

**HO CHECHA HOA
RAMO HASE HO BALEHA** Powering down to power up

Newsday

...pacing standards

18 October - 24 October, 2024

www.newsdayonline.co.ls

Vol 06 No 36

M6.00

News

Lesotho faces severe health risks

Page 4

News

Coal mining efforts take another shot

Page 4

GOVT SIGNS 99-YEAR DEAL WITH SWISS COMPANY



- Agreement focuses on creating Special Economic Zones in Lesotho
- Zones will be exclusively open to foreign operators, excluding local businesses
- Foreign workers in the Zones exempt from tax, while Basotho employees will be taxed

Page 2



Elevate your farming game with Lesotho's ONLY Agriculture publication "SEAHLOLO"

Catch Us



Bokamoso FM
On Thursdays
at 7:30 PM



SEAHLOLO - WE GROW TOGETHER-

Government signs 99-year deal with Swiss company

- **Agreement focuses on creating Special Economic Zones in Lesotho**
- **Zones will be exclusively open to foreign operators, excluding local businesses**
- **Foreign workers in the Zones exempt from tax, while Basotho employees will be taxed**

Staff Reporter

In an eyebrow-raising move, the government wants to commit to a 99-year agreement with the Swiss financial group, iSwiss, to establish Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the country.

According to the Lesotho Special Economic Zones Policy 2024–2029, which was presented to stakeholders yesterday for validation, this ambitious project aims to attract international investment.

However, there is a catch: only foreign entities, not local citizens, will be permitted to operate within these zones.

The controversial policy document reads more like a contract than a framework for national development, explicitly naming iSwiss as the government's exclusive partner.

Typically, a government policy describes a process for selecting companies, but this draft leaves no room for competition.

Instead, it outlines a partnership where iSwiss holds a 75 percent stake, with the government relegated to a mere 25 percent.

"The Government of Lesotho (GoL) and the iSwiss agree to establish a joint venture under the laws of Lesotho, wherein the GoL shall hold a 25 percent interest in the share capital, and the iSwiss shall hold the remaining 75 percent," the draft policy reads.

It adds: "The joint venture company (hereafter referred to as "the Company") shall be granted the exclusive right to create and administer the Free Zone in Lesotho, in compliance with local laws."

While SEZs have proven successful in other countries, this agreement raises concerns over the exclusion of Basotho entrepreneurs from participating in what could be a significant economic driver.

iSwiss will manage the SEZs, which will operate with minimal customs intervention, essentially creating a financial and legal bubble within the country.

The draft policy notes that iSwiss will also be responsible for recruiting European and North American manufacturing companies to set up shop in Lesotho. The SEZ will focus on industries such as clothing, automotive, and medical equipment.

But perhaps the most glaring issue is the policy's provision that companies within the SEZ can only be limited liability companies, with the option of foreign administrators, "not necessarily residents of Lesotho", and share capital "wholly owned by foreigners and non-residents."

In effect, local businesses are completely sidelined, leaving many to question the government's rationale.

The draft policy includes a raft of other unsettling provisions. It outlines the responsibilities of the government, stating that it shall provide legal, administrative, and tax consultancy services for the Free Zone at its own expense.

Additionally, the government is tasked with establishing the financial infrastructure necessary for processing payments from companies operating within the Free Zone. "The structure of the Free Zone must incorporate global best practices and lessons from existing free zones," the document reads.

Establishment of Regulatory Authorities

A "Free Zone Financial Authority" will be created, responsible for issuing licenses for banking, payment institutions, electronic money issuance, and lending activities.

The draft policy states that this authority will also establish a trust registry for registering trusts in accordance with Lesotho's laws, ensuring ultimate beneficiaries are identified, and providing a legal framework for trust jurisdiction.

Furthermore, the Free Zone Financial Authority will enforce international anti-money laundering regulations, with the authority to suspend or revoke licenses, freeze transactions, and report criminal activities to local authorities.

"Commercial Arbitration, comprising independent lawyers and honorary judges from various nationalities, will handle contract, corporate, and labour disputes within the Free Zone," the document states. This arbitration body will have appellate authority over decisions made by the Company Register and the Free Zone Financial Authority, including the power to annul, suspend, or modify such decisions.

A digital authority will also be established to issue digital signatures through remote identification, enabling global users to sign documents, open accounts, and conduct transactions remotely within the Free Zone.

Characteristics of free zone companies

According to the draft policy, companies within the Free Zone will be structured as limited liability companies. These companies may appoint foreign administrators, "who are not necessarily residents of Lesotho," and have share capital "wholly owned by foreigners and non-residents."

These companies may operate within or outside of Lesotho but not outside the Free Zone within the country.

Each company will receive a unique numerical code from the Company Register, which must be used in all invoicing. Companies licensed by the Free Zone Financial Authority must include their authorisation details in official documentation.

Free Zone companies will not be restricted to predefined corporate purposes and may engage in any lawful commercial, productive, or service activities.

Certain activities, such as cryptocurrency operations, securities and investment management, gold trading, trustee services, auditor activities, securities and shares rating, forex trading, and gambling, will require specific corporate objectives and authorisation from the Free Zone Financial Authority.

Companies will be encouraged to "voluntarily" submit annual financial statements to the Company Register, with only specific companies (DAC) required to do so in accordance with international accounting standards (IAS). All companies must maintain a physical address within the Free Zone.

Taxation

Companies in the Free Zone will contribute a predetermined annual fee towards the Free Zone's operation, and no additional tax will be levied on profits. Remuneration and sala-

ries of administrators and employees who are non-residents of Lesotho will not be subject to local taxation.

However, if these individuals are Lesotho residents or citizens, local taxation and social security laws will apply.

Companies will be required to report monthly to the Free Zone Management Company regarding employment and administrative contracts, which will be forwarded to local authorities for compliance checks.

Duty Exemptions

Imports of raw materials and goods into the Free Zone will be exempt from duties, provided they are used exclusively within the Free Zone's production facilities and companies, and not transferred to other parts of Lesotho. Exports of goods produced, processed, or modified by Free Zone companies will also be exempt from duties.

Establishment of industrial zone

The draft policy stipulates that the government will establish an area specifically designated for industrial warehouses and associated services. iSwiss will be responsible for promoting the zone, conducting research, and inviting productive activities, particularly in manufacturing sectors such as clothing, mechanics, medical, and automotive industries, from European and North American entities.

iSwiss will oversee the organisation, coordination, and facilitation of setting up production facilities within the Industrial Zone, acting as a liaison between foreign investors and local authorities.

iSwiss will also promote the Industrial Zone internationally, identifying reputable entities with the expertise, know-how, and financial resources to establish or relocate production operations to the zone.

Financial and infrastructural development

The Free Zone Management Company, iSwiss, may charge service fees for settling within the Industrial Zone. These fees will fund infrastructural developments, including roads, electrical, water, and telecommunication connections. iSwiss will be authorized to issue debt securities on major financial markets to finance these constructions, with future billings used to reimburse the securities.

"The infrastructures developed under this arrangement will become the property of the Free Zone Management Company," the document reads.

Recruitment and training

The government will establish an agency responsible for recruiting personnel for enterprises operating within the Industrial Zone. This agency, in collaboration with iSwiss, will implement training programs to enhance the skills of the local workforce in high-demand sectors.

Diplomatic status and promotion

The draft policy further states: "The Government of Lesotho agrees to grant diplomatic status and corresponding rank to individuals appointed by iSwiss who are instrumental in promoting the Free Zone and the Industrial Zone."

Lesotho received financing from the African Development Bank to implement the Econom-



ic Diversification Support Programme (EDSP), which included conducting a feasibility study on Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

The study was led by Vivid Economics, with a team comprising Dan Aylward-Mills, James Patterson Waterston, Shahbano Soomro, Giulio Vannicelli, and Jake Wellman (Vivid Economics); Jean-Paul Gauthier (Locus Economics); Yash Ramkolowan (DNA Economics); Lehlohonolo Chefa; and Manon Jones.

This work was done in collaboration with the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC).

Published in 2019, the study made several key recommendations. It urged Lesotho to urgently finalise its national Industrial Policy, ensuring the SEZ policy supports its objectives. The study emphasised that the primary goal of Lesotho's SEZs should be to attract high-value production investments.

The report also advised that the SEZ policy should prioritise the manufacturing sector but remain adaptable to respond to demand in other sectors, such as services.

It cautioned against using SEZs solely as a tool for regional economic rebalancing, instead recommending the development of hybrid zones that align with investor needs.

It indicated that investors should have the flexibility to operate in either SEZs or industrial estates.

Additionally, the study recommended formal partnerships between Lesotho's SEZs and South Africa's SEZ program, facilitating inter-zone trade between the two countries.

It also called for the introduction of fiscal incentives to lower the effective tax rate in SEZs and promote productivity-boosting investments.

Furthermore, it recommended, value added tax (VAT) and customs duties should be suspended on goods sold into or within the SEZs, and Lesotho should work with international financial institutions to create a concessional finance facility for SEZ investments.

**RAM
PLAN**
Ho checha hoo ramo hase
ho baleha



HO CHECHA HOA RAMO HASE TO BALEHA

Powering down to power up

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project tunnel system and 'Muela Hydropower Station will be shut down from **OCTOBER 2024, TO MARCH 2025** for essential maintenance operations. During this time, water transfer in the tunnels will stop, and the station will not generate electricity.

Lesotho faces severe health risks

• **Malnutrition, non-communicable diseases, shigellosis, gastroenteritis, and anthrax emerge as high-risk dangers**

Staff Reporter

The 2023/2024 El Niño event has devastated Southern Africa with widespread drought, extreme heat, and prolonged dry spells, exacerbating food insecurity, water shortages, and disease outbreaks across the region.

Lesotho, in particular, is facing for severe health risks in the coming months due to the unprecedented drought, the worst in 40 years.

The World Health Organization (WHO) released a *Public Health Situation Analysis (PHSA)* report this week, sounding the alarm on critical health concerns stemming from the harsh conditions.

"The current El Niño event has severely impacted maize production across the region," the WHO report said. "Communities have exhausted their food reserves with months still remaining before the next harvest in April 2025."

WHO has classified several health threats as "very high risk," including malnutrition, non-communicable diseases, shigellosis, gastroenteritis, and anthrax.

These threats could result in high levels of excess mortality and morbidity if not urgently addressed.

Malnutrition Crisis

With 19 percent of Lesotho's population already in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or worse, the prolonged drought and economic challenges have pushed 293,000 people to the brink of starvation.

WHO's report highlighted that severe acute malnutrition (SAM) cases have risen sharply, exceeding 200 by August 2024. The situation is especially dire in Maseru and Qacha's Nek, where 30 percent of the population is facing a crisis.

"Severe acute malnutrition (SAM) cases have exceeded 200 as of August 2024, with

management challenges due to frequent staff changes, impacting children with HIV/AIDS and adults on TB/HIV treatment.

