-sufficiency unusual in Lesotho. It was also conducive to the production of marijuana (*Cannabis sativa*). This is an illegal crop in Lesotho, and it can only be grown in any quantity where the police cannot reach. In the old days the police patrolled rural areas on horseback, and as a result the marijuana growers of Mohale were largely left in peace. They sold their crop to South African traders who came to buy and take it away on donkeys over the mountains.

Other sources of cash income were livestock sales and for many decades, work on the South African gold mines. It was the norm for young men to leave their villages and work in the mines until middle or late middle age (Murray, 1981; Lye & Murray, 1980; World Bank, 1994; Sechaba Consultants, 2000; Turner, 2000). For some years prior to the decision to build the Mohale Dam the mines had, however, been employing fewer and fewer Basotho, which had a profound effect on income of most Lesotho families and on the life prospects of working-



**Fig. 5.** Map of the Mohale Dam Area in Lesotho showing the areas where project-affected people could relocate.

age men. There were very few employment opportunities in the vicinity of Mohale until the start of construction on the dam, and these jobs were by nature only temporary. Moreover, the contractors brought most of their skilled men with them, and only relatively menial jobs were available for locals.

Prior to inundation the economy of the Mohale Basin was adequate to sustain its inhabitants in a modest traditional style. There were few signs of conspicuous wealth, but equally few of poverty. In this regard the people were significantly better off than most rural Basotho, whose fields produced a poor and unreliable supply of food and little surplus for sale.<sup>(2)</sup>

The Mohale Dam will likely have displaced some 320 households (and possibly as many as 425) when the removals are complete. The Mohale Dam is connected to Katse Dam by a 30 km tunnel. The several arms of the reservoir extend for long distances up the main and tributary valleys, creating peninsulas whose occupants would be caught between the reservoir and high mountain peaks.

The site of Mohale Dam and its reservoir, which reached full supply level in February, 2006, lies at an altitude of some 2500 m, with surrounding slopes and peaks reaching up to 3500 m. At this height winters are severe and snow is common in winter and not unknown in summer. The climate limits the range of crops that can be grown and their yields, and the fields are sited mainly in the valleys and on the more sheltered slopes. Most of the valleys are steeply incised and offer little level ground suitable for cultivation, while the soil on slopes is generally thin and stony. These conditions make the Mohale area suited predominantly to livestock, with agriculture confined mainly to small and isolated patches.

The Mohale Dam was designed to inundate a large and ancient oxbow, which included 760 hectares of deep and fertile soils, a rare and valuable resource in the

mountains. It was mainly the agricultural possibilities that had attracted a relatively large population – for the mountains – to settle in this area. Unfortunately for the villagers the same oxbow provided valuable storage for the planned reservoir.

The LHWP provides for compensation, resettlement, and development initiatives aimed at ensuring that project-affected people will be enabled to maintain a standard of living not inferior to that obtaining at the time of first disturbance (LHWP Treaty, Article 7, paragraph 18) (Government of Lesotho and Government of South Africa, 1986). The LHWP also provided for environmental rehabilitation, natural resources management and conservation. There were efforts made to conserve endangered species such as the Maluti minnow (*Pseudobarbus quathlambae*), the bearded vulture (lammergeier, *Gypaetus barbarus*), and the spiral aloe (*Aloe polyphylla*). It should be noted that as of the time of writing, there were serious questions as to whether the Maluti minnow would become extinct as a result of the LHWP, in part because of lack of concerted action on the part of the LHDA. Some new protected areas were established, including a new national park, Ts'ehlenyane, in the 'Muela area and a nature reserve at Bokong, a scenic overlook area near an alpine wetland at the top of the Mafika Lisiu Pass between Pitseng and Ha Lejone on the way from Maseru to the Katse Dam. There was also a small heritage park established at Liphofung, a 4.5 ha cultural site where there is a small cultural museum that is associated with a Community Conservation Forum. This site consists of a historically and archaeologically important rock shelter with contemporary ethnoarchaeological materials, including the remains of facilities used for livestock keeping by local herders. The LHWP affected numerous rock art sites, a number of which were preserved. Many of the rock art sites are likely the work of San (Bushmen) who resided in the mountains for thousands of years. There are few, if any, people who claim San descent in the mountains today, but there are numerous archaeological and historical sites that were occupied by San peoples who interacted in a variety of ways with Basotho, Europeans, and other groups in the Lesotho area in the past (Wright, 1971; Taole Tesele, personal communication, 2007). The preservation and management of Lesotho's rich cultural heritage and diversity were seen as important objectives of the LHWP.

## LHWP PROJECT MANAGEMENT

During the World Bank funded and supervised feasibility study of the LHWP in 1986 it was recognized that the very large scale of the operation, involving a series of dams and tunnels in the Maluti Mountains, and the resulting disruption to local communities and their resources, required a new and dedicated organization to implement and manage it. The project far exceeded the capacity of any existing government agency, and it needed a degree of financial and administrative freedom which would have been impossible from within the civil service. Thus the LHDA was established, and with offers of better salaries and working conditions it immediately attracted many of the more capable civil servants. A large and generously funded Environment Division was established within LHDA,

with responsibility for compensation and resettlement, rural development, environmental protection and public health.

The management of the LHWP was overseen by the Joint Permanent Technical Commission, later called the Lesotho Highlands Water Commission (LHWC). Project implementation in Lesotho was handled by the LHDA and for South Africa by the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority. Requests for budget approvals for engineering, environment, and social services activities went to the LHWC. The Commission was made up of three delegates each from Lesotho and South Africa, with 3 alternates on each side. The Chief Delegate of the Commission was from Lesotho. In terms of governmental management of the LHWP, the Ministry of Natural Resources in Lesotho and the Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry in South Africa were the responsible agencies.

Planning for the resettlement of several hundred families in the remote Senquyane Valley began in 1995. The Mohale Dam would inundate their villages, the graveyards of their ancestors, their fields and grazing grounds. A few families would be able to 'relocate', rather than 'resettle', by moving a short distance upslope to rejoin villages they had left some years before. For these families, economic and social dislocation would be tempered by their remaining in a familiar environment, albeit one radically altered and curtailed by the reservoir, along with their relatives and neighbours. But in some of these communities the decision, taken some decades ago, to move away from the parent village was made because of strains and tensions between families and sections of the community, and time has not entirely erased the ill-feeling. For most families, however, 'resettlement' to a destination far from their present homes was the only option. Whole villages would be flooded and there would be no place where they could rebuild locally and still hope to make a living out of agriculture and stock-keeping, the mainstays of their economy.

Following adoption of the feasibility study by the Lesotho and South African Governments and by the World Bank as principal international funding agency, the project went into final design. During this period the LHDA appointed and the Bank funded a compensation advisor to help draw up a compensation policy which reflected the experience gained during the construction of the Project's first major dam at Katse, and which incorporated the current international norms for resettlement (all of which were reiterations, in various forms, of World Bank policy).

The detailed planning of the resettlement program, and for the development of project affected areas, was contracted out to consultants, who worked from late 1995 to the end of 1996 (see Hunting-Consult 4 Joint Venture, 1997a-d). Field work began with comprehensive land use, land capability and soil surveys of the project area. A cadastral survey was undertaken of the structures and land directly affected by inundation or construction, and also of the land remaining to the affected families. From this it was possible to gauge how seriously the project would affect each family and whether it would still be possible to make a living from the remaining land after impoundment of the reservoir.

An infrastructure engineer travelled widely on foot and horseback through the area to consider with the residents the need for roads and bridges to alleviate some of the present and future communication problems, and also to plan village

**Table 2.** Milestones in the planning and construction of the Mohale Dam

Year(s)	Milestones
1985	Feasibility Study for the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) begins
1986	Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) established with the signing of the LHWP Treaty and Order
1987–1996	Implementation of advanced infrastructure (roads, electricity) and construction of dams and tunnels in Katse and ‘Muela areas (Phase 1A of the LHWP)
1995–1996	Feasibility studies and resettlement planning for Phase 1B of the LHWP begin
1996	Completion of Katse Dam, the largest dam in Phase 1A of the LHWP
1996–1998	Phase 1B Stage 1 resettlement and relocation implemented
1997	Reservoir-Induced Seismicity sees earthquakes having impacts on 7 villages in the Katse catchment; in one village, Mapaleng, 11 houses were destroyed, resulting in displacement of a dozen families (January)
1997	Adoption of revised compensation and rehabilitation policy based on the LHWP Phase 1A experience
1998	Construction of Mohale Dam (Phase 1B) begins
2002–2006	Phase 1B Stage 2 resettlement and relocation implemented
2003	Completion of Mohale Dam construction
2004	Official inauguration of Phase 1 of LHWP (March 16)
2006	Crack appears in wall of Mohale Dam (February), completion of relocation of households affected by the reservoir
2007	LHWP Implementation Completion Report (ICR) by World Bank
2008	Decisions reached by LHDA and LHWC on Stage 3 resettlement
2009	Decision made to implement Phase 2 of the LHWP (February)
2009	Final visit of Panel of Environmental Experts on Phase 1 of the LHWP (September–October), crack in Mohale Dam repaired (October)
2010	Workshop on lessons learned from LHWP (May 18)

water supplies, schools and the most acceptable methods of rebuilding houses at the chosen resettlement destinations.

One of the project’s two anthropologists and his wife went to stay in one of the villages to be inundated, while the other set about establishing the means for the affected people to participate fully in the planning and implementation of their own resettlement and development program. Throughout the planning period the consultants worked closely with LHDA, who were to implement the agreed program, and with the World Bank’s Panel of Environmental Experts, who made periodic visits. Table 2 presents milestones in the planning and construction of Mohale Dam. The authors of this paper have been associated with the LHWP throughout its existence, from the 1986 Feasibility Study to the present day. Devitt carried out the Environmental Impact Assessment in 1986 and was later the Compensation Advisor to the LHDA and the field anthropologist with the 1996 Resettlement and Development Study. Hitchcock has been a member of the World Bank’s Panel of Environmental Experts since its inception in 1990. His most recent visit to Lesotho was in March, 2010.

## COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION POLICY

The international norms for compensating and rehabilitating people affected by big dams set high ethical standards, and demand a sequence of intelligence-gathering and field actions worthy of a military campaign. But like several recent military operations, the outcome of even the most meticulously planned resettlement program is unpredictable and hardly ever an unmitigated success.

Two principles are central to all but a very few internationally financed resettlement programs: that the affected people should in large measure be the architects and the builders of their own futures; and that none who are compelled to move should end up worse off than before. In practice, however, these ideals are all but unattainable, even where the numbers of people affected are small, the money and expertise are adequate and the responsible authorities are sympathetic. These same authorities are subject to political, economic and ideological pressures which drive them on an unpredictable and uncharted path.

These principles were fully incorporated into LHDA's 1997 revision of its compensation and rehabilitation policy. The revision was carried out in preparation for Phase 1B of the Project – the Mohale Dam – and was based on current international norms and on LHDA's own experience of Phase 1A of the Project – the Katse Dam, the 'Muela Dam, and the 'Muela Hydropower Station.

One of LHDA's legal obligations is to ensure that the LHDA "shall effect all measures to ensure that members of local communities who will be affected by flooding, construction works, or other similar Project-related causes, will be able to maintain a standard of living not inferior to that obtaining at the time of first disturbance."<sup>(3)</sup> The LHDA Order of 1986 (Government of Lesotho and Government of South Africa, 1986: 3) states that the LHDA shall "ensure that as far as reasonably possible, the standard of living and the income of persons displaced by the construction of an approved scheme shall not be reduced from the standard of living and the income existing prior to the displacement of such persons."

The compensation package of 1997 consisted of the following:

- (1) replacement of homes and other facilities (e.g. kraals – livestock pens – and latrines). LHDA built new homes, according to a set of standard designs, at sites chosen by the families. There was also provision for families to take the cash equivalent and build their own new homes;
- (2) compensation for loss of arable land. Households moving out of the highlands gave up their rights to the property and arable land for which they received compensation. They had the option of choosing annual cash compensation, compensation in the form of grain, or lump sum compensation for the losses of agricultural fields<sup>(4)</sup> (calculated on the basis of estimates of their productivity). Annual payments were to be made for 50 years;<sup>(5)</sup>
- (3) compensation for communal resources, including grazing, shrubs (used for firewood, construction, or manufacturing of goods), thatching grass, and medicinal plants. This compensation came in the form of the Rural Development Program (RDP), explained in some detail below;
- (4) replacement of community assets lost such as schools or churches;
- (5) relocation of graves and the holding of ceremonies at or around the time

- of re-interment;
- (6) cash payment for garden lands, which are generally are under 400 square meters, and usually close to households, where fruit and vegetables are grown.
  - (7) a Disturbance Allowance paid to households for three years after relocation or resettlement.

