

EVALUATION OF HOME GARDENS PROJECT REPORT

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**Report produced for UNICEF and Department of Field Services of the
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.**

November 2009

Lesotho

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank all those Support Groups and Young Farmers Club members supported by UNICEF under the Home Gardens Project who were interviewed during the course of the study. They gave freely of their time and shared with us the relevant information and knowledge about the Project. We would also like to thank all donors and project staff whom we visited and who also gave freely their time, knowledge and views on the study.

We want to extend our sincere thanks to UNICEF and staff, who as the donor has made it possible for this project to exist. UNICEF also gave us the opportunity, guidance and support to carry out the study. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, especially the Department of Field Services staff as the implementing agency, were of great assistance to us in providing their opinions, knowledge, views and their valuable time on the project. Without the input from the staff of UNICEF and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security this study would not have been possible.

Lastly, we would like to thank our Research team members who assisted in conducting field work, data capturing and entry. Their contributions made it possible to produce a report which we believe will be of value to the funder of this noble gesture, which should have a positive impact to the life of the beneficiaries the OVC, PLWAs and other vulnerable groups.

Acronyms

AA	Agricultural Assistant
ADP	Area Development Programme
AEO	Area Extension Officer
AHS	Assumption High School
ATO	Area technical Officer
BAG	Berea Agricultural Group
CHATT	Church HIV and AIDS Task Teams
CBO	Community-based Organization
CCC	Community Care Coalition
CF	Care Facilitator
C-SAFE	Consortium for Southern African Food Security Emergency
CSC	Community Service Centres
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DHO	District Horticultural Officer
DIO	District Irrigation Officer
DNO	District Nutrition Officer
DPPA	Department of Planning and Policy Analysis
ED	Extension Division
EU	European Union

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GOL	Government of Lesotho
HGI	Home Gardens Initiative
HGNP	Home Gardens Nutrition Programme
HGP	Home Gardens Project
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Field and Life Skills
KGP	Kalahari Garden Project
LHDA	Lesotho Highlands Development Authority
LRAP	Livelihoods Recovery through Agriculture Programme
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MDP-ESA	Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern Africa
MLG	Ministry of Local Government
MOVE	Mountains Orphans and Vulnerable Children Empowerment Project
NANAFS	Nazareth and Nthabiseng Food Security Project
ND	Nutrition Division
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NUL	National University of Lesotho
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PLWAs	People Living With HIV/AIDS
RSDA	Rural Self-Help Development Association
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community

SADPMA	Sustainable Agricultural Development Programme for the Mountain Areas
SANReMP	Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Programme
SMARTD	Southern Mountain Association for Rural Development and Transformation
SCL	Send-A-Cow Lesotho
SCP	Secure the Child Project
SEED	Schools Environmental Education and Development
SG	Support Group
SP	service provider
SRDP	Semongkong Rural Development Project
SSIAP	Small Scale Intensive Agricultural Production
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VGL	Village Garden Leader
WFP	World Food Programme
WVL	World Vision Lesotho
YFC	Young Farmers Club

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Executive Summary

The Home Gardens Project (HGP) is being funded by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and is being implemented by the Department of Field Services (DFS) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS). The HGP distributes garden tools and seeds to Support Groups (SGs), Young Farmers' Clubs (YFCs) and schools who in turn produce vegetables for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) and People Living with AIDS (PLWAs). This report presents findings of the evaluation of the HGP whose purpose was to determine the effectiveness of the project as well as learn from other organizations that are implementing or supporting activities towards food security which can be used as promising practices. The evaluation methodology consisted of literature review, interviews with Key Informants and stakeholders, quantitative and qualitative techniques.

The initial target of the project was to reach 300 community based organizations. To date, the project has reached an average of 90 YFCs and 280 SGs which shows that the target of reaching 300 community gardens per year has been reached and surpassed. It is estimated that the HGP benefits just over 20,000 OVCs, 4,500 PLWAs, 730 other vulnerable groups in communities and 150 OVCs in schools per year. Most of the vegetables produced by SGs and YFCs are given to OVCs and PLWAs. Other beneficiaries include the destitute, needy, and disabled members of the community. The surplus vegetables when available are sold and seeds/groceries bought for OVCs and PLWAs.

Even though when asked about the impact of the project, the OVCs and PLWAs said that the project is having a positive impact in that OVCs and PLWAs get a variety of vegetables and nutritious meals, in reality the project is having a limited impact based on the reports from the primary beneficiaries. OVCs reported that they do not receive vegetables regularly as most indicated that they receive vegetables once a year while some reported receiving once in two years. In addition findings from the beneficiary survey reveal that the frequency of distributing vegetables to beneficiaries is low. The other major problem identified as a reason for the project for having limited impact is that its efforts are spread all over the country and as a result it is not effective as it would be if it was focused and concentrated in specific areas which would make it

easy to manage and monitor. The HGP supplements other interventions like the World Food Programme (WFP) which provides beneficiaries with maize meal, pulses and cooking oil. Some of the positive impacts of the project that would be realized if the production was good and the supply to the beneficiaries regular would be: (i) boosting of the immune system of the PLWAs by eating more vegetables which improves nutrition, (ii) when there is excess production, vegetables can be sold to purchase other necessities for the OVCs and PLWAs such as groceries and toiletries. Problems encountered by SGs and YFCs are members who do not attend meetings or who resign from their organizations, members internal conflicts, and not finding it easy to identify HIV positive people as people in general do not like to disclose their status because of the negative stigma attached to the disease. The top most activities that the groups/clubs felt should be implemented in order to tackle the problem of food insecurity were piggery production, poultry production, and tailoring and dressmaking in that order.

Findings also revealed that the management of the project is weak as there is no Memorandum of Understanding and no Project Steering Committee which has resulted in weak project management as the coordination of the project keeps on changing between the Extension and Nutrition Divisions of the DFS. There is little and weak monitoring of project's activities. The project is not included in MAFS project monitoring system and the Monitoring and Evaluation Section of UNICEF is not involved in the monitoring of the HGP. Selection of beneficiaries is not uniform. In some districts the number of members is one crucial criterion used and in some districts total membership in a group/club is used in deciding the number of garden kits to be given to a group/club. The distribution of garden kits has been problematic and this is mainly caused by communication breakdown between DFS and the District Agricultural Offices as in most cases the District Agricultural Offices are not aware of distribution arrangements. This has resulted in garden kits being distributed to inactive groups/clubs and beneficiaries being supplied with incomplete kits.

A significant proportion of SGs that received garden kits were not producing vegetables because they were inactive, some members were keeping the kits to themselves, the kits were delivered to chiefs/councilors who were refusing to pass them to SGs, and having no land to work on. A lot of YFCs that received garden kits are no longer active. The Nutrition Division of DFS conducted

some training for its staff that was to train SGs and YFCs. However, indications are that a lot of SGs and YFCs that received garden kits were not trained on vegetable production.

Most members of SGs produce vegetables on communal gardens while others produce on individual/private gardens. There are those that produce from both types of gardens and a small proportion that does not produce at all. Most communal gardens are not fenced while barbed wire is used by others. Private/individual gardens are fenced with barbed wire followed by both the diamond mesh and *lekhoakhoa*. A significant proportion of private gardens is not fenced. The common types of plots are the raised beds and terraced. Dam/pond and public tap are the most common sources of water for watering gardens. The majority of SGs and YFCs use watering cans and tins for watering. The commonly grown vegetables are cabbage and spinach. Drought, pests, insufficient water and trespass by animals are the major problems encountered in gardening.

A few organizations involved in food security activities were interviewed. The purpose of them being interviewed was to find out how they operated, problems they encounter in their operations and how they resolve them and more importantly what are some of their best practices which can be adopted by UNICEF. Most of these organizations are willing to collaborate with MAFS/UNICEF as they are already involved in similar interventions.

The major lesson learnt from the HGP is that the lack of Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF and MAFS led to the project implementation being fraught with problems which led to the project having limited impact on the ground. Although HGP achieved its objective of reaching 300 community based organizations by supplying them with garden kits, it has had limited impact on beneficiaries' lives. In conclusion, the HGP is considered relevant given the problems of food insecurity and HIV and AIDS that are facing the country. Key informants and stakeholders were of the opinion that the project should be strengthened and redesigned as to have maximum impact. Most of the problems within the project are on the implementing agency side, i.e. MAFS and it is believed that if MAFS streamlines its activities, a lot of problems currently hampering the implementation of the project can be done away with.

It is recommended that in order for the project to have an impact it should be redesigned in terms of signing a Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding should

include issues such as the roles of each agency involved, the period of the project, which Dept/Division with MAFs should manage and coordinate the project and agreed monitoring and evaluation system. There must be a uniform beneficiary selection in which MAFS staff at Resource Centers and local authorities (Chiefs and Councilors) are involved. Once the selection of beneficiaries has been completed based on the agreed criterion, the beneficiaries must be trained before given garden kits. At implementation level the project activities should be aligned with those of MAFS activities at district level and with those of other organizations with similar interventions. The project should be included in MAFS monitoring and evaluation system. UNICEF should consider partnering with other organizations with similar interventions.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Pervasive poverty, HIV and AIDs and food insecurity are the biggest threats to the survival and development of children in Lesotho. The 2004-05 Lesotho Demographic Health Survey indicates that over 23% of adults of between 15 and 45 years of age are infected with HIV, and the prevalence peaks at about 40% in women aged 25-29 and over 43% in women aged 35-39. The high prevalence rate of HIV has resulted in increased death toll which has in turn has eroded and in some cases depleted the safety nets of families and communities. The epidemic is having a wide-ranging impact on the country, one of which is the rapidly increasing number of orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC). According to UNAIDS figures (2005) it is estimated that there are already 180,000 orphaned children in the country and this figure is projected to rise to 210,000 by 2010. Generally orphans become heads of households and caregivers (often to their siblings and or to their parents). This means that they are burdened with among other adult chores and responsibilities, to provide food for those they care for.

At the same time Lesotho as a country is facing declining agricultural productivity which has resulted in food insecurity in the country. Food security affects OVCs more than other population groups and has resulted in chronic malnutrition. The latest national survey estimates stunting at around 40% which is considered to be critical and is closely associated with extreme vulnerability and poverty. It against this background that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other stakeholders have been implementing food security interventions in Lesotho and Home Gardens Project (HGP) is one of those. The HGP is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) through the Department of Field Services (DFS).

The HGP started in 2002 as the Home Gardens Initiative (HGI) funded by UNICEF and implemented by the Ministry and Local Government (MLG). The HGI provided garden tools and kitchen sets directly to OVCs. A kitchen set consisted of pots, bucket, knives, spoons, mugs, and plates. At this stage the National AIDS Commission (NAC) through District HIV/AIDS Forums and District Administrators were involved in identifying beneficiaries. The direct delivery of

garden tools and kitchen sets was stopped because of property grabbing by OVCs relatives and caregivers. A new approach which involved channeling garden tools and kitchen sets through community-based organizations was adopted. It was decided that Support Groups (SGs) were the best community-organization which can be used to assist OVCs as they were already assisting People Living with AIDS (PLWAs) and OVCs. The HGI was in 2005 transferred from MLG to MAFS. It is not clear why the initiative was transferred from MLG to MAFS. Under MAFS the initiative became to be known as the Home Gardens Project.

1.2 Project goal and objectives

The HGP is an intervention by UNICEF to support food security through distribution of garden tools and seeds to Support Groups (SGs) and Young Farmers' Clubs (YFCs). SGs and YFCs are provided garden kits in order to produce vegetables which are given to OVCs and PLWAs. For a description and composition of a garden kit see Annex one. The HGP covers all the ten districts of Lesotho.

The objectives of the project are as follows (UNICEF, 2006):

- To strengthen the capacity of the OVC, youth groups and communities.
- To increase the knowledge and transferable skills on issues such as cultivation, conservation, agricultural and environmental issues.
- To increase knowledge and skills of OVC, parents, caregivers and communities to cope with the emerging challenges compounded by food shortage.
- To promote entrepreneurial and innovation skills among children and communities.
- To promote self-sufficiency and to alleviate the burden of food purchase so as to concentrate available income on other pressing necessities.

1.3 Evaluation goal and objectives

UNICEF has been supporting the HGP for four years and it has been decided that a review of the project be undertaken with a view of determining the effectiveness of the intervention as well as learn from other organizations that are implementing or supporting activities towards food security which can be used as promising practices. The evaluation exercise also assesses what difference the project has made and generate lessons to inform future programming of UNICEF

activities in terms of support to food security initiatives. Specifically the terms of reference for the evaluation of HGP are as follows:

- To assess the process, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the garden tools, and seeds distribution as a food availability promotion mechanism especially for the OVC.
- To assess the effectiveness of the existing targeting mechanisms of the OVC including the delivery mechanisms.
- To determine the numbers of the OVC reached with this intervention, and the difference made in their food security situation. Has the initial project objective been realized? Has there been improvement of food diversification?
- To document lessons learnt from the implementation.
- To conduct a desk review of other existing interventions promoting food security and identify best practices.
- To explore opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with other stakeholders involved in food security.
- To determine whether the project was driven by the need on the ground, and what the communities or beneficiaries perceptions are relation to the project (quality, relevance etc). This evaluation should also seek input from communities in terms of what could work better.
- Based on the findings, to recommend strategic choices to be considered in relation to food security interventions.

1.4 Review of related research

The first step in the evaluation exercise involved reviewing all the literature pertinent to the HGP. A number of documents which included the UNICEF Country Programme Action Plan 2008-2012, Orphan and Vulnerable Children Home Gardens Funding Proposal, Field monitoring reports and other relevant documents were reviewed (Annex 3). The purpose of the literature review was to get the general background on such issues as the roles and responsibilities of the various institutions involved in HGP as well as assisting in the development and refinement of the data collection techniques to be employed. Examples from other Southern African Development (SDAC) countries are covered.

Traditionally Basotho grew sorghum and maize in the fields. These cereals were supplemented by gathering of wild fruits and vegetables (Sechaba Consultants, 2004). The tradition of homestead gardening was introduced by French missionaries when they arrived in Lesotho in 1833. Types of vegetables introduced and quickly adopted by Basotho included cabbage, spinach, Japanese radish, and potatoes. The uptake of homestead gardening started in the 1930s when the then Basutoland Department of Agriculture encouraged Basotho to establish back-yard gardens on land that was infertile as a result of soil erosion (Swallow and Mpemi, 1986). These were grown mainly for home consumption with surplus being sold to neighbors. Swallow and Mpemi (1986) found out that approximately 70% of all rural households in Lesotho produce some vegetables and 24% derive some income from their sale. The average per capita consumption of fresh vegetables was 21 kg/annum and 5 kg /annum for potatoes. Many studies have indicated that most households in Lesotho maintain home gardens (Bloem(1996), Lethola (2005) and Ndabe and Turner (2006)). According to FAO (2006) successful home gardening could significantly reduce the need for food aid in Lesotho in future.

