

# Newsday

...pacing standards

07 March - 13 March, 2025

[www.newsdayonline.co.ls](http://www.newsdayonline.co.ls)

Vol 07 No 04

M6.00

News

**Kamoli lobbies AU for bail**

Page 2

News

**Union secures M4,000 pay for factory workers**

Page 4

# THOLO HIT WITH ANOTHER FINANCIAL BOMBSHELL



- New info indicates it also owes Road Fund 'M48 million'
- This brings its total known debt to the state to about M179 million.

Page 2



**MZANSI YOUNG FARMERS INDABA**  
1-2 APRIL 2025  
POWERED BY FOOD FOR MZANSI

Re itokisetsa Mzansi Young Farmers Indaba e hloppa Mzansi, se ka tse tlo tsamaea le rona

**CANCELLED**

1-2 APRIL 2025  
Lavender Kontrei Market, Pretoria North, Gauteng.





# Tholo hit with another financial bombshell

- **New info indicates it also owes Road Fund ‘M48 million’**
- **This brings its total known debt to the state to about M179 million.**

### Staff Reporter

Tholo Energy, a company once touted as a success story in Lesotho’s fuel sector, is now at the center of a financial scandal of staggering proportions.

With an outstanding debt of M131 million in unpaid petroleum levies since 2019, the company’s financial dealings paint a troubling picture of negligence, evasion, and apparent complicity by regulatory authorities.

Natural Resources Minister, Mhloimi Moleko, informed the parliament’s portfolio committee on natural resources this week that his ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, has decided not to renew Tholo Energy’s trading licence until the M131 million debt is settled.

Further investigation by Newsday revealed that the M131 million is only part of the company’s arrears. Sources told this publication yesterday that Tholo Energy also owes the Road Fund about M48 million in road maintenance levies.

The Road Fund, established under the Road Fund Act of 1996, collects levies from fuel sales and vehicle licenses to finance the construction,

maintenance, and rehabilitation of Lesotho’s road network.

Its mandate is to ensure safe and accessible roads across the country to support economic activity and connectivity in a nation heavily reliant on its infrastructure.

The Fund’s annual budget depends on these contributions, making Tholo’s alleged unpaid M48 million a significant shortfall.

Road Fund officials confirmed the debt to Newsday yesterday but declined to specify the amount.

“We acknowledge that Tholo Energy does owe the Road Fund under the road maintenance levy stream. The Road Fund Secretariat in consultation with relevant stakeholders is continuously engaging with Tholo Energy to ensure that the debt is recovered in the most reasonably economic manner having considered several factors,” Phumla Moleko, Road Fund’s head of corporate communications, said.

“We will, however, not be in a position to divulge the specific amount as a show of good faith and trust in the process being followed,” Moleko added.



Newsday learned that the Fund considered legal action against Tholo Energy last month, but the company proposed a payment arrangement, staving off a lawsuit for now.

Minister Moleko told the committee that Tholo Energy has repeatedly defaulted on payment plans for the M131 million petroleum levy debt. He noted that the company’s trading licence has already expired and warned that liquidation proceedings would follow if the debt remains unpaid.

Moleko acknowledged that the government had shown leniency toward Tholo because it is a locally owned firm, but that patience has run out.

However, Ministry of Energy Principal Secretary (PS), Tankiso Phapano, offered a different perspective and attributed the delay to a dispute over the exact amount owed. Phapano said the government and Tholo Energy only agreed on the M131 million figure last year and are now negotiating a payment plan.

Newsday’s investigation, however, reveals that Tholo Energy’s troubles extend far beyond these unpaid levies. Last month, Newsday reported on an alleged M450 million tax fraud scandal involving the company and its managing director, Tha-

biso Moroahae.

A whistleblower provided evidence to the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO), Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS), Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL), and Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Advocate Hlalefang Motinyane.

Despite the FIU concluding an investigation in 2024 and sharing findings with relevant authorities, no action has been taken. Responses from law enforcement ranged from vague excuses to silence, raising questions about accountability in high-profile cases.

Adding to the company’s woes, Newsday reported in February 2024 that South Africa’s High Court dismissed an appeal by Tholo Energy Services CC, a Moroahae-controlled entity, in a R4.25 million tax refund scam.

Judge Molotsi ruled that the company’s claims were fraudulent, exposing deceptive fuel transport practices. Tholo Lesotho, also led by Moroahae, supplies fuel sourced from South Africa to local customers, while Tholo Energy Services operates as a fuel distributor across Southern Africa.



### Ntsoaki Motaung

In a desperate bid for freedom, incarcerated former army commander Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli has appealed to the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) to advocate for his release on bail, citing years of stalled legal proceedings.

A newly released report from the commission reveals that during its visit to Lesotho earlier last year, from January 29 to February 2, Kamoli personally requested its delegation to intervene in his prolonged pre-trial detention.

The commission’s delegation included Commissioner Ourveena Geereesha Topsy-Sonoo, the Commissioner Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Lesotho, and the Commission’s Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa, who served as the head of the delegation.

Additionally, Commissioner Dr. Litha Musyimi-Ogana, the Chairperson of the Working Group

on Indigenous Populations/Communities and Minorities in Africa, was part of the delegation.

Musyimi-Ogana also chairs the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of People Living with HIV and Those at Risk, Vulnerable to, and Affected by HIV.

The mission was further supported by Eva Heza from the commission’s secretariat.

“The Delegation toured the maximum correctional wing, which held ten (10) individual cells housing inmates accused of high-profile crimes, such as an inmate accused of organ harvesting,” the delegation noted in the report.

It stated that during the visit, it had the opportunity to interview Kamoli.

It said: “Mr. Kamoli told the Delegation that, despite being arrested in 2017 on treason charges, he had repeatedly been detained bail, whereas his trial had not meaningfully progressed. Mr. Kamoli requested the Delegation to advocate for his release on bail, pending his trial.”

# Kamoli lobbies AU for bail

Kamoli has been in pre-trial detention since 2017, with ongoing legal proceedings. His trial has faced multiple delays due to legal challenges and procedural issues.

He was arrested in October 2017. His arrest followed a period of significant political and military turmoil in the country, particularly linked to his alleged involvement in multiple high-profile crimes.

He turned himself in to the police after being summoned, having remained in the country despite knowing he faced serious charges.

This came after he had been retired from the LDF in 2016, though his actions during and after his tenure as army chief had made him a central figure in Lesotho’s instability.

Kamoli was arrested primarily for his alleged role in a series of criminal acts, including the murder of Sub-Inspector Mokheseng Ramahlolo.

This charge stems from the events of August 30, 2014, when soldiers under Kamoli’s command raided police stations in Maseru during an alleged attempted coup against Prime Minister Thomas Thabane’s first government.

Ramahlolo was fatally shot during the raid on the police headquarters, an operation that was widely seen as an effort to undermine the government after Kamoli was sacked as LDF commander earlier.

He faces attempted murder charges related to the January 2014 bombings of the Moshoeshoe II home of then-First Lady ‘Maesaiah Thabane and

the Ha-Abia residence of former Police Commissioner Khothato Tšooana.

Kamoli is also charged with treason for his role in the 2014 alleged coup attempt, a crime that carries the death penalty in Lesotho.

His alleged refusal to step down after being fired and subsequent military actions, including disarming police stations, were cited as evidence of his intent to overthrow the government.

Kamoli remains in custody at Maseru Maximum Security Prison, having been denied bail multiple times, most recently in February 2024. His legal battles involve several ongoing trials, which have faced repeated delays due to procedural issues, appeals, and logistical challenges.

In its report, the delegation noted that it was informed inmates received three meals a day.

However, it regrettably learned that the budget for feeding inmates had not been increased to accommodate the growing number of inmates. Instead, the budget had been progressively reduced over the years.

“The delegation also toured the garden where vegetables were being grown, and was informed by the Deputy Commissioner that the correctional facility grew enough vegetables to supply other prisons,” it said.

Additionally, the delegation stated that it was informed the Maseru Central Correctional Institution (MCCI) comprises four blocks, housing 699 inmates, with 222 prison officers.

“The Delegation was informed that the facility has five (5) blocks, including a wing to house inmates sentenced to death, which was currently empty given that there were no inmates sentenced to death at the time of the visit,” it said.

Newsday

(+266) 2231 4267/ 5945 8983

Carlton Centre  
3rd Floor  
Room 302  
Kingsway  
Maseru

PUBLISHER

Newsday Media (Pty) (Ltd)  
Maseru

MANAGING EDITOR

Lerato Matheka  
managingeditor@newsdayonline.co.ls

NEWS EDITOR

Kananelo Boloetse  
editor@newsdayonline.co.ls

SUB EDITOR

Bereng Mpaki

NEWS ROOM

Ntsoaki Motaung  
Seabata Mahao  
Relebohile Makhetha  
Kabelo Masoabi  
INTERNS  
Lungile Maseela  
Kananelo Mokhele

CONTRIBUTORS

Theko Tlebere  
Motsamai Mokotjo

PRODUCTION

Bolokang Mahlo  
Bataung Monaheng

VIDEOGRAPHER

Khosi Matheka

DISTRIBUTION

Tumisang Motsamai

MARKETING

Tefah Sello  
Mosa Lekhooa  
Tumelo Ramotsoane  
marketing@newsdayonline.co.ls

WEBSITE

www.newsdayonline.co.ls

FACEBOOK

Newsday Newspaper LS  
X  
@LsNewsday

INSTAGRAM

Newsday Lesotho

PRINTER

Thabure Media Group  
Maseru, Lesotho

# THE WAIT IS OVER

# FUMANANA EA HAU



VISA



Lesotho PostBank ke mofani oa lits'ebeletso tsa lichelete ea ngolisitsoeng ka molao ke Banka e Kholo ea Lesotho

Letsetsa Toll Free 80099920



# Teaching under umbrellas: Leratong Primary's shameful reality

- *Leaking roofs, collapsing toilets, and no water*
- *Students and teachers abandoned as officials stall on action*



## Ntsoaki Motaung

For nearly a decade, Leratong Primary School in Matheneng, Mafeteng, has been battling extreme infrastructural decay, forcing teachers to teach under umbrellas as rain seeps through broken roofs.

Newsday was told that despite repeated pleas for intervention, the government has allegedly turned a blind eye, leaving students and teachers to fend for themselves in dire conditions.

In an interview with this publication this week, the school principal, 'Malebohang Nthama, painted a grim picture of the school's state, which has said has been deteriorating since 2015.

Ntlama said they have written countless letters to the Ministry of Education and Training seeking assistance with classrooms, but their cries have fallen on deaf ears.

With no help forthcoming, the school, owned by the New Church of God, sought aid from local businesses to construct classrooms. However, the assistance was not a donation, payments had to be made in instalments.

"We have finally settled the cost of building



materials, but we still owe for labour. Worse, the classrooms are already falling apart," Nthama revealed.

Leratong Primary School, which accommodates between 170 and 185 students from Grade 1 to 7, has only three teachers who are stretched thin, each handling multiple classes due to a lack of staff.

