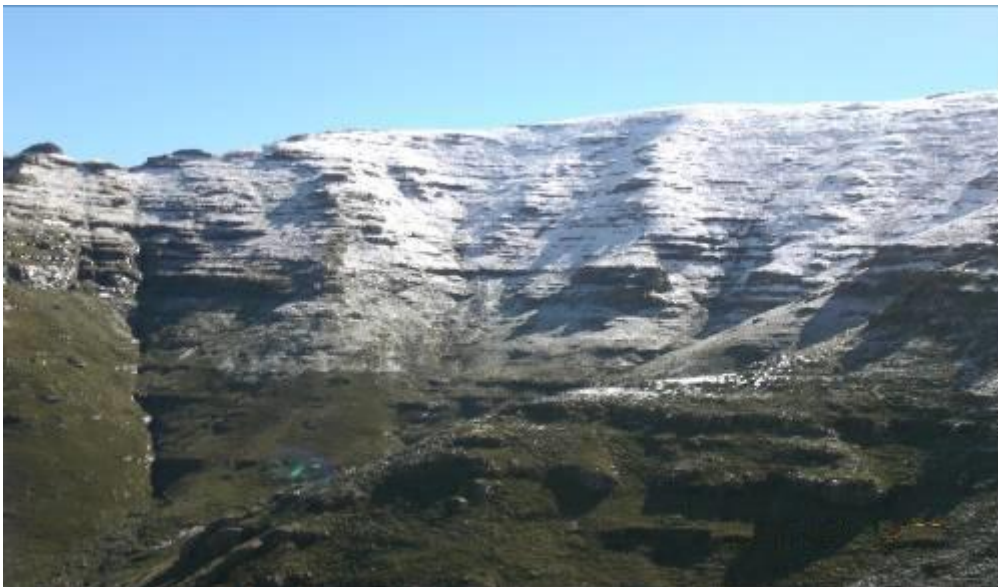




National Consultations on Water, Food Security and Nutrition

Final report of National Consultation on
Water, Food Security and Nutrition

LESOTHO
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About the overall initiative

2015 is a milestone with the new UN Sustainable Development Goals and the COP 21 on Climate Change in Paris. Building on the recent report on Water produced by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, Global Water Partnership Africa (GWP) partners are joining forces to contribute to sustainable development in the face of climate change. This initiative, planned for five years, will, in an inclusive manner, identify challenges and implement relevant concrete activities at all levels.



Country Water Partnerships (CWPs) in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe and now Lesotho and Malawi decided to seize the opportunity created by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to engage further with Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) to make a tangible contribution at country level.

As a first step, these CWPs took the May 2015 HLPE report, explained it to country water and FSN stakeholders and facilitated a national dialog on HLPE recommendations against country priorities. The second step was to convene national workshops with interested stakeholders for more than 200 concerned ministers, farmers organizations, CSOs, and development partners on urgent needs and priority actions to be taken to impact the functioning of the Water Energy Food Ecosystems nexus for better livelihoods.

Next steps: elaboration and implementation of the program

With its “SDGs preparedness facility”, its Water and Climate Development Program, and with partners, GWP will coordinate the elaboration in 2016 and then the implementation of a 3 years program addressing technical and institutional country-identified priorities in the context of CFS resolutions and the COP 21 agenda for solutions.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAADP	-	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CBOs	-	Community Based Organizations
CFS	-	Committee on World Food Security
CMJC	-	Catchment Management Join Committee
CWP	-	Country Water Partnership
ECCD	-	Early Childhood Care and Development
ENA	-	Essential Nutrition Actions
ERP	-	Emergency Resilience Programme
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization
FNPS	-	Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategies
FNCO	-	Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office
GOL	-	Government of Lesotho
GWP	-	Global Water Partnership
GWPSA	-	GWP – Southern Africa
HIV/AIDS	-	Human Immuno Virus/ Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
HLPE	-	High Level Panel of Experts
HMIS	-	Health Management Information System
IWRM	-	Integrated Water Resources Management
LVAC	-	Lesotho Vulnerable Assessment Committee
LWP	-	Lesotho Water Partnership
LWSP	-	Lesotho Water and Sanitation Policy
MAFS	-	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
NAIP	-	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NAPFS	-	National Action Plan for Food Security
NEPAD	-	New Partnership for Africa Development
NSDP	-	National Strategic Development Plan
ORASECOM	-	Orange-Senqu River Commission
OVC	-	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
SADC	-	Southern African Development Community
SADP	-	Smallholder Agriculture Development Programme
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
WAMPP	-	Wool and Mohair Promotion Programme
WHO	-	World Health Organisation
WSSCM	-	Water and Sanitation Sector Coordination Meeting

1. Background

Water, energy, food, and ecosystems are essential for meeting basic human needs. But each one is coming under pressure, and climate change is making the situation worse. This has been the trend that has been haunting the world and has been discussed in plethora of fora at the global, regional and national levels. The intrinsic linkages to these issues have always been cited but little has been achieved to holistically link them in a coordinated and integrated manner especially when policy documents and strategies are being developed and implemented.