1.4.1 Home gardens in Lesotho

Traditional (conventional) gardens

Traditional gardens are the original gardens which were first introduced by Missionaries and are usually operated by individual households. These gardens are raised in straight lines, neatly raked with no waste lying around. In most cases the gardens are located around the homestead with most of them being fenced. The fencing materials used include *Lekhoakha*¹, barbed wire, and diamond mesh wire. The fences are meant to keep out animals and wind. Phororo (1999) found out that the average homestead plot size was 647m² in summer and 503 m² in winter in Lesotho. The difference being that in summer more vegetables are grown as there is more rainfall. Rural homestead gardens tend to be bigger than urban gardens. Phororo (1999) reports that the major types of vegetables grown in Lesotho include cabbage, spinach, tomatoes, leafy greens (mustard, rape), carrots, potatoes, and pumpkins.

¹ This is made up of stocks/shrubs and other plants to fence the garden

The Home Gardens Nutrition Programme (HGNP) was a USAID-funded initiative implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and the USA Peace Corps. The overall purpose of the programme was to improve the food self-reliance status of participants in Lesotho's mountain areas through improved home gardens, nutrition training and increased community participation in development. An evaluation of the programme concluded that there had been considerable progress in vegetable production, both through increased numbers of households starting gardening and also through adoption of improved practices (Kumar, 1991). The principal recommendation was the adoption of the model gardener or Village Garden Leader (VGL) as part of the extension methodology, partly to overcome some of the problems related to inadequate Nutrition Assistants' coverage (Bloem and Howe, 1994). This resulted in the Small Scale Intensive Agricultural Production Project (SSIAPP) which was a successor of the HGNP implemented by the Nutrition Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. The goal of SSIAPP was to improve food security in Mokhotlong, Thaba Tseka and Qachas Nek districts. The project promoted both individual home gardens and communal gardens. The project's main thrust was to improve households' gardening skills, hence improve the production and improve the nutritional status of their livelihoods through the use of a larger variety of vegetables. The project was implemented by resident Peace Corp Volunteers who worked in the project villages, Ministry of Agriculture Nutrition Assistants and Village Garden Leaders. SSIAP best practices include the following:

- The use Village Garden Leader mode in which a village representative worked as a village extension agent in the absence of Peace Corps and Nutrition Assistants.
- Use of organic means of vegetable production and maintenance (use of manure, organic pesticides and cutworms collars and mulching)
- Use of low cost gravity-fed irrigation as well as double digging which conserves moisture.
- Use of Seed Order Form in which farmers ordered vegetable seeds from Maseru and other urban centers. Local traders were also encouraged to stock seeds as per needs of farmers.
- Liaised farmers with Agricultural Information Office so that farmers could obtain agricultural newsletters like Mobu ke Letlotlo

- Produced a field Agent Manual that covered technical gardening and nutrition information
- Farmers were given grants to erect market structures (small tin houses) where they sold their surplus vegetables and other wares.

In 2004 Sechaba Consultants undertook a study to find best practices in home gardens for the CARE Lesotho's Livelihoods Recovery through Agriculture Program (LRAP). Although LRAP promoted keyhole gardens, successful traditional gardens are also covered. Most of the traditional gardens visited were in the districts of Mafeteng, Mohale Hoek and Quthing with most keyhole gardens being found in Morija, Maseru district. The report identifies the following factors as contributing to successful home gardens:

- Personal interest and hard work
- Response to external shocks, e.g. retrenchments in RSA mines
- Getting extension advice and listening to Radio Lesotho farmers programme , “Re bitsa Lihaoi”
- Participating in study tours and district and central agricultural shows where farmers are able to see and learn what other farmers are doing
- Having reliable and accessible water supply

The Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA) carried out a further set of ‘good practice pilots on homestead gardening’ with LRAP funding in Mafeteng district. These pilots covered more detailed support for 11 good gardening practices identified by LRAP; a field trial of the use of effective micro-organisms; tests of various types of hafirs (pits or sunken tanks) for homestead water storage; and methods of food processing, preservation and marketing (TEBA, 2005). Ten participants consisting of nine households and one school, were selected. TEBA found the following as leading to best practices in home gardening:

- Use of Effective Micro-organism as fertilizer
- Use of hafirs and water tanks for homestead water storage
- Fenced gardens that provide windbreaks as well as protection against livestock
- Having enough garden tools which enable farmers to work their gardens timeously as they do not have to wait and borrow from neighbors
- Correct Plant Population
- Practicing crop rotation and succession planting
- Good weed and insect control
- Producing for the market

LRAP has introduced hafirs and water tanks as ways of solving the lack of water problem. Roof water tanks build of stones have also been promoted. For instance the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Programme (SANReMP) has completed approximately 30 roof water-tanks in the project area. The problem with roof water tanks is that the water is not used for watering vegetables instead is used for human drinking, livestock drinking and washing clothes. Drip irrigation has also been introduced to solve the problem of lack of water for irrigation. Drip irrigation is environmentally suitable for Lesotho's highly erodible soils as it minimizes runoff. It is also considered relatively less costly than other irrigation systems, thus it is useful for application in the poor remote agricultural communities (FAO, 2006). Provisional Agricultural Inputs and Training in three districts of Lesotho project was funded by the European Union (EU) in Mafeteng, Maseru, and Mohale's Hoek and implemented by the FAO.

Communal gardens

In the 1950s the Basutoland Department of Agriculture promoted communal gardens and in 1959 the first communal gardens were established. Members of communal gardens were responsible for the tending of their individual plots within the gardens. Communal gardens became popular in the 1970s and 1980s and were given prominence in the 1980s when the Ministry of Co-operatives and Rural Development was established. The Ministry of Co-operatives and Rural Development had a Communal Garden Section whose responsibility was to promote communal gardens in the country. Swallow and Mpemi (1986) reported that in 1985 the average size of a communal garden was 0.7ha with average membership of 25. In 1985 there were 83 communal gardens producing vegetables on 572 ha involving 2,241 members.

In 1989 Semongkong Rural Development Project's (SRDP) Horticultural Section started to work with some of the communal garden groups that already existed within the project area (Bloem, 1996). By 1995 the SRDP was supporting 35 communal gardens, which produced vegetables for home consumption, bartering and sale. By 1995 significant setbacks were being observed in terms of production, cultivated areas and group organization. This coincided with the handing over of responsibility for communal gardens to the Ministry of Agriculture. A case study of a successful communal garden (Ha Nchela) is presented. Some of the determinants of successful communal garden as observed at Ha Nchela are:

- All activities are done on group basis (planting, watering and purchasing seeds)
- The Chief being supportive and contributing in gardening activities and also warning people to respect the communal garden
- The Chief also making sure that no animals graze in or near the communal garden and that no children enter the garden without permission
- Village Development Council members also being members of the communal garden and being supportive in terms of the security of the garden, maintenance and cleanliness.

SADPMA also had a focus on community gardens and this was particularly relevant given food shortages faced in the programme districts. SADPMA Evaluation Mission visited several highly productive backyard plots in all three districts, in areas where successful mixed vegetable and fruit tree cultivation is very rare (IFAD, 2006). It is reported that the number of homestead gardens established and supported was 155% of the target for the project and was considered highly successful. An estimate was made that production from garden plots would equate to about M18,667/ha using drip irrigation.

Although a lot of effort has gone into the promotion and funding of communal gardens, the results are not encouraging. Most communal gardens in the country are no longer operational. The main reasons for the collapse of communal gardens include:

- Conflicts among community members
- Lack of water supply for irrigation
- Political rivalries
- Disruption of fences
- Damage of crops by livestock
- Vegetable theft
- Collapse of communal gardens once government and donor support ends

School gardens

When the Missionaries introduced home gardens in the country they ensured that school gardens were established from which pupils would learn. The Thabeng Teachers Training College had extensive vegetable gardens and trainee teachers were expected to take this practical experience to their schools once training was complete (Sechaba Consultants, 2004). The missionary and school garden approach was that success was often judged on neatness rather than on productivity. Students were expected to produce impeccable raised plots in straight lines, neatly raked with no 'waste' lying around. This resulted in teachers, extension workers and others involved in gardening not looking kindly on heavily mulched gardens without straight lines and nicely raised plots.

A successful school garden intervention has been the Berea Agricultural Group (BAG) (Green, 2002). BAG came into being as a result of the dedication and interest of teachers of agriculture at a number of schools in Berea district. The teachers originally formed an association with the intention of increasing the capacity of their schools to provide students with a daily meal without depending on any external aid. To date BAG has 45 member schools (primary and high). BAG has adopted permaculture as its main approach to gardening. Assumption High School (AHS) which is the home of BAG has one of the most impressive school gardens in Lesotho. At AHS each student has a plot for growing vegetables. AHS is able to feed approximately 700 students a cooked meal each day from their production. Gardening knowledge is transmitted to BAG members and students. Each student in BAG member schools has a garden at home where they implement what they have learned in school. Other schools, although not as successful as AHS, have successful school gardens and as a result are feeding their students. The BAG programme has been able to demonstrate that it is possible for schools to be able to feed students from local resources and even be able to sell some of the produce (Green, 2002).

Secure the Child Project (SCP) is aimed at promoting sustainable food security nets for OVCs that protect and uphold their basic right to food. The project targets 2,500 OVCs up to the age of 18 (both sexes). Project activities include establishment and rehabilitation of school gardens in the two selected districts of Mafeteng and Mochale Hoek, improving gardening skills of teachers and children, documenting lessons learned and best practices established. CARE Lesotho has established partnerships with governmental, non-governmental agencies, UN, other international agencies and private sector using partnerships that were established through LRAP. These

partners have established themselves well within the communities where SCP has been implemented. SCP not only contributed to school's nutrition improvement but also provided a number of nucleus for introducing positive living through proper nutrition and immune system stabilization for people living with HIV/AIDS. The Rural Self-Help Development Association (RSDA) and World Food Programme through SCP encouraged parents to be involved in school gardens. Parents were given food parcels when working in school gardens. This worked well where new gardens were being established as the virgin ground needed hard labour. This enabled scholars to have time for learning. The RSDA worked on an exit strategy which involved parents withdrawing slowly from school gardens after school gardens were on their feet and working well. As a result most schools have continued growing vegetables and having scholars eat vegetables at lunch as well as taking some home. Through RSDA's partnership with SCP at local schools, people became aware of keyhole gardens and double digging techniques. Parents claim that this approach has changed the attitude of their children, as they are now keen to engage in gardening.

Keyhole gardens

Several NGOs such as CARE Lesotho and Stock-Aid (Send A Cow) have introduced keyhole gardens in Lesotho. Keyhole gardens consist of a raised circular garden shaped like a horse shoe. Trenches or Double Digging are gardens that are usually about 1m x 4m. The garden is dug up to the subsoil and compost and manure added to it, leveled and the subsoil then replaced. While there is considerably more work to establish them, they increase productivity and are much more effective in retaining moisture and increasing yields than traditional gardens. Peace Gardens are appropriate for households with limited land space, as they are constructed alongside the length of the house. This method has been welcomed by households, particularly in peri-urban areas, who previously could not construct gardens due to a lack of space and also by households that are severely labor-constrained.

MAFS and CARE Lesotho-South Africa launched the Livelihoods Recovery through Agriculture Programme (LRAP) in October 2002, with funding from the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). LRAP initially focused on the southern districts of Mafeteng, Mochales Hoek, Quthing and Qachas Nek and later on Leribe and Mokhotlong were added. LRAP was a response to persistent food shortages and livelihood vulnerability for many

Basotho households, which are exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Often known in Sesotho as *Lirapa* (meaning ‘gardens’), the programme has emphasized homestead gardening as a feasible means of enhancing food security and improving nutrition. It has also promoted complementary techniques such as water harvesting.

A key feature of LRAP is that its work at community and household levels was undertaken by a group of NGO service providers (SPs), not by CARE itself. Some have ongoing programmes in these districts; others’ work was restricted to the activities funded through LRAP. In some cases, the SPs did not promote all the techniques shown in all the districts where they worked with the programme. None of the SPs worked district-wide; their activities were restricted to a limited number of communities and areas. LRAP organized study tours and exchange visits for rural people, MAFS personnel and NGO staff to promote broader awareness of the techniques and activities (Ndabe and Turner, 2006).

LRAP also sponsored a number of small-scale pilot activities that focused particularly on enhancing input supplies for the vulnerable. Households headed by or caring for orphans were provided with seed packs on a small scale in Leribe, Mohale’s Hoek and Mafeteng districts. Again on a small scale, various SPs distributed seed through a ‘sharing mechanisms in gardening’ initiative. Recipients, as households participating in LRAP activities, were expected to pass at least some of the seed to vulnerable, non-participating households. Through TEBA in Mafeteng district, 12 community-based distribution agents were supported in buying seed from trading companies and reselling it in their local areas, making a small commission on each sale. All these pilot projects achieved limited benefits for at least some of the participants. A recent review of them concludes that they all represent ideas with potential; but that their impact cannot be properly established in the absence of proper monitoring data (Thulo, 2005).

The evaluation of LRAP indicates that the homestead gardening techniques it has developed and promoted need to be made available throughout Lesotho, in particular water harvesting, small raised gardens near homesteads, increased vegetable varieties and rotations, conservation agriculture, such as mulching, manuring, composting, as well as drying and processing methods and seed multiplication (Ndabe and Turner, 2006). However, the programme has faced predictable problems in reaching such households. There is no easy way to stimulate their adoption of the recommended techniques. That goal can only be reached through a sustained

extension presence that continues to give such methods high priority within an overall emphasis on working with the poor and vulnerable – in an extension framework that focuses on individuals and households as well as communities.