However, the crumbling infrastructure poses an even greater challenge.

"It is devastating. Teachers have to hold umbrellas while teaching because of the leaking roofs. On some days, we are forced to send children home early due to sudden rain. If we anticipate bad weather, we cancel classes altogether," Ntlama added.

The school's problems extend beyond classrooms. The toilets, or what remains of them, are a ticking time bomb. While a separate toilet was built for teachers, according to the principal, students are left to use facilities on the brink of collapse.

"The situation is dire," Nthama said. "The toilets provide no privacy, and we fear they could collapse at any moment. For girls managing menstruation, it is even worse. They have to wait for moments when no one is around, often

missing lessons in the process."

Leratong Primary School is also grappling with a water crisis. With no borehole on the premises, teachers and students rely on a community tap, which is often dry due to ongoing water shortages in Mafeteng.

"When there is no water in the community, we have no choice but to bring water in containers from home and ask students to do the same," Nthama said. She indicated that a local business owner once offered to donate a borehole, but the initiative was abandoned due to the school's lack of electricity to power the pump.

Speaking after the budget speech on February 19, Minister of Education, Professor Ntoi Rapapa, admitted that classroom construction under a World Bank loan program would only begin in the 2025/2026 financial year:

"The money from the World Bank is meant only for construction of classrooms, toilets and laboratories. When it comes to primary schools we looking for struggling schools which do not have any class rooms. There are schools already which were selected and they will be the ones that will be prioritised and most of them are in the mountainous parts of the country," he said.

According to Rapapa the construction of schools has not yet started because an environmentalist is required to go and inspect the sites before construction starts.

"An environmentalist needs to inspect the sites before construction starts. We have already submitted a request to hire one, and if approved, we may begin by April," he said.

Lesotho, through the Ministry of Education and Training, secured a \$20 million loan from the International Development Association for the Lesotho Education Improvement Project (LEIP).

Component 2 of the project entails enhancing physical learning conditions in targeted primary and secondary schools through improving basic infrastructure in targeted primary schools and constructing laboratories and workshops in targeted secondary schools.

# Alarming surge in child sexual harassment cases in Quthing

## Kabelo Masoabi



Senior Superintendent Mamoipone Mohloai of Quthing Police

Labour migration to South Africa has led to a disturbing rise in child sexual harassment cases in Quthing, with adolescent girls aged 13 to 17 being the most affected.

Many children are left vulnerable to abuse and human trafficking when parents and guardians seek employment in South Africa, particularly in Ceres, Western Cape, leaving them unattended.

Senior Superintendent 'Mamoipone Mohloai, the assistant police commander in Quthing, told Newsday on Wednesday that a significant number of parents working in South Africa neglect their young children, exposing them to severe risks.

"This situation has resulted in a surge of sexual harassment cases and unplanned pregnancies," Mohloai said.

She highlighted a critical need to protect children from abuse and irresponsible behaviour due to excessive drinking, as they are often targeted by older men when returning from local

taverns.

She firmly stated that, in addition to parental negligence, the owners of drinking establishments are complicit in this issue by permitting young children to consume alcohol.

"Tavern owners admit that they often struggle to determine if a buyer is underage," she said.

Many parents are understandably distressed to discover that their daughters are pregnant upon returning from South Africa.

"We must focus on the fact that children are sometimes subjected to various forms of abuse, often by individuals within their close circle, including relatives and friends. It is imperative that this issue is addressed urgently to protect vulnerable youth in the region," she explained.

Mohloai further stressed that the situation prompts important discussions and actions, including police, schools and public intervention. To combat these issues, she said they are collaborating with other stakeholders to implement comprehensive child protection programs aimed at safeguarding children whose rights are being infringed upon.

Additionally, she said tackling the problem of early child marriage in Quthing is crucial, as some parents are pressuring their children into unlawful marriages.

"By raising awareness and working together, we can create a safer environment for all children," she suggested.

In Lesotho, one in seven women and one in twenty men aged 18 years and older experienced sexual violence at least once in their childhood, according to a 2020 report by the Ministry of Social Development.

The report indicated that sexual violence may

lead to long-term mental and physical health issues among victims, regardless of gender. Sexual violence is associated with mental distress, self-harm behaviours, suicidal ideation, and substance misuse throughout the victim's life course.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that globally, some 40 million children aged 0–14 years suffer some form of abuse and neglect, requiring health and social care. The most devastating is child sexual abuse (CSA).

The report: 'Child Sexual Abuse: A Silent Health Emergency,' indicates there is usually a strong element of denial and guilt if the suspected perpetrator is a family member.

"If a girl is sexually abused, she loses her worth for marriage. The child lives with the trauma but without professional and social counselling and support. The mother's low status in the family and certain social taboos prevent reporting of such incidents," stated the report.

WHO further reports that child abuse and neglect is a prevailing problem in all generations, socioeconomic strata and societies. The magnitude of the problem in the African region is not known, and information from authoritative studies is scarce.

In the African region, economic poverty and affluence, armed conflicts and the breakdown of family and social systems are listed as the main risk factors for CSA, opening the doors for child labour, child

trafficking, child prostitution and child pornography. In such circumstances, it is shown that human life has little value, and children become the main victims.

# Union secures M4,000 pay for factory workers

A wave of relief and victory swept through the Adient factory in Lesotho, one of the country's many textile manufacturing hubs, as workers celebrated a significant triumph secured by their union, the Independent Democratic Union of Lesotho (IDUL).

Lesotho's textile industry, a cornerstone of the nation's economy, employs tens of thousands, largely producing apparel for export to markets like the United States under trade agreements such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

Factories like Adient, often foreign-owned, have historically paid low wages, with many workers earning the national minimum wage of around M2,150 per month, a figure that barely covers basic living costs in the country.

IDUL Secretary General, May Rathakane, announced this week that, starting April 1, 2025, Adient employees will see their paychecks rise to over M4,000, a substantial increase won through hard-fought negotiations. This leap almost doubles the typical wage in Lesotho's textile sector, where workers, predominantly women, often toil long hours in demanding conditions to stitch garments for global brands.

Rathakane emphasised that the gains extend beyond wages: male workers will now enjoy paid paternity leave, while their female colleagues will receive fully paid maternity leave. Additionally, each worker will be granted five days of paid family responsibility leave annually.

The breakthrough follows intense discussions between IDUL, which represents the majority of Adient's workforce, and factory management.

"This is a direct result of the workers' unwavering support," Rathakane declared, expressing deep gratitude for their solidarity during negotiations. The victory marks a rare win in an industry where unions have struggled to counter the power of factory owners, who often cite global competition as justification for keeping wages low.

IDUL has pledged to build on this momentum, with plans to release a detailed report next week on ongoing wage talks at another textile firm in Maputsoe, Leribe, a district known for its cluster of garment factories.

Rathakane said the union is also engaging with other plants across Lesotho's industrial landscape, promising to extend its advocacy to the roughly 36,000 textile workers nationwide.

These efforts come as the sector faces scrutiny for its labour practices, with wages in some factories dipping as low as M1,800 per month for entry-level positions, despite the industry generating significant foreign exchange for the country.

"However, the shadow of the national minimum wage issue looms large," Rathakane noted. Workers across the country's textile factories are anxiously awaiting the government's decision on a new minimum wage order, which could set a higher baseline for all industries.

The Labour Department has yet to convene the necessary meeting to finalise this adjustment. In the meantime, Rathakane urged workers at other factories, where union presence is often weaker, to organise collectively and bring their employers to the negotiating table.





# Newsday Courts & Police Reports

Relebohile Makhetha

Advocate Sello Tsabeha, legal representative for two Lesotho Defence Force members, Corporal Tjekane Sebolai and Private Selone Ratsiu, charged with the 2014 murder of Lisebo Tang near the residence of former Army Commander Tlali Kamoli, told the court that critical evidence in the case was suppressed.

Addressing the court during an application for the discharge of the accused, Tsabeha argued that the prosecution failed in its duty to produce evidence favorable to his clients. He highlighted the absence of a conclusive ballistic report and noted that a bullet found in Tang’s body was never tested.

Tsabeha contended that the investigation was shoddy, jeopardising the accused’s right to a fair trial. “The prosecution’s evidence falls short of establishing a prima facie case,” he said, emphasising that the case is too weak to secure a guilty verdict. He insisted the discharge application was justified.

In response, prosecutor Advocate Motene Rafoneke argued that sufficient evidence exists to implicate the accused. “Based on what’s before the court, a conviction is possible if they remain silent,” Rafoneke said, asserting that a prima facie case has been made and the accused must answer the charges.

Recent testimony came from Major Bareng Moletsane, a Special Forces member at the time of the incident. Moletsane recounted visiting the crime scene near Kamoli’s home, where the accused were deployed. Moletsane confirmed that a Red Alert Order had been issued due to a white 4x4 vehicle linked to prior bombings.

The vehicle at the scene matched the alert’s description, and under the order, soldiers were tasked with arresting or reporting it. Moletsane agreed with the defense that guards at the commander’s residence expect approaching drivers to switch off headlights and turn on interior lights, failure to comply marks them as a security threat.

He testified that the driver, who attempted to flee and was shot at, appeared to take cover behind the vehicle’s rear lights. Moletsane supported the defense’s claim that shooting at the tires was necessary to stop the vehicle, given the alert and the driver’s actions.

The court also heard from Tšepo Jane, who was with Tang during the incident. Jane testified that he and Tang were shot by army members after he stopped near Kamoli’s home on May 9, 2014.

Both were taken to Makoanyane Military Hospital, where Jane was treated, his medical costs covered by the army, and later learned of Tang’s death. Other witnesses included Lehlohonolo Lesale, owner of the rented vehicle damaged in the shooting, and Detective Lance Sergeant Liau Seeko, a crime scene officer from Pitso Ground and part of the investigation team.

Exhibits presented include two AK-47 rifles, a postmortem report, a medical report, and a statement of facts. The postmortem, conducted on May 14, 2014, listed Tang’s cause of death as multiple gunshot wounds with internal organ damage. The defense argued that “dead bullets” found at the scene, unfired and not linked to their clients’ weapons, should be submitted as exhibits, bolstering their case.

Initially presided over by foreign judge Justice Kabelo Lebotse, appointed to handle high-profile cases, the trial saw one accused,

# Court hears clash over shooting of Tang



Private Kopano Matsoso, acquitted in 2020, while Sebolai and Ratsiu were ordered to stand trial. Lebotse’s term later expired, and Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane took over, ordering a fresh start in 2023.

The accused face charges of murder, attempted murder, and malicious damage to property. Prosecutors allege that on May 9, 2014, at Ha Leqele, they shot and killed Tang, injured Jane in an attempted murder, and damaged Lesale’s vehicle by gunfire.



