

AG DELIVERS WORST VERDICT EVER ON LEC



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The Work Continues: LNDC's progress, impact, and vision

LNDC's highlights – from driving investment to empowering Basotho businesses.

Lesotho National Development Corporation's Interim Chief Executive Officer unpacks the work being done to build an inclusive and export-led economy. Despite the economic and social headwinds both at a global and national level, LNDC continues to secure strategic investments, facilitate local business growth, and position Lesotho as a competitive and attractive destination for development.



ADVOCATE MOLISE RAMAILI - LNDC CEO

Turn the page for the full conversation with the CEO.

BY -THE- NUMBERS

M280m+
Value of supported PGG Loans to date

2800+
New jobs created under the #ReBulaLifeme campaign

8
Factory expansions and re-openings under the #ReBulaLifeme campaign

M100m+
Total spent on local suppliers to date

36000+
Jobs retained under the Industrial Portfolio

1
Equity injection

The Road to Sustainable Industry

The ICEO Speaks

Q1: Why does LNDC exist?

A: ICEO

LNDC is mandated by the Government of Lesotho through the Lesotho National Development Corporation Act No. 13 of 1990, to “initiate, promote and facilitate the development of manufacturing and processing industries, mining and commerce in a manner calculated to raise the level of income and employment in Lesotho”.

But beyond mandates, we exist to transform lives - from attracting high impact investments that create thousands of jobs, to ensuring local suppliers can access value chains and grow sustainably.

Q2: And what does that really mean in practical terms?

A: ICEO

Our aim is to commercialize and scale up various sectors earmarked to drive socio-economic growth in Lesotho. This entails helping a local manufacturer secure, serviced factory space, linking local producers with potential buyers in regional and international markets and taking Lesotho to the world stage and bringing the world to Lesotho.

At the core, we’re building a modern, export-led economy-one business, one sector, one job at a time.

Q3: As per your mandate, give us an example of a project that you have either initiated, promoted or facilitated.

A: ICEO

One strong example is the new Isuzu dealership set to open its doors later this month. This project stems from a process we initiated in June 2022, where LNDC issued a call for expressions of interest to invest in, manage, and operate an Isuzu commercial vehicle dealership in Lesotho. Through that process, we facilitated a partnership between Isuzu Motors South Africa and Zakhura Motor Group (ZMG). The Sod Turning ceremony for the construction of the dealership was held on the 2nd of August 2023. This dealership will not only enhance access to commercial vehicles but also create jobs, build local skills, and strengthen Lesotho’s presence in the automotive sector.

Q4: You have given us an example of a project you have facilitated. Can you now take us through projects you have (a) initiated and those that you are (b) promoting.

A: ICEO

LNDC has initiated and packaged several strategic investment projects by deploying project preparation funds to develop bankable opportunities that are ready for uptake by both domestic and foreign investors. Currently, the Corporation is promoting three key projects: Maluti Pharmaceuticals, The Mafeteng Special Economic Zone, and the Masianokeng Integrated Horticulture Project. These initiatives are aligned with our strategic focus on diversifying Lesotho’s investment landscape beyond textiles and garments.

While LNDC has been successful in attracting investors in the textile and garments industry, which falls under the manufacturing sector, our current strategic plan places greater emphasis on promoting other sectors such as agriculture and agro-processing, renewable energy, and innovation and technology. Our holistic approach to positioning Lesotho as an attractive investment and sourcing destination includes promotion, facilitation, implementation support, financing, and aftercare services. To that end, LNDC has established an Aftercare section within the Investment and Trade Promotion Unit, which is dedicated to retaining investors and supporting expansion efforts. Currently, the LNDC Industrial Portfolio comprises six (6) active industrial estates nationwide, accommodating seventy-eight (78) manufacturing companies across diverse industries, collectively creating over 36,000 jobs.

There are encouraging signs of recovery in the industry, demonstrated by the upscaling of operations by companies that had previously downsized, and the reopening of firms that were operating on short time. Many companies have also diversified to the RSA market to maintain competitiveness. As part of efforts to rebuild investor confidence and revive job creation, LNDC launched the #ReBulaLifemeCampaign in April 2024. The campaign is a hopeful initiative aimed at signalling economic recovery and reigniting interest from prospective and existing investors. Through this initiative, we have already seen two (2) re-openings, six (6) expansions, and one (1) new opening, resulting in the creation of approximately 2,800 jobs.





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Graphic Design
Interior Design
Signage
Exhibition Stand

Multiplex Industries celebrates 10 years of existence

Powered by You for a decade

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The Office of the Auditor General has issued a rare and scathing disclaimer opinion on the financial statements of the embattled Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) for the year ended 31 March 2023, raising serious concerns about transparency and governance at the state-owned utility.

Deputy Auditor General Paul Letlela announced the decision during a press conference on Tuesday, explaining that a disclaimer is the worst possible audit opinion, indicating that the financial statements do not reflect the true state of the company's affairs.

Letlela said the full audited statements will be made public once they are tabled in Parliament. The most recent LEC audited financial statements publicly available are for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The continued delay and lack of compliance constitute a direct breach of both the Companies Act and the Public Financial Management and Accountability Act of 2011.

Section 94 of the Companies Act states that a board of a company shall ensure that, within three months of the end of each financial year, accounts are completed in respect of the company's financial year; and signed on behalf of the board by at least two directors of the company or, if there is only one director, by that director.

The act further states that a board shall ensure that within six months of the end of each financial year, accounts of the company are audited.

Where a board fails to comply with the above requirements, a shareholder or group of shareholders may demand in writing that the board produce the completed or audited accounts and if the board fails to do so within 30 days of the written demand, the shareholders may bring an action to Court to compel the company to produce such accounts.

"If the Court finds that a board failed to comply with subsection (1) and to respond in a timely manner with the written demand, the Court shall order the board to produce the accounts and may make an order as to costs," the act reads.

However, in LEC's case, no such demand appears to have been made by its sole shareholder: the Government of Lesotho, represented by the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology.

Section 43 of the Public Financial Manage-

AG delivers worst verdict ever on LEC



ment and Accountability Act, 2011 states that a public enterprise shall provide the minister with an annual report that includes, a review of the activities of the public enterprise for the year and a statement of the expected activities for the coming three years and audited financial statements, prepared in accordance with international financial reporting standards.

The annual report should also include a statement of any losses of enterprise money or loss of or damage to enterprise property, including any amounts recovered or written off and any enterprise property disposed of by way of gift.

"A Chief Executive Officer of a public enterprise shall furnish a copy of an annual report to the Minister within three months of the end of the financial year to which it relates," the law reads.

"The Minister responsible for a public enterprise, after consultation with the Minister (of Finance and Development Planning), may direct a public enterprise to furnish other financial reports from time to time for the effective

management of the investment by Government in that enterprise, and shall furnish copies of the reports to the Minister (of Finance and Development Planning)," it adds.

Section 44 of the same act states that the minister responsible for a public enterprise shall present audited public enterprise annual reports to Parliament within six months of the end of the financial year to which they relate, and shall furnish copies of the reports to Minister of Finance.

As of June 2025, more than a year after the end of the 2022/2023 financial year, LEC's statements have still not been presented to Parliament. No officials appear to be facing consequences for these legal breaches.

The law also places clear responsibilities on CEOs of public enterprises.

It states that a chief executive officer of a public enterprise shall ensure that the operations of the enterprise are carried out efficiently, effectively and economically, and that its assets and liabilities are managed effectively to support business objectives.

The CEO also has to cause funds and accounts to be established and properly kept, ensure a sound system of internal controls is in place within the enterprise to provide assurance that business objectives are being met and that necessary accounting controls are in place, and "produce financial statements meeting international financial reporting standards."

This means any CEO fails to do the above-mentioned tasks violates the law.

This week, LEC's Acting Head of Customer Experience, Tšepo Mololo, was escorted by police from Parliament, where the utility's management was appearing before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), to the office to reverse questionable transactions involving Cell Power and Eco Solutions, who together owed LEC M582,000.

However, when Mololo returned, only the Eco Solutions transaction had been cancelled. He was grilled by the PAC on why he failed to cancel the transaction for Cell Power; a company reportedly owned by Limpho Tau, the Minister in the Prime Minister's Office.

17 agents have been implicated, collectively owing the LEC over M1.3 million. This has prompted public calls for immediate disciplinary action against those responsible.

But the LEC, despite failing to produce audited accounts for multiple years, continues to show up at the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA)'s doorstep with one hand asking for more money and the other hiding the financial skeletons in its closet.

And LEWA, the regulator tasked with protecting consumers and enforcing accountability, instead of shutting the door, keeps approving the tariffs.

This means Basotho are being forced to pay more for electricity every year, while knowing less about what LEC is doing with their money. They are literally being asked to fund LEC, without receipts, without explanation, and without oversight.