Consortium for Southern African Food Security Emergency (C-SAFE) was another CARE supported activity that targeted vulnerable households (14,500 beneficiaries in total), who had little or no harvest in the last season, little or no food stocks, little or no income, no livestock and limited access to agricultural land. The building of keyhole garden is a Food for Asset activity that used food resources as an incentive for communities to learn and put to use new and appropriate agronomical practices. Each household receives food (75 kg of cereals, 7.5 kg of pulses and 3.7 kg of vegetable oil). The C-SAFE Lesotho Food for Assets program was designed to ensure that targeted households are left with sustainable assets (the gardens) once the project is over. In a period of five months, over 7 000 households successfully applied the knowledge in the gardening manual. There is no doubt that this high rate of roll out related directly to an incentive in the form of food, but also to the knowledge offered through training. Its sustainability relies on the fact that these are individually owned gardens and local community members were trained and tasked with continuing assistance after the project has ended.

Protecting and Improving Food and Nutrition Security of Orphans and HIV Affected Children (Phase 1- Lesotho and Malawi) trust fund project, was actively involved in developing capacity for improving production by vulnerable households and in targeted assistance to orphans and widows in Mafeteng district through local Implementing Partners (IPs) (FAO, 2006). Stock-Aid (Send-A-Cow) worked in three Community Service Centers (CSC) in eastern Mafeteng and the Rural Self-Help Development Association (RSDA) in three in the lowlands. The Lesotho Red Cross Society covered communities in one peri-urban CSCAs a result of the success of all these projects, increases in participating household consumption of vegetables and the surplus production now available, processing and marketing support was requested and in 2007 the project bought a solar dryer for each target area and held workshops in food preservation and juice extraction. The Project was selected by the United Nations and Partners' Alliance on Orphans and Vulnerable Children Sustainable Livelihoods and Social Protection as one of the four Projects in the region with potential 'best practices' to upscale to other countries in the region.

Other interventions aimed at improving food security

The following interventions although not dealing with home gardens are worth noting as they are meant to promote food security especially for vulnerable and poor households. FAO through MAFS implemented the Special Programme on Food Security (SPFS) whose objective was to improve rural household food security through demonstrating the potential of short-cycle livestock species, namely poultry, sheep, goats, and pigs, for income generation, improvement of human nutrition and reduction of household vulnerability to natural and economic shocks (Tshabalala, 2006). The SPFS has introduced the *'Neheletse* system which involves passing on progeny of livestock mainly dairy goats, sheep, pigs and chicken. The programme worked through Lead Farmers who were identified within communities and trained. The SPFS procured improved breeding stock and production inputs (feed) for communities as seed capital. The breeding stock was distributed to the Lead Farmers who managed the stock on behalf of the community. The Lead Farmers retained some of the offspring and passed some offspring to vulnerable households who were identified by the community using specified guidelines and criteria. The process continues to the second level beneficiaries and so on. Although the SPFS concentrated on livestock there are other initiatives that use the same principles of *'Neheletse* but in crops. Examples include the Research Division of MAFS pinto bean seed multiplication, and garlic seed distribution (Tshabalala, 2006). Stock-Aid Lesotho has included bees and rabbits in its programme of passing on. The RSDA practices *'Neheletse* by supporting Support Groups through Lesotho National Association of People Living with AIDS (LENAPWA) whereby the Support Groups are supplied *Likoekoe* and traditional chickens.

An evaluation of the *'Neheletse* system identified some weaknesses that need improvement for the system to be effective. These weaknesses include disintegration of groups, Lead farmers not receiving management and financial support from group members, and Lead Farmers not being trained. All in all it was found out that the root cause of the problems was lack of adequate preparation of communities, follow ups and farmers training. It is believed that the *'Neheletse* system has the potential of addressing food insecurity in Lesotho if the current problems are attended to (Tshabalala, 2006).

1.4.2. Home Gardens in Southern African Development Community Countries

Home garden projects are also being implemented in other SADC countries. The following are some of the successful home gardens intervention in the region. Although SADC is made up of several countries a few countries initiatives are covered. The United Kingdom-based charity organization Garden Africa is active in several SADC countries and has established home gardens in Swaziland to promote health and self-sufficiency in the country. Garden Africa is training rural gardeners to enable them to teach other community members to grow vegetables and healing herbs and the most effective use of water. Garden Africa has selected and trained 50 people in Hhohho district on how to grow vegetables. Each trainee has trained 100 gardeners and at the end of the project 5,000 families will have been trained. The training starts with fence building task which involves low-cost fence building technique which the trainees apply at home. This is an important step for any rural gardeners due to the constant threat of animals. The selected households are trained on mulching, composting, water conservation weather patterns and soil management. The project has been successful in that even trainee's neighbors have started home gardens which have improved their food security.

The FAO is also participating in home gardens initiatives in the SADC region. The FAO's Junior Farmer Field and Life Skills (JFFLS) is an initiative where children are groomed to be farmers at a young age. Orphans and vulnerable children at selected schools are able to put food on the table through the garden where they have individual and communal plots. In Swaziland JFFLS started in 2005 as a year-long training for school-going OVCs who afterwards are expected to develop their own gardens at home and pass on the skills to their families and communities. From the individual plots, the children cultivate vegetables that they take home while vegetables from communal plots are sold to the community to generate income for further agricultural projects. At Bunya region the local community is assisted by UNICEF and Swaziland Children Rights Committee to help OVCs grow vegetables to supplement the rations of maize and soya they receive from WFP.

In Namibia the JFFLS project is being piloted at 5 schools in the Caprivi region. Garden Africa in partnership with the Global Diversity Foundation and the Eden Project as well as a local NGO Komeho Namibia are involved in the Kalahari Garden Project (KGP). KGP has been established

to support the internally displaced San people, who once hunted and gathered edible and medicinal plants on land that is now commercial or communal farmland. The San people who have hunted and gathered over thousand years have now been forced to settle without any knowledge of cultivation whatsoever resulting in extreme poverty and poor health amongst the indigenous population. The project is working with schools and communities to assist them in the task of feeding themselves and their children. The project has a total of 42 gardens spread along the 'corridor'. The gardens are 10 x 14 meters and have a strong livestock proof fencing and 8 rows of tilled sand improved with cow dung ash. The project has resulted in improved food security and health.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is promoting communal gardens in SADC countries. In Zimbabwe a USAID-funded project introduced low-labor irrigation technology into home garden nutrition program. The drip irrigation requires 50% less water and thus 50% less labor than traditional gardens. In addition, the drip irrigation produces a higher yield of a higher quality crop. To date the program has established 9,000 gardens which benefit over 33,000 OVCs in participating households. Community gardens have been financed by the EU and German Development Co-operation (GTZ) through the Coordinated Agricultural and Rural Development Programme (CARD). The support package consists of fencing material, insecticides, and seeds for one year as well as monthly visits by the Extension Worker and Health Worker. The community has to apply for a garden and once accepted they utilize their own labor to put up the fence and install vegetable beds. In Zimbabwe they issue of community gardens collapsing when donor funding ends has been observed.

In Republic of South Africa communal gardens have been established through a co-operation agreement between the City of Cape Town and the Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa (MDP-ESA). Under this agreement urban agriculture is being implemented in Philippi. MDP-ESA is an organization that helps municipalities across the globe to develop and expand urban agriculture project through the Cities for the Future Programme. Under the project urban farmers are helped to obtain plots, given guidance on what to farm and helped to find markets for their produce. Under urban agriculture projects like this, issues like food insecurity, ill health and poverty are addressed. The Philippi project benefits women who are responsible for looking after the sick in the community, who earn a living through selling

their vegetables and who look after their grand children who are left behind when their parents die of AIDS. It also addresses environmental issues as farmers are taught how to re-use grey water (mostly used for personal hygiene and for washing clothes). Trench gardening under which people dig trenches into which all biodegradable waste is thrown is also popular in the townships. The waste is covered with soil and seeds are sown on top. The soil is high in nutrients and can be farmed for up to 4 years before new compost is needed.

An NGO Abalimi Bezakaya is involved with community gardens in a number of townships in the Cape Town Metropolis. The community gardens are often established on school property because Principals are keen to become involved with the community they live and work in and where they are daily confronted with the devastating effects of poverty. The National Department of Education formally supports community gardens on school grounds. The USAID-supported Schools Environmental Education and Development (SEED) offers comprehensive program that incorporates teacher professional development, the design and implementation of appropriate environmental/agricultural systems on school gardens in South Africa. The Cape Flats are built on unstable and infertile sand dunes where most of the natural vegetation has been removed. As teachers transform the school gardens and enhance their teaching skills, school communities come to life with vegetable gardens, animal husbandry projects and models of income generation. SEED and home gardens competition has sparked an entrepreneurial spirit in pupils. The competition aims to transfer food security skills to the school community. Participating classes are provided with a small bag of fertilizer and a couple of multi-harvesting plants. Students are then asked to keep a record of their vegetable production. This information is reported back to the teachers who visit and judge the best contestants. SEED awards the winners with garden tools like watering cans, herbs and worm bins. SEED also hopes to secure its workforce of the future by hiring such student's contestants for up coming staff positions.

The report structure in such a way that Chapter 2 is the Methodology, Chapter 3 presents the Evaluation Findings and Discussions while Chapter 4 covers Other Organizations' Food Security Interventions. Chapter 5 presents Lessons Learnt from the Implementation of the Project and the last Chapter are the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.

2. METHODOLOGY

Several methods which included literature review, interviews with Key Informants and stakeholders, quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to collect data.

2.1 Interviews with Key Informants and Stakeholders

Interviews with Key Informants and stakeholders were conducted. The Key Informants were from the funding agency (UNICEF), implementing agency (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security), and stakeholders from other organizations. A list of Key Informants and stakeholders is attached as Annex 2.

2.2 Sample survey

Quantitative method involved a sample survey in which a structured questionnaire administered to the selected beneficiaries was used. The structured questionnaire is attached as Annex 4. A draft questionnaire was submitted to UNICEF and MAFS who made comments which were incorporated in the final version of the questionnaire. It is estimated that there are 3,000 beneficiaries of the project consisting of YFCs and SGs. It was decided that a 10 percent sample was adequate and this resulted in a sample of 300 respondents. It was further decided that the total sample be split into 20 percent YFCs and 80 percent SGs. The reason for this split was that with the available data the districts of Maseru, Mafeteng and Morales Hoek do not have YFCs while SGs are found in every district. The 20/80 percent split resulted in 60 respondents from YFCs and 240 respondents from SGs.

In order for the sample to be representative, each district was sampled. In selecting the number of beneficiaries to be sampled from each district proportional sampling was used. Under this method of sampling each district proportion to the total number of beneficiaries was sampled. The number of garden kits distributed by district for 2006 for YFCs and 2007/08 for SGs was used to come up with the proportions. The YFCs 2006 distribution of garden kits was used because it is the period with complete data. Respondents were selected from one or two Resource Centers within a district depending on the selected sample size. Two primary schools in Maseru district that have benefitted from the project were also selected.

It was decided that members of YFCs and SGs that have received garden kits be assembled at Resource Centers. This was done in order to save time and costs as members of YFCs and SGs are scattered all over around the Resource Centers. It should be noted that a Resource Center consists of several villages which are spread all over. A schedule of Resource Centers to be visited and the dates was drawn up and agreed that the Nutrition Division of MAFS would liaise with the selected Resource Centers with regards to the schedule. The data collection exercise started on 9th July 2009 and ended on 1st September 2009. The following table shows the districts, Resource centers, members of YFCs and SGs sampled. In addition St. Leo Primary School at Makhoathi and Makhobalo Primary School in Maseru district were interviewed as they have received garden kits. As shown in Table 1 only 25 respondents from YFCs could be interviewed because it was found out that YFCs were no longer active or in some places non-existent. The reasons given for this state of affairs include the fact that the position of YFCs Supervisor in DFS has been abolished and there is nobody to oversee the operations of YFCs, and members of YFCs going to urban areas to look for employment.

Table 1: Districts, Resource Centers, number of young farmers and support groups sampled

District	Resource Centre	Young Farmers	Support Groups	Total
Berea	Teyateyaneng	2	18	57
	Pilot	6	31	
Botha Bothe	Nqabeni	5	26	32
Thaba Tseka	Mashai	NA	18	19?
Quthing	Koali	NA	10	10
Leribe	Maputsoe	6	30	36
Qachas Nek	Sehlabathebe	1	4	5
Maseru	Ramabanta	NA	8	8
Mafeteng	‘Masemouse	NA	22	43
	Mafeteng	NA	21	
Mohaes Hoek	Mekaling	NA	20	32
	Mpharane	NA	12	
Mokhotlong	Thabang	5	7	12
Lesotho		25	227	252

NA = Not Available

2.3 Focus Group Discussions

Qualitative methods of data collection involved Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). It was planned that the following groups were to participate in the FGDs:

- Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2 per district)
- Support Groups (Not selected in sample survey – 1 per district)
- Young Farmers Clubs (Not selected in sample survey – 1 per district)
- Non-beneficiaries (1 per district)

Each group was to be made up of 6-10 people.

FGDs in the sampled areas were selected with the assistance of community leaders (chiefs). Chiefs were requested to assemble 10-12 people (men and women) to form the FGDs. The FGDs for boys and girls were selected from primary schools with the assistance of teachers. Boys and girls aged 12-16 years were selected. The age range of 12-16 was chosen because this age group

is mature and is in a position to discuss the selected topics. In addition if younger boys and girls were selected, the older ones would have dominated the discussions. The groups were mixed as it was believed that the topics discussed were not gender sensitive. The FGDs were conducted by one Facilitator and two Recorders. The participants' views were recorded and salient points analyzed.

The planned number of FGDs could not be reached especially for YFCs. The targets for the other groups were reached. In addition a group consisting of Chiefs and Councilors was made up at Pilot Resource Center.

2.5 Constraints and limitations

A number of constraints and limitations were encountered during the data collection phase of the evaluation and as a result the targets of 60 YFCs members and 260 members of SGs were not reached. The Nutrition Division of MAFS was supposed to liaise with the districts and Resource Centers about the schedule of data collection from beneficiaries. However, in most Resource Centers the Consultants were not expected and as a result had to hunt for the beneficiaries. This resulted in the data collection exercise taking longer time than anticipated. The other reasons for not reaching the planned total sample include the following:

- MAFS had just completed a transfer of staff exercise and most District Nutrition Officers and Area Technical Officers (Nutrition) were new in their duty stations and as a result did not have information on YFCs and SGs
- All District Nutrition Officers were attending a workshop at Pitseng, Leribe district
- Non existent Support Groups and Young Farmers Clubs

3. EVALUATION FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Project organization and management

The HGP is funded by UNICEF and is being implemented by the Department of Field Services (DFS) of MAFS. Within UNICEF the project falls under Child Survival and Nutrition intervention of the Young Child Survival, Care and Development programme. Within the DFS the HGP coordination changes between the Nutrition Division (ND) and the Extension Division (ED). It is understood that the Director of Field Services who is the Head of DFS is the one who decides who is to coordinate the project and when. This practice has led to the MAFS field staff getting confused as to which division is responsible for the coordination of the project. For instance some Area Extension Officers (AEO) and Area Technical Officers (ATO) (Nutrition) report that there are instances whereby they get instructions like submitting lists of people to be trained from the two divisions. When this happens the AEO sends the list to the ED while the ATO (Nutrition) sends the lists to ND.