"This situation is expected to worsen, with 403 000 people (27 percent of the rural population) projected to be in Crisis by early 2025 due to ongoing price hikes and La Niña impacts, while food availability remains unaffordable for poorer households," the report warned.

Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs)

Non-communicable diseases remain a major health burden in Lesotho, according to WHO. As of 2021, the age-standardised mortality rate for four significant NCDs — Cardiovascular Disease, Chronic Respiratory Disease, Cancer, and Diabetes — stood at a staggering 1,320 per 100,000 for men and 970 per 100,000 for women.

"Lesotho has made minimal strides in addressing NCDs, with limited efforts focused on developing guidelines and implementing tobacco taxes," WHO stated. However, it added, there has been "very limited progress" on other critical NCD control indicators, making these diseases a pressing health threat.

Shigellosis

WHO also identified shigellosis as a high-risk disease, especially during droughts, when clean water becomes scarce and sanitation deteriorates, increasing transmission.

It said by August 2024, Lesotho had recorded 431 cases of shigellosis, marked by diarrhea with blood, across different regions.

Gastroenteritis

The ongoing food insecurity in Lesotho has led many people to consume substandard food, including dead animals, putting their health at further risk.

WHO reported that, as of August 2024, over 6,399 cases of gastroenteritis had been recorded. This number is likely to rise if food security and risk communication are not urgently addressed.

Anthrax

Anthrax, particularly cutaneous and intestinal forms, has also been flagged as a significant risk, with outbreaks expected when droughts compromise livestock health.

"Increased human-animal interactions during droughts can lead to anthrax outbreaks,"

WHO explained. Weak regulation of livestock movement, the absence of proper abattoirs, and poor veterinary services exacerbate the situation.

Measles

Measles outbreaks pose another threat, especially in areas where healthcare systems are weak or displaced populations congregate. Lesotho experienced a measles outbreak in Maseru district in 2023.

"Measles is particularly deadly in malnourished children, with mortality rates of up to 10 percent in such vulnerable populations," WHO reported.

Protection risks, including Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

The WHO report highlighted Gender-Based Violence (GBV) as a severe issue across Southern Africa, where GBV prevalence is notably higher than the global average. In Lesotho, more than 86 percent of women and girls have experienced GBV at some point in their lives, a stark indicator of the pervasive threat in the region.

Acute Respiratory Illness and COVID-19

Droughts also pose a significant threat to respiratory health.

"Droughts have significant impacts on respiratory health. Drought-related changes in air quality, such as increased concentrations of air particulates and airborne toxins resulting from freshwater algal blooms, can irritate the eyes, lungs, and respiratory systems of persons with chronic respiratory conditions," WHO stated.

It explained that Lesotho experiences seasonal Influenza like-illness during winter season.

"Malnutrition in children can affect their immune system and thereby predisposing them to pneumonia that may lead to death especially in weak health systems like in Lesotho," it said.

It mentioned that this can also be worsened by the hard topography in the highland areas of the country where access to health services is very challenging.

"By August 2024 more than 3 700 cases of pneumonia were recorded in OPD of the country including more than 580 cases of severe form of pneumonia," it said.

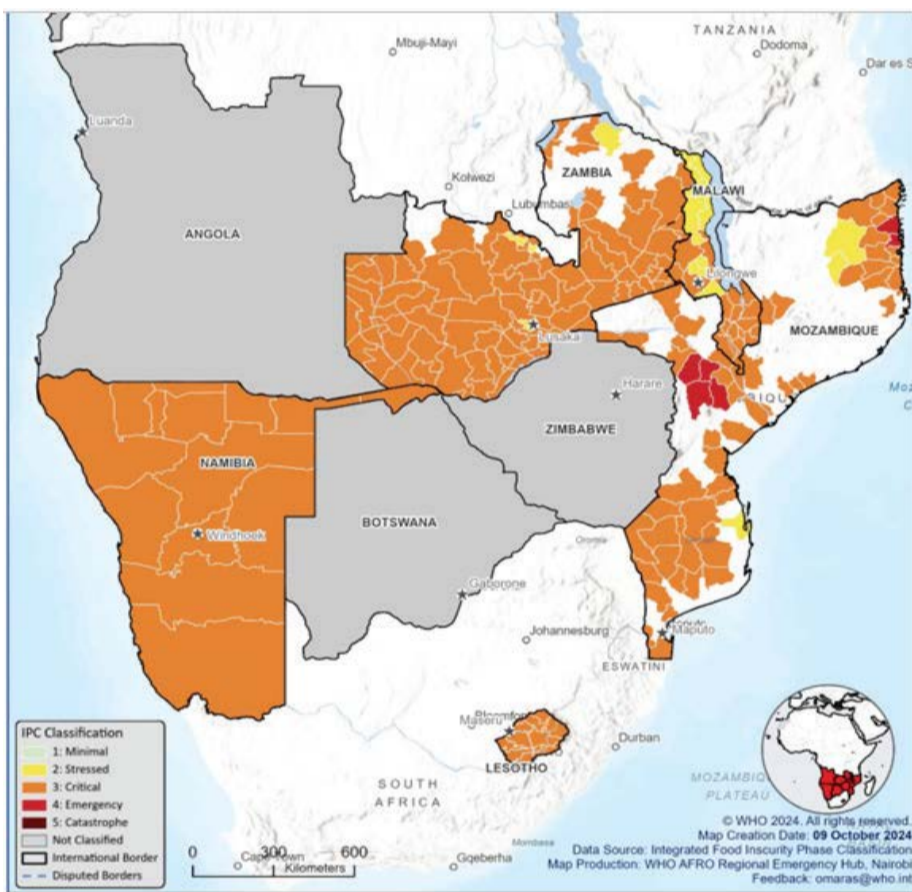


Figure 1- Projected Food Insecurity Southern Africa as of October 2024 (WHO, 2024)

Coal mining efforts take another shot

Staff Reporter

In a bid to create more job opportunities in Lesotho, the Ministry of Natural Resources has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Bokamoso Mining House, a local company, to explore the feasibility of coal mining in Mohale's Hoek district.

The MOA, equivalent to a prospecting license, grants Bokamoso Mining the right to conduct coal exploration through excavation, borehole drilling, and setting up temporary camps on the allocated site for up to two years.

To aid in the process, Bokamoso has roped in two South African mining experts to lead the exploration work.

Speaking at the launch of the prospecting activities recently in Qhalasi and Matebeleng, Mohale's Hoek, Minister of Natural Resources, Mhloni Moleko expressed hope that coal mining could expand the country's limited mineral resource base, which is currently dominated by diamonds.

"Lesotho has the potential to mine various minerals, including coal, crude oil, shale gas,

and uranium," Moleko said.

"These resources could be critical in creating much-needed employment opportunities."

Moleko explained that the current phase of exploration is aimed at determining the feasibility of commercial mining.

"If the findings are positive, the next stage will be to issue a mining lease," he said.

While previous coal exploration efforts in the area were abandoned, Moleko expressed confidence that Bokamoso Mining would not follow the same path as its predecessors.

At least two companies — Kenco Mining and Sando Investments (in partnership with South Africa's Masemanzi Mining Company) — have previously been granted permission to explore in the area but failed to complete their work.

Kenco Mining signed the MOA with the Ministry in 2017, but there were inconclusive results from their exploration after they abandoned the work midway.

"I'm encouraged by the commitment of Bokamoso Mining. I have witnessed their dedication in the energy sector, and I'm hopeful

they will complete this task."

The presence of coal deposits in the Qhalasi area has been known for many years. In fact, members of the local community previously engaged in artisanal digging for surface coal deposits. However, these unregulated diggings ended tragically in the 1980s when a mine collapse claimed the lives of three women. Since then, locals have refrained from further diggings.

Moleko highlighted the government's urgent need for successful coal exploration to create jobs.

"It's our wish to open more mines and create employment. While diamonds have received most of the attention, there are indications of other mineral resources that could be even more profitable, such as coal, crude oil, and uranium."

The ministry also plans to embark on a nationwide mineral high technology surveying campaign to record all available mining resources across Lesotho.

Matšepiso Mohapi of Bokamoso Mining emphasised the company's determination to



succeed where others who came before them have failed. Her confidence also stems from the fact that she is from Mohale's Hoek district.

"We are here to work, not play. We understand how much this project means for the people of Mohale's Hoek in terms of job creation, and we do not intend to disappoint anyone, including Minister Moleko, who gave us this opportunity," Mohapi said.

On Saturday, 12 October 2024, Ha Te-beli in Berea became the focal point of a remarkable event, a collaboration between the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, USAID, and the Lesotho Sports and Recreation Commission (LSRC).

Health for All

While the day was filled with sports, games, and excitement, it carried a much deeper purpose: to bring essential health services closer to the community.

This innovative approach combined physical activity and community engagement with the provision of critical health screenings, vaccinations, and treatments, to ensure that residents had access to a wide range of services.

Testing Services:

- Tuberculosis (TB)

- Blood pressure
- HIV
- Sugar diabetes
- COVID-19
- Pregnancy
- Cervical cancer
- Breast cancer

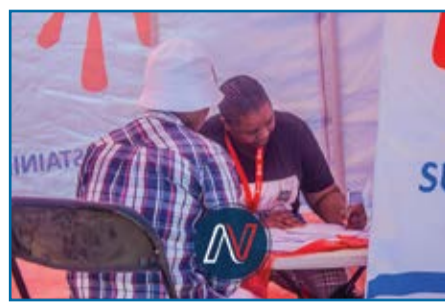
Vaccinations:

- Childhood vaccines
- Human Papillomavirus Vaccine (HPV)
- COVID-19 vaccine

Other Services:

- Family Planning Services

- Voluntary Male Medical Circumcision (VMMC)
- Provision of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)
- Provision of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)



BUSINESS

Jian Yang factory creates 250 jobs with expansion

Seabata Mahao

At least 250 people will be employed following the expansion of the Jiao Yang textile factory in Maputsoe, Leribe district.

The factory produces shoes, boots, and other items, with workers sewing 1,000 pairs daily.

The expansion was officially inaugurated by the Minister of Trade, Industry, and Small Business Development, Mokhethi Shelile, this week in collaboration with the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC).

In his remarks, Shelile highlighted the positive relationship between firm management, LNDC, and staff, which has contributed to the factory's growth.

"When the relationship between management and employees is strong, it leads to the growth of businesses," Shelile said.

He also announced that another factory producing shoes and clothing would open in



The re-opening of Jian Yang textile firm

the Maputsoe area by December. He acknowledged ongoing challenges related to water and electricity but assured that these issues were

being addressed.

"The government is committed to ending poverty and ensuring a better life for the peo-

ple of Lesotho," he stated.

Puseletso Makhakhe, who spoke on behalf of the LNDC CEO, echoed the minister's sentiments on the importance of expansion in terms of poverty reduction and economic growth.

"Many women have been working here since 2019, and we are proud of this expansion as it provides jobs for Basotho," she said.

Makhakhe also thanked LNDC's successful management of the factory.

