

The LHDA engages in the determination of real effective impacts of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project

HIV/AIDS

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) is undertaking Epidemiological and Social Survey (Contract LHDA 1204). The study will establish impacts of the project on the people affected by it. It is a key evaluation of the project's social and economic impact. The study will help evaluate the health status of people in area, and can therefore be a significant contribution to strategic planning for health interventions and HIV/AIDS campaigns. It will also assist in determining alternative redress for people affected by the Project including residual resettlement exercise. The ultimate objective is to have appropriate information for the Project's Implementation Completion Report which is due in December, 2005.

Residual Resettlement: Stage 3 Resettlement

The LHDA has resettled communities from their place of origin to give way to the implementation of Lesotho Highlands Water Project dams. In Phase IA, construction of Katse dam, the affected people were moved up or downhill to give way for related dam construction activities such as powerlines and road alignments. This movement within the same locality is defined as relocation in LHDA terms. The gorges below provided the perfect stronghold to contain Katse reservoir water. The valleys were used mostly for farming and grazing purposes. 372 households, approximately 2,300 people were affected in the process of implementation of Phase IA.

In the case of Phase IB, Mohale dam, communities actually lived in the valleys and gorges and oxbows that were to become the stronghold of the reservoirs ultimately. Environmental Impact Studies revealed that the people would need to move out of the basin areas. The activity was done under the resettlement programme where communities had options to move uphill within the highland regions or opted to resettle in the foothills and/or even in the urban centers. The resettlement was effected in stages 1 and 2. Altogether some 390 households, nearly approximately 1,700 individuals, were affected.



A new village for the resettled people. The houses are modern, provide for rain water harvesting and each household is fenced off and provided with ventilated improved latrines. The above area is in the Machache foothills, with Mount Machache in the background.

In Phase Ib, Mohale dam was impounded in November 2003. There are some additional 155 families who have lost arable land to inundation of the dam. The families are also situated around the circumference of dam in a manner that may or may not pose threat to their lives. The LHDA is undertaking studies on a case by case to determine and understand the significance of losses to their livelihoods. Of the 155 families, 90 have lost less than the 50% of their total arable land and 65 have lost more than 50%. Even so, individual situations vary enormously. Losses range from 309 square metres to almost 5 hectares, while households that have lost 5000 square metres range from those for whom the loss was only 15% of total holdings to those for whom it was 72 % - hence the need for a case-by -case study.

This information is matched against the Resettlement Policy to show incongruencies and/or partial compliance to policy and the possible downside to these households.



Katse dam- the mother of them-all LHWP dams. Holding back the Maluti highland waters for sustainable development of Lesotho economy



The majestic zig-zag rockfill concrete face Mohale dam. Transferring 9.2 cubic metres of water into Katse dam some 32km away.

The results will provide answers to proper and informed decision -making for both parties, i.e. the affected people and the Project Authorities including the LHDA. Families categorized as high-risks, living at the edge of a reservoir, will need their loss of arable land to be re-addressed. The study will provide answers to enable the people to make a voluntary decision as to whether they could maintain and improve their livelihoods by staying where they were, since their houses are not directly affected or whether they would prefer to relocate regardless. The 50 % loss baseline was adopted to signify a boundary beyond which

losses might warrant resettlement in respect of the policy. In respect of these families, their choices will be on voluntary basis and case by case- thus making policy prescripts pragmatic.