It is reported that the project proposal to UNICEF was initiated and prepared by the ND and as such ND believes it should be given the full mandate to run and manage the project. However, the project coordination has slowly been shifted to the ED to such level that the project coordination is now being interchanged between the two divisions of DFS. The ND feels that it has no power to redesign the project to meet current needs and problems. On the other hand the ED claim that the HGP started with YFCs who fall under the jurisdiction of ED. When the position of YFCs Supervisor was abolished the HGP was shifted to ND.

At the district level the District Nutrition Officer (DNO) and District Extension Officer (DEO) are responsible for the project depending on who is coordinating the project. At the Resource Center level the AEO and ATO (Nutrition) are responsible. The Agricultural Assistant (AA) is responsible for the project activities at the sub-center level. There were lots of MAFs transfers just before the evaluation exercise which means in most cases new staff members had just been in the Resource Centers. Most of the staff had no information on the names of YFCs, SGs, their areas, contact persons etc. because there were no handing over arrangements.

The project has no Memorandum of Understanding to spell out responsibilities of each institution involved in the project. Currently the project has no Project Steering Committee to oversee its activities. There are no scheduled meetings but UNICEF and MAFS meet when there is a need to do so. The other MAFS staff involved in the project are District Irrigation Officer (DIO), and District Horticultural Officer (DHO). The DIO is responsible for training project beneficiaries on irrigation issues while the DHO is responsible for trainings on vegetable production.

Some of the problems with regards to the management of the project include the following:

- At Head Quarters level, the project is perceived to be UNICEF-driven, there has never been good planning between the MAFS and UNICEF. Plans are those of UNICEF not the Ministry of Agriculture
- At the District level, it is a top down approach, districts are told what to do they do not have their plans for the support. This has led to lack of support from the district staff.

3.2 Project monitoring and evaluation

According to the HGP funding proposal there should be quarterly visits to monitor the implementation of project activities and reviews (UNICEF, 2006). Furthermore MAFS is to provide the technical support and monitor the implementation of the project through their extension staff based at community level. Ideally project beneficiaries are supposed to submit progress reports quarterly through AAs and ATOs (Nutrition) who in turn submits to District Nutrition Officer (DNO)/District Extension Officer (DEO). At this stage the reports are supposed to be compiled into a district report after which it is to be submitted to ND/ED. The DFS is then supposed to compile the country report to UNICEF. In practice no progress reports are prepared. UNICEF through its Senior Programme Officer undertakes periodic field monitoring field visits. Although the field monitoring visits cover other UNICEF activities the HGP activities are also monitored. In recent times UNICEF and DFS have undertaken joint field monitoring activities whose reports are available. Much as the field monitoring reports provide valuable information on the activities of the SGs and YFCs the reporting format is not uniform. Some monitoring reports provide detailed information while others give scanty information. Discussions with the

Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the Department of Planning and Policy Analysis (DPPA) of MAFS reveal that the DPPA is not aware of the HGP and as such it is not included in MAFS projects monitoring system. The DPPA came to know of the existence of the HGP when they saw some garden tools somewhere during their routine field monitoring trips. On the same note the Monitoring and Evaluation Section of UNICEF is not involved in the monitoring of the HGP. The staff in the Child Development and Survival Section of UNICEF are the ones involved in the monitoring of the project. Ideally the Monitoring and Evaluation Section of UNICEF should be involved in the monitoring process.

It is also reported that SGs report to whichever ministry established them e.g., Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Health and Social Services and Ministry of Local Government. These groups are supposed to report annually to their parent ministries and the ministries to report to UNICEF.

3.3 Beneficiary targeting mechanism

The HGP has two types of beneficiaries consisting of SGs and YFCs and these are referred to as secondary beneficiaries. The other type of beneficiaries consists of OVCs, PLWAs and other disadvantaged community groups such as the destitute, needy, the elderly and disabled and these are referred to as primary beneficiaries. Different approaches and criteria are being followed in selecting beneficiaries. Some secondary beneficiaries claim to be selected by MAFS and UNICEF. Although the selection criteria are not spelt out, findings are that the number of members is one crucial criterion used. Total membership in a group/club is also used in deciding the number of garden kits to be given to a group/club. It was difficult to get the criteria used in selecting beneficiaries as this differed from district to district. An example is made of Maseru district which used the following criteria in selecting which SGs and YFCs to be given garden kits in 2009:

- Total number of households supported by Support Group
- Total number of orphans and vulnerable children supported by Support Group
- Total number of malnourished under five years children in the village/supported by Support Group

- Total number of people living with HIV and AIDS supported by Support Group
- Availability of land/site for growing vegetables for OVCs
- Proof of active involvement of Support Group in local development activities
- Type and number of other sources of support/funds available to the Support Group

Each Community Council is to select in order of priority three SGs that are eligible for receiving garden kits inclusive of NGOs operating in the area.

Although the HGP funding proposal calls for the involvement of the Ministry of Local Government (MLG) in the selection of beneficiaries, there seems to be little or no involvement of MLG. There seems to be no consultation between MAFS and local authorities (Chiefs and Councilors) when selecting beneficiaries. However, there are some Resource Centers that involve local authorities when selecting beneficiaries.

Respondents in the beneficiary survey were asked if they knew the criteria used to select beneficiaries. The majority of them did not know the criteria used to select beneficiaries. Of those who gave responses, 11% indicated willingness and ability to help OVC's/sick people as the criterion used for selecting beneficiaries. 11% also indicated performance toward HIV/AIDS and OVC's activities, 6% performance of organization and 4% indicated that they were selected by Councilor.

The selection of primary beneficiaries is done by secondary beneficiaries. An overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated that the criterion of whom to give the produced vegetables was arrived at through discussions within the organization (91.3%). Non-Beneficiaries FGDs revealed that some of the OVCs are not given vegetables and the selection criteria is not transparent. This has caused conflicts within communities. They recommend that some selection criteria which is transparent should be followed. Examples of such are child-headed households, and double orphans being given priority.

3.4 The process, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of garden kits distribution

The Supply Unit of UNICEF is responsible for the distribution of garden kits. The selection of garden kits suppliers is done through competitive tendering through local newspapers. Usually one supplier is selected per bid. The selected supplier is given an option of supplying and transporting the garden kits. If the supplier is not in a position to transport the garden tools a transporter is engaged. The supplier is required to mark all garden tools with the UNICEF logo while the seed packs are labeled “**NOT FOR SALE – A GIFT OF UNICEF**”. Before the garden kits are distributed UNICEF and MAFS meet and draw a schedule of delivery places and dates. The Extension Division/Nutrition Division of the Department of Field Services is supposed to communicate with District Agricultural Offices who in turn communicate with Resource Centers about the delivery places and dates. When the supplier/transporter delivers the garden kits on the agreed dates, the person receiving the kits signs to acknowledge receipt. The YFCs and SGs are supposed to collect the garden kits from Resource Centers. However, findings of the evaluation exercise indicate that in practice this is not the case. In most cases the distribution of garden kits does not follow the above channels. Indications are that the distribution of kits went as planned in 2006 and did not go as planned in 2007/08.

There were instances where suppliers/transporters were not expected at Resource Centers and as a result there were no MAFS staff to receive the kits. In such cases the suppliers/transporters usually delivered the kits direct to contact persons of the YFCs and SGs or dumps the kits at the Resource Center. If the contact persons are not available they deliver to Chiefs and Councilors. In such cases District Agricultural Offices and Resource Center staff have no knowledge of the delivery of garden kits. For instance it is reported that in 2008 garden kits were delivered at Mokhotlong District Agriculture Office because the staff had gone somewhere and not aware that garden kits were to be delivered that day. The garden kits were received by the Security Guard on duty and were stored in the open. In some cases the garden kits are stored in several places and in the open where they are prone to theft and adverse weather. Most staff of District Agricultural Offices and Resource Centers complain that UNICEF bypass their offices when distributing garden kits and deliver them direct to beneficiaries. Indications are that there seems to be communication breakdown between DFS and the District Agricultural Offices as in most cases the District Agricultural Offices are not advised of the delivery dates. It should be noted

that UNICEF follows standard procedures like issuing Waybills which have to be signed by consignees like other UN organizations like World Food Programme.

It was also found out that MAFS staff at the Resource Center level do not verify the existence of some of the YFCs and SGs. This is because there are cases when the delivery trucks get to a designated place with the name of the SG and contact person, they are told that no such SG exists in the area and the name of the contact person is not known. In some cases the lists of names of SGs and their areas are interchanged and this causes lots of confusion. The non-verification of YFCs and SGs has resulted in garden kits being delivered to inactive YFCs and SGs. The UNICEF and MAFS joint field monitoring visits have also met problems of non-existent SGs and YFCs which purportedly received garden kits.

In most cases the local authorities know of the garden kits when they are delivered to their places because they cannot be delivered to Resource Centers for various reasons. Local authorities are also not notified when beneficiaries receive garden kits yet when disputes concerning garden kits arise they are called in to intervene.

A significant proportion of the respondents (41%) indicated that garden kits were delivered at the Committee member's house, 19% were delivered at the Chief's home while 18% were delivered at Resource Centers. This supports the case by MAFS staff at Resource Centers that garden kits in most cases are distributed direct to beneficiaries. Most organizations (50%) keep their garden kits at the Committee members' house, 28% at other members' house and 8% keep them at the Chiefs home. With regards to the criterion used for keeping them, the majority (52%) keep them with a member interested in gardening, 7% keep kits with a member with a garden. Safety/security as well as available storage facility account for 5% each. Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents indicated that the criterion of keeping garden kits where they are was arrived at by discussions within the organization.

In terms of timeliness of garden kits distribution respondents indicated that because vegetables are grown throughout the year their distribution is considered timely. The problem of utilization of garden kits lies with beneficiaries who do not use them when they arrive. There are cases whereby garden kits have not been utilized for two years and this has resulted in some seeds reaching their expiry dates. The garden kits' quality is considered very good as the tendering

process clearly stipulates the quality required. The garden tools trade name is considered the best in the industry. In 2007 suppliers could not supply the required quality of garden tools and this was mainly caused by the current economic crises when prices of commodities soared. After that quality garden tools have been supplied. The seeds supplied are also considered to be amongst the best in the industry.

3.5 Training of beneficiaries

Part of the objectives of the project was to increase the knowledge and transferable skills on issues such as cultivation, conservation, agricultural and environmental issues. In an effort to address this, the DFS organized training courses Nutrition Assistants and some project beneficiaries. The plan was to train at least five Support Groups in each district with the view that they will in turn train other community-based organizations and the community at large. In 2005 100 Nutrition and Home Economics Assistants were trained. Since 2006 the Nutrition Division, through the trained Nutrition Assistants facilitated trainings of SGs at different venues throughout the country. The topics covered included HIV/AIDS and breastfeeding, relationship between HIV/AIDS and nutrition, vegetable production, and rearing of poultry, and pigs. In 2008 the ND conducted training for members of YFCs and SGs. The following table shows the number of YFCs and SGs members that attended the trainings.

Table 2: Districts, venues, duration and number of beneficiaries trained

District	Number of venues	Duration (days)	Number of participants
Berea	5	3	200
Quthing	6	3	174
Qachas Nek	4	2	128
Mokhotlong	1	3	38
Botha Bothe	5	4	197
Thaba Tseka	1	3	40

Data from the beneficiary survey indicate that respondents who received training amounted to 62% whereas those who did not receive training amounted to 34%. The majority (39%) were trained prior to receiving garden kits while 20% were trained after.

Some of the problems encountered in training beneficiaries include the following:

- Some of the members of YFCs and SGs do not pass on the skills and knowledge they have acquired at the trainings
- Beneficiaries refuse to attend the trainings claiming that when they were given the garden kits there were no conditions that they had to attend the trainings.

Despite the plan to update and review educational materials on vegetable production and distribution, and to further facilitate excursions for youth groups and Support Groups to learn from each other, this did not happen. Reasons put forth being lack of funds to support these activities.

3.6 Estimated number of project beneficiaries

When the project started the target was to reach 300 SGs and YFCs per year. It was difficult to get the information from UNICEF and MAFS on the number of SGs and YFCs receiving garden kits as well as their membership in some years. The following table shows number of YFCs and SGs that received garden kits from 2006-2008. From the tables it is evident that the target of reaching 300 community gardens per year has been reached and surpassed. The average number of garden kits given to YFCs is 5 while for SGs is 3. It seems the distribution of garden kits has been spread very thinly all over the ten districts of the country as a result the garden kits are not having the desired impact. Some of the Key Informants indicate that giving one garden kit to a SG does not have the desired impact. They recommend that the HGP should have concentrated on a few districts as it did in the beginning and see what impact it was having before being rolled out nation-wide. Furthermore it is reported that other organizations are already supplying garden tools to selected districts and areas and HGP should have selected districts and areas which are not benefitting from other organizations.

Although there are lots of information gaps in the number and membership of YFCs that have received garden kits, it is evident from Table 3 that the numbers have increased between 2006 and 2008. This is despite the fact the findings of this evaluation are that YFCs are no longer active. The DFS also has indicated that YFCs are no longer in existence.

Table 3: Number of Young Farmers Clubs receiving garden kits²

District	Number of clubs		Total membership		Number of kits received	
	2006	2007/08	2006	2007/08	2006	2007/08
Berea	30	21	340	NA	243	67
Botha Bothe	10	10	113	NA	53	NA
Thaba Tseka	4	16	88	208	43	65
Quthing	7	31	107	NA	52	NA
Leribe	10	10	150	NA	73	NA
Qachas Nek	8	11	197	NA	97	NA
Mokhotlong	5	5	NA	NA	44	NA
Lesotho	74	104	995	NA	605	NA

NA = Not Available

Source: UNICEF and MAFS

It seems the number of SGs receiving garden kits is decreasing. This is because in 2006, 307 SGs received garden kits as opposed to 256 in 2007/08. In 2006 Thaba Tseka had the highest number of SGs at 201 but this number dropped to 17 in 2007/08.

