

Author(s): Kathleen Ludewig, 2010

License: Unless otherwise noted, this material is made available under the terms of the **Attribution License**

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>

We have reviewed this material in accordance with U.S. Copyright Law **and have tried to maximize your ability to use, share, and adapt it.**

Copyright holders of content included in this material should contact open.michigan@umich.edu with any questions, corrections, or clarification regarding the use of content.

For more information about **how to cite** these materials visit <http://open.umich.edu/education/about/terms-of-use>.

Any **medical information** in this material is intended to inform and educate and is **not a tool for self-diagnosis** or a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional. Please speak to your physician if you have questions about your medical condition.

Viewer discretion is advised: Some medical content is graphic and may not be suitable for all viewers.

Key Points

Chapters 3 and 6-8 focus on the Thaba-Tseka Development project in Lesotho from 1975 -1984. Lesotho is a LDC (a least-developed country). In November 1974, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Bank, Canadian International Developmental Agency (CIDA), and the Government of Lesotho (GOL) began a “mountain area development project” in an effort to use the agricultural resources in the mountains rather than the over-utilized lowlands. Only 5% of the land was arable, and 90% of the land was suitable only from grazing, so the project focused on livestock and range. The land was meant to be 8 plots of 4000 hectares each.

The first phase of the project established a regional center and a road link, two components seen as necessary infrastructure for developing a previously isolated area. The first phase also included land preparation, improved inputs for crop production, and an agricultural extension network. Phase 1 developed a better infrastructure but was far from agricultural improvement targets. In Phase 2, the project scope expanded from “regionally based livestock project” to an “integrated rural development project” (80). Figure 3.2 (85) provides a nice overview of the logic model of the project.

Ferguson critiques the Thaba-Tseka project:

- 1) The FAO/World Bank overstated the reliance on agriculture and ignored the importance of migrant labor. He also charges that the data contained in the report appendix did not match the statistics in the body of the report. (Ch 3)
- 2) The planners had a false sense of isolation of Thaba-Tseka. He points out that 4 traders and one co-op is sufficient for 16 villages. (Ch 3) He also mentioned that wool and mohair producers found ways to market their products illegals so they were in fact aware of legal and illegal markets. (Ch 6)
- 3) In order to govern the new plots, a grazing association on Thaba-Tseka was formed but it was not legal/registered, not representative (only those w/ high quality animals could join), and therefore ineffective. The fences were destroyed and land abused. The local farmers went around the grazing association and pressured the government to remove the associating grazing restrictions. (Ch 6) The lack of respect for the fenced in areas also destroyed the fenced woodlot areas. (Ch 8)
- 4) The IGOs (intergovernmental organizations, e.g. FAO, World Bank) and foreign governments (e.g. Canada) manipulated the Lesotho government into decentralization rather than working w/in their existing structures (Ch 7). It’s hard not to mix development and politics, but it can be done less disruptively.
- 5) “The programs of the Thaba-Tseka Project were conceived and designed as interventions in an isolated, aboriginal, peasant society and the ‘development’ proposed consisted of a package of technical innovations designed for backward farmers along with a series of measures to link up these traditional farmers with the modern market economy” (86)
- 6) The project took land from the local people w/ the goal of generating eventual employment and self-reliance for the locals but it created resentment towards the developers. (Ch 8)

Connection to Other Readings

The Thaba-Tseka project focused on development through agriculture rather than industrialization. One of our readings from last week pointed out that economic development is often associated with industrialization and urbanization, so some developers choose to focus on the urban areas and largely ignore the rural area. It makes sense politically that the FAO would overemphasize the importance of agriculture in Lesotho since agricultural development is one of their purposes. Although I don’t think Ferguson would agree with the urbanization over agriculture approach, he isn’t pro-agriculture necessarily either.

Ferguson’s critiques identify disconnect in the goals of the project and needs of the community at Thaba-Tseka. Although the local government was involved and the local community surveyed, it seems the survey was not constructed well and/or the results not correctly interpreted. It was not a participatory project as the residents of the 16 villages in Thaba-Tseka were not involved in the planning process beyond the initial survey.