"If other factory workers follow your example, they too will see growth. Our current investors should attract more investors to the country," Makhakhe added.

Jiao Yang factory manager, Jonathan Huang, praised the Basotho workforce for their hard work and dedication, which he credited for the factory's successful expansion.

"Our visibility and success are due to the commitment of the Basotho people. Without their hard work, we would not have achieved this expansion," Huang said.

However, Huang noted ongoing challenges, such as delays in goods transportation due to floods and electricity issues that have not occurred in the last 23 years.

Road Fund dialogue highlights importance of budget performance

Seabata Mahao

The Chief Executive Officer of the Road Fund, Matšepang Sekhokoane, has urged road infrastructure agencies to assess their budget performance for the 2024/25 financial year.

Speaking at a recent stakeholder engagement meeting organised by the Fund, Sekhokoane revealed the budget allocations for the agencies; M300 million to the Roads Directorate, M80 million to Maseru City Council (MCC), M33 million to the Local Government Department, and M8 million to the Road Safety Department.

The Roads Directorate is tasked with maintaining national roads, MCC focuses on Maseru's urban roads, local authorities handle council roads, and the Road Safety Department educates the public on road safety.

While she did not dwell much on the matter, Sekhokoane raised a pertinent point of budget under-performance by the agencies as reflected in the 2022/23 financial year.

According to the Road Fund's 2022/23 annual report, only 33 percent of the total allo-

cated funds were utilised by the agencies. Of the M217,395,375 allocated, just M72,605,971 had been spent by the end of the fiscal year.

"Two of the three implementing agencies did not undertake new projects, despite receiving funding according to their yearly implementation plan," the report stated.

Sekhokoane also emphasised the need for improved financial performance and urged Basotho to pay their spot fines, which contribute to road maintenance.

She noted that payments can now be made through mobile services like Mpesa and Eco-cash, making it easier for people to comply.

The Road Fund generates its revenue from several sources: toll gate fees collected by the Lesotho Revenue Service, the Road Maintenance Levy from oil companies, and fees from the Department of Traffic and Transport for license renewals, vehicle registrations, and fitness checks by traffic police.

Looking ahead, Sekhokoane mentioned that the Road Fund has already drafted its budget for the next fiscal year.

"Once the financial year ends in March, we

will assess our collections and allocate funds based on the needs of each stakeholder. While we don't directly maintain roads, we fund their construction and upkeep," she explained.

During the same dialogue, acting Town Clerk Qoboko Makhakhe highlighted the challenges posed by Maseru's growing population,

particularly traffic congestion within the city.

The Roads Directorate's Director of Road Network Planning, Khasapane Kikine, added that their strategic plan would conclude at the end of this financial year.

"We have identified unclear business processes as a significant barrier to progress, and we're working to streamline them moving forward," Kikine noted.



Chief Executive Officer of Road Fund

**PRE-OWNED
CLOTHING & FURNITURE
AUCTION**

TIMED ONLINE AUCTION **BIDDING STARTS:
23 OCT AT 2 PM SAST**

Register & Bid | live.lescorauctions.com

CLOSING

OCTOBER

25

FRIDAY

FROM: 2 PM SAST

Clothing & Fabric

967 Boxes of Second-hand clothes, 578x Tops, 428x Fabric Rolls, 200x Pyjamas, 137x Shorts, 90x T-Shirts, 83x Women's Trousers, 45x Caps, 34x Men's Trousers, 20x Skirts, 20x Baby Blankets, 4x Personal Bags, 3x Mixed Clothes, 3x Boxes Shoes, 2x Men's Black Shoes, Doctors or Nurses Clothes & Off-Cuts Fabric

Home Appliances & Equipment

Pressure Cooker, Power Air fryer, 2x Electric Heaters, Electric Stove, TV, Electric Appliance, Carbon Butterfly Pillow, Books, Empty Plastic Bottles, Shock Absorber, Farming Equipment, Construction Equipment & Engineer Tester

Viewing: Tuesday, 22 October 2024 from 9:00 to 16:00

Assets located at: Plot Nr. 12281-319 Florida Industrial Ha Hoohoo Maseru

Register & Bid Online: live.lescorauctions.com Enquiries: +266 627 83610

Conditions: Each buyer has to be registered in order to bid. A refundable registration deposit of **M5 000** is payable via debit or credit card or EFT. No Cash! Duty is payable at border. All offers exclude VAT & Commission. All assets will be sold subject to confirmation. T's & C's apply. This auction is held subject to reserve prices. Vendor bidding is permissible. SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION.

ESTATE NOTICE

Notice in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024;
ESTATE LATE MOTLATSIS DAVID LIBE E121/2024

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024 calling upon surviving spouse, the heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend a meeting before the Master of the High Court at the office of the Master of the High Court in Maseru on WEDNESDAY, 30th October 2024 at 10:00 am for the purpose of; Proposing some person/persons to be appointed by the Master as executor

Dated at Maseru this 4th September 2024
Master of the High Court Office
Magistrate Court Building
Maseru

ESTATE NOTICE

Notice in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024;
ESTATE LATE SEHLEPHO TLALI E258/2024

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024 calling upon surviving spouse, the heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend a meeting before the Master of the High Court at the office of the Master of the High Court, in Maseru on TUESDAY, 03rd at 09:00 am for the purpose of; Proposing some person/persons to be appointed by the Master as executor

Dated at Maseru this 16th October 2024
Master of the High Court Office
Magistrate Court Building
Maseru

HEALTH



Phelane's battle with keratoconus

Ntsoaki Motaung

... A call for awareness

Twenty-seven-year-old Tanki Phelane is watching his vision deteriorate, making everyday life increasingly challenging.

Born with eyesight problems, Phelane was diagnosed with keratoconus in 2004.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, keratoconus occurs when the cornea thins and bulges into a cone shape. This distortion causes blurry and distorted vision, making tasks like reading and driving difficult.

Phelane shared his story with Newsday, explaining how he had been in and out of hospitals, often with little hope.

"Before I was diagnosed, I would visit health facilities, and they would tell me they didn't know what was happening. They gave me eye drops to suppress the pain, but it would return once they ran out. After my diagnosis, I was told I needed surgery," he said.

Doctors informed Phelane that his condition could be treated if addressed early, with surgery being a key part of the treatment plan.

However, the necessary surgery must be performed in South Africa, and since 2018, Phelane has been unable to afford it. The disease has also cost him his job.

"As the disease progressed, I found it



harder to work. Some days everything would go blurry, and other days the pain was too unbearable to even leave the house," he explained.

Eventually, he lost his job due to his worsening condition.

Despite visiting several doctors, includ-

ing specialists in South Africa, Phelane has been unable to undergo the surgery, which would cost around M50,000.

Without it, he has been told he would lose his sight completely by the time he turned 35.

In his search for help, Phelane reached out to the Ministry of Health, hoping for assistance. While he requested support similar to that provided for other patients, such as those with cancer, he was informed that his condition was not covered under the government's current agreements with South African hospitals.

"It's been 10 months since I contacted the Ministry, and nothing has happened," he said.

Fumane Malebo, General Secretary for the Rare Disease Lesotho Association, explained that rare diseases affect people differently and are often genetic or spontaneous.

"Some rare diseases can be treated, but most cannot. Keratoconus is debated among scientists, some say it is rare, others disagree because more people are affected. If it were classified as a rare disease, our association could help by raising funds," Malebo said.

Ministry of Health public relations officer, 'Mateboho Mosebeka, advised Phelane to continue following up with the office of the Director General of Health Services. Mosebeka also suggested that he visit Makoanyane Hospital, where an eye specialist could guide him further.

7th Galien African Forum to address health and climate crises in Africa

Ntsoaki Motaung

The 7th Galien African Forum will take place from October 22-25 in Dakar, Senegal, organized by Galien Africa in collaboration with REMAPSEN.

This year's forum focuses on the theme "Health and Community Actions in the Face of Climate and Environmental Crises in Africa."

Professor Ibrahima Seck, Secretary General of Galien Africa and Coordinator of the Scientific Commission stated that the forum will reward researchers and innovators in health and environmental sectors across the continent.

Speaking during a webinar with African journalists, Seck explained that the forum is dedicated to addressing public health challenges in Africa.

The event will recognise innovations in medical technology, pharmaceuticals, digital health interventions, and other vital public health initiatives. Each recipient will be awarded USD 30,000 for their contributions to advancing health in relation to environmental issues and climate change.

The forum will begin on October 22 with a focus on young people, bringing together over 100 youths for capacity building. Young innovators who have made it to the final selection stage will receive awards between \$5,000 and USD 10,000.

Seck highlighted that these prizes are designed to encourage youth involvement in health innovation.

Prof. Awa Marie Seck, President of Galien Africa and former Senegalese Minister of Health, pointed out the urgent need for African solutions to health problems aggravated by climate change.

She noted that environmental factors are tied to health issues such as malaria, diarrhoea, and malnutrition, with climate events like droughts and floods worsening food insecurity.

Additionally, Professor Paul Lalvani, founder of Empower School of Health and a member of the Prix Galien Jury Africa, urged African journalists to strengthen partnerships with Galien Africa and other continental bodies to raise awareness and respond to public health crises on the continent.

The forum aims to inspire action and innovation as Africa confronts the dual challenges of health and environmental crises.

Road construction linked to increased mental health issues

Ntsoaki Motaung

In every community, residents eagerly anticipate infrastructure and service delivery improvements.

The Marakabei and Monontša communities in Botha Bothe were no exception; they celebrated the construction of a new road connecting their communities, unaware that it would also bring about distressing consequences.

District Administrator (DA) Quthing Tšepa Chaba revealed that the road construction from Marakabei to Monontša has contributed to a rise in mental health cases within the communities.

This alarming information was shared during last week's Mental Health Day commemoration in Qholaqhoe, organised by the Ministry of Health and its partners.

Chaba noted a significant increase in mental health cases, particularly among residents of Marakabei and Monontša. He pointed out that infrastructure projects often lead to challenges for local communities.

One significant issue has been the interaction between construction workers and community members, leading to unplanned pregnancies.

"These relationships often result in women facing unplanned pregnancies, with some men unwilling to take responsibility. This abandonment can lead to mental health issues for women left to care for the children alone," Chaba explained.

Chief Malefetsane Tšoloane, representing the Principal Chief, echoed Chaba's concerns, emphasising that some indi-

viduals may deliberately exacerbate their mental health issues.

"With the Marakabei to Monontša road construction, we've observed negative impacts, including a rise in unplanned pregnancies. Many women, when faced with these challenges, avoid health facilities, leading to mental health problems, including depression," he said.

Tšoloane further highlighted how unstable family environments contribute to the poor mental health of children, negatively affecting their academic performance.

He urged community members to support those struggling with mental health issues. "We must ensure that they seek medical help and adhere to prescribed treatment," he stressed.

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), one in four women experience depression, and 10-15 percent suffer from depression during pregnancy or after childbirth.

