

SAFE-World Project/Initiative Summary

Country: Lesotho

Project/Initiative Title: PTC II Project
1986

Scale: many communities

Agro-Ecological Zone: III

Improvement types

1x	2	3x	4	5x	6x	7	8	9
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D. Contact Point for Project/Initiative

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E. Project Narrative

The Production Through Conservation (PTC II) Programme, Lesotho

The PTC II programme is a Ministry of Agriculture initiative supported by SIDA to encourage farmers to achieve improved husbandry of their land, and so achieve better conservation and production. It aims to do this by fostering self-sustaining rural communities, capable of planning the development of their own resources for sustained use. It is currently working in the Districts of Mohale's Hoek, Mafeting and Quthing, and follows up earlier projects that emphasised soil conservation as the primary need. In contrast to past approaches, its guiding principle is that immense potential exists in villages and this should be built upon and strengthened. The extension staff at district level are organised into 5 or 6 Area Teams, comprising staff from a range of divisions of the Ministry. Each Area Team chooses its own leader, who then represents them on the District Agricultural Officer's (DAO) District Management Team. These arrangements encourage greater multidisciplinary.

The programme promotes institution building from village level upwards, facilitating flows from the village and village development committee to the DAO, the Board of Farmers, the District Development Council, and on the various national ministries. The programme specifically sets out to raise interest and create demand among villages, while at the same time increasing the supply of information, goods and services to satisfy these new demands. The initial focus is the Headman Village Workshops, to which all people are invited, and the common interest groups which may emerge during the course of participatory analyses and discussions. The emphasis is on establishing good relations between local people and

extension staff, in order to ensure that the hitherto undervalued resources of local knowledge and enthusiasm are tapped.

There are strong feelings amongst rural people that they do not like plans to be made for them by others, and so now that they are fully involved in developing joint plans with the Area Teams, they greatly welcome this aspect of the programme. It had been expected that 'encouragements' would be needed for villagers to implement resource-conserving practices. Instead farm families are now stating what they wish to do, and so pressuring government to give them support and help. Staff appreciate this different role of responding to farmers. Because of the team approaches used by extension, everyone is included in the process, and so shares equally in both praise and blame.

There have already been a wide range of impacts, particularly in the government agencies. Staff are positively motivated by the better relations with farmers, and by the better exchanges with their colleagues. Because of the better understanding of local needs, district planning and budgeting can be more targeted on expressed needs, which should lead to more efficiency in future. Other benefits include the elimination of unnecessary journeys and the more efficient use of transport. Although it is too early to see impacts in the field, rural people are enthusiastic about the new approach, and are also proving more receptive to the technical suggestions being made.

Source: Shaxson and Sehloho, 1993; Mikael Segerros, pers. comm.

Data for this project is in hard copy format and is not currently available electronically. If you would like further information please contact Gedion Shone at the above address.