Table 4: Number of Support Groups receiving garden kits

District	Number of Groups		Total membership		Number of kits received	
	2006	2007/08	2006	2007/08	2006	2007/08
Berea	12	66	NA	NA	157	195
Botha Bothe	31	29	359	324	105	100
Thaba Tseka	201	17	242	255	121	75
Quthing	26	NA	248	NA	126	NA
Leribe	16	22	190	461	94	122
Qachas Nek	21	NA	573	NA	192	NA
Maseru	NA	7	NA	135	NA	32
Mafeteng	NA	31	NA	659	NA	183
Mohales Hoek	NA	22	NA	418	NA	121
Mokhotlong	NA	27	NA	NA	NA	26

² Young Farmers Clubs in the districts of Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohales Hoek did not receive garden kits

Lesotho	307	256	NA	2,922	511	919
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NA = Not Available

Source: UNICEF and MAFS

It was found out that the 252 sampled beneficiaries assist 8,064 OVCs, 1,512 PLWAs and 252 other disadvantaged members of the community. This means the average number of OVCs assisted with vegetables by the groups is 32 while the groups assist an average of 6 PLWAs. The average number of other groups other than OVCs and PLWAs assisted is one. Assuming that these groups are assisted on average two times a year then the SGs and YFCs on average assist 62 OVCs, 12 PLWAs and 2 other categories of community members per year. It should be noted that it was very difficult to estimate the number of beneficiaries reached by the project because of gaps in information provided. For instance it was very difficult to get the number of active YFCs and SGs, membership etc.

Table 5: Beneficiaries of vegetables produced by SGs and YFCs

Whom given	Frequency	Percent
OVCs and PLWAs	163	67.4
Single and double orphans	33	13.6
People Living with AIDS	20	8.3
Double orphans	11	4.5
Vulnerable children	4	1.7
Elderly and sick people	2	0.8
Others	9	3.7
Total	242	100

Source: Beneficiary survey

The following table shows the estimated number of OVCs, PLWAs and other vulnerable groups that were assisted with vegetables by SGs and YFCs. From the table it is estimated that the project reaches an average of 27,000 primary beneficiaries per year. It should be noted that the number does not include family members of SGs and YFCs who also benefit from the project. If SGs and YFCs family members are included approximately 2,000 beneficiaries should be included basing the above on the Bureau of Statistics figures where an average household in Lesotho consists of 5 people.

Table 6: Estimated number of OVCs, PLWAs and other groups reached by the project

Category	2006	2007/08
Total number of YFCs	74	104
Total number of SGs	307	256
Total clubs and groups	381	360
Number of OVCs reached	23,622	22,472 ³
Number of PLWAs	4,572	4,320
Number of other vulnerable groups reached	762	720
Total beneficiaries reached	28,956	27,512

3.7 Project impact

The primary beneficiaries of the project are OVCs, PLWAs and other disadvantaged members of the community. Even though when asked about the impact of the project, these beneficiaries indicated that the project is having a positive impact in that beneficiaries get a variety of vegetables and nutritious meal, in reality the project is having a limited impact based on the reports from the very same beneficiaries which indicates that they do not receive vegetables regularly as most indicated that they receive vegetables once a year while some reported receiving once in two years. The HGP supplements other interventions like the World Food Programme which provides beneficiaries with maize meal, pulses and cooking oil. The vegetables are eaten with *papa* which is the staple food in Lesotho. Vegetables are also important for boosting immune systems of PLWAs. In cases where secondary beneficiaries had surplus vegetables they sell them and with the revenue purchase groceries and toiletries. There were instances where OVCs knew of SGs that received garden kits and were producing vegetables but sell the vegetables to everybody including OVCs.

The frequency of giving vegetables to beneficiaries range from quarterly to when vegetables are available as shown in Table 7. A significant proportion of the respondents gave beneficiaries vegetables quarterly followed by giving bi-annually. It is apparent that the distribution of

³ 152 OVCs assisted by the two primary schools have been added

vegetables is bringing minimal impact to the lives of primary beneficiaries. This is because giving a person vegetables once a year does not bring any change to his/her food security situation.

Table 7: Frequency of giving vegetables to beneficiaries

Frequency of giving vegetables	Frequency	Percent
Quarterly	80	33.1
Semi-annually	70	28.9
Once a year	68	28.1
When vegetables are available	14	5.8
Others	10	4.1
Total	242	100

Source: Beneficiary survey

It was difficult to measure the project's impact on both secondary and primary beneficiaries as there is no baseline data. The absence of progress reports also compounded the problem of measuring the project's impact.

Members of SGs and YFCs are volunteers who assist OVCs and PLWAs. They sacrifice their families' times to work on the gardens and well caring for PLWAs. As a result SGs and YFCs families are supposed to benefit from the HGP by using the garden kits in producing their own vegetables as well as eating some of the vegetables produced. 67.4% of the beneficiaries indicated that their families eat some of the vegetables produced while 18.2% indicated that they did not enjoy any benefits from the HGP. 6.2% use the garden tools for their own private use. Others share the revenue accruing from the sale of surplus vegetables while others share seeds left when planting. Wheel barrows are used for such activities like getting drinking water, going to shops to get groceries, going to hammer mills while drums are used for getting and storing drinking water and be used in ceremonies like funerals and weddings.

The above section reflects a situation where secondary beneficiaries (SGs etc) benefit more than the primary beneficiaries (OVCs, PLWAs, etc) from the project. The impact at this level can be said to be higher than that at the primary beneficiary level, but this was not the purpose of the project.

3.8 Community and beneficiaries' perception about the project

Knowledge about the HGP was prevalent to most members of SGs and YFCs as those who had heard about the project constituted 98% and 2% said they had not heard about the project. The marking of the garden tools with the UNICEF logo helped in respondents identifying the source of the tools. However, results from the FGDs indicate that OVCs and non-beneficiaries were not aware of HGP. A significant proportion of respondents (46%) had heard about the project from members of their organization, 21% heard from extension workers, 6.3% heard from the chief while 5.6% heard from UNICEF. Some MAFS staff at Resource Centers indicated that they did not know the initiative as a project but considered it a drought relief initiative.

The assessment of the Department of Field Services is that about 50% of the Support Groups working with this project are doing well, that is the tools are well managed and utilized and services reaching the beneficiaries, while the other 50% the support is not serving the purpose. Some of the tools are with the community Counselors' or Parliamentarian wives either stored doing nothing or used for other purposes not for food security purpose.

The relevance of the project was assessed by asking respondents about their needs related to food security before the project. 44% mentioned garden tools, while 19% and 18% indicated that home-based care kits and food for PLWAs and OVCs respectively had been their needs. It therefore goes that the initiative was a relevant measure to address the felt need at the time. Key informants and stakeholders were of the opinion that the project should be strengthened and redesigned as to have maximum impact. Non-beneficiaries FGDs were also of the same opinion and added that the project needed strengthening in selecting active SGs.

The top most activities that the groups felt should be implemented in order to tackle the problem of food insecurity were piggery production (35%), poultry production (31%), and tailoring and

dressmaking at 13%. Improvements suggested were training in agricultural production by 39%, donations towards funding income generating activities by 10%, provision of sewing machines by 5% and being given money by 4%.

3.9 Beneficiary survey results

A total of 252 respondents consisting of 227 members SGs and 25 members of YFSC were interviewed using a structured questionnaire. Two primary schools were also interviewed. The average membership per organization is 25. Of the SGs interviewed, it was learned that in terms of gender there are more females than males with number of females up to more than three times more than those of males. The results show that SGs are mostly made of females as the average number of females is more than three times that of males. An almost similar trend was observed in YFCs. Members of SGs reported that SGs assist PLWAs and OVCs and members of YFCs indicated that their organizations' function was to encourage youth to be interested in agriculture.

Most respondents (60%) produced vegetables on communal gardens while 29% produced on individual/private gardens. There are those that produce from both types of gardens (7%) and 4% that do not produce at all. It is likely that those that did not produce anything had problems with being allocated a site for gardening or were having problems in accessing garden kits. The majority of communal gardens are not fenced while *lekhoakha* and barbed wire are used by few beneficiaries. *Lekhoakhoa* is effective in preventing encroachment by livestock and shielding the vegetable from wind but is amenable to theft by people who use the shrubs used to make *lekhoakhoa* as fuel wood. Although barbed wire is of help to large stock it is not effective in curbing small livestock and poultry. The types of plots found in communal gardens are raised beds, terracing and flat plots while raised beds plots are common in private gardens.

The most common sources of water for watering gardens are dam/pond, public tap, spring and stream/river. Dams and ponds are usually used during the rainy season but dry up when there are no rains. Although public taps are also used, vegetable growers face complaints from other people who complain that they finish the water especially during dry periods. In addition public taps are open for a short while during the day and in most cases people will rather spare the little

they have for drinking and cooking purposes. The issue of sources of water for vegetable gardens is important because the availability of water is one of the ingredients of successful gardens. This means the issue of the location of vegetable gardens is crucial. It was found out that some of the communal gardens are located some distances from sources of water and this affects their workings. This calls for local authorities to consider the proximity of communal gardens when allocating land for communal gardens. The majority of beneficiaries used watering cans followed by tins and perforated tins. The high incidence of use of watering cans for watering gardens can be attributed to HGP which supplies beneficiaries with watering cans. The proportion of beneficiaries using tins for watering vegetables is of concern. Although perforated tins are effective in watering vegetables they have some disadvantages which include applying less or too much water on plants. The majority of beneficiaries used hands/head to carry water from source. Those that used wheelbarrows amounted to 34% while the use of scotch cart and hosepipe were lowest ranking at 1% each. It should be noted that a combination of the distance of the source of water from the garden and the means of getting water e.g. hands/head may jeopardize vegetable production. Wheel barrows may also not help that much if paths to the source is rugged.

The majority of beneficiaries used organic manure. Organic manure are easily obtained locally and in most cases cost nothing hence their predominant use. The commonly grown vegetables include cabbage, spinach, rape, carrots and tomatoes. Drought, pests and insufficient water are the major problems encountered in gardening. These are followed by trespass by animals, theft, not enough labor and not enough/lack of garden tools. Problems encountered by organizations are members who do not attend meetings or who resign from organizations, members' conflicts, and not finding it easy to identify HIV positive people as they do not disclose their status. Other problems include trespass by animals, lack of money and or incentives, and non-participation of OVC Caretakers in SGs activities. It is also reported that OVCs do not participate in vegetable production but expect to be given the produce after harvest and this leads to dependency syndrome. Beneficiaries think that the problems can be addressed through training in community organization, appealing for money, provision of incentives for those engaged in supporting PLWAs and OVCs, Chiefs supporting groups, fencing of communal gardens and assistance with garden tools.

The working arrangements in the two primary schools that received garden kits are that each class has a plot that it attends to during the Agriculture period on the time table. One school garden is not fenced and the other is fenced with barbed wire. Raised plots are used in the schools. Water to irrigate the gardens is drawn from dams and pupils use watering cans to draw water. One school does not use manure while the other school uses organic manure on the plots resulting in good production. Vegetables grown include rape, cabbage, spinach, sepaile, onion, pumpkins and peas. Problems encountered in gardening were pests, drought, lack of manure, pilfering and trespass by animals.

4. OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' FOOD SECURITY INTERVENTIONS

Some agencies that are involved in food security activities were interviewed. The purpose for the interview was to find out how they operated, the problems they encounter, how they resolve them, and these best practices which make them achieve their goals and objectives and more importantly what are some of their best practices which can be adopted by UNICEF. In this context best practices are defined as interventions that the organization uses to help it succeed in reaching its goals and objectives. Selection of the agencies was based on the literature review, discussions with the MAFS and UNICEF, and interview with some stakeholders.

4.1 World Vision Lesotho

World Vision Lesotho (WVL) was legally established in 1989. However, the ministry of World Vision in Lesotho dates as far back as 1976 when WV South Africa began child sponsorship in two primary schools in Lesotho. The main activities of these two projects were health, nutrition and education. In 1987, with the support of the Methodist church as a local partner, a small coordination office was established in Maseru. The first Country Program Manager was appointed in 1993 and by 1995 the Lesotho office was declared a National Office. Currently World Vision Lesotho has funding from USAID/FFP, AUSAID, WFP, WV Taiwan, WV Hong Kong, WV Australia. In the recent past, other grants came through the Global Fund, OFDA and USDA. World Vision Lesotho operates in seven of the ten districts of the country, including Maseru, Botha-Bothe, Mafeteng, Leribe, Berea, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing. Within these districts, World Vision has operated Nine (9) Area Development Programs (ADPs) since 1993.

World Vision Lesotho operates mainly in the following areas:

- Advocacy
- Christian fellowship
- Education
- Nutrition
- OVCs and HIV/AIDS

- Relief and Food Security

Since the HIV/AIDS pandemic began having a devastating impact on communities, WVL has focused on supporting OVC and their support network, developing their ability to cope with the growing problem. Most of the ADP's have a dedicated HIV/AIDS Officer, supported by a HIV/AIDS coordinator at National level.

WVL operations under the relief and food security are:

- Training in the Home Stead gardening(Keyhole gardens and Trenches)
- Training in conservation farming
- Training of Home Visitors and Support (by the coalition community care)(CCC)
- Provision of the Home Based care kits
- Training in seed production.
- Equipping local leadership (councilors, chiefs and ADP committees) on skills to improve

The main problems encountered by World Vision Lesotho are:

- Duplication of efforts to target beneficiaries
- Mixed messages to beneficiaries

These problems can be resolved by coordinated stakeholders meetings to share ideas and plans.

