

Project Title:	Designing Mental Health Law in Developing Countries: A Case Study of Lesotho
Dates:	March 2008 to March 2010
Location:	Nottingham and Maseru
Core Staff:	Peter Bartlett and Emilie Hunter
Funders:	Nuffield Foundation

Project Summary

This project looks at the complexities of mental health reform in environments with limited economic and other resources, using Lesotho as a case study. The project involved two consultations, both involving discussions with stakeholders regarding the direction of a reformed mental health law and also visits to locations where people with mental disorders are accommodated. Intended outputs are a draft mental health bill for Lesotho, development and distribution of a guidance document for those interested in mental health law reform in sub-Saharan Africa, and academic papers relating to mental health law reform in Africa. Funded by the Nuffield Foundation.

Objectives

This project looks at the complexities of mental health reform in environments with limited economic and other resources, using Lesotho as a case study. The project has three main objectives:

- Development of a draft mental health bill for Lesotho, in consultation with stakeholders in Lesotho
- Development and distribution of a guidance document for those interested in mental health law reform in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Development of two or more academic papers relating to mental health law reform in Africa.

Participants

Along with the Nottingham staff, relevant participants include –

- A large panel (c 50) of stakeholders in Lesotho, including government actors, medical and social professionals, users of psychiatric services and their carers, police, legal professionals, law reform commission personnel. Key local organisers are Mathaabe Ranthimo of the Lesotho Ministry of Health and Peter Phori of WHO Lesotho.
- A smaller panel (c 20) charged with closer collaboration relating to drafting, drawn from the larger panel.

- Additional experts – Natalie Drew (WHO Geneva); Melvyn Freeman (psychologist, South Africa)(until May 2009) and Soumitra Pathare (psychiatrist, India, from May 2009).

Activities/Content

The project involved two consultations in Maseru and environs, the first occurring in June 2008, the second in August/September 2009. Both included extended discussions with stakeholders regarding the direction of a reformed mental health law, and also visits to locations where people with mental disorders are accommodated.

Outcomes/Outputs

See above.