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Matekane runs, but cannot hide

... Eventually faces the full force of public anger over jobs crisis

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

For the first time in his three years in office, Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane will today confront the full force of public anger as legions of factory workers march to deliver a petition demanding urgent government intervention to save jobs and struggling firms.

The protest, organised by a coalition of trade unions, underscores growing frustration over the government's inaction, broken promises, and bureaucratic delays that have left Lesotho's industrial workforce teetering on the brink of despair.

Workers say their livelihoods are under severe threat following U.S. executive orders and the imposition of reciprocal tariffs, compounded by the impending expiration of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the trade arrangement that sustains many of Lesotho's factories.

As global economic pressures mount, factory employees accuse Matekane's administration of leaving them to fend for themselves, even as Members of Parliament repeatedly raised the crisis in parliament.

The protest is led by a joint front of unions including the United Textile Employees Union (UNITE), Economic Freedom Trade Union (EFTU), National Clothing Textile and Allied Workers Union (NACTWU), Lesotho Workers Association (LEWA), Lentsoe la Sechaba Workers Union (LSWU), and the Mining Quarrying Allied Union (CMQ).

The unions claim the government dragged its feet for months in granting a permit to protest, prompting them to escalate their complaint to international bodies, who reportedly pressured Matekane's administration to respect the right to civic demonstrations.

They said they met all the requirements under the Public Meetings and Processions Act of 2010, yet the government continued to frustrate them. They even threatened to take the matter to court if a permit was not granted by October 31.

The economic pressure on workers stems in part from the uncertainty surrounding AGOA. Minister of Trade, Industry and Business Development Mokhehi Shelile assured parliament that the U.S.

government has promised a one-year extension of AGOA, following lobbying missions to Washington.

Shelile and Minister of Labour Tšeliso Mokho-si met with congressional representatives from both Republican and Democratic parties, as well as trade organisations such as the American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA), the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the American Fashion Industry Association.

However, controversy surrounded the delegation as one union representative, previously promised inclusion on the trip, was left behind due to what the government described as an administrative hiccup.

Yet, despite these high-level engagements, workers at home see no tangible relief, fueling anger and disillusionment.

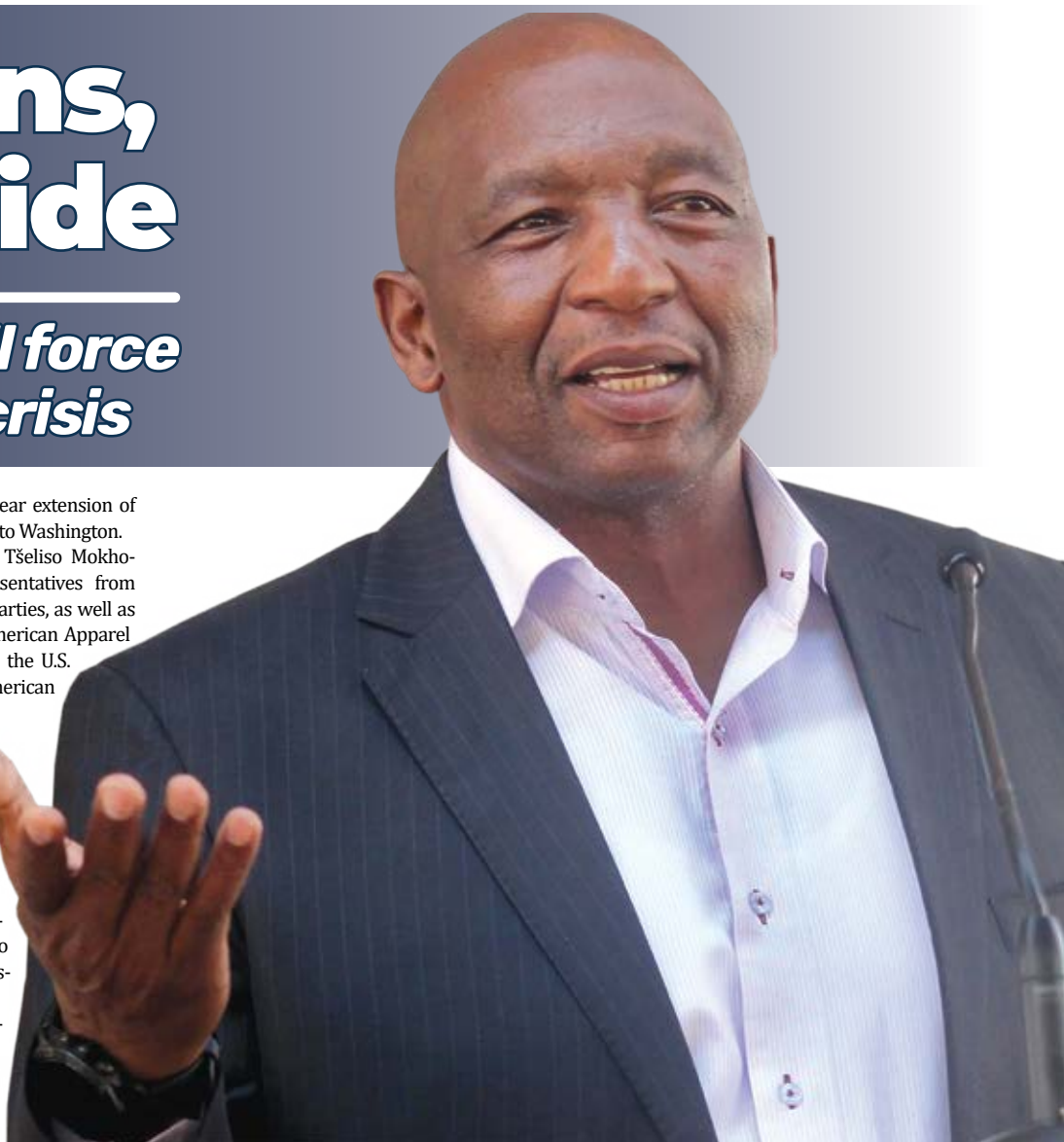
Factories remain critical employers in Lesotho, second only to government employment. According to a 2024 report by the Competitiveness and Financial Inclusion (CAFI) project, there are currently 42 operational firms in Lesotho: 14 from South Africa, 16 from Taiwan, six locally owned, and six by Chinese nationals.

For many, the stakes could not be higher: Factory closures and job losses would not only threaten family incomes but could also destabilise entire communities reliant on the textile and apparel sector.

This marks the first mass strike under the Matekane administration, which celebrated three years in office on Tuesday, October 28. Political undercurrents are evident. Basotho National Party (BNP) leader Machesetsa Mofomobe has called on citizens to participate in the protest "regardless of political affiliation" in the name of protecting the Constitution.

Conversely, government supporters are expected to largely abstain.

Adding to the tense atmosphere, armed soldiers



Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane

have been visibly deployed across Maseru, and reportedly surrounded union meetings in recent days, a move that critics describe as intimidation and an overreach of state power.

Earlier this year, when frustration among young Basotho reached boiling point and plans for a youth-led protest over skyrocketing unemployment were already underway, Prime Minister Matekane swiftly convened what he called a national youth dialogue at the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre in Maseru. The gathering, which was attended by hundreds of restless young people, government officials, and private sector representatives, was meant to calm growing anger and restore public confidence in his administration's commitment to job creation.

