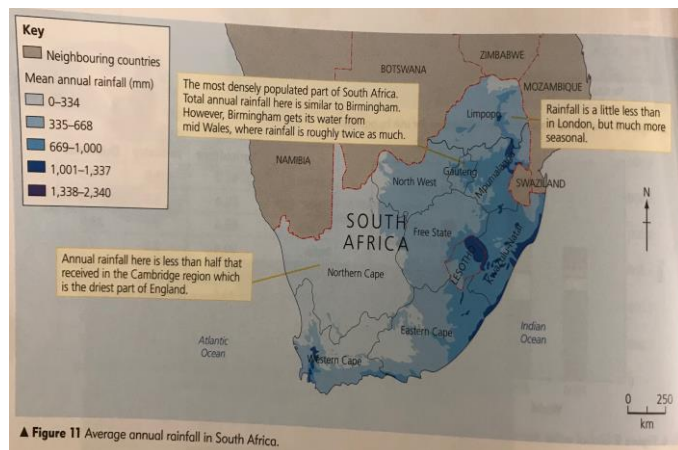


# Knowledge Organiser #32: Lesotho Water Highlands Project

## Water supply in South Africa



## Impacts on Lesotho

### Advantages

Lesotho is one of the world's poorest countries, with no natural resources, except water, and a high percentage of unemployment (50%). The scheme will help the country to develop and will provide 75% of Lesotho's income.

The dams will provide HEP, providing cheaper electricity to Lesotho.

There will be improved roads in the country, as a result of construction work. Local workers have been given jobs on the construction of the project and have received training which has improved their skills.

### Disadvantages

The scheme is estimated to cost \$8 billion, given on loan from the World Bank. This money will need to be paid back.

In the short term, Lesotho will struggle with water shortages and poor sanitation.

Local people have no access to the water supplied by the dams, and they will be made homeless as valley are flooded once it is built. Farming land has been lost which has resulted in food shortages.

## Background Information

Lesotho is a small land locked country surrounded by South Africa.

Rainfall varies across southern Africa.

The east Atlantic coast of South Africa receives less than 300mm of rainfall a year.

The west coast of Africa, including Lesotho, receives a lot more rain, in excess of 1200mm each year. This is due to relief rainfall caused by air travelling over the Indian Ocean towards Africa being forced to rise over the Lesotho Highlands, a large mountain range.

Lesotho is only a small country but has a large amount of water and is therefore able to sell water to South Africa who have a water deficit, particularly Johannesburg which is located in the rainshadow of the Highlands.

## The project

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) is a large scale water management scheme.

It consists of 4 phases where 6 dams will be built in Lesotho and 200km of tunnel systems to transfer the water to South Africa.

It is the largest water management scheme in Africa, transferring 40% of Lesotho's water to South Africa.

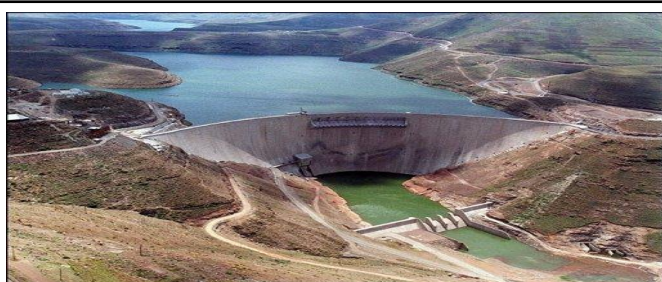
## Impacts on South Africa

### Advantages

The percentage of people with access to safe drinking water in South Africa will increase to 87%.

### Disadvantages

There have been many complaints from residents as leaking pipes has led to much water being lost and as a result prices of water have increased.



## Key words

Water surplus – Water deficit – Relief rainfall – Cultivation