In addition, there was to be a Minimum Threshold Payment for each project-affected household whose minimum income fell below an estimated poverty level of 3,960 Maluti. One Maluti, pegged to the South African Rand, was worth about US\$0.16 in September, 2006. (M7,558.80 at 2005 rates). It was to be provided in the form of cash as a top-up payment to ensure that each affected household remained above the threshold level, and it is to be paid annually for 10 years from the time of relocation or resettlement. When annual income exceeds the threshold level the payment is withdrawn.

The 1997 Compensation Policy provides for annual assessments of project-affected households' livelihoods. In fact, the annual assessments have not taken place. Various partial studies have tried to establish income and expenditure levels of the resettled families, but these are acknowledged to provide incomplete data and are of dubious accuracy. Verifiable income and expenditure data are notoriously hard to collect and in this case there was known to be a bias due to the tendency of respondents to under-report income and inflate costs in the hope of qualifying for higher rates of compensation and of Minimum Threshold Payments.

Communal compensation in the form of the RDP (as in (3) above), for losses of grazing and other natural resources was provided to project-affected communities and their hosts. To participate in the RDP people were required to form co-operatives, grazing associations or other kinds of local legal entities. The co-operatives helped their members to purchase agricultural inputs and to market their products, including seed potatoes and maize; the grazing associations were intended to improve the management of the communal range; grain mills provided a service where none was previously available; other components included tourism, fisheries, health, water and sanitation and youth development.

While the individual compensation and threshold payments were intended to ensure that affected families were at least no worse off after than before resettlement, the 'communal compensation' was meant to bring 'development' and improved standards of living both to the affected families and to their hosts.

Infrastructure was provided in the relocation and resettlement areas, including new roads and community watering points. Funds were also made available as replacement for gardens. LHDA also provided gardens for resettled households through the use of heavy equipment at LHDA expense.

The experience of the Katse (Phase 1A) rural development program had been a caution against the assumption that this form of communal compensation can bring tangible benefits to the participants. That program had been well funded, but in many years it was unable to spend more than a few percent of its budget, and that which had been spent was generally ineffectual in bringing about any significant improvements. Part of the reason that so little was spent was that

priority shifted to Phase 1B developments. Another reason for the expenditure patterns was that there were insufficient personnel, especially in agriculture and income generation projects, to implement programs. It should be noted, however, that the record of Phase 1A field personnel in the establishment of community co-operatives was far better than it was in Phase 1B, so more funds were expended in setting up and running community-based projects such as hammer mills, sewing projects, and petrol stations.

The 1995/1996 Phase 1B Resettlement and Development Study, which formed the basis of the subsequent resettlement and development program, had stressed that participation in the development program should not be taken as a form of *individual* compensation for economic losses sustained on account of the project. Some LHDA officials nevertheless took the view that although some of the affected families seemed to be falling into poverty they would nevertheless benefit from the development program and would ultimately be better off. The evidence from Katse that this assumption was unsound was met by the argument 'now we know how to do it better'. This too proved false, with the exception of two projects, one for growing seed potatoes and the other for improved maize production and marketing.

A major study by the South African Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) was completed in 2007 and the final report made available in July, 2009 (HSRC, 2007a–d, 2009). Some of the issues highlighted in this report were the impacts of the project on the well-being of the people affected directly and indirectly by the LHWP, the roles that compensation played in helping to restore the incomes of people affected by the project, and the effects of the project in terms of health and nutrition. For example, there was a relatively high rate of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections in the Katse, Lejone, and Mohale areas and some of the project-affected households exhibited evidence of under-nutrition. A general conclusion of the HSRC study was that compensation had largely enabled project-affected people to maintain their living standards. The HSRC study did not, however, address some of the temporal trends affecting local populations and the degree to which dependency on the LHDA had a debilitating effect on some of the people who were affected by the first phase of the LHWP, in part because of the lack of comparable data from the various studies that had been conducted as part of the project (HSRC, 2009: 9).

The HSRC examined issues surrounding participation, drawing on group interviews of people in the project area. Some of the local people said that they were aware that the LHDA had a set of policies and procedures relating to participation (see LHDA, 1997a–c). A sizable number of the people who spoke about the project to the HSRC researchers said that they believed that it was important for them to have a say about the project and the way that it was implemented, but that they were unsure whether the project authorities were really listening to their concerns. One of the biggest concerns that people had related to whether or not they would receive fair compensation for the assets that they lost to the LHWP.

## COMPENSATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN PHASE 1B OF THE LHWP

By the time the compensation policy of 1997 came to be applied, the dialogue between LHDA, the affected families, the Panel of Experts and others had taken the policy several steps further and by 1998 the Phase 1B amended compensation policy incorporated the following changes:

1. The Scope of Services for each new construction contract shall show in detail how the contractors intend to address environmental and social impacts associated with the contract and how they will reinstate any surface works for the benefit and in accordance with the wishes of the local community.
2. LHDA shall manage land taken for project purposes in a beneficial manner and then return leftover land to its previous users, and land not being used shall be made available for re-allocation.
3. Replacement income, in the form of Minimum Threshold Payments, shall be periodically adjusted to ensure that the standard of living of each affected family is maintained.
4. LHDA shall compile baseline information on households affected by the project.
5. Equitable compensation shall be provided for people who hold 'secondary rights' (i.e. people having sharecropping, rental, or borrowing arrangements with land holders).
6. People who received compensation for loss of assets would also gain access to development assistance, training and credit.
7. The Phase 1B compensation policy added an annuity option (that is, people could choose a lump sum cash payment for their losses, which would be invested to yield an income).
8. LHDA should investigate the scale and severity of losses of trees and natural sources of fuel and recommend a means of compensating people affected by these losses. The communal losses of grazing, trees, shrubs, and other resources would be included in a communal assets compensation program that would be provided to affected communities as a whole.
9. A dispute resolution system will be established in which people have the option of appealing compensation decisions through the local level liaison committee, the Land Tribunal, the High Court of Lesotho, and the Appeal Court.

In Phase 1A (The Katse Dam), compensation for losses of agricultural yields was given in the form of annual supplies of grain and legumes (peas and beans). In Phase 1B (The Mohale Dam) of the project, people could opt for compensation in the form of grain or cash. Most (95%) project-affected households in Mohale opted for annual or lump sum cash payments. After the family's basic domestic needs had been met the balance of the lump sum cash payments could then be reinvested in business ventures, the purchase of tools, seeds, and household goods, or placed in interest-bearing unit trust accounts, as in 7 above.

'Land-for-land' has generally been considered the most satisfactory means of compensating for land losses in dam projects. Lesotho, being a small and moun-

tainous country, its arable areas heavily populated and most of the land already allocated to farmers land. Land-for-land did not therefore seem a feasible means of providing compensation for lost arable fields, and for this reason various forms of cash or grain compensation had been devised.

There are drawbacks to cash compensation. The global experience in resettlement and compensation programs is that the provision of lump sum cash payments to rural families has not usually served to restore their incomes (Scudder, 2005: 82–86, 129–134; Cernea & Mathur, 2008). One of the reasons is that recipients who are unused to handling substantial sums of money may spend it very quickly and sometimes not very wisely. Another reason is the frequent lack of local opportunities for investment of the money. A third problem relates to the control of the cash. In some cases, adult males in the household appropriate the cash for their own use; women and children thus end up being disadvantaged.

An annuity system is an attractive alternative because it allows the initial investment to be safeguarded<sup>(6)</sup> and the income can be managed with relative ease. It can also be entered in the name of the individuals who then can control the cash in the annuity. An annuity system has the advantage of being able to accommodate the various sources of individual and community income. It also allows people the flexibility to save their money, divide it among designated kin or other people, or pool their funds for use in community projects. A nest-egg plan can allow for the banking of funds indefinitely. Individuals could choose to invest a portion of their annuities in a special-purpose activity such as a revolving credit fund. Revolving credit schemes have worked well in a number of developing countries, notably in the case of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and revolving credit schemes in Uganda, and they have served as a means of providing people with the capital necessary to initiate businesses and both on-farm and off-farm income generating activities (Tendler, 1997).

There was nevertheless a strong feeling among senior LHDA officials during the planning period that the compensation package should not encourage ‘idleness’ by providing affected families with unearned income. The prospect of hard-working farmers being compensated for the loss of their land by means of a regular stipend seemed to do just that. During the period when compensation policy was being formulated an advisor proposed that people losing their land and buildings to the project should be treated as investors in the project, the value of their shares being proportional to the productive value of the land and other assets they ‘invested’ in the project. Since there were few opportunities for land-for-land compensation, and the LHWP generates income through the sale of water to South Africa, the shareholders would each receive a proportion of that income.

The concept of shareholding was virtually unknown in Lesotho at the time and the idea was swiftly dismissed, as an inducement to indigence. There was also a sense that the creation of a partnership between the Lesotho Government and the affected people would erode the primacy of the State in national affairs. The Highlands Water Project was eminently a national undertaking and the inclusion of locals as shareholders would weaken central control over it. Payment of the cash equivalent of the annual crop value forgone, for fifty years, was for reasons unclear then as now, not regarded as indigence-inducing.

Only recently has a significant proportion of arable land, especially in the lowlands and foothills, remained uncultivated from year to year. Although still held under traditional and secure rights by those to whom it was allocated by the local authorities or handed down by forebears,<sup>(7)</sup> large tracts have been lying fallow from year to year. Agriculture has become an increasingly unrewarding and expensive occupation. Soil fertility and rainfall are believed to have declined; the cost of ploughing, for the many that do not have their own oxen, has increased; and the cost of seed and fertiliser often exceeds the value of the crop. Arable farming is a more viable enterprise when high-value cash crops can be raised and marketed, and the scope for that is limited.

The fact that arable land was going out of production, and was therefore not contributing to the holders' income, may have provided an incentive for them to realise some value from these otherwise useless fields. Those with traditional rights over land began to lease it out, sharecrop it or even sell it. This opened the possibility for the Phase 1B settlers to negotiate for land to cultivate in sharecropping kinds of arrangements or through rental.

There was a long and heated debate within LHDA and with the South African negotiators as well as with the World Bank and the Panel of Environmental Experts on the question of compensation for the loss of one of the pillars of the local economy in the affected region. This was the production of marijuana, which grew exceptionally well in the sheltered valleys soon to be occupied by the waters of the Mohale Reservoir. As noted previously, growing marijuana is illegal in Lesotho and in South Africa, but the remoteness of the area and the absence of roads prevented access by the police, and farmers raised their crop without hindrance. There was an established trade with South African marijuana dealers who conveyed their purchases out of the area on donkeys. In the foothills and lowlands, where most of displaced people were going to settle, the police presence was too strong to allow this lucrative crop to be produced in commercial quantities. Both governments took the view that they could not be party to a scheme which compensated farmers for growing an illegal crop. Yet both sides were legally bound to provide full compensation for economic losses caused by the project. A way around this dilemma was found by assuming for compensation purposes that the area under marijuana was actually under maize, with unusually high yields and prices.

Compensation policy was influenced by the outspoken dissatisfaction of the affected families. They demanded a more effective compensation complaints mechanism than that provided by LHDA itself (see 9 above), and LHDA responded by attempting to deal with compensation complaints through its Field Operations Branches, one of which was in Mohale. When compensation complaints did not bring about results that were satisfactory to those who felt aggrieved about losses that they had suffered, they took the complaints to the government of Lesotho and to the government Ombudsman or, in some cases, to non-government organizations (NGOs). The Ombudsman responded by holding hearings on complaints in Mohale and in the foothills (for example, at Nazareth). The result of these hearings was a report by the Ombudsman, published in August, 2003, which outlined the various complaints (Office of the Ombudsman, 2003). LHDA responded

by increasing its efforts to resolve complaints ranging from repairing cracks in houses caused by blasting to providing compensation to owners of agricultural fields that had been damaged by boulders and debris resulting from road work.

Having little faith in the RDP as a means of improving their livelihoods, the affected families also urged that the 15 year compensation period for land losses (see 2 above), be extended. LHDA and the Joint Permanent Technical Commission responded by extending the compensation period for land losses to 50 years.