At that meeting, the Prime Minister sought to reassure the youth that his government had a

clear plan to curb unemployment and create new economic opportunities. In a bold declaration that sparked both hope and scepticism at a press conference ahead of the dialogue, Matekane announced that his government would create 70,000 jobs, a figure that was later revised to 62,000 during the dialogue. The adjustment, which came without a clear explanation, drew criticism from activists and opposition leaders who accused the government of inflating numbers to appease public outrage rather than offering concrete, time-bound solutions.

Months later, many of those who attended the dialogue say little has changed. The promised jobs remain elusive, and the factories that once absorbed thousands of low-skilled workers continue to close. For many young Basotho, the memory of that meeting has become a symbol of empty promises.

TB from unpasteurised dairy products could infect humans

Tumelo Taole

Lesotho continues to bear one of the highest tuberculosis (TB) burdens globally. According to the Ministry of Health, 664 out of every 100,000 Basotho are infected with TB.

With a population of just over two million, this translates to at least 15,000 people living with the disease. Experts warn that TB can be transmitted not only between humans but also between cows and humans, a concern especially for dairy farmers.

This was highlighted by South African consultant Ronald Raphoolo during a three-day training workshop for dairy farmers organised by the Lesotho National Dairy Board (LNDB) in Maseru on Monday.

The workshop aimed to equip dairy farmers with the knowledge and skills needed to improve

production, compete internationally and protect both human and animal health.

Raphoolo explained that unpasteurised milk from infected cows can transmit TB to humans.

He also warned about other zoonotic diseases, infectious illnesses that can pass between animals and humans.

"Zoonotic diseases are caused by viruses, bacteria, fungi, or parasites and can spread through direct contact, food, water, insects, or other vectors. Examples include rabies, salmonella, Lyme disease and influenza, which account for over 60 percent of human infectious diseases.

Brucellosis, another bacterial disease caused by Brucella bacteria, Raphoolo said, also poses a significant risk.

"It spreads through direct contact with infected animals or their fluids and by consuming unpas-

teurised milk or dairy products. Symptoms include fever, sweats, headaches and body aches, and in chronic cases, the disease can lead to long-term health issues such as joint pain or heart valve inflammation," he described.

The first day of the workshop emphasised that dairy farmers should exercise caution when handling livestock. Experts recommended that both humans and animals undergo health screenings at least once a year to prevent disease transmission.

Statistics from the 2019/2020 agricultural year by the Bureau of Statistics show that Lesotho had 330,726 cattle, 59% of which were female.

Most cattle were over two years old, with 105,117 males and 154,992 females.

Maseru had the largest cattle population (59,029), followed by Leribe (56,094), while Qacha's Nek had the fewest at 1,303.

During this period, 7,158 cattle died from various diseases, with anaplasmosis responsible for the highest number of deaths (2,119). Berea recorded the highest cattle mortality (2,060), while Quthing and Qacha's Nek recorded the lowest (97).

Dr. Llang Maama, head of the TB and Leprosy Department at the Ministry of Health, noted that while TB transmission from animals to humans and vice versa is possible, it has not yet been confirmed in Lesotho.

She noted that with improved testing mechanisms, the country's health system may determine the origins of TB variants in humans.

"With improved testing, the country may one day determine whether animals are a source of TB, but to this date, we aren't able to determine," she said.

She further highlighted the link between agriculture, nutrition and health outcomes, noting that poor agricultural practices and food insecurity can contribute to malnutrition, which in turn increases TB susceptibility and worsens treatment outcomes.

The Ministry of Health continues to advocate for community TB screening through programs in Advocacy, Communication, and Social Mobilisation (ACSM).

Newsday (+266) 2231 4267/ 5945 8983

Carlton Centre
3rd Floor
Room 302
Kingsway
Maseru

PUBLISHER
Newsday Media (Pty) (Ltd)
Maseru

MANAGING EDITOR
Lerato Matheka
managingeditor@newsdayonline.co.ls

NEWS EDITOR
Kananelo Boloetse
editor@newsdayonline.co.ls

SUB EDITOR
Bereng Mpaki

NEWS ROOM
Nisoaki Mofaung
Seabata Mahao
Thoboloko Ntšonyane

CONTRIBUTORS
Theko Tlebere
Motsamai Mokotjo

PRODUCTION
Bolokang Mahlo
Bataung Monaheng

VIDEOGRAPHER
Tumelo Taole

DISTRIBUTION
Lehlohonolo Mantsoe

MARKETING
Tefah Sello
Tumelo Ramotsoane
marketing@newsdayonline.co.ls

WEBSITE
www.newsdayonline.co.ls

FACEBOOK
Newsday Newspaper LS
X
@LsNewsday

INSTAGRAM
Newsday Lesotho

PRINTER
Thabure Media Group

Who will guide next elections?

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The Council of State is set to advise His Majesty King Letsie III to appoint new Commissioners for the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) as the current team’s five-year term comes to an end in December.

The move marks a crucial transition for one of Lesotho’s most vital democratic institutions, still reeling from past controversies that have cast doubt on its credibility.

Newsday has learned that the political parties have submitted a shortlist of five names to the Council of State for consideration. They include Dr John Maphephe, ‘Mamatlere Matete, Retšelisitsoe Mohale, Dr Monyane Chelete, and Dr Fako Likoti.

From this list, the Council will select three to be appointed by His Majesty King Letsie III in accordance with Section 66(4) of the Constitution.

“For the purpose of enabling the Council of State to select the names of persons to be submitted to the King under subsection (3), the Council shall request all registered political parties in accordance with the procedure agreed by them to jointly propose to the Council within a period of thirty days from the date specified by the Council, a list of not less than five names,” the constitution reads.

According to sources close to the process, 44 applications were received for the coveted positions, but four were disqualified for failing to meet eligibility requirements, notably, holding political or government posts

A consultant was engaged to assist with the evaluation, and after rigorous screening, 10 candidates were shortlisted for interviews.

According to sources involved in the process, a scoring system was used in which political parties controlled 70 percent of the marks, while 30 percent were assigned to the consultant’s inde-



Mr. Mphasa Mokhochane , IEC Chairman (Photo Credit - IEC)

pendent assessment.

After consolidation, the top five candidates emerged and were forwarded to the Council of State for final consideration.

The Council of State, which advises the King on such appointments, is now tasked with selecting three names to be formally appointed to the IEC, a decision expected to be announced in the coming weeks.

“The final decision now rests with the Council of State, which must apply its mind and advise His Majesty,” said a senior government source familiar with the recruitment process.

Among those who did not make the final cut is Dr Karabo Mokobocho-Mohlakoana, one of the current IEC Commissioners, who had been shortlisted but ultimately failed to secure a spot in the top five.

The current Commissioners, Mphasa Mok-

hochane (Chairperson), Tšoeu Petlane, and Dr Mokobocho-Mohlakoana, are nearing the end of their five-year term and have formally expressed interest in being reappointed. In their motivation letters, the trio argued that they have “faithfully served the nation” and wish to continue steering ongoing institutional reforms at the Commission.