Governments and international development organizations have already demonstrated an understanding of the important links between water, energy, food and ecosystems, as COP 21 emphasised the importance of this nexus.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the United Nations (UN) body entrusted to oversee the global issue relating to food and agriculture. Under this body, the Committee on World Food Security, focussing on water and food security was mooted in 2015 session.

Notably the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) was created in 1974 and is an intergovernmental body open to all FAO member states which is dedicated to food security and nutrition issues. The composition and process were reviewed in 2009 in order to open up this framework to other categories of stakeholders. CFS is the global and intergovernmental platform where all stakeholders can collectively discuss and agree on strategic goals and means for improved food security and nutrition. CFS tackle short term crisis as well as long term structural issues.

Before each annual session of CFS, a High Level Panel of Experts” (HLPE) consults and elaborates on a report on the theme agreed upon by CFS in previous session.

Global Water Partnership with 20 years of positive experience of sharing knowledge, building relationships and effecting change in integrated water resources management (IWRM) has been tasked to take up this initiative with GWP partners in Africa at regional and country levels.

This initiative basically aims for the establishment of a bridge between two issues very often separately tackled in public policies, food security and water security. Indeed integrating CFS resolutions and implementing adapted policies at country

level requires that at country level stakeholders of both water security and food security can exchange and agree on common priorities and possible ways forward.

In the Sub-Saharan Africa, Lesotho was of the countries that were selected to take up this initiative by the Country Water Partnership (CWP) guided by the Regional Secretariat of GWP Southern Africa (GWP-SA). The assignment entails:

- To undertake a desk study and consult a range of key partners on the CFS HLPE report and outcomes in order to elaborate a draft country report on water security and food security in particular identifying priorities.
- Based on the previous study, invite 15 – 20 key, stakeholders-government representatives, private sector, civil society, development partners to a workshop to comment, amend, agree on the draft report. Thereafter the report should be finalized and formatted and sent to GWPSA

2. Policies and Sector stakeholders

Given the cross-cutting nature of water with other sectors, it has been suggested through the guidelines of this project that documents including the research papers need to be analysed to inform this initiative. National documents like recent policies for water, agriculture, food and nutrition; national development and economic growth and poverty reduction, strategies, "Country Agricultural Development Plan" (CAADP) status and investment plans and National Adaptation Plan as well as any other relevant national initiatives and studies being undertaken by research institutions and consultancies are the instruments that have been suggested by the guide. Below are the policies, Plans, Agreements, etc to guide on the expected outputs of the consultations.

2.1 Policies:

The Policies that have impact on the content report of this initiative are many including international obligations. Water and food security cuts across many sectors including the private sector and civil societies. Nonetheless, the policies and agreements are developed by the government at the sector level. Some of the relevant policies that address this initiative are below elaborated in matrix:

Table 1 – list of Water and Food Nutrition Policies

Policy document	Core mandate and objective	Relevance and linkage to Food Water and Food security
Sustainable Development Goals	World Leaders building on successes of past 15 years, have set new goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aiming to end poverty and hunger by 2030	In the 17 Goals set, Goal 2 (zero hunger) and Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation) directly link in the food security.
Vision 2020	The vision guides the destiny of developmental objectives for Lesotho in 2020. The vision States that <i>“By the year 2020 Lesotho shall be a stable democracy, a united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours. It shall have a healthy and well-developed human resource base. Its economy will be strong, its environment well managed and its technology well established.”</i>	Item 3.2.5 (A strong economy and Prosperous Nation) the issue of self sufficiency in agricultural production is well articulated thus: <i>“.... Agricultural production will be at its peak driven by availability of resources (material and human) and proper utilization of agricultural resource centres. The country will then experience a full state of food security and ultimately, commercialized agriculture.”</i>
National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2012/2013 – 2016/2017	Provides for the overall national strategic thrust for the next five years and guides the Nation on the right path towards the achievement of the National Vision 2020 goals	Food security is well enshrined under item 5.1.4 (Agriculture and rural economy). Salient features entail recognition that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution of agriculture to GNP has declined overtime, from around 20% thirty years ago to around 8% now, and still remains an important sector for increasing employment and rural incomes • Crop production is largely rain-fed and since Lesotho is increasingly susceptible to extreme weather variability which include prolonged droughts, floods, early and late frosts, agricultural production is highly erratic The NSDP further outlines measures to reduce