It was recognised that dislocation of the Mohale communities was likely to have particularly adverse consequences for people with little or no land, for the old and dependent, for sick and disabled people, and even for young people with no land rights. For them compensation for the loss of assets and of production could be quite inadequate to prevent their falling into poverty. The provision for compensating the holders of 'secondary rights' (see 5 above) and the Minimum Threshold Payment were designed to prevent this. Despite the difficulties of implementing these policies, they were sincere attempts by the Project to avoid harming the weak and the vulnerable.

The families affected by the Katse Dam and reservoir in Phase 1A, by most reports, had been poorly represented in the decisions that involved them. Several NGOs took up the cause of the affected families with the LHDA and some had published their views in international journals, reports, or on-line (see, for example, Horta, 1996; Archer, 1996; Hoover, 2001; Panos Institute, 2001). At the local level, the Highlands Church Action Group (HCAG) and later the Transformation Resource Centre (TRC) monitored the impacts of the project. They lobbied hard for compensation complaints to be resolved equitably and for more effective development strategies to be implemented in the highlands (TRC, 2004, 2005; Thamae & Pottinger, 2006). They also undertook periodic monitoring visits of the LHWP areas, talking to local people and holding community meetings. The NGOs responded when specific events occurred, for example, when a crack appeared in Mohale Dam in February, 2006, they immediately called for something to be done about the problem, which was of great concern to people downstream as well as to some of the other people living in the Mohale area.

LHDA's initial reaction to the appearance of NGOs as advocates of the affected families was one of mistrust. The NGOs were seen as interfering in the affairs of the project and of inciting dissatisfaction. Due to shortcomings in the communication between the people and the LHDA it was agreed to hold regular meetings between the NGOs and LHDA. This became a principal means of indirect participation by the people affected by Phase 1A.

A central feature of the planning stage of Phase 1B was its establishment of formal structures in the affected communities to facilitate the participation of the affected families in the planning and implementation of the program. At this stage the NGOs had virtually no part in representing the interests of the people to LHDA.

As the project moved from planning into implementation, however, the practical issues facing families and communities came into sharper focus. The NGOs found useful roles in helping to identify the problems affecting project-affected people and bring them to the attention of the LHDA, the Ombudsman and other authorities.<sup>(8)</sup> In some cases, the NGOs worked with the host communities, those

communities to whom people from Mohale would be moving. The host populations were, in a number of instances, concerned about the potential impacts that the resettled people would have on resources such as land, grazing, firewood, and water. In one case, Ha Makotoko in the foothills, 45 families from Mohale were resettled. Some of them joined what came to be known as Survivors of Large Dams while others collaborated closely with the host community in road building and water projects, drawing on their communal compensation funds which were used to pay for materials and labor. In this way, both the hosts and the resettles were able to benefit. It should be noted that there were sometimes tensions between the hosts and the resettles, as was the case, for example, at Maji in the foothills, where the 6 resettler families were asked by their hosts to pay a M70 fee for water, the same as the host population was assessed in the past, but the resettles refused to pay this fee, arguing that it should be covered by LHDA. The host-resettler relationships varied significantly in the foothills and lowlands, with many of the communities with resettled groups getting along reasonably well, and others having differences of opinion about issues ranging from how to use communal compensation funds to who should be trained in book-keeping and other skills by LHDA and the Department of Co-operatives. The NGOs and the Ombudsman highlighted some of these issues in part as a strategy aimed at getting LHDA to provide broader and deeper coverage for losses suffered by project-affected people.<sup>(9)</sup> In general, with some minor exceptions, there were relatively few significant conflicts between resettles and the host communities where they moved, with a notable exception of Makhoakhoeng, where there were disagreements between the host community and the resettles over the right to bury deceased members of the resettles in the local cemetery.<sup>(10)</sup>

## THE LHWP PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

The participation program was instituted by LHDA's Resettlement and Development Study consultants in 1996. It began with a tour by the team's Resettlement and Development anthropologist of the affected villages and of those in the general vicinity, informing them of the nature of the project and of the program, and encouraging their participation. At a series of village meetings throughout the area he suggested that they elect an Area Liaison Committee (ALC) to represent a cluster of villages, and that representatives of each ALC form a Combined Area Liaison Committee (CALC). This suggestion was adopted enthusiastically and the committees were duly elected.

There was an existing committee structure in the form of the Village Development Committees (VDCs) whose responsibilities cover a wide range of local affairs, including land allocation which used to be the preserve of the chief or village headman. He or she continues to play a prominent, if more democratic, role in local government. It was important that the new ALCs were not seen as usurpers of the powers of the chiefs and the VDCs, but that they should provide support to the existing institutions in the realm of project-related matters, especially resettlement. Accordingly the chiefs and the VDCs were represented on the

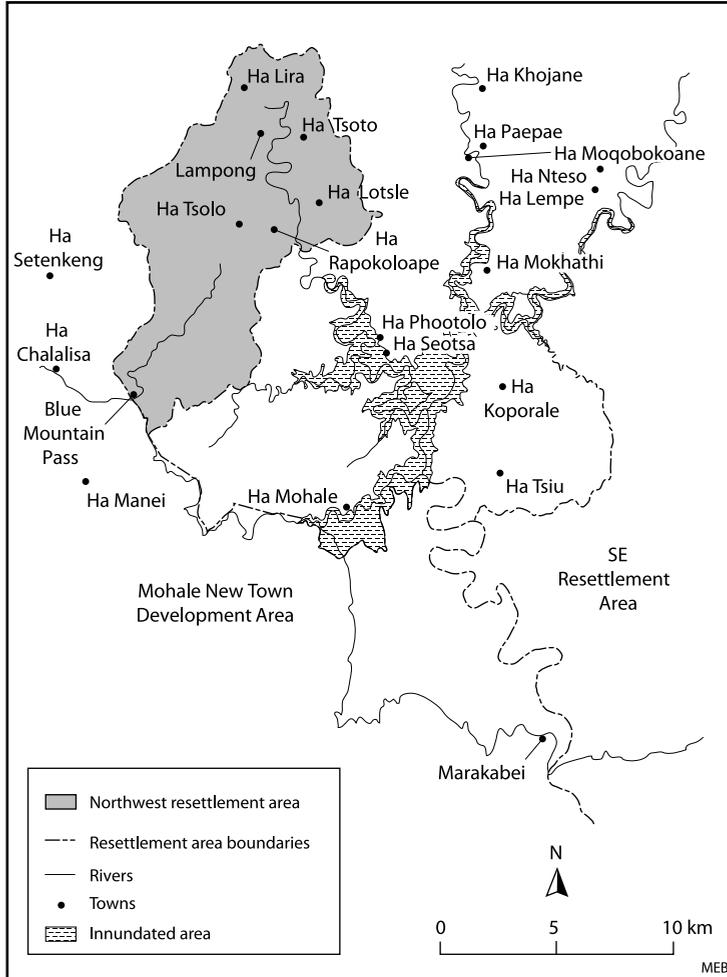
CALC and this arrangement seemed to work harmoniously.

In addition, it was agreed that the chiefs and the ALCs should appoint young and educated people from the affected villages as 'Community Liaison Assistants', to be paid by the consultants. The CLAs would be trained by the consultants' team in their role as communicators and would be continuously brought up to date on developments within the project. They would convey this information to the affected families and try to answer the questions of each family concerning the impacts of the project on them and options open to them. Questions they could not answer would be referred back to the team and to LHDA. They would keep the team briefed on the concerns of the people, assist in the organization and conduct of ALC and CALC meetings and help with periodic field surveys.

These arrangements contributed to mutual understanding and trust between the people of the project area and the consultants' team. The most important element in building and maintaining this confidence was the public participation program and the structure through which it worked as outlined above. But this was augmented by other important factors, one of which was that most members of the team spent protracted periods living and working in the affected villages.

The land use and soils surveyor spent three months almost continuously in the area, and became known and liked, featuring briefly in the football team of one of the villages he lived in. The field anthropologist (co-author of this paper) and his wife lived for about six weeks in one of the largest and oldest villages which were due to be inundated. Their intention was to acquire a deeper understanding of the nature of the affected communities and families and of their hopes and fears, strengths and vulnerabilities and to help work out a range of acceptable alternatives to the existing and established pattern of life. When they first arrived in the village it soon became clear that many people thought the project was just more 'government talk' and they considered it physically impossible that their entire valley including villages and fields would be flooded. Some said it was a ploy by the South Africans in collusion with the Lesotho government to move people out of the valley so they could extract its mineral wealth. White people had been seen digging holes in the ground (the soil surveyor) and picking up stones to take away with them (quartz crystals idly collected by various team members), which probably meant that there were diamonds there.

After about two weeks of continuous explanation of the project, with the aid of maps and aerial photos, incredulity began to be replaced with anger and indignation that their government through the LHDA and with the assistance of foreigners (the consultants' team) were actually intent upon displacing them from their land and separating them from the graves of their ancestors. The field anthropologist was asked by the village headman to go to the capital and deliver a letter, composed by her and her councillors, addressed to the King, the Prime Minister and the chief executive of LHDA. The letter demanded that they come in person to the valley to explain what was intended, and it announced the refusal of the people to relinquish their land to the project. Whether the King and the Prime Minister ever received their copies is unknown, but senior officials at LHDA were considerably irritated by the letter and ascribed its origin to 'agitators', implying that NGOs or possibly even the consultants themselves had been putting ideas into people's heads.



**Fig. 6.** Map of the Mohale Dam area showing the Resettlement and Development Zones in the Highlands.

The letter to the authorities produced no visits or results.

Within some two months of the team starting work in the project area, most of the local people had a fairly good idea of how the project was likely to affect them, and those living in the reservoir basin had come to accept the fact that they would have to move. Some had begun to think carefully about their destinations and to make tentative plans for groups to resettle together. Some, already mentioned, decided to return to villages higher up the slope which they had left some years before (for a map of the Mohale area showing areas where project-affected people could relocate, see Fig. 6). Another substantial group thought they would move out of the mountains into the foothills region of Lesotho to live near their principal chief at Ha Ratau. Others thought their best opportunities lay in moving to the vicinity of the capital, Maseru.

It became clear that for most people these options were shots in the dark, for they had little if any personal experience of life in these places. Accordingly, the consultants offered to taxi those who wanted to look for themselves at places they thought might be suitable for resettlement. The visitors looked at the arable and grazing opportunities, for spaces in the villages where their houses could be built, and they held long discussions with chiefs, headmen and farmers. Visits were also made to Maseru and other towns, to enable those interested in an urban life to explore the possibilities of living and earning an income there.

This proved helpful in enabling them and the people at home to reach their decisions on where to resettle. It also gave the future hosts a chance to assess the effects of accepting the incomers, which was generally favourable as it was thought they would come with money from their compensation payments to spend on building the new houses and acquiring land.

In the choice of their destinations the resettlers were, subject to conditions imposed by the Lesotho Government, to a large extent the architects of their own destinies. They were able to choose between cash payments for their old buildings and from a range of several different types of modern housing to be built by LHDA in sites of their own choosing. Most families opted for their new houses and were well pleased with the results. The subsequent challenges of economic and social adaptation have had to be met to a large extent by the families themselves, with a certain amount of 'enabling' by LHDA.

One group, comprising 40 families, said that since arable land was scarce in Lesotho they would like to move to South Africa, just across the border with Lesotho, on to a farm which LHDA would buy for them. There they would establish an agrarian community consisting mainly of serious farmers, but including also people with building, mechanical and other practical skills. The main exponent of this idea was an elderly and influential farmer whose notions bore a remarkable similarity to those of the English social philosopher and experimentalist William Morris, who advocated a way of life combining rural simplicity with craftsmanship. Needless to say, the farmer and his followers had not read or heard of the English Arts and Crafts Movement.

The head of LHDA's Environmental Division urged the consultants' team to follow up this suggestion and a number of land agents in the South African border towns of Ladybrand and Ficksburg were contacted. There was plenty of land for sale, the white farmers having become anxious to move out for economic and security reasons. The withdrawal of the generous subsidies provided by the previous government to white farmers had hit them badly, and many had been overwhelmed by debt and forced to sell. Also security along the border was poor and stock theft, break-ins and assaults on the white farming population were common. One farm of over 1,000 ha, half of it arable, and adjacent to the border, was for sale at a very low price by the bank which had repossessed it. The team carried out a brief survey and reported that it had all the elements of a suitable place for the settlement of at least forty families.