Appointed in 2020, the three oversaw the 7 October 2022 general elections, which ushered in the current government.

Their leadership of that electoral process, however, was not without controversy — with questions raised over the Commission’s handling of proportional representation (PR) seat allocations and its subsequent admission of administrative errors.

In January 2023, three civic activists, Kananelo Boloetse, Motsamai Mokotjo, and Resetselemang Jane, wrote to the Council of State petitioning it

to advise the King to institute a tribunal to investigate the fitness of the Commissioners to hold office.

The trio accused the Commission of “undermining public trust” after it admitted to an error in the calculation of four PR seats in the 2022 elections. They argued that such an error compromised the integrity of the poll and demanded that the Commissioners be investigated under Section 66 of the Constitution.

Although the Council of State acknowledged receipt of the activists’ letter, the tribunal was not established. The IEC, for its part, maintained that the error was an “administrative oversight” and not an act of misconduct.

Despite these challenges, the IEC has sought to position itself as a forward-looking institution. In 2023, it unveiled a Strategic Plan for 2024–2028, outlining a vision for strengthening election management and restoring public confidence.

The 54-page document, rooted in Section 66A of the Constitution, sets out the Commission’s constitutional duty to ensure that both national and local elections are held regularly, and that they remain free and fair.

In launching the strategy, Chairperson Mokhochane described it as a “roadmap for the future of election management,” pledging to improve transparency and deepen stakeholder engagement. The plan includes measurable targets such as maintaining a 95 percent updated voters’ roll and achieving at least 75 percent voter turnout by the end of the strategy period.

Former IEC Chairperson Advocate Leshele Thoahlane commended the initiative, saying it demonstrated a renewed commitment to credible elections. He encouraged the IEC to collaborate with institutions like the National University of Lesotho (NUL) to expand civic and voter education, arguing that public awareness remains a cornerstone of democratic participation.

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Rising HIV infections spark alarm in Thaba Tseka

Ntsoaki Motaung

HIV infections are on the rise in Thaba Tseka, raising alarm among local leaders and health officials who warn that urgent interventions are needed to prevent further escalation.

Member of Parliament for Thaba Tseka, Mamamello Holomo, revealed that she became aware of the disturbing trend just before Parliament closed for the winter holidays.

"I had intended to sit with the District Medical Officer to review the data, which has shocked many people. But we have not yet met. We want to find the root cause be-

cause this is all new," Holomo said.

Holomo cited child marriage as a key factor driving the rise in infections. "When children marry, they often lack the knowledge or courage to discuss safe sex with their partners or families, especially if married to older men. If the mother is infected and pregnant without knowing it, the child is also put at risk," she explained.

District Medical Officer Ngaka Joseph Mashale emphasised that the increase in HIV cases is linked to broader social issues. "Many children do not attend school, and their main form of entertainment becomes sexual relationships, contributing to new infections. Poverty also makes young girls

particularly vulnerable, often trading sex for money or food," he said.

Mashale warned that low condom use and high rates of early and unintended pregnancies, currently at 32 percent, the highest in the country, are exacerbating the situation. "High teenage pregnancy rates indicate unsafe sexual practices, which inevitably fuel new HIV infections," he noted. He also highlighted the district's ongoing struggles with syphilis and hepatitis B.

District Administrator Tlali Mphafi corroborated the concerns raised by Holomo and Mashale, attributing part of the rise to an influx of people moving to the district due to ongoing development projects.

However, preliminary data from the National AIDS Commission (NAC) suggests that Thaba Tseka's HIV prevalence rate stands at 16.10 percent, placing it below heavily affected districts such as Maseru (18.20 percent) and Mafeteng (18.10 percent).

With an estimated 16,000 people living with HIV, Thaba Tseka is considered one of the lesser-burdened districts nationally.

Still, officials insist that complacency could be dangerous. "Even if the prevalence is relatively low, the upward trend is worrying. Immediate action is needed to address the social and structural factors driving new infections," Mashale stressed.

Lesotho launches second joint external evaluation to bolster health security



Ntsoaki Motaung

Lesotho has embarked on its Second Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of core capacities for implementing the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), signaling a renewed commitment to national, regional, and global health security.

The voluntary evaluation provides an independent assessment of the country's ability to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats.

The week-long evaluation was marked by opening statements from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Ministry of Health, and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), all highlighting the importance of a multi-sectoral approach in strengthening the nation's health system.

Dr. 'Makhoase Ranyali, Director General of the Ministry of Health, delivered a comprehensive presentation detailing Lesotho's health infrastructure and key challenges. With a population of roughly 2

million spread across 30,000 square kilometers, she noted that the country's varied terrain makes access to health services difficult.

The health system comprises 310 facilities, including 21 government and Christian Health Association of Lesotho (CHAL) hospitals, four private hospitals, and 281 health centers.

Ranyali highlighted progress made under the IHR (2005), presenting findings from the 2024 State Party Annual Report (SPAR), which show Lesotho has achieved 42 percent of the core capacities, below the African regional average of 46 percent and the global average of 59 percent.

She expressed confidence that the country is on track to improve this score significantly over the next five years, noting strong performance in ports of entry, food safety, and health emergency surveillance, all scoring around 80 percent.

However, she warned of high-risk areas marked "very red" on the country's risk assessment, including antimicrobial resist-

ance, rabies, violent conflicts, accidents, and gastrointestinal and foodborne diseases. Seasonal threats, such as rabies in winter, were also flagged.

Ranyali also highlighted persistent health challenges, including a high teenage pregnancy rate of 17 percent, with the highest incidence in Thaba Tseka district, and stunting in children under five, which has risen to 36 percent. On a positive note, Lesotho has exceeded the global 95-95-95 targets for HIV epidemic control.

Dr. Innocent Nuwagira, WHO Representative, praised Lesotho for volunteering for a second JEE, calling it a demonstration of transparency, accountability, and cross-sector collaboration.

He reflected on the first JEE in 2017, which found only 14.6 percent of core capacities at the demonstrated level, informing the National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) 2018-2024. Despite financing challenges, only 7.9 percent of the required investment was secured, funding from the Pandemic Fund in 2025 is expect-

ed to accelerate progress.

Mantsoanelo Monyobi, Deputy Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Health, reinforced the government's commitment, stressing that whole-of-government engagement is fundamental, not optional.

Monyobi noted that the JEE coincides with a review of the National Health Policy, which emphasises IHR 2005 compliance and promotes transparency, peer learning, and mutual accountability.

Batsirai Mbodza, Deputy Regional Coordinating Centre Representative for Africa CDC, commended Lesotho's efforts, noting that strengthening the Kingdom's health capacities enhances security for the entire Southern Africa region. Africa CDC has pledged continued support to translate JEE recommendations into a robust new National Action Plan for Health Security.

The evaluation is expected to yield critical recommendations to guide Lesotho's future health security strategy, positioning the country to better respond to both endemic and emerging public health threats.

Ministry of Health’s missteps leave patients at risk

Staff Reporter

The already floundering Ministry of Health continues to make decisions that could be described as digging its own grave.

Earlier this month, the ministry advertised the long-vacant position of Director General of Health Services, a role tasked with steering the nation’s health sector through leadership, strategy, policy formulation, program oversight, and budget management.