Basotho migrant workers exploited in South Africa

... Media urged to help fight human trafficking

Ntsoaki Motaung

The Executive Director of the Migrant Worker Association of Lesotho, Lerato Nkhetše, has revealed disturbing accounts of exploitation faced by Basotho trying to earn a living on farms in South Africa.

Speaking during a media training on Trafficking in Persons hosted by the Ministry of Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs, and Police, with support from Skillshare Lesotho, this week, Nkhetše said many Basotho migrant workers are trapped in exploitative arrangements that deny them

the rewards of their hard labour.

"We have seen cases where a Mosotho national rents or borrows a South African citizen's identity document to secure a job. They work under that false identity, but the salary is deposited into the South African citizen's bank account. Whether or not they give the actual worker any money is entirely at their discretion," Nkhetše explained.

He warned that the consequences of this deception extend far beyond the working years. "When it is time to retire and claim benefits, the company only recognises the

identity on paper, the South African citizen. The real worker is left with nothing," he added.

Also addressing the training, Peter Buyondo from Skillshare Lesotho stressed the vital role the media plays in combating human trafficking. Buyondo said journalism can expose trafficking networks, inform vulnerable communities, and push for stronger policies.

"When reporting on human trafficking, the media is not just informing, it is protecting. It raises awareness, shapes public perception, and influences political action," he said.

Echoing these sentiments, Deputy Principal Secretary Machachamise Nkhotla of the Ministry emphasized that media can also use investigative reporting to pressure governments into strengthening laws and enforcement mechanisms against trafficking.

He pointed out that women and children are the most affected by trafficking, often lured by the promise of jobs, scholarships, or other opportunities.

Lesotho is currently classified as a Tier 2 country in the 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report by the U.S. Department of State, meaning it does not yet meet the minimum standards for eliminating trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so.

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PAC turns up the voltage as LEC runs to court

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament has vowed to uphold transparency and accountability, affirming it will proceed to summon the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) despite the utility's desperate attempt to block the committee's probe through court action.

This comes after LEC filed an urgent High Court application seeking to interdict the PAC from interrogating its management over alleged mismanagement and fraud, a move widely seen as an attempt to derail parliamentary oversight.

In the court papers filed this week, LEC, 100 percent government-owned and responsible for procuring and distributing electricity, argues that the PAC is acting ultra vires, or beyond its legal authority.

The applicants in the case are the LEC and its board, while the respondents include the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Clerk of the National Assembly, PAC, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, and the Attorney General.

Responding to this legal manoeuvre, PAC Chairperson 'Machabana Lemphane-Letsie, came out swinging during a press briefing yesterday.

"The PAC of the National Assembly of Lesotho firmly reiterates its constitutional mandate to promote transparency, accountability, and sound financial govern-

ance. As a standing session committee, the PAC scrutinises reports by the Auditor-General and investigates the management of public funds across ministries, departments, and state-owned enterprises," Lemphane-Letsie said.

"The Committee notes with concern the recent court application by the LEC, aimed at preventing the PAC from carrying out its statutory oversight duties. This action undermines the rule of law, disrupts parliamentary processes, and challenges the constitutional principle of separation of powers," Lemphane-Letsie she added.

She said when public institutions resort to judicial intervention to avoid scrutiny, it sets a dangerous precedent, one that weakens transparency and erodes trust. She indicated that the three arms of government must operate within their distinct roles, not as instruments to bypass accountability, but as complementary forces that uphold democratic governance and the public interest.

"Despite this attempt to derail its work, the PAC remains undeterred. The committee is bound by law to act without fear or favour in protecting the public's interest," she said.

"It will proceed to summon LEC to account for its use of public resources and will exercise its legal authority to compel attendance and the submission of relevant documentation," she added.



She vowed that no institution or individual will be permitted to operate beyond the reach of the law or evade parliamentary oversight.

In a letter dated 30 May 2025, LEC board chairperson Thabo Khasipe wrote to the Speaker of the National Assembly, pleading for intervention in how the PAC conducts its hearings. He complained that LEC officials were being ambushed with unanticipated questions and denied a fair opportunity to respond.

"...we wish to bring to your attention the manner in which the PAC proceedings

have been conducted. In the Board's considered opinion. The interactions have frequently been accusatory, judgmental and fundamentally unfair. Our members were ambushed with questions which were not foreshadowed in summons which the law dictates must be a prerequisite prior to participation in the proceedings of the Committee," read the letter.

This is not the first time a public institution has tried to dodge the PAC. The Ministry of Public Works and Transport previously attempted to interdict the committee from investigating the allegedly scandal-ridden tender process for the Moshoeshoe I International Airport rehabilitation project.

But Section 117(4) of the Constitution mandates that Parliament must review reports from the Auditor-General. These reports, tabled by the Minister of Finance, are essential for holding public entities accountable.

Lemphane-Letsie confirmed that summons for LEC's management and board will be issued despite the pending court application.

"Let's be clear: LEC has only filed for an interdict. The court has not yet granted it. Until then, we are proceeding with our mandate," she said.

The High Court is expected to hear arguments on the urgency of LEC's application on Monday.

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Botched Royal Palace may be structurally unsafe

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The long-delayed new Royal Palace project may not only be incomplete, but also structurally unsafe, according to a damning audit report that exposes serious flaws in construction, oversight, and procurement.

What was envisioned as a proud symbol of the monarchy has become a cautionary tale of public sector failure.

The 2025 Auditor-General's report on the construction of the new Royal Palace in Maseru reveals that the Ministry of Public Works failed to enforce basic safety standards, while the Building Design Services (BDS) allowed unchecked changes and bypassed critical quality controls.

The audit found that both a quality control plan and a quality assurance plan, essential for ensuring construction safety, were completely absent. More than half of the inspected construction items (56 percent) did not meet design specifications.

Defects include cracked tiles, damaged timber flooring, leaking drainpipes, ceiling collapses, and water-damaged walls, raising red flags about the structure's fitness for occupancy.

The report also cites a 2016 assessment by Henry Fagan and Partners, the structural integrity consultant, which highlighted "unsupported brickwork, unprotected steel beams, inaccurate concrete setting," and other alarming workmanship issues.

The Auditor-General, Mathabo Makenete, attributed these to a lack of supervision by civil and structural consultants.

"A review of the Structural Audit report prepared by Henry Fagan and Partners (the structural integrity consultant) in March 2016 raised concerns related largely to

workmanship of civil and structural works such as unsupported brickwork, steel beam in brickwork without corrosion protection, inadequate cover to concrete, plastering over brick to concrete junctions with gaps to allow for expansion, inaccurate concrete setting out among others," Makenete said in the report.

"All these are considered by audit to be as a result of inadequate supervision or lack of it by the consultant. There was no evidence on file to indicate that some of the findings by Henry Fagan were identified by the supervision consultant prior to the assessment and that non-conformance reports had been prepared to that effect. This indicated inadequate construction supervision by the civil/structural consultant which could result in sub-standard workmanship as indicated in the assessment report," she added.

On the quality of the works, the report noted absence of quality control and assurance plans.

"Section 14.2 (7) of the Procurement Manual of 2007 recommends that a supplier should have a quality plan in place specific and tailored to the project to ensure that the goods, works and services received by Government are fit for purpose for which they are intended and satisfy the needs of the user.

"Furthermore, it provides that the quality plan is required where the requirement is particular complex, critical interface and is fundamental to safety. A review of the building contract revealed that there was no requirement of the contractor to provide a quality control plan as part of the quality management plan and it did not appear among the documents availed for review.

"The consultants were also not required



to provide quality assurance plan after review of the Contractor's plans. The absence of the requirement for quality control and assurance plans in the contracts denies the Client of the means to check how quality is achieved," she added.

Deputy Auditor General Paul Letlela told journalist this week that irregularities were evident as early as 2014, including suspicious incidents during inspections, like doors opening on their own and dismissed contractors still holding property keys, suggesting serious lapses in site control.

Now 13 years since the project began in 2013, the Palace remains unfinished, deteriorating, and unfit for habitation. Their Majesties continue to commute daily between Matsieng and Maseru city.

The Auditor-General's report also paints a picture of financial chaos: over M74 million in cost overruns, with some contractors

allegedly overpaid by up to 3,000 percent. Despite repeated infusions of public funds, the result is a crumbling, vacant structure.

Letlela said a fresh round of inspections is being launched and that compliance reports will be issued where violations of procurement and safety laws are found.

Other red flags include:

- BDS's failure to enforce contractually required safety measures.
- Use of South African payment guidelines, contrary to agreed lump-sum terms.
- Missing original construction documents.
- Legal complications due to contracts falling under South African jurisdiction.
- Makeka Design Lab making unauthorised and costly modifications without approval or safety vetting.

Lesotho's economy shrinks by 5.3% in Q1 of 2025

Palesa Moloinyane

Lesotho's economy contracted by a sharp 5.3 percent in the first quarter of 2025, underscoring the mounting economic strain from muted domestic consumption, reduced government spending, and a subdued performance in major sectors such as transport and construction.