		<p>vulnerability and manage risk</p> <p>For the water sector, NSDP in item 5.2.2 recognizes the need to promote investment in water related economic activities which include irrigation projects, fisheries, water sports and bottling.</p>
National Action Plan of Action (NAPA)	<p>Developed under 7th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP7) It entails the country's "urgent and immediate" priority adaptation needs aimed at providing an enabling mechanism for the country to minimize the impacts of climate change while at the same time enhancing adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities that are most prone to the adverse effects of climate change.</p>	<p>Water and Food security are directly affected by the climate change which brings about uncertainty availability of water and the agriculture outputs. The NAPA aims to identify and assess the impacts of climate change on community livelihoods and prioritise responsive adaptation activities for implementation in the vulnerable zones.</p>
Revised Protocol on shared water courses	<p>Regional instrument for managing the shared river basins for equitable use and sharing of benefits for the shared rivers</p>	<p>Addresses the advancement of the SADC agenda of regional integration and poverty reduction. Food security is core to poverty reduction</p>
Orange-Senqu River Commission Agreement (ORASECOM)	<p>Focus at the basin level or Senqu river basin. The Agreement taps from the Revised Protocol above but customise it to the four member states sharing the Senqu-Orange river</p>	<p>Same as above but with focus on member states of ORASECOM (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa)</p>
Water Act 2008	<p>Legal instrument aimed to provide for the management, protection, conservation development and sustainable utilization of water resources and amongst others gives the Minister to regulate water uses</p>	<p>Use of water for agricultural purposes i.e. irrigation would be informed by quantity and quality of water provided by the sector including the water use permit for such works</p>
Lesotho Water and Sanitation Policy (2007)	<p>Policy objectives entail proper and sustainable management of country's water resources with seven policy statements embracing, management, water supply, environment, stakeholder involvement, transboundary and</p>	<p>Calls for integrated approach in planning of water resources management with all sectors having a stake including irrigation under agriculture sector.</p> <p>Expand water and sanitation distribution services to households and other</p>

	<p>institutional frameworks for policy implementation</p> <p>Develop water infrastructure for communities that have no access to water, including installation of communal taps, well protection and water harvesting techniques</p> <p>Enforce standards for construction of VIP latrines</p> <p>Encourage community lead sanitation initiatives</p> <p>Encourage proper washing of hands using different mechanisms</p>	institutions
Long Term Water and Sanitation Strategy	Operationalises the Lesotho Water and Sanitation Policy and deals with the “how part” and investment costs thereto	Food Security is subject to proper management of the catchment. Arresting erosion and land degradation will assist in the productive agriculture. This is well articulated in the Strategy with involvement of multi stakeholders including Agriculture sector
Environmental Act 2008	An Act to make the provision for protection and management of the environment and conservation and sustainable utilisation of natural resources of Lesotho and for connected purposes.	The protection of environment is complementary to food security as the healthy or near pristine environment provides conducive conditions for crop production
Agricultural Sector Strategy 2003	Provides the statement of government policy in the agricultural sector based on national strategic principles provided by the National Vision.	Guides on the strategic direction of achieving food security based on identified constraints in the sector
Lesotho Food Security Policy	To guide on framework of food security including the institutional structures to address food security	An overall policy which includes the sector stakeholders towards common destiny of food security
Lesotho Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategies (draft)	Food and Nutrition Security are essential for meeting basic human needs.	Water deficiency affects food and nutrition security
Nation Action Plan for	Based on the agricultural development component of the	Set the time based and costed targets on five identified

Food Security (NAPFS)	Poverty Reduction Strategy as set out in the Agricultural Sector Strategy and National Food Security Policy	programmes to achieve goal and objectives of the Food Security Policy
Lesotho CAADP Compact	The GOL officially launched the CAADP process in May 2011 and subsequent establishment of a CAADP Country Team. In November/December 2011 Cabinet approved a draft of the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) which outlined the national sector priority pillars. This paved the way for the formulation of the CAADP Compact which was signed on 4 September 2013. Upon signing of Compact a roadmap was drawn for the formulation the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP), with support from NEPAD, FAO and other organizations	CAADP is a NEPAD initiative that aims to address the constraints in the food security including developing investment plans for member states.
National Agriculture and food security Investment Plan (NAIP 2015 -2019)	Was developed as a CAADP initiative elaborated above.	The NAIP has not yet been approved by the Lesotho Government. Nonetheless item 2.6.5 page 37 clearly outlines how endowed is the country with water resources but out of 12,500 hectares of irrigable land, less than 2,600 is under irrigation
National Policy for integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (2013)	Improve children's development through ECCD based on multi-sectorial approach (nutrition, immunisation, socialisation, education support) Extend coverage of reception classes Strengthen curriculum and quality of teachers (primary, secondary and high school levels) and reduce dropout, especially in rural Lesotho.	Improve access and quality of education
School Feeding Policy	Expand early childhood feeding services Feeding services will be provided for all day care services, preschools and reception year classes serving	

	impoverished, vulnerable and marginalised children. Special training and monitoring services will be given to food handlers	
National Guidelines on Infant and Young Child Feeding (2013) Lesotho National Guidelines for Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (2007) Lesotho Nutrition and Poverty Programme (2002) Lesotho National Plan of Action for Nutrition (1997) Health Sector Strategic Plan 2012/13 – 2016/17	Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) with emphasis on first 1,000 days Management of Acute malnutrition Community Health and Nutrition promotion Develop National Nutrition Policy Develop National Food Fortification Legislation Integrate nutrition monitoring in the HMIS Enhance capacity of the national nutrition coordination body and Nutrition section at large Improve Antenatal Care services including the essential nutrition packages for pregnant and lactating women	Reduce malnutrition (stunting, wasting, underweight) Reduce maternal mortality rates
HIV and AIDS Policy (2006) National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2011/12 – 2015/16	Integrate nutrition support Support and empowering mechanisms for OVCs	Increase coverage and quality of treatment Improve efficiency and sustainability of mitigation programmes

2.2 Water Sector

With the advent of new government after the elections held in May 2015, the water sector was upgraded to being the Ministry on its own and separated from energy sector and meteorology. This gave water a good leverage for getting the sole focus for budgeting and cabinet meetings. The water sector in Lesotho consists of service providers who are guided by the regulator and the government departments that oversee the management and development of country's water resources.