LESOTHO  
CAMPUS



BOTHO  
UNIVERSITY  
VIBRANCE • INNOVATION • IMPACT

2025

Admissions

RECRUITMENT  
ROADSHOW



DISTRICTS	PROPOSED DATES Feb - Mar 2025	NO. OF DAYS	VENUE
Qacha's Nek	24th - 25th Feb	2	Thimo & Sons Guest House, Qacha's Nek
Quthing	26th - 27th Feb	2	Fuleng Guest House, Quthing
Mohales Hoek	3rd - 4th Mar	2	Rubicon Guest House, Mohales Hoek
Mafeteng	5th - 6th Mar	2	Hotel Mafeteng, Mafeteng
Berea	12th - 13th Mar	2	Golden Pot B&B, Berea
Thaba Tseka	17th - 18th Mar	2	Motherland Guest House, Thaba Tseka
Leribe	19th - 20th Mar	2	Naleli Guest House, Hlotse
Butha Buthe	24th - 25th Mar	2	Crocodile Inn Hotel, Botha Bothe
Mokhotlong	26th - 27th Mar	2	Mosito Guest House, Mokhotlong



All our programmes are accredited by the  
Council on Higher Education and aligned to  
the Lesotho Qualifications Framework

 +266 59685313  
lesotho.bothouniversity.com





# Newsday Business

## PostBank introduces VISA debit cards

**Seabata Mahao**

Lesotho PostBank (LPB) has launched its new VISA debit cards, promising greater convenience and flexibility for its clients.

The move will enhance access to banking and payment services, both locally and internationally, making it easier for customers to manage their finances.

The cards will allow customers to make purchases at any store that accepts VISA and to withdraw cash from Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) both locally and globally.

Speaking about the introduction of the new product, LPB's VISA Card Product Manager, Paballo Makhatle, shared that the idea had been in development for approximately four years. This period included testing the product internally to ensure its reliability before making it available to the public.

"It took us about four years to develop this innovative product. We tested it with our employees to ensure its reliability, and now we are confident that all our customers can use it with ease," Makhatle said.

"We've also launched a campaign to encour-



LPB Executives during the launch of the VISA debit cards to enhance convenience for its clients, enabling them to easily access banking and payment services.

age our clients to migrate their accounts to the LPB VISA debit cards, and we are excited about the new convenience we're offering."

Makhatle emphasised the bank's commitment to keeping the new cards affordable. He explained that affordability remains a core value for the bank, with the goal of making banking accessible to all Basotho.

"As always, affordability remains a priority for our customers. We are excited to introduce

this development and will continue spreading the news across the country. We, therefore, appeal to every Mosotho to return home and join LPB, a bank that belongs to Basotho," he added.

LPB's Acting Managing Director, Mahase Mahooana, also weighed in on the new offering during the announcement ceremony. Mahooana assured existing clients using older cards that they would have six months to up-

grade to the new VISA debit cards.

He highlighted the global accessibility that the new cards would provide, underscoring the bank's desire to keep up with modern banking trends while remaining affordable for their customers.

"After a successful development phase and internal trials, the VISA debit card is now available for all LPB clients," Mahooana said.

"The bank has been serving the country for 22 years, and soon there will be new branches opening in Mokhotlong and Mahale's Hoek. This expansion and the introduction of the new cards will further enhance our ability to serve Basotho, both locally and abroad."

Mahooana also urged former LPB customers to return to the bank, as LPB had addressed previous challenges through innovative solutions, ensuring a more seamless banking experience for all.

Customers looking to obtain the new VISA debit cards are encouraged to visit any LPB branch. To register, clients will need a valid identification card as the only requirement.

## Fuel reserve construction to address price stability and security issues

**Seabata Mahao**

Lesotho is set to break free from the uncertainties of fuel supply disruptions, as the long-awaited fuel reserve facility is finally poised for construction.

In the 2026/2027 fiscal year, the Lesotho Petroleum Fund will begin building the nation's first fuel reserve, to be located at Maqhaka, in Berea district, following this week's confirmation by the Petroleum Fund about the ongoing technical studies, and securing of the land for the project.

The land acquisition process was facilitated with the help of the Ministry of Energy and a consultant who worked with Maqhaka's affected residents.

The Petroleum Fund allocated M4 million to the Ministry and consultant to compensate the landowners whose properties are being used for the reserve facility and the access road from the Main South 1 Road.

The compensation covered 35 residents, including those with land along the access road leading to the site.

Rorisang Mahlo, the Public Relations Officer for the Petroleum Fund, highlighted that the fuel reserve is just one of several vital infrastructure projects being planned for Lesotho.

Alongside the Maqhaka reserve, the Fund plans to build two additional fuel distribution depots: one in Botha Bothe for the northern region and another in Mahale's Hoek for the southern region.

Nthomeng Seephephe, Principal Energy Officer at the Ministry of Energy, emphasised that the Maqhaka facility will serve the central regions of Lesotho, including Maseru and Thaba-Tseka, while depots in Mahale's Hoek and Leribe will serve the southern and northern regions, respectively.



"The project is designed to mitigate potential fuel supply disruptions and ensure Lesotho's energy security. This is a strategic intervention to stabilise fuel prices and secure a constant supply, reducing the impact of issues in South Africa on our fuel availability," Seephephe said.

Lesotho's reliance on South African oil supplies has long been a source of vulnerability. Supply disruptions in South Africa, caused by factors like truck protests or refinery issues, often leave Lesotho facing fuel shortages and price hikes. In response to this, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) has urged member nations, including Lesotho, to build their own fuel storage facilities to safeguard against such challenges.

The idea for a national fuel reserve has been in the works for over a decade, but the project faced several setbacks, including the exclusion of the Department of Environment during the initial stages. However, progress is now being made, and the project is on track for completion in the 2026/27 period.

Seephephe acknowledged that the necessary preparations are still ongoing, including

finalising the design for the Maqhaka site. Once the design is complete, the project will be advertised, and construction will commence. Although the national fuel reserve was not included in the financial plan for 2025/2026, it will be a priority in the 2026/27 budget.

In her budget speech on February 19, Finance Minister Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane outlined the government's efforts to establish the National Strategic Fuel Reserve Facility at Maqhaka. She confirmed that an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) has been completed, and compensation for landowners is well underway.

"This project is crucial for securing a minimum level of fuel reserves and ensuring that

Lesotho can continue functioning economically in the face of future fuel supply disruptions," Dr. Matlanyane stated.

In a recent engagement with Maqhaka residents, the Petroleum Fund held a financial education session to guide the 35 individuals whose land was acquired for the fuel reserve. The compensation payments ranged from M22 000 to M400 000, depending on the size of the land.

Despite the compensation, some Maqhaka residents, such as Mofana Matane, expressed concerns about the government's approach. Matane suggested that a community-driven project would have provided longer-term benefits, rather than offering short-term financial assistance.

Maqhaka's member of community council, Tumelo Leboto, however, urged the community members who received compensation to invest in local businesses and explore economic opportunities tied to the fuel reserve construction project. He emphasised that this could create lasting economic benefits, beyond temporary jobs, for the community.

"With M4 million invested in our community, we should aim to develop businesses and entrepreneurial initiatives that will strengthen our local economy," Leboto said. "This project offers an opportunity for our community to grow and benefit in the long run."

### NOTICE OF LOST LEASE

NOTICE is hereby given that I intend to apply for a copy of a registered Title Deed / Lease to immovable property registered under **No 12311-097** on the 18th / 07 / 2013 in Favour of **KETUMETSE GRECY LEFOKA** in respect of Every right or interest on and to the building (s) and other developments express or implied in certain Plot **No. 12311-097** situated at **LIKOTSI, MASERU URBAN AREA** on plot **No 12311-097** As held by the Chief Surveyor.

All persons having objection to the issue of the said copy are requested to lodge such in writing to the Land Registrar within three weeks from the last publication of the notice.

ADDRESS: APPLICANT'S NAMES AND ADDRESS  
Land Registrar **Matsobotsi Lefoka**  
Land Administration Authority. **Likotsi Ha Tsiamo**

Lerotholi Road  
P. O Box 11856  
Maseru 100.

**Maseru Lesotho**

**Contact Numbers: 58912449**





# First-ever dementia study in Lesotho reveals critical findings

**Ntsoaki Motaung**

The first research paper assessing dementia prevalence in Lesotho has found a 4.89 percent prevalence of dementia in the country.

The research paper titled ‘Prevalence and Factors Associated with Dementia in Lesotho: A Cross-Sectional, Population-Based Study’ was published in February 2025.

Among adults over 55, factors such as depression and being underweight were associated with an increased risk of dementia, while physical activity and obesity were linked to a lower risk.

“We found no association with other commonly reported risk factors, such as HIV, sex, arterial hypertension, or alcohol or tobacco use,” the study states.

The researchers noted: “We found no significant association between self-reported living with HIV and dementia. One potential explanation could be the successful rollout of antiretroviral therapy, thus mitigating the neurological effects of HIV. The absence of sex as a factor associated with dementia is mirrored by the findings of a recent study in South Africa.”

Dementia diagnosis in Lesotho is limited to mental health specialists primarily located in the capital, Maseru, at the country’s only psychiatric hospital.

This limitation highlights the importance



of the study’s use of the Community Screening Instrument for Dementia (CSI-D), which has shown high sensitivity and specificity in similar settings, making it a valuable tool for identifying potential dementia cases in areas with limited clinical diagnostic services.

Globally, dementia remains a major cause

of death and disability. A 2019 study on the worldwide costs of dementia estimated the annual societal costs at \$1.3 trillion for 55.2 million people affected, averaging \$23,796 per person.

“Of the total, \$213.2 billion, or 16 percent, were direct medical costs; \$448.7 billion, or 34 percent, accounted for direct

social sector costs, including long-term care; and \$651.4 billion, or 50 percent, covered the costs of informal care,” the study highlighted.

It further found that: “The huge costs of dementia worldwide place enormous strains on care systems and families alike. Although most people with dementia live in low- and middle-income countries, the highest total and per-person costs are seen in high-income countries.”

While 61 percent of people with dementia live in low- and middle-income countries, 74 percent of the total economic burden falls on high-income countries.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes dementia as “an umbrella term for several diseases affecting memory, other cognitive abilities, and behaviour that interfere significantly with a person’s ability to maintain their activities of daily living.”

WHO also emphasises: “Although age is the strongest known risk factor for dementia, it is not a normal part of aging.”

Currently, 55.2 million people worldwide live with dementia, and it is the seventh leading cause of death globally, with women accounting for 65 percent of dementia-related deaths, and dementia is the 7th leading cause of death globally, according to WHO.

# Malnutrition crisis: Research highlights urgent concerns



**Ntsoaki Motaung**

A recent study has revealed that only a small fraction of young children in Lesotho receive a Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD), highlighting a critical issue of child nutrition in the country.

The study, titled ‘A Multilevel Analysis of the Factors Associated with Minimum Acceptable Diets Among Children Aged 6-23 Months in Lesotho: A Study of the Lesotho Multiple Cluster Indicator 2028,’ was conducted by Nthatisi Leseba, Kerry Vermaak, and Tiisetso Makatjane and published last

month.