The Member of Parliament for the project area and other influential politicians and administrators, including some within LHDA itself, strongly supported the idea. Other senior officials in LHDA, however, ordered a halt to the investiga-

tion on the grounds that it was too politically controversial. They followed this up by sending a group of senior chiefs and civil servants to the project area in two helicopters. They summoned the people to a meeting and demanded that there was to be no more discussion of a move to South Africa. They suggested that instigators and 'trouble-makers' had put this idea into peoples' heads. Some of the more outspoken local people at this meeting bitterly denounced LHDA for misleading them into believing that they would have a say in their own resettlement and that every option would be considered, and they castigated the chiefs for deserting them at the time when the people most needed their support.

This was the first major setback to the confidence of the people in LHDA's good will and willingness to conduct the resettlement program as a joint venture. LHDA, following its initial reaction against the prospect of 'community-led resettlement', had announced that the people themselves should take the lead in identifying places where they would like to resettle. South Africa had been mentioned by a significant number of affected families at an early stage as one of the preferred destinations for resettlement. Initially, LHDA had raised no objections and had indeed asked the consultants to include it as one of the options to be investigated. As soon as it was taken up by the people as a serious possibility some senior LHDA officials felt the reins of control slipping from their grasp. This reversal of policy and the use of heavy political and traditional authorities to reinforce that decision made many people, even those who had not thought of moving to South Africa, question LHDA's good faith and trustworthiness and their own role as participants in the resettlement process.

The message delivered by LHDA at the meeting in the project area had been uncompromising, and after the delegates had left in their helicopters the mood in the project area was noticeably subdued. It was several days before people were willing to talk about their plans again, and when they did they had obediently deleted South Africa from their list of options. This was a satisfactory outcome for the authorities, who were plainly relieved to have avoided the need to continue confronting this controversial issue. But the price paid for closing the door on the South African option was a loss of confidence among the people in the project area that LHDA was genuinely committed to participatory planning of the resettlement program. The first response of the affected people to LHDA's invitation to them to participate had been an outright rejection of their proposal and an accusation against its proponents that their ideas were seditious.

Apart from the political controversy generated by the proposal to resettle in South Africa there were several technical and administrative arguments against it. Providing adequate post-resettlement support to the new community would have been difficult for LHDA as it had no mandate to operate outside Lesotho's national borders. Cash transfers to the settlers would have been easy, but monitoring and follow-up would pass out of the control of LHDA whose mandate it was ensure that the settlers were not adversely affected by the move. For the Lesotho authorities and the World Bank these were substantial objections to the proposal, but the proposers, themselves, having little faith in LHDA's ability to provide practical assistance additional to the cash components of the compensation package, valued their own independence and self-sufficiency and believed they could make a go

of it on their own.

Some months after the confrontation over the South African option the LHDA revived its efforts to cooperate more closely with the affected people, and began to listen to their concerns. In part this was due to the efforts of non-governmental organizations working in the area to promote the interests of local people and to make known to the international community the problematic issues of compensation and resettlement.

### LHDA'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (RDR)

The challenges of post-transition economic and social adaptation have had to be met to a large extent by the families themselves, with a certain amount of support by the LHDA. In addition to direct assistance with transport to the new sites, the provision of new houses, and the payment of compensation allowances, LHDA, under its development program, has supported a range of institutions and activities including co-operatives, range management associations, and agricultural extension services for the benefit of both the resettlers and their hosts.

A total of 54 co-operatives eventually were planned for the Phase 1B upstream area, and 32 local legal entities were planned for downstream areas. At the time of writing 29 co-operatives and local legal entities had been established, registered, trained, and provided with financial assistance in the form of communal compensation by the LHDA. While some, including the seed potato and maize growing co-operatives, have clearly flourished, others are harder to assess. Co-operatives in general have a record of failure in Lesotho, and people tend to be wary of committing their own resources to them. People may enrol as members on a tentative basis, to see if the co-operative brings any tangible benefits, and if not they leave after a year or two. The number of co-operatives established therefore gives no assurance that they will survive or thrive. The Co-operatives Department of the Ministry of Agriculture is understaffed and the support that it is able to offer new co-operatives at this crucial time in their development is therefore limited.

While the implementation of some of LHDA's development projects was delayed, a number of project-affected people were able to benefit from them. Particular progress was made in 2003–2004 in seed potato production, thanks in part to a store with cooling facilities built by funds provided by LHDA and managed by the farmers' co-operative at Mohale. There was also some success in promoting maize production, in spite of the drought at the time. Many people had started gardens and were growing a wide range of vegetables.

A number of farmers in the project and resettlement areas were diversifying by raising chickens for consumption, sale, and egg production. One farmer was producing a wide variety of vegetables (onions, cabbage, and many others) along with apples and peaches that he was selling to neighbours and to teachers and health workers at the local mission hospital (Ha Mohau in the Lejone area). Some co-operative members produce and sell tree seedlings, flowers, vegetables, and fruits. Co-operatives also produce and sell goods such as coffins, face creams, and crafts. A few co-operatives engaged in money lending using their

compensation funds, something that in fact was not allowed under Lesotho co-operatives policy according to the Department of Co-operatives (personal communication, February, 2009).

As LHDA's resettlement and compensation program draws to a close, and funding for its various components, including the RDP, terminates, the question of sustainability becomes paramount. Either the grazing associations (known in Lesotho as Range Management Associations), the co-operatives and the other elements of the RDP are strong enough to continue on their own, without much external assistance, or the relevant government ministries and departments will have to take over the lines of support provided previously by LHDA. At this time there are no assurances that the new organisations will be able to sustain themselves or that the government agencies are willing or able to support them. These uncertainties over sustainability are not, of course, confined to LHDA's RDP, but afflict virtually all externally funded development projects and for similar reasons.

## RESETTLEMENT AND RELOCATION IN LHWP PHASE 1B

Between the time of the studies and preparations for resettlement, the LHDA's consultants worked closely with local communities in the Mohale Basin, assessing preferred destinations, finding out whether people wished to relocate in the basin or resettle outside of the mountains, and providing familiarization tours for people to potential destinations. On the basis of the familiarization tours, combined with information on the kinds of housing people would receive and on the compensation package, individuals began to make decisions as to whether they wished to relocate or resettle and where they wanted to go.

The consultants made careful measurements of the assets of the households that were affected by the infrastructure of the project (access roads, tunnels, the dam area, gravel pits, and construction camps) and of those that would later be affected by inundation. Forms were filled out on each household that became part of the Compensation Register. During the course of the 1995/1996 Resettlement and Development Study, the consultants measured all arable fields below Full Supply Level of the Reservoir. It was more difficult to determine the amount of land left to each household and it was not until 2003–2004 that a cadastral survey determined these land areas, allowing for an accurate assessment of the total amounts of arable land possessed by each household.

Once the preferred options of the various project-affected households were determined, the planning for the actual movement of the households began. LHDA agreed to cover the cost of hiring drovers to drive the herds of livestock to new grazing areas in the highlands or in the foothills. Given the fact that most of the households were living in areas without roads, arrangements had to be made for animal transport to carry the household goods to points where they could be loaded on trucks and moved.

In Stage 1, the Pre-construction Stage, a total of 99 households were moved, many of which had been affected by the construction of roads and other project works. In line with the preferences expressed by the various households, 37

**Table 3.** Households relocated or resettled by destination and stage in phase 1B of the LHWP

Stage	Destination			Total
	Basin	Foothills and Lowlands	Maseru	
Stage 1	37	38	24	99
Stage 2	27	190	5	222
Stage 3	103			103
Total	167	228	29	424

Note: Data obtained from the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

households out of 99 were relocated within the Mohale Basin, 38 households moved to the foothills, and 24 households went to Maseru. The bulk of Stage 1 resettlement took place from 1996 to 1998. Two households opted for self-resettlement, accepting cash compensation and building their own houses and other facilities (e.g. kraals for their livestock) and undertaking the move themselves.

In Stage 2, The pre-inundation Stage, 222 households were relocated or resettled. LHDA offered to construct gardens either in the yards of resettler households or nearby. Stage 2 resettlement took place in the period from 2002 to 2006. In this period, 27 households chose to relocate while the rest (N=195) moved either to the foothills or the lowlands. In some cases, entire villages resettled, but in the process they dispersed to different destinations.

In Stage 3, Post Inundation, households situated dangerously close to the reservoir and whose access to their fields was cut off, relocated or were moved to the foothills. They were in their new homes by 2006. Four people had died, leaving their property to households that were resettled. In summary, the affected households were divided into three stages (see Table 3). Stage 1 and Stage 2 household moves were completed in the period between 1996 and 2006. During these times, 321 households either relocated in the Mohale Basin or resettled outside of the Mohale Basin in the foothills or lowlands (see Fig. 7). Although individual families and communities had been able to choose their resettlement destinations, the choice of a specific site for the new house was subject to limitations, often imposed by local authorities with whom the resettlers had to negotiate.

Some of the resettler households moved as groups to places in the foothills or lowlands that they felt would be receptive to their presence. Thirty six households from two of the reservoir-affected communities moved to Ha Makotoko in the foothills. Twenty two households moved to a housing project at Makhoakhoeng in Maseru. Resettlers also moved to four other locations in Maseru and ten other locations in the lowlands. All told, in Stage 2, households resettled in 16 locations in the foothills, 10 in the lowlands, and 5 in Maseru. 27 households in Stage 2 relocated to 4 communities in the Mohale Basin. The overall picture is therefore one of dispersal of the previously stable and integrated mountain communities, but small groups of relatives or erstwhile neighbours nevertheless remained together, or at least close to one another, in their new locations.

For many of the households in the Phase 1B area physical resettlement was followed by a difficult period of adaptation and uncertainty. The resettlers had



simultaneously to reconstruct their sources of household income and their relations with their neighbours, settle their children into new schools, adapt to new climatic and environmental conditions and learn to manage their new financial arrangements, which for many had been radically altered by the substitution of their familiar land and natural resources with cash payouts. They also had to adjust in many cases to a whole set of new people in the host villages where they had resettled.

For the most part, the resettlers integrated reasonably well with their hosts, especially in the foothills region, entering into sharecropping and land rental agreements with them and intermarrying. Host villagers sometimes saw the resettlers as resources since they were coming in with cash from their compensation payments. A worry of some of the host villagers was that having additional people in their midst would place greater strains upon their grazing, firewood, and water resources. There was particular concern about the addition of substantial numbers of livestock on the range. As it turned out, many people who moved out of the highlands left their cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys behind in the highlands in the care of relatives or herders hired to manage them so that there were relatively few new livestock on the range in the foothills.

Initially, Phase 1B resettlers moving to the foothills had difficulties getting access to land for crops, in part because host populations asked high prices for the land or were reluctant to allow the incomers to rent or sharecrop. As familiarity and mutual trust developed the situation began to change and within a few years virtually all of the resettled households had land of their own, or rented land or share-cropped. Also, settlers who started off renting or share-cropping tended to buy land as they settled in to their new surroundings.

In 2004, decisions had yet to be made about the agricultural fields above the high-water line of the Mohale Dam that LHDA acquired from people who had resettled out of the Mohale Basin. It was hoped that people remaining in the mountains could get access to some of the fields left behind by those who left, but they were not allocated the replacement fields that they had been promised, in part because of uncertainty over the land tenure status of the fields. Most of these fields had been taken over by relatives of re-settlers or by individuals who encroached on them without permission. Also, the fields below full supply level were generally more productive than those higher up on the slopes around the basin. Compensation for land lost to the reservoir with land above full supply level was therefore bound to be inequitable. Moreover, the resettlement package included a substantial disturbance allowance that could be invested in agricultural land or in other income generating opportunities. These factors favoured resettlement to the foothills or the lowlands rather than relocation within the Mohale Basin. The main attraction of remaining in the Mohale Basin was the relatively good grazing. Most of those who chose relocation over resettlement were farmers whose main interest was in livestock rather than in raising crops.

The households that moved to the capital Maseru found new opportunities as well as difficulties. On the positive side, some people were able to take advantage of the urban economic opportunities, investing in *malaene*, rental property located close to the industrial area where there were garment factories. These

were flourishing at the time, but by 2005 the massive influx of Chinese-made garments on to the world, as well as Lesotho's, markets and China's admission to the World Trade Organization, led to a crisis in Lesotho's garment industry. Most of the factories closed down, leaving large numbers of workers unemployed. This resulted in a decline in the demand for rental accommodation. Some individuals took their lump sum compensation payments and invested in taxis, a highly competitive field. These people were also affected by the economic downturn in the textile industry. At the same time the settlers found that living costs in the city were far higher than in the mountains.

