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Vol 07 No 23

M6.00

News

PAC calls for LEGCO disbandment

Page 3

News

Govt allocates M459 million to fight youth unemployment

Page 4

SEVERE CRISIS BREWING IN LESOTHO, WARNS CONTINENTAL BANK



... Poverty and unemployment projected to surge to alarming levels

Page 2

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Severe crisis brewing in Lesotho, warns continental bank

... Poverty and unemployment projected to surge to alarming levels



Ntsoaki Motaung

Lesotho is on the brink of a deepening economic and social crisis, the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) has warned, as new global trade shocks and dwindling aid collide with long-standing structural vulnerabilities.

In its Lesotho Country Focus Report 2025, the AfDB paints a grim picture of the country's economic outlook, warning that a combination of external and internal shocks could lead to spiralling unemployment, rising poverty, and social instability.

At the centre of the storm are newly imposed 30 percent United States tariffs on South African exports, which are likely to disrupt the region's trade ecosystem.

As a member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), Lesotho's economy is inextricably tied to South Africa's, and any turbulence across the border spells disaster at home.

As a member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), Lesotho's economic survival is tightly tethered to South Africa. A slowdown in South Africa's economy, now likely in the wake of the tariffs, poses direct and devastating risks for the Mountain Kingdom.

"While Lesotho's own tariff could potentially have a devastating impact on the economy, the broader and more significant impact stems from tariff developments in South Africa which affects all SACU members. The 30 percent tariffs imposed on South Africa could have indirect, yet substantial effects on Lesotho," the report read.

"Most notably, the tariffs could lead to a slowdown in South Africa's economy, reducing employment opportunities for Basotho migrant workers and leading to a decline in remittance flows, an essential source of household income in Lesotho," it added.

The report warned that the domino effect does not stop there.

Reduced trade volumes in the region are expected to shrink Southern African Customs Union (SACU) revenue transfers, which fi-

nance a significant portion of Lesotho's public spending.

With less money flowing into government coffers, vital social services, already stretched thin, could deteriorate further, the report warned.

"Long-term risks include deindustrialisation, a further rise in unemployment, and social instability. Poverty levels could rise, particularly in urban centres which are heavily reliant on factory employment," it read.

But amid the grim outlook, the report identifies a sliver of opportunity. With urgent investment and policy support, Lesotho could diversify away from U.S.-dependent industries.

"Navigating these overlapping shocks will require coordinated action to stabilise the economy, protect vulnerable populations and lay the groundwork for a more diversified economy," it read.

"The uncertainty around the AGOA expiration, combined with trade tariffs on its exports, necessitates the exploration of new markets, including AfCFTA, and the enhancement of manufacturing efficiency and value-addition in the country's textile niche," it added.

"Exploring bilateral agreements and upgrading logistics chains to reduce costs is equally essential," the AfDB advised, stressing the urgent need for targeted investments.

The bank said the government should "invest in sector competitiveness, particularly in quality assurance, skills development, and logistics efficiency," to keep apparel exports viable under increasingly unfavourable trade conditions.

It also recommended policies aimed at "supporting entrepreneurship and SME development in non-textile sectors" as a pathway to reduce the country's structural dependence on a single export industry.

The report highlights that Lesotho's economy has recently been rattled by several significant shocks, including "cuts in official development assistance (ODA), a 50 percent tariff on exports to the United States—temporarily

reduced to 10 percent for a 90-day period starting April 9, 2025—and the cancellation of the MCC second five-year compact, a USD 300 million grant."

These developments have compounded existing vulnerabilities such as high unemployment, and "underscore the urgent need for targeted policy responses to build resilience and support inclusive recovery," the Bank stated.

The report was particularly damning about the suspension of U.S. assistance programs. "The suspension of key U.S. assistance, particularly the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has severely disrupted the health sector," the report noted. This has led to "the loss of approximately 1,500 healthcare jobs and setbacks in HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and outreach."

The situation could worsen as "other donors have signaled potential funding cuts," creating further uncertainty in Lesotho's aid-dependent health and development sectors.

The AfDB said the cancellation of the MCC compact—which was set to improve Lesotho's rural economy through irrigated horticulture, strengthen primary healthcare, and support women- and youth-led enterprises—halts critical infrastructure and institutional reforms, and has "severely disrupted Lesotho's development prospects."

With limited fiscal space and no clear strategy to replace lost funding, the Bank warned that the situation "underscores the urgency for Lesotho to explore alternative financing mechanisms and partnerships with other development partners to avert a broader crisis."

The Bank also painted a grim picture of the effects of U.S. tariffs on Lesotho's textile exports. The 50 percent tariffs, imposed in the context of deteriorating trade relations, pose a major threat to the textile and apparel industry, which relies heavily on duty-free access to the U.S. under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), set to expire in

September 2025.

"Textile exports to the U.S. accounted for about 47 percent of Lesotho's textile exports and amounted to over USD 200 million," the Bank noted. It warned that the new tariffs could result in "a 20–30 percent decline in orders," slashing export earnings by up to USD 60 million.

Such a shock would be "likely to push Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth below one percent, especially if factory closures or re-trenchments accelerate."

The report cautioned that medium-term prospects depend on "the speed at which Lesotho can diversify its markets or improve supply chain efficiency."

"If diversification efforts stall, Lesotho may face further declines in investment, factory relocations, and job losses in its already fragile manufacturing base," the AfDB warned, adding that such a scenario would further erode the country's tax base and deepen fiscal stress.

Lesotho's export performance sees sharp drop in first quarter of 2025

Lesotho's merchandise exports showed a fluctuating trend in the first quarter of 2025, with a strong start in January followed by steep declines in the following two months, the latest foreign trade data from the Bureau of Statistics (BoS) shows.

Exports jumped by 17 percent from December 2024 to January 2025, reaching M1.16 billion, driven mainly by gains in miscellaneous manufactured articles, manufactured goods, and crude materials.

However, that early momentum quickly faded. In February, exports fell by 4.8 percent to M1.11 billion, and plunged further by 16.9 percent to M920 million in March.

The largest contributor to January's export earnings was the miscellaneous manufactured articles category, which includes textiles and clothing, rising from M407 million to a peak of M502 million in February before slipping to M475 million in March.

Similarly, manufactured goods classified chiefly by material (such as footwear and base metals) started strong at M343 million in January but plummeted by two-thirds to M115 million by March.

Crude materials, which includes items like wool and mohair, also saw a drastic drop from M154 million in January to just M46 million by March.

Food and live animals exports remained stagnant at M62 million in January and February but declined to M48 million in March. Beverages and tobacco was the only category that showed consistent growth throughout the quarter, climbing steadily from M124 million in January to M137 million in March.

The significant month-on-month declines toward the end of the quarter raise concerns about the sustainability of Lesotho's export-led growth, particularly in the face of global market volatility, regional supply chain disruptions, and potential currency fluctuations.

These declines, occurring before April 2025 when United States President Donald Trump imposed 50 percent tariffs on Lesotho's exports (suspended until July 31, 2025), signal deeper vulnerabilities.

The looming tariffs, even if temporarily suspended, could exacerbate these challenges, particularly for textiles and clothing, which rely heavily on U.S. markets.

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PAC calls for LEGCO disbandment

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has called for the dissolution of the Lesotho Electricity Generation Company (LEGCO), the entity responsible for operating and maintaining the Ramarothole Solar Plant in Mafeteng.

The solar plant was built to supplement Lesotho's energy supply and reduce the over M600 million spent annually on electricity imports. The country aims to achieve energy self-sufficiency and eventually export surplus energy to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) power pool.

However, the PAC has raised concerns that LEGCO lacks legal standing, having been established by a 2019 Cabinet decision without the necessary legislative framework. During hearings, the Committee grilled officials from the Ministry of Energy and LEGCO over its legitimacy.

Principal Secretary (PS) in the Ministry of Energy, Tankiso Phapano, admitted that LEGCO was set up as an emergency response to manage the solar plant. Pressed to dissolve it, he said legal gaps would be addressed through the Energy Bill currently before Parliament.

He stopped short of agreeing to shut the company down but promised corrective measures during its operation.

PAC Chairperson 'Machabane Lemphane-Letsie said the Committee would recommend tough government action to ensure compliance. PAC also expressed discomfort with LEGCO's monthly M1.2 million wage bill, funded by taxpayers, and questioned staff qualifications and hiring practices.

It emerged that employees were appoint-



PAC Chairperson 'Machabane Lemphane-Letsie

ed by the PS rather than a governing board, as required for non-government projects. The Committee criticised the hiring of a senior finance officer with only a BA in Business Entrepreneurship to manage a M1.5 billion investment.

PAC recommended that most staff be released until LEGCO is legally established, keeping only essential personnel.

"There is too much redundancy in LEGCO," said Lemphane-Letsie.

During a PAC site visit on Monday, reports emerged that some employees work only four to twelve days a month while earning full salaries, raising concerns of inefficiency and mismanagement.

for solar energy development.

The government is also reportedly finalising arrangements for the Ramarothole Phase II project, which is expected to add 50 megawatts to the national grid.

During a site inspection on Monday, staff from the Lesotho Electricity Generation Company (LEGCO) told the Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) that hydropower remains a more efficient and reliable option for the country.

"Solar energy has challenges, including weather dependence and the need to replace panels as they reach the end of their lifespan," the Committee was told.

The PAC hearings further revealed that the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) owes LEGCO approximately M70 million related to solar power generation. While the Ramarothole Solar Plant Phase I has already contributed 30 megawatts to the national grid, the Committee said it reserves the right not to settle the debt at this stage.

The controversy surrounding the solar projects has raised concerns that it could undermine His Majesty King Letsie III's global efforts to attract investment into Lesotho's clean energy sector.

The King's green diplomacy has already borne fruit. UK Export Finance (UKEF) has pledged £250 million (approximately M6 billion) to support renewable energy initiatives in Lesotho, a figure that could potentially double.

This commitment followed a visit earlier this year by Dirk van den Berg, UKEF's Head of Export Finance for Southern Africa, in the wake of the King's investment promotion mission to the United Kingdom in May 2024.

To further this agenda, Lesotho has partnered with Standard Chartered and the Standard Bank Group to establish the King's Just Energy Transition Fund. The fund is designed to attract private and international investment into renewable energy projects and support the country's ambition of achieving energy self-sufficiency.

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Govt allocates M459 million to fight youth unemployment

Palesa Moloinyane and Karabo Ramathe

The Government of Lesotho has earmarked M459 million from the 2025/26 national budget to support youth empowerment and job creation initiatives, Minister of Information, Communication, Science, Technology and Innovation, Nthathi Moorosi, announced this week.

This allocation represents two percent of the country's total government expenditure.

Moorosi said the decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting held on July 8, 2025, where ministers approved the reallocation of funds to finance targeted programmes aimed at equipping young Basotho with skills, creating employment opportunities, and fostering entrepreneurship.

The announcement follows the government's formal declaration of a national state of disaster over the country's soaring youth unemployment and widespread job losses.

The declaration was made official through a Government Gazette published on July 7, 2025, and signed by Acting Prime Minister Nthomeng Majara. The state of disaster, issued under the Disaster Management Act of 1997, will remain in effect until June 30, 2027.

Prime Minister Sam Matekane had already signalled this shift in government priorities during the National Youth Dialogue on June 18, where he declared youth unemployment a national emergency. This declaration came in response to sustained pressure from a coalition of youth organisations, which in April called on the government to treat the crisis as a disaster.

The disaster designation allows gov-



the Minister of Information, Communications, Science and Innovation Nthathi Moorosi

ernment to bypass standard procedures and roll out emergency interventions such as the M400 million earmarked to support youth-led enterprises, a waiver of business registration fees, and a new procurement policy reserving 40 percent of public contracts for youth, women, and people with disabilities.

When presenting the 2025/26 budget, Minister of Finance and Development Planning Dr. Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane said findings from the 2024 Labour Force Survey painted a grim picture,

calling for urgent intervention.

Of the 760,230 Basotho aged 15 to 35, approximately 145,087 are unemployed.

"Nearly 39 percent of our youth actively looking for work are unable to secure a job. This situation represents more than just numbers, it reflects postponed aspirations, unfulfilled potential, and uncertain futures," she said.

She noted the crisis is even more severe for young women. While the overall youth unemployment rate stands at 38.9 percent, young women face a higher rate

of 40.8 percent, compared to 37.1 percent for their male counterparts.

Although this is not the first youth-targeted financial intervention, previous allocations have delivered limited outcomes.

Matlanyane also acknowledged that lack of access to finance remains a chronic challenge for entrepreneurs and small businesses, particularly for women and youth. She cited stringent collateral requirements and risk-averse banking practices as key barriers to credit access.

To address this, she said the government planned to allocate M400 million toward the newly created Inclusive Growth Fund (IGF), a venture-capital-style financing vehicle designed to expand credit access, promote entrepreneurship, and drive inclusive growth.

"A defining feature of the IGF is its strong commitment to financing women- and youth-led enterprises, ensuring these historically marginalised groups gain meaningful access to capital," Matlanyane said.

