



HERDERS COMMEMORATE THE INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS DAY FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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The International Volunteers Day was commemorated on December 6, 2010, at Liotloaneng in the Berea District. The event, which was coordinated by the *United Nations Volunteers Programme in Lesotho*, involved mobilization of about 50 volunteers from community youth groups, vocational and skills training centres supported by various government departments and local authorities, to complete a two-classroom block at *Bosco Primary School*. The process culminated in the official opening of the completed two classroom block by the *United Nations Resident Coordinator for Lesotho*; and planting of trees to enhance the school grounds.

Two herders associations, *Sebetsang ka Thata Balisana* and *Utloang Balisana*, that are Berea-based organizations supported by the *GEF Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP)*, lent a hand in the environment and social development of their home district by donating *grape vine* and *olive tree* seedlings and treated poles to the school. The herders did not only donate the trees but they also attended the event, demonstrated how trees are planted and watched on as volunteers and those in attendance planted the trees. The demonstration was done by the herders jointly with officers from the Department of Forestry and Land Reclamation in Berea.

These Associations are among the 16 organizations that are implementing 16 projects that comprise the Country Programme Project Portfolio for Lesotho. The majority of the herders are illiterate while others are school dropouts and are now hired to look after livestock. The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation through its Department of Range Management, is working hard to sensitize herders to organize themselves into associations and engage in sustainable natural resources management initiatives so that they can be recognized as an important group of society and the strongest link in sustainable range resources management.

Herders: A Forgotten Lot!

A little push in the right direction, that's all it takes to liberate the energy, the enthusiasm, and to ignite a glimmer of hope in their lives.