The qualifications are exacting: a PhD in a medical field or public health with five years in management, or a master’s degree with 10–15 years’ managerial experience, among other alternatives.

But as the application deadline of November 3, 2025, looms, one of the few candidates with the requisite expertise, ophthalmologist Dr. Wenjun Fan, has been suspended.

Dr. Fan, one of fewer than three doctors in Lesotho holding a PhD, was sidelined for allegedly disclosing confidential information to the media. His suspension, effective October 24, 2025, to January 24, 2026, with full pay, prevents him from attending work or even entering ministry premises without written permission.

This move effectively sabotages his chances for the coveted post.

Section 20 of the Lesotho Constitution protects the right to participate in public affairs. This includes the right to hold public office or take part in government or administrative functions, subject to the law.



Ministry of Health HeadQuarters

In other words, citizens who are qualified should be able to compete for positions and perform their duties in public service.

If shortlisted or eventually selected, he must seek special permission just to attend interviews or assume duty, a bureaucratic quagmire that no one else faces.

This effectively sidelines him from the race before it even begins.

The timing could not be worse. With the closing date for applications fast approaching, Dr. Fan is left at a disadvantage not because of lack of skill or experience, but because of an administrative decision

that isolates him from the process.

Fan’s absence also leaves Lesotho with just one practicing ophthalmologist. The human cost of sidelining this expert is immediate and tangible.

Meanwhile, his warnings about systemic failures at Maseru District Hospital (MDH) have proven prescient.

In a letter to Medical Superintendent Dr. ‘Mabatho Masupha, Fan detailed miscommunication between staff and management, departmental meetings held without the knowledge of Heads of Departments, and dangerous directives placing patients’ lives at risk.

He accused the superintendent of instructing him to refer patients with simple eye conditions, correctable with spectacles, to Queen ‘Mamohato Memorial Hospital (QMMH) or even to Bloemfontein.

He also highlighted improper patient admissions, already resulting in at least one death.

“As the eye consultant, I can only see 30 to 40 patients a day,” Dr. Fan explained. “With two ophthalmic nurses, we could manage up to 100. Without support, it is impossible.” Yet hospital management, he claims, deliberately restricted nurse assistance, effectively dismantling the eye team and forcing him to limit consultations.

Patients who spoke to this publication have corroborated the dysfunction.

One patient described being attended to by a rude nurse at the eye clinic, only to find prescribed medication unavailable, confirmation of supply shortages.

Administrative chaos extends to the Dental and ENT departments, where patients face pre-dawn queues, hours-long waits, and abrupt interruptions.

Negligence and misdiagnosis have exacted a human toll. A patient recounted being misdiagnosed and sent home with a drip needle improperly inserted, a horrifying ordeal handled with apparent indifference.

Tragically, the system’s failures allegedly claimed the life of Malebuli Bolofo’s brother; admitted for the flu and later undergoing lung surgery for pulmonary edema.

Despite signs of recovery, he died due to inadequate post-operative care.

“I suspect my brother passed because he did not receive the care he was supposed to get after the operation,” Bolofo said. “If it had been handled properly, he would be alive today.”

Three years after the storm, Ha-Long residents get new homes



Thoboloko Nšonyane

Three years after violent storms swept through Ha-Long village in Mantšonyane, destroying homes and leaving families destitute, Au Moleko and his neighbours are finally seeing a glimmer of hope.

In 2022, a storm transformed the usually clear skies into dark, menacing clouds. Winds grew stronger by the minute, ripping through the village, uprooting roofs, and leaving Moleko’s two rondavels in ruins.

“We ran for shelter, but it was too late. Our houses were destroyed in minutes,” he recalled. Neighbours faced similar devastation, with roofing sheets blown away and families left with nothing.

The aftermath forced Moleko, a widower, to share a single room with his son and daughter-in-law, compromising the family’s privacy and creating awkward living conditions.

Unemployed at the time, he had no means to rebuild his home. The small, shared space became a daily reminder of the loss they endured.

Hope returned in March this year when the Disaster Management Authority (DMA), a government agency tasked with disaster prevention, mitigation, and recovery, delivered a new two-roomed house to Moleko.

“Seeing the foundation being dug was the first hope I felt in years,” he said. “This house is more than a roof over our heads. It is a place to preserve memories, find warmth, and feel a sense of belonging.”

While the house is yet to be furnished and powered, Moleko is determined to make it a home filled with hope and new beginnings. “I want to thank the government for building houses for me and my four neighbours. We reported this matter to the chief and

councillors, and construction started in December, ending in February this year. May God grant favour to this government so that it does not discriminate against us, the citizens,” he said.

The storm’s devastation was a stark reminder of

the vulnerability of rural communities to natural disasters. For Moleko, the new house marks not just physical restoration but the start of a new chapter, one that promises resilience, hope, and the chance to rebuild life for his family.



Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition
P.O. Box 24
Maseru 100
Lesotho
Tel: (+266) 22322741

Letter of Invitation

October 31, 2025

1. The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho through Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition intends to test the Agricultural Soil in Lesotho for Enhanced Agricultural Productivity.

2. The **Principal Secretary for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition** now invites **“Technical and Financial Proposals in SEPARATE envelopes”** to provide the following services: **Testing of Agricultural Soil in Lesotho for Enhanced Agricultural Productivity**. More details on the services are provided in the Request for Proposals (RFP) referred to under 5 below.

3. The technical proposal shall clearly demonstrate your understanding of the expected outputs, your proposed approach to the services involved, necessary equipment, your comments on the Scope of Work, your relevant experience, and you will be expected to provide detailed and updated curricula vitae for the proposed key personnel for carrying out the assignment. The financial proposal should clearly reflect the breakdown of your fees and all other associated costs for carrying out the assignment.

4. A Service Provider will be selected in accordance with the current Government Public Procurement Regulations 2025 and Public Procurement Act 2023 and the procedures described in the RFP. A firm will be selected under Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method as stipulated in this Request for Proposals (RFP).

5. Detailed RFP is available at the address indicated.

6. Your sealed proposals should be submitted at the following address by **12:00 noon on November 27, 2025**

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, Corner Constitution and Linare Roads, P. O. Box 24, Maseru 100, Lesotho. Tel: (+266) 22322741. Attention: **Procurement Manager**.

7. The submissions should be clearly marked: **“(Testing of Agricultural Soil in Lesotho for Enhanced Agricultural Productivity)”**. It is the Service Providers’ responsibility to ensure that their proposals are received on or before the closing date whether posted or hand delivered.

8. The selection criteria shall take both technical quality and costs into consideration to determine the overall preferred Service Provider. Therefore, it should be noted that technical proposals will be opened first and evaluated and only those companies attaining the technical scores above the minimum pass mark will qualify for financial proposals opening and evaluation.

9. Interested Service Providers from different firms may submit as an association or partnerships or joint ventures provided, they submit a letter of intent signed by all parties with a clear indication of the representative of such association or partnership or joint venture.



Glowing tributes for outgoing Accountant General

Seabata Mahao

The accounting fraternity bid an emotional farewell to Accountant General 'Malehlohonolo Mahase at a ceremony held in Maseru yesterday, marking the end of an era defined by excellence, integrity, and visionary leadership in Lesotho's public finance management.