The fund will also be accessible to other eligible businesses seeking to scale up operations, invest in productive assets, or enter new markets. By bridging financing gaps and enhancing liquidity, it is expected to stimulate business development, accelerate job creation, and foster a more inclusive financial ecosystem.

Matlanyane added that the IGF will partner with commercial banks to create a sustainable financial model that expands credit without placing undue pressure on public finances.

"The IGF represents a transformative policy shift aimed at building a more equitable and dynamic economy," she said. "It will begin operations this year, in partnership with all commercial banks, once operational modalities and agreements are finalised. It also lays the groundwork for a future development bank."

Judgment looms in Fraser Solar case

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

With judgment reserved in the high-stakes legal battle between the Government of Lesotho and German-based Fraser Solar GMBH (FSG), attention now shifts to Bloemfontein, where the Supreme Court of Appeal of South Africa is expected to deliver its ruling.

Attorney General Advocate Rapelang Motsieloa KC told this publication that the judgment is expected in the not-so-distant future, although a specific date has not yet been confirmed. The outcome will carry significant implications for both parties, possibly determining the financial future of the Lesotho government and the credibility of Fraser Solar's claims.

Fraser Solar, whose claims now exceed €58 million (approximately M1.2 billion), has been embroiled in a marathon legal dispute with Lesotho over an alleged energy equipment supply contract signed in 2018.

The deal was intended to provide 350,000 solar lanterns, 40,000 solar water heating units, and 1.5 million LED lights to Lesotho. It was reportedly signed by former Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Temeki Tšolo, during Motsoahae Thabane's adminis-



tration, with Dr. Moeketsi Majoro serving as Minister of Finance at the time.

However, the government later backtracked on the agreement, arguing it was unconstitutional and in violation of the Public Financial Management and Accountability Act of 2011 and the 2007 Procurement Regulations.

This triggered a protracted legal fight across multiple jurisdictions, including courts in South Africa, the United States,

Mauritius, and the United Kingdom, and led to attempts by Fraser Solar to attach Lesotho's assets abroad, including those of the Lesotho Electricity Company.

In 2023, the Gauteng Division of the High Court ruled in Lesotho's favour, a decision Fraser Solar appealed, now awaiting a final outcome in the appellate court.

Central to Lesotho's case is the assertion that the agreement was neither

approved by cabinet nor processed through constitutional procurement channels, rendering it "unconstitutional, unlawful, and invalid."

The Commercial Division of the High Court of Lesotho echoed that stance, noting: "What is clear is that Minister Tšolo's mind was dead set on concluding the agreement regardless of every conceivable legal impediment."

The court found that the supply and arbitration agreements were void from the outset.

Despite these rulings, Fraser Solar has relentlessly pursued enforcement of the arbitration award, which had previously been granted uncontested in South Africa.

Currently, the government of Lesotho is seeking to annul both the arbitration award under Article 34 of the Model Law (as provided in South Africa's International Arbitration Act of 2017) and the court order that recognised that award.

During his outgoing address on October 28, 2022, former Prime Minister Majoro warned incoming Prime Minister Sam Matekane about the costly burden of the Fraser Solar lawsuit. The case has already drained public funds to pay for high-profile legal representation in South Africa.

If the Supreme Court finds in favour of Fraser Solar, it could compel the government to pay a substantial amount from an already strained national budget, a potential fiscal blow with far-reaching consequences for Lesotho's development agenda.

Mofomobe raises alarm over Basotho's healthcare struggles in SA

Karabo Ramathe

Basotho National Party (BNP) leader Machesetsa Mofomobe has raised alarm over the reported denial of medical services to Basotho living and working in South Africa, calling it a failure of leadership by Lesotho's government.

Mofomobe said both documented and undocumented Basotho deserve access to healthcare in South Africa, citing the country's National Health Act of 2003, which he said guarantees primary healthcare to all persons within its borders, regardless of their legal status.

He commended the Southern African Human Rights Commission and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa for recognising that denying access to healthcare is a criminal act.

"The Prime Minister and the Minister of Home Affairs have failed Basotho living in South Africa," Mofomobe said. "These are the same people who send money home and keep our economy afloat, yet they are being ignored."

His remarks follow recent Newsday reports that several Basotho residing in South Africa are being turned away from public health facilities, even when they hold valid documentation.

A Mosotho woman in Vosloorus said she was denied care at a local clinic despite presenting a valid passport. Another woman in Soshanguve, Pretoria, said she was refused family planning services, even though her documents were in order.

The incidents reflect a growing wave of hostility toward foreign nationals in South Africa, driven by political parties and pressure groups such as ActionSA and Operation Dudula.

ActionSA, through its Parliamentary Chief Whip and National Spokesperson Lerato Ngobeni, has declared its intent to "end abuse



of public healthcare by illegal foreigners," claiming that health facilities are "overburdened, under-budgeted and lack the staff and resources" to serve all.

"We reject the continued abuse of our hospitals by people who are illegal in the country because they are criminals," Ngobeni said.

Operation Dudula has taken a more extreme stance, calling for both documented and undocumented foreigners to be barred from public facilities altogether. The group insists that foreign nationals should pay for private healthcare or leave the country if they cannot afford it.

"South Africa's resources are under pressure. It's only fair that non-citizens contribute their share by paying privately," the group said in a recent statement.

Healthcare centres reportedly affected by these actions include Rosettenville, Vosloorus, Addington, and Hillbrow.

In a controversial twist, a Lesotho government official appeared to side with the anti-foreigner sentiment.

Pulane Lesita, spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told this publication last week that South Africans are within their

rights to prioritise citizens at public healthcare facilities.

"They are not saying foreigners, including Basotho, should not access services," Lesita said. "They are saying foreigners must access services that are paid for and leave public services for South Africans."

She added: "Basotho in South Africa are not paying tax there. If this were happening in Lesotho, even our own citizens would not be happy with foreigners burdening the system."

Lesotho, a landlocked country entirely surrounded by South Africa, shares a long and porous border with its economically dominant neighbour. Over the years, generations of Basotho have crossed that border, legally and otherwise, in pursuit of better opportunities.

For many, South Africa is not just the nearest destination, but the only realistic option for employment, education, healthcare, and basic survival.

Historically, South Africa's mining industry absorbed large numbers of Basotho men, many of whom spent decades working underground and sending money home to support their families.

Even as the mining sector declined, Basotho

workers shifted to other industries, factories, construction, domestic work, farming, and the informal economy. Others cross daily or weekly to access better-resourced schools, clinics, and hospitals unavailable in their villages back home.

Remittances from these migrant workers are vital. They help families buy food, pay school fees, build houses, and fund small businesses. In some districts of Lesotho, remittances are the primary source of income for entire communities.

The South African economy is, in this way, deeply interwoven into Lesotho's social fabric and economic stability.

However, that lifeline is now under threat.

As South Africa grapples with high unemployment, service delivery failures, and political instability, frustration has increasingly been directed at foreign nationals.

Anti-immigrant rhetoric, fueled by political parties, vigilante groups, and parts of the media, has found fertile ground, often scapegoating migrants for the country's systemic problems. This has led to rising xenophobic violence and the introduction of exclusionary policies targeting non-citizens in housing, education, and healthcare.

Basotho living in South Africa, whether they hold proper documentation or not, now face mounting hostility. Many report being harassed, assaulted, or denied access to services.

Healthcare facilities, in particular, have become flashpoints. Despite South Africa's constitution and health laws affirming the right to access primary healthcare for all, some clinics and hospitals are increasingly turning non-South Africans away.

For Lesotho, this trend has far-reaching implications. Beyond the humanitarian concern for citizens abroad, reduced access to services, job loss, and declining remittances could destabilise the country's already fragile economy and social systems.

Lesotho shifts trade focus amid US tariff/AGOA uncertainties

Bereng Mpaki

Lesotho is gradually moving away from the United States (US) market towards regional African trade as uncertainty grows over American tariffs and trade agreements.

The shift comes as JEE Clothing, a Maputsoe-based workwear manufacturer, expands operations to employ 250 additional workers, bringing its workforce from 632 to over 850.

JEE's expansion was recently launched under the government's "Re Bula Lifeme" campaign, led by the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC). The campaign aims to revitalise Lesotho's economy by reopening and expanding factories, thereby creating jobs and reducing unemployment.

Since the campaign launched in 2024, several factories, in particular those exporting within the African continent, have expanded their operations and increased their workforce, while some have resumed operations after previously running into significant market challenges.

Mokhethi Shelile, the Minister of Trade, Industry and Business Development, said that given the growing challenges faced by Lesotho-based manufacturers in exporting to the United States (US), the government has resolved to shift its focus to alternative markets, particularly within the African region.

Speaking on the sidelines of the recent official launch of JEE's expansion, Shelile em-

phasised the importance of reducing exports to the US amid the uncertainty surrounding future US-Lesotho trade relations despite the ongoing discussions around reciprocal tariffs.

His comments come in the wake of US President Donald Trump's executive order earlier this year, which imposed a new 50 percent import tariff on goods from Lesotho. The implementation of the tariffs has been deferred to August 2025.

As a result of this unfavourable trade development, some manufacturers operating in Lesotho have responded by downsizing their operations while exploring alternative regions for investment.

Among such manufacturers is Maseru E-Textile, which in June this year laid off about 1000 workers due to diminished orders from its US buyers, as the uncertainty about the tariffs ominously hangs over Lesotho's textile and clothing industry.

Compounding the situation, Lesotho is also facing uncertainty regarding the renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), a key US trade concession that expires in September 2025. Lesotho's textile sector has long relied on AGOA, with the US historically being the largest export market for its garments.

In April this year, Shelile warned that the failure to renew AGOA would have disastrous consequences, as there are currently 11 manufacturers in Lesotho directly servicing the US market and employing over 12,000 Basotho

workers.

According to the Bureau of Statistics' (BoS) foreign trade report for the first quarter of 2025, 62.6 percent of Lesotho's exports were destined for South Africa, while only 19.8 percent went to the US.

"It is becoming difficult to trade with the US at the moment," Shelile said in Maputsoe last Friday.

"We as the government have done our part in engaging the US on tariff negotiations, and we are still awaiting their positive response," he added, noting that the regional market is more appealing due to its proximity to Lesotho and the resulting lower logistical costs.

"We must therefore decrease the rate of exporting to the US and export more to the regional market, like the factory we are launching today."

He believes that with the government's new plan to diversify markets away from the US, Lesotho can revive its struggling textile sector and create more jobs, as it once did in the past.

"We will get back up from where Mr Trump has thrown us. We will not perish without him," Shelile insisted.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, Lesotho's textile sector has endured devastating job losses, with close to 30,000 positions lost in recent years.

Echoing Shelile's sentiments, LNDC interim CEO Molise Ramaili said that the current market challenges have pushed Lesotho to explore

alternative destinations, with South Africa's 60 million-strong population offering strong market potential.

Ramaili also pointed to opportunities across the African continent, which Lesotho hopes to tap into through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement. He added that they would soon open another Maputsoe-based factory to generate about 600 new jobs.

Veteran trade unionist Bahlakoana Lebakae has urged the government to intensify efforts to attract foreign investors into the country. He believes that developing a national strategy to industrialise Lesotho requires the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders with diverse expertise.

He expressed concern over the government's public celebration of job creation numbers that pale in comparison to the scale of losses already sustained in the sector.

"It is concerning to see the Minister appear on national television announcing 250 jobs when tens of thousands have already been lost in the textile sector."

"The government must develop a holistic approach that brings together different stakeholders to chart the way forward in finding new markets for Lesotho. We need to involve academia, economists, and trade unionists alike. If we can put the interests of the masses ahead of our own, meaningful progress can be achieved," Lebakae said.



LTDC broadens standardisation in tourism sector

Karabo Ramathe

The Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) has officially launched the second phase of its Quality Assurance Programme, significantly expanding efforts to raise standards and improve service delivery across the tourism sector.

The launch took place on Wednesday at the LTDC head office, marking a pivotal moment for the country's tourism industry.

This latest development represents a major milestone as the programme now extends beyond the "Star Grading" system introduced in 2016 to include previously overlooked sub-sectors such as tour operators, guides, hikers, and event organisers.

The expansion demonstrates LTDC's commitment to comprehensive sector transformation.

Speaking at the launch event, LTDC's acting CEO Mamello Morojele described the initiative as heralding a new era for tourism in Lesotho.

She explained that the programme aims to establish clear standards for tourism businesses, build trust with visitors and investors, and promote a culture of continuous improvement and professionalism throughout the industry.

"This is a significant occasion for the Lesotho tourism sector at large, as it marks an important milestone in our journey towards improving standards, promoting quality assurance, and enhancing the competitiveness of Lesotho as a tourism destination," Morojele said.

"Today, we are not just launching a programme; we are ushering in a new era of accountability, professionalism, and excellence."

Morojele emphasised that the programme



is designed to empower rather than burden operators by providing structured guidance to improve service quality and promote accredited businesses at both national and international levels.

She assured stakeholders that LTDC will provide comprehensive training, workshops, and support tools to help operators meet the new standards while monitoring compliance transparently and fairly.