The following are some of WVL best practices

- Use of Community Care Coalition (CCC).
- Support of Home Visitors by CCC.
- Training of Home Visitors so that they Know their duties
- Use of Home Based Care Groups
- Working with OVC and their families and training them on life skills
- Introduction of Life Skills Education in schools and out of school youth
- Working with churches

- Use of resources that are available and affordable
- Commitment and sustainability on the part of the beneficiary
- Use of good financial systems

World Vision Lesotho best practice in food security issues is the Nazareth and Nthabiseng ADPs Food Security Project (NANAFS). NANAFS began in 2005 and its major objective is to improve food security in Nazareth and Nthabiseng ADPs. The objective is to be reached by:

- Improving the quality of agricultural extension between the two ADP communities
- Promoting soil and water conservation techniques and measures
- Promoting advocacy in land distribution
- Sensitizing the community in good food utilization with emphasis on child nutrition
- Encouraging NANAFS' integration and synergy in the ADP's to ensure sustainability in MAFS activities among the communities
- To increase farm profitability through market oriented approaches to production and sales

WVL Best practices in relation to Food Security are:

- Training farmers and raising them to the level of Village Extension Workers (VEWs) where this would provide technical assistance to fellow farmers in the absence of the MAFS extension worker.
- Training farmers in seed production so that seeds may ultimately be available and distributed locally.
- Increasing farm profitability through market orientated approaches to production, and sales through training in the inventory register, labor record and cash flow.
- Training Community Based Organizations (CBO) in leadership and management skills including monitoring and evaluation of their CBO's, and conflict management, and resolutions.
- Improving communities' access to clean potable water for domestic use and Home Garden irrigation through Water for Emergency Response (WAFER) Project.
- Provision for *likoekoe* chickens and pigs to provide the protein in the OVC's diets.
- Provision of Nutrition Training that implants basic knowledge on utilization of various types of food available locally, and that encourages diversification of food production.
- The geographic focus
- Study Tours

4.2 Southern Mountain Association for Rural Transformation and Development

Southern Mountain Association for Rural Development and Transformation (SMARTD) is an ecumenical community based organization (CBO) in the southern mountain of Lesotho, whose primary mandate is to facilitate efforts of rural communities by encouraging an integrated community development initiative that will alleviate poverty. The association was established in 1976 under the umbrella of the Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL) to supply the communities around Ha Sekake with drinking water. In the following years SMARTD expanded its operations to agriculture and to integrated rural development to address the dire poverty in the region.

In August 2004 the association became independent. Currently more than 20 local experts in agriculture, finance, education, horticulture and nutrition reach out to over 12,000 households in roughly 120 villages in the southern districts of Qacha's Nek, Quthing and Mohale's Hoek. SMARTD main funding agency is German based church organization called EED.

To facilitate efforts of rural communities by encouraging an integrated community development initiative that will alleviate poverty by assisting the affected communities to work and improve:

- Field crops
- Home state gardens
- Environmental protection
- Watershed management
- Organic farming
- Sheep and piggery improvement and animal health.

SMARTD area of operations is about 80km radius of the Senqu River Valley in the districts of Qacha, Quthing and Mohale's Hoek.

The food security interventions SMARTD is involved in are:

- Production of cereal and vegetables

- Improvement of livestock
- Food processing and preservation
- Nutrition Education

The target group/beneficiaries are women, orphans, elderly and youth. The criterion used to target beneficiaries is through public gatherings (*Lipitso*) and focus group discussions to identify the people needs. SMARDT partners include CARE, MOVE, World Vision and Development for Peace Education (DPE)

The problems encountered:

- Competition among stakeholders
- Duplication of efforts
- Lack of coordination and sending of mixed messages to the target group
- Problem of packaging and processing to increase shelf life during bumper harvest
- Lack of reliable funding

Solutions to the problems

- Promotion and facilitation of meetings and planning together of stakeholders in the same area
- Planning ahead and arranging market for crops to be produced
- International funding agencies based in Lesotho to look into potential NGOs that enhances food security and support them

SMARDT best practices include the following:

- Planning together with members of the community who take ownership of the activities

- Working and training women yield better results
- Use of available and affordable resources
- Patience, understanding that development is a process and it takes time

4.3 Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) Mohale Field Operations is involved in Fruits and Vegetables Production Programme in Mohale Dam Catchment area (Ha Tsiu, Koporala villages). The objective is to ensure that people's lives are not made worse-off by the activities of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project through providing development programmes and compensation to directly affected households through key hole gardens and container plots. The programme involves inter cropping systems of wheat, potato, maize and peas grown to protect soil erosion, improvement of soil nutrition and to provide for food security. The directly affected households, orphaned children and HIV/AIDS support group are the targeted beneficiaries of the programme.

The main problems encountered by the LHDA are unavailability of quality seed and lack of market for surplus produce. These problems can be solved by subsidizing the cost of seed, ensure that the local shop owners sell the quality seed and ensuring that surplus produce is processed and preserved for later use.

LHDA's best practices are:

- close monitoring of the programme
- engage farmers to choose crop mix and
- allow other farmers to copy from the farmers that are assisted
- provide subsidized seed
- use of manure instead of chemical fertilizers

4.4 Send-A-Cow Lesotho

Send-A-Cow Lesotho (SCL) is an NGO whose roots emanate from Send-a-Cow United Kingdom. It started as a project in 2000 and became a programme in 2004. It is funded by Send-a-Cow UK. The NGO also works on short-term Partnerships with other organizations that fund it for that term to accomplish a specific objective. The main thrust of the organization is to improve household food security through sustainable agriculture through (a) Home gardens such as keyhole gardens and trench gardens, provide vegetables for the household and crop residue is fed to animals and (b) Livestock production of milk goats, rabbits and poultry are given to participating members and the droppings from these animals are used to maintain soil fertility in the gardens and fields. Another objective is to increase income through the sale of surplus produce and through other income generating activities. Groups are trained in marketing of produce. The organization relies on their social development initiative to improve family and community cohesion through this initiative, members are taught how to share and support each other as well as to be self reliant. Promotion of sustainable environmental management is another objective of the organization where members are taught how best to use and maintain their natural resources.

The geographic coverage is mainly in the lowlands in areas/villages around Morija and Matsieng. The organization has however worked in the Foothills when FAO engaged it.

Beneficiaries to the programme are selected by communities themselves based on the criterion that they live on or below poverty line, that they are unemployed, that they are orphans and or vulnerable groups' widowers and the elderly. Room is also given to any interested people who do not own large livestock or who may own sufficient land within their homes' range. This should however show interest to work with the organization.

Other organizations collaborating with Send-A-Cow are:

- FAO who funded the foothills programme while Send-a-Cow contributed in manpower and refresher courses

- Sentebale - works with OVC on food security issues
- Scott Hospital Morija - Works with OVC on food Security and agricultural issues
- SANReMP. In this programme - Send-a-Cow will be supporting the initiatives already in existence in the Mafeteng district. They will be working with the extension workers within the programme areas.

The following problems are encountered by Send-A-Cow:

1. It is difficult to have a tight schedule by which programmes have to be completed when working with OVC. These are school going children whose free time is the weekends liaising with communities and or foster parents in engaging OVC.
2. Send-a-Cow has to negotiate with the Head office especially with new programmes that have not been budgeted for. These negotiations may take time to be approved and can lead to potential partners' plans delayed and loss of interest.
3. Lack of communication among partners and stakeholders often lead to duplication of efforts on one community. This also leads to unhealthy competition amongst service providers.
4. The social development initiative has certain agreed stipulations by which members are expected to abide. These are not legal agreements and some members breach them. They don't meet their obligations and commitments.

These problems can be solved by:

- Although OVC may be the target for interventions, communities around them should also receive some benefit to avoid animosity.
- Food security should be viewed in its whole entirety. People supported may not necessarily want to engage in agricultural production. Other activities that are food security related should be looked into e.g. cottage industries based on locally available raw materials.

- Meeting and planning together of stakeholders working in the same area.

Send-A-Cow best practices are:

- The organization operates on fundamental cornerstones/ principles and these are: passing on of the gift, sharing and caring, nutrition promotion, income generation, improving the environment, training and education.
- Social development is a mandate before the group can get help and this goes on during the lifetime of the group with S.C.L. This is an important element in that it educates the group into being able to help, share and solve problems for each other.
- S.C.L has an exit strategy which it discusses with the group from the onset. The end to support groups is negotiated when groups are self-sufficient. They are weaned financially but may be assisted with training and other initiatives that do not require funding from S.C.L.

4.5 Rural Self-help Development Association

Rural Self-Help Development Association (RSDA) operates in selected areas in the districts of Mafeteng, Mochale's Hoek, Bera and Maseru. It is involved in the promotion of home gardens, dairy farming, Machobane Farming System demonstration and indigenous poultry promotion. In Bera district RSDA is supporting SGs through Lesotho National Association of People Living with AIDS. SGs members are trained in vegetable production after which they are supplied with vegetable seeds to grow vegetables on their private gardens. Initially RSDA supplied SGs with maize seed and fertilizers and members of SGs grew the maize on members' fields. This led to conflicts as owners of fields wanted bigger shares and OVCs and other needy members of the society were not being assisted. It was also found out that some members of SGs were sick and could not travel to the fields as they are located some distances from homes. As a result RSDA shifted to home gardens as they are nearer to homes. RSDA has introduced permaculture in

home gardens. The advantages of permaculture are that yields are higher, locally available resources are used and moisture is retained. RSDA has a long history of working with communal gardens and they have seen that communal gardens do not work. As result beneficiaries grow vegetables on their gardens and give the produce to OVCs and other needy people. Initially RSDA only trained selected representatives of SGs in vegetable production but it was found out that the trained SGs members were not training others. As a result RSDA trains all members of SGs on vegetable production.

SGs members are also trained on chicken farming. Indigenous chickens and dual-purpose chickens (*Likoekoe*) are supplied to SGs members. Each member is supplied 5 *likoekoe* chickens and 3 indigenous chickens. *Likoekoe* chickens are good layers but do not brood while the indigenous chickens are good brooders. After members' chickens grow to ten in size they pass on the progeny to other members of the SG. This has proven to be successful as chicken are confined and kept home and PLWAs can easily manage them. Beneficiaries eat protein in the form of eggs and chicken meat as well as getting some money to buy other essentials by selling eggs and chickens.

In Mohales Hoek the RSDA was involved in the Secure the Child Project (SCP) funded by CARE. The RSDA and World Food Programme through the SCP encouraged parents to be involved in school gardens. Parents were given food parcels when working in school gardens. This worked well where new gardens were being established as the virgin ground needed hard labor. This enabled scholars to have time for learning. The RSDA worked on an exit strategy which involved parents withdrawing slowly from school gardens after school gardens were on their feet and working well. As a result most schools have continued growing vegetables and having scholars eat vegetables at lunch as well as taking some home. Through RSDA's partnership with SCP at local schools, people became aware of keyhole gardens and double digging techniques. Parents claim that this approach has changed the attitude of their children, as they are now keen to engage in gardening

In Mafeteng district RSDA has been working as a Service Provider (SP) together with Send-A-Cow for FAO. The project involved beneficiaries being supplied with vegetable seeds to grow on key hole gardens. The vegetables grown were to be given to OVCs. The project was successful as many households in Mafeteng where RSDA worked took up key hole gardening. RSDA was

also involved in another FAO project in which households were supplied with drip kits for irrigation. A drip kit consisted of a drum, hose pipe and vegetable seeds. The drip kits were given to promising and active farmers. RSDA staff and beneficiaries were trained on the use of the drip kits by the Irrigation Section of MAFS. Roof water harvesting tanks were also erected using stones in selected households.

The problems encountered include:

- Some people selling given vegetable seeds
- Some exchanging vegetable seeds for beer and some selling the surplus vegetables instead of giving to OVCs.
- Drip kits drums being used for storing drinking water as well being used for brewing traditional beer and for irrigation
- Roof water tanks being used for storing drinking water (human and livestock purposes) and washing clothes and not for irrigation.

Their best practices are:

- Working closely with farmers
- Changing strategies quickly if one strategy is not working.
- Close monitoring
- Working in selected areas which they can manage

4.6 National University of Lesotho-Roma Valley Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Programme

The National University of Lesotho is implementing the NUL-Roma Valley Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Programme which is funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The programme covers 760 OVCs in 34 villages in the Roma valley. The main activities of the programme are to supply OVCs with garden tools, vegetable seeds, and provision of

psychosocial support. Beneficiaries are given those garden tools they do not have. Beneficiaries are selected by Chiefs and Councilors with priority being child-headed double orphans, followed by double orphans living with vulnerable adults and then vulnerable children. In each village there is a Care Facilitator (CF) who is selected by the Chief and the community. In most cases Care Facilitators are Village Health Workers and members of Support Groups. The CFs are responsible for distributing garden tools and vegetable seeds to beneficiaries. In addition the CFs are responsible for monitoring the programme.

All community members are taught how to build keyhole gardens but the garden tools and vegetable seeds are supplied to targeted households only. The programme has engaged university students studying agriculture to assist beneficiaries in building keyhole gardens. In addition students are attached to the programme during the university long vacation (June-July). The use of students and CFs has meant that the programme activities are closely monitored and at the same time students get hands-on training.

The problems encountered by the National University include:

- People fight over OVCs in order to get garden tools and other benefits
- Not all OVCs were given garden tools and this caused complaints from communities
- In some villages people are reluctant to have key hole gardens but prefer conventional gardens

The National University of Lesotho best practices are:

- Close monitoring
- Working closely with local authorities in the selection of beneficiaries
- The use of Care Facilitators
- Providing psychosocial support training to SGs members
- Training all members of the communities

- Engaging students in training and monitoring

4.7 Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Programme

The Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Programme (SANReMP) is an IFAD funded programme that was designed in 2000 but became operational in May 2005. It covers the Southern Districts of Mafeteng, Mochaleshoek and Quthing. The /project/programme in this state (as funded) will end in 2011. The designing period signifies the era when the present Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation was a Department within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, hence why the functions/components of the programme include those that are executed by the new Ministry. Components are:

- Agricultural (crop and livestock) diversification and intensification where the Department of Agricultural Research provides the mandate for operations.
- Land and water management
- Infrastructure and Training of communities
- Local capacity building of staff (in the project/programme area)

Under crop diversification the programme deals with seed multiplication and conservation agriculture. It also encourages the use organic manure.

The programme has formed partnership with Rev. Bason who is famous for conservation agriculture and based in Maphutseng. IFAD has even given the grant to the Reverend to spread/ provide support in conservation agriculture.

The livestock includes poultry (layers, broilers and the dual purpose birds), sheep and goats (for their mohair and milk respectively), pig production and dairy production (although no community has undertaken this yet). Under the programme communities are encouraged to produce fodder for their sheep and goats and are also encouraged to manage their range land. The programme started by providing ewes and does to improve the genetic pool of flock in the programme site. It later changed to provision of the rams and bucks as it realized that a change in

the genetic pool would be faster with the male species. Training of communities cuts across all the functions of the programme.-under agriculture as well as under land and water management.

The programme has managed to build 2 Resource centers in both Quthing and Mafeteng and 3 in Mofalehoek. A Woolshed has been built in Tsatsane, Quthing and two are in the process in Mofalehoek. The total number of infrastructure originally planned cannot be met at present. This is due to a 5 year lapse in period between the planning of the programme and the execution of the programme. The budgeted funds do not meet the present costs due to inflation and other related costs.