The event, hosted by Cadre Accountants, drew senior officials from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, colleagues, and peers from the accounting profession, all of whom paid glowing tributes to Mahase's outstanding service and leadership.

In her address at the farewell ceremony, the acting Accountant General Hlompho Matsoso described Mahase as a "pillar of strength" who elevated Lesotho's accounting profession to international recognition.

"She held everything together and worked tirelessly to put accountants from Lesotho on the map. She leaves us with the knowledge and skills to be calm when things get tough. It is now our duty to carry her baton forward," Matsoso said.

"She was young when she took over, but she knew her work and handled every challenge with calm professionalism. She stabilised the system during upgrades and ensured operations ran smoothly.

"Accountants are often disliked for insisting on accountability, but with her, we walked that path proudly. She put Lesotho on the international map and helped us host the AAAG conference with excellence," he added.

Matsoso concluded his remarks by saying; "Mahase has shown us what leadership rooted in service looks like. We owe it to her legacy to sustain the standards she set and continue building an accountable financial future for Lesotho."

On her part, Director of Finance Expenditure and Acting Deputy Accountant General – Expenditure, Retšepile Mosenene, commended Mahase's leadership and ability to inspire her team.

"She led a very demanding department, yet she made the Treasury feel like home. We found warmth, understanding, and respect, even from our international counterparts," Mosenene said.

"When she arrived, the office was in chaos, filled with piles of pink papers. But she brought order, gave us direction, and moulded us into professionals. She has left a legacy we will uphold with pride."

In her address, the outgoing Mahase reflected on the challenges and milestones that defined her tenure in office.

"When I was appointed, I did not think I had the experience or maturity for the role. But when God wants to use you, He qualifies you," she said.

"I arrived in October 2019, right in the



The outgoing, Accountant General 'Malehlohonolo Mahase

middle of the teachers' protests and the 'no work, no pay' standoff. On my very first day, I was summoned to Parliament to explain why teachers had not been paid. Fortunately, I had already done my research."

She went on to recount some of the defining moments of her six-year tenure that comprised two consecutive three-year terms.

"The following year brought Covid-19, then the IFMIS system crash. The next year, we dealt with a fraud case involving M50 million, and later, the M6.1 billion saga. But through it all, you made me shine. You supported me day and night. When God wants to use you, He gives you strength, wisdom, and people who stand by you."

Mahase also expressed pride in Lesotho's rising prominence within the continental accounting community.

continent. Keep up the great work. We used to read the newspapers every Friday and say, 'We have not appeared in the papers, it means God is still protecting us,'" she said.

Appointed as Accountant General in 2019, Mahase's tenure was marked by transformative reforms, innovation, and strengthened accountability within the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

She also served on several key national boards, including the National Health Training Centre, the Public Officers' Defined Contribution Pension Fund, Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital, and the National Drug Services Organisation.

Beyond national service, she represented Lesotho in the Eastern and Southern Association of Accountants General (ESSAG), where she served on the board, and made history as the founding Chairperson of the African Association of Accountants General (AAAG), a position she held until October 2025.

Born on 22 March 1987 in Mokhotlong, Mahase's academic and professional journey has been characterised by determination and excellence. She attended St. James Primary and High Schools, where she achieved national recognition by ranking seventh in the 2003 Form E examinations.

She later pursued her accounting studies at the Centre for Accounting Studies (CAS) between 2004 and 2009, qualifying as a Certified Accounting Technician, General Accountant, and Chartered Accountant. She is currently completing an MBA with the University of the Free State in South Africa.

Her professional career began at Moor-Rowland in 2006, where she rose to the position of Audit Manager before joining the Lesotho Institute of Accountants (LIA) in 2009. At LIA, she advanced to become Chief Executive Officer from 2014 to 2017. She also lectured part-time at CAS, teaching ACCA, CIPFA, and CIMA programmes.

Mahase later founded Tirong Chartered Accountants, a firm dedicated to nurturing local accounting talent and promoting ethical financial management in the corporate sector. Her international outlook and commitment to integrity earned her selection as a Mandela Washington Fellow at Georgia State University in the United States, a testament to her exemplary leadership.

ESTATE NOTICE

Notice in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024

ESTATE LATE TS'EPANG NEPHTHALLY MAFA E1358/2025

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 37 of the administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024 calling upon surviving spouse, the heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend a meeting before the Master of the High Court at the office of the Master of the High Court, in Maseru on **MANDAY, 27TH OCTOBER 2025** at 09:00 am for the purpose of:

Proposing some person/ persons to be appointed by the Master as Executor dating.

Dated at Maseru this **11th SEPTEMBER 2025**

Master of the High Court Office

Magistrate Court Building

Maseru

NOTICE TO CHANGE COMPANY NAME

Notice is hereby given that Bokamoso HR Consulting (PTY)LTD is changing its name to Cornerstone Consulting Group (PTY)LTD.

All persons having objection to the name change are hereby requested to lodge such objection in writing to the Ministry of Trade and Industry at the Registrar of Companies.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Director of Shiny Tobacco Distributors Ltd, Mr. Phooхло Tlekerese, wishes to inform the public that the company is undergoing liquidation.

For further information or clarification, please contact:

(+266) 6330 7740 / 5973 4096



Peer power: How Lesotho students drive HPV vaccine uptake



HPV Vaccine Beneficiaries

Ntsoaki Motaung

The schoolyard, often a stage for teaching, learning and the latest trends, is now an unlikely but powerful frontline in Lesotho’s fight against Human Papillomavirus (HPV).

Beyond the health clinic posters and radio announcements, a soft revolution is taking place, driven by the simple, convincing power of children sharing their vaccination stories.

Lesotho has made remarkable strides in protecting its young girls from the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), the leading cause of cervical cancer.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), since re-launching a nationwide campaign in 2022, the Ministry of Health, with support from the WHO and partners, has achieved an impressive 93 percent HPV vaccine coverage among girls aged 9 to 14, surpassing its 90 percent target.

This success is a testament not only to robust public health systems but also to a hidden hero, the positive influence of children on their peers and, crucially, on their parents.

For students like Moleboheng Mphenetha, 12 years from Ha Paki, who attends school at Paki Primary school, the message about the HPV vaccine was clear and personal. “I was told that I should get vaccinated so that as I grow older, I should not get HPV.”

Mphenetha received her first dose at Paki Primary School during an outreach by Paki Health Center in 2022 and her second in 2024, reporting no negative side effects.

Her experience did not stop with her own protection; it became a mission. “She has done much to make sure that she encourages other students to get vaccinated,” says her aunt Lineo Pelebe, who was also an early source of information, having heard about the vaccine’s importance on the radio.

This combination of institutional messaging from the school and a reinforcing message at home empowered Mphenetha to become a vaccine champion among her friends.

Another student from Paki Primary School, Maleshoene Mosiee, 11 years of Ha Rajoko, recalls the moment she decided to

get vaccinated in January.

“We were told by the school before that on that particular day, we were expected to bring along our health booklets.”

Though she felt a passing fatigue and sleepiness afterward, a common mild side effect, she woke up fine, “as if nothing happened.”