Tragically, suicide is a leading cause of pregnancy-related death in some regions.

The National Mental Health Policy and Strategic Plan 2023-2027 reveals that approximately 20.8 percent of the population in Lesotho lives with a mental disorder, which translates to around 431,000 individuals at any given time.

The report indicates that the burden of Mental, Neurological, and Substance Use Disorders (MNS) in Lesotho increases with age, peaking between ages 15-19, where it accounts for 21 percent of overall disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) in that demographic.



Minister of Health Selibe Mochoboroane, DA Botha Bothe Ts'epa Chaba and Director General Health Services Dr Makhoase Ranyali at Mental Health Day Commemoration

"As individuals transition from adolescence to adulthood, the burden of mental illness stabilizes but still constitutes between 5-16 percent of the overall illness burden in DALYs among adults," the strategic plan notes.

The report also highlights the prevalence of TB and HIV in Lesotho, conditions often associated with comorbid depression.

Given the high incidence of these diseases, many affected individuals may also experience depression. "Depression alone accounts for roughly 20 percent of the mental illness burden in the working population (ages 15 and older)," the strategic plan states.



Theko Tlebere

COMMON CONCERN

Role of technology in streamlining voting processes and reducing long queues in Lesotho

Over the past decade, Lesotho has experienced a notable decline in voter turnout, with the participation rate in the 2022 elections plummeting to just 37.44 percent. This sharp drop from previous years signals a troubling disengagement from formal electoral processes and raises concerns about the health of democracy in the country. My interest in this topic was piqued by an invitation from the Africa Students for Liberty (ASFL) Lesotho chapter to participate in a Zoom discussion as a panelist. Initially hesitant, I soon recognised the importance of investigating viable solutions to the issues contributing to voter apathy. As a nation that depends on democratic elections to reflect the will of its people, it is crucial to explore ways to streamline voting processes and alleviate the burden of long queues to restore voter confidence and engagement.

The historical trends in voter participation underscore the urgency of addressing this issue. Voter turnout, which peaked at 81.90 percent in 1970, has steadily declined over the decades. By 1998, turnout had dropped to 71.83 percent, and by 2022, it had plummeted to a mere 37.44 percent. This trend is not isolated to Lesotho; it is part of a broader global phenomenon where voter turnout has declined since the early 1990s (Solijonov, 2016, p. 8). Nevertheless, the significant decline in Lesotho necessitates immediate intervention. This article will explore how technology can transform Lesotho's voting processes by reducing long queues, improving efficiency, and boosting voter participation. By harnessing technology, Lesotho can modernise its electoral system, encouraging more citizens to engage in shaping the country's future.

Lesotho's electoral challenges mirror those faced by many African nations. The current voting process is heavily reliant on manual systems

that are slow, error-prone, and lead to long wait times at polling stations. According to data from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), the number of registered voters in Lesotho has increased steadily, reaching 1,375,753 in 2022. However, despite this rise in voter registration, actual turnout continues to decline. This discrepancy suggests that although more individuals are eligible to vote, fewer are participating. Key reasons for this trend include inefficiencies in the voting process, prolonged queues, and overall voter dissatisfaction. Addressing these issues is essential for Lesotho to reverse the decline in voter engagement.

In this context, technology encompasses the use of digital and electronic systems aimed at automating, simplifying, and securing various aspects of the voting process. This includes innovations like Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), biometric identification systems, and online voting platforms. Streamlining the voting process involves leveraging technology to make voting more efficient, faster, and less burdensome for both voters and election officials, ultimately aiming to reduce delays and errors associated with manual systems. A notable issue during elections in Lesotho is the long queues at polling stations, often caused by inefficient voter verification methods, manual voting procedures, and slow tallying of results. Addressing these inefficiencies is essential for creating a smoother and quicker voting experience for everyone.

This article discusses three technological solutions to the voting challenges in Lesotho:

- 1. Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs):** EVMs can streamline the voting process by allowing for faster, more accurate vote counting and minimizing human error. In countries like India, these machines have successfully reduced both the time it takes to cast a vote and the time

required to tally results. Implementing EVMs in Lesotho could provide similar advantages, including shorter wait times at polling stations and quicker result dissemination. However, challenges such as the cost of acquiring and maintaining these machines, along with concerns about security and tampering, must be carefully addressed.

- 2. Biometric Identification:** Biometric systems can significantly decrease fraud and errors by accurately confirming each voter's identity. Technologies like fingerprint or facial recognition can be employed to validate a voter's identity before they cast their ballot, thus preventing double voting and impersonation. Implementing biometric identification in Lesotho would enhance the integrity of the voter roll, ensuring that only eligible voters can participate. Nevertheless, this technology demands substantial investment in infrastructure, and privacy concerns must be addressed to avoid eroding public trust.

- 3. Online and Mobile Voting:** Online and mobile voting platforms are gaining popularity in various parts of the world. These systems allow voters to cast their ballots remotely, which reduces the number of people physically present at polling stations, thereby shortening queues. Online voting is particularly appealing to younger, tech-savvy voters who may find traditional voting methods cumbersome. However, in a country like Lesotho, where internet access and digital literacy are still developing, implementing such systems would require significant investment in infrastructure and cybersecurity measures to prevent hack-

ing and fraud. Nonetheless, the potential benefits in terms of increased accessibility and convenience are undeniable.

While the benefits of technology are evident, several challenges must be overcome to ensure successful implementation. A primary concern is the lack of reliable infrastructure to support advanced voting technologies. The government of Lesotho must invest in establishing a robust technological backbone, particularly in rural areas where access to electricity and the internet is limited. Additionally, cybersecurity risks such as hacking and data breaches pose significant threats to the integrity of online voting systems. Strengthening cybersecurity laws and investing in security measures will be crucial for protecting voter data.

Training election officials to use these new technologies is another critical factor. Without proper training, even the most advanced systems may fail to deliver their intended benefits. Ensuring that election workers are well-prepared to operate Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), biometric scanners, and online voting platforms is essential for a smooth voting process.

In conclusion, technology offers a powerful solution to many challenges facing Lesotho's electoral system. By adopting innovations such as EVMs, biometric identification, and online voting platforms, the country can enhance accessibility, efficiency, and transparency in voting. These changes will help reduce long queues, increase voter turnout, and restore confidence in the democratic process. However, to successfully implement these technologies, Lesotho must invest in infrastructure, address security concerns, and ensure that both voters and election officials receive adequate training. By doing so, the nation can look forward to a future where elections are not only more efficient but also more inclusive and participatory. The future is NOW!

Gearing for 2025: What PR and communication teams in the African context need to know

Tanki Kotelo

In today's fast-moving world, staying ahead is essential for PR and communications professionals. As the industry evolves, the strategies that worked a few years ago may no longer resonate with today's audiences. As we look towards 2025, PR and communication teams, especially those much closer to home, across Africa, face several significantly new challenges, often driven by rising technological innovation, shifting audience expectations, and socio-economic developments unique to the African continent.

For those who want to stay at the helm of this thriving industry, these insights are a surefire way to start strategising and remain ever-ready for what is coming. Here are some key trends and challenges African PR and communication teams should prepare for:

Balancing efficiency VS. authenticity using AI: Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly shaping how content is created and distributed. In Africa, where digital transformation is moving at different strides across the region, the adoption of AI tools in PR is crucial for streamlining workflows and advancing outreach. However, the challenge lies in maintaining authentic, human-centred messaging.

While AI can boost efficiency, African PR teams must avoid relying too heavily on it at the expense of cultural nuance and personal engagement. Especially dealing with the new primarily Gen Z media consumers, who are now demanding original content and are forcing brands to



talk it like they walk it. These consumers are more informed and discerning than ever, so brands must be authentic and impactful in their communications.

The rise of misinformation: The spread of misinformation is a global issue, but in Africa, where social media—catapulted by the arrival of COVID-19—has speedily become a primary news source for many over the years, it can be particularly challenging. This has further been heightened by the lack of media literacy in some regions, which makes audiences more vulnerable to false information.

African PR practitioners now have the responsibility to counter fake news by establishing trust through transparency, consistent engagement, and credible sources of information. In this digital era, positioning your brand as a reliable voice

can be a game-changer and a thought leader among your industry peers.

Navigating diverse platforms and audiences: Africa is a continent with a young and dynamic population, and media consumption habits differ widely across regions and demographics. With the rise of platforms like TikTok, WhatsApp, and localised social media apps, PR teams need to be flexible in their approach.

One of the ways to do that is by appreciating the dissimilar preferences of different audience segments. For instance: urban vs. peri-urban vs. rural, youth vs. older generations. From podcasts to short-form videos and reels and traditional media, the ability to craft your strategies to meet the consumption habits of varied audiences will help you stay relevant.

Crisis management in a rapidly connected world: The internet has turned the world into a global village of vastly linked chains of communication. This means that both local and global issues can quickly spiral into crises before the eyes of PR managers and brands alike. Having a robust crisis communication plan in place is more important than ever. Whether it's responding to political instability, economic distress, or social issues, African PR teams must be equipped to act quickly and communicate convincingly.

In an interconnected era where news instantaneously spreads like wildfire, it is imperative to be nimble and dynamic when managing a crisis. Attaining credibility also means maintaining strong relationships with media outlets and local influencers, who can help mitigate harm and

conserve public trust in times of crisis.

The future of sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR): African consumers, like their global counterparts, are now demanding that brands function ethically while making meaningful contributions towards sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Nevertheless, the variation lies in the fact that in many African countries, sustainability is predominantly associated with socio-economic development.

By 2025, PR teams will need to show tangible results in areas like job creation, environmental conservation, and community engagement. Fauxpa CSR messaging won't cut it—African audiences are increasingly looking for organisations that are truthfully championing positive change.

As we look toward 2025, PR in Africa will require a blend of innovation, authenticity, and cultural awareness. As a PR practitioner, whether you're navigating AI, tackling misinformation, or connecting with diverse audiences, flexibility and vigilance will be your most valuable assets. Keep an eye on our blog for more insights and tips as we navigate the future of PR and communications together!

Bloom Communications is a Lesotho-based consultancy specialising in best-in-class media-driven communications, professional writing, public relations, social media management, and marketing for individuals, corporations, and micro, small, and medium-sized brands. For feedback, contact: info@bloomcommunications.co.ls.

OPINION

SEKOELE: Time to reclaim Moshoeshoe's vision for true national development

Mokotjo Maseli



As Basotho celebrate 200 years as a nation founded at Thaba-Bosiu there is very little to show for. The why of that touches on many a facet, one of which is the role of the Central Government in developing a nation. It has been relayed orally and in written text that Basotho as a nation we have come to know was founded on the backdrop of perilous times, Lifaqane. Moshoeshoe and his small band of people even moved from Botha-Bothe to Thaba-Bosiu in search of a haven. Just to demonstrate the jeopardy of then, Peete, Moshoeshoe's grandfather was devoured by cannibals en route to the sanctuary that was Thaba-Bosiu.