This was revealed during the 113th meeting of the Central Bank of Lesotho's (CBL) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held on June 3, 2025, at Lehakoe Sports and Recreation Centre.

"Lesotho's economy contracted by 5.3 per cent in Q1 2025, reflecting weak consumption, reduced government spending, and sluggish performance in transport and construction," CBL governor, Dr Maluke Letete, said.

Dr Letete noted that although manufacturing and financial services showed modest resilience, buoyed by textile exports and credit expansion, the broader economic momentum remains fragile.

He pointed to emerging risks clouding the outlook, including rising tariffs affecting textile exports, the withdrawal of key development support, such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and the continued decline in the diamond market.

On the inflation front, Dr Letete report-



ed that headline inflation eased to 4.0 percent in April 2025, down from 4.2 percent in March. This drop was driven by falling global oil prices and the strengthening of the loti against the US dollar, which reduced fuel import costs. Food prices remained stable, offering some relief to households.

"Looking ahead, inflation is likely to remain contained, though rising global trade tensions and policy uncertainty could yet

stir price pressures," he warned.

From a fiscal policy perspective, Lesotho maintained a disciplined and supportive stance in Q1 2025, recording a budget surplus of 12.9 percent. This came despite weaker VAT collections due to compliance challenges. Government spending focused on infrastructure and social support, providing a countercyclical buffer for the economy.

Notably, public debt fell to 53.8 percent

of GDP, thanks to successful bond redemptions and external debt repayments, reflecting a continued commitment to fiscal sustainability.

"This fiscal prudence also created room for private sector activity, as improved liquidity in the banking sector supported higher credit extension," said Letete.

Lesotho's current account surplus narrowed to 0.7 percent of GDP, mainly due to weaker exports and rising service-related outflows. Despite resilient income inflows, the trend signals growing pressure on external sustainability.

Still, the level of reserves remains healthy, with 5.3 months of import cover, bolstered by strong Southern African Customs Union (SACU) receipts and prudent reserve management.

The CBL's Net International Reserves (NIR) rose by approximately US\$40.3 million, from US\$1.028 billion on March 13 to US\$1.069 billion on May 21, driven mainly by SACU inflows. The NIR is projected to continue improving in the near to medium term.

Despite this, domestic growth remains fragile, hampered by trade-related shocks and the underperformance of major industries.

In response to the current landscape, the MPC made two key decisions. It revised the NIR target floor downward, from US\$840 million to US\$830 million, to safeguard the loti-rand peg and lowered the CBL rate from 7.25 percent to 7.00 percent per annum, aligning with domestic and regional monetary policy dynamics.

Harsh reality of boarding life at St. Sebastian High School



Ntsoaki Motaung

When parents bid farewell to their daughters and entrust them to a boarding school, they carry with them a hopeful belief that their children are going to a place where learning thrives, where discipline is instilled, and where dormitories offer a second home, perhaps not luxurious, but certainly safe, clean, and conducive to growth.

At St. Sebastian High School in Mhale's Hoek, however, this hope is unravelling.

The girls' dormitories, a vital cornerstone in the boarding experience, are in a dire state. An investigation by Newsday into these living quarters uncovered conditions that challenge the very idea of dignity and safety, let alone learning.

Students are expected to live and continue studying in their dormitories, especially after school hours. Multiple students who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of victimisation described the conditions as far from suitable for either learning or healthy living.

Upon approaching the dormitories, a strong, pervasive odour immediately assaults the senses. The smell is suggestive of overcrowding and a clear lack of regular cleaning.

It is difficult to imagine how students are expected to concentrate on their studies in such an environment.

Compounding these issues is the absence of electricity. Students are confined to dark rooms filled with an unpleasant smell, a setting hardly conducive to academic focus or mental well-being.

Each dormitory is crammed with bunk beds stacked one above the other. The mattresses and blankets appear unwashed for extended periods, adding to the foul atmosphere. Their dark, unidentifiable colours only underscore the apparent neglect.

The rooms are cluttered with open trunks propped against the walls, with clothes, socks, underwear, and other personal items spilling out. The walls are dotted with holes where students have hammered nails to hang their uniforms, a makeshift solution in the absence of proper wardrobes.

Communication with parents is another

challenge. Students rely on small solar panels to charge their phones, crucial not just for staying in touch with home, but also for conducting schoolwork and research. These personal, often inadequate charging solutions highlight significant gaps in infrastructure.

According to the students, each dormitory houses nearly 30 girls. While they are supposed to clean the rooms on a rotating basis, this system often breaks down, with some students neglecting their duties.

For many, proximity to their classes is the only benefit. But the dire living conditions erode any comfort this might offer.

A student from Quthing voiced her frustration: "There is no privacy. We know dormitories do not offer much privacy, but there should at least be a little."

Cleanliness, she added, is the most distressing issue. Students frequently suffer insect bites and skin rashes, which they believe stem from the unhygienic environment.

Monaheng 'Musi, Principal of St. Sebastian High School, acknowledged the poor conditions. "Initially, these were not dorms, they were old classrooms we repurposed to accommodate students from far away," he explained. "Eighty percent of our students live too far to commute daily."

He added that the school has employed a caregiver, a "mother" figure, to support the girls in the dormitories. But he admitted that geographical isolation and deep-rooted socio-economic challenges make the situation even more difficult.

The school is severely understaffed, with only five teachers, including the principal, serving more than 175 students. "This makes teaching and learning extremely difficult and compromises education quality," said 'Musi.

He noted that more than half the students come from vulnerable families and rely on government grants provided through the Ministry of Youth, Gender and Social Development.

However, these grants are both delayed and insufficient. "Each student receives only M250, which is expected to cover food and

someone to cook for them. The school is often in debt. We simply can't afford to develop our facilities under these circumstances," he said.

The challenges extend beyond staffing and finances because St. Sebastian High School has no access to electricity.

"For things that require electricity, we use a generator, which sometimes goes for long periods without petrol," 'Musi shared. His remarks follow recent government statements declaring electricity a luxury, arguing that many Basotho survive without it, and rejecting calls to zero-rate VAT on electricity to improve affordability.

Adding to his concerns, 'Musi highlighted the heartbreaking issue of students dropping out due to early marriage or migrating to South Africa in search of employment.

He attributed this to the fact that most of these children are orphans, or their parents have left home for South Africa for jobs and no longer take care of their children, underscoring the profound socio-economic pressures weighing on his students and the community.

Ministry of Education and Training Chief Information Officer Molikuo Sekhonyana indicated that there are no guidelines within the ministry which specifically speaks on boarding housing.

Sekhonyana said the only guiding principle is the School Health Policy which does not specifically speak about boarding houses but speaks about maintaining cleanliness in general in schools.

She said the issue of cleanliness is looked at the same time when Inspectors from the Ministry visits schools and that is done together with inspecting everything in schools.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Khutsong Memorial Gardens, Thuathe, Berea, Lesotho

In accordance with the Environment Act of 2008, Khutsong commissioned Multinodal Development Consultant to develop an Environmental Social Impact Assessment and Environmental Management Plan for the above-mentioned project.

The proposed project will involve land acquisition, planning and construction, within Thuathe within Berea district. Khutsong Memorial Gardens is a proposed private cemetery dedicated to offering a peaceful and dignified final resting place for loved ones. Located on 33000 sqm of beautifully landscaped grounds, we propose provide a range of burial options, including traditional burials, green burials, cremation niches, and tailored memorial services. The facility aims to maximise space utilising by not only offering traditional gravesites, but also memorial niches for storing ashes of loved ones. Our mission is to create a serene and respectful environment where families can mourn, reflect, and celebrate the lives of those who have passed.

The detailed description of the project and its anticipated impacts are presented in the ESIA report. While the proposed Environmental and Social measures that shall be adopted to manage the identified impacts are presented in the Environmental management Plan. Copies of the ESIA and EMP are available, for public review and comment at:

**EIA Section
Department of Environment
6th Post Office Building, Kingsway Street
Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture
Maseru, Lesotho**

Electronic copies of the documents are also available online on
www.tourism.gov.ls/

If you wish to comment on this proposed Private Cemetery project. Please do so within 28 days, from the **25th May 2025**.

Comments should be submitted via email: mndctikoloho@gmail.com or Short Text Message +26662909145

Lesotho Electricity Company: A utility in the dark

Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) is a public utility that has long operated under a cloud of secrecy and dysfunction. This week, that cloud darkened significantly with a rare and damning announcement from the Office of the Auditor General: a disclaimer opinion, the worst possible audit verdict, has been issued on LEC's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

A disclaimer opinion does not merely signal poor bookkeeping. It is a declaration that the company's financial records are so deficient, disorganised, or possibly manipulated that the Auditor General cannot even form an opinion. It is a bright red flag waving from the top of an enterprise that, despite being wholly owned by the Government of Lesotho, continues to treat the rule of law as optional and public accountability as a nuisance.