Other stakeholders in the organization's intervention and their roles:

- a) The Ministry of Agriculture through the crops, livestock and agricultural research components
- (b) The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation (MFLR) with its components of land and water management
- (c) Ministry of Local Government with the Action Learning Cycle which is also used by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security to engage communities in identifying and drawing action plans.
- (d) The Ministry of Home Affairs with marking and registration of animals
- (e) The Marketing department of The Ministry of Industry Trade and Cooperatives
- (f) Rev. Basson with Conservation Agriculture
- (g) RSDA that is contracted by SANReMP in the Mafeteng District to support organic farming
- (h) Managing for Impact an IFAD funded project where KHANYA aicdd is subcontracted to assist SANReMP to realize impact.

Problems encountered and how they are solved-

- There is not enough organic manure due to smaller numbers of animals and other organic materials. Encouraging people to use conservation agriculture ensures that manure is

applied to a smaller area than in the conventional farming method where manure is spread throughout the field

- Training is treated as an ‘event’ rather than a process. The entire components of the subject are taught in one session as against teaching in bits as the steps are taken. The problem is solved by devising a guideline where just one topic is treated per session
- There are no standardized training manuals and therefore no uniformity in training within the same topic. The programme is in the process of standardizing training manuals with the assistance of Ministries concerned.
- Reporting is haphazard due to weak links between management systems. The programmes has devised Monthly Reporting Action Plans between the MAFS and MFLR
- The monitoring and evaluation of the programme is weak, almost non-existing. Districts expect personnel from the Programme’s headquarters to do the monitoring and evaluation of day to day activities. The Monitoring and Evaluation system is being devised to assist staff at all levels to monitor and evaluate the progress.
- Staff mobility/transfers are a hindrance. The programme has no control over this but an example of how this can hinder progress is demonstrated by this example. Transfers were rumored in January of 2008, but were only effected in June after the Central Agricultural show. The project could not invest in people who were being transferred to outside the project area and yet at the same time it lost time to implement the plans by 6 months.

SANReMP best practices are:

- Partnering with NGO’s that have similar programmes. This extends the arm of the project.
- Conservation farming not only conserves the soil matter but also uses less manure as only the spot where seed is planted is manured
- Community involvement in matters that affect them gives communities a chance to critique themselves, to improve decision making and to bring confidence when things go right.
- Changing tactics in purchasing breeding stock from female breeding stock to male breeding stock has expedited the process of livestock improvement

- Seed potato multiplication and irrigation scheme particularly at Mphaki is one of the success stories.
- Once ‘Interest groups have been formed, members are subjected to a discipline called Theory of Change’ Theory of Change aims at building commitment and willingness among members. Success stories realized with Sekhutlong and Metsi-Masooana groups both in the Mohale’s hoek district.

4.8 Best practices

. The following highlight some of the best practices used by the organizations interviewed: review.

- All agencies operate from a small and manageable geographic area and are therefore able to concentrate their effort in those areas
- Most agencies link food security interventions with MAFS for continuity after their programmes have folded
- As a means of providing extension services, organizations train farmers to become Village Extension Workers/Lead Farmers. These assist other farmers in the absence of a MAFS Extension Worker as well as extend the arms of the organization
- Some organizations are flexible to change strategies if one strategy is not working, e.g. not encouraging communal and concentrating on individual/private gardens
- Most organizations practice close monitoring of their activities to observe if things are going according to plan
- Some organizations have disciplines that create a code of conduct for members. These disciplines built cohesion, commitment, self-help and problem solving among members
- Some organizations train farmers in seed production and this facilitates availability and easy distribution of seeds among farmers
- Value addition is done through processing and preservation of vegetables while they are in season and in abundance so as to lengthen the shelf-life

- Nutrition education is provided to members so as to validate why there should be diversification of produce (vegetables and livestock)
- Some organizations work with schools in their areas which is a good move in that it involves the youth in food production at an early age
- There is deliberate intention by some organizations to increase profitability through market oriented approaches to production and sales. Record keeping, cash flow analysis and other related matters are taught to members
- In an effort to mitigate the effects of drought and respond to shortages of water, organizations encourage farmers to build roof water harvesting tanks and use low cost gravity-fed irrigation
- Some organizations have training manuals to support extension work
- The ‘Neheletse system facilitates coverage of where more people benefit from the few livestock that were initially given to Lead Farmers
- Organizations encourage and use study tours as a means of sharing ideas, learning what others are doing and gauge themselves as to how they progressed
- The use of an exit strategy that is discussed with farmers/groups from the onset helps “weaning” of farmers/groups to be easy. The strategy only weans the groups financially but are assisted by MAFS with training and other issues that do not require funding

4.9 Opportunities for collaboration and partnerships

All the stakeholders interviewed indicated their willingness to collaborate and partner with MAFS/UNICEF in fighting food insecurity in the country. Most of the organizations have at one time partnered with other organizations. Furthermore some of the organizations have been engaged as Service Providers of development partners. For instance Send-a-Cow and RSDA have been FAO SPs in several projects. The advantages of partnering with these organizations are that some have ongoing programmes, others’ work in certain areas which they are familiar, have experienced staff, and have close monitoring systems in place. MAFS/UNICEF and the

organizations would have to agree on the roles of each organization and the interventions that each would provide and then sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

5 LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION

Most of the observations about the project are in connection with its administration.

- The lack of Memorandum of Understanding drawn between UNICEF and MAFS resulted in:
 - Partners not understanding their roles in the project
 - Weak project management with project coordination exchanging hands between the two divisions of the DFS
 - Weak project monitoring with project not included in the implementing agency's project monitoring system
 - Support Groups reporting to whichever ministry established them e.g. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Health and Social Services and Ministry of Local Government. These groups are supposed to report annually to their parent ministries and the ministries to report to UNICEF.
 - Non-verification of beneficiaries which resulted in some inactive groups and clubs being supplied with garden kits
 - No clear indication of how many times the beneficiaries were to produce goods to serve the purpose the kits were meant to effect. There was no binding agreement to this
- The lack of communication within MAFS between the DFS and District Agricultural Offices resulted in:
 - MAFS staff at District Agricultural Offices and Resource Centers not understanding the objectives of the project, how it operated and their roles in the project
 - Garden kits being delivered direct to beneficiaries
 - Beneficiaries being supplied incomplete garden kits
 - Some SGs and YFCs not receiving garden kits meant for them
 - Some garden kits being kept at local authorities and being unused
- Every District Agricultural Office and secondary beneficiary use own beneficiary selection criterion as there is no uniform beneficiary targeting mechanism

- Lack of communication between development partners and other funding organizations leads to duplication of efforts. e.g. within UN agencies themselves where UNICEF and FAO gave the same kits and sometimes to the same people.
- The up-scaling of a project from covering a few districts to covering the whole country with limited resources results in the project having limited impact
- The up-scaling of a project from covering a few districts to covering the whole country without learning from the initial smaller phase of the project can lead to failures
- The lack of baseline information and progress reports makes measuring a project's impact difficult
- The involvement of local authorities (Chiefs and Councilors) in projects is important because they are apprised of developments in their areas and when disputes arise they are able to resolve disputes as they have background information
- Lack of clear distribution channel of garden kits from headquarters to intended beneficiaries results kits being delivered at different locations e.g. Resource Centers, Chiefs home, Councilors home and members' home. This results in difficulties in monitoring where and how many kits have been delivered.
- Lack of planned meetings with beneficiaries lead to a lot of attrition and non-attendance of meetings among group members.

6 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

Most members of SGs and SGs produce vegetables on communal gardens while others produce on individual/private gardens. Most communal gardens are not fenced while barbed wire is used by others. Private/individual gardens are fenced with barbed wire followed by both the diamond mesh and *lekhoakhoa*. Dam/pond and public tap are the most common sources of water for watering gardens while watering cans and tins are used for watering. The commonly grown vegetables are cabbage and spinach. Drought, pests, insufficient water and trespass by animals are the major problems encountered in gardening.

A few organizations involved in food security activities were interviewed and their best practices examined. One of their best practice is that they concentrate their efforts on small and manageable geographic area and are therefore able to concentrate on these area. All the organizations interviewed indicated their willingness to collaborate and partner with MAFS/UNICEF in fighting food insecurity in the country. The major lesson learnt from the evaluation of HGP is that the lack of Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF and MAFS led to implementation problems which led to the project having limited impact.

6.2 Conclusions

Lesotho is faced with the HIV/AIDS pandemic which has resulted in increased numbers of OVCs and PLWAs and at the same time is faced with declining agricultural production which has resulted in food insecurity. UNICEF in support of the Government of Lesotho, to try and address this devastating situation, funded and supported a Home Gardens Project (HGP) which was implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS). UNICEF contracted Sechaba Consultants to evaluate the impact of this project. The following are conclusions made from this evaluation:

Project organization and management is weak and not well coordinated. There are no proper project documents between UNICEF and MAFS. The distribution of garden kits to the targeted

beneficiaries is haphazard as a result some garden kits are distributed and delivered to some of the people that they were not intended for. There is also poor communication and coordination at the implementation level among staff and relevant stakeholders, this leads to lack of support from their part.

There is lack of proper project monitoring and evaluation system. The Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the Department of Planning and Policy Analysis (DPPA) of MAFS revealed that they were not aware of HGP as such it is not included in MAFS project monitoring system. On the same note, the Monitoring and Evaluation section of UNICEF reported not being involved in the monitoring of this project.

The beneficiary targeting mechanism is poor and confused. It is difficult to get the criteria used in selecting beneficiaries as this differs from district to district e.g. in some districts they say the selection is done by MAFS and UNICEF, while in other districts they say the number of members of beneficiaries is the criterion used.

The Supply Unit of UNICEF is doing a good work of selecting the garden kits suppliers as is done through competitive tending, the problems starts when these kits are being distributed. The communication between the suppliers and the staff at the district is not good as a result some suppliers get to deliver when they are not expected.

Training of beneficiaries is one of the positive aspect that has been achieved by the project. The Nutrition Assistants of MAFS trained SGs and YFCs throughout the country on topics such as, HIV/AIDS, breastfeeding, nutrition, vegetable production, poultry and pigs rearing. The part that was not done though planned for is the update and review of educational materials and facilitation of excursions for youth groups.

The overall project impact is limited based on the reports from the beneficiaries which indicated that they received vegetables once a year while some reported receiving them once in two years.

In a poverty stricken country such as Lesotho, the project has potential to improve and impact positively to the livelihood of this country if well planned and implemented. There are other organizations in the country and in the region that are involved in food security activities. The project can learn some of the best practices used by these organizations and improve its approach and get good results.

6.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations emanate from the evaluation of the Homes Gardens Project:

1. The project should continue but must be re-designed in terms of signing a Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF and MAFS. The Memorandum of Understanding should entail the following:
 - The roles of each agency involved in the project
 - Beneficiaries' role
 - The period of the project
 - Other stakeholders involved in the project
 - Geographical coverage of the project
 - Which Department/Division within implementing agency is to manage and coordinate the project
 - The reporting structure and frequency
 - Agreed monitoring and evaluation system
2. The project should continue within MAFS but must address the issues raised in 1 above.
3. If UNICEF decides to partners with other organizations involved in similar activities, UNICEF should select the partners by requesting for proposals and organizations be selected on merit based on the qualities of interest to MAFS and UNICEF.
4. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security should improve communication between the DFS and District Agricultural Offices
5. The project should concentrate its efforts in selected districts in which other organizations with similar interventions do not operate or seek to partner with others to increase coverage.
6. Local authorities (Chiefs and Councilors) and MAFS staff at Resource Center level should be involved in the facilitation and selection of beneficiaries
7. Selection criteria of beneficiaries should be uniform. Selection criteria should be developed which should prioritize beneficiaries according to activeness and need. For

instance selected SGs should have gardens and the quantities of garden kits be supplied according to membership and size of gardens. With regards to OVCs child-headed households be given priority followed by double orphans and then orphans and lastly vulnerable children.

8. Verification of beneficiaries should be undertaken prior to distribution of garden kits
9. Training on vegetable production and other related topics be provided to selected beneficiaries before being supplied with garden kits
10. Local authorities (Chiefs and Councilors) be advised to allocate communal gardens next to water sources if possible
11. The project should include fencing material in garden kits as encroachment by livestock is considered a major problem
12. OVCs should take part in project activities like producing vegetables as the current practice of giving them vegetables leads to dependency syndrome
13. The project should include more schools in its activities as schools reach more beneficiaries easily.
14. Competitions be held for best performing secondary beneficiaries in terms of producing more vegetables and assisting more primary beneficiaries on a regular basis as a way of motivating them
15. Excursions and study tours for secondary beneficiaries to best performing groups and clubs to learn from each other be undertaken
16. The project staff should have regular meetings with beneficiaries so as to be appraised of problems encountered and ways of solving them found
17. There should be strong monitoring of project's activities and the project be included in MAFS monitoring and evaluation system. On the same note the UNICEF monitoring and evaluation section should be involved in project activities.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Composition of a garden kit

A set of garden tools consists one each of the following:

1. 1x wheelbarrow
2. 1x digging spade
3. 1x watering can, 10 liters (Plastic, blue)
4. 1x rake
5. 1x digging fork
6. 1x water drum, 200 liters (blue, black)

A Seed Basket consists one packet of each of the following:

1. 1x 50g Pumpkin
2. 1x 500g Beans (contender)
3. 1x 500g Peas (green feast)
4. 1x 35g Mustard (Florida broad leaf)
5. 1x 25g Kale (tronchuda)
6. 1x 25g Cabbage (star 3306)
7. 1x 25g Spinach (Florida broad leaf)
8. 1x 25g carrots (chantenary)
9. 1x 25g onion (suitable type for climate)