Post settlement at Thaba-Bosiu and the waning of Lifaqane, Moshoeshoe embarked on a deliberate nation-building on the cornerstone of peace and social welfare, perhaps having witnessed the devastation of Lifaqane and also recalling the teachings of Morena Mohlomi. This nation-building saw Thaba-Bosiu becoming an asylum for refugees of Lifaqane. Moshoeshoe went further and made alliances with neighbouring kingdoms, as well as those far off, prevention of war, being better than cure.

A proper modern analysis of Moshoeshoe's life as a chief and king reveals a remarkable and complex leader with an unusual philosophy of leadership, and a surprising grasp of the realities and challenges facing him and his people during the mid-1800s. Morena Moshoeshoe had earlier realised that poverty and hunger were the main enemies of stability and a strong state after all, a Sesotho proverb says lela le lapileng ha le na

tsebe, he, therefore, started what was called Mafisa, cattle on loan to the poor among his subjects. They could use the fruits of these animals, like milk and offspring, but they remained his property - (Ngale, 2021). Mafisa was a social grant before social grants became social grants and that was in the 1800s. Make a note.

Morena Moshoeshoe embodied the noble qualities of a chief who loved and served his people based on the understanding that his power depended on the goodwill or grace of the people, thereby fulfilling the Sesotho proverb - morena ke morena ka sechaba. He greatly understood that the justification for the use of power by the public (leadership) is the advancement of the public interest - (Ngale, 2021). This philosophy is nowhere to be found in modern-day political leadership.

The dearth of a government for the people is a glaring contradiction to the governing political system of democracy, the government of the people by the people. The government is of the people yet surprisingly serves other interests that are not necessarily for the people, odd. In Lesotho's democratic dispensation, a government of the people by the people was elected in October of 2022. Prime Minister Matekane's government is of a philosophy of free market capital/trickle-down economy/private sector-led development, which suspiciously sounds like a government repudiating its responsibilities, passing the buck of development when the buck should stop with the government. A stark contrast to what Morena Moshoeshoe was about.

A trickle-down economy breeds monsters, hoarders of wealth, and exploiters of labour, of the environment, of laws of the land. Private-led growth is collusions, cartel behaviour, price fixing, and price gouging become an order of the day. Remember 2-3 years back during the COVID-19 pandemic when retailers decided to astronomically increase prices of basic commodities? Yes. Those are the pitfalls of private sector-led growth because the private sector is only concerned with increased price and profitability instead of human needs, and that is who our government wants to rely on in terms of state development, a non-Moshoeshoe philosophy.

Private-sector-led economy is based on the premise that the self-interest of the businesspeople is sure to benefit the nation; that the best way to get things done is to let capitalists make as large a profit as possible and, as a certain by-product of the process, the needs of the people will be served. Ludicrous. How so, when the governments couldn't control price gouging by retail conglomerates during the Covid-19 pandemic?

To whose advantage is that being done? The economic welfare of the nation can best be achieved, industrialists assure us, not by careful comprehensive planning to that end, but by allowing individual capitalists to decide what is best for the rest of us. The very same entities that collude to fix the price of bread want us to put our fate in their hands.

Instead of "handling their business" as Morena Moshoeshoe did during times of distress, our government seeks to only become a servant of private capital, a gatekeeper, something that the father of economics, Adam Smith long foresaw as far back as 1776 as he laid it out in his famed book (The Wealth of Nations), "Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all."

For the class that rules economically, that owns the means of production, also rules politically - (Leo & Sybil H., 1953). We see this whenever workers take to the streets to fight for better work and/or living conditions. The wrath of government response is lightning quick, unsurprisingly utterly slow in improving workers' conditions. In the surrounding Republic of South Africa, the Red Berets have realised that having political power without economic power is of little use when pursuing an equal society, hence their urging for state capacitation economically for the benefit of all. Morena Moshoeshoe saw that in the 1800s, hence the devising of a Citizen Economic Empowerment (CEE) system called mafisa.

The lip service by corporations, in the boardrooms and annual reports is ethics and sustainability, yet practically, it is competition, self-interest, sharp dealing, dog eat dog, cutthroat, push your rival to the wall, anything goes that you can get away with. Private capital has polluted the air we breathe, the land we live on, and the water we drink, because that is their nature. In a system where the primary motive for the production of goods is the making of a profit, profit should inevitably be regarded as all-important, more important even than lives. And so it is. Profit at all costs. Societal welfare is a by-product of the world of free market capital. However, in the world of our Lord, Morena Moshoeshoe The First of His Name, instead of competition, cooperation (matsema); instead of hate, love; instead of grabbing for yourself, service to others; instead of climbing to the top on the other fellow's back, help your fellow-man; instead of

"how much is there in it for me?", "will it benefit others?"; instead of the lust for riches, the desire to serve. Conscious, intentional leadership.

We need a government like that of the People's Republic of China, which took charge of the welfare of its people via Centralised Planning instead of leaving that to private capital because the increase in man's power to produce should have resulted in the abolition of need and poverty. It has not had that result even in the United States of America, the land of the free, home of the brave, pursuers of the American Dream, the strongest, richest, and most productive capitalist country in the world. Instead, homelessness, exorbitant healthcare, and working multiple jobs to make ends meet. It, therefore, can be said that China's success has eroded the belief that free markets represent the best development strategy for everyone.

The People's Republic of China has managed to uplift millions out of poverty because it did not leave up the functions of a state to a private individual, it became fully hands-on and intentional, with centralised planning. China leads in many aspects of the economy and technology. Its success is built on centralised planning and control.

The Kingdom of Lesotho saw a glimpse of centralised planning when the Government of Lesotho (GoL) had a fully functioning National Planning Board (NPB), continuity and ability to translate policy goals into concrete projects and programs, with visible benefits for the entire population, not just the elite was the order of the day, until power-hungry, self-infatuated politicians decided to render it useless.

Just a few years back the then Minister of Development Planning Mr Selibe Mochoboroane decried the pandemic of abandoned projects in Lesotho, which one can say is a result of frequent changes of governments in the dawn of coalitions (lack of continuity/monitoring, lack of NPB). Selibe Mochoboroane, blamed the delays in completing the projects and the resultant cost escalations on rampant corruption among government officials and a general lack of political will to ensure efficient and prompt completion of projects. Unchecked, unbalanced.

Clarity is clear to see, Lesotho does not need a private sector-led development, Lesotho needs SeMoshoeshoe, a hands-on approach, a centralised planning style where the people come before profitability, only then will our kinfolk settle in their homeland and not form part of gangs that fight over abandoned mines in the neighbouring states. A welfare state society is possible, when everyone feels part and benefits from the resources of their fatherland. After all, freedom means living life to the fullest, the economic ability to satisfy the needs of the body in regard to adequate food, clothing, and shelter; plus an effective opportunity to cultivate the mind, develop one's personality, and assert one's individuality as prescribed in the constitution of the Kingdom. That becomes a task too far to achieve when the development of the sovereignty is left in the hands of a few elites who are controlled by a profit motive.

Sekoele to 200 years ago when Morena Moshoeshoe settled at Thaba-Bosiu. A clarion call to retreat, retreat to the prosperity (Nala) that will see Khotso multiplying and maybe our ancestors in seeing that we have not forgotten our ways will beg the gods to open the skies and Pula will come down on us. The prosperity that our founder envisioned for us, the prosperity that Morena Moshoeshoe greatly made an effort manifest. Moshoeshoe, an enigma, a philosopher, a graduate of Morena Mohlomi School of Political Leadership and Governance.



Opportunity

Terms of References for the following LNFOOD vacancies:

- One (1) District coordinator in Mafeteng district
- Five (5) DREAMS Ambassadors
- Five (5) Disability Case Management Workers

Introduction

Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled LNFOOD is seeking to fill up the above-mentioned posts for the implementation of Bokamoso activity in the districts of Berea, Buthabuthe, Mafeteng, Maseru and Leribe and Mokhotlong.

About LNFOOD

Founded in 1989, and legally registered in October 1991, Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOOD) is a non-governmental umbrella body of organisations of persons with disabilities registered in Lesotho dedicated to capacitating organisations of persons with disabilities and empower persons with disabilities socially, economically, and politically through advocacy and capacity building.

Its membership consists of six Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (ODPs), Albino Aid Multipurpose Association (AMA), Deafblind Association of Lesotho (DBAL), Intellectual Disability and Autism Lesotho (IDAL) formerly known as Lesotho society of mentally handicapped persons (LS-MHP), Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD), Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP), and National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL).

Our understanding of disability:

We define disability as a social factor resulting from the interaction between a person with impairment and the environment and attitudes which may hinder full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis with others.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse:

LNFOOD has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse and candidates selected to be Bokamoso staff will undergo background checks to determine criminal record if any before appointed into these positions.

Vision:

A Basotho society that is accessible and inclusive of all people that live in it, and that enables and empowers people with disabilities to enjoy social, economic, cultural, political, and human rights on an equal basis with others, and to reach their full potential in all aspects of development.

Mission:

Advocate for, promote, defend human rights of persons with disabilities and their families through provision of training, emotional support and by representing their interests to government, private sector, development partners and the wider community.

In fulfilment of this mission, LNFOOD implements several advocacy initiatives to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities, especially women and girls with disabilities are realised on an equal basis with others. This initiative falls within this scope and LNFOOD is therefore seeking to employ 1 Mafeteng district coordinator, 5 DREAMS Ambassadors and 5 Disability Case Management Workers to implement the project at the district and community council level.

Type of contract: Contractual

Duration 5 years subject to review on annual basis.

Reporting:

Disability Case Management Workers report to district coordinators District coordinators report to disability inclusion advisor.

Purpose: to facilitate disability mainstreaming within the implementation of Bokamoso activity.

Job description of the Disability Case Management Workers

Job Title	Case Management Worker	No of incumbents	5
Country/ Office	Lesotho	Department	Programs
Job Grade		Date Prepared/Updated	

Overall Purpose of the Job

Provide HIV/AIDS services for children with disabilities and facilitate disability mainstreaming within Bokamoso implementing partners.

Case Management Worker will be reporting directly to the district coordinators and will be responsible

in conducting community mobilisation within the community council. She/He will be identified and conduct an assessment of vulnerable households and register them as per the household tool. She/He will conduct mobilisations and demand creation at community prior to the community campaigns on HIV and VAC issues at community level. She will further successfully link the beneficiaries to services and conduct an on-going monitoring of the household. In liaison with the district coordinator the Case management Worker will provide the weekly and monthly report.