Lesotho is well endowed with relatively abundant water resources, however, the amount of water available changes markedly, spatially, seasonally and annually. The distribution within the country is far from uniform with the north-western lowlands and majority of the highlands receiving more precipitation and water as compared to the southern parts of the country.

Figure 1 – Metolong Dam constructed to ensure reliability of supply within lowlands

Widespread land degradation in Lesotho, caused mainly by inappropriate range management practices has led to decreasing agricultural yields and diminishing grazing lands, which both impact negatively on food security for the majority of the population. Soil erosion and eventually siltation also affects ecological functions of wetlands which are sources of rivers and this has an impact on availability and quality of water for different uses. Also sedimentation decreases the lifespan of dams, thus exacerbating the availability of water for different uses.

2.3 Agriculture Sector

Agriculture is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. The ministry is committed to provision of dynamic and pro-active leadership in participatory development and implementation of policies and programs with farmers, provision of expert advisory agricultural services to the farming community and agro-businesses leading to sustainable agriculture for the achievement of food security.



Around 80% of the households in Lesotho live in rural areas and 70% derive all, or part, of their livelihoods from agriculture. Although the contribution of

agriculture to GDP has declined over time, from around 20% thirty years ago to around 8% now, it still remains an important sector for increasing employment and rural incomes. The crops and livestock sector contribute 2.3% and 4.1% to GDP respectively.

Despite all the efforts by the Ministry to achieve food security, the sector is not spared from the constraints to meet the intended production targets. Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) 2015 results indicates a deterioration in food security situation with population in need from 447,760 in the previous season to 463,936 this season (increase in prevalence from 26% to 33%)

These are below outlined as captured in the Agricultural sector strategy:

- **Limited availability of arable land:** Although the total area of the country is about 3 million hectares', less than 10% is classified as arable. This implies an availability of less than a hectare of arable land per rural family.
- **Declining availability of arable land:** The factors of urban encroachment, soil degradation and soil erosion have significant impact on availability of suitable crop land
- **Declining fertility of arable land:** Even in those areas where crops can still be grown, fertility is declining. In livestock areas there is a chronic over grazing in the rangelands. The fact that marginal land is often used for agriculture also aggravates the already poor condition of soils
- **Climate and control of water:** the spatial and temporal distribution of rain is very uncertain to sustain healthy agricultural activity. Moreover, it is not just the spatial distribution of rain that is a problem but also the problem that water does not always collect in places where is immediately accessible for agriculture. This in turn makes it necessary to build infrastructure that will be able to move the water from where it is to where it is needed. Climate change also adds to the uncertainty.
- **Poor animal and crop husbandry:** There is a long tradition of farming and livestock production in the country, but there has been poor transfer of knowledge about more modern crop and animal production techniques to farmers

- **Poor supply and use of agricultural inputs:** This shortcoming is attributed to :
 - Unavailability at the right time and place
 - Lack of working capital to pay for them
 - Inadequate knowledge on the best way of using them
- **Marketing:** Rural market facilities are very poorly developed in Lesotho. There are few traders who work in rural areas and market infrastructure, including roads, storage facilities and even market places at times, have not been established.
- **Crop and livestock theft:** The problem of theft of both crops and livestock is rife and becomes a serious disincentive to production.

HIV/AIDS: The impact is on labour availability, mobility and productivity. The disease has both qualitative and quantitative effect on agricultural production. Nonetheless, HIV/AIDS pandemic affects all the sectors. HIV and AIDS and TB are both major threats to Lesotho's development. Progress has been substantial on HIV treatment coverage (both for antiretroviral treatment –ART and prevention of mother to child transmission –PMTCT) very slow for the other HIV related indicators and stagnant on TB reduction. (LDHS 2007 and preliminary results of LDHS 14) The HIV pandemic has complicated the food production availability and household earnings. It has further increased the burden of providing adequate nutrition to vulnerable groups in households. The disease has significantly affected productivity and efficiency levels due to high absenteeism and mortality. In the rural areas HIV and AIDS is the major hindrance to food security. One in five household still does not have access to clean drinking water (SDG 2). Portable water is important as it is required for food preparation, cleaning of utensils and personal hygiene and thus is essential in ensuring good nutrition and health.

2.3.1 Agricultural programmes

Table 2 – List of on –going Agricultural programmes

Programme	Objectives	Outputs/activities in relation of Food Security
Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)	Commits the country to achieving the goal of raising agricultural productivity by 6% per annum and ensuring that 10 percent of the national budget is allocated to agriculture	National Investment Plan for Agriculture developed (the plan is not yet approved by the government)
Smallholder Agricultural Development Programme (SADP)	Supports smallholder farmers in exploiting opportunities and increasing productivity, as well as diversifying into market oriented agriculture.	Irrigated vegetable production, wool, mohair, dairy and poultry hatcheries
Emergency and Resilience Programme (ERP)	Assists 18,500 vulnerable farming families across the country with agricultural inputs, and support the Ministry’s extension staff with training on conservation agriculture, home gardening and nutrition.	Home gardening and training of extension staff on conservation agriculture and nutrition
Wool and Mohair Promotion Project (WAMPP)	To boost resilience of poor wool and mohair producers to the adverse effects of climate change in the Mountain and Foothills regions of Lesotho, while generating higher incomes and sustainable improved livelihoods	The rural economies in the country are largely dependent on livestock. The quality wool and mohair exports address issues of poverty and ability to buy agricultural inputs.