Representing the Lesotho Council of Tourism, Lisebo Mosetsi stressed that accreditation transcends simple certification or formality, serving instead as a strategic instrument that enhances the credibility, competitiveness, and sustainability of Lesotho's tourism offering.

Under LTDC oversight, the accreditation process formally recognises tourism operators who meet established national and international standards for quality, safety, and service delivery.

"Accreditation is much more than a badge an operator wears, it is a declaration of our collective resolve to raise standards, protect tourists, and build a more inclusive tourism economy," Mosetsi emphasised.

The Council highlighted the need to expand training and mentorship programmes, strengthen dialogue between public and private actors, and build on regional synergies to promote Lesotho as a high-quality, reliable destination in Southern Africa.

"Together with LTDC, the Ministry, and the private sector, we are building a modern tourism sector that Lesotho can be proud of," said Mosetsi.

"Accreditation is not just a technical exercise; it is a powerful expression of our national ambition."

The event featured remarks from 'Mabolaona Selinyane, Director in the Department of Tourism, who echoed the urgent need for

sector transformation. She acknowledged that while Lesotho's natural beauty and cultural richness have always attracted visitors, inconsistent service and informal practices have historically constrained the sector's growth potential.

"For years, our tourism potential has been held back, not by lack of beauty or culture, but by inconsistent service standards, informal practices, and uncoordinated development. This ends today," Selinyane declared.

"The accreditation and grading programmes are our commitment to excellence as a country. It is our promise to tourists, locally, regionally, and internationally, that wherever they travel in the Kingdom in the Sky, they will receive services that meet internationally recognised standards."

Selinyane highlighted that the programme extends beyond business development to empower communities by ensuring tourism operators across the country receive equal recognition and are equipped to compete effectively in the industry.

She applauded LTDC, the Ministry of Sports, Tourism, Arts and Culture, and all stakeholders who contributed to bringing the programme to fruition.

LTDC announced that the training programme welcomes all participants, particularly encouraging youth involvement. The comprehensive training will span a maximum of six months, with participants receiving recognition badges upon completion.

Both leaders called on all players in the tourism value chain, from government and private sector to communities and media, to rally behind the initiative.

They expressed confidence that the programme would position Lesotho as a trusted, high-quality destination known not only for its breath-taking landscapes and heritage but also for service excellence.

Econet's CSR delivers shelter, hope in Botha-Bothe



HigherLife Foundation, handed over a newly built two-roomed house to the family of 'Masefako Maleoa. (Picture Courtesy ETL)

Seabata Mahao

Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL), through its social impact arm HigherLife Foundation, this week handed over a newly built two-roomed house to the family of 'Masefako Maleoa in the rural village of Matsatsaneng, Botha-Bothe district.

'Masefako, a widowed mother of eight, had endured harsh living conditions for years in a crumbling structure that posed a daily threat

to her family's safety. Two of her children live with psychological conditions, further compounding the family's struggle to find stability.

That struggle took a remarkable turn as ETL's initiative transformed not only their living conditions but also restored dignity and hope to their lives.

The new house, valued at nearly M250,000, features two spacious rooms, electricity access, basic furnishings, and essential household items, all designed to give the family a

new lease on life.

Speaking on behalf of the ETL CEO, Chief Finance Officer Teboho Tjaoane highlighted the importance of corporate social responsibility.

"This new home is not just a building but a symbol of our deep-rooted commitment to changing lives. We believe that access to a safe and dignified living environment is a basic human right," he said.

"This handover represents a significant milestone in our journey to make a lasting difference in the lives of Basotho families."

Tjaoane emphasised that the selection process for the beneficiary household was carefully considered, ensuring assistance reached those most in need. He also stressed the company's continued commitment to uplifting vulnerable communities through meaningful and sustainable interventions.

"We are rejoicing with our student today so that she can focus more on her studies without any worries including her wellbeing," he added, referring to one of 'Masefako's children who is currently pursuing education.

The project forms part of ETL's flagship corporate social responsibility programme, which extends beyond digital access to provide prac-

tical support for communities facing hardship.

An emotional 'Masefako Maleoa delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks during the handover ceremony.

"I never imagined that a company like Econet could step into my life and bring about such a big change. May God bless Econet and everyone who made this possible. You have restored hope to me and my children."

She added, "Life has not been easy, but today we finally saw God's miracle. We are very grateful to HigherLife Foundation for being a loyal companion in this long journey."

The initiative drew praise from government officials. Minister of Gender, Youth and Social Development Pitso Lesaoana commended ETL for leading by example in corporate social responsibility.

"The government can succeed if entrepreneurs or the business community give back to the community," he said. "It is every company's responsibility to engage in CSR efforts. We need more partnerships like this for the betterment of Basotho lives."

This marks the fifth home built by the HigherLife Foundation. Previous beneficiaries include the Lelapa family in Mokhotlong (2024) and the Moorosi family in Qacha's Nek (2023), reinforcing the Foundation's enduring commitment to social upliftment.



Newsday Health

Ntsoaki Motaung

At just 18 years old, Pulane Mothebesoane from Thlanyaku in Mokhotlong speaks with a maturity shaped by hard lessons.

Her life changed dramatically at 16 when she fell pregnant and had to leave school, a reality many young Basotho girls know too well.

But Mothebesoane's story is not just one of hardship. It is a story of resilience, learning, and the power of timely support, especially from initiatives by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

"Having sexual relationships at an adolescent age is not a good choice because, in most cases, the consequences affect one's future negatively," Pulane said.

She reflected on the dangers of transactional relationships with older men, where negotiating condom use is nearly impossible.

"We should not be driven by money," she added. "Most of these relationships are not with our peers but with older men, and we often can't ask them to use protection."

Mothebesoane also spoke about the social pressure and stigma that come with early motherhood. "I have learned that having a baby young does not mean I should get married. What I need is to go back to school and secure my future."

This clarity, she said, came only after overcoming anger, guilt, and shame.

Now a young mother working occasional jobs to support her child, Mothebesoane said, "If I had the knowledge I have now, I would have made different choices."

Despite strong support from her parents, she faced judgment from her community. People called her "talkative" and said they "never expected her to fall pregnant."

Though she lived near a health center, shame kept her from seeking help until six months into her pregnancy. Thankfully, when she did, she received the care she

The silent epidemic of child pregnancy



UNFPA celebrates World Population Day in Mokhotlong

needed.

Sadly, Mothebesoane's experience is common. "Many girls in Thlanyaku go through this," she said. "Poverty and the lack of value placed on education push us to drop out, fall pregnant, get married early, or move to South Africa for work—often returning with children we can't afford to raise."

This reality is what UNFPA is working to change. During World Population Day commemorations in Mokhotlong, held under the theme "Empowering young people to create families they want in a fair and hopeful

world," UNFPA trained 30 youth from different backgrounds, both in and out of school.

"For someone to be empowered, they need to have knowledge," said Maseretse Ratia, UNFPA's National Programme Analyst for Behaviour Change Communication. "They must be educated on sexual and reproductive health and how to make informed decisions."

The training included comprehensive sexuality education, covering pregnancy prevention, emergency contraception, family planning, and how to identify and report

gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual abuse.

Ratia also addressed the heartbreaking reality of young people who become parents through no choice of their own.

"Some children are sexually assaulted and end up pregnant or married. They didn't choose this path," she said. "UNFPA wants to ensure that all youth know their rights and have access to health services, including free family planning."

UNFPA's State of World Population 2025 report highlighted both progress and ongoing challenges in Lesotho's reproductive health sector.

While 89 percent of births are now attended by skilled professionals, the country's maternal mortality rate remains high at 478 deaths per 100,000 live births. HIV remains a major concern, with 3.00 new infections per 1,000 uninfected people recorded in 2023.

Contraceptive use stands at 67 percent for modern methods and 50 percent overall, but unmet need for family planning remains at 13 percent among married or in-union women.

The report also revealed that Lesotho's adolescent birth rate is 53 births per 1,000 girls aged 15–19.

Encouragingly, child marriage has declined significantly, from 24.2 percent in 1999 to 13.4 percent in 2024. Still, intimate partner violence remains a concern, with 16.5 percent of women aged 15–49 having experienced abuse as of the 2018 survey.

New booklet highlights early motherhood, child marriage crisis

Ntsoaki Motaung

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Lesotho has officially launched Turning Points: Stories of Young Lives Interrupted by Early Parenthood and Marriage, a powerful publication that brings to light the lived experiences of eight girls, all aged 15 and under, from the remote districts of Thaba-Tseka and Qacha's Nek.

Through their voices, Turning Points exposes the harsh realities of early motherhood, child marriage, and gender-based violence (GBV), painting a sobering picture of the challenges that continue to undermine the futures of young girls in rural Lesotho.

These personal accounts reflect how deeply intertwined these issues are with poverty, inequality, and harmful social norms.

Innocent Modisaotsile, UNFPA Representative to Lesotho, emphasised that "Turning Points" is not merely a collection of stories but a demand to confront the root causes of early parenthood, child marriage, and GBV with determination and urgency.

The publication highlights how deeply rooted social norms, limited access to education, and inadequate healthcare services perpetuate these cycles.



UNFPA Lesotho Launches Turning Points Booklet Amplifying Voices of Adolescent Mothers and Child Brides

It also underscores the pervasive role of violence, whether through forced marriage, intimate partner abuse, or structural neglect, in perpetuating these hardships.

Modisaotsile indicated that the organisation works in partnership with the government, civil society, and communities to ensure that adolescent girls have access to education, healthcare, and the necessary support to break free from cycles of violence

and disadvantage.

"The booklet advocates for comprehensive sexuality education and improved access to family planning services, which are crucial for empowering adolescent girls to protect themselves from early pregnancy and GBV," he said.

He further stated that by sharing these courageous personal stories, such as those of Puleng, 'Mathabo, and 'Mampho, who

faced immense challenges including rape, financial crises leading to early marriage, and societal pressures, UNFPA aims to foster understanding, spark dialogue, and inspire coordinated action.

Teenage pregnancy rates remain high, with Thaba-Tseka at 22 percent and Qacha's Nek at 17.3 percent, both above the national average of 17 percent.

This is exacerbated by a significant unmet need for family planning, particularly among adolescents, standing at 21.2 percent nationally. These alarming statistics underscore the critical challenges faced by adolescent girls in Lesotho.

The booklet also highlights the devastating impact of these issues on girls' health, with Lesotho's maternal mortality rate at 530 per 100,000 live births and an adolescent birth rate of 94 per 1,000 for girls aged 15–19.

Furthermore, child marriage affects an estimated 19 percent of girls in Lesotho, often leading to increased vulnerability to violence, with 36 percent of women having experienced violence from their intimate partners.

These figures paint a clear picture of the urgent need for interventions to protect and empower young girls.



Lesotho or Basutoland? Understanding our history and sovereignty

Theko Tlebere

The recent arrest of Tšepo Lipholo, an MP from the Basotho Covenant Movement (BCM), has reignited a significant debate surrounding identity, land, and loyalty in Lesotho. Lipholo, who boldly refers to himself as the “King of Basutoland,” is currently facing serious charges of sedition and disrespecting the monarch. His supporters contend that he is merely advocating for the return of land that historically belonged to the Basotho nation, land that now lies within the boundaries of present-day South Africa. As the country grapples with these contentious claims, we must ask ourselves: how do we distinguish between Basutoland and Lesotho? Furthermore, who truly holds the right to that historical name, which carries so much weight and significance?

To comprehend this complex matter fully, we must revisit Africa’s colonial past. Almost every modern African state experienced a change of name at the point of independence. The Gold Coast became Ghana; Southern Rhodesia transformed into Zimbabwe; Upper Volta was renamed Burkina Faso;

Nyasaland evolved into Malawi; Bechuanaland transitioned into Botswana. And what about Lesotho? It was once known as Basutoland. These names, including Basutoland, were colonial impositions, reflecting the interests and designs of imperial powers rather than representing the true aspirations of the African people.

When Lesotho gained its independence in 1966, it triumphantly shed its colonial name and embraced its authentic identity: Lesotho, the land of Basotho. Thus, Basutoland is not a separate entity from Lesotho; rather, it is the colonial designation of the very land we inhabit today. To suggest otherwise is to fundamentally misunderstand both our historical narrative and the sovereignty that Lesotho earned through blood, diplomacy, and unwavering determination.

Lipholo’s declaration of a “Basutoland” state, complete with new flags, anthems, and a self-proclaimed kingship, is not merely symbolic; it represents a direct challenge to the constitutional order of Lesotho. According to the Penal Code, it is a crime to provoke unrest or show disrespect towards the King, and this

law is in place to safeguard the nation’s stability.

While it is one thing to raise legitimate questions about land dispossession, a genuine concern shared by many Basotho citizens, it is an entirely different matter to bypass established national institutions, declare a parallel government, and proclaim oneself ruler of a territory that legally and politically belongs to Lesotho. Only the Kingdom of Lesotho, under the leadership of His Majesty the King and the duly elected government, possesses the authority to pursue historical land claims. Any attempt by an individual or political movement to usurp that mandate not only constitutes a violation of the law but also poses a significant threat to national unity.