Researchers found that the prevalence of the minimum acceptable diet in Lesotho for children aged 6-23 months was 10.4 percent.

Researchers suggest this may be due to the delayed introduction of complementary foods, often influenced by teething issues or misconceptions about the importance of solid foods alongside breastfeeding.

“At the immediate level, the children aged 12-17 months were more likely to be fed MAD,” the researchers noted.

“At the underlying level, the children

from rural areas were less likely to be fed with the MAD while those from rich households and the richest households, as well as those with mothers with secondary education and education beyond secondary, had elevated odds of being fed with MAD,” they added.

Where a child lives and their household’s wealth also significantly impact dietary adequacy. “Urban areas tend to have better socio-economic conditions, allowing families to provide more nutritious meals,” the study explained.

Similarly, wealthier households have greater access to diverse foods, improving their children’s chances of receiving essential nutrients.

Maternal education emerged as a crucial factor. “Children whose mothers have secondary education or higher are significantly more likely to receive a MAD,” the study noted.

Educated mothers often have greater autonomy, better access to healthcare, and a stronger understanding of child feeding practices. Additionally, antenatal care visits proved beneficial by providing opportunities for nutrition education and counseling.

Access to media also plays a vital role in shaping dietary habits. “Mothers exposed to media, such as radio or television, are more likely to adopt healthy feeding practices,” researchers noted.

The study also found that children in communities with higher male education

levels were more likely to receive a MAD, as educated men can help disseminate vital information and influence positive feeding practices within their communities. Similarly, communities with greater female media exposure showed better child nutrition outcomes.

Interestingly, the study revealed that children in communities with high land and livestock ownership were less likely to receive a MAD. Researchers suggest this may be due to subsistence farming practices, where families prioritise staple crops over diverse nutritional options.

Community poverty was also a significant factor, with children in poorer communities facing increased challenges in accessing diverse and nutritious foods. “Poverty and food insecurity limit the availability of adequate and safe foods,” the study highlighted.

The study acknowledged limitations, including its cross-sectional design, which prevents establishing direct cause-and-effect relationships. The reliance on self-reported data from mothers also introduces potential biases.

Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the factors affecting child nutrition in Lesotho. Researchers recommend further investigations to explore the complex interplay of these factors and develop targeted interventions to improve child feeding practices and reduce malnutrition.





Theko Tlebere

# Common concern

## Rethinking National Development in Lesotho: Beyond the capital

The newly inaugurated Botho University campus in Maseru is an impressive addition to Lesotho's higher education landscape. Originally from Botswana, the institution has made a significant investment in the country, bringing with it modern infrastructure, academic resources, and an expanded platform for skills development. The new campus is a symbol of progress, featuring state-of-the-art lecture halls, high-tech libraries, and advanced student facilities.

At first glance, this development appears to be a step in the right direction for Lesotho's national growth. However, beneath the surface, the decision to place yet another university in Maseru reinforces a longstanding and troubling pattern of unequal development one that continues to sideline the rest of the country. The question that lingers is: Why Maseru again?

While it makes sense for investors to establish institutions in the capital, where infrastructure and services are more developed, this approach exacerbates regional inequalities. In a country with ten districts, why do higher education institutions remain concentrated in only one? This is not just a matter of academic opportunity, it reflects the broader national development problem that has kept rural districts trapped in underdevelopment.

Beyond Maseru, infrastructure investment in education remains painfully inadequate. While a single new government building is under construction in Mokhotlong, many other districts, such as Thaba-Tseka, Quthing, and Qacha's Nek, have nothing substantial to show in terms of modern infrastructural facilities. Young people in these regions must

either relocate to Maseru for higher education or settle for limited options closer to home. The lack of universities outside Maseru forces students to leave their home districts, weakening the economic and social fabric of these regions.

Instead of distributing educational development more equitably across the country, Lesotho continues to reinforce a capital-centric model of growth that leaves most of the country behind. The issue with Botho University's location is not an isolated case. It is part of a much larger pattern that defines Lesotho's national development strategy, a strategy that overwhelmingly favours Maseru at the expense of other districts.

This centralisation has led to severe disparities in infrastructure, economic opportunities, healthcare, and education, making it difficult for rural communities to participate meaningfully in national progress. The construction of a 2025 single university campus in Maseru is a reminder that national development in Lesotho remains deeply imbalanced. While Maseru continues to expand with new investments, other regions remain stagnant, lacking basic resources to improve the lives of their people.

This article explores the pressing need for a restructured development approach, one that decentralises economic and social growth across all ten districts. If Lesotho is to achieve true national development, investment in higher education, infrastructure, and economic opportunities must extend beyond the capital.

National development is a multidimensional

process that encompasses not only economic growth but also social progress, institutional strengthening, and an overall enhancement of the quality of life for all citizens. In Lesotho, however, development has been predominantly concentrated in Maseru, leading to a significant divide between the capital and rural areas.

While Maseru benefits from superior infrastructure, vibrant economic activity, and better access to essential services, the rest of the country grapples with underdevelopment, limited job opportunities, and inadequate service delivery.

To fully understand national development in Lesotho, it is important to contextualise it within the frameworks set by international organisations like the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). The AU's Agenda 2063 envisions inclusive economic growth, human capital development, and infrastructure expansion, while the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underscore objectives such as poverty eradication, quality education, accessible healthcare, and economic diversification.

Despite Lesotho's alignment with these global aspirations, progress has been uneven, with rural districts consistently lagging in nearly all development indicators.

The challenge for Lesotho extends beyond merely achieving economic growth; it lies in ensuring that this growth is inclusive. The existing development structure favors urban areas, particularly Maseru, leaving the majority of Basotho without the necessary resources and opportunities to improve their living conditions. For Lesotho to attain meaningful and sustainable national development, economic and social progress

must be experienced across all ten districts, not just in the capital.

Economic activities in Lesotho are heavily concentrated in Maseru, which serves as the hub for financial, industrial, and administrative functions. The capital houses most government offices, financial institutions, and commercial enterprises. Manufacturing and textiles, key drivers of the country's economy, are predominantly centered in Maseru and its surroundings. Additionally, remittances from Basotho working in South Africa, an essential source of household income, are more accessible to urban residents than to those in remote areas.

Government jobs, representing a large segment of formal employment, are also primarily based in the capital, further entrenching its economic supremacy.

This urban-centric approach has created a stark imbalance, whereby rural areas suffer from inadequate infrastructure, insufficient healthcare services, weak educational institutions, and limited economic opportunities.

While Maseru boasts relatively modern hospitals, many districts, such as Mokhotlong, Qacha's Nek, and Thaba-Tseka, have restricted access to healthcare facilities, often forcing residents to travel long distances for medical services. The road network is also heavily biased toward the capital, hindering rural businesses' access to markets and stifling productive economic activities. **The future is NOW!**

... to be continued.

## Lesotho must stop demonising politics

Kananelo Boloetse

Last year, I had the privilege of having a few minutes with the Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. Tlohang Sekhamane, for a candid and thought-provoking conversation.

Amidst our exchange, he shared a perspective that has lingered with me ever since, one that cuts to the core of why political participation in Lesotho remains anemic, particularly among the youth.

"If you engage in politics in Lesotho and then serve in Parliament," he remarked, "regardless of how young and vibrant you may be upon completing your term, no corporation will be willing to hire you."

His words were stark, sobering, and, perhaps most troubling, unsurprising.

Mr. Sekhamane painted a grim picture of the post-political landscape for former parliamentarians: an unspoken blacklist imposed by the corporate world, rendering them untouchable, persona non grata in the marketplace. He cautioned that anyone stepping into the political arena should do so with their eyes wide open, fully aware that self-employment might not merely be an option but an inevitable necessity upon leaving office.

In Lesotho, it seems, the private sector views former politicians not as assets with valuable experience but as liabilities to be avoided at all costs. Their years in public service, regardless of performance, do not translate into career capital.

Instead, they become baggage, excess weight that corporations are unwilling to carry. The perception is that former politicians are too controversial, too polarizing, or too accustomed to power to reintegrate into the workforce. And so, once they exit parliament, many find themselves cast adrift with no clear path forward.

This is not a revelation unique to Mr. Sekhamane's observation, it is a quiet truth we all know but rarely confront aloud. It is the elephant in the room that explains why so few young, intelligent, and ambitious Basotho throw their hats into the political ring. The stakes are simply too high.

For young professionals contemplating a future in politics, the calculation is brutal. Do they risk their economic security for a seat in parliament, knowing that even a single term could render them unemployable?

Do they gamble their careers on the hope that their time in office will open new doors rather than shut them forever? The reality is bleak: whether they succeed in securing a parliamentary seat, stumble during primary elections, or lose in the National Assembly elections, the outcome is often the same—a scarlet letter branding them as unfit for economic opportunities beyond the political sphere.

Politics in Lesotho, it appears, is a one-way ticket to ostracism, a career path reserved for those who feel they have little left to lose. This dynamic explains why our political landscape is overwhelmingly dominated by individuals who enter the fray late in life, often after exhausting other avenues. It also explains the lack of fresh ideas and the cyclical nature of our political leadership.

But the consequences of this phenomenon extend beyond individual politicians. It is the country itself that suffers when brilliant young minds, who could bring innovation, pragmatism, and energy into governance, are deterred from participation. It is Lesotho that remains trapped in a revolving door of leadership stagnation, where the same faces and ideas resurface election after election, because the barriers to entry for new blood are simply too high.

But must this be our reality? Must we resign ourselves to a system that punishes rather than rewards civic engagement? Is it truly inevitable that political participation in Lesotho should come at the cost of one's future employability? Or can we envision something better, a system that values, rather than vilifies, those who step up to lead?

Look across our border to South Africa, where a different narrative is unfolding. This week, former Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) Member of Parliament Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, a brilliant and dynamic young leader, stepped away from his parliamentary role and joined a prominent South African radio sta-

tion. Far from being cast aside as a pariah, Ndlozi was welcomed with open arms. Listeners eagerly anticipated his first broadcast, a testament to the public's recognition of his intellect, charisma, and potential beyond the political stage.

Imagine if Ndlozi had been relegated to obscurity simply because he once served as an MP. What a waste of talent that would have been. Imagine if, instead of being embraced by the media industry, he had found every door closed, his credentials dismissed, his past experience treated as a stain rather than a strength. South Africa understands something that Lesotho seems to have forgotten: that political leadership should not be a dead end. It should be a launching pad.

Lesotho could learn a vital lesson from this. Ndlozi's transition demonstrates that political service need not be a death sentence for one's career prospects. Instead, it can be a springboard, a chapter that enriches an individual's experience and equips them with skills that are transferable to other fields. Leadership, public speaking, negotiation, policy analysis—these are the tools of a parliamentarian, tools that any corporation, media house, or entrepreneurial venture should covet.

Yet in Lesotho, we have allowed a toxic stigma to fester, one that demonises politics and, by extension, those who dare to engage in it.