Departmental Structure/Reporting Relationships

(Reflect positions above, below and at the same level as the position being described)

She will be reporting directly to the Community Social Worker

She will be working directly with the GBV-VAC Navigators, Dreams Ambassadors

Job Specifications

No job description can be all embracing. Associated duties, which can be reasonably considered to be part of the job, shall form part of the job responsibilities. In addition, if required, an employee may be allocated to other temporary duties, provided these are in keeping with his / her status and experience

(Minimum education, qualifications, legal requirements, knowledge, languages, previous work experience, skills, on the job training and competencies required to perform the job)

Qualifications and experience:

- Lesotho O levels/Form 5. Those with tertiary education will have an added advantage
- Ability to read and write in English and Sesotho is also a requirement
- Strong numeracy skills
- Ability to listen and empathize
- Passion for GBV and OVC messaging
- Ability to travel across the district
- Knowledgeable on Child protection issues in Lesotho
- Familiar with current in country GBV screening protocol
- Experienced in implementing the PEPFAR community-based projects.

Competencies required

- Good listening skills and empathy towards others
- Good ability to work independently and effectively influences the team
- Good interpersonal skills
- Responsible and mature in dealing with sensitive psychosocial issues
- High level of integrity

Internal / External Relationships

(important / essential relationships which need to be developed and maintained)

- Internal working relationships DREAMS Ambassadors, Case Management Workers and the linkage officers.
- Externally She/He will work with the Community based Auxiliary Social Workers

Working Conditions

(If applicable make mention of the fact that the incumbent will be required to travel locally and/or internationally, work regular overtime and/or during weekends, etc.)

Travel within diverse community councils in the District

Travel in different terrains of Lesotho

Description of Tasks / Key Performance Areas

(for C upper and above positions list Key Performance Areas)

- Routine Service Delivery in implementation of OVC Comprehensive Case Management (65%)
- Conduct the community demand creation and mobilisation for eligible OVC and caregivers
 - Conduct community health and wellbeing education sessions, as well as leading in the awareness campaigns on HIV and VAC issues
 - Identify and register the vulnerable households through use of the tool at household level
 - In-collaboration with the community leaders advocate for the Community Health days in communities in need
 - Conduct the assessment of the vulnerable households at community level
 - Develop the care plans and ensure submission to the district coordinators
 - Strive to build trusting relationships with all household members
 - Where appropriate, provide direct service delivery, such as facilitate community parenting and hygiene sessions
 - Ensure successful referral and linkages of the beneficiaries to appropriate services
 - Conduct regular follow up visits to monitor progress against case plan, graduation benchmarks and risk assessments
 - Prompt reporting to the Community Social Worker on the challenging questions from the community that may need program support
 - Participate in case conferencing
 - Organize trainings, awareness sessions as well as the campaigns at community level in collaboration with other community stakeholders
 - Ensure graduation of all eligible beneficiaries

Data capturing and reporting at community level (20%)

- Weekly data capturing and submission of reports.
- Compilation of the monthly reports to the Community Social Workers
- Provide the bi-weekly report on activities conducted and improvements noticed in the program
- Monthly submission of the time sheet to the line Manager
- Appropriate completion of the monitoring tools during the home visits and sessions

Representation and relationship management (15%)

- Coordinate and manage relationships with relevant stakeholders including CCCPT
- Participate in community stakeholder forums and provide feedback on progress within the project.

Agreed by Incumbent	Name Printed	Signature
Approved by Immediate Line Manager	Name Printed	Signature
Approved by Department/ Country Head	Name Printed	Signature



RE-ADVERTISEMENT

TORS for developing a tool kit for integrating health services for Adolescent in Lesotho.

A community training guide on the integration of Adolescent sexual reproductive health ASRHR), HIV Services, immunization and child protection in Lesotho.

Project title: Integrating health responses for adolescents in Lesotho

Activity: Development of the integrated SRHR, vaccination, HIV services and child protection referral pathways information kit, An SBCC toolkit to guide peer education.

Introduction:

Skillshare Lesotho and UNICEF have a long history of partnership of promoting adolescent and young people health in the areas of ASRHR, HIV & AIDs, COVID-19, Immunization community mobilization and community education, and child protection through the approach of social accountability.

Recently initiatives revolved around building capacity of adolescents and young people in engaging with services providers to enhance services delivery that meet their needs. Skillshare has strengthened peer to peer education approach, and citizen participation approaches that promote community education and positive engagement. With the integration of COVID-19 immunization, and following WHO guidelines supporting the integration of vaccination as part of the adolescent health response among the state parties.

Skillshare using the two models (peer to peer and social accountability) has been able to establish strong community structures that identify all groups of people, who are left behind for services. Such groups of people include young mothers, young sex workers, people living with disability, adolescents and young people and herd boys to mention but a few. With the emergency of COVID-19 in the year 2021, Skillshare integrated COVID-19 guidelines into their implementation models, including conducting of research, and community feedback mechanism to understand community perception towards the disease, and be able to educate the community on prevention, control, and treatment of COVID-19 including Vaccination.

The proposed information kit to be developed will be aligned with the Lesotho National AH-HAI Guidelines which highlights a set of strategic guidelines designed to address critical health issues in Lesotho, particularly focusing on Adolescent Health, HIV/AIDS, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). The aim of the information kit will aim to provide a comprehensive framework for improving health outcomes, especially among adolescents and young people, by integrating HIV/AIDS services with broader health access and promoting sexual and reproductive health rights including vaccination as integral service to complete adolescent health response in Lesotho.

As part of the 2024-2025 partnership, a coordinated approach for community education will be strengthened, Skillshare Lesotho will take lead in the development of the information tool kit that is intended to provide a central resource tool for peer educators and community workers. The kit is meant to consolidate community health education in response to adolescent health in the areas of ASRHR, immunization, HIV services and child protection.

The program/partnership will be guided by the following project outputs

- Promote vaccination, access to HIV services, and child protection referral pathways for high risk groups, including adolescents living with HIV, as well as adolescents and young mothers.
- Promote integration into existing programmes and platforms, vaccination services, HIV services, and access to child protection referral pathways.
- Promoting gender integration and mainstreaming in HIV/ASRHR and immunization, access to HIV services, and access to child protection referral pathways
- Promote community feedback mechanisms to enhance vaccination awareness, access to HIV services, and access to child protection referral pathways including uptake of all health services (SRHR, HIV services, vaccination and child protection).

Purpose and objective

To develop the information toolkit which can be used by all actors in the adolescent health response in the country. The information kit would be tested as a national guide for scale up and support Ministry of Health (adolescent Health and Health Promotions) and other actors in the response to the adolescent health- supplementing AH-HAI Framework. The tool kit should provide a standardized materials for self-awareness of the target beneficiaries to Champions for community and support group awareness and advocacy.

Objectives:

- To develop a user friendly and context-specific information kit that aligns with National health policies and guidelines
- To ensure the information kit provides clear guidelines on the integration of ASRHR, HIV services, immunization, and child protection referral pathways.
- To include practical tools, checklists, and protocols that health workers, volunteers, and others can use in their data today activities in the delivery of the adolescent health services.
- To provide training modules that can be used to enhance the capacity of community health workers, volunteers/peer educators in delivering integrated services

General scope of the work; in this assignment, the consultant will be responsible for the following tasks;

- Conduct a situational analysis- review existing policies, guidelines and training materials related to ASRHR, HIV services, immunization and child protection. Identify gaps and challenges in the current delivery of integrated services both at national and community level
- Stakeholder engagement; Engage with key stakeholders including MOH, and other health agencies, NGOs, community leaders, health services providers, to gather insights, and also validate information kit content. An opportunity for wider consultation Development of the information kit, the consultant is required to draft the information kit, ensuring it is practical, accessible, and easy to use for health workers. Include modules

on the integration of ASRHR, HIV services, immunization, and child protection, referral pathways with specific focus on:

- Service delivery protocols
- Referral systems
- Communication strategies for adolescents
- Monitoring and evaluation tools
- Incorporate visual aids, flowcharts, and case studies to facilitate understanding and application.

iv. Field Testing and Validation; Pilot the information kit in selected health facilities to test its usability and effectiveness, gather feedback from health workers and other stakeholders to refine the content.

v. Finalization of the Information Kit; Revise the information kit based on feedback from the field testing and validation process. Prepare the final version of the information kit, including any necessary translations or adaptations for different regions.

vi. Training of Trainers (ToT) Develop a training module and conduct a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop to ensure effective dissemination and use of the information kit at the national and community levels. The TOT participants will not exceed 20 selected from the District of Berae, Mafeteng, Mphahlele Hoek and Thaba Tseka.

Anticipated Deliverables

The consultant/firm will be expected to deliver the following:

- A comprehensive situational analysis report.
- A draft version of the information kit for review and feedback
- A field-tested and validated information kit.
- A final version of the information kit, ready for dissemination.
- Training modules and materials for the ToT workshop
- A final report detailing the process, findings, and recommendations.

Timeline

The assignment is expected to be completed within 30 working days with the following key milestones

Required Expertise

The consultant/firm should possess the following qualifications:

- Proven experience in public health, specifically in ASRHR, HIV, immunization, and child protection.
- Experience in developing training materials and information kits for health workers.
- Strong understanding of the national health system and policy environment.
- Excellent communication and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Experience in conducting field tests and validation processes.

Reporting and Supervision

Supervision: The consultant will report to Skillshare Program Manager/Executive Director and closely work with other members and key stakeholders (MOH/UNICEF etc.) Skillshare District focal persons, DHMTs, peer educators, Health facilities managers, and selected beneficiaries

Budget

A detailed budget proposal should be submitted, outlining the costs associated with each phase of the assignment, including stakeholder engagement, development, field testing, finalization, and training.

Submission of Proposals

Interested and qualified consultants are invited to submit a technical and financial proposal that includes the following:

A technical proposal alongside the financial bid outlining their understanding of the assignment, methodology and approaches for the assignment as well as financial bid in Lesotho currency (not more than 4 pages, single space, font size 12).

- A brief description of the proposed approach and methodology.
- CVs of the key team members.
- A detailed work plan and timeline.
- A financial proposal, including a breakdown of costs.

Please hand deliver your application to Skillshare Lesotho Offices located at 42b Old Europa, UN Road, and Opposite Maseru Golf Club. Submission should include application letter, financial proposal, CVs of the individual/team of consultants. Ensure submission in separate envelopes for the financial and technical proposals- clearly marked.

Address the Applications to the; Executive Director, Skillshare Lesotho, clearly indicate the title on the envelope: *"expression of interest for the developing of the community information tool kit"*

Skillshare will only contact an entity/person that qualified. If not contacted, consider your application unsuccessful.

Applications reserves the right to call off the offer and/or the advert.

Applications should be hand delivered at the address below:

Skillshare Lesotho
Opposite Maseru Golf Club
42b Old Europa, United Nations Road
Maseru 100, Lesotho
P.O. Box: 269, Maseru, Lesotho
Office: +266 2231 4202

Deadline for submission – on or before 25th October 2024 at 12:00 Pm Maseru time

For inquiries contact: ndyana.dickson@skillsharelesotho.org

PREQUALIFICATION OF SUPPLIERS/SERVICE PROVIDERS 2024-2026
PROC. REF: SKL/PREQ/2024-2026/0004.