Let us not forget that Lesotho is not alone in facing historical territorial losses. Kenya lost land to Uganda. Cameroon and Nigeria have fought over the Bakassi Peninsula. Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Namibia have all encountered border issues rooted in colonial-era treaties. In all these cases, claims were and are made through state channels, not by individuals claiming sovereign authority. It is not treason to remember history; it is treason to rewrite

it in a way that undermines the very nation that history gave birth to.

While Lesotho is no longer a colony, we must recognise that Basutoland was the name of Lesotho before independence in 1966. When we became a sovereign nation, we inherited not only the territory but also the historical grievances of Basutoland. Therefore, the rightful heirs to that legacy are the people of the Kingdom of Lesotho, not any individual or political group.

That inheritance belongs to a constitutional monarchy led by His Majesty the King, safeguarded by the law, and represented through democratic institutions. If land is to be reclaimed or history corrected, it must be done by the state, not through parallel governments or self-appointed titles. To speak of Basutoland while rejecting the authority of Lesotho is not patriotism; it is political confusion.

Patriotism is not measured in catchy slogans or defiant declarations; it lies in respecting the Constitution, honouring the King, and strengthening the nation. Let us remember: Basutoland is not gone; it lives on in Lesotho. But only united, legally grounded, and with our King at the helm, can we truly honour its legacy. The future is now!

Sanism and the denial of voice to people with marginalised mental health conditions

Rethabile Mathealira-Molapo

In societies across the world, of the various mental health conditions people experience, depression and anxiety, being the more common and more relatable conditions for the general population, somewhat dominate the mainstream mental health conversation. These two conditions are somewhat deemed more acceptable and are somewhat cloaked with some measure of respectability, provided that those affected by them remain cognitively functional and anchored in a shared sense of reality with society. Those with other conditions, such as those whose experiences feature some measure of psychosis, which involves them perceiving realities that those around them do not necessarily share, remain among the most silenced, misunderstood, and marginalised individuals.

Although modern psychiatric care has made significant strides in diagnosis and treatment, less so in prevention and rehabilitation, the foundational power dynamics within mental health institutions and broader society remain largely unchanged, more so with mental health institutions. These dynamics often deny those diagnosed with mental health conditions a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their lives.

Worse still, they are often treated as lesser beings, incapable of coherent thought or emotional perception, and are systematically denied recognition of their personhood. This denial is deeply rooted in a pervasive and largely unchallenged social prejudice against people who have been diagnosed with mental health conditions, especially those with marginalised mental health conditions, known as sanism.

It is deeply embedded in legal, medical, and cultural institutions. Like gender discrimination or other forms of discrimination, it functions to dehumanise, delegitimise, and exclude people based on their mental health status. It legitimises discrimination and exclusion, justifying the denial of rights and reinforcing the belief that people with mental health conditions are less rational, less trustworthy, and qualitatively less human.

Sanism manifests in many forms: in the legal system where people with mental health conditions can be institutionalised involuntarily; in the workplace where their capabilities are underestimated or their diagnoses weaponised against them; in the media where mental unwellness is routinely equated with violence and danger; and in everyday interpersonal interactions, where disclosure often leads to pity at best, or discomfort and unease at worst.

One of the most consistent experiences reported by people with mental health conditions is the denial

of agency. In psychiatric settings, this often manifests as forced admissions which often take place through prioritising family and even non-family members’ preferences for admission over an established need to limit the admitted person’s right to liberty, without due process of legal procedures outlined in mental health laws for minimum safeguards, or once patients are admitted, a refusal to take their concerns seriously, or to involve them in their own treatment planning, or once discharged to get their feedback on services rendered and inputs on future treatment and other possible helpful interventions, or even to get their insights on the source of their unwellness.

Reported narratives of abuse and suffering are often dismissed. Psychiatric patients frequently report that when they complain of mistreatment, whether it be over-medication, medical restraints such as sedative injections and physical restraints like forced seclusion, which is a form of solitary confinement, even as they express their anxiety and protest, their pleas tend to be ignored.

When they experience verbal abuse or even sexual assault, they are dismissed outright. Their complaints are frequently either not believed or minimised, and in many cases interpreted as symptoms of their mental health condition. Their words are treated as hallucinations or delusions, rather than credible accounts of real events.

This silencing has life-threatening consequences as deaths have in some cases arisen. When a person with mental illness reports abuse and is not believed, perpetrators are emboldened to continue without fear of consequence. The psychiatric system, intended to be a place of healing, becomes a site of trauma and re-traumatisation. People are left not only to endure abuse but to do so in a system that denies the validity of their pain and the truth of their experience.

Commonly infantilised, it is not surprising that people with mental health conditions, have experiences which mirror those of children who are violated by adults under the assumption that they cannot truly comprehend what is happening to them. Just as when a society of adults which grows up to recount experiences of childhood trauma reaches adulthood often assumes children are too young to remember or process trauma, people with mental health conditions are assumed to lack the cognitive and emotional capacity to register abuse or even recognise injustice.

In both cases, this assumption is false and sanist and makes them prime targets for violence, neglect, and control.

Looking at psychiatric spaces: The design of

many psychiatric facilities reinforces this dynamic. Locked wards, institutional clothing, forced medication, and restrictions on movement all create an environment that diminishes personhood. Patients are often stripped not just of their rights, but of their identities, reduced to diagnoses, symptoms, and behaviours. And their personhood erased by the psychiatric lens.

This dehumanisation extends to the way psychiatric treatment is delivered. Various measures, restraints, and forced drugging, often without informed consent, are routine practices. These interventions are justified by a paternalistic logic that views them as incapable of making decisions in their own best interests, and therefore as needing control rather than care.

The concept of “lack of insight,” a clinical term frequently used to describe individuals who reject their psychiatric diagnosis or treatment, is another tool that reinforces the hierarchy of the sane versus the insane. Rather than being seen as a legitimate difference of opinion or a reflection of a person’s lived experience, such rejection is interpreted as further evidence of illness, creating a circular logic in which disagreement is itself pathology. In this system, to speak against one’s treatment is to prove one’s unfitness to speak at all.

Discrimination and sanism also manifest differently in different groups or categories of patients. Locally, criminally charged persons in psychiatric care receive better treatment than those who are committed for ordinary mental health care purposes, receiving charitable visitors and enjoying recreational activities, as they are perceived as being less mentally ill, while those under civil admissions often spend their days idling like prisoners in the fenced off backyard, aimlessly counting down days until their discharge.

Patients with depression and/or with suicidal ideation, especially those with favourable socioeconomic circumstances, tend to receive special care and enjoy private rooms, which those with psychosis are not deemed worthy of, even when it has been directed by the medical practitioner in charge. Women are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, while geriatric patients tend to receive much gentler care and experience no isolation for disruptive behaviour. These experiences are not isolated incidents or the result of a few bad practitioners; they are systemic and rooted in sanism and its interaction with other factors of privilege and oppression.

One of the most insidious effects of sanism is internalised oppression or internalised sanism. Many individuals who have experienced psychiatric label-

ling come to believe the negative stereotypes about themselves: that they are broken, incapable, or unworthy of love and belonging, that the abuse levelled against them for various reasons related and unrelated to their condition is justified. This internalised sanism can deepen despair and make healing even more difficult, especially when combined with the trauma of institutional and domestic abuse.

To challenge sanism is to insist on the full humanity of people with mental health conditions. It is to recognise that they, like everyone else, possess a deep inner world, capable of insight, reflection, and growth. It is to affirm that they are not simply the sum of their symptoms or the labels imposed upon them.

This recognition demands systemic change. Mental health systems must shift from paternalistic models to rights-based, trauma-informed approaches that prioritise consent, dignity, and collaboration. Peer-led advocacy and survivor movements must be centered, as they offer a powerful counter-narrative to mainstream psychiatry, one rooted in lived experience, mutual support, and collective liberation.

Legal systems must also evolve to safeguard the rights of people with mental health conditions, ensuring that their testimony is taken seriously, their autonomy is respected, and their protection from abuse is guaranteed. Education and public awareness campaigns are needed to dismantle the myths and fears that sustain sanism and to cultivate compassion, understanding, and solidarity.

Most importantly, we must listen to the voices of those who have been silenced, especially within the walls of psychiatric institutions. Their stories are not incoherent noise. They are not the ravings of madness. They are truths, often painful, often complex, that demand to be heard.

To be a person with a mental health condition in today’s world should not be equal to holding a precarious position, vulnerable not only to internal struggle but to systemic violence and silencing. People with mental health conditions should not be denied a voice in matters affecting them, treated as lesser beings, and subjected to abuse with impunity, all under the shadow of sanism.

As long as we continue to view them as incapable of thought, unworthy of trust, and impervious to pain, we perpetuate a cycle of dehumanisation and harm. It is way past time to hear, honour, and uphold the voices of those whom the world has long ignored and abused. Only then can we begin to build a society in which all minds, regardless of how they are labelled, are treated with the dignity and equality they deserve.

His Majesty King Letsie III celebrates 62nd Birthday in Berea

Staff Reporter

His Majesty King Letsie III marked his 62nd birthday anniversary today with a vibrant celebration at the Pitso Ground in Berea, surrounded by his beloved family and thousands of well-wishers.

The event was graced by the presence of Her Majesty Queen 'Masenate Mohato Seeiso, Princess Senate, Princess 'Maseeiso, and Prince Lerotholi, who joined the King in the joyous festivities.

The atmosphere was filled with warmth and unity as Basotho from across Berea and the surrounding districts gathered to honour their monarch.

The celebration featured cultural performances, traditional songs, and heartfelt tributes to His Majesty's leadership and dedication to the nation's development.

A distinguished guest, the President of Botswana, Duma Boko, attended the event and delivered a powerful message of solidarity.

In his address, the President emphasised the deep historical and cultural ties between the two nations, declaring that: "Basotho are Batswana, and Batswana are Basotho."



From Royal Paths to National Highways.

As we pave roads that unite our people and propel Lesotho forward, we celebrate the journey of a King whose vision leads us all.

Happy Birthday Your Majesty.

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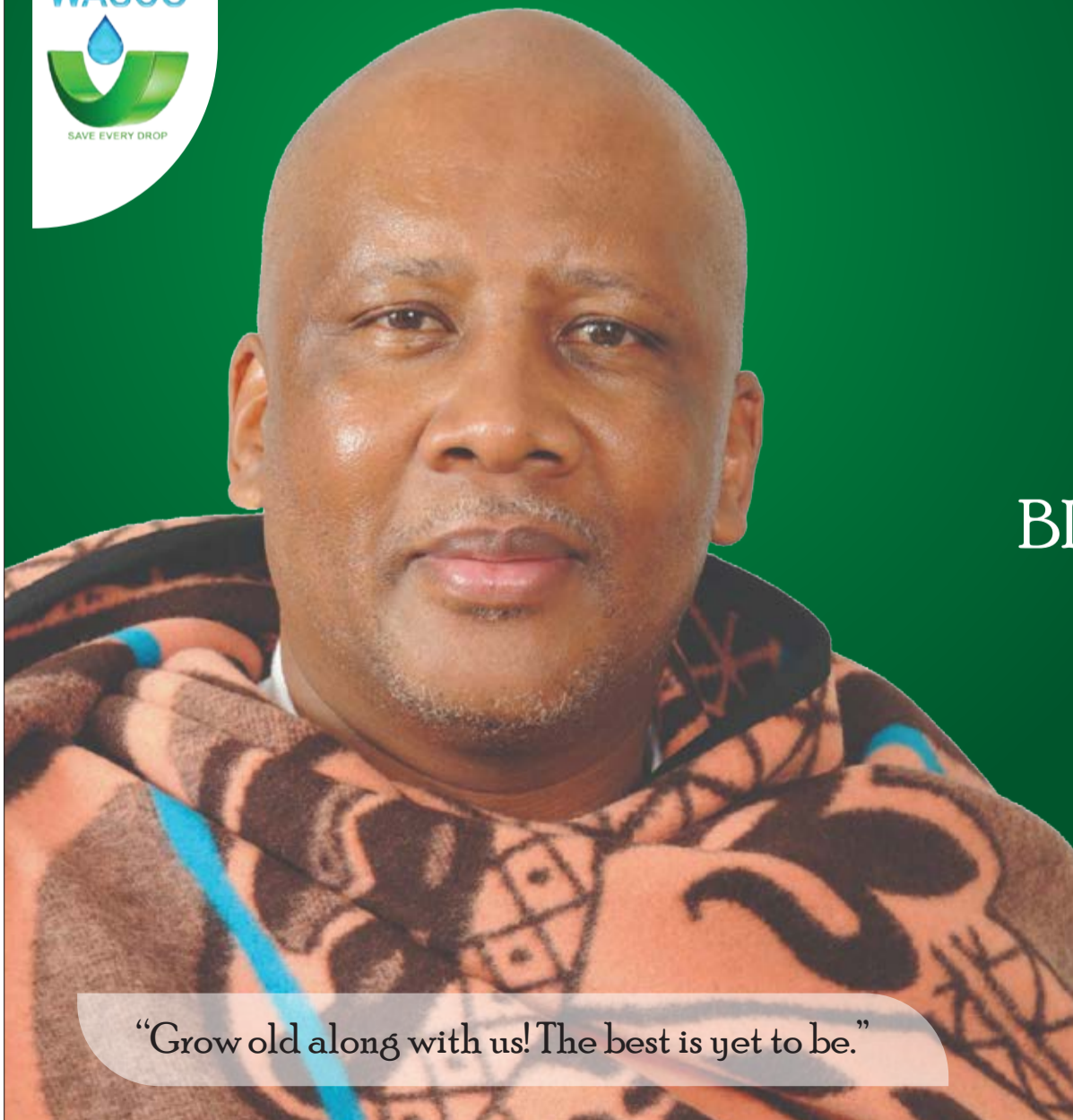
#SafeRoadsForBasotho

HAPPY 62ND BIRTHDAY, YOUR MAJESTY KING LETSIE III

17 JULY 2025

We recognize your efforts in representing Lesotho on global platforms, advocating for global food security and championing sustainable development.

