



## THE UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR VISITS SGP PROJECTS

*Nthabiseng Majara – National Coordinator, SGP Lesotho*

The GEF-SGP Country programme in Lesotho was established in December 2007 and while the grant making process was initiated towards the end of 2008. The Country Programme now boast a total of 17 projects in its portfolio with a total of USD 499 974.26 awarded in grants to local communities through non-governmental and community based organizations (NGOs and CBOs).

The GEF Small Grants Programme in Lesotho is hosted and housed by the UNDP Country Office, and its staff forms part of the Energy and Environment Team. For the 2010 UNDP Staff Retreat which took place on 17 – 19 March, a decision was made that the first day be dedicated to project site visits, to take stock of the UN interventions in Lesotho and the impact they have on the lives of ordinary Basotho. As part of the Retreat Team, the SGP National Coordinator was charged with the responsibility of coordinating the project site visits. Of the six projects visited, two were SGP funded projects: a biodiversity project focusing on the preservation of the gene pool of the indigenous Sesotho chicken and the Biogas production project in Matelile also in Mafeteng, aimed at promoting rural energy technologies that are also environmentally friendly.

The UN Resident Representative (RR), who is also the UN Resident Coordinator, was among those that signed up for the SGP projects site visits. During the visits, *Grantees* briefed the *UN Team* about their projects, entertained their questions and comments and took them on a tour of their projects. It was during site visits report-back session that observations, impressions and suggestions for improvements were shared. The UNDP Resident Representative in sharing her field experience highlighted the following:

- The simplicity of the approach and the setting within which the projects are implemented
- The depth of knowledge, dedication and the amount of work done by a few people with limited resources; and
- The innovative ways in which grantees operate to forge sustainability of project results, with particular reference to the pass- on-the-gift system to be adopted in the Sesotho chicken project.



*UN Resident Coordinator at the Indigenous Chicken Farm*

About the biogas project, the RR observed that the system required a considerable amount of water which may be a challenge if adopted in drought prone areas, and thus recommended integration with other initiatives that tackle water supply.

Comments/remarks by grantees during the site visits and by staff during the report back session:

*"I have appreciated the environment and setting within which community development projects are implemented and the associated challenges. This experience will definitely change, positively, the way I handle procurement requests by projects". Procurement and Assets Management Associate - UNDP*

*"We are honored to have the UN visiting us to see what we do and to benefit from feedback and suggestions for improvement of our work..... It is through the UNDP and the SGP that other donors like the Japanese are coming in to enhance the project impact." Director - RSDA*