Skillshare Lesotho is a non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to promoting sustainable development, capacity-building, and human rights in Lesotho. Skillshare Lesotho works closely with local communities, government bodies, and other stakeholders to implement programs that improve the lives of vulnerable populations, with a strong emphasis on equity, social justice, and empowerment. Skillshare Lesotho is inviting qualified and interested Suppliers and Service Providers to submit sealed applications for prequalification to supply goods, works, and services in the categories listed below for the period 2024 to 2026. The specific categories are as follows:

Category Number	Category description
SKL 001/2024-2026	Supply of health and safety materials / equipment
SKL 002/2024-2026	Provision of branded promotional items, uniforms and corporate wear
SKL 003/2024-2026	Supply, installation, repair and maintenance of physical security systems (CCTV, access control, intruder alarms)
SKL 004/2024-2026	Supply, installation and maintenance of electrical equipment and appliances / backup systems
SKL 005/2024-2026	Supply, installation and maintenance of air conditioning systems
SKL 006/2024-2026	Supply of electronic and non-electronic asset tags
SKL 007/2024-2026	Supply and maintenance of fire extinguishers and fire systems
SKL 008/2024-2026	Supply and maintenance of office door locks
SKL 009/2024-2026	Supply of communication gadgets (phones, tabs) and accessories
SKL 010/2024-2026	Supply and maintenance of IT computer equipment and hardware
SKL 011/2024-2026	Supply and installation of branded office furniture, furnishings and fittings
SKL 012/2024-2026	Supply of assorted printed office stationery and other printed items
SKL 013/2024-2026	Supply of assorted general office stationery
SKL 014/2024-2026	Provision of professional cleaning, waste management, pest control and other sanitary related services
SKL 015/2024-2026	Provision of handyman services i.e plumbing, painting and carpentry
SKL 016/2024-2026	Provision of civil/building construction/office fit out services
SKL 017/2024-2026	Provision of digital branding, marketing and advertising services
SKL 018/2024-2026	Provision of event management services (PA sound systems, guest Tents, Gazebos)
SKL 019/2024-2026	Provision of motor vehicle repair and maintenance services
SKL 020/2024-2026	Provision of vehicle, truck hire and cab services
SKL 021/2024-2026	Provision of distribution of fuel services
SKL 022/2024-2026	Provision of records management services
SKL 023/2024-2026	Provision of records destruction services
SKL 024/2024-2026	Physical branding/signage services
SKL 025/2024-2026	Project quality assurance consultancy services (Consulting firms, individuals)
SKL 026/2024-2026	Legal services
SKL 027/2024-2026	Mystery and project beneficiary experience surveys (Consulting firms, individuals)

SKL 028/2024-2026	Capacity Building Training and content development/ learning management services (Consulting firms, individuals)
SKL 029/2024-2026	Provision of evaluation surveying consultancy services
SKL 030/2024-2026	Provision of Human Rights training services
SKL 031/2024-2026	Provision of IT software services (system software, communication software, internet access software, application development)
SKL 033/2024-2026	Provision of vehicle and asset tracking services
SKL 034/2024-2026	Provision of courier and logistical services
SKL 035/2024-2026	Provision of human recruitment and background check services
SKL 036/2024-2026	Provision of photography/ video services
SKL 037/2024-2026	Provision of printing & photocopying services (e.g booklets, manuals,)
SKL 038/2024-2026	Provision of insurance and brokerage services
SKL 039/2024-2026	Provision of catering services.
SKL 040/2024-2026	Provision of emergency relief services (food and non-food items)
SKL 041/2024-2026	Supply of drinking water.
SKL 042/2024-2026	Provision of evidence-based research and survey services (baselines, endlines, needs assessment, midlines, bench-marks)
SKL 043/2024-2026	Personal computers (PCS), printers, accessories, support and maintenance services
SKL 044/2024-2026	-Security (Armed guarding and intrusion detection alarm system services)
SKL 045/2024-2026	Provision of assorted office groceries (supermarkets, hypermarkets and whole sellers)
SKL 046/2024-2026	Provision of auctioneering services
SKL 047/2024-2026	Provision of audit services (accounting firms)
SKL 048/2024-2026	Newspaper advertising services
SKL 050/2024-2026	Provision of cloud-based storage solution (digital storage platforms and back-ups)
SKL 051/2024-2026	Provision of hotel services (accommodation and meetings/workshop services in the 10 districts of Lesotho)
SKL 052/2024-2026	Supply of Mobile Money services e.g. Mpesa, Eco cash
SKL 053/2024-2026	Provision of farm inputs and agricultural inputs (seeds, light farm equipment)
SKL 054/2024-2026	Provision of small livestock and feeds (rabbits, chicken)

The prequalification process will begin on Tuesday, 25th October 2024, at 12:00 PM. All bids must be clearly labeled and sealed, marked "Application for Provision of (Indicate Category)," and hand-delivered to the Skillshare Lesotho Offices for registration. Submissions should include quotations for your services or items, a company profile, a valid tax clearance certificate, a trading license, and at least two (2) recommendation letters from previous or current clients.

Note: Suppliers from all districts are encouraged to apply. In your application, please specify the districts where you are able to provide services.

All applications should be hand delivered at the address below:

Skillshare Lesotho
Opposite Maseru Golf Club
42b Old Europa, United Nations Road
Maseru 100, Lesotho
P.O. Box: 269, Maseru, Lesotho
Office: +266 2231 4202



THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

INVITATION TO TENDER NO:7 of 2024/2025

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) SOFTWARE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) EQUIPMENT FOR B.O.S

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), through the Bureau of Statistics (BOS) has been allocated funds by the Government of Lesotho (GoL) for the preparation and implementation of 2026 Population and Housing Census project. Bidding will be conducted through National Competitive Tendering The ITT has three lots and bidders are free to bid for **one lot or more**.

A complete set of bidding documents in English may be available to the interested bidders upon payment of a **non-refundable fee of LSL 5000.00 (Five thousand Maloti only)**. The method of payment shall be in cash and the bidding documents must be collected in person at Development Planning - Procurement Unit office number 124. While payment shall be made at 1st floor office number 262 – Accounts Office. Clarification requests on bidding documents will be allowed up to the day before submission date line, during office hours between 9:30 am until 3:30 pm. A **tender security of 2% of bid price** shall accompany all bids.

Bids must be deposited on or before **29th October, 2024 at 12: 00, hrs.** in the tender box situated at Government Complex Phase II at Development Planning 2nd floor. Bids arriving after the closing date time shall be rejected. Tenders will be opened in the presence of bidders or representatives at **14: 30** hours on the same day.

The address for procurement of bidding documents, clarification requests and bid submission is:

Development Planning
Procurement Unit
P.O. Box 630
Maseru 100.
Tel no. 22 317433 / 266 22 328187

Tender Timetable

Activity	Dates
ITT Issued	17 September 2024
Clarification dates	17-28 October 2024
Deadline for obtaining Tender Document	28th October 2024
ITT Close	29th October 2024 at 12:00 noon
Tender opening	29th October, 2024 at 14: 30 hours
Evaluation and tender award	11th November 2024

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning is not bound to accept the lowest at any bid also reserves the right to reject or cancel the contract in any legal or corrupt practices have been connected with one award.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Job Title: Assistant Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Location: DHAOL
Career Level: Mid-Level (2 years' experience).
Employment Type: Fixed-term contract
Reports to: Programmes Director

The Assistant Monitoring and Evaluation Officer will work closely with the Programmes Director to ensure that all programs and projects are effectively monitored and evaluated to ensure their success. The incumbent will be responsible for collecting and analyzing data related to program activities, tracking progress towards program goals, and identifying areas for improvement.

Key Responsibilities:

- Assist in the development and implementation of monitoring and evaluation plans for all programs and projects.
- Collect data on program activities, outcomes, and impact using a variety of data collection methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups.
- Analyze data to identify trends and patterns, and prepare reports and presentations to communicate findings to program staff and stakeholders.
- Monitor program progress and implementation to ensure that activities are being carried out as planned and are achieving their intended outcomes.
- Support the design and implementation of M&E tools and systems to streamline data collection and analysis processes.
- Provide training and support to program staff on data collection, monitoring, and evaluation techniques.
- Assist in conducting regular field visits to monitor program activities and provide technical assistance to program staff.
- Coordinate with external partners and stakeholders to ensure that monitoring and evaluation activities are aligned with donor requirements and standards.
- Assist in the preparation of program reports, including quarterly and annual reports, as well as ad-hoc reports as needed.

► Contribute to the overall learning and knowledge management of the organization by documenting and sharing best practices and lessons learned from program activities.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field (such as statistics, social sciences, development studies, or a related field).
- At least 2 years of experience in monitoring and evaluation, preferably within the NGO sector.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook and Internet computer skills.
- Expertise in using statistical software and applications such as SPSS, STATA, Epi Info, R software, Comm-Care, DHIS2 etc.
- Excellent communication and writing skills, with the ability to synthesize complex information into clear and concise reports.
- Experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative data collection activities, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and participatory methods.
- Knowledge of M&E frameworks and tools, as well as best practices in monitoring and evaluation.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team, with strong organizational and time management skills.
- Fluent in English (both written and spoken), with additional languages a plus.

HOW TO APPLY:

To apply, submit your CV and a motivational letter through email at applications@dhaol.org.ls NB: Please write the position you are applying for as a subject "RE:APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANT MONITORING AND EVALUATION OFFICER E POSITION"

Deadline for applications: Wednesday 22nd October 2024

Please Note that no hand delivered applications shall be accepted. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted



Fees	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months
------	----------	----------	-----------

Subscription	M 72.00	M 156.00	M 312.00
---------------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------

Delivery	M 60.00
-----------------	----------------

Names:..... **Email:**..... **No. Of Copies:**.....
Address:..... **Start date:**...../...../..... **Expiry:**...../...../
Tel:..... **Cell:**..... **Signature:**.....

Payment Method	Newsday Media PTY LTD
----------------	-----------------------

Cash	Bank Deposit	Merchant
	Standard Lesotho Bank Acc#: 9080001310220	EcoCash 92669 m-pesa 3551

**More to share
with our tasty treats**

Select something delicious with our iconic Champion Toffees, Manhattan, Mister Sweet, Super C Sweets, and Candy Tops Eclairs. Packed full of flavour and perfect value for money.



THE ORIGINAL
CHAMPION
The BIG taste that lasts

Candy Tops Making life sweeter
ECLAIRS



mister sweet
MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE



MANHATTAN
The taste of Fun



SuperC
The original energy sweet.



ARTS

How the King and Ambassador's meeting inspired Lesotho-France film project

Pheello Mosesi

In a significant cultural exchange event marking Lesotho's 200th anniversary, French Ambassador David Martinon recently hosted the first public screening of the documentary: *Kingdom in the Sky at Alliance Francaise de Maseru*.

The initiative stems from a deep-rooted relationship between Lesotho and France, dating back many decades.