Constitutional Monarch of the Kingdom of Lesotho | FAO Special Ambassador for Nutrition | **Champion of Lesotho's Green Energy Potential** (HMKLIII Just Energy Transition (JET) Fund)



HAPPY 62nd BIRTHDAY

*to
His Majesty*



S A V E E V E R Y D R O P

“Grow old along with us! The best is yet to be.”

HAPPY Birthday KHOSI RABASOTHO

On the auspicious occasion of His Majesty's birthday, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology stands in deep reverence alongside the people of Lesotho to honour and celebrate a sovereign whose grace, wisdom, and unwavering dedication continue to illuminate the path of the nation.

We offer our heartfelt wishes and solemn prayers for His Majesty's enduring health, strength, and divine guidance. May his steadfast leadership, noble vision, and commitment to the prosperity of his people continue to uplift and unite the Basotho nation.

As the Mountain Kingdom flourishes under his reign, may peace, progress, and pride echo across every peak and valley.



U hole, u holele Lesotho le Basotho! Long live the King. Long live Lesotho.



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NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO



HAPPY 62nd Birthday

The management, staff and students of the National University of Lesotho wish His Majesty King Letsie III and NUL Chancellor a happy 62nd birthday.

Long live the King!



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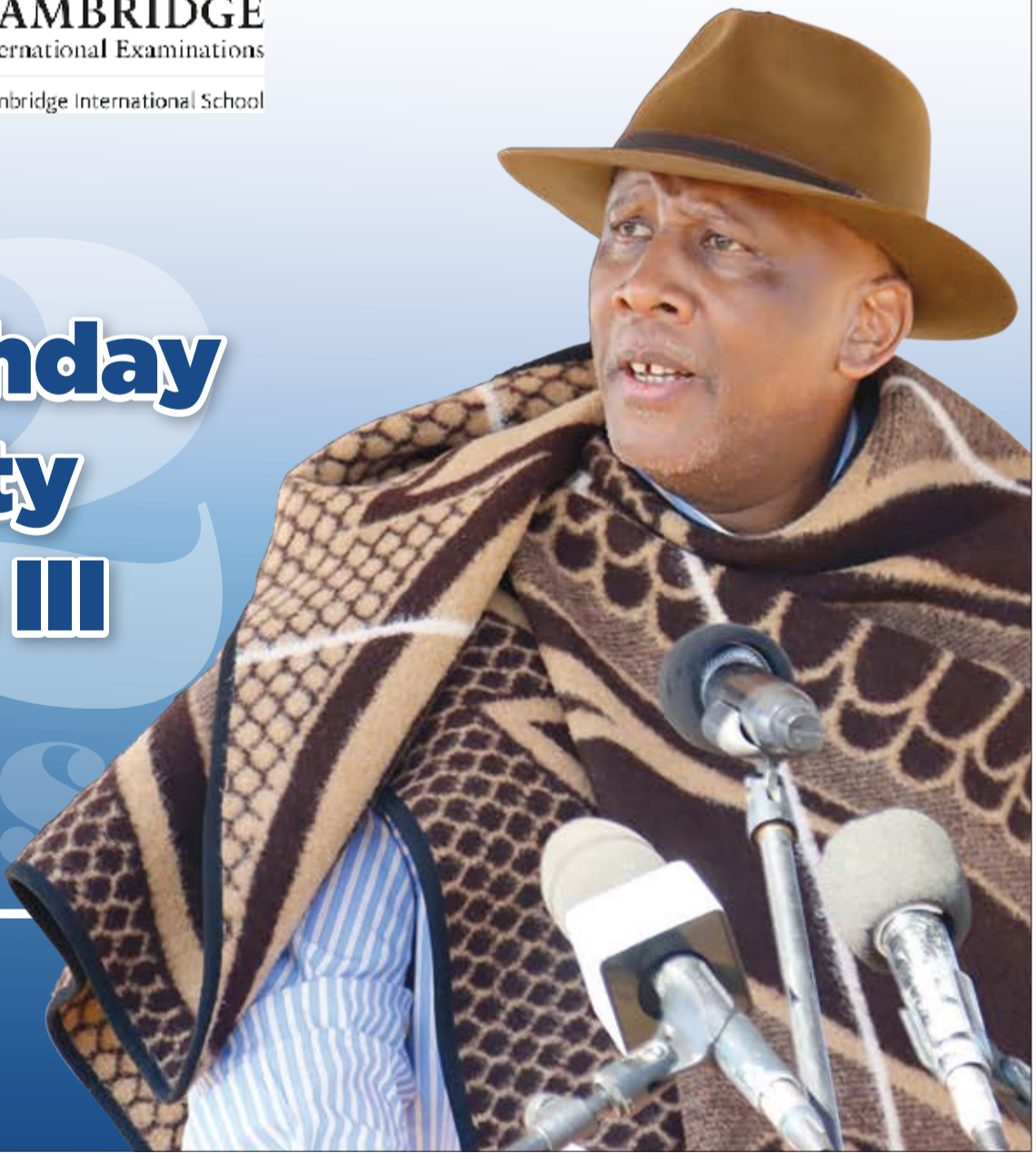
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Happy Birthday Your Majesty King Letsie III

62 YEARS





Happy Birthday Your Majesty **King Letsie III**

We honour your visionary leadership in championing a secure, sustainable, and energy-independent Lesotho. Your commitment to empowering the nation through strategic partnerships and innovation continues to inspire progress and unity.



Khotso, Pula, Nala!

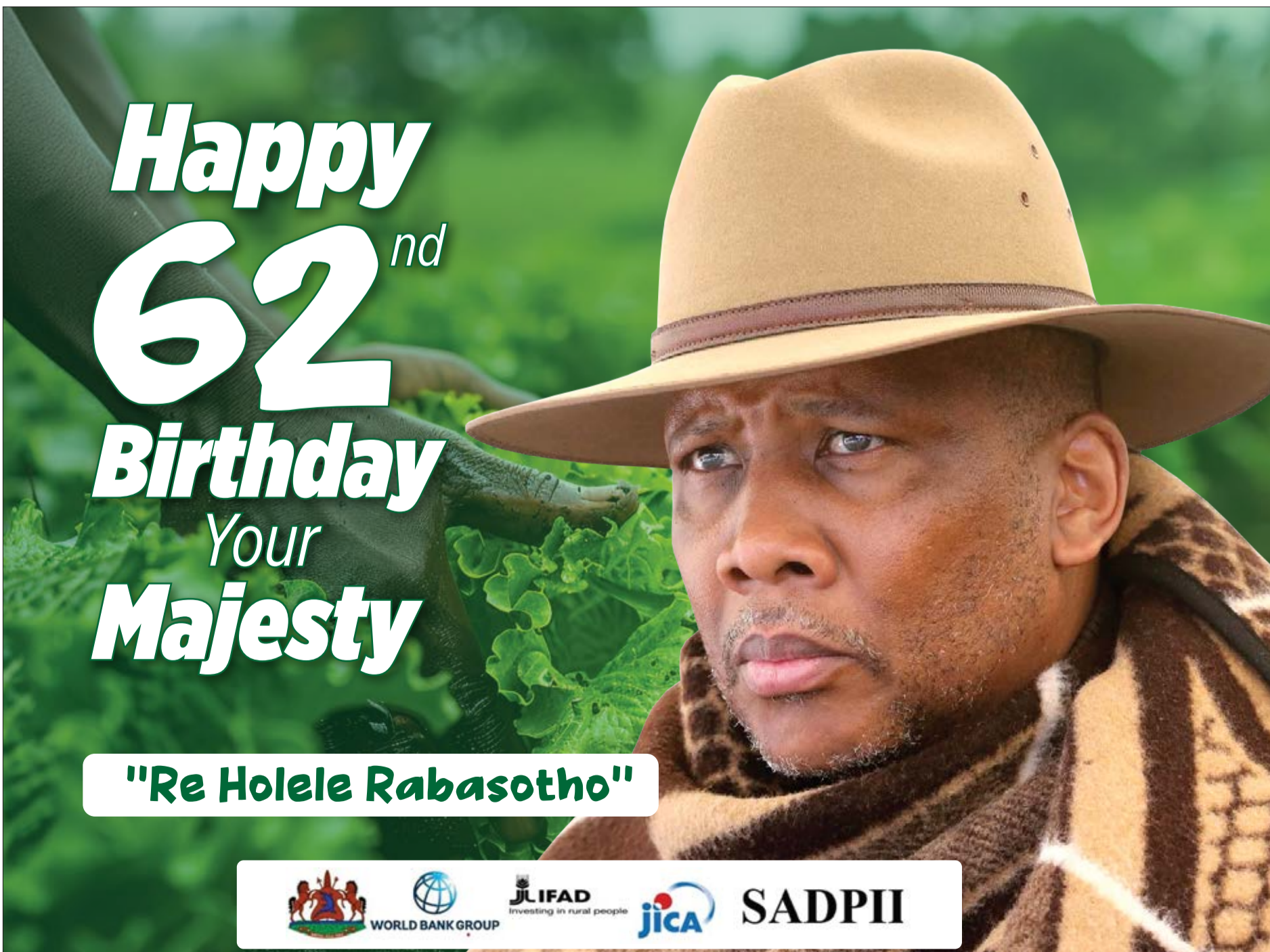


LAND
ADMINISTRATION
AUTHORITY

Happy
Birthday
Your Majesty

62
YEARS

RE SIRELE TSA LITOKELO TSA HAU MOBUNG, REA U SIRELE TSA

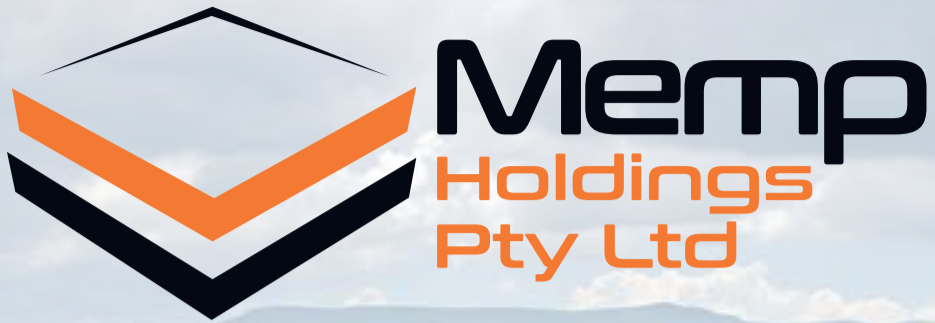


Happy
62nd
Birthday
Your Majesty

"Re Holele Rabasotho"



SADPII



HAPPY

62ND

BIRTHDAY

TO HIS MAJESTY
KING LETSIE III



The Management and Staff of **Memp Holdings PTY LTD**
wishes His Majesty King Letsie III a Happiest birthday