2.3.2 Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategies (FNPS)

Rationale behind the Lesotho Food and Nutrition Policy Strategy (draft)

Nutritional well being of the population is a reflection of the performance of its social economic sectors. Water sector is one of those sectors. A well nourished healthy workforce is a precondition for sustainable development. It is therefore important

that the majority of the population are in good health and have good nutritional status in order for them to participate actively and hence contribute effectively to national development. Better nutrition outcomes are essential for attainment of the Lesotho Vision 2020 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore strong advocacy and programmatic space is required in the area of nutrition. Commitment and leadership on nutrition by the government, donors and partner agencies needs to be raised higher. There is a need to prioritise nutrition on the development agenda and to negotiate for appropriate space and resource allocation to address under-nutrition and its underlying factors.

Despite the existence of a number of Food and Nutrition programmes and interventions in Lesotho, the nutritional status of vulnerable groups (young children, pregnant and lactating mothers, the adolescents and youth, orphans and the elderly) has remained below international standards. In particular chronic malnutrition (stunting) remains persistently prevalent in Lesotho, with devastating consequences. There is a clear need to not only address dietary intake and diseases but also to consider measures for water partnering because of the cross cutting nature of water with other sectors and for achievement of sustainable Food and Nutrition Security.

It is for this reason that [country nutrition task Force and team experts from various sectors have developed Food and Nutrition policy and Strategy through coordination of Food and Nutrition Coordination Office (FNCO) as an update to earlier nutrition guidelines and national plans for the country. Lesotho Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategy (LFNPS) draft involve and guide all stakeholders involved in nutrition in the country to ameliorate current nutrition problems and put in place appropriate intervention measures. It provides a framework for implementation of multi-sectoral programmes with set targets and clear measurable nutrition objectives.

The decision to put in place such a framework to guide action on nutrition is based on the following considerations:

- Nutrition problems including macronutrient and micronutrient (hidden hunger) deficiencies are greatly affecting the poor and vulnerable population in Lesotho.
- Under-nutrition results in poor growth in young children with impaired cognitive development; impaired or difficulties in reproduction and impaired physical work capacity in adults.
- Over-nutrition brings about other diet related Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart diseases also affects work productivity and country development efforts.
- Poor dietary intake

- The causes of malnutrition are multiple and complex, requiring multiple partners/players which in turn demands for an effective coordination mechanism.
- Evidence across the world has demonstrated that improvements in nutrition will bring benefits in several ways. Good nutrition is fundamental for better health, human development, human capital formation and economic growth.
- The Government of Lesotho (GoL) has robust policies and strategies in place on reducing poverty, food insecurity, improving access to quality health care and social services. These initiatives have taken into consideration gender and community participation issues. However, in order to realise desired nutrition outcomes careful planning of interventions is required.

The Lesotho Food and Nutrition Policy Strategy draft is on its final stage as it has already been submitted to a panel of cabinet ministers and parliamentarians to discuss it and therefore adopt it.

2.3.3 National Development Framework for Lesotho Relevant to Nutrition

In the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) for Lesotho that covers the period 2012/13 until 2016/17 the main indicator for success is that economic growth translates into sustained employment opportunities.

2.3.4 Causes of malnutrition in Lesotho (using conceptual models)

The UNICEF conceptual model (fig.4) as developed in the eighties of the past century remains to be the main framework for explaining the causative factors and links at different levels of operation that need to be addressed by any initiatives directed at curtailing the vicious cycle of poverty, malnutrition and disease. It also demonstrated the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary principles to be applied for the success of any nutrition program. As shown in the diagram, an individual's nutrition status is directly related to both diet and health. For this reason nutrition security is concerned with the utilisation of food obtained and its accessibility. To make things even worse, Lesotho, similar to many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa is facing a double burden of malnutrition. This means there is high under-nutrition but at the same time also a high level of over-nutrition among population.

