



FIELD PROJECT REPORT

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Executive Field Officer



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Kamohelo & Lefunyane

Lepoqong Care Givers

In November 2008 Cathy Hayes O'Brien and Triona O'Keeffe, volunteers from Kerry who have been working in Maseru since October supporting Dee Fay's work with orphans and vulnerable children, visited Maputsoe for two weeks to get an insight into the work of Twinning the Kingdoms and their projects in local villages. Cathy and Triona made a huge difference to the work of Lepoqong Care Givers by contributing R4,150 (€320) for recreational toys in the Centre and initiating an essential feeding programme for 16 of the most critical patients attended by Lepoqong volunteers with a donation of R5,000 (€385). The programme will provide each of the 16 patients with a monthly food basket that will cover their basic needs; the programme will be funded for eighteen months. Cathy and Triona visited a number of the families and were concerned by the conditions in which people were trying to survive; all of the people were hungry and some too sick to cook and indeed some did not have pots or stoves on which to cook. 80% of the patients are HIV positive and taking anti retroviral drugs; in order for the medication to be effective it is vital that food is taken before tablets, thus Cathy and Triona's programme will ensure that people can take their medication regularly. The girls were also concerned that a number of the patients were so sick that it was necessary for children to stay at home from school to care for them.



Malimpho Tsemane



Maneo Litabe & family



Khotso Molhabeng



Teboho Letlaka

The food basket comprises of; a sack of crushed mealie meal, 1 kg of beans, 1.5 Litres of cooking oil, a bar of sunlight soap, Vaseline, matches and 5 litres of paraffin. The total cost per basket is R154 (€12) per month; cost for 16 people per month R2464 (€190); cost of the programme for 18 months R44,352 (€3,412); cost to support one person for 18 months R2,772 (€214). It is recommended that Twinning the Kingdoms promotes this project so that families in Ireland can be encouraged to support a sick person and that Lepoqong can increase the numbers of people that they can care for.



Mamosa Mothibeli



Matjato Khothe



Mantho Tiela



Liphapang Mosolobane

Ntate Mankoe and the Field Officer delivered the boxes of supplies and a quilt to each home between the 9th and the 18th of December. In January deliveries will be made to those people who are living on their own by Nt. Mankoe and members of the Lepoqong youth group, Willing Hearts; those people who have carers will collect supplies from the Community Development Centre. House visits were most important to establish further supports that are needed. A number of the patients have a disability and this was reported to the Reikamohetse Association of People with Disabilities. Parents were encouraged to send children to school in January; a number of the children are attending the Lepoqong weekend feeding programme. All of those visited were so relieved to know that food would be available on a regular basis and many people did not own a blanket so the quilt was a much appreciated gift. Our thanks to Ruth Griffin, Fiona Cooke, Triona O'Neill, John Barry Family, Sheila Gorman, Theresa Moriarty and the staff of the Cork Probation Service who helped fund the Christmas quilts; their donation totalled €710 (R9,230). Remaining monies will enable another sick person to be added to the list.



Manapo Lethea



Mamotintolo Matjakhe



Mabulane Mokone & Family

Before deliveries could begin one of the gentlemen on the priority list died and Mamoea Ramakatso was taken to Maluti hospital where she was operated on for a deep leg ulcer; she remained in hospital for 9 days. As she had no transport and no money to pay the hospital bill Twinning the Kingdoms arranged for her journey home. Unable to get to the local Filter Clinic for her dressings to be changed Dr Jesse sent a nurse with TTK's Field Officer to attend to the lady in her home and provided her with essential medication; the nurse worked by candle light to change the dressings; Mamoea lives on her own and is reliant on her sister for care.



Mamoea Ramakatso



Regina Mafemekoane



Kamoho Ralebakeng



Malimpo Tsemene



Khotso Mothabei



Mantso Tiel's grandson



Cathy Hayes O'Brien and Triona O'Keeffe

Twining the Kingdoms would like to thank Cathy Hayes O'Brien and Triona O'Keeffe for initiating this essential programme that is already making so much difference to people's lives in six villages; this feeding programme will act as a model for the work that TTK will undertake in the remaining six villages in Maputsoe.

Lepoqong Care Givers (Phela U Phelise) found in the past month that their original name has been used by another organisation thus the change of name to Lepoqong Care Givers. Currently the group are focused on two projects; a programme of visits to the terminally sick and the weekend feeding programme for orphans and vulnerable children. The ten volunteers visit the sick on Tuesday and Thursday of which there are 120 people living in six villages; clients are referred by the local chiefs and neighbours. CARE Letsema are supporting this programme by contributing R5,000 (€385) per month; from this, R4,000 (€307) is the stipend for volunteers and R1,000 (€77) covers electricity, stationery, transport, airtime and food for the sick. The group identified that food is the major issue for all of the people they visit.