The Companies Act and the Public Financial Management and Accountability Act (PFMAA) of 2011 both impose clear obligations on LEC and its sole shareholder, the Government of Lesotho, represented by the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology.

These laws require:

- Audited accounts within six months of year-end.
- Annual reports submitted to the Minister within three months.
- Presentation of audited statements to Parliament within six months.

None of these requirements have been met. As of June 2025, about two years after the close of the 2022/2023 financial year, LEC's audited accounts have still not been presented to Parliament. This is not merely an administrative oversight, it is a legal violation, plain and simple.

Meanwhile, disturbing scenes continue to unfold before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), where this week, LEC's Acting Head of Customer Experience, Tšepo Mololo, had to be escorted by police from Parliament to reverse shady transactions with agents who owed the utility hundreds of thousands of maloti.

Mololo only reversed one of the two transactions in question, leaving untouched a payment to Cell Power, a company allegedly owned by Minister Limpho Tau, a member of the Prime Minister's Office. If that allegation proves true, this is no longer just a matter of maladministration, it is state-enabled looting.

Seventeen agents are reportedly implicated in debts totalling over M1.3 million to LEC. And yet, we are still to see any concrete action taken against them, any suspensions, prosecutions, or recoveries. Instead, the company continues to operate as though accountability is optional and transparency a threat.

Even as LEC fails to meet its most basic obligations, auditing its finances, disclosing losses, or presenting a clear picture of its operations, it routinely returns to the regulator, LEWA, asking for tariff hikes.

What's worse, LEWA continues to approve these increases, seemingly without demanding audited statements or meaningful reforms in return. This relationship between regulator and utility has become uncomfortably cosy, and consumers are paying the price, literally.

Basotho households are being asked to pay more for electricity each year while receiving no assurance that their money is being managed legally, efficiently, or honestly. It's a one-sided deal: LEC demands funding, offers no receipts, and suffers no oversight. LEWA signs off. And the public pays, more, each year.

What we are witnessing at LEC is not an isolated lapse but a systemic failure across multiple levels of governance:

- A board of directors that appears complicit.
- A CEO and management team failing to meet the legal duties of their office.
- A government shareholder that has abandoned its supervisory role.
- A regulator that acts more like a business partner than a watchdog.
- And a Parliament that, even when alarmed, lacks the power to compel rapid action.

At the heart of this crisis is a complete disregard for public trust. The electricity that powers Lesotho is not a gift, it is paid for, in every bill, by the people. And those people deserve answers.

If no action is taken, then LEC will become a symbol not just of corporate failure, but of state-enabled corruption and impunity.

This country cannot afford to have its critical public utilities become playgrounds for mismanagement and personal enrichment. Electricity is a lifeline. It powers homes, hospitals, schools, and businesses. It deserves better governance.

We must not allow darkness, financial, legal, or ethical, to engulf our public institutions. LEC must be brought into the light.



Theko Tlebere

Lesotho's Scholarship Policy: A Bottleneck to Diplomatic Gains in Education

On Sunday afternoon, I quietly listened to Hon. Lejone Mpotjoane, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, deliver a fervent keynote address at the opening of Lesotho's Diplomatic Consultations for Heads of Missions abroad. He spoke with clarity and conviction, urging our ambassadors and high commissioners to prioritise securing more scholarships, internships, and training opportunities for Basotho.

His inspiring vision aligned with national development goals. However, as the minister outlined this ambitious plan, my thoughts drifted to Ha Khohlopo in Thaba-Tseka where my cousin stays. She graduated from a local tertiary institution three years ago with support from the National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS). Despite her qualifications, she remains unemployed just like thousands of other Basotho youth trapped in a stagnant labour market. Because she has not begun repaying her NMDS loan, how could she apply and get a scholarship, with no income?

She is ineligible to apply for any new scholarships, even those fully funded by foreign governments. So when I hear that our diplomats may secure 100 or even 200 scholarship opportunities, I can't help but ask: *What good are these efforts if my cousin and others like her are locked out before they even begin?*

A policy that punishes the poor. In Lesotho, accessing a scholarship regardless of its source requires proof of repayment for any past NMDS loan bursary. Even if the new opportunity comes from the governments of Azerbaijan, China, or Botswana, and even if it is fully funded, applicants must have cleared their previous NMDS debt. This blanket requirement effectively bars those who are most in need and most likely to benefit from further education, Basotho from disadvantaged and unemployed backgrounds.

This policy exemplifies a systemic failure to connect foreign policy with domestic realities. The NMDS, operating under the Ministry of Development Planning, mandates that anyone previously sponsored must show "Proof of Loan Bursary repayment according to approved Loan Bursary Fund Repayment Criteria" before applying again.

This condition is a constant feature in every scholarship announcement from the recent Azerbaijan and Botswana offers to others managed through the NMDS. While the intention behind this clause may be to promote accountability and fiscal sustainability, the outcome is undeniably punitive. The irony is heartbreaking. On one hand, Lesotho is receiving goodwill from the global community in the form of scholarships meant to uplift its youth.

On the other hand, the government, through NMDS, closes the door on those same youth, demanding repayment for past assistance before they can access opportunities that come at zero cost to the state. Lesotho's unemployment rate currently hovers

at a staggering **38 percent** (Bureau of Statistics, 2024). Expecting unemployed graduates to repay loans before accessing further studies, especially those sponsored internationally, is not only unrealistic, it is unjust.

Lesotho is at a critical crossroads. Its foreign policy objectives, particularly in education diplomacy, are being quietly undermined by domestic policy inconsistencies, chief among them, the outdated and rigid scholarship requirements enforced by the NMDS. During the Diplomatic Consultations, held for the first time since 2017, Minister Mpotjoane issued a bold directive to Lesotho's Heads of Missions to elevate education diplomacy as a national priority.

His instructions were clear: secure scholarships, internships, and pathways for Basotho youth to thrive in global academic and professional spaces. The aim was noble to address skills gaps, build a globally connected workforce, and foster international cooperation. However, this enthusiasm from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs clashes sharply with NMDS's entrenched requirements. The contradiction is stark, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is opening doors while NMDS is quietly shutting them.

Consider two recent examples: the 2025/2026 scholarship offers from the Republic of Azerbaijan and the University of Botswana. Both countries extended generous, fully funded opportunities to Basotho citizens across a spectrum of academic programs. These scholarships are designed to improve bilateral ties, human capital development, and knowledge exchange.

Yet, in both calls for applications, NMDS imposed its standard repayment clause: previous beneficiaries must submit proof of loan repayment to be considered. This effectively disqualifies a significant number of applicants those who may have completed their studies but remain unemployed or underemployed. These scholarships, meant to be lifelines, are rendered ineffective by a policy that equates opportunity with financial status. Worse still, it fails to differentiate between a government-funded bursary and a foreign-funded scholarship that places no burden on Lesotho's public finances.

Originally, the NMDS loan bursary scheme was introduced to widen access to higher education. The repayment model made sense on paper: study now, repay later when gainfully employed. But in practice, the model has turned into a trap. Instead of being a bridge to opportunity, it has become a gatekeeper. Why should a student who benefited from a modest NMDS bursary five years ago be barred from applying for an Azerbaijani or Chinese scholarship today simply because they haven't secured employment? Such rigidity doesn't just hinder access, it entrenches inequality. This is a broader issue of **access and justice**. It penalises those who are already marginalised and cements education as a privilege rather than a right supported by the laws in Lesotho.

The disconnection between Leso-

tho's foreign policy and its scholarship management reflects a deeper institutional problem. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is actively securing opportunities through diplomacy, while NMDS remains rigid and outdated in its implementation of scholarship policy.

Without synergy between these two ministries, even the most well-intentioned international partnerships will fail to deliver results. Minister Mpotjoane's directive to Heads of Missions is commendable, but it will not translate into real change until NMDS recalibrates its approach.

If Lesotho is to fully benefit from its international diplomacy efforts, especially in the education sector, the following reforms are necessary:

Policy Differentiation: NMDS MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN FOREIGN-FUNDED SCHOLARSHIPS AND LESOTHO-FUNDED BURSARIES. SCHOLARSHIPS FROM EXTERNAL PARTNERS SHOULD NOT BE CONTINGENT ON NMDS LOAN REPAYMENT.

Grace Periods and Flexibility: For applicants with outstanding NMDS debts, there should be deferment options or income-contingent repayment plans, especially for unemployed graduates.

Cross-Ministerial Collaboration: The Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Development Planning must work closely together to ensure that diplomatic wins are accessible to the public.

Transparency and Awareness: Eligibility requirements must be clear, fair, and well-publicised. Vague phrases like "application does not guarantee award" must be re-examined and clarified.