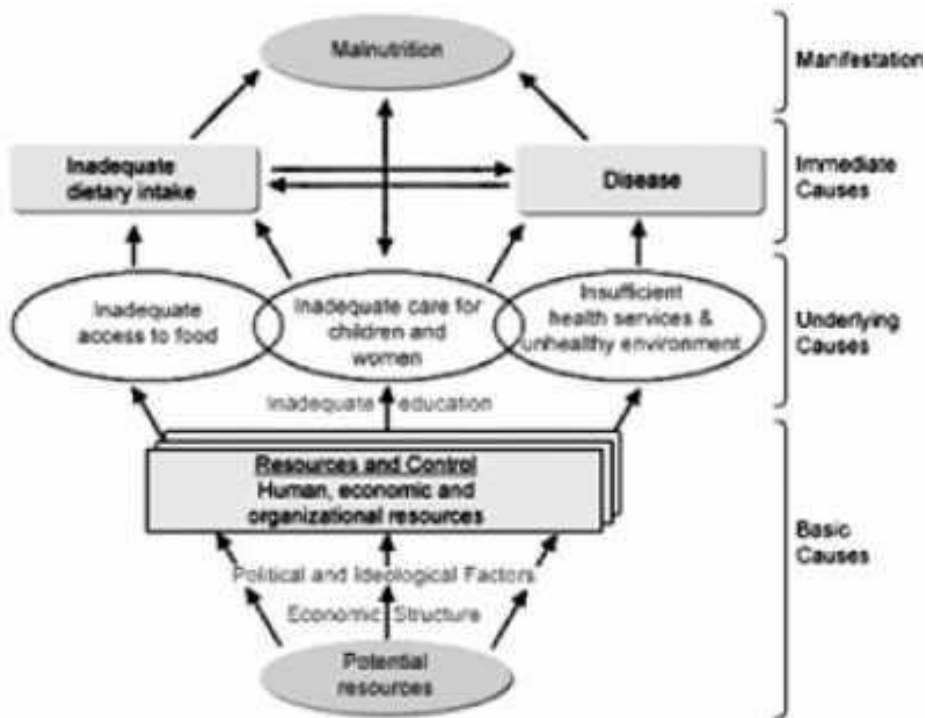


Figure 2: UNICEF Conceptual Framework on Nutrition

Since the early nineties, awareness on the importance of nutrition as a key factor for ensuring healthy and productive lives has increased considerably at both global and national levels. A series of key events and publications marks how nutrition as a core policy issue has evolved over the years.

2.3.4 Water deficiency affects Food and nutrition Security

Relationship between water, food and nutrition security | Lesotho is statistically significant. Most of the rural households depend on the immediate environment for their livelihoods including water for home use, food production, gathering wild foods as well as source of firewood for cooking. Much of the land is grassland which makes it difficult for households to access firewood, thereby increasing the workload. In the same vein accessing water particularly in the highlands is a problem. Households have to walk fairly long distances to water points. The terrain in some rural areas makes it difficult to produce crops such as the much needed cereals like sorghum, maize and wheat. The situation has been further aggravated with the effect of climate change, which has impacted greatly on food production due to unpredictable weather patterns. The responsibility of providing care to the family lies heavily on women. Women can provide good care only if they are provided with necessary resources such as water, firewood (good forestation) land, etc. and power to control these resources.

1. The UN Standing Committee on Nutrition proposed the following definition “Food and Nutrition Security exists when all people at all times have physical, social and

economic access to food, which is consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life.

2. Operational bottlenecks and challenges for nutrition programmes (key gaps for nutrition programmes)

The experiences on the MDGs have shown that Lesotho is far from realising the set targets. The reasons for this to a large extent are related to the specific country context marked by high poverty levels combined with a high prevalence of HIV and AIDS and TB. On the other hand, there are weak social services such as agriculture, education, primary health care delivery and geographical coverage of safe water and sanitation supply on the other.

2.4 Food Security Conditions in Lesotho

Agriculture (still engaging over half of the population but mainly subsistence farming) has been declining in terms of its contribution to the national economy.

In rural Lesotho, food security conditions are linked to the seasonality patterns of agriculture. In the winter months, May to July the supply of maize (the main crop is at its maximum while in the summer months (November up to January) access to cereals usually is more restricted. This is why the summer months are sometimes called 'the hungry months' although other foods like fruits and vegetables actually are more abundant in summer than in winter. In this respect, it is relevant to refer to the annual Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) reports that provide information on the estimated number of people in need of humanitarian assistance during the summer months. Generally the most affected zones are the southern lowlands, the mountains and the peri-urban areas.

2.5 Challenges faced by Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security in Lesotho

LVAC estimates on number of people in need of humanitarian assistance and also with reference from the El Nino-induced drought briefing –February 2016 are as follows:

Over 534,000 people are at risk of food insecurity up to June 2016 (one in every four people in Lesotho) it is predicted that the number is likely to go up beyond 725,000 people after June 2016.

Over 377,000 people require immediate food or cash assistance to enable them to access food. From the market as well as livelihood support to resuscitate own food production.

Rangeland and water availability for livestock is poor and livestock conditions have deteriorated with reported drought related deaths in Senqu valley and lowlands mainly.

FAO needs US\$ 7 million to assist drought affected people through coordinated support to agriculture and livestock production, nutrition, social protection and resilience –building interventions. Of this US\$ 1.1 million has already been pledged by ECHO.

2.6 *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene*

Access to and use of safe water, sanitation facilities and good hygiene have potential to positively impact nutritional outcomes by addressing both the direct and underlying causes of malnutrition. In Lesotho access to improved drinking water is ensured for 82% of the population while about 55% of households have access to improved sanitation (mainly latrines). Lesotho also has high rates of open defaecation (OD) which is related to poor nutrition outcomes. Therefore, the policy aims to link with the water and sanitation sector to advocate for WASH infrastructure and promote intervention that promote use and awareness on WASH practices. These essential WASH practices have been shown to effectively reduce prevalence of diarrhoea, a major contributor to child malnutrition.