The weekend feeding programme has 64 children registered and TTK is providing R2,000 (€154) on a monthly basis. The Lepoqong volunteers organised a party for the children before Christmas. The local District Council gave Lepoqong a large roll of fabric and they employed a local seamstress to make clothes for the children. Each child received a package that included; clothing, sweets, biscuits, crisps and a toothbrush. TTK provided toothpaste and soap for each child.



The celebration was attended by CARE Letsema, Chief Peter, representatives of the District Council, National AIDS Commission, members of the Qoqolosing committee, parents and carers; it was an opportunity for TTK to thank Lepoqong volunteers and CARE Letsema for the good work being done from the Community Development Centre. The celebrations were rounded off by a hot meal for all those attending.



Thuso Khotoso, a student social worker has offered to work as a volunteer during his university holidays to support the Lepoqong youth group, Willing Hearts; he attended the Carers course at the Centre in July.

TTK have provided the funding for the security fencing for the perimeter of the Community Centre; the fencing is going to be erected by a member of the Lepoqong committee and Popa Seako. Popa is currently attending a 4 month basic computer course in Peka, funded by TTK volunteers Una Martin and Anne Delaney; he is progressing well, is enthusiastic and eager to practice his skills; his expertise will be really valuable in supporting the Lepoqong youth group who are eager to start computing at the Centre. The computer room still needs a carpenter to construct the computer bench.

It is recommended that TTK's long term funding plan for Lepoqong should include a monthly stipend for the 10 volunteers that could be based on the CARE Letsema model.

The Lepoqong Youth Group, Willing Hearts were given R700 (€54) by Brenda Friel as a loan in order to start their gardening project. The aim of the project is for each of the 9 members to plant and grow vegetables; cabbage, beetroot, carrots, onions and potatoes which they will sell locally. The group met to agree on the vegetables they would purchase, the implements they needed, two spades and two digging forks, and to designate tasks to each member of the group. Five members met at 6.00am one morning at Ntate Mankoe's house in order to collect manure while the other members travelled to Leribe to buy plants. Each member has planted a variety of vegetables outside their own house in order to tend them every day and the plants are growing. Lepoqong committee members are eager that more young people are encouraged to join this group.



The Field Officer and Pheelo Tau visited Durham Link in Maseru in order to investigate the outdoor activities offered to groups of young people. It is recommended that the group attend a weekend in January before they return to school, 17th & 18th where they can take part in team building activities. The group will camp and have the opportunity to take part in water sports and rock climbing. Ntate Mankoe would transport the group in the jeep and stay overnight and document the activities. Cost estimate for the weekend €400.



Willing Hearts' & Ntate Mankoe

Setsoto Designs



Mamphe Makhotsa

Theresa Moriarty, TTK volunteer from Ballydavid, undertook a 5 day course at the weaving centre incorporating the dying process, teasing the raw wool, carding, spinning, setting up the loom and weaving. Theresa enjoyed the course and produced a small weaving of her own design with which she was delighted. In her evaluation of the course she recommended that for future week long courses the time spent on the preparatory work of teasing, carding and spinning be cut to a minimum so that participants could concentrate on the main goal of learning how to weave. Theresa suggested that participants be encouraged to use face masks when teasing and carding the wool to guard against inhaling the fibres.

The Field Officer met with Kate Chisholm, Project Manager for Aid to Artisans a South African based Support Company who has been funded by Kellogg to work with four small weaving companies in Lesotho over an eighteen month period. Chisholm selected the four companies based on the need for the companies to develop and considered Setsoto Designs to be much more advanced in its business development. The initial funding proposal had been for a period of 5 years and has been cut to 18 months which Chisholm feels will not be long enough to support and grow the businesses. Chisholm and her SA designer, an expert in felting are spending time with each of the companies on developing new products, branding, marketing and trade shows.



Pictured are two of the Lebohang Morena participants who attended two days of training at Setsoto Designs to learn how to prepare and dye wool for their crib figures; both women were delighted with the experience and learned fast.



St. Monica's Evaluation



The exterior of the building is complete. The interior comprises of three classrooms, two of which can become one large meeting room as there is a wooden divider between the two; the divider is causing a few problems at the moment that need to be resolved. The windows are metal but a little frail thus the exterior windows and doors need to have burglar-proof metal bars added. Estimated at R4,900 (€377).