The transition from an agricultural and pastoral life to urban life was fraught with uncertainty. One group who had moved to Makhoakhoeng in Maseru, for example, found that their hosts refused to allow them to bury one of their members who had died there. While this problem was eventually resolved, it was not before there were calls from the hosts for the settlers to be relocated by LHDA to another area.<sup>(11)</sup>

Interviews with people who had resettled in the foothills and lowlands or who had relocated in the highlands (38 people in 14 communities) revealed a variety of views on whether they felt themselves to be better or worse off as a result of the Highlands Water Project. Half of the households who had moved to the foothills said that their agricultural yields and commercial sales of agricultural products were now higher. At the same time, they said that their cash expenditures for agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers were far greater. Eight of the resettlers responded that being separated from their livestock, most of which had been left in the highlands, had exposed them to higher losses due to theft. 160 resettler households were, for the first time, selling their surplus maize to the Lesotho Maize Board out of a total of 260 households. Nearly all of the people resettled in the foothills and lowlands said that they now had greater access to social services and markets, but that their costs of living had increased.

Of the 321 households that have had to move as a result of the Mohale Reservoir, dam and other infrastructure development, 61 opted to relocate locally, in the Mohale Basin. Some of them felt that they then had to contend with greater competition for grazing, arable land, and natural resources such as firewood. People from several communities in the Mohale Basin relocated to a nearby small village, Ha Koporale, above the water line, in part because of the good grazing there. On these steep slopes there was hardly any land suitable for arable and gardening purposes, a fact obvious to the residents but not, apparently, to the incomers. When the new settlers arrived in Ha Koporale, they began trying to acquire land to cultivate, which led to friction with their hosts, and since their efforts were largely unrewarded their livelihoods were also affected.

Households headed by women or by elderly people were usually short of labour and often found themselves worse off after the LHWP than they were before, in spite of the Minimum Threshold Payments. The relatives, friends and neighbours who had previously helped out in the fields and with herding had moved away. Many households split up, with younger members moving to town or starting new homesteads, leaving behind the elderly people. Information from social workers in the Mohale Field Operations Branch in October, 2009 indicated that

many of the elderly people both in the highlands and in the resettled households in the foothills lowlands were having a difficult time. Some of the elderly were classified as especially vulnerable by the LHDA Field Operations Branch and were receiving assistance in the form of funds and food, a substantial portion of these goods provided by individual LHDA officers at their own expense.

The various surveys and reports on the affected families<sup>(12)</sup> show that the LHWP had widely differing affects on the households, families and individuals who fell under its influence.<sup>(13)</sup> Some households increased their incomes by working on the dam, tunnels, feeder roads, or the water and sanitation projects carried out in the Mohale area. These were by their nature temporary jobs. Over time, some households were able to capitalize on development opportunities provided by the Project or to invest their compensation funds in enterprises such as poultry production or rental property. But there were also households whose income levels fell substantially, especially immediately after resettlement.

After 10 years from the time they resettled, most of the households in the foothills and lowlands had the use of arable land through sharecropping arrangements, rental, or purchase. They were getting satisfactory harvests, a portion of which they were able to sell. Nevertheless, household food shortages were reported more frequently than before relocation.

The Minimum Threshold Payment was to be provided to qualifying households for 10 years. In a study of these households carried out by the Lesotho Bureau of Statistics in 2004, it was found that more households had fallen below the minimum threshold level (31 households) and required assistance than had been able to increase their incomes to the point where they no longer qualified for the minimum threshold payment (21 households). Minimum threshold payments were seen by their recipients as crucial to their survival. Without them, they said, they would be much worse off as a result of the Highlands Water Project. The prospects for the Minimum Threshold Payment recipients being economically viable after ten years without the livelihood supports are uncertain.

With the help of LHDA Field Operations Branch personnel and agricultural advisors and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Self-Sufficiency, Phase 1B farmers established their own agricultural co-operative in the foothills. It provides assistance and inputs to its members who in March 2004 numbered some 1,119, some of whom were resettlers and some who were residents of host villages. The co-operative enabled them to obtain the inputs they needed for field preparation and planting without having to travel to Maseru. LHDA and the Ministry provided extension advice.

Households invested some of their compensation funds in agriculture and income generating projects, including poultry, pig production, carpentry, hammer mills for grinding maize and sorghum, grocery stores, and taxis, a number of which appeared to be relatively successful. In general, it appears that the majority of the households in the lowlands and some of the households in the foothills have been able to make a living, sometimes by diversifying in ways that they had not anticipated, for example, giving up agriculture and livestock production and finding jobs, or starting businesses such as poultry production, carpentry, raising trees for sale, running a taxi, selling phone cards or renting out accommodation.

A critical constraint for many of these households is that they lack members with the skills to cope successfully in the complex and diversified economy of Maseru and its environs. Some of the resettlers had received training in bricklaying and carpentry at the Thaba Tseka Rural Training Centre, but employers did not accept their certificates as evidence of competence. Others found low paying jobs, such as domestic workers.

People who had moved to the foothills now had to rent or purchase land, whereas in the mountains they had access to land that had been granted to them by traditional authorities. Even when they did get land from local land committees in the foothills, they had difficulties in getting what are known as Form Cs which in Lesotho are proof of land rights. There were cases where people who had made sharecropping or rental agreements learned that the land owners had denied making those agreements and had refused to let them use the land. Nevertheless, by 2004 90% of the resettled households at one foothills village had been able to plant crops.

Some people had purchased land outright from members of the host population (the vast majority of whom were Basotho farmers) using funds from their lump sum compensation and other household resources. Others bought ox carts and then traded those carts for fields. Still others bought one or two fields and then rented another one or two. Almost half were involved in share-cropping, and even these households said that they did not have difficulty making share-cropping arrangements. Members of the host villages, of which there were 44 in the foothills and lowlands (see Fig. 8 for a map of the area where people from Mohale were resettled in the foothills and lowlands), generally were willing to cooperate with the resettlers, sharing goods and services with them. In some places, such as Ha Maja in the foothills, resettled households who had formed a co-operative (a local legal entity) were sharing their communal compensation with host village members and members of a local community councils<sup>(14)</sup> and the local traditional authority in paying for labour in the construction of an access road in the village.

One of the problems that resettler farmers faced was how to get some of the crops produced in their new areas back up to the mountains so that they could supply relatives and people looking after their animals. It was expensive, they said, to transport grain to the highlands, with charges of M200 for an 80 kg bag of maize.<sup>(15)</sup>

The households that had relocated in the Mohale Basin did so because they had livestock. They were supplementing their income in some cases with high value marijuana production, despite the loss of the best land for this crop and the increased risk of police intervention. Food crops were less important to them than their other sources of income from marijuana and livestock production, but they nevertheless all expressed the desire to have gardens and fields.

Some of them wanted to take over the fields left by resettlers that were not going to be inundated by the Mohale Reservoir. These fields were not positioned in such a way that they would pose a threat of soil eroding and going into the reservoir if they were ploughed. Some of the fields left behind by resettlers have in fact continued to be cultivated, sometimes by relatives, and sometimes by other people who have encroached on those fields from their own lands. There are also

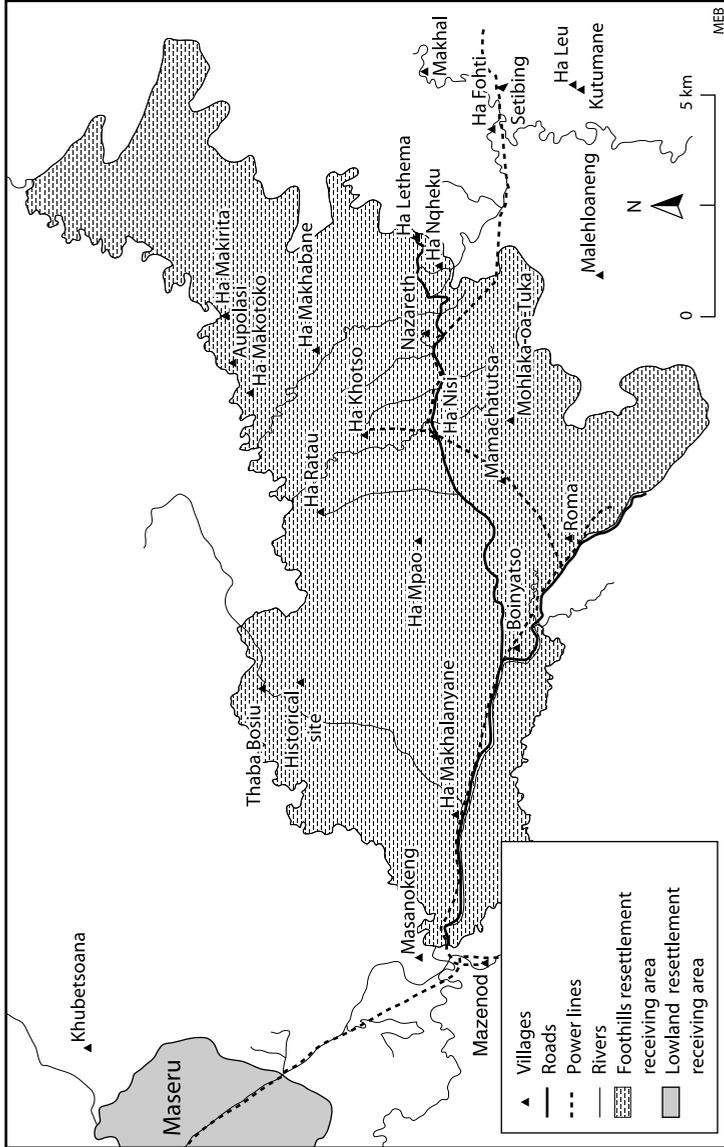


Fig. 8. Map of the foothills and lowlands Resettlement Receiving Area for Phase 1B of the LHW.

a few fields that are cultivated by people from the lowlands and foothills who come up and plant crops when they are watching over their livestock or working on the feeder roads and other project works.

The feeder roads have changed the socio-economic situation in the Mohale Basin. While travel times and costs associated with bringing in goods have been reduced, the roads also meant that outsiders had greater access to the highlands. This includes the police, who were able to reduce the high rate of stock theft, but they also presented risks for those people growing marijuana on the remaining land.

The fact that the displaced people ended up in different places, some of which were in new communities in the Mohale Basin and others in the foothills or lowlands, meant that their old communities were thoroughly dismantled. One result of this was it became much more difficult for the affected families to articulate their shared difficulties and grievances to the authorities.

## CONCLUSIONS

### I. Were Standards of Living Maintained or Improved?

Even with the relatively<sup>(16)</sup> small number of families resettled out of the Mohale Basin it has proven to be difficult to assess the degree to which their incomes and living standards have been restored, either through project-related compensation and development programs or through their own energies and initiatives. LHDA was to have undertaken annual household income surveys to provide answers to these questions and to form the basis of any ameliorative actions shown to be necessary, but these were not carried out. A survey conducted by the Lesotho Bureau of Statistics in 2004 found that “There is significant improvement in the lives of the resettled households as evidenced by comparing the socioeconomic status before and after resettlement” (Bureau of Statistics, 2004: 7). The socio-economic parameters on which the report concentrated were primarily access to infrastructure and services (e.g. distances to stand pipes, availability of ventilated improved pit latrines and access to transport).

In fact, more households had suffered a fall in income than had improved their income following resettlement. The numbers of households with livestock, an important source of income and subsistence, had also declined. The Bureau of Statistics (2004: 6) admitted that the loss of livestock signified a decrease in wealth of the households, especially since the value of livestock had increased. People who moved to the foothills and lowlands that had livestock note that the quality of the grazing is significantly worse in these areas than in the mountains.

Most of the families resettling in the foothills had been able to plant crops, but only a relatively small proportion were able to do it on their own land. Ownership of fields had declined drastically since resettlement. Of the 315 households interviewed, 41 did not own fields before resettlement; after resettlement, the number had increased to 267 (Bureau of Statistics, 2004: 7). Approximately half of the households interviewed (a total of 152) were engaged in sharecropping. The number of people renting fields had increased from 3 before resettlement

ment to 30 in 2004. According to the Bureau of Statistics, total crop production was lower after resettlement than prior to the inception of the project. Agricultural input costs (e.g. for seeds and fertilizers) were high both in the highlands and the lowlands, though many highlands farmers sent relatives down to the lowlands to purchase goods. From an economic standpoint, therefore, relocated and resettler households were, according to these criteria, measurably worse off than they had been previously.