Policy objective:

To ensure that all households and other institutions in Lesotho can live in conditions of good environmental health.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Promote safety of drinking water including commercial bottled water.
2. Promote essential WASH practices (hand washing with water and soap at critical times, treatment and safe storage of drinking water, and sanitary disposal of human faeces).
3. Promote water protection interventions.
4. Advocate for water, sanitation and hygiene distribution services to households and other institutions.

Second international Conference on Nutrition, Rome, November 2014 states that coordinated action among different actors, across all relevant sectors at

international, regional, national and community levels needs to be supported through cross cutting and coherent policies, programmes and initiatives including social protection to address the multiple burdens of malnutrition and to promote sustainable food systems.

Second international Conference on Nutrition at Rome, 19-21 November 2014; the presence of ministers and representatives of the members of the Food and Agriculture Organisations of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) jointly organised by FAO and WHO is witnessed by the commitments they agreed upon such like reaffirming the right to everyone to have access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food. The driving force in this regard is access to clean water.

The conference also recognised that the root causes of and the factors to malnutrition are complex and multidimensional. That malnutrition is often aggravated by poor infant and young child feeding and care practices, poor sanitation and hygiene, lack of safe drinking water, etc.

3. Situation analysis at the Country level based on High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) report

3.1 Promote sustainable management and conservation of ecosystems for the continued availability of water and reliability of water for Food Security and Nutrition

As mentioned in the constraints for the Agriculture sector to meet the full production potential, land degradation takes first priority in the water sector.

This has been highlighted in preparing the Basin level Integrated Water Resources Management Plan. The initiatives to address the ecosystems for continued availability of water entail the wetlands protection and



Figure 2 – Rehabilitated wetlands at Motete part of Water Sector Pilot project



conservation. The water sector is currently under the German assistance piloting the conservation and management to wetlands in the north eastern

part of the country. Lesotho Rivers originated in these sensitive ecosystems and are degrading due to amongst others unsustainable grazing of livestock, road construction and burning of rangelands. This initiative is undertaken by sectors including Range, Environment, Local Government, CBO's and Chiefs. This initiative though is a pilot has realized the successes by appreciation by resource users and can be piloted in other places.

a. Improve coherence between water and food security related policies, strategies and plans

The Water and Sanitation Policy aptly calls for integrated approach in the management of water resources. The policy has further been beefed with the Water and Sanitation Strategy that sets the implementation road map for the Policy. The Strategy proposes the management of water at the basin to sub-basin by the Community councils with the sector expertise as advisors than implementers. The formation of the catchment management committee calls for involvement of agriculture sector where the land for productive uses like irrigation could be highlighted including the availability in both quantity and quality of water could be integrated in the catchment management plan. However, the Strategy is new and the mechanisms including the resourcing for the implementation is lacking.

b. Achieve equal access to water for all, prioritise the most vulnerable and marginalized at all ages and empower women and youth

The Water and Sanitation Policy addresses this explicitly under Policy statement 2 : Water Supply and Sanitation, objective 4 viz “ *To promote equity in access to water supply and sanitation services taking into account vulnerable and marginalized groups including women, girls and all those affected by HIV/AIDS*” Similarly, The Agriculture National Action Plan for Food Security (NAPFS) clearly depicts consideration of the marginalized under Food Security Objectives (Main Food Security strategies)

c. Improve the efficiency and diversity of water use and productivity of agricultural systems for Food Security and Nutrition

This is a challenge area in the two sectors (Agriculture and Water). The coordination and information sharing between the sectors is weak and the need to highlight this link at the high level is necessary. This is evidenced by planning of water infrastructure projects by sector. That inputs from the Agriculture in benefitting from the large dams infrastructure planning is weak. This could be an area where strengthening is necessary. Nonetheless, Ministry

of Natural Resources this is well captured in the NAPFS as the related institution.

d. Manage risk and increase resilience to water variability for Food Security and Nutrition

Water sector (Department of Water Affairs) monitors the surface and groundwater resources. It has the database of all the springs in the country. As such information for water needs is readily available. This information can assist in forecasting the crop yields and/or plan the resilience measures where the water resources are dwindling due to drought situations or destructive floods. But as aforesaid in 3.4, this linkage in information sharing with Agriculture sector is weak or lacking.

e. Develop and share knowledge, technologies and tools related to water for Food Security and Nutrition

The status of this recommendation by CFS is similar to 3.5 above. The need to share reports from the regional and national level on the agricultural issues could inform the water sector on seeming causes of production where this is highlighted. Similarly Agriculture could be well informed of the state of water resources, a report produced annually by the water sector.

f. Foster inclusive and effective collaboration and national and local governance on water for Food Security and Nutrition.

This is the critical recommendation that can address some of the shortcomings in coordinating the two sectors. The water sector has an institutionalized Water and Sanitation Sector Coordination Meetings (WSSCM) which is held once in three months. WSSCM invites all the key stakeholders including the funding agencies. This is where the programmes and progress of the sector are reported. This could be the best avenue for Agriculture sector to collaborate with water sector.

g. Promote the full and meaningful implementation of international human rights obligations and instruments as they relate to water and Food Security and Nutrition.