Currently it is difficult to have a meeting with parents thus the staff are delighted with the two rooms that can provide the opportunity for Board Meetings, parents meetings and choir rehearsals. All three classrooms need to be outfitted so that they can be used from the new term at the end of January. Cost to outfit classroom one and two includes desks, chairs, shelving, white boards, notice boards and heating. Estimates for classrooms one and two only include 60 double seater school desks, two teacher's tables and two teacher's chairs; R40,400 (€3,108); classroom three needs to be outfitted to accommodate computers.

Nt. Mankoe has painted the school logo on the wall attributing the building to Twinning the Kingdoms. It is recommended that the wording suggested by Paul Hanrahan be put on a plaque in Ireland and taken out in February when it can be erected on the building. Paddy Fay has been in conversation with the Minister of Education who has agreed to launch both St Monica's suite of classrooms and those at Morate on Monday the 6th April.



On Sunday the 7th December the evaluation took place and was attended by nine members of the Board of Management. The benefits that the board outlined as a result of the construction were as follows; *'the classrooms will help with congestion; the original tent was either very hot or very cold thus the classrooms will alleviate these problems. The use of the latest technology will make an immense difference to the school, staff and students; electricity has been the greatest change. The buildings have been well planned and have beautified the place. There has been great happiness with the addition of the toilets for staff and students which has replaced the use of the nearby forest.'*



We don't have enough words to express how this development will change the lives of the students. The installation of the electricity means that children will be able to learn, before they just could not see and were unable to work. We feel that we will now be able to provide quality education and that the results will be better this year as a result of the building.

We feel that we will need more support with technology and the use of computers; we are dedicated to further study so that we will be able to help our colleagues. We attended the Camara workshop, it was beneficial but too short, we need more training on the basics. Throughout the project we had a tremendous amount of help from the community; the parents showed their commitment by coming to work voluntarily on the site. Some of the parents are working in the factories and unable to come so they provided a small contribution so that we could employ labourers. 500-600 people made a financial contribution. It took between 6-10 people a week to complete the foundations.

The construction was a problem for the students we were worried about injuries; the children were really interested in the building and the builders thus teachers needed to be more vigilant. Culturally it was quite a challenging experience for us to see women involved in the building process; it taught us a lot; that women should not shy away from this work, it was interesting to see and motivating. We felt that the process should take place while the children were in school because we have seen Bo Me' building the school.

We had problems with a lack of water while the building was going on as we just have one tap and there was a queue for water. On one occasion Ntate Mankoe drove to Maputsoe for water; we would like to recognise the work that he has done on this project and the fact that TTK covered the extra electricity costs incurred during the building process.

The problems that remain to be resolved are; security proofing the windows and doors, resolving the technical issue of the dividing doors between classrooms one and two, furnishing the three classrooms so that we can start teaching and budgeting the cost of the launch in April. The teachers would like to start a tuck shop in order to generate a small income and need the finance for the initial stock.'

Lebohang Morena - Me' Matsepo's Quilts & Crib Figures

Me' Matsepo's team have been busy and 23 quilts had been sewn and ten sets of crib figures. A combined meeting took place of the Lebohang Morena Sewing Group and the Agricultural Group at St Luke's Mission where the rondavel was crowded to capacity and all the sewing group worked on their crib figures or quilt pieces with great enthusiasm. Each member of the sewing group gave voice to their appreciation of Me' Matsepo as a true community leader who has encouraged them to become involved in the group in order that they have an opportunity to earn a living and, as a result, feed their dependents. The significance of the project and what it means to the community is evident from comments voiced at the meeting.





Quilts on the way to the Bakkie



Crib Figures ready for Ireland



Me' Matsepo working on a quilt



Dance of Celebration

Ha Chonapase Pigs

A productive meeting took place with the Chonapase Pig Project. The group of fourteen people, thirteen of which are unemployed, each have a pig and the group owns a boar. Two of the pigs have given birth, the first has 10 piglets and the second 7 piglets; a third pig is pregnant. Out of the 14 pigs 9 are being fed for market and 5 are for breeding; a sale of some pigs gave money to feed the pigs destined for the market and TTK is feeding the breeding pigs and piglets. The group have built three farrowing houses and two more will be built in January. The group's main concern was the cost of feed which they had underestimated; the fact that the piglets needed more food and that another birth was imminent, thus the need for a farrowing house. The group are eager to 'stand on their own' and want the project to be a success. The pigs and piglets are very well looked after and the group are working hard with enthusiasm and energy on limited resources.