On the other hand, a survey of resettler families undertaken by a contractor in 2000–2001 (Tshabalala & Kisubi, 2003) found that the average cash income had increased almost by a factor of three. 80% of this income, however, was derived from compensation payments. At the same time, the income generating capacity of most households had declined, in spite of their having moved closer to centres of employment and trade. A major cause of this decline had nothing to do with the project or with the disruption of resettlement, but was due to the massive reduction in employment opportunities for Basotho on the South African mines and cutbacks on employment in the garment industry. Another cause was the completion of the construction contracts for the dams, roads and associated works on the Project, with only a few jobs remaining, such as cleaning of roads into the project areas, with wages paid by the Department of Roads.

According to the LHDA, 611 households received a total of M2,355 million in the Mohale area in 2006, an average of M3,584 per project-affected household. In addition, by the end of 2006, 214 households affected by the LHWP received lump sum cash payments totalling M13,030 million, an average of M60,886 per household. Downstream households that had formed local legal entities were paid M3.2 million (Human Sciences Research Council, 2007c: 63).

Phase 1B caused a total loss of 1,275 hectares of arable land. Overall, the percentage of agricultural products contribution to household income and subsistence was substantially lower than it was in 1993 at the time of the initial baseline investigations of the Mohale area (HSRC, 2007c: 59, Table 5.3). The average household income level in 1993 was M2,500 per household (Ben Mateka, personal communication, 2007). Compensation payments for households that were either close to the dam or had chosen to resettle averaged between M6,564 and M8,088 (HSRC, 2007c: 63, Table 5.9). The HSRC (2007c: 72) concluded, therefore, that, based on income levels before and after the project, largely as a result of compensation payments, project-affected households' income was the same or better and thus, in their view, LHDA had fulfilled its treaty obligations. However, the HSRC (2007c: 72) cautioned that the unequal distribution of income in the area is "a cause of concern." It should be noted, however, that there are important differences between income levels and overall livelihoods.

The households that were doing the best in the Mohale area owned livestock, had substantial agricultural field and garden areas, and had diversified sources of income. Based on our own fieldwork, households that bought or built rental units with their compensation money, near the main urban centres, saw their standards of living increase, at least until relatively recently when they levelled off and then began to decline, especially with the downturn in the global economy in 2008.

As is often the case with reporting on the outcome of a resettlement program, the people who have made a conspicuous success of the opportunities offered by the program are readily identifiable, easily accessible, and may quite legitimately be held up by the authority as examples of how well the program has worked. Those who have fared less well are easily lost from sight unless determined efforts are made to find them and to determine the causes of their difficulties.

The post-resettlement economic indicators of household welfare have proved very difficult to assess. Reliable evaluations of the cultural, social, spiritual and personal losses are almost entirely missing, and had these been investigated and reported there are no clear remedial actions available. Some losses are irreparable and cannot be made good by the normal means of compensation. The long-term effects of the relocation and resettlement of what essentially are 'development refugees' are yet to be seen. We do know, however, that in line with theoretical work on resettlement (see McDowell, 1996; Scudder, 1997, 2005; Scudder & Colson, 1982, 2002; Cernea, 1995, 1997; Cernea & Guggenheim, 1993), LHWP-affected people experienced physiological, psychological, and sociocultural stress. Many people grieved for their lost homes and the loss of connections to culturally and spiritually significant localities. Many of them experienced what Scudder and Colson (1982: 271) have referred to as "multidimensional stress."

It has been argued that the World Bank's 'no worse-off' policies actually work against the interest of those caught up in compulsory resettlement programs, in that this minimum level of economic welfare is too often taken as the target (Scudder, 2005: 61–62, 278–285). World Bank policy documents clearly state that the affected families should be considered as beneficiaries of the project which displaces them, and that a resettlement program should be conceived as a development program for those affected (World Bank, 1990, 2004a; Picciottio et al., 2001). The subsequent dilution of this well-articulated and generally benign policy may well have had unfortunate results for the 'project-affected families' in Lesotho, something pointed out by the TRC (see Thamae & Pottinger, 2006). Particular concerns raised by NGOs and independent research organizations in the past several years include high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in the project area, the need for enhanced economic development activities to offset project-related impacts, and the reports from local communities of the lack of follow-up by LHDA on compensation-related cases (TRC, 2004, 2005; HSRC, 2007a–d). The Ombudsman of Lesotho and NGOs did, however, follow up on compensation-related cases, and the LHDA moved relatively quickly to resolve those cases.

The World Bank's Implementation Completion and Results Report for Phase 1B of the LHWP says that the spread of HIV/AIDS as a result of the large construction workforce associated with the project and improved transport corridors was identified at appraisal one of the most significant social impacts of the project (World Bank, 2007: 21). There are some indications that the mortality rate from HIV/AIDS has increased, judging in part from the numbers of funerals being conducted and the popularity of coffin-making as a means of generating income for individuals and communities. In the Phase 1A area, the epidemiological report of the HSRC (2007a: 56) points out that the rapid increase in the prevalence of HIV/AIDS from 1% in 1993 to 24% of the population in 2006 was

striking. In Mohale, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS was 23.3%, with a lower rate in the remote areas above Mohale Dam (HSRC, 2007c: 109). The question remains as to the degree to which the project itself was responsible for that increase.

## II. The Parameters of Participation

The notion that the authority to make decisions affecting the use of land and water for national purposes is the legitimate preserve of government and its agencies is deeply embedded in the psyche of public officials and of the rural people. It was therefore a brave step when the communities affected by the Mohale Reservoir took the initiative in deciding where they wanted to resettle, and under what conditions they were prepared to leave their familiar environment.

This is the response to the necessity for resettlement which international funding agencies universally applaud, and indeed require. It was, nevertheless, a response which deeply disconcerted the responsible officials in the project authority, who felt that their control over the process had been usurped – as indeed, in some small degree, it had. LHDA's initial reaction was followed, over a period of some years, by a gradual reconciliation with the principle that the people affected by the project have a legitimate claim to some measure of control over their own destinies, and that by allowing it LHDA was actually facilitating its own task. The fact that the people had played an active part in determining their own fate meant that they carried at least some of the responsibility for the outcome. If things went wrong, therefore, responsibility could not entirely be laid at the door of the project authority.

The official reaction against the affected peoples' proposal to resettle in South Africa demonstrated the limits to public participation. But there were other, even more intractable limitations, arising out of these mountain communities' limited experience of the wider world. Their perspective was illustrated by the terms they used for their own territory – *Maluti*, which means a range of mountains – and *Lesotho*, the territory of the dwellers in the lowlands and foothills. A journey to *Lesotho* was a major expedition, to a different 'country'. Their choices of destination and of the form of compensation payment for their loss of assets, and of their future livelihood were constrained by their limited personal exposure to these novel circumstances.

The communities affected by the Mohale Dam were widely separated from one another by distance and by the extreme topography. They had no cause, before the announcement that they were all to be displaced by the new reservoir, to consider themselves as a single collaborative entity. Now, they were required to 'participate' with one another and with the authorities in the planning and implementation of their own resettlement. The natural tendency was for each affected household to focus initially on its own resettlement plans, but with the encouragement of the Resettlement and Development field team, groups of households soon began to form and to consider their joint future. These informal and spontaneous groupings did much to provide their members with moral and practical support in the traumatic period leading up to the move, the move itself, and the aftermath. But some families, either through choice or default, were left to

participate with the authorities on their own. This worked well in some cases, mainly for the more robust families who looked on resettlement as an opportunity to move into a wider and hopefully more rewarding world, and less well for the more vulnerable and socially isolated households whose prospects for flourishing in a new environment were far poorer.

The ability of affected households and individuals to participate, with neighbours and relatives and with the authorities, in the formulation and implementation of the resettlement program depends very largely on their education, their experience in work and in positions of responsibility, and on their health, age and temperament. Those who are stronger in these respects tend to survive the resettlement experience and even to prosper, while the weaker tend to participate less, are heeded less and seldom do as well. It is not at all easy to remedy this inequality by institutional means, although such measures as the Minimum Threshold Payment go far to help, in the short term at least.

It can be argued that ‘participation’ in the LHWP context was merely window dressing, that in fact, people were not transformed or empowered to make their own decisions. After all, as one of our informants in Mohale noted, “We had no say whatsoever over whether the dam project was to go ahead, and we could not stop it no matter what our opinions were.” A representative of one of the more influential Lesotho NGOs monitoring the LHWP said the participatory approach which LHDA prided itself on was actually a means of subverting public opposition to the project and ensuring that people went along with it. Numerous statements were made by local people to the Lesotho Ombudsman and to project authorities to the effect that they were not really able to participate in any of the decisions relating to the implementation of the LHWP. One of the areas that project-affected people expressed serious concern about was that involving compensation, and there were numerous complaints at the local level and in the Lesotho media that the compensation was insufficient and that people did not have any say in determining the items for which compensation was paid nor the amounts of funds paid to individuals and communities.

The title of this paper asks the question – who drives resettlement? There was certainly a strong element of self-determination in the selection of resettlement destinations, even though one of the most popular, South Africa, was ruled out by the authorities. It is probably safe to say that most people went to the destination of their choice, and that most, eventually, had a fairly good idea of what that choice implied, but they could not foresee the detailed outcome of their decisions, for example, exactly where at the chosen destination their new house would be built, how they would manage to acquire arable land and under what terms, how their relations with their new neighbours would turn out, and how the economic fluctuations in their new rural or urban situations would affect them.

### III. Was This a Successful Resettlement Program?

As resettlement programs go, this one certainly ranks above average. The people were well informed, long in advance of their having to move, of the nature of the project that was to displace them, of the likely sequence of events leading

up to the move, and of the options open to them. They were helped and encouraged to organise themselves, and their destinations, despite the veto on South Africa, were chosen by the community members themselves. The project-affected people were provided with new houses, to a higher standard than their old ones, at these destinations. They were compensated for their loss of land and other income-earning opportunities, and for most, access to clean water, sanitation, schools, health services and transport was improved substantially.

Once having arrived at their destinations the re-settlers were largely responsible for re-building their own economies. As we have seen, some did well and others poorly. Some people ended up landless, depending heavily on the compensation that they received. There were also those who ended up without jobs or productive work, and some individuals became destitute, particularly elderly individuals and ones who were physically or psychologically incapacitated.

The support for income-generating and agricultural activities provided by the LHWP was well-intentioned and well-funded, but with few exceptions it was ineffectual. Despite the experience of the RDP in Phase 1A and the avowed intention to learn from this and to do it better in Phase 1B, it fell far short of its declared aim of improving the livelihoods and environments of the affected people. There is a tendency among politicians and high-ranking aid officials to assume that more investment means less poverty. The RDP of both of LHWP's phases disproves this assumption. Not only could the allocated funds not be spent, but that which was spent had a meagre effect.

The intangible sense of loss expressed by many of the re-settlers, especially by those for whom the move had not brought the compensations of affluence, was something the Project could hardly address. The fact that people had chosen their destinations and their hosts, and that the hosts in most cases had welcomed their arrival, to some extent alleviated the pain of separation from ancestral homes, but this is probably something that time alone can heal.

There are many instances in the recent history of resettlement programs where the prevailing international norms have been followed assiduously in the planning phase, and generally ignored in the implementation (World Commission on Dams, 2000; Cernea & McDowell, 2000; Scudder, 2005; Panel of Environmental Experts, 2009). A reason for this discrepancy is that the preparation of adequate plans, in conformity with international standards, is necessary for the release of the international funds for the project, while their implementation is largely under the control of the government 'owning' the project. The international funding agencies tend to lose their grip on the project once the funds have been granted, and especially once implementation has begun. The financial and political consequences of closing down the flow of funds to a project once it is under construction can be very dire as contractors can claim heavy damages for delays not of their own making.<sup>(17)</sup>

As to whether this was a 'successful' resettlement program, it can be said that it was better than most, but still suffered from the endemic defects of similar disruptions imposed on people world-wide. In general, the more robust families and individuals use the resources provided by a well planned and benign resettlement and compensation program to realise ambitions that were constrained in their previous environment, and some ended up in what they themselves consider

an improved situation. Those who are less able to adapt to change, and who are dependent on the wide range of benefits provided by a stable and traditional village community, typically do less well, and often do poorly. They are often difficult to follow and difficult for the authorities to support following the move and the disintegration of their community. In poor countries it is hardly practical or politically expedient to provide continuous support for a small and specific group of poor people, while others, equally deprived, but for different reasons, have no such state assistance.