According to the organisers of the special screening, the idea for the film originated during one of Ambassador Martinon's visit to present his credentials to His Majesty King Letsie III. During this visit, the king highlighted France's pivotal role in securing Lesotho's independence through the efforts of French missionaries.

He then expressed the desire for a film that would capture this important historical relationship. In response, the French Embassy, with funding from the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, collaborated with the Morija Museum and Archives to produce a film that commemorates Lesotho's 200 years of existence and documents the long history of diplomatic relations initiated by French missionaries.

The organisers further indicated that the success of *Kingdom in the Sky* was made possible through the collaboration of talented artists across various disciplines, including



The French Ambassador to Lesotho David Martinon (Right) with the Director of Alliance Francaise de Maseru Elisabeth Douillet

graphic designers and filmmakers. "The project was feasible through the collaboration of talented filmmakers and designers. It is important to engage artists in traditionally academic endeavours to make information easily accessible to the public," the organisers said.

Commenting on the film project, Ambassador Martinon noted that the milestone

not only celebrates the enduring partnership between the two nations but also lays the groundwork for future collaborations rooted in mutual respect for cultural heritage.

"This project reflects our commitment to fostering continued enrichment and partnership in the years ahead," he stated.

The screening also revealed a strong appetite among the audience for more accessible

representations of Lesotho's history through film, with plans already underway to develop a digitisation strategy to make the Morija Museum and Archives more accessible to the public, particularly focusing on its history with France.

"The initiative is part of a broader effort to preserve fragile historical documents and make them available for future generations."

Looking ahead, local film enthusiasts can anticipate more Basotho productions being screened. The upcoming European Film Festival, organised by the EU Delegation in Lesotho and Alliance Française de Maseru, will feature local films alongside European ones at multiple venues, including the National University of Lesotho.

Additionally, workshops will be held for students in the film industry, further enhancing local filmmaking skills. The film has also begun to circulate in France, and while formal feedback is pending, it has already attracted 2,000 views on YouTube within the first week of its release, indicating a positive reception.

Despite the current reliance on South African filmmakers for the production of Basotho heritage and history, there are growing opportunities for local talent to learn from international professionals. Alliance Française de Maseru regularly hosts workshops where local filmmakers can gain insights from experienced producers.

Bicentennial Celebrations



European Film Festival returns to Lesotho

Arts

Staff Reporters

The European Film Festival is set to make its return to Lesotho from November 13 to 30, 2024, bringing a diverse line-up of films from Europe and Lesotho, European Union (EU) Lesotho announced this week.

The festival will explore significant themes such as inheritance rights, women's rights, and the music of a generation in Lesotho.

This year marks the first-ever binational European Film Festival between Eswatini and Lesotho.

"We are excited to partner with the European Union in Eswatini, Alliance Française de MASERU and Alliance Francaise de Mbabane for the first bi-national European Film Festival Eswatini-Lesotho.

"This edition of the Lesotho European Film Festival will open in Maseru and Roma with local films produced in the last year with EU support via the Sound Connects Fund. Beyond presenting films from across Europe, the festival aims to promote local talents."

The Sound Connects Fund was a multifaceted initiative designed to accelerate development and enhance the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors in Southern Africa.

It provided financial support through various-sized grants and comprehensive capacity-building programs to eligible creative and cultural industry organizations based in Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The fund focused on sectors such as per-



Bringing the best of European and Basotho cinema to Lesotho: a cultural feast across the nation!

Wednesday 13 to Saturday 30 November 2024



With the financial contributions of



forming arts, animation, film, gaming, photography, videography, and visual arts.

The conclusion of the fund, led by the Music in Africa Foundation and the Goethe-In-

stitut, was announced earlier this year.

The Lesotho edition of the European Film Festival is supported by financial contributions from Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Germa-

ny, France, Italy, Ireland, Poland, Spain, and the European Union.

Movie lovers can look forward to an exciting film line-up to be announced soon.



SPORTS

LCS overpowers Majantja

Thabo Rakhomo



Lesotho Correctional Services Football Club (LCS FC) also known as 'Masheshena,' narrowly defeated Majantja FC 3-2 in a recent match that was played at the Mohale's Hoek District Football

Association (DIFA) ground.

Masheshena entered the game riding high after a morale-boosting victory against Matlama FC, while Majantja FC came into the match on the back of a loss

to Bantu FC.

Unfortunately for Majantja, their winless streak continues, as they have now played three matches without securing a win or earning any points.

The first half of the match saw fierce competition, with both teams locked in a 2-2 draw. However, Masheshena pulled ahead in the second half when Makara Ntatsane scored a decisive goal, breaking the deadlock and securing the win.

After the match, Majantja's head coach Bafokeng Mohapi expressed satisfaction with his team's performance despite the defeat, acknowledging that their defense struggled to contain Masheshena's attack.

"Majantja is a young team with players lacking experience in premier league football, but they have shown commitment and growth. The club is on a journey of self-reflection, looking for ways to improve. Our mistakes today will help us grow," he said.

Mohapi also highlighted the challenges facing Majantja, including the lack of resources and support, which has made it difficult for the club to prepare adequately for the season.

"We have set a target to win a minimum of five matches this season, and we are determined to build from here," Mohapi stated.

On the other hand, Masheshena's head coach Thabile Secker praised his team's performance but admitted there are still areas that need improvement.

"We followed our game plan well, but we need to address the defensive errors that allowed Majantja to score two goals. Although we did not play at our best, we are improving with each match," Secker said.

The league title-winning coach with Matlama concluded by emphasising the need to strengthen the backline to ensure better defensive responses in future games.

"The team's performance in this game reflected the hard work put in during training," Secker added.

Econet dresses High School teams in new kits

Seabata Mahao

Telecommunications giant Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) has started distributing 105 sports kits to male and female teams from schools that participated in this year's Lesotho Institutions Sports Association (LISA) games.

This gesture is part of the M6 million sponsorship deal Econet signed with LISA in 2022.

The sports kit handover, which includes football, netball, basketball, volleyball, and handball equipment, will continue across the country until November 27, this year.

The kits, which include football, netball, basketball, volleyball, and handball items reflect Econet's continued dedication to empowering youth and promoting sports development in Lesotho, according to Econet's acting General Manager – Marketing, Communications and Customer Experience, Puleng 'Mathabo Masoabi.

In her remarks regarding the hand-



over, Masoabi emphasised the importance of investing in youth talent.

"We are proud to support our future athletes and leaders by equipping them with the tools to excel in

sports. At Econet, we believe in building strong relationships with communities, and our partnership with LISA aligns with our vision to nurture young talent, promote healthy competition, and foster

teamwork across the nation."

Naleli Setlai, who spoke on behalf of LISA expressed gratitude for Econet's unwavering support over the past three years.

"The LISA Games would not have been the same without our strong partnership with Econet Telecom Lesotho. Their commitment to the development of sports and youth has greatly contributed to the success of these competitions. With this generous handover of jerseys, students from all corners of Lesotho will continue to participate and grow in various sports disciplines," Setlai said.

Over the past three years, Econet has pumped M6 million into the LISA Games, making a profound impact on both the sports sector and the country's economy. The company's consistent support demonstrates its belief in sports as a powerful vehicle for change, fostering discipline, teamwork, and national pride among Lesotho's youth.

Maseru Super Kings clinch cricket T20 trophy

Seabata Mahao

The Maseru Super Kings cricket team emerged as champions of the LPL 2024 T20 tournament, which kicked off in a league format on August 18, this year.

The final match, successfully hosted by the Federation of Cricket Lesotho (FCL), concluded a thrilling tournament organised by the Lankasia Cricket team and sponsored by the Sri Lankan community in Lesotho.

The two teams that competed in the finals were the Maseru Super Kings and Rising Stars Maseru. Both teams reached the final after triumphing over Basotho XI, Scorpions, Lankasia, Pak 11, and Kokni Cricket from Leribe.

The winners, Maseru Super Kings, took home a prize of M15000, a revolving trophy, and medals. Additional prizes will be announced later.

In an interview with the FCL spokesperson, Lebona Leokaoko, he described the final as one of a kind.

"We launched the trophy, which was

brought in by a helicopter before the game commenced. There were food stalls representing different cultures including Indian, Lankasian, Pakistani, Basotho, Filipino, and many more," Leokaoko said.

He also highlighted the presence of cultural clothing booths and entertainment for children.

Looking ahead, Leokaoko hinted at an even bigger tournament in the coming months, which will include South African cricket teams.

"It has been a restless three weeks preparing for this successful tournament, but we made it perfect," he stated.

In a post-match interview, Maseru Super Kings' captain, Salman Salman, expressed pride in his team's performance.

"I'm very happy and proud of my team. We played according to our strategy. We will compete in the next tournament as the same team. We are very strong together," Salman said.

The event was attended by an important delegation and was free to the public.





18 Oct - 24 Oct 2024

Another disappointing loss for Likuena

Seabata Mahao



The senior national football team, Likuena, saw their Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) 2025 hopes further fade away after a 2-0 loss to Gabon this week.

The match was played at Moses Mabhida Stadium, South Africa as Lesotho continues to be without internationally approved playing facilities.

The defeat, a third one in the ongoing qualifiers, has all but sealed Likuena's fate of failing to qualify for yet another AFCON tournament, following a string of flattering but ultimately poor performances.

Likuena's journey began with a 3-1 loss to the Central African Republic (CAR), followed by a 1-0 defeat at the hands of Morocco.

They faced Gabon in their first leg in Franceville, where they managed a 0-0 draw. However, in the return leg, which they needed to win to stay in contention, Likuena fell short, losing 2-0.

Likuena are currently rooted at the bottom of their group with a solitary point after playing four games. They are yet to travel to Morocco and host CAR in their remaining matches with little chance of getting a positive result from both games.

Reacting to the loss, Likuena's head coach, Leslie Notši, acknowledged their challenges, citing Gabon's strength as a key factor in the loss.

"Gabon is a strong team with most of

their players competing in top football clubs around the world. CAR, Gabon, and Lesotho are all competing in a tough group that includes Morocco, so every match requires full strength," Notši said.

He also noted that playing at home gave Gabon a significant advantage, suggesting that if Likuena had been their own home matches in Lesotho, they might have done better.

"Gabon had the benefit of home advantage, which boosted their confidence," he explained.

On the broader challenges faced by the national team, Notši mentioned that the country's limited resources and fewer in-

ternational players make competing at this level difficult.

"I'm proud of Likuena for their efforts, but Gabon is a team feared by other nations," Notši added.

Thierry Mouyouma, Gabon's head coach emphasised that his team had learned from their previous matches and was determined to secure a win.

"Our goal was to score points and advance to the next stage. In sports, actions speak louder than words," said Mouyouma.

Despite hopes that Lesotho might leverage their familiarity with the South African region, they were unable to capitalise on this advantage.

94.7fm bokamoso

COME GET THE BEST RADIO ADVERTISING OF ALL TIME

FOLLOW US NOW

WWW.BOKAMOSO974.CO.ZA
TEL: +266 6616 0009 / 5193 4769 / 6317 2559