This stigma is strangling our democracy. By discouraging young people from entering politics, we are depriving ourselves of fresh ideas, bold leadership, and the energy needed to tackle the pressing challenges of our time, unemployment, poverty, and underdevelopment among them.

The reluctance of our youth to step forward is not apathy; it's a rational calculation. Why risk a promising career, a stable future, or a seat at the corporate table for a system that offers little reward and even less security? The result is a political landscape dominated by older voices, many of whom are disconnected from the aspirations and realities of the younger generation.

It's time for a paradigm shift. Lesotho must stop treating politics as a radioactive wasteland and start viewing it as a noble pursuit, one that builds rather than destroys futures. We need to dismantle the myth that serving in

Parliament is a one-way ticket to economic exile. Corporate leaders, civil society, and the public at large must begin to see former politicians not as liabilities but as individuals with unique insights and proven resilience.

Imagine a Lesotho where a young MP, after serving their term, can walk into a boardroom, a classroom, or a media studio and be celebrated for their contributions rather than shunned for their past. Where a former legislator is recognized not as damaged goods but as a leader whose experience in governance, policy, and public service makes them a valuable asset in any sector. Where the transition from politics to private enterprise is not seen as an act of desperation but as a natural and welcomed progression.

To achieve this, we must start by changing the narrative. Political service should be marketed to young Basotho as an opportunity for growth, not a gamble with their livelihoods. Mentorship programs could connect former parliamentarians with private-sector opportunities, showcasing their value.

The National University of Lesotho (NUL) and training institutions such as (LIPAM) could offer reintegration programs tailored for former lawmakers to help them translate their public service into new professional paths. And, most importantly, we must foster a culture that honours civic duty rather than penalising it.

Mbuyiseni Ndlozi's story is a beacon of possibility. It proves that political engagement does not have to be a life sentence to irrelevance. It proves that leadership in government can be a stepping stone to leadership in business, media, academia, or any other field. Lesotho's youth deserve to know that they can enter politics, serve their nation, and still have a future beyond the National Assembly.

Let's stop demonising politics and start empowering a new generation of leaders. Our democracy, and our country, depends on it.





# RFP's unfulfilled promises of meritocracy

Mokotsolane Rapelang Mosae

Opaque appointments in Lesotho have long been a rule rather than an exception since democratic rule. These opaque appointments have often been termed political because often times we are placed at pains to make sense of the appointments. For purposes of this commentary, therefore, I too will use the term political appointments which will simply mean appointments made by a political functionary without following due process or at least without being transparent about the procedure followed.

Governance scholars in this country have stated before that the judiciary, civil service and security agencies have been politicised through political appointments, which have resulted in institutions being used for political ends, which has in turn led to constant instability in the country.

The term "reforms" in Lesotho is also quickly losing its spark, what used to be a beacon of hope is now becoming just another political slogan. Since 2012 Lesotho has been pursuing reforms against the backdrop of instability. The cause of the instability? Wide politicisation of all sectors of government which effectively led to the collapse of governance. After the main political parties failed to restore any order to the mountain kingdom, the newcomers under the banner of the RFP seemed like what Basotho truly needed. These newcomers coined something that echoed with the sentiments of Basotho; "meritocracy".

For a country with such high rates of unemployment, where the youth constantly graduate only to walk up and down the streets with brown envelopes applying for jobs they will never attain because they do not have the requisite "connections". For a country where it has become an open secret which political parties military leaders support, and for a country where the judiciary was so political that one did not have to have a semblance of knowledge on the reading of the law to know which political party would emerge victorious when appearing before certain judges. Meritocracy truly was what Basotho wanted to hear.

The RFP, in its manifesto, stated categorically that unlike governments that came before it, they would do away with the phenomenon of political appointments, where people come out of nowhere to occupy integral positions. Under the RFP government, transparency would be the order of the day. To bolster this point, the RFP even said they would lead by example, and exercise meritocracy in the appointment of candidates to stand for elections within its own ranks.

On June 27, 2022, the RFP issued circular 0018/2022 which announced that primary elections would be held in 69 constituencies, further that after the primary elections, the names of the top 4 performers would be sent to the RFP headquarters for purposes of holding interviews.

The circular stated that those successful in the interviews would be the ones to stand for elections under the banner of RFP. The result of this was that after the interviews, candidates who were victorious in primaries in 30 of the 69 constituencies were substituted by other candidates. With these results, the RFP submitted its candidates list of the IEC as per requirement.

The first thing that was curious about the conduct of RFP was that it had imposed



candidates in 11 constituencies on RFP members and categorically decreed that those candidates would not go through the process that was meant to ensure meritocracy. This, for some spectators, was the first alarm, as the stance was uncomfortably reflective of George Orwell's satirical comment in "Animal Farm" that all animals are equal but some are more equal than others.

The Court was quick to stop the RFP dead in its tracks and in *Moloi Ralentsoe & 4 Ors v Motjoka Toloane & 7 Ors CIV/APN/0257/2022LSHC* the court found that the RFP in substituting the primary election winners, acted unconstitutionally as it denied the winners the right to participate in public affairs.

The RFP had no choice but to adhere to the court ruling and reinstate the erstwhile substituted candidates. However, despite being shown the error of their ways, the RFP opted to reinstate only those candidates who had brought the case to court and not all those who were affected by the decision, necessitating yet another challenge which they again lost. This attitude by the RFP was yet another red flag, as it exposed the extent to which RFP was willing to go to impose certain chosen individuals in prospective positions of power. It further gave a sneak peak into the RFP's interpretation of meritocracy; perhaps in the RFP dictionary, it means "the ones chosen by the inner circle".

One would have hoped that this early rebuke by the courts would force the RFP to go back to the drawing board and actually attempt to give meritocracy a fighting chance, but if the actions of the government are anything to go by, Basotho who once believed in that campaign promise are yet to face a rude awakening.

Anyway, what is meritocracy? In simple terms, meritocracy means the holding of power by people who have been selected according to their high quality. It is therefore not fallacious to claim that for there to be a meritocracy, there has to have been an assessment of the quality. In appointments,

therefore, the expectation was that a clear process would be set out on how strategic positions would be filled in government institutions and parastatals, but lo and behold, in true RFP fashion, candidates are being imposed on institutions without any clear process being followed.

Most recently, Basotho were shocked when the government appointed an in-service soldier by the names of Mantšo Sello to head up the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO). To further add insult to injury and expose how ill-conceived this appointment was, it was only after Brigadier Sello took office and caused public outcry that he was informed that he would have to resign from either the LDF or the DCEO.

For a position as key as that of the Director General of the DCEO, transparency is key. The expectation from a government that preached meritocracy was that there would be a call for applications, a vetting process which may include objections from the public, and a public interview. The RFP led government did not bother to do even the bare minimum. Instead, Basotho came to know of this appointment through multiple social media posts, after which the LDF Commander admitted in an interview that he had seconded Sello to the DCEO.

The LDF Commander's assertions were finally confirmed by a memo issued on February 10, 2025, to DCEO staff members informing them of Sello's appointment. It cannot be gainsaid how important it is for the Director General of the nation's anti-corruption unit to enjoy public confidence and support.

It also cannot be overemphasised how chilling it was for the LDF to admit that it had "seconded" its own officer to head up what ought to be an independent institution. The DCEO already struggles with its autonomy with various reports pointing to political interference in the functions of DCEO, but the RFP saw it fit to appoint a Director General in the most opaque way possible.

The appointment of the DCEO boss is not the only example of a blatant disregard of meritocracy by the RFP led government. Last month, the Lesotho Communications Authority (LCA) held a press briefing in which amongst others it stated that the Minister had appointed 5 members to the Broadcasting Disputes Resolution Panel.

These appointments came as a surprise to some Basotho as this panel had long been called for by Basotho, so it only stood to reason that once government was ready to constitute it, Basotho would not only be informed of its composition in obiter but rather be taken into the government's confidence through the entire process.

It is imperative for the RFP led-government to understand that the absence of transparency in appointments casts doubt over the appointed candidates. Many a times, holders of positions are assigned political colours simply because of the lack of transparency in their appointments, and such holders seldom enjoy support, leading to poor performance.

If one were to be drawn to offer advice to the RFP led-government, it would be to take a leaf out of the Judicial Service Commission's book and make all appointments transparent. Appointment of judges used to be a hotly contested issue in Lesotho with most judges being assigned political colours.

This was because of the manner in which they were appointed, so Basotho simply looked at the appointing regime and assigned a political colour.

However, after changing the manner of appointments by making it more transparent, including calling for public objections, judges now enjoy more public support. The unsavory effects of political appointments are well known in Lesotho, there is no need to reinvent the wheel.

In 2022, Basotho were happy and ready to cash the cheque of meritocracy in appointments, but in the words of Martin Luther King Jr, the cheque came back marked insufficient funds.





Kingdom of Lesotho  
Ministry of Health  
LNHSSP-P170278

Request for expression of interest for  
Grants Contracting Expert to Support Development of Guiding documents for Strategic Purchasing of Health Services.  
(Individual consultant Selection)

LS-MOH-309176-CS-INDV-LNHSS-2022

Issue Date 06-03-2025

BACKGROUND

The Government of Lesotho (GOL) is implementing the Lesotho Nutrition and Health System Strengthening Project (LNHSSP) with the International Development Association's (IDA) financial and technical support. The project aims to support the GOL in implementing a multi-sectoral approach to improve health and nutrition outcomes over five years. The project development objective is to increase utilization and quality of key nutrition and health services. Component three of the project also covers Ministry of Health (MOH) Stewardship and M&E Capacities through which the Ministry is developing guidelines for strategic purchasing of health services to define the services to be purchased and which criteria is to be used and for how long.

The MOH's vision is that all people living in Lesotho shall have productive life, access to affordable and sustainable quality health services with the aim of ensuring Universal Health Coverage. To ensure this, the MOH is committed to promote, prevent, cure, rehabilitate and control diseases at all levels with special focus on the primary health level; through well-developed health systems by competent health workers and therefore, contributing to the attainment of improved health status and quality of life with all partners to ensure responsiveness to the health sector clientele' needs.

Strategic purchasing of health services must be targeted in order to realize progress towards universal health coverage. Strategic purchasing of health services should be an active system rather than the current passive system where resources are allocated without consideration of the provider's performance, the intended outcomes and for a package that is not clearly defined. Strategic purchasing of these services must be evidence based, should define which specific health services must be bought and from which providers, how the services should be paid for and at what rate in order to maximize health objectives.

For the past 5 years the MOH has been allocated a budget of around 14 percent of the total GOL budget. A substantial amount of MOH budget is allocated for operations which are recurrent in nature. Approximately 20 percent of the MOH budget is for the purchases of health services from various organizations in the country. The subvented institutions under the MOH include:

- Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS)
- Baylor Pediatric Center of Excellence
- Lesotho-Boston Health Alliance
- Lesotho Nursing Council
- Christian Health Association of Lesotho (CHAL)
- Riders for Health
- Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association

Each of these providers fills a niche that the MOH finds it more advantageous for a partner to provide rather than the Ministry. The relationship between the GOL and the mentioned institutions is currently governed by Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) specifically designed for each institution depending on the health services they provide to the public. There are no defined guidelines on how to allocate funding and to monitor some of the deliverables for some of the agreements.