What is compelling about Mosiee’s story is the clear chain of influence: School → Child → Parent → Peers.

“I told my mother, who had no objection but gave me the booklet and also kept reminding me that I had to get vaccinated,” she recounts.

Her influence then spread to her classmates. “To my friends, I just told them that my mother said we should vaccinate because we will not get HPV, and my friends got vaccinated, although we were afraid that the vaccines would be painful.”

This straightforward, relatable motivation from a trusted classmate, an appeal for shared protection and mutual bravery, was enough to overcome any fear of the needle.

The positive uptake is anchored in the relief felt by parents who have seen the devastating impact of HPV.

Morongoe Nkoti, years, a mother from Matukeng, embodies this sentiment. “I happily agreed for my daughter to receive the cervical cancer vaccination because I was aware of the gravity of the situation of cancer in the country,” she says.

Lesotho faces a serious cancer burden, with an estimated 541 women diagnosed



One of the girls who received HPV Vaccine

and 362 dying from cervical cancer each year. The country logged an incidence of 49.9 cases per 100,000 women in 2020.

This alarming reality is what makes the vaccine’s promise so compelling to parents.

“I believe it is with vaccines like HPV that we will be able to protect our children against the disease, which is said to have taken the lives of many women,” Nkoti affirms.

She adds a key insight on the peer dynamic: “Our children can also influence other parents to get their children vaccinated when they tell them about their own experiences after being vaccinated.”

For these parents, their daughters getting the vaccine is “everything” a collective sigh of relief and a decisive step toward a future free from this preventable cancer.

The success of the campaign centers on smooth collaboration between the health system and the education sector.

‘Maseutloali Morebotsane, the Principal of Matukeng Primary School, notes the real influence of the students themselves. She believes that peer pressure in schools, where one student encourages others to get vaccinated, can dramatically boost coverage.

“If one girl is vaccinated and goes back home, where she tells her experience with the vaccine to other parents or her peers, it can motivate other parents to allow their children to be vaccinated,” Morebotsane explains.

She proudly reports that all eligible girls at Matukeng Primary School have been vaccinated.

Nthakoana Mokeretla, the Nurse-in-

Charge at Matukeng Health Center, commends the groundwork laid by others. The health center, which serves more girls in primary schools, has reached its target, a feat she attributes to the key work of village health workers.

‘Matumelo Tumo, 43 years, a village health worker, confirms this crucial role. “When it comes to HPV, our work is to raise awareness about cervical cancer and let parents make the decisions for their children. But since parents have been receiving the message very well, that is why we have many girls vaccinated,” she states.

This extensive awareness campaign, often supported by messages from the Ministry of Health and its partners through the media, ensures parents are informed even before their children bring home the message that there will be a vaccination campaign at school and that they should seek permission from their parents.

Mokeretla agrees that peer-to-peer influence is effective, especially in an environment where parental refusal can be high. “In our area, we have not experienced the challenge of parents refusing to allow their children to be vaccinated. I believe this is because there has been much awareness or parents are seeing the deadliness of cervical cancer caused by HPV. The students are essentially the final, most trusted messengers,” she says.

Lesotho’s success in achieving 93 percent coverage by vaccinating over 139,000 girls since 2022 is a model for how a targeted health intervention can be amplified by social dynamics.

The story offers clear lessons on how positive peer pressure can be deliberately and effectively leveraged, creating platforms for vaccinated students to share their brief, positive experiences, not just the medical facts, with their classmates in a supportive, non-mandatory setting.

The Ministry of Health should also continue to clearly link the HPV vaccine to Lesotho’s goal of eliminating cervical cancer, as envisioned by the WHO’s Global Strategy.

Suzan Ramakhunoane from the Department of Family Health at the Ministry of Health says the Ministry has good collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Training. Together, they have developed, printed, and disseminated a School Health and Nutrition Strategy to ease the process of providing health services in schools.

“We have established structures together, District Immunisation Steering Committees (DISC) to plan together, get reports, and coordinate the health and nutrition work in schools,” she said.

She noted that people mostly seek advice and listen to their peers. “Our target for HPV vaccination is adolescents, who we have seen mostly copying their peers. If people look up to and believe in vaccines, then our uptake is positively affected and vice versa,” she said.

Ramakhunoane further emphasised that laws and regulations governing child protection should be strengthened to protect children from parents who prevent them from getting vaccines and other health services.

This story was supported by the Pabal-lo-ee-Bophelo.

LHWP Phase II: Progress, challenges and the promise of transformation



Staff Reporter

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) says while construction on Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) has experienced delays, the project remains firmly on course to deliver lasting benefits for Lesotho and its people.

Speaking during a press club earlier this month, LHDA Chief Executive, Tente Tente, acknowledged that progress has been slower than planned but assured that the project will “finish stronger,” emphasising that lessons from Phase I have shaped a more transparent, inclusive, and development-driven approach this time around. “We started slowly, but I think we will finish stronger. Looking at the overall progress, the planned progress is about 57 percent, while the actual progress is 48 percent. This says we are about 10 percent behind schedule,” Tente told reporters.

A nation's lifeline and economic anchor

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), a bi-national undertaking between Lesotho and South Africa, is one of Africa's most ambitious transboundary water transfer and hydropower initiatives. Conceived under the 1986 Treaty, its primary objective is to transfer water from Lesotho's highlands to South Africa's industrial heartland while generating hydroelectric power for Lesotho.

Phase I, completed in two parts (1A and 1B), gave birth to Katse and Mphahle dams, tunnels, and the Muela Hydropower Station, which now generates nearly half of Lesotho's domestic electricity needs.

Phase II, currently underway, includes the construction of the Polihali Dam in Mokhotlong, a 38-kilometre transfer tunnel to Katse, access roads, bridges, and the expansion of power generation capacity. Once complete, the project will significantly increase water exports to South Africa, while boosting local infrastructure, employment, and socio-economic development in Lesotho.

Behind the schedule but moving forward Despite progress across multiple fronts, the LHDA Chief Executive admitted that the project

is behind schedule in key construction areas. The bridge construction works are 91 percent complete, compared to the planned 97 percent.

The transfer tunnel, which will connect Polihali Dam to Katse, is at 46 percent completion instead of the expected 53 percent. The dam construction, the centrepiece of Phase II, is furthest behind, sitting at 37 percent against the planned 50 percent.

Still, Tente remained optimistic.

“The dam is beginning to take shape; the rock fill is now visible. About five million cubic metres of rock have already been moved, which is 38 percent of the intended 14 million cubic metres,” he said.

Jobs and local participation

Employment generation remains one of the most visible impacts of the LHWP. So far, 16,380 workers have been hired, with 91 percent being Basotho.

“We are often accused of employing foreign workers, but that is less than 10 percent,” Tente said. “We live in a global village where countries export skills. We also have many Basotho working abroad, it is the same principle.”

Within Mokhotlong district, where most of the Phase II works are taking place, 7,583 locals, nearly half of the total workforce, have been employed. “Naturally, it is easier to hire people living close to the project area,” Tente explained.