After some years following resettlement the authorities tend to lose interest in the fate of the people displaced by the project, and the institutional capacity to continue the follow-up work on behalf of the disadvantaged ones also diminishes as key staff and resources move on to other more immediately demanding tasks. The degree to which individuals and communities can participate in project-related decisions also changes. In the case of Phase 1B of the LHWP, the nature of participation changed as the project wound down. The community-level consultation institutions met less often, and the LHDA abolished the Community Liaison Assistants who had been so instrumental in helping facilitate the resettlement and post-resettlement process.

Whether these defects could be remedied by the rigorous application of the kind of detailed prescriptions offered by the World Commission on Dams is unclear so far, but in our opinion it seems improbable. Requirements as demanding and complex as the World Commission on Dams are unlikely to be sustained after the construction period. The World Commission on Dams (2000: 176) noted that "The most unsatisfactory social outcomes of past dam projects are linked to cases where affected people played no role in the planning process, or even in selecting the place or terms of their resettlement." In the case of the LHWP, people affected by Phase 1B of the project were consulted about many issues ranging from compensation to resettlement; they got to choose where they would be relocated or resettled; and they undertook much of the relocation themselves, with some assistance from Project authorities. Their economic rehabilitation was to a large extent in their own hands. What was not in their hands, however, was the decision about whether to undertake the project that affected their lives so substantially.

Local people in the highlands and resettlement areas sought assistance from outsiders, including the Lesotho Ombudsman. NGOs, including the HCAG, the TRC, Christian Aid, and the International Rivers Network sought to enhance the degree to which project-affected people were consulted. The World Bank and the Panel of Environmental Experts continuously urged the LHDA to be more responsive to the concerns of local people and NGOs and were sometimes, but not always, heeded.

Public participation is often cited as a crucial part of successful development policy and practice, linked closely to empowerment and social justice (World Bank, 1996; Chambers, 2005). There are, however, questions regarding whether or not participation has resulted in significant social gains, due in part to failure to engage with issues of politics and power (see Cooke & Kohari, 2001; Hickey & Mohan, 2005). Devolution of power to local authorities, particularly those at

the village level in Lesotho, has proceeded only to a limited extent. With respect to the LHWP, most decisions are made by the project authority, and people in the project area have relatively little choice but to go along with them. One of the major issues raised by NGOs in Lesotho is the limited degree to which local people can influence elites and the larger power structure in general.

Public participation in the LHWP did, however, help to reduce conflict and bring about changes in resettlement policy. This can be seen, for example, in the case of Stage 3 (Residual) resettlement, where the governments of Lesotho and South Africa and the LHWC, after much discussion with project-affected people and the organizations working with them, decided to allow those households in the areas immediately surrounding the Mohale Reservoir to have land in the Mohale Basin to replace the land that they lost and, potentially, to have the option to resettle outside the area if they so chose to do so. The Residual Resettlement Policy, which took over two years to draw up, argued for participation of local people in decision-making, though the procedural steps and mechanisms for this participation were not laid out in detail (LHDA, 2009). The real challenge now will be for the LHDA to take seriously the demands of the project-affected people to ensure that all of those households affected by the LHWP are better off socially, economically and spiritually over the long term.

#### IV. Concluding Questions

The real cost of a resettlement and compensation program such as that outlined here is hardly possible to calculate. The funds disbursed directly to affected families and spent on various development programs are known and recorded, but the cost of the various and frequent visits of World Bank missions, Panels of Experts and other specialists, and of other international agencies, over two decades has not, to our knowledge, been computed. To these must be added the prolonged and substantial input of the several NGOs involved in the project. When these ‘direct’ and ‘peripheral’ costs have been summed, several questions arise:

- Of the total real costs of the program and its supervision and administration, what proportion could be counted as direct and tangible benefit to the affected families?
- Assuming, as we suspect, that a significantly higher proportion of the total costs has been spent on what we here refer to as ‘peripherals’, and not spent on direct and tangible benefits, can this be justified in terms of the outcomes for the affected families? Is there not a better and more ‘direct’ way of using the money spent on the peripherals?
- Most of the peripheral cost is incurred in monitoring, evaluation, and persuasion of the responsible authority to do better by the affected families and their environment. If the authority itself was fully committed to these ends, would there still be a need for the now customary external intervention?

The LHDA, at its final stakeholders’ conference held in October, 2006, billed the LHWP as ‘a model for success.’ The question remains, is a project that has

had mixed results in terms of social, economic, and environmental impacts really a 'model' to be replicated? Some valuable lessons have been learned, granted. The project has reached some of its objectives, providing water to South Africa and electricity to Lesotho. Not all of the project-affected households have had their livelihoods restored to the point where they were before first disturbance. From the standpoint of some of the households involved in the project, they are, as Thamae and Pottinger (2006) have described, 'on the wrong side of development.' Others have clearly benefited from the LHWP, increasing their incomes and raising their living standards.

Development is tied closely to bureaucracy as well as to strategies aimed at enhancing livelihoods and social well-being (Hitchcock & Holm, 1993; Tandler, 1997; Scudder, 2005; Derman & Hellum, 2007). The LHWP, with its emphasis on protecting the environment and promoting social and economic development, is, in some ways, a classic example of a mixture of top-down and bottom-up development and participation. The degree to which resettlement was based on a 'do-it-yourself' principle in the LHWP varied, depending on the willingness of project authorities to allow decision-making by project-affected people. When it came to allowing local people the option of staying or going, the LHDA and other stakeholders in the Lesotho Highlands struggled over the notions of democracy, participation, and devolution of authority to the local level.

Most of the available evidence on the fate of the resettlers suggests that the resettlement program has opened new opportunities to the economically fit, who have adapted to their new circumstances and in some cases have prospered. Those people who were vulnerable are now, in general, poorer, less healthy and survive largely on the minimum threshold payments, which will begin expiring within the next few years. Their prospects thereafter are uncertain, but not bright. The majority of the project-affected people who were resettled or relocated have had a portion of their livelihoods restored through compensation but from their own perspectives largely are worse off they were before the project began.

The Mohale Dam resettlement program was elaborately planned, generously funded and closely monitored to ensure that, as far as possible, none of the more than 400 affected families ended up worse off than before. The planners were acutely aware of the unforeseen effects that other resettlement programs in Lesotho and worldwide had had for their subjects and devised a program intended to avoid following these unhappy examples. The outcome of their well-meant efforts was often far off the mark.

The stark message from this and other resettlement programs is that the strong prosper while the weak cannot withstand the social, cultural and economic disruption of forced removal and must be treated as wards of the state for a long if not indefinite period. Efforts have to be made to ensure that both upstream and downstream populations are able to benefit from compensation and development programs. The economic rehabilitation of poor and weak families, however, is a process as yet little understood.

It remains to be seen whether the LHWP will be characterized as a successful model of 'do-it-yourself' resettlement or one that, as some NGOs have argued, has increased dependency. Clearly, transparency, accountability, and broad stake-

holder participation are crucial in the planning and implementation of large dam projects if they are to achieve the multiple goals of benefiting local people, nation-states, and the regions in which they are established.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** Earlier versions of this paper were presented at seminars at the Department of Anthropology and Geography, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the African Studies Center, Michigan State University, at a meeting on ‘Theorizing Africa’ organized by Kristin Peterson at Michigan State University and at a symposium entitled “Water, Culture, and Power: Global Trends and Local Realities” organized by Bill Derman and Anne Ferguson held at the 108<sup>th</sup> annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on December 5, 2009.

Support for this work was provided by Hunting Technical Services (Contract 1012 and Paul Devitt) and the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (for the work of the Panel of Environmental Experts and Robert Hitchcock). We wish to thank Richard Ramoetsi, Ben Mateka, Makhasi Nyaphisi, Masilo Phakoe, Lebohang Moleko, David Nkalai, B.G. Sibolla, Mahase Thokoa, Fred Thomola, Junior Potloane, Trower Namane, Tankiso Makara, A.M. Morejele, Taole Tesele, Mavuso Tshabalala, Wilson Kisubi, Keketso Sefeane, Yehuda Danziger, Amusaa Inambao, Mike Mentis, John Ledger, Ted Scudder, Steve Turner, Jonathan Jenness, Andrew Macoun, Roxanne Hakim, Thuso Green, John Gay, and the late Dan Aronson for their useful advice, comments, suggestions, and insights. We also wish to thank Marieka Brouwer for producing the figures for this paper.

## NOTES

- (1) The World Commission on Dams report had not appeared when the program was being planned and during the early stages of its implementation.
- (2) For descriptions of the rural economy of Lesotho, see Turner (1978, 2000); Murray (1981); Ferguson (1994); World Bank (1994); and Sechaba Consultants (2000).
- (3) LHDA Treaty (Government of Lesotho and Government of South Africa, 1986: 27).
- (4) Arable land in Lesotho is a public asset. Farmers do not own their fields in any freehold sense, but hold rights of usufruct. Land rights are retained by continuous use and are relinquished when the land is no longer cultivated. The land is then re-allocated by the local authorities. In recent times, with increasing scarcity, land has been transferred informally and privately, in what amounts to sale.
- (5) In Phase 1A (The Katse Dam) the compensation period was 15 years. It was intended that the rural development program would by that time have increased incomes to pre-relocation levels. It soon became evident, especially to the recipients, this was unlikely to happen.
- (6) How to ‘safeguard’ the capital sum awarded as compensation to a family is, nevertheless, problematic. The capital is actually the property of the family, and it could be legally and practically impossible to prevent the head of the family from disposing of his capital as he wishes.
- (7) Until recently the right to use arable land was allocated to a family by a local chief or headman, and more recently by a local land allocation committee. The land itself remained the property of the nation. There was no such thing as land ownership. This has changed and land is now increasingly bought and sold.

- (8) NGOs and other critics of the LHWP pointed to the fact that corruption trials held in Lesotho led to the conviction of the Chief Executive of the LHDA and several large dam construction companies including Acres International of Canada and Lahmeyer International of Germany. In November, 2006, the World Bank declared Lahmeyer to be ineligible for the awarding of World Bank contracts for a period of seven years. As the World Bank's Implementation Completion Report on Phase 1B of the Lesotho Highland Water Project (World Bank, 2007: 2) noted, "The experience of the LHWP and the pro-active role of the government of Lesotho have been used widely as a case study of good governance, highlighting how small, developing states can successfully prosecute some of the largest multinational firms in the world."
- (9) In these cases, the hosts, some of whom were relatives of families being resettled, were considered project-affected people as much as those individuals who lost their homes and fields and other assets to the dam and related infrastructure.
- (10) For a discussion of the issues of conflicts and conflict management among people who were relocated or resettled as a result of the LHWP Phase 1B, see Bildhaeuser (2010).
- (11) See the studies by Keketsho (2003); Shale (2003); Thabane (2000); Braun (2005); and Mwangi (2007, 2008).
- (12) See Horta (1996); Archer (1996); Panos Institute (2001); Transformation Resource Centre (2004, 2005); and Thamae and Pottinger (2006).
- (13) Households in Lesotho generally consist of one or more extended families that are tied together through marriage, kinship, or friendship; they often share a compound and may cook and eat together at least some of the time. Nuclear families usually consist of a husband, wife, and children and sometimes elderly parents or relatives. Basotho generally are patrilineal and patrilocal, although there is significant variation in residence and descent. As Braun (2005: 35) notes, "Despite the residence pattern chosen, the strength of patrilineal kin groups remains strong."
- (14) Community councils are local government bodies established under the Lesotho Local Government Act 1997 (as amended). These councils are corporate bodies consisting of 9 to 15 members who are elected periodically in local government elections. These councils are supposed to engage in local level development and conservation activities, and they play a role along with traditional authorities (chiefs) in land allocation and management. They differ from co-operatives which are local legal entities established under the Co-operatives Societies Act of 2000; these are membership organizations to which individuals pay an annual fee which engage in activities such as craft production and marketing, agriculture, and running hammer mills (installations used to grind maize and other grains).
- (15) At the time, a Maluti was equivalent to M7=US\$1.
- (16) This is relative to other big dam resettlement programs in which thousands, if not tens of thousands, of families have been moved. See Lawson (1982); World Bank (1994); Dorsey et al. (1997); Cernea & McDowell (2000); World Commission on Dams (2000); McCully (2001); Khagram (2004); Scudder (2005); Oliver-Smith (2009).
- (17) Perhaps times are changing in this regard. The international development bank funding the Naga Hammadi Barrage on the River Nile ordered a halt to construction until the affected households had been compensated and resettled as agreed.