It is against this background that the MOH seeks to develop Guidelines, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for strategic purchasing and to move away from using MOUs to allocate funding to subvented organizations. To efficiently carry out the assignment, the services of a suitably qualified Grants Contracting Expert will be engaged through World Bank (WB) support under Lesotho Nutrition and Health System Strengthening Project.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS CONSULTANCY

The GOL aims to engage a grant contracting expert that will provide technical support to the MOH to review and clearly define the health services purchasing function of the MOH to maximize value for money from purchasing of health services

and improve the health system delivery and nutrition services by subvented partners.

Specific Objective:

Develop the guidelines and standard operating procedures, including templates, that the MOH can use to regularize its relationship with subvented partners in the country.

SCOPE OF WORK

Working with the PPP unit:

- Assess the current state of strategic purchasing in the Health Sector.
- Develop Guidelines, Standard Operating Procedures, templates for Strategic Purchasing of Health Services in the Ministry of Health.
- Build Capacity and/or guidance for the relevant staff on use of the Guiding documents, and monitoring and evaluation of strategic purchasing of Health Services.

SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CONSULTANT

- To assess the current subvention process and define its objectives to be more coherent and strategic in nature for maximum health benefits to Basotho in relation to efficiency and quality of services;
- To clearly define which services to buy depending on the MOH priorities, MOH capabilities and the gaps targeted at appropriate levels of care;
- To develop and pilot assessment tools that can be used by MOH staff to review the systems and capabilities of subvented organizations and identify risks.
- To support the MOH technical staff to develop clear, evidence-based scopes of work for subvented organizations, with proposed indicators and a grant application process and timeline.
- To develop granting guidelines to promote quality, efficiency in promoting the health needs of the population and ensure equity in resource distribution
- Develop grant agreement templates with clear obligations between the MOH as the purchaser and all the health services providers depending on the services they provide;
- To design standard operating procedures and tools to monitor provider's performance and provision of oversight by the relevant MOH department.

DURATION

The assignment is for a period of 48 days.

DATA, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT:

The client will provide the service provider with documents that will assist in executing the assignment. The client will also provide office space for the service provider when needed and during meetings that take place at the premises of the client. Furthermore, the client will not provide transport for the service provider.

DELIVERABLES

No	Activities	Time-lines	Payment
1	Inception report	5 days	5%
2	Analytical Report on services purchased by the Ministry of Health	10 days	20%

3	Draft Guidelines, SOPs, Monitoring tool and grant agreement templates for Strategic Purchasing of Health Services	25 days	50%
4	Final Guidelines, SOPs, Monitoring tool and grant agreement templates for Strategic Purchasing of Health Services	5 days	
5	Validation Meeting	2 days	20%
6	Dissemination Meeting	1 days	5%

The consultant will be paid upon presentation of invoices and contingent upon timely submission of agreed deliverables as approved by the Director Health Planning and Statistics department.

QUALIFICATION, PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

The Grants Expert should possess the following qualifications:

- At minimum, a master's degree in a relevant discipline. A PhD will be an added advantage.
- 10 years working experience in granting, contracting or contract management.
- 10 years' experience in developing guidelines and standard operating procedures.
- 8 years' experience in drafting Scope of Works for health sector services in a collaborative manner and contracting strategy/practice would be an added value.
- Experience of having undertaken similar work would be an added advantage.
- Excellent public speaking, presentation, report writing and facilitation skills.
- Excellent leadership, motivational skills and Teamwork.
- Competence in the use of computers application software such as Word, Excel and Power Point.
- Familiarity with the health sector in Lesotho will be an added advantage

CLIENT'S ASSIGNMENT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT AND REPORTING

The consultant shall report to and receive technical guidance from the Chief PPP Officer in the Ministry of Health. The Project Coordinator will be responsible for managing the contract.

CONTRACT TYPE

Lump sum contract, meaning that payments will be paid based on completed deliverables.

SELECTION OF CONSULTANTS

The selection of Individual Consultants is governed by the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers," Fifth Edition September 2023.

SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSAL

Qualified and interested individual consultants are invited to submit their Expressions of Interest (EOI) via email to **Inhssproject@gmail.com**, with a copy to **mokhoabomoeketsi@gmail.com**, or deliver a hard copy to the address below no later than **21ST March, 2025 1200hour**:

Procurement Officer's Office, Procurement Unit Ground Floor, Ministry of Health, Corner constitution & Linare Roads, Kingdom of Lesotho, Telephone: (+266) (+266) 27323277.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted within two weeks of the submission deadline. If you do not receive any communication within this period, please consider your application unsuccessful.





MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (LHDA)

Background:

The LHDA is a statutory body established under the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) Order No. 23 of 1986, in line with the Treaty between the governments of Lesotho and South Africa. The LHDA operates under the oversight of the Lesotho Highlands Water Commission, to whom the Board is accountable. It is responsible for implementing, operating, and maintaining the part of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) situated in the Kingdom of Lesotho. Through the office of the Minister of Natural Resources, the Government of Lesotho, interested, suitably qualified individuals to serve as Independent and Non-Executive Directors on the Board of the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA).

REQUIREMENTS

The following mixed set of competencies, experiences, and skills are essential to strengthen the Board in executing its duties:

Cross-cutting:

- All Applicants must have at least five (5) years of board experience or at least ten (10) years of senior or executive management experience with exposure to board intricacies.
- Also, a strong understanding of public sector governance, legislative requirements, and large-scale infrastructure development will be prioritised.

Domain-specific:

- Applicants must possess proven skills, knowledge, qualifications and experience in at least one of the following domains:
- Large infrastructure planning and delivery.
  - Large infrastructure operation, maintenance, asset care, and management.
  - Audit and risk management in large organisation contexts.
  - Corporate or construction law large or-

- ganisation contexts
- Human resource development in large organisation contexts
- Environmental management and social management in relation to large-scale developments.

All applicants must hold an internationally recognised bachelor's degree and have at least 15 years of experience relevant to the selected domain above. Registration with the appropriate professional or statutory bodies is required. Specifically, the applicant(s) for infrastructure planning, delivery, operation and maintenance, and asset care management must be registered as professional/chartered engineers with the recognised body and must possess certification in Project Management or Construction Management from a recognised body and those for audit and risk management must be registered as a Chartered Accountants (CA(SA) or CA(L)

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested applicants must submit their applications in writing, including the following:

- A motivation letter (not exceeding two pages).
- A detailed curriculum vitae, including three referees' names and contact details.
- Certified copies of qualifications.
- A detailed disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest concerning any LHDA activities.

The appointment of preferred candidates will be subject to verification of qualifications, probity and reference checks, and security clearance. Applications must be submitted via email only to [sec@lhwc.org.ls](mailto:sec@lhwc.org.ls) and addressed to the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Maseru, Lesotho. Deadline for submission: 14th March 2025 at 16:00 hours. No late applications will be accepted.



VACANCY

Department : Finance  
Job Title : Finance Manager  
Grade : I  
Responsible to : Director of Elections

Job Summary

Under the general supervision of Director of Elections, the incumbent provides an advisory role to the DOE on financial matters and is responsible for compliance on all financial matters, preparing annual budget estimates, managing revenue collection, monitoring expenditure, managing cash and preparing financial statements.

Main Duties

- Financial compliance and reporting.
- Coordinate implementation of Financial laws, policies, guidelines, systems, procedures and standards.
- Monitor implementation of systems, procedures and standards.
- Coordinate preparation of annual budget estimates.
- Monitor revenue collection and expenditure against budget.
- Manage trust monies.
- Monitor collection and banking of non-tax revenue.
- Monitor reconciliation of revenue bank accounts.
- Provision of custody and control of accountable documents.
- Facilitate preparation of financial statements and reports.
- Supervise and manage Finance Department staff.

Qualification and Experience

Chartered Accountant/MBA/any post graduate degree in related field **Plus** three (3) years working experience at the managerial level in the related field.

Or

Bachelor of Commerce/Business Administration (Accounting)/General Accountant/any recognised degree in related field **Plus** ten (10) years' experience at the managerial level in the related field

Other Relevant Knowledge

- Appreciation of Public Sector Accounting
- Knowledge of Public Service Act and Regulations
- Appreciation of the IFMIS system
- Knowledge financial management systems
- Knowledge of Procurement Regulations, Treasury Regulations and Public Financial Management and Accountability Act
- Computer literacy

Submission of applications: Interested candidates should submit letter of application, detailed curriculum vitae, certified copies of their educational qualifications and names of three (3) contactable referee to [recruitment@iec.org.ls](mailto:recruitment@iec.org.ls) under the subject line "Application for Finance Manager on or before 14th March 2025. Or hand deliver to The Director of Elections Independent Electoral Commission Corner Maluti and Caledon Road Maseru West P.O. Box 12698 Lesotho. Applications can be submitted to Headquarters (Registry) or District HQ Offices. Applicants should be registered with IEC as electors.



Illustrated by Sekantši Mokohlane, a locally based Mosotho artist whose work has reached the international stage.

Disclaimer: The story was developed with the financial support of the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Its contents are the sole responsibility of the Integrated Catchment Management Coordination Unit (ICU), and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or the BMZ.







# With Us,

## Hybrid is the New Normal

Get your copy *Physically or Digitally*







Newsday Newspaper Is

**20k**  
Likes

**1.3M**  
Page reach

**118.6k**  
Views per Post

95%

@LsNewsday

**7.4k**  
Followers

Over  
**100k**  
X impressions

80%

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/FHvwwDUYx3e7y8rj7KjJxL?fbclid>

**27K**  
subscribers

50%

[marketing@newsdayonline.co.ls](mailto:marketing@newsdayonline.co.ls)

**4.3k**  
subscribers

65%

[www.newsdayonline.co.ls](http://www.newsdayonline.co.ls)

**55K**  
pageviews

**5.6k**  
Unique Pageviews

70%

Join the Growing Community



**Ministry of Natural Resources  
Department of Rural Water Supply**

**Tender Notice**

The Government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Natural Resources, supported by UNICEF hereby invites tenders from suitable companies interested in contracting their services for **rehabilitation of water supply systems in Mphahle's Hoek, Maseru and Thaba Tseka Districts of Lesotho.**

**Work Description**

The title of the tender is: **Rehabilitation of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Projects 2024-2025**. Tender No: **DRWS/RE/002/2024-2025**. This tender will require the contractor to rehabilitate water supply systems in the three districts of Lesotho. Additional information and requirements are as specified in the Tender Documents.

**Bidder Qualifications**

To tender for the proposed contract, bidders must be in DRWS category A and B, and registered companies in Lesotho. Bid security of M20, 000.00 in a form of bank guarantee valid for one hundred and twenty (120) days will be required.

