

Case 8: L E S O T H O

Leshoboro Plateau Participatory forest Management

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This project was initiated by the Ministry of Forestry Range and soil conservation through the department of Forestry with the aim of solving the problem of insufficient community involvement in forest management.

The approach that was used was to hand over the user right to the community. The expected outcome was the improved Participation and involvement of the community when it comes to forest management and protection. The good practice is the community is involved in any decision made on the activities carried out in the forest and by so doing they feel ownership of the forest. The benefits reaped from this project include ready available fire wood, revenue and employment creation.

For this be sustainable there are set by laws that govern the forest and there is a Forest Management Committee that is man dated to lead every activity that is carried out in the forest.

Implementing Organization	Ministry of Forestry Range and Soil Conservation Address: P.O Box 774 Maseru 100 Lesotho www.gov.ls/ Forestry
Funding Source	GIZ and Government of Lesotho
Implementing Period	2012 – 2018
Project site	Maqhaka village, Berea District, Lesotho

Key Words: Participatory Forest Management, Handing over the user rights to the community Forest Protection



Tree planting:
The community members are engaged on tree planting on a day designated by the FMC

Background of the Project

In Lesotho there are forests that are owned by the government and the community, the arrangement was that the community will get 20% share of the return from the forest while the government will take 80% share in this kind of forests. This arrangement seems to have negative impact towards forest management and its sustainability. Since the community share was too small which led to illegal felling and improper management of the forest as a whole. With this regard the department realized the need to fully engage the local communities surrounding the forest in decision making.

Overall Goal and Objectives of the Project

Goal: Hand over the user rights to the community.

Objective 1: Enhance community involvement in the sustainable Management of the forest

Objective 2: Equip the community with the forest management skills

Objective 3: Make a community year a living out of timber and no timber forest products

Major Activities

- ✓ Capacitating the forest management committee with the Forest management skills (silvicultural skills) so that they will be able to make good management decisions on their forest after the handing over of the user right to them, although there will still be an assistance and guidance from the ministry. There is also a capacity building in Forest record keeping and conflict management and resolution.
- ✓ Since some of the compartments are ready for harvesting, one of the activities is wood and poles sales. These forest products are being sold by the FMC. Then they report on weekly basis to the ministry personnel who is in charge (Area Forester.) then giving the government its share and they deposit their share in to their own bank account. These collected funds are later used for other needed developmental projects within their area.
- ✓ The other activity is to protect the forest against illegal felling, fire, vandalism and grazing. With the help of the areal forester they have formulated their bylaws that govern the forested area and they are in line with the Forest Act 1998.

Direct Outputs from the Project

- ✓ Increased forest cover resulted from proper management and protection of the forest.
- ✓ Readily available fuel wood and timber
- ✓ Revenue collection done by the FMC (the government gets it share later)
- ✓ Improved biodiversity

Indirect Impact of the Project

- ✓ Improve livelihoods
- ✓ Carbon sequestration
- ✓ Source of forage for bees is increased
- ✓ Soil erosion is minimized

Intervention of Central/Local Government

The Government has formulated the Policy and the Act that are used as a guiding tool. Forester’s hand book for Community owned / managed woodlots and handbook for forest management committee have also been developed. The department of forestry staff was charged with imparting technical knowledge and skills to the FMC. GIZ also played a vital role of funding the trainings and the meetings conducted.

Challenges and limitations

- ✓ Insufficient funds
- ✓ Inadequate law enforcement

Way Forward

As the way forward, after the community has met all the requirements for them to be handed over the user rights then the process of handing over will be conducted. Plan is also to conduct regular trainings for the communities to strengthen their understanding.

Reference Documents/Materials

- ✓ Forest act 1998
- ✓ National Forestry Policy 2008
- ✓ Forester’s handbook for community owned or managed woodlots. 2003.

Resource Persons

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Fuewood collection:
Fuel wood gathered from an indigenous forest (Leucosidea sericea) as an alternative to utilizing adjacent pine (to be used for production of timber) and eucalyptus (as a source for poles production)



Skills development:
Training of FMCs (on terrifying, wood harvesting techniques, record and book keeping of wood sales, conflict management etc)

