

Working with Networks in Lesotho

Skillshare International Lesotho has developed a long-term relationship with the Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN), an organisation working to build capacity within civil society organisations in Lesotho. The main purpose of LCN is to provide supportive services to the NGO community in Lesotho through capacity building, coordinating activities and representing its members.

Representing over 100 NGOs, the organisation works through 6 commissions, one of which being the Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resource Commission, that has a core of 15 NGOs interested in work of that nature. Since 2003, Skillshare International has placed 2 development workers (DWs) with this commission to develop effective programmes in food security, environmental justice, forestry information, land reclamation and related law and policy formulation.



Photo shows Lesotho Council of NGOs project.

Justin Sargent completed his placement in January 2005, when Tracy Irvine joined the LCN. Tseliso Tsoeu, who works with Skillshare International's DWs, says *"technically the DWs have provided us with skills we did not have; writing proposals, action planning and environmental justice skills. More time is now spent on planning, which makes implementation easy. It gives us a sense of achievement to what we are doing."* One of the commission's successes has been a 2-year food security project delivered by 9 NGOs on the ground, training trainers within NGOs to teach conservation farming and homestead gardening to vulnerable groups. Tracy Irvine is currently working with LCN's information department to assist in improving the communication of the wealth of LCN activities.

Through grants obtained from the Make Poverty History campaign, LCN is working with 3 NGOs to co-ordinate a study on the impact of the Multifibre Agreement of Women and Children in Lesotho. Mrs Pholo, a member of the Women's Federation of Lawyers, said *"We are concerned about the welfare of our children as the leaders of tomorrow; with the study we would like to find out what the impact of textile industry has been on women factory workers because where a woman suffers, a child suffers the most."*