Resettlement and compensation: Lessons from Phase I

One of the most sensitive aspects of the project has always been compensation and resettlement, as thousands of households and graves have had to be relocated to make way for dams, tunnels, and infrastructure.

Tente said that Phase II has introduced a more meticulous compensation process after acknowledging weaknesses during Phase I. The LHDA has rolled out an asset verification system to document affected properties, including photographs, sizes, and ownership details.

To date, 12,843 verification forms have been completed, with 7,456 captured digitally. Of these, 93 percent have already been paid, while



the remaining cases are pending due to disputes, lack of identification, or unresolved family ownership issues.

On resettlement, about 36 percent of households in construction zones have already been relocated. Around 400 graves have been moved so far, with nearly 1,000 more expected to be relocated from areas that will be inundated once the dam fills.

Economic impact and legacy of the LHWP

Since its inception, the LHWP has stood as one of the most transformative undertakings in the history of the Kingdom of Lesotho. Conceived in partnership with South Africa, the project was designed not only to transfer water from the highlands of Lesotho to the Vaal River system but also to generate hydroelectric power for Lesotho and stimulate national development. Decades later, its legacy continues to shape the country's economy, infrastructure, and livelihoods.

According to Tente, the LHWP has contributed immensely to Lesotho's socio-economic progress and remains a cornerstone of the country's development story. Speaking during a Phase II progress update on October 10, 2025, he described the project's economic impact in terms both tangible and transformative.

He revealed that cumulative royalty revenues paid by South Africa to Lesotho now exceed M19 billion, with monthly inflows averaging between M300 million and M400 million. These royalties, he explained, are deposited directly into Lesotho's Consolidated Fund, from which the government finances national priorities such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

“These figures are not just numbers,” Tente said, “they represent schools built, hospitals staffed, families sustained, and national development funded through this project's legacy.”

Under Phase I of the LHWP, the achievements were far-reaching. Tente reported that 1,000 kilometres of road networks were constructed, opening up once-isolated highland regions to trade, services, and opportunity. The project also generated employment for 16,000 Basotho, who collectively earned over M1 billion in wages during the initial construction phase. In addition, more than 40 classrooms were built across 16 schools, and several new health facilities were established to serve resettled and nearby communities.

Local enterprise was another area of measurable impact. Basotho-owned contractors and suppliers, Tente said, benefitted through procurement and service contracts worth over M1.2 billion, ensuring that a significant share of the project's economic footprint remained within the domestic economy. This, he added,

helped nurture a local construction and services industry that continues to play an active role in national infrastructure projects.

Beyond these immediate financial gains, the

commerce between Lesotho's highlands and lowlands, stimulating local trade and tourism.

For Tente, these outcomes underscore a deeper truth about the LHWP, that it is not merely an



project's impact has extended to institutional and human-capital development. The implementation of the LHWP has fostered the growth of skilled labour in engineering, environmental management, and project administration, creating a generation of professionals capable of managing complex national projects.

The accompanying investment in roads, bridges, and utilities has also opened new corridors of

engineering venture, but a nation-building enterprise.

“Since the inception of the LHWP,” he said, “we have not just seen the construction of world-class infrastructure, but also human progress, livelihoods transformed, and communities relocated with care.”

In his view, the figures tell a broader story of a project that continues to finance Lesotho's devel-

opment while symbolising the country's resilience and partnership with its neighbour, South Africa. The revenues generated have strengthened Lesotho's fiscal position, while the infrastructure built under Phase I laid the foundation for the more ambitious Phase II, now underway in Mokhotlong.

Phase II: Continuing the development story

In Phase II, 296 households are earmarked for relocation, with 21 already resettled and compensated. The total compensation bill across all project phases now exceeds M6 billion — M470 million of which was paid during Phase I, and M160 million already disbursed under Phase II.

“Beyond compensation, the project has been the cornerstone of Lesotho's physical strength,” said Tente. “These figures are not just numbers; they represent schools built, hospitals staffed, families sustained, and national development funded.”

Protecting credibility and public trust

Tente emphasised that LHDA's continued success depends not only on technical expertise but also on public trust and transparent communication.

“A reputation for an organization like ours would not be great if it is not anchored in credibility, transparency, and integrity,” he said. “When reputation falters, the benefits that flow to Lesotho — royalties, jobs, livelihoods — can easily be lost.”

He urged journalists and the public to understand that the LHDA is more than an engineering entity; it is a symbol of partnership, progress, and national resilience.

“LHDA is not just an engineering masterpiece; it is a symbol of partnership between nations, institutions, and people. Beyond the machinery and cement, what will endure is trust, and trust is built, sustained, and protected by the stories that we write.”

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project at a glance

The project's scope encompasses a series of dams, tunnels, and hydropower stations, as well as supporting infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and social development facilities. It is administered by the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) on Lesotho's side, and by the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) on South Africa's side.

Phase I: Completed foundations of a landmark project

Phase I, which commenced in the late 1980s and was completed in the early 2000s, laid the foundation for what would become one of the most significant water infrastructure systems



on the African continent. It consisted of two sub-phases: Phase IA and Phase IB.

Phase IA saw the construction of the Katse Dam, a 185-metre-high double-curvature concrete arch dam, one of the highest in Africa, and the Muela Hydropower Station, which supplies nearly half of Lesotho's domestic electricity needs. This phase also included a 45-kilometre transfer tunnel from Katse Dam to Muela and a 37-kilometre delivery tunnel to South Africa.

Phase IB expanded the system through the construction of the Mphahle Dam, located on the Senquyane River, and a transfer tunnel connecting Mphahle to Katse. Collectively, these works created a vast water-transfer and energy network that now supplies around 780 million cubic metres of water annually to South Africa.

Beyond dams and tunnels, Phase I had a profound infrastructural and socio-economic footprint in Lesotho. The project brought the construction of approximately 1,000 kilometres of roads, opening previously inaccessible highland regions to trade, tourism, and public services. It also generated thousands of jobs and spurred the creation of new businesses, laying the groundwork for Lesotho's integration into regional development networks.

Phase II: Building on the legacy

The second phase of the LHWP, now underway, is designed to expand the system's capacity and long-term sustainability. Phase II includes the construction of the Polihali Dam, situated in the Mokhotlong district at the confluence of the Khebelu and Senqu rivers. Once complete, Polihali will create a reservoir with a capacity of approximately 2.3 billion cubic metres, and will significantly increase the volume of water transferred to South Africa each year.

A key component of Phase II is the Polihali-Katse Transfer Tunnel, a 38-kilometre underground conduit that will connect the new dam to the existing Katse reservoir, effectively integrating it into the established Phase I system. Alongside these major structures, the project also entails the construction of access roads, bridges, and other supporting infrastructure required for transport, logistics, and community development in the project area.

In addition to water infrastructure, Phase II

includes plans for power system expansion to enhance Lesotho's energy generation capacity and reduce reliance on imported electricity. The broader vision is to make Lesotho not only self-sufficient in power but eventually a net exporter of clean, renewable hydroelectric energy within the Southern African region.

Partnership and financing

The LHWP is governed by a binational treaty and jointly managed institutions that ensure mutual benefit and accountability between the two countries. The Government of Lesotho and the Government of South Africa each finance and manage different components of the project: South Africa primarily funds the water-transfer infrastructure, while Lesotho assumes responsibility for the hydroelectric power component.