This recommendation is well enshrined in the sectoral policies and Acts

4. Recommendations and conclusions

- a. **Coordination – Policy Level:** Generally the policies and strategies for the Agriculture and Water sectors are crisp and address the well researched constraints in their developments. However, the necessary link by two Ministries is direly lacking. The LTWS Strategy calls for management and planning of water resources at the sub-catchment level including the formation of Catchment Management Joint Committee (CMJC). It is this body that integrates Agricultural land uses entailing the suitable areas for irrigation. Similarly the Water sector would assist with water resources availability in terms of quality and quantity. Indeed there are other sectors that will add value to these sectors which include Environment, Energy and local government.
- b. **Coordination – Project Level:** Development of water infrastructure falls within the mandate of water sector. Large water infrastructure projects like Lesotho Highlands Water Project and Metolong should be undertaken within the principles of IWRM. Markedly, the Agriculture component is often overlooked when these projects are developed. Opportunities to include irrigation potential in the feasibility stages are lost, compromising the food security.
- c. **Information sharing:** Technical reports like State of Water Resources Report should be shared with agriculture sector both the presentation of the report meetings and the actual report. This would assist agriculture to be apprised of the water uses and the demands thereto. Similarly reports outlining the agricultural production forecasts should be shared with water sector. Further, avenues of sharing information could include amongst other web-sites, electronic mails and hard copies. Sectors like Agrometeorology should also be involved in sharing of information.
- d. **Policies/Plan delays for approval by Government:** Delays in approving the well researched plans and strategies are some of the bottlenecks maiming the implementation. The Cooperating Partners take keen interest to assist the policies that are approved by government. Some of the said policies/plans include Long Term Water and Sanitation Strategy for water sector and National Agriculture and food security Investment Plan (NAIP 2015 -2019) under CAADP for agriculture.
- e. **High Level Water and Food Security Forum:** This forum may consist of Ministers for water, agriculture and environment. The forum will give political

direction where the implementers at the technical level will take up the decisions of the forum. This could be in the situation where emergency situation is eminent caused by lack of water (drought) or floods and impacting on food security.

5. Discussions and recommendations emanating from the National Stakeholder Consultation workshop

A national workshop of some stakeholders in the country was held to solicit their inputs in the initiative. Participants were drawn from different organisations: government, private sector, NGOs, CBOs, farmers. These are the discussions and recommendations from that workshop.

Wetlands are crucial as water sources are on a serious decline. If we have to have water in the future some drastic measures need to be taken presently. There are projects to rehabilitate wetlands but that is not enough it has to spread countrywide. Wetlands protection should be the focus. Damage caused by lack of vegetation cover is a major challenge as grazing controls are a major task as targets are set without understanding. Agriculture sector should take the major challenge they face with irrigation if there is a challenge in this regard. Catchment basins have to be protected to secure wetlands a consultancy is essential on how to manage catchment basins and how to implement such an endeavour.

Human Rights on land use is dubious and land holding rights has for sometime been not indicated by BOS this is challenging as it impacts on water. Local Authorities in regard to Councillors' role is a major challenge as they allocate land rights in areas not demarcated for habitation. Coordination in their land allocation is crucial for better land management. A concern was raised over councillors as to whether they take advice or not; whether Basotho elect them as knowledgeable or eloquent individuals. Responsibilities of local authorities are not clarified and the system of local government has not been properly placed.

There is no Nutrition policy though Agriculture policy is present. Water is critical in our lives and water harvesting needs promotion. There is need for supply of clean water and WASH has been established for the sole purpose. Some of the policies are very old and need revision. There is need to revise the Food Security and Nutrition Security Policies.

Agriculture sector has received support often but as the initiatives are not commercial once the support ends the initiative collapses. Thus the initiative became a non-starter. The support to agriculture sector must be business oriented.

Currently dam construction is not in cultivation areas, so there is need to invest in canals to convey water to those areas or invest in wind pumps to access water for irrigation for commercialized farming. Feasibility and design of such dams should enable them to capture sediment and convey fertile water as commercial driver. Turbines powered by solar or wind energy can also be used to push water so that gravitational irrigation can be implemented. Drought impacts agricultural produce thus need for investing in multipurpose dams; fish farming and irrigation.

A meeting of all stakeholders is essential to discuss the current problems of environmental conservation. The minister should invite all stakeholders to this important meeting.

Recommendations

With the view that we need to conserve water for future generations the meeting concluded that priority one is catchment management and its implementation.

Drastic measures are needed to conserve wetlands, to commercialise agriculture, to protect biodiversity and engagement in tree plantation to curb land degradation as erosion is wreaking havoc throughout the country. The National Action Plan for Orange-Senqu River Basin in Lesotho published by ORASECOM has recommended that proper management of water is basic for the nation. We need to construct multipurpose dams for agriculture and construct water highways and storage towers for maximum usage.

The Decentralisation Policy should be reviewed so that there is harmonious land use and planning, there is need for Institutional arrangement in catchment management. All stakeholders should share and dissemination information and strive as one to reach the same goal.

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