Data-Driven Policy Design: The government should invest in tracking scholarship beneficiaries, employment outcomes, and repayment rates to inform responsive and equitable policy.

People-Centred Design: Scholarship policies must reflect the socio-economic realities of Basotho and prioritise merit over financial status.

When I think of my cousin in Ha Khohlopo intelligent, hopeful, and ready to contribute, I see a generation of Basotho blocked not by a lack of opportunity, but by institutional design. We say we want to uplift our people, yet we maintain systems that exclude them. Minister Mpotjoane, your efforts in mobilising global opportunities for Basotho are truly commendable. But your vision cannot be realised if the policies at NMDS remain unchallenged. **Lesotho doesn't need just more scholarships—it needs access to those scholarships.** Access starts with reform. Until we reconcile domestic policy with foreign opportunities, the scholarships our diplomats secure will remain nothing more than distant promises to those who need them most. The future is NOW!



Government of Lesotho
Ministry of Natural Resources
Department of Rural Water Supply

Tender Notice

Introduction

Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) through its Department of Rural Water Supply (DRWS) received funds from Government of Lesotho to procure services for maintenance of gravity systems, hand pumps, and pumping systems in the ten districts of Lesotho. Therefore MNR hereby invites tenders from competent contractors interested in contracting their services with the DRWS.

Work Description

The title of the tender is: **DRWS, System Maintenance Programme, 2025-2026**
Tender No: DRWS/M/GOL/2025-2026.
This tender will require the contractor to maintain hand pumps, solar & electrical pumping and gravity system in the ten district 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 C & D and registered companies in Lesotho. Bid security of **M10, 000.00** in a form of bank guarantee valid for one hundred and twenty (120) days will be required.

Site visits/Pre-tender Meeting

A pre-tender meeting shall be held on the **11 June, 2025** at the DRWS Resources Centre, Khubetsoana at 10.00am.
There are no site visits planned for this tender. It is recommended that the bidders familiarize themselves with the districts and the sites to assess the work and the time frame involved.

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 **Friday 30 May 2025** until **23 June 2025**. **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 2nd July 2025.** Bid documents one (1) original, one soft copy, and sealed financial proposal must be deposited to the Ministry of Water Tender Box situated at the entrance of **DRWS Office Khubetsoana, Resource Centre, Next to Appropriate Technology Services (ATS)** on or before the closing date and time in sealed envelope clearly Marked **"Tender for DRWS, System Maintenance Programme, 2025-2026."**

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.

Tender Opening

Bids will be opened by the Ministry of Natural Resources Procurement Committee on the **2nd July 2025 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),**

Contacts

All questions and clarifications relating to this tender should be directed to The Procurement Unit, Ministry of Natural Resources, Bokamoso House, Orpen Road, Conner Maseru Avani, and Opposite Centre for Accounting Studies Maseru.



GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO
THE JUDICIARY

TENDER NOTICE

TENDER NUMBER 3 OF 2025/2026

Tenders are hereby invited from both local and international consultancy firms. Local firms must be registered with the Building Design Services of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, while international firms must be duly registered with the relevant authorities in their respective countries. Interested firms are requested to submit separate technical and financial proposals for the feasibility study of the proposed Southern Region Court Complex in Mohale's Hoek.

A consulting firm, consortium, or joint venture is invited to tender for the following services:

- Geotechnical Investigation
 - Land Survey (Cadastral and Topographical)
 - Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)
- A preference margin shall be granted in accordance with the Lesotho Procurement Act 2023.

NB: All potential Consultants are advised to note that consulting companies to Lesotho Government, are expected to be in compliance with their tax obligations.
Consultants must attach **valid copies of Tax Clearance and Trader's License** to their bids, certified at the Source.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference and related documents will be available for collection from Monday, 02nd June 2025, between 9:00 to 15:00hrs from **Procurement Unit High Court** at a non-refundable cost of M3 000.00 payable at the Accounts office, Ground floor High Court building.

MANDATORY SITE VISIT

The Mandatory site visit will be conducted on Wednesday, 11th June 2025. All Bidders are expected to assemble in **Mohale's Hoek**, outside the magistrate court premises at 11:30 a.m.

DATE AND TIME FOR SUBMISSIONS

The submission of **1 original and 4 additional copies** of each proposal **bids** in the sealed envelopes separately marked **Technical and Financial Proposals Bids** for the

Feasibility Study for the Proposed Southern Region Court Complex in Mohale's Hoek, and which shall be put in one sealed envelope must be deposited in the tender box which will be placed at 1st Floor of High Court building, outside procurement office by **Friday 27th June 2025** on or before **12:00hrs**. Tenders will be opened on the same day of submission at **12:15hrs** in the presence of bidders or their representatives who choose to attend.

Evaluation criteria

The points to be given under each of the evaluation criteria are as shown in the table below.
The minimum technical score required to have the financial proposal opened is **70%**.

The following evaluation criteria shall be observed.

SELECTION CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS	POINTS AWARDED	REMARKS
Nationality Status	5		
Key Staff	20		
Company Experience	20		
Methodology	30		
Bid Amount Competitiveness	5		
TOTAL	80		

Table1: Evaluation Criteria

The Government of Lesotho reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids.
For any Further inquiries, please contact:
E-mail: napomatsolo9@gmail.com or jamesakabk@gmail.com;



World Food Programme

Vacancy Announcement

Position Title	Link for External Candidates	Deadline
Consultant -Nutritionist TAFt	https://wd3.my-workdaysite.com/recruiting/wfp/job_openings/job/Maseru-Lesotho-The-Kingdom-Of/Consultant---Nutritionist--TAF_JR113071	10.06.2025

NB.: It's important to us to create an accessible, inclusive workplace for everyone, so please email global.inclusion@wfp.org if you are shortlisted and need any disability related adjustments for your interviews/test/technical assessment. Our reasonable accommodations team will then connect with you to confidentially discuss your options.



Kingdom of Lesotho
Ministry of Health

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FEASIBILITY STUDIES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, UPGRADING, AND RENOVATION OF FOUR (4) HEALTH FACILITIES IN RURAL LESOTHO.

RFP/QCBS/MOH/2025/26-06

First Date of Issue: 06-06-2025

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Health, on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho, invites qualified, experienced, and reputable consulting firms or consortia to submit technical and financial proposals for conducting feasibility studies for the following health facilities:

- Construction of a New Health Centre at Senqunyane, Berea District
- Construction of a New Health Centre at Ketane, Mohale's Hoek District
- Upgrading of an Existing Health Post to a Health Centre at Qabane, Mohale's Hoek District
- Upgrading of an Existing Health Post to a Filter Clinic at Qalabane, Mafeteng District

These feasibility studies are aimed at informing infrastructure investments that support Lesotho's national health development goals, improve access to primary health care, and contribute to the realization of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

5. Scope of Work

The assignment involves:

- Technical, environmental, and economic viability assessments;
- Health service demand analysis and infrastructure planning;
- Environmental and Social Impact Screening (ESIA);
- Development of site-specific investment plans and implementation frameworks.

6. Eligibility Criteria

This RFP is open to national and international consulting firms or joint ventures that meet the following criteria:

- At least 10 years of experience in conducting multidisciplinary feasibility studies in the health or social infrastructure sector;
- A proven record of delivering at least three (3) comparable assignments in similar rural or developing contexts;

- Demonstrated financial stability, qualified personnel, and the ability to work in remotely located and topographically challenging environments.
- Local participation is encouraged, and preference will be given to consortia that include Lesotho-based experts or firms.

7. Enquiries & Further Information

Clarifications may be requested in writing by email to the following addresses no later than **7th July, 2025: satbhssles@gmail.com cc:motsukunyanemolise@gmail.com.**

8. Selection Criteria

- Selection Method: Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) and only bidders whose technical proposal has scored 70% and above will be invited for Financial Proposal Opening.
- Proposal Format: Technical & Financial Proposals to be submitted in separate sealed envelopes. Technical Proposal 4 hard copies & 1 soft copy in Flash Disk (Word documents Converted to PDF).
- Proposal Document Fee: M3,000.00 (non-refundable), payable at 1st Floor Accounts Unit at Ministry of Health.
- Submission Deadline: **15th July 2025 at 11:00hour (Lesotho Time)**.
- Submission Venue: Ministry of Health Procurement Office, Maseru.

9. Proposal Submission

All proposals must be written in English and properly completed. Proposals must be hand delivered to the address below. Proposals submitted via email will not be considered.

**Attention: Procurement Manager
Ministry of Health, Corner Constitutional and Linare Road
Maseru, Lesotho**

The Ministry of Health reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals without obligation to award the contract.