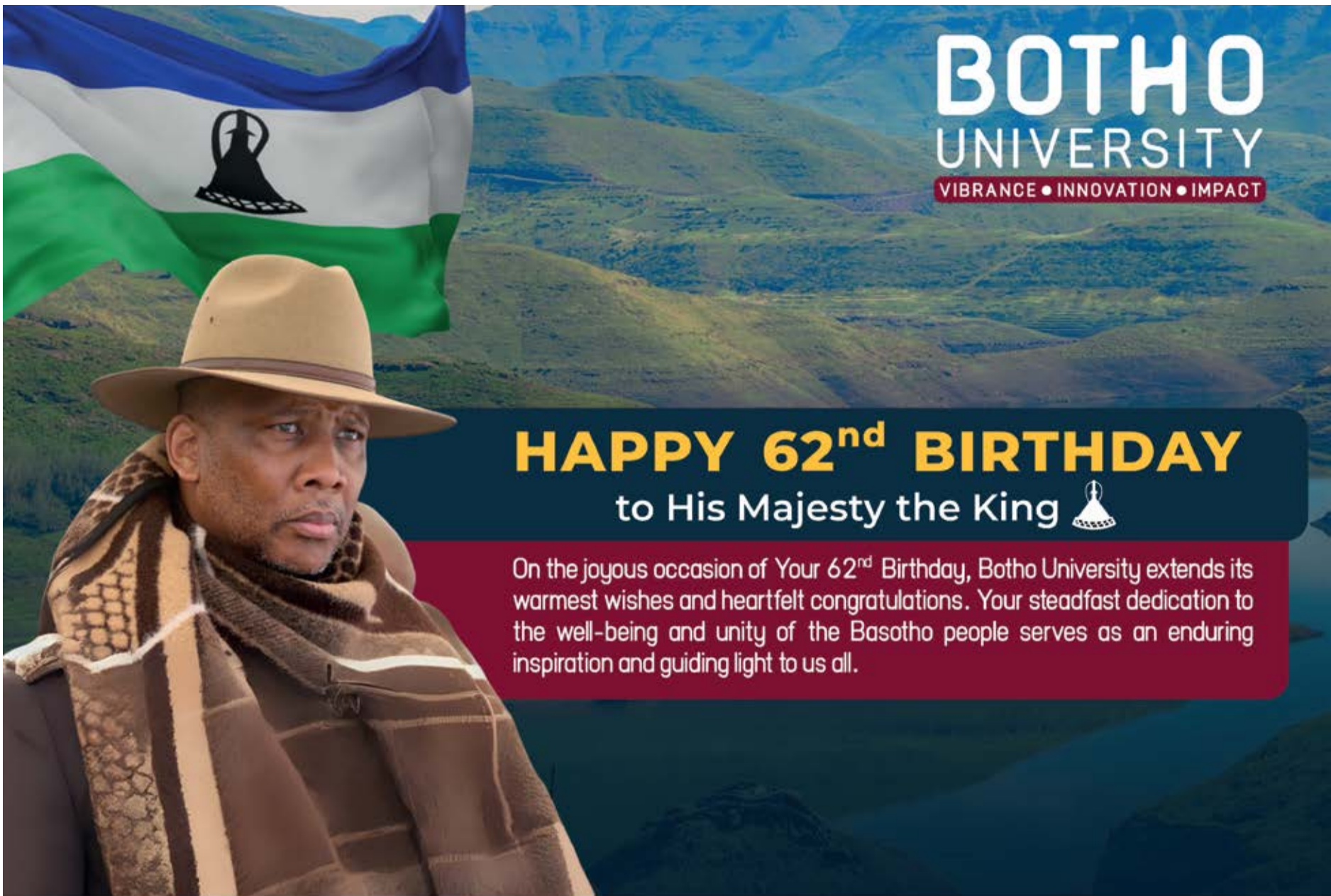
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HAPPY 62nd BIRTHDAY
to His Majesty the King 🏰

On the joyous occasion of Your 62nd Birthday, Botho University extends its warmest wishes and heartfelt congratulations. Your steadfast dedication to the well-being and unity of the Basotho people serves as an enduring inspiration and guiding light to us all.

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The Management and Staff of Newsday Media Wish His Majesty King Letsie III a Happy



Re Holele Rabasotho



Letlotlo Champions Local Farming and Fortified Food in a Bid for Food Security

Staff Reporter

According to an article published on 23 May 2025 by **Newsday**, Lesotho currently imports 98% of what it consumes; an alarming figure for a small developing country. This aligns with international data, including a 2023 report from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which highlights Lesotho's heavy reliance on food imports, with estimates ranging between 90–98%, particularly for processed and staple foods.

The situation is not as bad when it comes to maize meal and wheat flour production, even though it is still higher than it should be. According to Lesotho Flour Mills' (LFM's) estimates, around 60% of all maize meal and wheat flour consumed in Lesotho, is imported from neighbouring South Africa, with only 40% produced by Lesotho-based millers. Unfortunately, Basotho farmers supply less than 5% of the white maize and wheat milled by Lesotho-based millers. Fortunately, the situation with yellow maize is looking better with an estimated supply of 30% of yellow maize used in local feed production, for supply into the livestock feed production chain.

LFM sees these figures as an opportunity. To close this gap, LFM offers a guaranteed market for local farmers and has launched a series of initiatives to support farmers and the local feed and food production supply chain. LFM

is working with several important industry players, including international and local organisations, like the United Nations, World Food Programme (WFP), and the Government of Lesotho.

"LFM is in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, engaging in regular community forums and farmer roadshows to educate growers on grain grading, quality control, and best practices." Mr. Dingaan Mann, the LFM Food Safety and Quality Assurance Manager since 2020, says. "Farmers are also encouraged to bring in samples for free testing, allowing them to improve their produce to meet national and international standards." Mr. Mann joined LFM in 2010 as a laboratory technician, after completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Biotechnology, at the National University of Lesotho. He since worked himself through the ranks and recently completed a Wheat Milling qualification offered by the Southern African Grain Milling Academy.

LFM pays farmers within seven days and currently accepts all maize and wheat grades, except those infested with grain weevils, to encourage more participation. Becoming a supplier is straightforward, requiring only an ID and banking details. Farmers can contact LFM on 2221 5200, to request more information from the LFM Customer Services department.

Lesotho Flour Mills as the country's

leading milling company, is driving change through investment, innovation, and advocacy for local food production. "It is crucial that we start producing more as a country," says Mr Thabo Thoala, LFM's Flour Production Manager. "We have the potential and the people, we just need to make the system work for us. As LFM, we are not just waiting to buy, we are mentoring as Ntate Mann has mentioned," Mr Thoala explains. "We want farmers to succeed commercially."

Mr Thoala has 23 years' experience in wheat milling and production. He has been the LFM Wheat Flour Mill Production Manager, since September 2017. He joined LFM in 2002, after completing a Certificate in Fitting and Machining at the Lerotholi Polytechnic Technical College in Maseru, and a Diploma in Industrial Engineering at the Port Elizabeth Technikon. LFM assisted him to also complete advanced international wheat milling qualifications with City & Guilds, and the Buhler African Milling School based in Kenya.

LFM recently invested M7.4 million in upgrading automated wheat milling software and hardware components. This replaced outdated controls with a new PLC (Programmable Logic Controller) system, dubbed "the brain of the mill". Five staff members, including Mr Thoala, were trained in Johannesburg to operate the new system.

"The PLC system does not only speed up production, but also assists in quality control, detecting early faults and reducing waste. It also significantly lowers electricity use, cutting operational costs," says Mr Thoala.

LFM's product is fortified, enriched with essential vitamins and minerals to improve health outcomes. Fortification, which is the process of adding essential vitamins and minerals to food plays a crucial role in public health. "In Lesotho, where malnutrition remains a concern, fortified maize meal and flour helps combat common deficiencies, including iron, vitamin A, and folic acid. These nutrients are especially important for children and pregnant women. "This is why international organisations choose to buy from us, because we offer good quality fortified foods produced in Lesotho," says Mr Mann.

Lesotho Flour Mills embraces the vision of fostering self-sufficiency, promoting fair trade, and safeguarding public health. By collaborating closely with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and communities, we can collectively unlock the full potential of our agriculture and food production sectors. Through unified effort, we aim to build a resilient and sustainable local food supply chain that secures the nourishment and well-being of all Basotho, ensuring a future where food security is not only a goal, but a lasting reality.



MAKHULO
THE NATION'S CHOICE

Lijo tsa boleng!
Letlotlo La Basotho

“Polokeho ea lijo tsa liphoofole ke polokeho ho batho.”

DINGAAN MANN
Quality Assurance Manager



LETLOTLO
LESOTHO FLOUR MILLS

“Mmechini ea boleng bo holimo, e etsa phoofo ea boleng.”

MR. THABO THOALA
Lesotho Flour Mills
Flour Production Manager

Lijo Tse Hlabosehang!
Letlotlo La Basotho



TENDER NOTICE

OPEN NATIONAL COMPETITIVE TENDER
LES/IEC/TEN/PAN/2025-2026/01

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) invites tenders from interested companies for the **Supply and Delivery of Thirty-Two (32) Desktops and Nine (9) Laptops**

BIDDING DOCUMENT

Tender document is obtainable from Procurement Unit Second Floor Election House during working hours from 09:00am to 4:00pm. Interested Bidders must purchase a copy of tender document at a **NON-Refundable fee of M2,200.00 (Two Thousand, Two hundred Maloti)**. The procedure for obtaining the Tender document is as follows: **Payment for bid document must be made at Second Floor Election House Finance Department. The receipt issued must be taken to the office of Procurement where document will be issued.**

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Evaluation criteria has two weights Technical and Financial Weights. The pass mark for Technical Evaluation is 90 points for both Desktops and Laptops. The Technical weight is 60% and Financial weight is 40%

1. DESKTOP

TECHNICAL EVALUATION	POINTS
Operating System (Windows 11 Pro 64 Bit)	20
Processor (13th Generation i7)	25
Memory (64 DDR5-480 SDRAM)	25
Storage (2TB)	20
Display 60.5cm (23.8") Touch	5
Colour (Silver)	5
Experience	10
Lead Time	10
TOTAL POINTS	120

2. LAPTOPS

TECHNICAL EVALUATION	POINTS
Operating System (Windows 11 Pro 64 Bit)	20

Processor (13th Generation i7)	25
Memory (64 DDR5-480 SDRAM)	25
Storage (1TB)	20
Display 35.6cm (14") Touch	5
Colour (Silver)	5
Experience	10
Lead Time	10
TOTAL POINTS	120

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- Attach valid and **relevant** Traders License/ Business Identity Card.
- Attach valid copy of Tax Clearance Certificate.
- The Bonafide Certificate should be filled and signed by company's authorized representative (failure will lead to rejection) and the total cost should be written on the certificate.
- Provide Bid Security of M166,907.51 from the bank and must be validity for three months

Sealed bids bearing no identification of the suppliers should be deposited in the tender box at the Ground Floor Election House On or before **12:30pm Friday 29th August 2025** and will be opened on the same date at **14:30hours**. Envelopes should be clearly marked: **"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF DESKTOPS AND LAPTOPS"**

For further information, relating to the above information please contact,

The Procurement Unit

Independent Electoral Commission
Election House
Corner maloti and Caldeon Road, P.O. Box 12698
Maseru, Lesotho
Tel: +266 – 22 31499
E-mail: tenders@iec.org.ls

The Independent Electoral Commission of Lesotho reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.

Procurement Unit-IEC



TENDER NOTICE

OPEN NATIONAL COMPETITIVE TENDER
LES/IEC/TEN/PAN/ 2025-2026/02

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) invites tenders from interested companies for the **Supply, Delivery and Installation of Park Homes and Guard Houses.**

DESCRIPTION

Supply, Delivery and Installation of Park Homes and Guard Houses.

Number	Description	Quantity
Lot 1	Park Home	
Lot 2	Guard Houses	11

BIDDING DOCUMENT

Tender document is obtainable from Election House Procurement Unit 2nd Floor, Corner Maluti and Caldeon Road, Maseru West during working hours from 09:00am to 16:00 hours. Interested Bidders must purchase a copy of tender document at a **NON-Refundable fee of M2 000.00 (Two Thousand Maloti only)**. The procedure for obtaining the Tender document is as follows: **Payment for bid document must be made at 2nd Floor Election House, Finance Department. The receipt issued must be taken to the office of Procurement where document will be issued.**

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Evaluation criteria has two weights Technical and Financial weights. The pass mark for Technical Evaluation is 165 points for Park Homes and 120 points for Guard Houses. The Technical weight is 75% and Financial Weight is 25%.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- The price should be VAT inclusive for suppliers who qualify to collect VAT (attach VAT registration certificate).
- Attach valid and **relevant** Traders License/ Business Identity Card.
- Attach valid copy of Tax Clearance Certificate.

- Attach Company Extract.
- The bonafide certificate should be filled and signed by company's authorized representative (failure will lead to rejection) and the total cost should be written on the certificate.
- Provide Category A or B Certificate from Ministry of Works.
- Site Visit is compulsory and it will be at Molele's Hoek on the 1st August 2025 at 11.00 am.
- Provide Bid Security of M250,000 for Park homes and M50,000 for Guard House from the Bank and be valid for three months
- Provide Manufacturing Authorization Letter filled, signed and stamped on manufacturing letter letterhead.

Sealed bids bearing no identification of the suppliers should be deposited in the tender box at the Election House Ground Floor near security office **On or before 12:30pm Monday 1st September 2025** and will be opened on the same date at **14:30hours** at 1st Floor Boardroom. Envelopes should be clearly marked: **"SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF PARK HOMES & GUARD HOUSES LOT 1 FOR PARK HOMES OR LOT 2 GUARD HOUSES "**.

For further information, relating to the above information please contact,

The Procurement Unit

Independent Electoral Commission
Election House Maseru West
Maseru, Lesotho
Tel: +266 – 22 31499/59019086
E-mail: tenders@iec.org.ls

The Independent Electoral Commission of Lesotho reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.