## REFERENCES

- Archer, R. 1996. *Trust in Construction: The Lesotho Highlands Water Project*. Christian Aid, London.

- Bawden, M.G. & D.M. Carroll 1968. *The Land Resources of Lesotho*. Land Resource Study No. 3. Land Resources Division, Directorate of Overseas Surveys, Tolworth, Surrey, England.
- Bildhaeuser, S. 2010. *Institutions of Water Management and Conflict Resolution on a Local Level: An Empirical Study of Displacement Areas of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project*. Microcon Research Working Paper 11. Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom.
- Braun, Y.A. 2005. *Feminist Political Ecology in South Africa: The Social Impacts of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine.
- Bureau of Statistics 2004. *LHDA Compensation Policy Minimum Threshold Assessment Study*. Agriculture and Environment Statistics Division, Bureau of Statistics, Government of Lesotho, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Cernea, M.M. 1995. Understanding and preventing impoverishment from displacement: Reflections from the state of knowledge. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 8(3): 245-264.
- 1997. The risks and reconstruction model for resettling displaced populations. *World Development*, 25(10): 1569-1587.
- Cernea, M.M. & S.E. Guggenheim (eds.) 1993. *Anthropological Approaches to Resettlement: Policy, Practice, and Theory*. Westview Press, Boulder and London.
- Cernea, M.M. & H.M. Mathur (eds.) 2008. *Can Compensation Prevent Impoverishment? Reforming Resettlement through Investments and Benefit-Sharing*. Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford.
- Cernea, M.M. & C. McDowell (eds.) 2000. *Risks and Reconstruction: Experiences of Resettlers and Refugees*. World Bank, Washington DC.
- Chakela, Q.K. (ed.) 1999. *State of the Environment in Lesotho 1997*. National Environment Secretariat, Ministry of Environment, Gender, and Youth Affairs, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Chambers, R. 2005. *Ideas for Development*. Earthscan, London.
- Cooke, W. & U. Kohari (eds.) 2001. *Participation: The New Tyranny*. Zed Books, London.
- Derman, B. & A. Hellum 2007. Livelihood rights perspective on water reform: Reflections on rural Zimbabwe. *Land Use Policy*, 24(4): 664-673.
- Dorcey, T., A. Steiner, M. Acreman & B. Orlando (eds.) 1997. *Large Dams: Learning from the Past, Looking at the Future*. IUCN, World Conservation Union, and Washington DC: The World Bank, Gland, Switzerland.
- Ferguson, J. 1994. *The Anti-Politics Machine: 'Development', Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London.
- Government of Lesotho and Government of South Africa 1986. *Treaty on the Lesotho Highlands Water Project between the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Government of the Republic of South Africa*. Government of Lesotho and Pretoria and Cape Town, South Africa: Government of the Republic of South Africa, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Hickey, S. & G. Mohan 2005. Relocating participation within a radical politics of development. *Development and Change*, 36(2): 237-262.
- Hitchcock, R.K. & J.D. Holm 1993. Bureaucratic domination of hunter-gatherer societies: A study of the San in Botswana. *Development and Change*, 24(2): 305-338.
- Hoover, R. 2001. *Pipe Dreams: The World Bank's Failed Efforts to Restore Lives and Livelihoods of Dam-Affected People in Lesotho*. International Rivers Network, Berkeley.
- Horta, K. 1996. The mountain kingdom's 'White Gold': The Lesotho highlands water project. *The Ecologist*, 25(6): 227-231.
- Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) 2007a. *Main Report: Findings from the 2005/2006 Monitoring and Evaluation Survey Conducted in the Phase 1A and 1B Project Areas of the LHWP: Mohale, Katse, 'Muela, and Matsoku*. Contract 1204, LHDA. Human

- Sciences Research Council and Maseru, LHDA, Pretoria.
- 2007b. *Socio-Economic and Related Findings of the 2005/2006 Monitoring and Evaluation Survey. Volume II: Phase 1A, Katse, Matsoku, and 'Muela Areas*. Contract 1204, LHDA. Human Sciences Research Council and Maseru, LHDA, Pretoria.
- 2007c. *Socio-Economic and Related Findings of the 2005/2006 Monitoring and Evaluation Survey. Volume II: Phase 1B, Mophale Project Area*. Contract 1204, LHDA. Human Sciences Research Council and Maseru, LHDA, Pretoria.
- 2007d. *Downstream Monitoring Survey: Report on River Usage and Socio-Economic and Related Findings in IFR Reaches: IFR 1, IFR 2, IFR 3, IFR 7, and IFR 9*. Contract 1204, LHDA. Human Sciences Research Council and Maseru, LHDA, Pretoria.
- 2009. *Main Report: Findings from the Population and Epidemiological Study of Phase 1 of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project*. Contract 1204, LHDA. Human Sciences Research Council and Maseru, LHDA, Pretoria.
- Hunting-Consult 4 Joint Venture 1997a. *Resettlement and Development Study. Final Report. Volume 1. Executive Summary*. Contract LHDA 1012, Phase 1B Services. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- 1997b. *Resettlement and Development Study. Final Report. Volume 2 – Main Report*. Contract LHDA 1012, Phase 1B Services. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- 1997c. *Resettlement and Development Study. Final Report. Volume 3 – Social Impact Assessment and People's Involvement Program*. Contract LHDA 1012, Phase 1B Services. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- 1997d. *Resettlement and Development Study. Final Report. Volume 4 – Adjudication*. Contract LHDA 1012, Phase 1B Services. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Keketsho, L. 2003. The mixed blessings of the Lesotho highlands water project: An assessment based on local perspectives. *Mountain Research and Development*, 23(1): 7-10.
- Khagram, S. 2004. *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.
- Lawson, M.L. 1982. *Dammed Indians: The Pick-Sloan Plan and the Missouri River Sioux 1944-1980*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
- Lahmeyer International Joint Venture 1992. *Feasibility Study for Arun III Hydroelectric Project*. Lahmeyer International Joint Venture, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) 1997a. *LHDA Policy on Community Participation in the Lesotho Highlands Water Project*. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- 1997b. *Guidelines for Community Complaints Resolution*. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- 1997c. *Community Participation Policy and Procedures*. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- 2009. *Residual Resettlement Policy*. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Lye, W.F. & C. Murray 1980. *Transformations on the Highveld: The Tswana and the Southern Sotho*. David Philip, Cape Town and London.
- Maema, M., T. Putsoane, K. Sefane, P. Bertilsson, M. Molaoa, & T. Gwintsa 1997. *Making Resettlement a Community Development Project: Case Study of Katse Dam Resettlement in Lesotho*. Manuscript on file at the LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- McCully, P. 2001. *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams*. Second Edition. Zed Books, London.
- McDowell, C. (ed.) 1996. *Understanding Impoverishment: The Consequences of Development-Induced Displacement*. Berghahn Books, Providence.
- Morvaridi, B. 2004. Resettlement, rights to development, and the Ilisu dam, Turkey. *Development and Change*, 35(4): 719-741.
- Murray, C. 1981. *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Mwangi, O. 2007. Hydropolitics, ecocide, and human security in Lesotho: A case study of the

- Lesotho highlands water project. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 33(1): 3-17.
- . 2008. Environmental change and human security in Lesotho: The role of the Lesotho highlands water project in environmental degradation. *African Security Review*, 17(3): 58-70.
- Office of the Ombudsman 2003. *Ombudsman's Report on Complaints by Resettled Communities against the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (August, 2003)*. Office of the Ombudsman, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Oliver-Smith, Anthony (ed.) 2009. *Development and Dispossession: The Crisis of Forced Displacement and Resettlement*. School for Advanced Research Press, Santa Fe.
- Panel of Environmental Experts 2009. *Lesotho Highlands Water Project Report No. 52*. Report to the LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho, September 28 – October 5, 2009. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Panos Institute 2001. *Voices from the Mountain: Oral Testimonies from the Lesotho Highlands*. Panos Institute, London.
- Picciotto, R., W. van Wicklin & E. Rice, (eds.) 2001. *Involuntary Resettlement: Comparative Perspectives*. Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ and London.
- Scudder, T. 1997. Resettlement. In (A.K. Biswas, ed.) *Water Resources: Environmental Planning, Management, and Development*, pp. 667-710. Macmillan, London.
- . 2005. *The Future of Large Dams: Dealing with Social, Environmental, Institutional and Political Costs*. Earthscan, London.
- Scudder, T. & E. Colson, 1982. From welfare to development: A conceptual framework for the analysis of dislocated people. In (A. Hansen & A. Oliver-Smith, eds.) *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Dislocated People*, pp. 267-287. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.
- & ———. 2002. Long-term research in the Gwembe valley, Zambia. In (R.K. Kemper & A. Peterson Royce, eds.) *Chronicling Cultures: Long-term Field Research in Social Anthropology*, pp. 197-238. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, California.
- Sechaba Consultants 2000. *Poverty and Livelihoods in Lesotho, 2000: More than a Mapping Exercise*. Sechaba Consultants, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Shale, M.M. 2003. Exploring the relationship between relocatees from Mohale dam project area and hosts and Ha Makotoko and Makhoakhoeng. *Lesotho Social Science Review*, 7(2): 174-193.
- Tendler, J. 1997. *Good Government in the Tropics*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- Thabane, M. 2000. Shifts from old to new social and ecological environments in the Lesotho highlands water scheme: Relocating residents of the Mohale Dam. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 26(4): 633-654.
- Thamae, M.L. & L. Pottinger (eds.) 2006. *On the Wrong Side of Development: Lessons Learned from the Lesotho Highlands Water Project*. TRC, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Transformation Resource Centre (TRC) 2004. *The Irony of the 'White Gold.'* Maseru, TRC, Lesotho.
- . 2005. *Lives of Resettled Communities after Resettlement: A Survey on the Lives of Communities Affected by the Lesotho Highlands Water Project*. TRC, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Tshabalala, M. & W. Kisubi 2003. *Socioeconomic Monitoring of Households Affected by Phase 1 of Lesotho Highlands Water Project: A Synthesis of 2000/01 Results*. LHDA, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Turner, S.D. 1978. *Sesotho Farming: The Conditions and Prospects of Agriculture in the Lowlands and Foothills of Lesotho*. Ph.D. dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
- . 2000. *Livelihoods in Lesotho*. CARE Lesotho, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Wiest, K.M. 1995. Development refugees: Africans, Indians, and the big dams. *Journal of*

- Refugee Studies*, 8(2): 163-184.
- World Bank 1980. *Social Issues Associated with Involuntary Resettlement in Bank-Financed Projects*. World Bank, Washington DC.
- 1990. Operational Directive 4.30: Involuntary Resettlement. *World Bank Operational Manual*. World Bank, Washington DC.
- 1994. *Lesotho Poverty Assessment*. Report No. 13171 LS. Population and Human Resources Division, Southern Africa Department, Africa Regional Office, World Bank, Washington DC.
- 1996. *The World Bank Participation Sourcebook*. World Bank, Washington DC.
- 2004a. Operational Policy 4.12: Involuntary Resettlement. *World Bank Operational Manual, Operational Policies*. World Bank, Washington DC.
- 2004b. *Involuntary Resettlement Sourcebook: Planning and Implementation in Development Projects*. World Bank, Washington DC.
- 2007. *Implementation Completion and Results Report (IBRD-43390) on a Loan in the Amount of US\$45 Million to the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority for Lesotho Highlands Water Project – Phase 1B*. Report No. ICR 168. World Bank, Washington DC.
- World Commission on Dams 2000. *Dams and Development: A New Framework for Decision-making. The Report of the World Commission on Dams*. Earthscan, London.
- Wright, J. 1971. *Bushman Raiders of the Drakensberg, 1840-1870*. University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg.

——— Accepted April 13, 2010

Authors' Names and Addresses: Paul DEVITT, 4 Stapleford Court, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 2LB, UK.

E-mail: paul@devitt01.freeserve.co.uk

Robert K. HITCHCOCK, Department of Geography, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1117, USA.

E-mail: hitchc16@msu.edu