Fees	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months
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Subscription	M 72.00	M 156.00	M 312.00
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Delivery	M 60.00
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Arts & Entertainment

Newsday

DJ Lym is done just playing the hits ... Now she's making her own

When Beyoncé sang, "I was here, I did, I've done everything that I wanted,

And it was more than I thought it would be, I will leave my mark so everyone will know, I was here...", she might as well have been channelling the spirit of Lesotho's own trailblazing DJ, **Limpho Mochone**, better known as **DJ Lym**. One of the very few female DJs in the country, she has already made her mark spinning unforgettable sets in clubs and festivals, filling dance floors and turning ordinary nights into memories. But now, she is turning up the volume on her dreams.

From the DJ booth to the studio, DJ Lym is gearing up to drop her very first original track, produced by the fire duo Supaa and JNR from South Africa. The song is set to drop on **June 28, 2025**, and it is more than just a new single; it is a bold step in her evolution from DJ to performer, and now to artist and creator.

In this exclusive interview, Newsday catches up with the *Madam President* of Vibes to talk TikTok, working with Supaa and JNR, the transition into production, and the message she wants to send to every young girl daring to dream in a world that wasn't built with them in mind.

Let's vibe!

Newsday: You have already got clubs buzzing and dance floors full. That is an achievement on its own. What made you get out of your comfort zone and say, "Okay, now it's time to drop my own songs"?

DJ Lym: it has been an incredible experience, I am truly blessed to have so much support. I feel the need to express my own artistic vision. I'm super excited to step out of my

comfort zone and start producing my own music and I believe having my own music will help grow my brand beyond just being a DJ. I have already made the shift from being just a DJ to a performer, I even have my own dancer now! So creating my own music felt like the natural next step. I want to share my unique sound and connect with people in a deeper, more personal way.

Newsday: These days, it feels like a song a l -

most has to have a TikTok challenge to blow up. Is that something you're thinking about with this release, or are you letting the music speak for itself?

DJ Lym: Most of the tracks I play are already trending on TikTok, so I absolutely see the value in it as a platform for music promotion. A TikTok challenge can definitely help a song go viral. That said, I also really believe in the music speaking for itself. My focus is on making quality songs that people can feel. If a challenge fits naturally, great, but at the end of the

day, I want my music to stand on its own.

Newsday: What has the transition from just being a DJ into music production felt like, especially in a scene that often favours male producers?

DJ Lym: It has been both challenging and empowering. Many women face difficulties related to gender stereotypes and industry bias, but we are increasingly breaking barriers, gaining recognition and inspiring others in the process.

Newsday: Supaa and JNR are on production! How did that collaboration come together, and what did they help bring out in the sound?

DJ Lym: Supaa actually reached out to me on TikTok! He'd seen my content and said he felt something special in my vibe and energy and wanted to collaborate. I loved the idea, especially since I was already thinking about creating my own music, even though I had little to no experience in production. Supaa and JNR have such a sharp ear for bold, catchy beats, and I think I added some finesse and depth to the sound. It was a perfect creative balance.

Newsday: When people hear this song for the first time, what's the reaction you are hoping for? Goosebumps? Dance moves? Big smiles?

DJ Lym: Honestly, I am hoping for all of that. I want people to feel something the moment the beat drops, it be that rush of energy that gets you moving or that instrument that hits you in the chest.

Newsday: Should we be expecting more original tracks or even a full DJ LYM album soon?

DJ Lym: Definitely

Newsday: Lastly, for all the young girls watching you rise in a male-heavy industry, what message do you hope they hear through your music and your moves?

DJ Lym: I want every young girl watching to know that they belong in any space they choose to step into. Being a female DJ in a male-dominated industry is not always easy, but through my journey and my music, I hope they will see and hear that it is possible, their voices matter, their talent is enough, and they do not have to change who they are to make an impact. Start, do it, stay true to yourself and let your passion lead the way



Ntate Stunna named brand ambassador for Thabeng Hotel



Ntate Stunna and Thabeng Hotel management signs

Chris Theko

One of Lesotho's most celebrated musical talents, Ntate Stunna, was officially unveiled as the brand ambassador for Thabeng Hotel during a glitzy, star-studded ceremony held at the hotel last Saturday evening.

The event drew a glittering mix of Lesotho's top entertainment personalities, media figures, influencers, and key business stakeholders, marking a major milestone for both the artist and the luxury hospitality brand.

For Ntate Stunna, born Thaabe Letsie, the ambassadorship affirms his evolution beyond music into a cultural icon and influencer.

For Thabeng Hotel, the partnership represents a bold strategic move to align its brand with the energy, creativity, and aspirations of

Lesotho's youth and entertainment scene.

Speaking at the event, Ntate Stunna, born Thaabe Letsie, expressed his excitement and deep appreciation for the opportunity to partner with a brand that, like himself, is Basotho for Basotho and is rooted in Lesotho's culture and committed to excellence.

"This is more than just a business partnership for me. It's about representing something bigger, the potential of Basotho talent and the pride we carry in our identity. Thabeng Hotel is a space that celebrates local excellence, and I am truly honoured to be part of this journey," Ntate Stunna said.

Known for his unique sound, blending Sesotho lyrics with modern production, Ntate Stunna has steadily risen to become one of Lesotho's most recognisable artists, with a fan base

that extends beyond national borders.

His music, fashion sense, and influence on youth culture have made him a symbol of modern-day Basotho creativity. Thabeng Hotel joins a growing list of brands partnering with the artist, including KFC Lesotho, Vodacom Lesotho, eBet Lesotho, and LNIG Hollard, signalling his broad appeal and commercial value.

Thabeng Hotel, located in the heart of Maseru, has built a strong reputation for its luxury accommodation, fine dining, and commitment to supporting local talent. Over the past year, it has increasingly positioned itself as a cultural hub, hosting events, music performances, and exhibitions that showcase the best of Lesotho's artistic landscape.

A spokesperson for the hotel described the appointment of Ntate Stunna as ambassador

as a "natural alignment."

"Ntate Stunna embodies the spirit of our brand, authentic, vibrant, and unapologetically Basotho. He is a role model to many young people and represents the kind of excellence and innovation we want to promote through our platform," the spokesperson said.

The evening's program featured live performances by the artist and the official signing of the agreement. The artist's fans were treated to an exclusive preview of upcoming campaigns, with promises of events, branded experiences, and curated packages bearing his signature influence.

Among the guests were some of Lesotho's top musicians, such as Selimo Thabane, Cityzeen LS, Mavele & Tash, and digital content creators such as Mosh, Junior Kots and Swenky, who praised the partnership as a win for the local entertainment sector.

"It's always exciting to see our own being celebrated at home and given the platforms they deserve," said one attendee. "Ntate Stunna has always represented us with pride, and it's fitting that he now works with a brand that also believes in investing in local talent."

Industry observers say the move is also a signal of the growing importance of celebrity brand partnerships in Lesotho, as companies look for innovative ways to market their services while resonating with younger audiences.

The ambassadorship is expected to run over the coming year, with collaborative content, events, and brand promotions already in the pipeline.

With this new partnership, Thabeng Hotel and Ntate Stunna are set to redefine how local brands and artists can work together to elevate Lesotho's image, not just within its borders, but across Southern Africa.

As the evening ended with music, laughter, and a renewed sense of pride, it was clear that this was not just a celebration of a partnership, it was the beginning of a new era of collaboration between corporate Lesotho and its creative pioneers.

Joachim Garments tops list of most admired brands in Lesotho

Chris Theko

Joachim Garments, a leading Basotho luxury streetwear label, has been named one of Lesotho's most admired local brands in the 2025 Brand Africa Rankings.

This prestigious recognition highlights not only the brand's meteoric rise in the fashion industry but also its growing influence on African cultural identity and entrepreneurship.

Joachim Garments walked away with several top honours in this year's rankings, including: Most Admired African Brand Contributing to a Better Africa - Lesotho, Most Admired Lesotho Brand, Most Admired African Brand (Spontaneous Recall), Most Admired African Brand (Aided Recall).

These accolades mark a remarkable achievement for a brand that began just six years ago in the modest confines of a rented room. Founded in 2019 by self-taught designer Katiso Tsoho, Joachim Garments has carved a niche for itself with bold, contemporary designs that reflect and celebrate Basotho heritage, resilience, and cultural pride.

"As a young kid chasing a dream from a small rented room in Katilehong, I remember spending weeks sewing day and night, with only short naps on the machine to keep me going," shared Tsoho in an emotional statement following the announcement.

"I never imagined that one day, a brand I



Joachim Garments

built with calloused hands and relentless hope would stand here... recognised as the Most Admired Brand in Lesotho and one of Africa's Most Admired Brands."

Tsoho emphasised that Joachim Garments remains a grassroots operation with a small team and limited resources. "We are a small team. A young brand. No fancy systems. No major capital. Just vision, grit, and a deep-rooted love for our people. Every stitch, every

thread, every pattern, crafted with intention. Built from scratch by Basotho."

Joachim Garments has become known not only for its innovative streetwear pieces but also for its commitment to community and youth empowerment. The brand often collaborates with local creatives, models, and photographers, creating a platform for emerging talent while keeping the brand firmly grounded in the Basotho community.

