

What is the Livelihoods Recovery through Agriculture Programme?

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Scope of presentation

- Design of LRAP
- Goal and purpose of LRAP
- LRAP outputs and achievements
- Beyond LRAP...

Background

- LRAP designed as a response to the food and livelihoods insecurity induced by the southern African regional drought of 2002
- Initially a 2 year programme, extended to 3.5 years to enable LRAP to blossom
- Livelihoods recovery approach - short term impacts on food security while building longer term capacity to withstand shocks and stresses
- Also designed to address impacts of HIV and AIDS on rural livelihoods
- Implemented jointly by CARE, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) and local NGOs. Impact study carried out mid 2005.

Design elements in 2002

LRAP tries to address underlying causes of household vulnerability:

- The poorer the rural household, the more dependent the household is on agriculture as part of the livelihood.
- CARE study – only 29% of the target population could feed themselves from their harvest for a period of six months.
- Some evidence that labour is a constraint in households due to HIV and AIDS - people struggling to farm fields which are located far from people's houses. Household gardens in the women's domain and they are also carers of sick people.
- Supporting and strengthening development and implementation of enabling policies that assist vulnerable people to secure their livelihoods

Design logic...

- Focus on homestead gardens – Household assets that are easy to build and manage while caring for a sick family member or when someone is sick themselves.
- Promotion of crops that supply nutritional needs recommended for people living with HIV+AIDS
- Build households capabilities for food production
- Work with local NGOs to scale up their work and get direct support to vulnerable rural households in the short term
- Support government client-led extension system (known as the UES) to support people in the longer term

Goal and purpose of LRAP

- Goal - Improved capacity of vulnerable rural households in Lesotho to cope with shocks and stresses.
- Purpose - Vulnerable rural households in the districts most affected by food insecurity have improved their homestead agricultural production.

Output 1 Improved skills and systems to implement the UES in support of vulnerable rural households

Strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture to roll out its policy of client –led agricultural extension, the UES.

- National training in Unified Extension System (UES) for MoAFS staff and NGOs (70-100% coverage across ten districts)
- 340 community action plans currently being implemented
- Evidence of 211 activities on the ground as a result of plan implementation
- Supported Lesotho Agricultural College to incorporate the UES into its curriculum for longer term sustainability
- Local NGOs increasingly working within the UES framework
- UES deals with more than agricultural planning. Under new decentralised dispensation, potential for UES to become a more integrated planning tool under decentralisation beyond MAFS – current area of work between CARE, MAFS, MOLG and GTZ

Output 2 Good practices in production systems for vulnerable households promoted by MAFS and other stakeholders

LRAP as a knowledge broker

- Funding practical innovations in homestead agriculture eg seeds, poultry, water conservation, working with vulnerable groups – all with a “learning” agenda. More of these in next presentation.
- Using these pilots to develop materials (11 pamphlets in the gardening manual, nutrition guidelines) to consolidate good practices.

Output 3 Service providers promoting homestead food production by poor vulnerable households

Direct support to local NGOs to support poor people in homestead gardening

- Promoting innovation in gardening, by bringing together experiences of different NGOs
- LRAP directly supported 1250 households across six districts in homestead gardening. 7500 people have directly benefited from increased production from their homestead gardens
- At least 71% of households monitored on on-going basis reported stabilised or increased production between 2004/5.
- Impact study (mid-2005) shows that three main issues addressed by LRAP stand out in rural people's concerns – soil fertility management, crop diversity and water conservation

Output 4 Improved awareness of vulnerability and coping strategies and implications for PRS process and policy

Action-research and practice to policy impact.

- LRAP active in LVAC and other fora, creating a climate for alternative food aid programming
- Ten research studies plus the practical experiences on homestead gardening under Outputs 2 and 3 used as basis for advocacy
- LRAP advocacy based on the “grounded expert informant” model ie providing evidence of good practice from LRAP and others’ experience...supporting systems for uptake.
- Impact study (mid 2005) showed “LRAP has done better in linking its outputs and lessons into national policy than was anticipated in its design....Food Security policy reflects LRAP priorities and strategies, LRAP priorities and achievements clearly reflected in the PRS”.
- LRAP currently working on mainstreaming UES into MOLG, as a new policy area

Output 5: Programme implemented effectively with gender and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming

. *Good relationships between MAFS and CARE, ensuring poverty focus.*

- Programme with a strong local, Lesotho identity (*Lirapa!*)– important for networks, influence and policy **implementation**
- Partnership with MAFS was critical for policy impact
- Partnership with local NGOs was critical for rapid impact and technical innovation, sharing and learning.
- Impact study (mid 2005) - LRAP innovative work on HIV/AIDS mainstreaming, especially Positive Living is reported to have made a real impact on people's understanding and attitude with regard to HIV and AIDS. Good progress has been made in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS concerns into the awareness and commitment of LRAP, MAFS and LRAP NGO's personnel

Replication and sustainability

- Homestead gardening innovation and conceptual thinking happened under LRAP. Taken to larger scale and continuing innovation in two on-going programmes in Lesotho:
- *C-SAFE* (funded by the US Food for Peace). CARE adapted LRAP homestead gardening into a Food for Assets model with Teba Development. Reached additional 3821 households in one year (2099 with chronically ill or disabled household members and 1722 caring for orphans). Now being taken up by CRS, WVI etc
- *Secure the Child* (funded by Norwegian Min. of Foreign Affairs). Adapted LRAP into school gardens model with Min Education and Training, WFP, GROW and RSDA. Reached 21 schools in one year, benefitting 3800 pupils and covering 13000 sq metres of school garden

Beyond LRAP, where we are now?

- In the final six months of the LRAP programme - sharing lessons and experience with wider development audience
- LRAP conceptual thinking will not end, on-going in other projects and programming responses
- Currently linking LRAP with initiatives that will outlive it
PMTTC/CARE/British Council implementing DFID support to Lesotho PRS and Food Security Policy implementation. Two foci – food security and employment creation. This is one vehicle for LRAP sustainability in Lesotho
- Working with other regional programmes eg Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme to share LRAP lessons with the region
- *CARE website www.caresa-lesotho.org.za for all the LRAP materials*