It was decided by the group that they will undertake to construct 16 keyhole gardens to support the Lepoqong feeding project. Each of the sick patients will have a keyhole garden built outside their home so that they will be able to avail of fresh vegetables. The labour for this work will be costed and taken off the TTK Pig Project loan, thus the project will be beneficial to all groups. Ntate Clifford Sampi from Lepoqong made arrangements to demonstrate the most effective construction of the keyhole gardens. It is anticipated that the Chonapase group will utilise their expertise to support the Lepoqong and Loantsang feeding programmes over the next twelve months and other TTK projects.

Lebohang Morena – Agricultural Project

The success of the Lebohang Morena OVC growing project depends on the vagaries of the weather and 2009 does not bode well, as rain came late to Lesotho in 2008, thus delaying the vital period of ploughing. The drought meant that in December maize that is usually waist high at this stage was disappointingly low in the ground. The state of the weather means that only two and a half acres out of the potential 19 have been planted this year and thus there will be a low yield. The group were anxious about their ability to hoe the fields; many of the group are elderly, sick and hungry. It was decided that two days before Christmas and two days after Christmas the group would all hoe and use a small amount of money that they have saved from milling activities to employ a man to join them in the fields.



Members of the Committee

Despite the hardships encountered the group shows great determination and commitment to their community. The Mill is a most successful enterprise; a man has been employed and is currently being trained by Nt. Pascales and Nt. Mankoe who are still the mainstays of the project.



Tuesday afternoon at the Mill



Nt. Mankoe with crushed Mealie



The Jeep's first Lepoqong distribution trip

H a Nyenye Pig Project



The Ha Nyenye Pig Project has three sows and a Boar and has produced 32 piglets. 21 of the piglets are now four months old and the remaining 11 are three months and two weeks old. The breeders were most concerned about feed for the piglets that are currently underfed and also the fact that



the pigs need sties as they are fast outgrowing the tin sheds they were born into. Both men are serious about expanding their business but will be unable to do so without the buildings in which to successfully rear the piglets. TTK were able to resource the project with R2,600 (€200) for feed and R5850 (€450) for building in December thus alleviating fears for the pigs and encouraging the men.

L oantsang - Ha Maqele



The Loantsang group are continuing to work hard looking after sick people in the surrounding villages but were currently out of any medication. They, like Lepoqong Care Givers, are very concerned about the amount of sick people on ARVs who do not have anything to eat. Another source of concern is the amount of orphans in the village. They brought to the attention of the Field Officer the details of a family of 4 children in the village whose parents died in 2007. The oldest daughter Mamello, aged 18, left school to work in a factory to earn money for food and school fees for her thirteen year old brother Kamohelo. Each day she and her brother leave the two younger children at home and the eight year old girl, Maseabata, looks after two year old Lefunyane; both of the younger children are HIV positive and Lefunyane was recently hospitalised with TB. The TTK field staff and Loantsang volunteers visited the family and took some food. It was an important visit; Loantsang are committed to supporting the family. Kamohelo and his younger sister need to be able to attend school; Lefunyane needs to be cared for during the day and all of the family need regular meals and the comfort of being together in their own home.

Loantsang group members feel that a feeding programme based on the Lepoqong model with a monthly food basket and keyhole garden would make a huge difference to their priority patients. It was suggested that they compile a list of the neediest so that the idea can be presented to the Bantry Friends of Lesotho for support.



Results of the Community Survey were fed back to the group; committee members felt that the process of the survey has been really valuable. The survey was conducted by local young people and as a result one of those young people is now part of the committee and playing an active part; his presence is also motivating other youth in the villages. Another positive result was the public relations that resulted for the group.

Dee Fay, the Irish Ambassador's wife and volunteers Cathy Hayes O'Brien and Triona O'Keeffe visited Loantsang in November with TTK Project Coordinator Ntate Mankoe. Dee Fay contributed R300 to the group to purchase seed which was much appreciated and by December the seeds were growing.

Tsoha U Iketsetse – Wake up and do it yourself



Me' Mary's Sewing Group is eager to produce more products that may be of interest to the European market. Six members of the group attended the meeting all have produced scarves. The basic cotton scarves have been priced at R22.50 and the Seshoeshoe scarf at R41.50. The local market prefers the Seshoeshoe scarf but the price is not competitive locally. The group are enthusiastic and eager to increase their skills. The group have elected Me' Maleboha as Quality Control Manager as Me' Masealiete feels she is having problems with her eyes. It is recommended that TTK help to support all the sewing projects by training a person who will be able to maintain all the electric sewing machines. Both groups are going to find a translator so that TTK volunteers can get language support during their training sessions.