The Brand Africa Awards are based on extensive consumer surveys conducted across the continent, measuring brand recognition, trust, and admiration. In Lesotho, these rankings reflect the voice of the people, highlighting the brands that are not only popular but also perceived as contributing positively to society and national identity.

Brand Africa's founder and chairman, Thebe Ikalafeng, has long emphasised the importance of elevating African brands on the global stage. The rankings are part of a broader movement to promote self-reliance, creativity, and economic development through local enterprise.

Joachim Garments' recognition in multiple categories is a reflection of its authentic storytelling, cultural relevance, and unwavering focus on quality. It also signals a shift in consumer behaviour, where Basotho and Africans at large are increasingly embracing and celebrating their own brands.

As Lesotho continues to support the growth of creative industries, Joachim Garments stands as a beacon of what is possible when vision meets resilience. Its journey from a dream in a bedroom to a nationally and continentally admired brand serves as an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs across Africa.

With eyes now turning toward the future, Joachim Garments is not just setting trends, it's making history.

Likuena youngster bound for the US



Seabata Mahao

Paseka Maile, a rising star for the national football team, Likuena, and Kick4Life Academy, is set to further his career in the United States after earning a prestigious scholarship to study and play football at Lindsey Wilson College in Columbia, Kentucky.

The announcement was made earlier this week during a packed press conference held at Kick4Life headquarters. Maile

becomes the 17th student-athlete from the academy to secure an international scholarship.

A standout player in the country's second tier football platform, the A Division League and a regular in both the U-20 and senior national teams, Maile will begin a four-year Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Management this August.

He will also represent Lindsey Wilson

College in the NAIA soccer league, joining former Kick4Life teammates Seabata Tšemane and Thabo Mahlaha, who are currently studying at Freed-Hardeman University.

"I am very happy and thankful to Kick4Life for making this dream a reality," an emotional Maile said during the press conference, flanked by proud family members, Kick4Life officials, and representatives from the Ministry of Education and Train-

ing.

Maile's former accounting teacher at Itsekeng High School, Martin Nyai, highlighted his leadership qualities during his school days.

"Paseka always led by example. We are not surprised he has achieved this milestone. He has made us proud," Nyai said.

Ntaeboso Phenduka from the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL) commended Kick4Life's holistic development model and credited head coach Mukete Mboh for his mentorship.

"Coach Mboh deserves credit for nurturing Paseka's talent, both academically and athletically."

Paseka's father, Teboho Maile, reflected on the challenges they faced along the way.

"It was not easy. South African clubs showed interest, but their offers lacked educational opportunities. We insisted on school first. Now, he has the best of both worlds," he said.

Likuena's head coach Leslie Notši also praised the youngster's character and commitment. Maile received a national team call-up to the Likuena squad, currently involved in the 2025 COSAFA Cup tournament in South Africa.

"He is a model athlete. We're confident he will excel and represent Lesotho with pride," he said.

'Mamphaka Ralehlathe, Director of Kick4Life Social Enterprises, urged Maile to carry the names of Lesotho and Kick4Life with "pride and excellence," while Country Director 'Motlatsi Nkhahle advised him: "Respect football, respect education, be teachable and be coachable. These values will carry you far."

Four-club tourney for Nthane's 70th birthday

Seabata Mahao

In true celebratory style, the T.J. Nthane Foundation is marking the 70th birthday of its illustrious founder with a football spectacle set to thrill fans across Lesotho.

Backed by a M500, 000 sponsorship, the tournament brings together top-flight teams in a one-day knockout showdown guaranteed to stir excitement and sporting passion.

The much-anticipated tournament was officially launched on Monday at BMI Stadium in Berea, with the action culminating on June 15 at the iconic Bambatha Tšita Sports Arena in Maseru.

A total of four teams, each hailing from districts where the foundation's affiliated businesses operate, will vie for glory: Majantja FC (Mohale's Hoek), Linare FC (Leribe), Lioli FC and Maroala FC (both from Berea).

The knockout format features two fiery semi-finals: Match 1 pits Linare FC against Majantja FC, while Match 2 sees Lioli FC square off with Maroala FC. The winners will clash in the final later that day, promising a jam-packed football



feast for fans.

Of the M500, 000 sponsorship, M100, 000 is earmarked for event logistics, while the lion's share, M400, 000, will be split among the participating teams.

The stakes are high: M200, 000 awaits the tournament champions, M100, 000 goes to the runners-up, and the remaining

two teams will each walk away with M50, 000.

To spice things up even more, individual accolades will be awarded to standout performers, including Top Scorer; Best Goalkeeper; and Player of the Match for each game.

Speaking on behalf of Lioli FC, Club Pres-

ident Lebohang Thotanyana expressed appreciation for the tournament's timely support.

"We are very grateful for the consistent support from businesses under the T.J. Nthane Foundation. These matches are not only in celebration of the founder's 70th birthday but also a chance for us to express our gratitude."

He also hailed the tournament as a golden opportunity for pre-season preparation, especially as Lioli gears up for the CAF competitions in the 2024/25 season. Thotanyana confirmed that the tournament had received the green light from LEFA.

Meanwhile, Teboho Shelile, Chairperson of the T.J. Nthane Foundation, revealed that the tournament is not just about football, it is part of a broader celebration.

"We appeal to supporters to maintain proper behavior during the tournament. If all goes well, this could become an annual event."

He added that the event also commemorates 20 years of the founder's hospitality ventures, which include hotels in Mohale's Hoek, Berea, and Leribe.

The tournament is more than just a birthday bash, it is a powerful nod to the social and economic impact of sport. As communities rally behind their local teams, the T.J. Nthane Foundation continues to showcase how business, sport, and social upliftment can work hand-in-hand.



Likuena slay Malawi in COSAFA opener



Seabata Mahao

The national football team, *Likuena*, made a promising start to their 2025 COSAFA Cup campaign with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Malawi yesterday afternoon in Bloemfontein, South Africa.

LCS FC's prolific striker, Makara Ntaitsane continued his fine form by scoring the winning goal late in the second half. The in-form forward, who topped the 2024/25 Vodacom Premier League scoring charts with 19 goals, proved decisive once again for his country.

Likuena are in Group B alongside Angola, Namibia, and Malawi, all competitive sides, though none considered among the tournament's traditional powerhouses. This opening win gives Lesotho a valuable three points in a tightly contested group.

Combined with their impressive run to the 2023 COSAFA Cup final, where they narrowly lost to Zambia, this victory signals Lesotho's intent to build on recent progress.

The current squad reflects a renewed focus on youth development and future potential.

Head coach Lesley Notši selected a youthful squad dominated by local league players, marking a shift from previous reliance on veterans. His approach signals a long-term strategy centered on energy, hunger, and local talent.

In last year's tournament, Likuena were eliminated in the group stage after finishing third. Ahead of this year's competition, Notši acknowledged the challenge of limited preparation time following the conclusion of the domestic season.

However, he expressed confidence in the squad's abilities, especially given the players' performances for their clubs.

"Our goal is to end the trend of having the same players represent the country in all competitions, whether it is COSAFA, AFCON qualifiers, or World Cup qualifiers," Notši said.

He emphasised the team's ambition to advance to the knockout stages and praised the positive spirit and determination of the play-

ers, noting the presence of experienced individuals to guide the younger members.

Team captain Tšepo Toloane echoed the coach's sentiments, commending the assembled squad as talented and capable of delivering results. He noted that previous failures to qualify were often due to dropping crucial points, a trend they aim to reverse this year.

"Competing in international tournaments is vital as it gives players exposure and the opportunity to be scouted globally. Already, a few of our players have been recruited by international clubs," said Toloane.

He added that the current energy in the squad bodes well for the campaign, highlighting the leadership's role in aligning with LeFA's strategy to sustain the under-23 structure.

Toloane further pointed out the challenge of transitioning players from under-20 to senior level, a gap he believes is slowly being addressed through improved coaching and structures across both men's and women's

football.

"The talent is there, now it's about harnessing it," he said, adding that they are working to end the trend of clubs registering teams without qualified coaches involved in player development.

Likuena's next group fixture is against Angola on June 8, followed by their final group match against Namibia on June 10, 2025.

Likuena's squad:

Goalkeepers: Nthebe Majoro and Leluma Mofoka

Defenders: Mosoeu Seahlolo, Molengo Morao, Mhloni Makhetha, Thabo Makhele, Thabang Malane, Mphale Mphalaole, Thato Sefoli, Fusi Matlabe, and Leluma Posholi

Midfielders: Lehlohonolo Matsau, Mokoteli Mohapi, Teboho Letsema, Lehlohonolo Fothoane, Tumelo Makha, Tholang Makuru, Paseka Maile, and Limpho Ralesupi

Forwards: Tsepo Toloane, Kananelo Rapuleng, Khaketla Matamane, Teboho Masuoane, and Makara Ntaitsane



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The Road to Sustainable Industry

The ICEO Speaks

Q5: Does LNDC provide any financing support?