Annex 2: List of people and organizations interviewed

1. Mrs. 'Mapotsane Potsane, Principal Nutrition Officer and Home Gardens project Coordinator, Nutrition Division, Ministry of Agriculture
2. Ms . Kekeletso Morolong, Senior Programme Assistant, United Nations Children's Fund
3. Mr. Molopo Mkorosi, Senior Economic Planner, Department of Planning and Policy Analysis, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
4. Ms. Limakatso Nqosa, Assistant Economic Planner, Department of Planning and Policy Analysis, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
5. Ms. Mosili Mokau, Area Extension Officer, Maputose Resource Center, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
6. Mrs. Paballo Pule, Area Technical Officer (Nutrition), Maputsoe Resource Center, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
7. Ms Mpewi Semoli, Senior Supply Assistant, United Nations Children's Fund
8. Dr. Wasim Al-Timimi, Chief Child Survival Care and Development, United Nations Children's Fund
9. Mrs. Puseletso Thobileng, Principal Nutrition Officer, Nutrition Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
10. Ms. Nkeme Sehalahala, Administrator, NUL-Roma Valley Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Programme, National University of Lesotho
11. Mr. Lefu Sekete, Project Manager, Agronomy and Extension, Rural Self-Help Development Association
12. Ms Matseliso Melato, Agricultural Assistant, Sehlabathebe Resource Center
13. Mr. Khotso Mapepesa, Team Leader, Send-A-Cow, Morija
14. Mrs. Sebongile Makeka, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF

15. Ms Likhapha Motuba, Area Technical Officer (Crops), Mokhotlong
16. Mrs. ‘Mankune Nkune, Area Extension Officer, Mokhotlong
17. Ms Moipone Mpesi, Area Extension Supervisor, Nqabeni Resource Center
18. Mr. Maboella Ramaboella, Area Technical Officer (Crops), Nqabeni Resource Center
19. Mr. Mphasa Mphasa, Area Extension Officer, Pilot Resource Center
20. Ms ‘Mamonts’i Monts’i Area Technical Officer (Nutrition), Pilot Resource Center
21. The Chief of Ha Mavuka, Sehlabathebe Resource Center
22. Mrs. ‘Mamoshengu Tshabalala, Acting Area Extension Officer, Ramabanta Resource Center
23. Mrs. Lineo Lesetla, Area Technical Officer (Nutrition), Ramabanta Resource Center
24. Mrs. Lethusang Hanyane, Director of Field Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
25. Mr. Ntitia Tuoane, Chief Extension Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
26. Mr. Letuka Mohapi, Senior Extension Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
27. Mrs. Malianakoena Bereng, Chief Nutrition Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
28. Mr. Habi Habi, Project Coordinator, World Vision – Lesotho
29. Mr. Palo Mochafo, Project Manager, Southern Mountain Association for Rural Development and Transformation Christian Council of Lesotho
30. Mr. Richard Ramoeletsi, Manager, Mohale Area, Lesotho Highlands Development Authority
31. Mr. Lepita, Area Extension Officer, Koali Resource Center
32. Mrs. Pusetso Teletsane, Agricultural Assistant, Mpharane Resource Center

33. Mr. Moitahli Khemi, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, SANReMP

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Annex 4: Beneficiaries' questionnaire

EVALUATION OF HOME GARDENS PROJECT

1. District _____

2. Resource Centre _____

3. Name of Interviewer _____

4. Date of interview _____

Introduction:

My name is I am working with Sechaba Consultants which has been commissioned by The Ministry of Agriculture and UNICEF to undertake an evaluation of the Home Gardens Project. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess progress in the implementation of the project and identify its strengths and weaknesses. The information collected here is strictly confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the evaluation.

1, Organization identification

Question	Coding categories	Response #
1.1 Respondent's name _____	Male 1 Female 2	<input type="text"/>
1.2 Type of Organization	Support Group 1 Young Farmers Club 2	<input type="text"/>
1.3 Name of organization	_____	<input type="text"/>
1.4 When was organization formed (year)	_____	<input type="text"/>
1.5 Total membership in the organization	_____	<input type="text"/>
	Don't know 98	

1.6 How many are males	_____	<input type="text"/>
	Don't know 98	
1.7 How many are females	_____	<input type="text"/>
	Don't know 98	
1.8 What does the organization do or what are the functions of the organization	Help HIV/AIDS patient 1 Help OVCs 2 Help HIV/AIDS patients and OVCs 3 Encourage youth to be interested in agriculture 4 Others(Specify)_____	<input type="text"/>
1.9 Have you heard about the Home Gardens Project (<i>Thuso ea thepa ea majareteng</i>)	Yes 1 No 2	<input type="text"/>
1.10 From whom did you hear about the project	Extension Officer 1 Members of my organization 2 Neighbor 3 Councilor 4 Chief 5 Member of Parliament 6 Others (specify)_____	<input type="text"/>
1.11 Who were given the garden tools	Support Groups 1 Young Farmers Clubs 2 Orphans and vulnerable children 3 Support groups and Young Farmers Clubs 4 Others (Specify)_____	<input type="text"/>
1.12 What was the criterion used for selecting organizations receiving garden tools	_____ _____ _____	<input type="text"/>
1.13 Has your organization received garden tools	Yes 1 No 2	<input type="text"/>
1.14 What were your organization's needs before receiving tools	Home-based care kits 1 Food for HIV/AIDS patients 2 Food OVCs 3 Food for HIV/AIDS patients and OVCs 4	<input type="text"/>

	Garden tools 5 Others (Specify) _____	_____
1.14 Which year did your organization receive garden tools	_____	<input type="text"/>
1.15 Where were the garden tools from	Ministry of Agriculture 1 Ministry of Local Government 2 Ministry of Health 3 First Lady's Office 4 UNICEF 5 Member of Parliament 6 Chief 7 Councilor 8 Church 9 Others (Specify) _____ Don't know 98	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> _____
1.16 Where were the garden tools delivered when they arrived in the area from source	At Committee members' homes 1 At other members' homes 2 At the Resource Centre 3 At Councillor's home 4 At Chiefs home 5 At Member of Parliament home 6 Others (Specify) _____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> _____
1.17 Where are the garden tools kept	At Committee members' homes 1 At other members' homes 2 At the Resource Centre 3 At Councillor's home 4 At Chiefs home 5 At Member of Parliament home 6 Others (Specify) _____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> _____
1.18 What was the criterion used for keeping them where they are	Member with a garden 1 Member interested in gardening 2 Member close to water source 3 Only member from village 4 Don't know 98	<input type="text"/>
1.19 How was the criterion arrived at	Discussed within the organization 1 Told to do so by the Extension Officer 2 Told to do so by Councilor 3 Told to do so by Chief 4 Told to do so by Member of Parliament 5	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

	Don't know	98	
1.20 Did you receive any training on vegetable production	Yes	1	<input type="text"/>
	No	2	
1.21 If yes was the training before or after relieving garden tools	Before	1	<input type="text"/>
	After	2	
	Not applicable	99	
1.22. What garden tools did the organization receive	<u>Tool</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	Spade	_____	
	Digging fork	_____	
	Rake	_____	
	Wheel barrow	_____	
	Plastic drum	_____	
	Watering can	_____	
	Vegetable seeds	_____	
	Complete kit	_____	
	Others (Specify) _____		
	Tick all the applies		
1.23 How many times have your organization received garden tools	Once	1	<input type="text"/>
	Twice	2	
	Thrice	3	
	Don't know	4	
1.24 Where do you produce vegetables	Communal garden	1	<input type="text"/> If 1 or 3 go to 2 If 2 go to 3
	Individual (private) garden	2	
	Both types of gardens	3	
	Do not produce	4	
1.25 If not producing vegetables, why are you not producing vegetables	Do not have a garden	1	<input type="text"/> Go to 5
	Do not have garden tools	2	
	Drought	3	
	No water supply for watering	4	
	Livestock damage vegetables	5	
	Others (Specify) _____		

2. Communal Gardens and private gardens

2.1 What is the working arrangement on communal garden	Members work communally	1	<input type="text"/>
	Each member works on own plot	2	
	Members work communally and individually	3	
	Not applicable	99	
2.2 What fencing material is used in the communal garden	Not fenced	1	<input type="text"/>
	Lekhoakhoa	2	
	Stones	3	

	Barbed wire 4 Diamond mesh wire 5 Others _____ Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Types of plots in the garden	Raised beds 1 Terracing 2 Double digging 3 Keyhole 4 Peace 5 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4 What is the source of water for watering vegetables	Own tap within yard 1 Public tap 2 Hand pump 3 Spring 4 River/stream 5 Dam/pond 6 Others (Specify) _____ 7 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5 How far is the source of water	0 – 30 minutes 1 31 - 60 Minutes 2 >60 minutes 3 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6 What do you use for getting water	Hands/head 1 Wheel barrow 2 Sleigh 3 Irrigation pipes 4 Donkeys/mule 5 Scotch cart 6 Bicycle 7 Vehicle 8 Tractor 9 Others (Specify) _____ Not applicable 99 Tick all the applies	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7 What do you use for watering vegetables	Tin 1 Perforated tin 2 Watering can 3 Hose pipes 4 Drip irrigation 5 Others (Specify) _____ Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.8 What are the types of manure used on the plot	None 1 Organic 2 Inorganic 3 Both organic & inorganic 4 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.9 What are the types of vegetables grown last season	None	1	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Cabbage	2	
	Spinach	3	
	Tomatoes	4	
	Carrots	5	
	Beetroot	6	
	Green beans	7	
	Rape	8	
	Mustard	9	
	Onion	10	
	Butternut	11	
	Others (Specify) _____		
	Not applicable	99	
Tick all the applies			
2.10 How was the yield	Good	1	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Fair	2	
	Bad/poor	3	
	Not applicable	99	
2.11 Problems encountered in gardening	Drought	1	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Insufficient water	2	
	Pests	3	
	Theft	4	
	Not enough labor	5	
	Not enough/lack of garden tools	6	
	Trespass by animals	7	
	Members conflicts	8	
	Lack of inputs	9	
	Inputs arriving late	10	
	Frost	11	
	Damage by birds	12	
	Others (Specify) _____		
Not applicable	99		
Tick all the applies			

3. Individual (private) Gardens

Question	Coding categories	Response #						
3.1 Which year did you receive garden tools	_____ Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
3.2. What garden tools did you receive	<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Tool</u></th> <th><u>Quantity</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Spade</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Digging fork</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Tool</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	Spade	_____	Digging fork	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Tool</u>	<u>Quantity</u>							
Spade	_____							
Digging fork	_____							

	Rake _____ Wheel barrow _____ Plastic drum _____ Watering can _____ Vegetable seeds _____ Complete kit _____ Others (Specify) _____ Tick all the applies	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3. What fencing material is used in your garden	Not fenced 1 Lekhoakhoa 2 Stones 3 Barbed wire 4 Diamond mesh wire 5 Others _____ Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4.Types of plots in the garden	Raised beds 1 Terracing 2 Double digging 3 Keyhole 4 Peace 5 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5.What is the source of water supply for watering vegetables	Own tap within yard 1 Public tap 2 Hand pump 3 Spring 4 River/stream 5 Dam/pond 6 Others (Specify) _____ 7 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.6.How far is the source of water	0 – 30 minutes 1 31 - 60 Minutes 2 >60 minutes 3 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.7.What do you use for getting water	Hands/head 1 Wheel barrow 2 Sleigh 3 Irrigation pipes 4 Donkeys/mule 5 Scotch cart 6 Bicycle 7 Vehicle 8 Tractor 9 Others (Specify) _____ Not applicable 99 Tick all the applies	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.8.What do you use for watering vegetables	Tin 1 Perforated tin 2 Watering can 3 Hose pipes 4 Drip irrigation 5 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3.9.What are the types of manure used on the plot	None 1 Organic 2 Inorganic 3 Both organic & inorganic 4 Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.10.What are the types of vegetables grown last season	None 1 Cabbage 2 Spinach 3 Tomatoes 4 Carrots 5 Beetroot 6 Green beans 7 Rape 8 Mustard 9 Onion 10 Butternut 11 Others (Specify) _____ Not applicable 99 Tick all the applies	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3.11. Problems encountered in gardening	Drought 1 Insufficient water 2 Pests 3 Theft 4 Not enough labor 5 Not enough/lack of garden tools 6 Trespass by animals 7 Lack of inputs 8 Inputs arriving late 9 Frost 10 Damage by birds 11 Others (Specify) _____ Not applicable 99	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

4. Produce sharing arrangements

Question	Coding categories	Response #
4.1. Who is given the produce	Single orphans 1 Double orphans 2 Both Single & double orphans 3 Vulnerable children 4 Orphans & vulnerable children 5 HIV/AIDS Patients 6 Others (Specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> _____
4.2. How was the criterion arrived at	Discussed within the organization 1 Told to do so by the Extension Officer 2 Told to do so by Councilor 3 Told to do so by Chief 4 Told to do so by Member of Parliament 5 Others (Specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
4.3 When produce is available what is the frequency of giving produce to beneficiaries	Once a year 1 Quarterly 2 Semi-annually 3 Others (specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
4.4 How many orphans and vulnerable children are assisted by your organization	_____ Don't know 98	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5. How many HIV/AIDS patients are assisted by your organization	_____ Don't know 98	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.6 How many other groups are assisted by your organization	_____ Don't know 98	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.7 What do you do with surplus produce	Never have surplus 1 Sell 2 Identify more needy people to be assisted 3 Others (specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
4.8 What are your family needs that are met from the distribution of garden tools	None 1 Family eats some of the vegetables 2 Family uses garden tools for own	<input type="checkbox"/>

	production Others (Specify)_____	3 _____
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5. Project performance and impact

Question	Coding categories	Response #
5.1 Do you think the services provided have addressed beneficiaries' needs	Yes	1
	No	2
	Do not know	3

5.2. Which needs have been met?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5.3. Which needs have not been met?

2.
3.
4.
5.

5.4. What are the problems that the support group/young farmers club experienced since it started operations?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5.5. How do you think these problems should be addressed?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5.6. Are there any other activities that you feel the support group/young farmers club should implement?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5.7. On the whole how do you think the support group/young farmers club should be improved?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5.8 What best practices the support group/young farmers are engaged which can be copied by others?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5.9 Which other funding agencies assist the support group/young farmers club?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5.10 What is the vision of the support group/young farmers club in 5 years time?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Annex 5: Work plan

Activity	July 2009				August 2009					September 2009					Oct2009
	15-16	17-20	21	22-31	3	4-5	6	7-28	31-4	7-8	9-16	17	22	23-5	6
Documents review	⇒														
Development of data collection methodology		⇒													
Submission of full proposal on methodology			⇒												
Literature review				⇒											
Submission of literature review report					⇒										
Design and development of questionnaire						⇒									
Training of enumerators							⇒								
Data collection								⇒							
Data entry									⇒						
Data analysis										⇒					
Report Writing											⇒				
Submission of draft report												⇒			
Presentation findings to UNICEF and stakeholders													⇒		
Final report writing														⇒	
Submission of final report and data sets															⇒

Notes: 1. Weekends and holidays have been excluded