Procurement Unit-IEC



Ministry of Agriculture, Food
Security and Nutrition
WaMCoP
P.O. Box 24
Maseru 100



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(Individual Consultants)

LESOTHO

WOOL AND MOHAIR VALUE CHAIN COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT

Assignment title: Productive Alliances Consultancy

Reference no.: LSO-2000003942-0065-CS-ICS

The Government of Lesotho has received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) towards the cost of Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the recruitment of consulting services provided by an individual consultant as part of the post of Productive Alliances Consultancy.

The use of any IFAD financing shall be subject to IFAD's approval, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the financing agreement, as well as IFAD's rules, policies and procedures. IFAD and its officials, agents and employees shall be held harmless from and against all suits, proceedings, claims, demands, losses and liability of any kind or nature brought by any party in connection with Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project.

The consulting services ("the services") include improving the three strategic supply chains through productive alliance approach. The assignment is expected to take two months (eight weeks in total). The applicant consultant will work under the supervision of the WaMCoP PCU with support from the DOM, DLS and IFAD, the selected consultant will be responsible for the sets of deliverables above.

This request for expressions of interest (REOI) follows the general procurement notice that appeared on Lesotho Times on 1 May 2025 and on The Reporter on 2 May 2025.

The attention of interested consultants is drawn to IFAD's Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Policy and the Revised IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Activities and Operations. The latter sets forth IFAD's provisions on prohibited practices. IFAD further strives to ensure a safe working environment free of harassment, including sexual harassment, and free of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in its activities and operations as detailed in its IFAD Policy to Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. By entering in this document, you certify to have read, understood, and agreed to be bound by the Privacy Policy of IFAD.

Interested consultants shall not have any actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest. Consultants with an actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest shall be disqualified unless otherwise explicitly

approved by the Fund. Consultants are considered to have a conflict of interest if they a) have a relationship that provides them with undue or undisclosed information about or influence over the selection process and the execution of the contract, or b) have a business or family relationship with a member of the client's board of directors or its personnel, the Fund or its personnel, or any other individual that was, has been or might reasonably be directly or indirectly involved in any part of (i) the preparation of the REOI, (ii) the selection process for this procurement, or (iii) execution of the contract. Consultants have an ongoing obligation to disclose any situation of actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest during preparation of the EOI, the selection process or the contract execution. Failure to properly disclose any of said situations may lead to appropriate actions, including the disqualification of the consultant, the termination of the contract and any other as appropriate under the IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Projects and Operations.

The following conflict of interest rules shall apply with respect to recruitment of government/client staff within the consultant's proposed team:

- No member of the client's board of directors or current employees of the client (whether part time, or full time, paid or unpaid, in leave status, etc.) shall be proposed or work as, or on behalf of, any consultant.
- Except as provided in sub-clause 8.6(d), no current employees of the government shall work as consultants or as personnel under their own ministries, departments or agencies.
- Recruiting former client or government employees to perform services for their former ministries, departments or agencies is acceptable provided no conflict of interest exists.
- If a consultant proposes any government employee as personnel in their technical proposal, such personnel must have written certification from the government confirming that: (i) they will be on leave without pay from the time of their official proposal submission and will remain on leave without pay until the end of their assignment with the consultant and they are allowed to work full-time outside of their previous official position; or (ii) they will resign or retire from government employment on or prior to the contract award date. Under no circumstances shall any individuals described in (i) and (ii) be responsible for approving the implementation of this contract. Such certification shall be provided to the client by the consultant as part of its technical proposal.
- In the case where a consultant seeks to engage the services of any person falling under ITC sub-clauses 8.6(a) – 8.6(d), who may have left the client within a period of less than twelve (12) months of the date of this RFP, it must obtain a written "no-objection" from the client

for the inclusion of such a person, prior to the consultant's submission of its proposal.

The Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project now invites eligible Individual consultants ("consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services in the form of a curriculum vitae (CV). A consultant will be selected in accordance with the individual consultant selection (ICS) method set out in IFAD' Project Procurement Handbook that can be accessed via the IFAD website at www.ifad.org/project-procurement. Interviews **will not** be conducted as part of the selection process.

The shortlisting criteria are:

- ◆ Minimum of Master's Degree in Agribusiness/Agricultural Economics/Social Sciences/Business Development or related field.
- ◆ At least five years' relevant experiences in working with productive alliances/ collaborative arrangements within a wide range of industries, especially agricultural.
- ◆ Three years' experience in conducting Productive Alliance trainings
- ◆ Experience in developing PA for wool and mohair will be an added advantage for the consultant
- ◆ The consultant should have a proven track record of building capacity of staff on the development and implementation of Productive Alliances
- ◆ Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of regulatory frameworks, technologies and market requirements, and of the entrepreneurial and management skills

Any request for clarification on this REOI should be sent via e-mail to the address below no later than **12:00hrs on 28 July 2025, Lesotho time**. The client will provide responses to all clarification requests by **16:00hrs on 30 July 2025, Lesotho time**.

Expressions of interest in the form of curriculum vitae (CV) must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail or by e-mail) by **12:00hrs on 01 August 2025, Lesotho time**.

Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project
Attn: Procurement and Contracts Manager
P.O. Box 24
Department of Livestock Services
Old Airport Road, Moshoeshoe II

e-mail: mlejeta-thakong@wamcop.org.ls and cc: mtau@wamcop.org.ls

- The policy is accessible at <https://www.ifad.org/en/document-detail/asset/41942012>.
- The policy is accessible at www.ifad.org/anticorruption_policy.
- The policy is accessible at <https://www.ifad.org/en/document-detail/asset/40738506>.
- The policy is accessible at <https://www.ifad.org/en/privacy>.



Road Fund

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT ASSISTANT PROCUREMENT OFFICER

The Road Fund Secretariat requires the services of a suitably qualified Lesotho National to fill the position of **Assistant Procurement Officer**.

Job Purpose:

The incumbent is responsible for providing administrative and operational support to the Procurement Section, by sourcing suppliers, purchase order processing, and maintaining records, while complying with Procurement Policies. The incumbent further adheres to ethical Procurement Standards and Compliance with organisational quality levels for goods or services purchased.

Qualifications, Working Experience and Knowledge:

- Degree in Supply Chain Management or CIPS level 4 or equivalent qualification.
- Minimum of two (2) years experience working in the procurement environment.
- The applicants must have a knowledge and understanding of Public Procurement Regulations.
- Essential Requirements of the Post:
- Excellent communication skills with the ability to organise, supervise and direct the work of others;
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work with a variety of individuals at all levels;
- Ability to be assertive;
- Excellent negotiation skills;
- Attention to detail;
- Computer skills with word-processing, spreadsheets, e-mail and other specialised software applications utilised daily.

Remuneration:

Salary will be in accordance with the Road Fund scales of remuneration, which are competitive and market related.

Closing Date for applications: Friday 1st August 2025 at 12:00hrs (Midday).

Interested candidates may send their applications, complete with Curriculum Vitae, Certified Copies of Certificates of Academic Achievement, certified copy of driver's license, certified copy of National Identity Document and letters of reference from two referees to: The Head of Human Resources and Administration, Road Fund, P. O. Box 14644, Maseru 100 OR hand deliver at the Ground Floor Reception Office of the Road Fund Secretariat, situated at the former Department of Rural Roads, corner Senate and Moshoeshoe Roads Industrial Area, Maseru OR email to recruitment@roadfund.org.ls

Disclaimer:

- Only applications received on or before the closing date and time will be considered;
- Correspondence will only be conducted with short-listed candidates;
- Road Fund reserves the right not to appoint if no suitable candidate is found.

For further details on the Assistant Procurement Officer's job profile, please visit the Road Fund Website: www.roadfund.org.ls.



Road Fund

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT ASSISTANT SYSTEMS SUPPORT OFFICER

The Road Fund Secretariat requires the services of a suitably qualified Lesotho National to fill the position of **Assistant Systems Support Officer**.

Job Purpose:

To provide Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Technical support services to the Road Fund Secretariat. The incumbent will prioritise and resolve Systems Faults/Incidents in order to minimise downtime and meet the Service Level Agreement (SLA). These shall include appropriate escalation of issues through the System Support Officer.

Qualifications, Working Experience and Knowledge:

- Diploma in Computer Science, Computer Systems, Information Technology / Systems, or related field, with at least two (2) years experience in at least two (2) of the following Areas: IT Support Infrastructure, IT Service Management and Desktop Support.
- The successful candidate must hold a minimum of Code B valid driver's license with at least two (2) years driving experience and be able to travel to the districts as maybe required.

Essential Requirements of the Post:

- Must possess good technical ability that will assure maximum availability of the Road Fund's Systems as well as broad technology awareness;
- Must have a good understanding of communications and networking combined with sound knowledge of computer hardware and peripherals;
- Must possess good communication skills with the ability to build and maintain healthy interpersonal relations to enable him/her to give support to Road Fund Staff on ICT queries while also maintaining working relations with vendors;
- Must possess good decision-making skills and be able to produce daily calls attendance reports.

Remuneration:

Salary will be in accordance with the Road Fund scales of remuneration, which are competitive and market related.

Closing Date for applications: Friday 1st August 2025 at 12:00hrs (Midday).

Interested candidates may send their applications, complete with Curriculum Vitae, Certified Copies of Certificates of Academic Achievement, certified copy of driver's license, certified copy of National Identity Document and letters of reference from two referees to: The Head of Human Resources and Administration, Road Fund, P. O. Box 14644, Maseru 100 OR hand deliver at the Ground Floor Reception Office of the Road Fund Secretariat, situated at the former Department of Rural Roads, corner Senate and Moshoeshoe Roads Industrial Area, Maseru OR email to recruitment@roadfund.org.ls

Disclaimer:

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For further details on the Assistant Systems Support Officer's job profile, please visit the Road Fund Website: www.roadfund.org.ls.



Government of Lesotho

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

Invitation for Registration

Registration of Vehicles for short term hire in the Ministry database

1. The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho intends to improve Agricultural service delivery. Therefore, part of the proceeds will be utilized on eligible payments resulting from the procurement of the above.
2. The Principal Secretary now invites interested Basotho vehicle owners for the **Registration of Vehicles for short term hire in the Ministry database for financial year 2025/26**. Interested Basotho vehicle owners may obtain further information from the following address:

Procurement Unit and
Administration Office
Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition
Corner Constitution and Linare Roads
Maseru 100, Lesotho
Tel: (++ 266) 22322741

3. It is mandatory for Basotho vehicle owners to submit and note the following:

Vehicle Type: Double Cab 4x4, Single Cab 4x4, SUV 4x4, SUV, Ten-Ton Truck, Minibus (13 Seater) or Quantum

- ▶ **Vehicle Registration**
- ▶ **Vehicle Model: 2015 upwards**
- ▶ **Valid third party insurance**
- ▶ **Complete tool kit**
- ▶ **Double Cab 4x4 with Canopy or Tonneau cover and Tow bar for pulling trailer**
- ▶ **Single Cab: Valid B permit & Tow bar**
- ▶ **Ten (10) ton: Valid F permit & Fitness**
- ▶ **13 Seater: Fitness**

4. **Submission and registration with Administration Office.**



Road Fund

TENDER FOR SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ICT EQUIPMENT

The Road Fund Secretariat requests proposals from suitably qualified locally registered suppliers with the capacity to supply and deliver ICT Equipment according to the following details:

Requirements:

1. Bidders must submit a bid security from a reputable banking or Insurance Company registered with the Central Bank of Lesotho and valued at 2% of the bid amount;
2. Bidders must be compliant with their tax and licensing obligations, hence a valid company Tax Clearance and a valid and relevant Trader's License must be submitted;
3. Bidders are expected to deliver within a maximum period of six (6) weeks from receiving the official purchase order.

Detailed minimum specifications and tender requirements are available at the Road Fund website www.roadfund.org.ls.

Submission:

Sealed bids clearly marked "**Tender for Supply and Delivery of ICT Equipment**" bearing no identification of the bidder should be deposited in the tender box located at the reception area of the Road Fund offices on or before **Friday, 29th August 2025 at 14:00 hrs**. Public tender opening will be held on the same day at **14:15 hrs**.

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Arts & Entertainment

Newsday

Litšepe LR, Qhomane exit Metšoaka Nersan Records

Chris Theko

and the label's founder.

Trouble continues to mount at Metšoaka Nersan Records, as artists Litšepe LR and Qhomane officially confirmed their departure from the label.

The duo were part of the high-profile lineup of seven artists unveiled at the label's official launch earlier this year; a launch that promised to usher in a bold new era for Lesotho's music industry.

The initial roster included Sannere, Phoka Ea Boroa, Flash Cortez, Teddy DJ, Ali DJ, Litšepe LR, and Qhomane.

However, just months after its formation, the label has been rocked by high-profile exits, behind-the-scenes drama, and public statements that paint a picture of a company struggling to keep its internal dynamics in check.

The first red flag appeared shortly after the label's launch when rapper Flash Cortez abruptly announced his departure. Though he refrained from detailing his reasons, sources and social media posts at the time pointed to a falling out between Cortez

The tension was public enough to spark discussions across platforms, with fans and industry insiders expressing concern over the label's leadership and direction.