**Tender Submission**

The tender documents are available at the Department of Rural Water Supply Head Office (DRWS), Accounts Office Maseru at a non-refundable fee of **M2, 000.00, from Tuesday 26 November 2024 until Wednesday 8 January 2024. The method of payment is cash. Bidders must produce the receipt obtained from accounts to procurement Unit at the (DRWS) in order to receive the soft copy of the Tender document. The closing date for this tender is 10.00am on the 15 January 2025.** Bid documents one (1) original, 4 copies, soft copy, and sealed financial proposal must be deposited to the Ministry of Natural Resources Tender Box situated at the entrance of **DRWS Office Khubetsoana, Resource Centre, Next to Appro-**

**appropriate Technology Services (ATS) on or before the closing date and time in sealed envelope clearly Marked "Tender for Rehabilitation of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Projects 2024-2025."**

All bidders are advised that Contractor and Suppliers to Lesotho Government are expected to be in compliance with their tax obligations. Please submit together with the tender, valid certified copies of DRWS certificate (certified **at source**), Traders License, VAT certificate and Tax clearance.

**Pre-tender Meeting**

A Compulsory pre-tender meeting shall be held on the **11th December, 2024, 10.00am** at the DRWS Khubetsoana Resources Centre.

**Site visits**

Site visits are also compulsory and will be on the 12 to 13 December 2024 in Mphahle's Hoek, 16 to 17 December 2024 in Maseru and 18 -19 December 2024 in Thaba Tseka

**Tender Opening**

Bids will be opened on the date of submission at **10:30am** in the presence of bidders or their representatives who wish to attend at the following address: DRWS Office Khubetsoana, Resource Centre, Next to Appropriate Technology Services (ATS),

**Questions and Clarifications**

All questions and clarifications relating to this tender should be directed to The Procurement Unit, Ministry of Natural Resources, Bokamoso Business Suit, Old Christie House, Orpen Road, and Opposite Centre for Accounting Studies Maseru. Tel: 27325160.



# NUL launches 80th anniversary celebrations



## Kananelo Mokhele

The National University of Lesotho (NUL) has announced the start of its 80th-anniversary celebrations, honouring eight decades of academic achievement, regional collaboration, and innovation.

The milestone festivities will kick off on April 8, 2025, at the university’s Roma campus, with His Majesty King Letsie III, who serves as NUL’s Chancellor, presiding over the launch.

NUL’s journey began on April 8, 1945, when

the Catholic University College was founded at Roma by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of South Africa. Initially a modest institution, it offered post-matriculation education and religious instruction for African Catholic students from across the region.

Located 34 kilometers southeast of Maseru, Roma’s quiet valley provided an ideal setting for what would grow into Lesotho’s premier center of higher learning.

In 1964, the institution transformed into the University of Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate, and Swaziland (UBBS), reflect-

ing a broader mission to serve the educational needs of three British protectorates, present-day Lesotho, Botswana, and Eswatini.

This shift cemented its role as a hub of regional collaboration, drawing students and faculty from across Southern Africa and fostering intellectual exchange during a time of colonial transition.

The university took its current form on October 20, 1975, when it was established as the National University of Lesotho under Act No. 13 of 1975, following Lesotho’s independence in 1966. This marked a new era, with NUL

becoming the country’s flagship institution, tasked with educating a growing nation and building on the foundation laid by its predecessors.

Over 80 years, NUL has produced generations of graduates who have shaped Lesotho and beyond. Its alumni include prominent figures in politics, such as former Prime Ministers, as well as leaders in education, business, and public service. Globally, NUL graduates have contributed to academia, science, and development, amplifying the university’s influence far beyond Lesotho’s borders.

NUL has also emerged as a leader in research and innovation. In recent years, its materials science department has gained attention for breakthroughs using Lesotho’s natural resources, such as basalt rock and indigenous plants, to develop sustainable products like textiles and construction materials.

These efforts highlight the university’s role in addressing local challenges while contributing to global knowledge.

The year-long 80th-anniversary celebration will feature seminars, exhibitions, and events showcasing NUL’s history, achievements, and vision. The April 8 launch will set the tone, bringing together students, alumni, and dignitaries to reflect on eight decades of impact.

Beyond nostalgia, the milestone signals NUL’s ambition to expand its reach, with plans to bolster research funding and modernise facilities in the coming years.

In a country where access to higher education remains limited—Lesotho’s literacy rate hovers around 80 percent, but tertiary enrollment lags, NUL stands as a vital institution.

With roughly 9,000 students today, it remains the largest university in Lesotho, despite challenges like funding constraints and competition from regional institutions.

# Econet raises M1 million for education

## Seabata Mahao

Higherlife Foundation (HLF) will receive over M1 million raised from the recent Econet Golf Day meant to support the education of vulnerable children.

The one-day event that brought together corporate golf clubs, independent golf clubs, and individual golfers who pledged financial support, took place at the Maseru Golf Club.

The glamorous occasion was also graced by the presence of Queen ‘Masenate Mohato Seeiso, some members of His Majesty’s Cabinet, captains of industry, elite golfers, and the ETL family.

Since its inception in 2018, the event has proven to be a powerful platform for corporate philanthropy, and has to date raised over M4 million in support of HLF, the social investment arm of Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) dedicated to uplifting the nation’s youth through education and leadership development.

“The Econet Golf Day is more than just a

game – it is an opportunity to collectively invest in Lesotho’s future. Every contribution made today directly impacts a young scholar’s journey, empowering them to become future leaders who will drive our nation forward,” said ETL’s Chief Executive Officer, Dennis Plaatjies.

Plaatjies highlighted that ETL firmly believes investing in human capital is the cornerstone of a thriving society.

Through HLF, the company has played a pivotal role in transforming lives for the past 14 years by focusing on education support, leadership development, and institutional assistance.

“The impact of our work is tangible. Since inception, we have reached over 180 000 young Basotho, providing them with access to quality education, mentorship, and career guidance. Nearly 2 000 scholars have benefited from Higherlife Foundation scholarships since 2011, changing not only their individual futures but the trajectory of their families and communities,” he added.

Since 2021, the foundation has supported 18 registered children’s homes, covering school fees and ensuring young scholars transition successfully from secondary to tertiary education. At Mantšase Children’s Home in Mafeteng, they currently have 10 fellows in high school, while at Semonkong Children’s Home, one of their fellows is completing a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work at the National University of Lesotho.

Plaatjies also announced plans to expand their early education initiatives by providing Growing Tree Books to ensure preschool children receive quality education.

“We also recognise the importance of food security. That is why we extend our support beyond education by supplying food and hygiene packs, agricultural inputs, and conducting minor renovations in these institutions,” he added.

The Minister of Education, Professor Ntoi Rapapa, acknowledged the immense contributions made through HLF’s scholarships and

learning interventions such as Akello Smart Learning.

“I am happy that through these scholarships and support, close to 6 000 students are pursuing their dreams at various educational institutions – from high schools in Lesotho, colleges in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and eSwatini, to universities in the United States,” he stated.

In her address, Her Majesty commended ETL and its partners for their unwavering dedication to education and youth empowerment.

“It is through collaborative efforts like these that we can create a lasting impact in the lives of many young Basotho. Investing in education is investing in the future of our nation,” Her Majesty said.

During the golf event, one of HLF’s beneficiaries Ratalane Fusi shared how the foundation’s support transformed his life, granting him access to quality education and unlocking opportunities for a brighter future.

His testimony underscored the tangible impact of the foundation’s work.

# RSL, NUL solidify partnership with new agreement

## Lungile Maseela

The Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) and the National University of Lesotho (NUL) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen their collaboration, knowledge promotion exchange, research initiatives, and capacity-building efforts.

The signing ceremony, which took place at NUL, was attended by distinguished guests, including the Vice-Chancellor of NUL, the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Law, the Commissioner General of RSL, and the Dean of Social Sciences.

By solidifying their partnership, NUL and RSL aim to drive mutual development, ensuring that academic expertise contributes to policy and economic advancements while providing students with valuable real-world

exposure.

Professor Olusola Fajana, the Vice-Chancellor of NUL, hailed the newly signed MoU as the beginning of a transformative collaboration between the two institutions. Speaking at the official signing ceremony, he emphasised the importance of the partnership in fostering economic growth, improving governance, and enhancing societal well-being.

“I am thrilled to see the university take a proactive role in forging partnerships that will drive economic development, improve governance, and enhance well-being,” he stated.

Professor Fajana also highlighted the partnership’s potential to drive innovation in taxation, revenue management, and economic development. He stressed that through this collaboration, the two institutions will devel-

op cutting-edge solutions while strengthening knowledge-sharing and research efforts.

“This collaboration will go a long way in fostering research excellence and bridging the gap between academia and practical economic solutions,” he stated.

The MoU outlines a broad scope of cooperation, including educational and training programs, graduate internships, mentorship initiatives, and recruitment opportunities. This strategic partnership is expected to equip students with real-world experience.

Acting Dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor Anthony Nwafor, further elaborated on the MoU’s significance, describing it as a formalization of the relationship between the two institutions.

“The MoU signifies the evolution of our partnership, transitioning from a voluntary collaboration to a formal agreement that reflects a deeper commitment,” Professor Nwafor explained.

The MoU also outlines several key initiatives, including providing NUL students with guidance on tax research areas for their projects, fostering innovative ideas, and introducing awards to recognise top academic performers. These initiatives aim to enhance the academic experience for students while advancing their professional development.

For her part, the Commissioner General of RSL described the MoU as a milestone in their shared vision for national development.

“This partnership will not only enrich the academic landscape but also have tangible benefits for the administration of taxation and the development of tax policy in Lesotho,” she said.

She further emphasised that the impact of this collaboration would extend far beyond the two institutions.

“The nation at large will benefit from the knowledge, skills, and innovations generated through this partnership,” she added.

This partnership marks the beginning of a new chapter for both NUL and RSL, with the potential to shape the future of tax administration and policy in Lesotho while fostering inclusive knowledge and professional growth.





**Re itokisetsa**

**Mzansi Young Farmers Indaba  
e hlophisoang ke Food for Mzansi,  
se ke oa salla morao. Eba karolo ea lihoai tse tlo  
tsamaea le Seahlolo**

**Date: 1-2 April 2025**

**Venue: Lavender Kontrei Market, Pretoria North, Gauteng**

**Package 1: 6000**

**Package 2: 10000**

**Includes:**

-Event Entry

-Transport

-3 x nights

-50+ Exhibitions

-6 + Masterclasses

-Funding Opportunities

-Entry and Exit

Limited to 10000

**NO**

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

-A

**CANCELLED**

**50% discount**  
End February

No

Registration: **M500**

THE

**Why**

Gain insight from agricultural experts and leaders.

Network with successful farmers and agripreneurs

from across Africa.

Access opportunities to connect with funders and investors.

Discover new ways to grow your farming business.

### Speaker Announcements

Some of Indaba's incredible speakers.

More exciting announcements coming in the weeks leading up to the event.