Lepekola spent a term at Laura Vicuna Preschool where he made friends and got his first school report. He was very sick for the month of November and attended Dr Jesse's Polyclinic on a regular basis for chest x-rays, blood count and medication; at the beginning of December he was still unwell but improving slowly. Bernadette Parte and her family in Dublin have committed to sponsoring Lepekola through school.

Lepoqong Care Givers were instrumental in arranging for Lepekola's older brother, Sekake, to move to Lepekola's village to live with an elderly aunt, Me' Mathabo, where he is three doors away from his brother. Theresa Moriarty is going to sponsor Sekake through school thus both boys are now settled and happy to be near each other and at

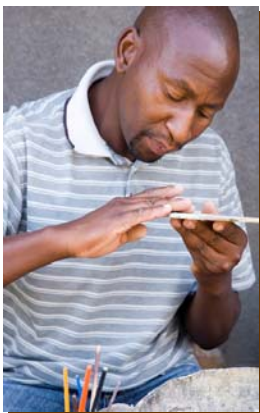


the thought of attending school. Brenda Friel donated R800 (€62) for the boys Christmas clothes and they were looking forward to wearing them at the village children's Christmas party.



A meeting was arranged by Ntate Clifford Sempi with the Chief of Ha Nyenye village and Sekake's Great Grandfather and his uncle. Both of the relatives have been herd boys and are anxious that both Lepekola and Sekake have an opportunity to attend school and grow up without the responsibilities of looking after cattle.

Lepekola will continue in 2009 at St. Luke's Preschool and Sekake register at St. Luke's Primary School and enter Form 2. TTK covered the costs of Lepekola's and Sekake's medical care at a cost of R1549 (€119)



Mokhethi Chabeli – Potter

Ambassador Mannete Ramaili suggested that the Field Officer meet with Mokhethi Chabeli, Maseru based artist. Chabeli was born in 1971 and his dream is to help create jobs for disenfranchised youth in the city. He left school at the age of 16 and he has found his art in the hills surrounding Maseru. Self taught he has created a unique art form using only traditional methods and crushed sandstone. Gathering clay from the don-gas and firing his pots surrounded by cow dung the results of his work are purely his invention. Chablis' work has been recognised by the Minister of Sports and Culture in Lesotho and he has travelled extensively in Africa exhibiting his work and gathering awards along the way. As with all artists in Lesotho Chabeli finds it difficult to make any kind of living; Chablis' studio is the porch outside his house in the village of Upper Thamae where he creates the most delicate and intriguing work with the simplest of tools. Chabeli hopes that his work will be exported overseas and that his work will promote tourism in Lesotho.



Qoqolosing

The local committee Ipopeng Lithota (B) Association–Look after yourself- has been legally registered and are setting up a bank account. The committee has acquired half an acre of land and the community have ploughed it and are now in need of seeds. At the moment they have not yet sourced the land for the fruit farm. An engineer from the Rural Water Supply visited the village, met with the community and conducted a feasibility study to ascertain the number of families in the area, the number of orphaned and vulnerable children, the number of toilets and the current source of water. There are 750 people in the village.



TTK staff and Simon Mokhehi visited the District Manager of the Rural Water Supply, Ntate Makhata, in Maputsoe and as a result two engineers visited Qoqolosing to design and cost a water system, results of the feasibility study were compiled and a detailed quotation drawn up and collected from the RWS offices on the 19th December. The total cost of providing water to the area €14,000. Simon is currently seeking a second estimate.



Qoqolosing is a beautiful village that is the nearest area to Maputsoe that would be of interest to the Traveller/Tourist who wishes to experience Basotho culture. The village has a number of traditional Rondavels that need to be rebuilt and could then be used as B&B accommodation. Visitors to the area could generate much needed income for the local population.

Ha Mapotsoe Initiation School

In Maputsoe in December two groups of young women were celebrating the completion of initiation school; both groups were led by a female leader and a Sangoma through the villages singing and dancing in order to raise money in a similar fashion to the Wren as celebrated in Ireland. The groups were followed by crowds through the villages eager to participate in the excitement.



Welcome to Me' Moselantja Florina Kalake, TTK Part Time Administrative Assistant in Maputsoe



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