Now, Litšepe LR, who had been described as Sannere's protégé, has become the latest artist to sever ties with the label. In recent months, their once-tight relationship had visibly cooled. Observers began noticing their absence from each other's social media content and public events, leading to speculation that the partnership

had soured.

Sources close to the situation have now confirmed that a physical altercation took place between the two artists in May, ultimately leading Litšepe to make the decision to walk away from Metšoaka Nersan Records.

"There was a fight that broke out between Sannere and Litšepe. As a result, the two brothers failed to reconcile, and that led to Litšepe leaving the label," a source told this publication.

When contacted for comment, Sannere acknowledged the departure but declined to provide specifics.

"Yes, it is true. I am aware of his departure and have known for a while, but I am not at liberty to get deep into the details of the matter," he said.

As for Qhomane, while he was never formally signed to the label, he had been operating as part of the team during the label's early activities. According to insiders, plans to make his contract official were in motion but ultimately fell through, again, reportedly due to disagreements with Sannere.

Sannere downplayed Qhomane's involvement. "Qhomane was never signed by Metšoaka Nersan Records. He was only a friend of the label as far as I know," he said.

Contrary to this, Moeketsi Pius Kebise, the former label manager who is now managing both Litšepe and Qhomane, offered a different perspective.

"I can confirm that Litšepe is now under my management, and so is Qhomane. I cannot go into details of why Litšepe left Metšoaka, but I can clarify that Qhomane was in the process of being signed. We bought him equipment and supported him with

resources because we were planning to bring him on officially," Kebise explained.

Kebise himself left the label just a month after its launch, citing irreconcilable differences with the founder of Metšoaka Nersan.

"After an incredible journey with Metšoaka Group, I am stepping into a new chapter of my life, embracing fresh opportunities and new challenges," read part of Kebise's departure statement.

"When you do not see eye to eye with the founder of the company, the best thing to do is leave. And I felt it was the right thing to do," he told Newsday in an earlier interview.

Adding to the instability, in June, Sannere's long-time manager Teho Matheleli of Teho Visuals, also stepped down. In a heartfelt public statement, Matheleli expressed disillusionment with how the label had evolved.

"What started as a collective dream, built on trust, sacrifice and a shared vision, slowly began to unravel as success came into the picture," Teho's statement read.

"I poured my heart, resources and creativity into building and elevating the Metšoaka Nersan brand. But, over time, I saw a shift in values that left me sidelined."

These departures, especially of key personnel and artists, are raising broader concerns about the direction and leadership of Metšoaka Nersan Records. Once viewed as a promising platform for emerging talent in Lesotho, the label now faces mounting questions about its future.

As of now, only a few artists from the original lineup remain under the Metšoaka Nersan banner. Whether the label can stabilise and rebuild its reputation or continue to fracture remains to be seen.

In the meantime, Litšepe LR and Qhomane are looking ahead under new management, signalling that their careers are far from over despite the setbacks. With the guidance of Kebise, they may yet find the creative freedom and stability they sought at Metšoaka but never found.

Corporate Challenge
2025



Ticket Price: M3 400

Team of 5
Venue: Maseru Mall
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Happy Birthday

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King Letsie III



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Key Roles & Recognition

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UN FAO Special Ambassador for Nutrition

Recognised globally, The King was appointed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as Special Ambassador for Nutrition, amplifying his influence on the world stage.

Major Achievements & Advocacy

Raising Awareness

King Letsie III has been a leading voice urging African governments and international partners to make nutrition a top priority, emphasising its link to economic development and the well-being of future generations.

Mobilising African Leaders

He has worked with African Heads of State, finance ministers, and the African Development Bank to rally support for the African Leaders for Nutrition initiative, which aims to end childhood stunting and hunger by 2025.

Championing Policy & Investment

King Letsie III calls for practical, sustainable financing mechanisms for nutrition, and stresses the need for joint efforts from governments, development partners, the private sector, and civil society.

Driving Continental Action

Under his leadership, the AU declared 2022 the "Year of Nutrition," further elevating nutrition on the continental agenda and inspiring greater investment in nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

Global Advocacy

At international forums, he highlights the "positive correlation between nutrition and the socio-economic development of nations," and urges continued global momentum to eliminate malnutrition.

Let us all remember the positive correlation between nutrition and the socio-economic development of nations. It is well fed and well-nourished individuals that can drive the economic development agendas of their countries.

— King Letsie III of Lesotho

Women's football makes historic debut in Alliance tournament

Palesa Moloinyane

Alliance Insurance officially launched the 2025 edition of the Alliance Winter Challenge at Lancers Inn on Tuesday, marking a historic milestone by including women's football for the first time in the tournament's eight-year history.

Speaking at the launch, Alliance Insurance's Public Relations and Corporate Communications Manager, Limakatso Mokobocho announced that this year's challenge will feature both male and female teams from four clubs that are exclusively sponsored by Alliance Insurance namely Matlama FC, Lioli, LCS, and Linare.

The tournament represents the eighth consecutive year of the annual competition, which has become a cornerstone of the local football calendar.

Mokobocho explained that the Winter Challenge serves a crucial purpose in maintaining teams' fitness levels during the off-season, ensuring players remain physically prepared for upcoming tournaments.

"We do not want the players to rest completely. This challenge is meant to keep them training and motivated for the competitive season ahead," she said.

The challenge also functions as a strategic initiative to strengthen relationships among participating clubs while generating funds to support them throughout the year.

"We want to build solidarity among the teams and show that they are all part of one family, supported by Alliance," she noted.

In this groundbreaking edition, women's teams will compete for the first time, though without financial prizes initially.

Mokobocho emphasised this represents just the beginning of women's inclusion in the tournament.



Lioli's General Manager Lekhooa Thabaneng

"We started with nothing for the men. The same applies here, but growth is the goal."

For men's teams, significant financial incentives remain in place. The winning team will walk away with a M100,000 cash prize. The top scorer, best goalkeeper, and player of the season will each receive M2,500, according to Mokobocho.

On his part, Matlama's President Moeket-

si Khojane expressed deep appreciation for Alliance's continued support at the event.

"If it were not for Alliance, Matlama and Lioli would not be dominating the premier league like they are today. Their backing has made a huge difference," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA), Lioli's General Manager Lekhooa Thabaneng conveyed sincere gratitude to Alliance Insurance for

their unwavering commitment to local football development.

"LeFA truly appreciates what Alliance is doing. We acknowledge that, without their continued involvement, we wouldn't have achieved all that we have. Their support is visible and impactful," said Thabaneng.

The women's matches take place on August 16, while the men's matches kick off on August 17 this year.

New marathon eyes woman empowerment

Palesa Moloinyane

Miles of Hope marathon, in partnership with Hill Busters and Mountain Kingdom Club, is hosting a women-focused marathon to celebrate Women's Month.

The event aims to address challenges faced by women while promoting health, wellness, and bringing the community together through running.

Scheduled for August 30, the marathon will see runners start at St Michael's and finish at Lekhalong la Baroa in Maseru.

More than just a sporting event, this initiative seeks to address the many challenges women face by offering a space for empowerment, healing, and dialogue.

Bafokeng Mofani from Hill Busters announced that the marathon will feature three race categories: 21km, 10km, and 5km, with cash prizes awarded to winners in all categories. He emphasised the deeper significance of this sporting event beyond competition.

"This program aims to bring women together to share skills, ideas, and support one another through conversation and exercise," he stated.

Mofani explained that this represents their approach to addressing women's challenges and honouring their strength through movement, unity, and purpose.

Rorisang Mabusela from Mountain Kingdom Club further highlighted that the mar-



athon focuses on both mental and physical healing. He stressed the therapeutic benefits of running beyond mere fitness.

"Running is not just for fitness; it is for restoring the mind and building a healthier lifestyle, and therefore, through this marathon, we hope to bring people together and encourage a spirit of togetherness and care,"

he stated.

In the spirit of community giving, Katleho Malefane indicated that organisers will establish a Hope Basket initiative. Participants and the public are encouraged to donate clothes and shoes, with these items subsequently distributed to underprivileged communities.

The conference, led by Miles of Hope, underscored that the marathon transcends mere competition and focuses on contributing to meaningful change. Organisers expect the event to spark important conversations among women, uplift communities, and establish a tradition of running for a cause.



The allure of local football to foreign coaches

Seabata Mahao

The Vodacom Premier League (VPL) is increasingly becoming a lucrative destination for South African (SA) coaches, who are leading some of the country's top clubs and sometimes using the platform as a stepping stone to bigger things.

This notable trend has this year alone, seen at least three of the country's elite Premier League clubs appointing SA tacticians at the helm, drawn by competitive packages and the promise of international exposure that can enhance their coaching credentials.

The most recent of these appointments came just last week, when Linare Football Club unveiled former Mamelodi Sundowns and Moroka Swallows midfielder Jabulani 'S-Curl' Mendu as their new head coach.

The 48-year-old Mendu, who holds a CAF A Licence, brings with him a reputation for tactical discipline and a long-passing style that made him a household name during his playing days. Linare expressed their confidence in Mendu's leadership in an official statement:

"We are excited to introduce our new head coach, Jabulani 'S-curl' Mendu, with experience and a proven track record of success. Coach Mendu brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to our team," the club said.

"Under coach Mendu's leadership, we are committed to developing talented players, building a strong team culture, and achieving victory on the field."

Linare's decision to invest in a South African coach follows a precedent set in November 2020, when they appointed former Orlando Pirates tactician Teboho Molo, signaling the club's willingness to offer competitive packages to attract quality foreign expertise.

This growing trend, driven by clubs' financial capacity to offer attractive terms, also saw Lioli FC appoint Bongani Maseko last month, who immediately made his mark by guiding Tse Nala to victory in the inaugural T.J. Nthane Foundation Tournament, beating Linare 2-0

in the final. Similarly, Lijaba-



James Madidilane

tho FC has recently appointed former Bantu FC head coach James Madidilane, another SA coach, who previously tasted success in Lesotho's top flight by winning back-to-back league titles and participating in continental competitions.

These success stories continue to attract more South African coaches seeking both career advancement opportunities and to some extent financial rewards.

For other SA coaches, Lesotho is emerging as a strategic launching pad that offers better recognition than development leagues back home. After gaining experience and building their profiles here, some move on to more prestigious roles elsewhere, having enhanced their market value through inter-

national experience.

One example is Morena Ramoreboli, who once coached Lioli FC and now serves as the interim head coach for Botswana's senior national team, The Zebras. His current mission is to qualify for the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON).

Prominent sports journalist Tebalo Lebajoa explains this dynamic; "Most of the SA coaches in Lesotho come here to build their CVs. They usually come from development leagues in South Africa, and if they perform well here, they gain the international exposure they need to return home or move to other leagues with better opportunities."

Lebajoa further highlighted that the local league offers fewer barriers to growth and better financial prospects for foreign coaches.

pared to South Africa's cutthroat environment, where even a CAF A licence may not guarantee recognition or adequate compensation.

"In South Africa, coaches with CAF A licenses often compete with unqualified ex-players. It is easier for them to stand out and get noticed in Lesotho," he said, adding that the financial packages available in Lesotho often exceed what these coaches could earn in South African development leagues.

Implications for homegrown coaching talent

While the influx of foreign expertise brings new perspectives, it also raises questions about the opportunities afforded to local

coaches who cannot compete with the attractive packages offered to their South African counterparts.

The Secretary General of the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) acknowledged this concern in an exclusive interview with Newsday.

"We have trained many local coaches under CAF licensing, but very few have shown the strength to handle big clubs. It is no surprise that club bosses are increasingly turning to foreign coaches," he said.

The LeFA official admitted that while foreign coaches have improved discipline and competitiveness in clubs, there are risks of marginalising local coaches, especially with the growing trend of appointing foreign assistant coaches who command higher salaries.

"If we are not careful, local coaches will find themselves completely sidelined. We must regulate this trend before it takes an unpalatable turn."

Balancing benefits with integrity

Foreign coaches have played a role in improving professionalism and discipline among local players, justifying the financial investment clubs make in their services. According to Lebajoa, their distance from players allows them to enforce stricter standards—something local coaches often struggle with due to personal ties within teams.

However, concerns are growing about system manipulation, with accusations of foreign coaches influencing club bosses to illegally register ineligible players as locals, potentially compromising the integrity that makes these lucrative opportunities possible.

"We have had cases of players allegedly born in hospitals that never existed, or with dual birthplaces. These abuses must be curbed before they damage the integrity of our game," warned the LeFA SG.

A call for sustainable development

While foreign coaches undeniably bring value that justifies their attractive packages, stakeholders agree that the long-term growth of Lesotho football requires a dual approach, leveraging international experience while uplifting local coaching talent to eventually compete for these lucrative positions.

"Our local coaches must improve their professionalism and learn from these expatriate mentors. Football is a continuous classroom, and our coaches must be willing students."

Lebajoa echoed these sentiments, urging LeFA to facilitate partnerships between international and local coaches, increase the number of foreign players allowed per club, and create pathways for local players to gain international exposure.

"The presence of foreign coaches and players creates healthy competition. Our players need to fight for their place, and that will naturally raise the level of our football," Lebajoa concluded.

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