**Payments methods:** | **Account: Standard Bank, Mpesa : 3551 & Ecocash: 92669**  
**9080001310220 | Newsday Media**

**Contact details: 50920676 OR 62425157 (WhatsApp)**





Lesotho boxer, 'Mathealira Sehlohoholo

Seabata Mahao

Lesotho's boxing team has made the nation proud at the Zone 4 African Championships in Maputo, Mozambique, securing a total of seven medals.

Held from February 26 to March 2, 2025, the tournament saw fierce competition, but Lesotho's talented boxers rose to the occasion, bringing home two golds, two silvers, and three bronzes.

Boxers bring win seven medals in regional championships

The standout performances came from Mathealira Sehlohoholo and Monaheng Khebe, who both won gold medals in their respective weight categories. Sehlohoholo triumphed in the men's 54kg division, while Khebe emerged victorious in the men's 60kg category, adding two prestigious gold medals to Lesotho's tally.

In addition to the golds, Lesotho boxers Retšelisitsoe Kolobe (48kg) and Toka Litabe (57kg) secured silver medals in their divisions, further solidifying the country's reputation for producing skilled fighters.

Meanwhile, RapelangMaselela, the sole female representative from Lesotho, earned a bronze medal in the women's 57kg category, making her achievement particularly significant in a competition dominated by male participants.

As a result of their remarkable performance, Lesotho ranked third overall in the tournament, a commendable feat considering

the limited number of athletes they sent. The team's five medals were enough to secure a trophy for the nation, a well-deserved recognition of their hard work and dedication.

The host nation, Mozambique, finished at the top of the standings with 14 medals, including 8 golds. Botswana secured second place with a total of 2 golds, 3 silvers, and 3 bronzes, while Lesotho's impressive haul earned them third place and further boosted the nation's pride in its boxing program.

Thabiso Nketu, coach of the Lesotho team, expressed his pride in the boxers' achievements, noting that the results could have been even better had more athletes been sent to the tournament.

"I am upbeat with the execution of my boxers and the results—five medals and a trophy are commendable. Had we taken more boxers, I am sure we would have at least secured second place," Nketu said.

The coach also acknowledged the challenges faced by the team, including limited funding for adequate preparation. Despite these hurdles, Nketu was full of praise for the dedication of the coaches and the National Boxing Federation, who played a crucial role in ensuring the success of the team on the international stage.

Other countries participating in the championship included South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Tanzania, and Malawi.

With the strong performances at the Zone 4 African Championships, Lesotho's boxing prospects are looking bright, and the achievements of these athletes have certainly raised expectations for future competitions.

Their success is a testament to the potential within Lesotho's boxing scene, and with continued support, these athletes are poised to compete at even higher levels.

Matlama tighten grip on league title race

Kananelo Mokhele

Under the floodlights of DIFA Maputsoe Stadium in Leribe, Matlama FC proved once again why they are the team to beat in the Lesotho Premier League (VPL) this season.

On March 1, the league leaders secured a hard-fought 1-0 victory over struggling Mzamane FC, keeping their title aspirations firmly on track as the season heads into its final stretch.

It was a tense encounter, with both teams displaying impressive resolve and determination. However, Matlama's attacking efficiency and unwavering defence made all the difference in the end.

Thamae Katiso, whose name has become almost synonymous with Matlama's title charge, scored the only goal of the match. His clinical finish in the second half capped off yet another fine performance, securing his side all three points.

Katiso's goal sparked wild celebrations among the Matlama faithful, reinforcing the club's position as the front-runners in the race for the VPL crown.

His ability to find the back of the net at crucial moments this season has been one of the key factors in Matlama's dominance, with the team now sitting comfortably at the top of the league standings with 45 points from 19 matches.

They are followed in second place by the reigning VPL champions, Lioli FC with 42 points from the same number of games. Bantu FC is in third place with 38 points, while LMPS FC comes fourth with 37 points.

While the win was crucial for Matlama's pursuit of the league title, it was yet another tough blow for Mzamane, who continue to battle relegation. The team fought valiantly to find an equaliser, but their efforts were thwarted by Matlama's resolute defence.

The visitors, despite showing flashes of creativity in attack, simply could not break down Matlama's backline. Mzamane remains rooted at the bottom of the table, with just 7 points from 19 matches, desperately searching for solutions to stay afloat in the league.

The victory marked Matlama's second triumph over Mzamane this season. In their previous encounter on December 15, 2024, Matlama delivered a commanding 3-0 performance, further underlining the significant gap between the two teams. While the results were different in scoreline, the pattern of dominance has remained clear: Matlama has been the superior side in every department.

The consistency Matlama has displayed throughout the season continues to set them apart from their rivals. With only a



handful of matches remaining, the team, led by Charles Manda will be keen to maintain their current performance and ensure they are the team lifting the VPL trophy come season's end.

Their lead at the top has allowed them to build a comfortable cushion over their closest competitors, and at this point, it would take a monumental collapse for them to relinquish their position.

With Lioli breathing down their necks in second place, Matlama find themselves in a familiar situation to last season's where together with Lioli, the two clubs took their fight for the league honours to the final day of the season, where Lioli prevailed to lift the title.

Kananelo Mokhele

The Kingdom Select (Likatola reserve side) has been forced to postpone their eagerly awaited matches against Toyota Cheetahs Rugby Club and Mangaung Rugby Club, originally scheduled for March 1 in Bloemfontein.

The highly anticipated encounter had to be delayed after communication break down between the federation and the opposition led to logistical complications, ultimately preventing the team from making the trip.

The disappointment of the postponement was palpable among players, coaches, and fans alike, but there was reassurance from Lesotho's head coach, Raphepheng Khauhelo, that the match had not been cancelled outright.

In a bid to keep momentum and excitement alive, the match has now been rescheduled for this coming weekend, on March 8.

"We regret that we could not make it to Bloemfontein as planned. There were some miscommunications that affected our travel, but we are actively working to ensure everything is in place for next week," Khauhelo said.

"The team is ready, and we look forward to facing Mangaung and Cheetahs on the new date," he added.

Despite this hurdle, the Lesotho rugby team has remained focused and resilient. The squad

National rugby side reschedules Free State tour



The Kingdom Select (Likatola reserve side)

has continued its rigorous training sessions, determined to give a strong performance on their rescheduled date.

For the Kingdom Select players, the delayed game is merely a temporary setback, and they are using the extra time to refine their strategy and sharpen their skills.

The disappointment of the delay has only heightened anticipation for the rescheduled

match, with fans from both sides eager for an exciting display of rugby.

The Kingdom Select team, which has made considerable strides in recent years, will be looking to showcase their developing skills and solidify their reputation on the field. Their performance against the Mangaung and Cheetahs will be closely watched as a barometer for their growth and potential in international

- rugby.
- Below is the selected squad to face both Toyota Cheetahs Rugby Club and Mangaung Rugby Club:
- Forwards:**
1. MokoneChabana
  2. VuyaniChabana
  3. LetlatsaLetompa
  4. ThapeloKhoali
  5. Napo Mashapha
  6. Motheo Mokhothu
  7. KelelloLibaka re
  8. KeketsoSejane
  9. MonahangMokitimi
  10. LehloengMangoele
  11. Kananelo 'Molaoa
  12. TlaliNkuka
- Backs:**
1. BokangNcheke
  2. Nkolamonyatsi
  3. ReatileJoale
  4. LehlohonoloMohasi
  5. TlotlisoMotseremeli
  6. MoletsaneTsoo
  7. BakoenaNketsi
  8. SekhoolaPhate
  9. MolapoMosothoane
  10. SelloKobeli





# Cup competition suffers massive dip in voter turnout

- ***Doubts over voting system sustainability emerge***
- ***Voting period shortened, but participating clubs increased***

## Seabata Mahao

The 2025 edition of the annual People's Cup tournament has seen a massive drop-off in voter turnout from 1.3 million in 2024 to just over 400,000 this year.

Several factors are believed to have contributed to the decline, with the short voting period being a primary cause.

The voting for the competition opened on February 19 and closed on March 4, leaving the football community with just over two weeks to cast their votes.

Additionally, the official launch of the competition was delayed until February 25, just days before the voting deadline, which may have caused confusion and inconvenience for the fans.

Beyond the tight voting window, the drop in votes has also reignited concerns raised by the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) Secretary General, Mokhosi Mohapi, regarding the potential for money laundering in the voting process.

Mohapi previously questioned how an average football fan could afford bulk voting amounts, such as the M10,000 votes often seen in past editions, while still managing to attend games and purchase merchandise.

In the past, despite struggling financially, some clubs reportedly used bulk voting to secure votes for a top-four finish, even borrowing money in the hope of winning the competition's M500,000 grand prize.

Unfortunately, when these clubs were eliminated early, they were left with significant debts, further fueling scepticism about the sustainability and fairness of the voting system.

"There is no way that fans can sustain this kind of financial burden, especially when they already strain their finances to attend games and support their teams," Mohapi said.

"It's becoming increasingly clear that the system is unfair and unsustainable, especially when we see clubs resorting to borrowing



money to secure votes and then left to deal with the fallout."

Mohapi also stressed the importance of striking a balance between meeting the demands of clubs and protecting the financial well-being of the supporters.

"What do we see when we look at football supporters? If we are going to put so much burden on them, I am sure we are looking at over 3 million votes so that there is a return on expectation," Mohapi said.

"When I see a football fan, I see a stakeholder who is there to witness the fruits of hard work on the field, not someone to cover the entire cost of football operations."

The expansion of the People's Cup from a four-team event to eight teams has also raised questions, particularly regarding its effect on

the tournament's prestige.

In previous years, teams fiercely competed for one of the coveted four spots, with every vote crucial in determining which teams advanced. In 2023, for example, Swallows missed out by just 50 votes to Linare, underlining how fiercely contested the spots were.

By expanding the competition, some fear the tournament may lose its exclusivity and glory. There is concern that this shift may dilute the prestige of being one of the final four teams.

For now, the focus is on the quarterfinals which are set to take place this weekend. LMPS FC, which topped the voting standings with 114 114 votes, will face Linare FC, while Lioli FC, with 64 736 votes, will take on Li-jabatho FC.

In other quarter-final matchups, Bantu FC will play Lifofane FC, and Matlama FC will face Majantja FC. These fixtures are set for March 8 at the Maputsoe DIFA Ground and March 9 at the Mohale's Hoek DIFA Ground.

The tournament is supported to the tune of M1.5 million by a partnership between Sam Matekane Foundation (SMF) and Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL), who have contributed M800 000 and M700 000, respectively.

The total prize pool for the 2025 People's Cup has been set at M1 million, with the winner receiving M500 000, the runner-up M200 000, and the third and fourth-placed teams sharing M100 000. Quarter-finalists will receive M40,000 each. The final is set to take place on March 15, at the Bocheletsane Ground in Mantšonyane, Thaba-Tseka.



Elevate your Brand's visibility!  
**Advertise With Us**  
and unlock exclusive rates...