A: ICEO

Our 2024–2028 strategy focuses on promoting domestic investment with facilitation of foreign direct investment partnerships to create enterprises that generate jobs for Basotho. To help facilitate these partnerships and strong domestic private sector participation, the Corporation has introduced a range of financial instruments through its development finance unit, which focuses on expanding access to finance across a variety of sectors. One key initiative is our **partial credit guarantee scheme**, where we partner with commercial banks to offer a 75% guarantee on approved loans. This helps derisk projects and enables businesses with limited collateral to secure funding and grow. This has been a huge success as it has streamlined governance and empowered our board's investment committee to make faster loan approvals. We also have a **project preparation facility** to derisk select, strategic investments. We package projects by conducting feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments and business cases - making them investment-ready. This has attracted strong interest from international investors unfamiliar with Lesotho but looking for credible, well-prepared opportunities.

Moreover, we piloted a **supply chain financing** initiative last year to support local businesses, especially in high-value sectors like mining. Many domestic companies struggle to participate in supply chain opportunities due to limited access to finance. We bridge this gap by assessing their agreements with large buyers and providing funding based on the credibility of those clients.

We are already planning to launch a fourth instrument named **quasi-equity financing**, which is hybrid financing that blends debt and equity characteristics used by SMEs that may not qualify for loans. The facility allows businesses to access capital without taking on a full debt obligation.

Q6: What efforts are you doing to engage stakeholders?

A: ICEO

We actively engage stakeholders as part of our strategic objective to become a trusted advisor and partner, while building brand capacity. In 2024 and 2025, the Corporation implemented several stakeholder engagement initiatives aimed at promoting inclusive economic growth, strengthening partnerships, and enhancing visibility across various sectors.

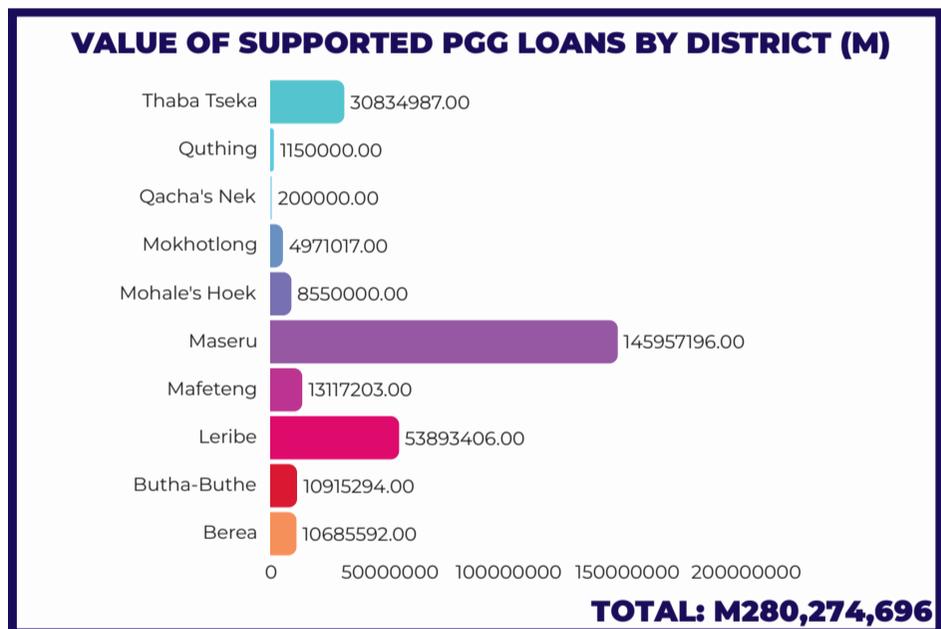
One of the flagship initiatives during this period was the development finance and investment and trade roadshows held across the nine districts of Lesotho. These roadshows promoted investment opportunities, development finance interventions, and to encourage broader participation from the local private sector. They also created a valuable platform for LNDC and its partners to engage directly with communities and entrepreneurs. Notable feedback from attendees included requests for LNDC to support agricultural infrastructure development, similar to its investment in factory shells for the manufacturing sector. Participants also expressed appreciation for the eye-opening and motivating sessions, which inspired them to explore investment opportunities and engage with LNDC and banks for financing.

The Corporation also continues to play a key role in the Lesotho Supplier Development Programme (LSDP), in collaboration with UNDP, Standard Lesotho Bank, FinMark Trust, and relevant government ministries. The initiative focuses on strengthening local supply capacity in key sub-sectors such as horticulture, poultry, piggery, and beekeeping. In 2024, the programme concluded Phase I and recognized two outstanding producers with grant support for GlobalG.A.P. certification to boost their access to export markets. Further reinforcing support for local enterprises, we partnered with the LMDA to host a Standards and Quality Infrastructure Dialogue, resulting in a roadmap to address gaps in Lesotho's quality infrastructure framework and improve market access and competitiveness.

LNDC also participated in high-level policy engagements such as the Lesotho Development Partners Coordination Forum, where it presented measures to address the impact of U.S. tariffs and the potential withdrawal of development aid on trade and employment.

To support a stable and conducive business environment, LNDC maintains collaborative relations with trade unions, which has contributed to a decline in industrial strikes by promoting open dialogue and industrial peace.

In conclusion, the Corporation recognizes the media (both local and international), as a key stakeholder, working closely with them to share economic stories and promote Lesotho's investment potential. This included a collaboration with a Japanese television station ahead of the Osaka Expo to showcase the country's offerings to a global audience. The Osaka Expo is currently ongoing, and we look forward to spearheading the Lesotho Business Forum and taking part in the Lesotho National Day activities, both scheduled for 1st July 2025.



Aggregated performance distribution of the scheme by district since its launch in 2011



Highlights from the domestic roadshows

The Road to Sustainable Industry

The ICEO Speaks

Q7. Let's turn our eye to the sectors you mentioned earlier. Tell us more on these.

A: ICEO

Manufacturing:

One of LNDC's goals is to achieve sustainable development through the promotion of responsible industry. LNDC has engaged with the Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production (WRAP) management team based in the United States and South Africa, to strengthen capacity of local firms to align with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and Gender Based Violence in Production (GBV) principles. This project is being implemented through the LNDC with technical assistance from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC). The project seeks to improve Lesotho's competitiveness by providing enterprise-level interventions from pre-production, production to post-production stages to ensure compliance with international labour and market access standards.

Agriculture and Agro-processing

In alignment with the national sustainable development agenda, piloted production of wheat on 230 hectares in Quthing under the #PeoMobung initiative. This initiative underscores our commitment to advancing commercialization of agriculture in Lesotho to drive meaningful societal impact and to strengthen local food production value chains. The project was officially launched on the 8th of November 2024, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security as we also celebrate World Food Day! a local milling company provided an offtake for the produce.

Renewable Energy

Sustainable infrastructure and technology are at the heart of sustainable industry. To this end, LNDC hosted an engagement with Astra Energy and stakeholders to obtain full understanding of the envisaged Astra Energy project and discuss the collaborative approach towards the implementation thereof. Astra Energy Inc. is a Canada based Company which identifies and develops clean energy and renewable energy projects in underserved markets around the world, focusing on end-to-end development. The Lesotho Project aims to develop, finance, and operate the Lesotho Clean Renewable Energy Park (LCREP), a 100-megawatt facility designed to address Lesotho's immediate power needs, and demonstrate the future potential for development of energy export. The Corporation has also mobilised suitable resources by strengthening its collaboration with the Development Bank of Southern Africa to co-finance preparation and funding of green infrastructure projects in Lesotho.

Innovation and Technology

LNDC is also focusing on business process outsourcing. With Lesotho's literacy rate standing at 86.2%, and 61% of the population below the age of 40, BPOs and call centres can benefit from investing in Lesotho. Lesotho has made significant progress in ICT infrastructure and digital connectivity. Broadband and fibre networks are expanding, with Vodacom and Econet Telecom boosting 4G and fibre optic coverage. "Notably, Lesotho became one of the first Southern African countries to introduce 5G through Vodacom. The government is prioritizing e-government services, including online tax payments and electronic business registration, which allows company registration within three days.

Q8. Has LNDC made any other notable societal impact through its initiatives?

A: ICEO

Indeed, the Corporation continues to make meaningful contributions toward inclusive economic development and social impact. A key achievement has been supporting local suppliers, with a total spend of approximately M107,162,828.99 from September 2022 to date. This investment not only strengthens local enterprise but also promotes job creation and economic resilience across communities.

Q9. Any last words?

A: ICEO

We are committed to maintaining this momentum and look forward to finalizing and implementing all strategic objectives in our current strategy, as we continue to build a more inclusive and investment-ready Lesotho.