Funding for Phase II is drawn from a combination of loans, grants, and revenues generated from ongoing water transfers under Phase I. The financial structure reflects the project's hybrid nature, a development initiative with both commercial and social dimensions. International partners, including development finance institutions and commercial banks, have also provided support in the form of concessional loans and technical assistance.

Timeline and outlook

Construction on Phase II officially began in 2019, with major contracts awarded for the Polihali Dam, the transfer tunnel, and related works. According to the LHDA, the project is expected to be completed by 2028, though Tente has noted that progress timelines are subject to adjustment due to various logistical and environmental factors.

When fully completed, the LHWP will deliver significant long-term benefits: increased water-transfer capacity to South Africa, sustained royalty income for Lesotho, enhanced electricity production, and a stronger foundation for national infrastructure and human development.

The project's scale and scope have made it a model for transboundary water cooperation in Africa, an example of how shared natural resources can be harnessed for regional stability and mutual prosperity.



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Kingdom of Lesotho



LESOTHO LOWLANDS
WATER DEVELOPMENT AND SANITATION PROJECT III
Economic Trade Water

SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION FOR

SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT FOR TWO HYDROMETRIC STATIONS

Name of Project: **Lesotho Lowlands Water Development and Sanitation Project III (LLWDSP III)**

Project ID No: **P-LS-E009-008**

Loan Number: **2100150043397**

LCB NO: **LS-LLWDPIII-0050-GO-LCB**

Date: **23rd October 2025.**

Request for Quotation (RFQ) Method.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Procurement Division Lesotho Lowlands Water Development and Sanitation Project Phase III, LNDC Development House, Block D level 9 Maseru, Lesotho to ramagelef@llwdp3.org.ls cc seithekom@llwdp3.org.ls and inspect the RFQ document during office hours 0900 to 1600 hours.

5. A complete set of Request for Quotation document in English may be obtained by interested eligible bidders at the above address.

6. Quotations must be addressed and hand delivered/courier to the address below **on or before 3rd November 2025 at 14:00hrs**, electronic submissions will not be allowed, and late bids will be rejected.

The Project Manager
Lesotho Lowlands Water Development Project Phase III
LNDC Development House,
Block D level 9
Constitution Road
Maseru, Lesotho.

1. The Ministry of Natural Resources, Department of Water, received financing from The African Development Fund (ADF) (hereinafter called The Financier) for the implementation of the Lesotho Lowlands Water Development and Sanitation Project Phase III (LLWSDP III) that is intended to supply clean water and sanitation services to Botha-Bothe and parts of Leribe. LLWDSP III is coordinated by Project Implementation (PIU) based in Maseru. Part of the funds are to be used to procure equipment for Two hydro-metric stations at Ngoajane and Khukhune.

2. You are invited to submit your quotation for supply, delivery and installation for the above as per attached schedule of requirements.

3. Bidding will be conducted through national competitive bidding using



Revenue Services
Lesotho

RSL/BE/SCM/EOI/01/10/2025

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

REGISTRATION OF SUPPLIERS / SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR INCLUSION IN THE SUPPLIER DATABASE

Revenue Services Lesotho invites suitably qualified, reputable, and eligible suppliers and service providers to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for inclusion in its Supplier Database for the provision of goods, works, and services. The objective of this exercise is to update and expand the organization's Supplier Database in line with applicable policies and procedures. The database will serve as the official source for identifying pre-qualified suppliers and service providers who may be invited to participate in future procurement opportunities. Registration on the database does not guarantee the award of any contract but ensures that your organization will be considered for relevant procurement processes.

Interested suppliers/service providers are required to obtain and complete the official Request for Information (**RFI Form**) obtainable at a non-refundable fee of **M100.00**. The form can be requested via email by writing to supplychainmanagment@rsl.org.ls with the subject line: **"REQUEST FOR SUPPLIER REGISTRATION FORM"**. Applicants must complete the form in full and strictly adhere to all instructions provided. The form is designed to ensure that all necessary information and documentation are submitted. Incomplete or incorrectly filled forms will result in disqualification from consideration.

The Expressions of Interest must be submitted to the SCM address below on or before **15th January 2026 at 17:00hrs**. They must be submitted through an email provided below

N.B. The RFI form needs to be filled by every supplier who intends to do business with the RSL from 2026-28, it also applies to those who are already in the supplier database and those who have already supplied RSL before. Those who have also recently submitted the profiles (within 2025/26 financial year)

Suppliers are expected to express interest in supplying goods they are licensed for

All queries concerning this Expression of interest should be addressed to Supply Chain Management unit at supplychainmanagment@rsl.org.ls



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Programme Officer – Knowledge Management (SC8)	https://wd3.myworkdaysite.com/recruiting/wfp/job_openings/job/Maseru-Lesotho-The-Kingdom-Of/Programme-Officer--Knowledge-Management_JR117216	16 November 2025
Programme Officer – School Feeding (NOA)	https://wd3.myworkdaysite.com/recruiting/wfp/job_openings/job/Maseru-Lesotho-The-Kingdom-Of/Programme-Officer---School-Feeding_JR116517-1	16 November 2025
Comms, Partnerships & Reports Officer (NOA)	https://wd3.myworkdaysite.com/recruiting/wfp/job_openings/job/Maseru-Lesotho-The-Kingdom-Of/Comms--Partnerships---Reports-Officer_JR117021	16 November 2025

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Arts & Entertainment

Newsday

5th Lesotho Music Awards triumph despite setbacks

Chris Theko

The 5th edition of the Lesotho Music Awards (LMAs) lit up the Khali Hotel in Maseru on Saturday night, a celebration that almost did not happen. Despite major logistical challenges in the days leading up to the ceremony, the show went on, proving resilience at its finest.

Uncertainty clouded the event after major sponsors withdrew, and the venue was not secured in time. But organisers pushed forward with determination, driven by a shared belief in the importance of consistency and industry recognition.

"There was a pact we made within our committee and we vowed to make the event happen with or without funding... we wanted to maintain the consistency we plan to have in the public's eye." Malibe Mahao, the Event Organiser, said.

Mahao reflected on the growth of the LMAs over the years, describing the initiative as a "waterproof project" that has demonstrated its resilience faster than anticipated.

When the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) and other partners pulled financial support, the committee was forced to regroup and adapt.

"We had to go back to the drawing board... the withdrawal delayed us as we didn't effectively market the event according to our expectations," Mahao said.

Even so, the LMAs remained a legacy project in the making — one that requires patience, collaboration, and a long-term vision for both artists and audiences.

Despite the setbacks, fresh partnerships emerged in the final stretch, including On-store LS, Sesotho Fashioneng, Ebet, and Lin-Bet. Their involvement ensured that cash prizes for winners became a reality for the first time, a major milestone in supporting artists beyond trophies and applause.

"I would advise partners to sponsor local arts... The unity between partners and the arts can ensure that we enable an ecosystem that thrives and decreases the unemployment rate in the country," Mahao said.

He added that shepherding the awards through difficult moments has strengthened his own leadership and emotional resilience.

Looking ahead, the LMAs aspire to become one of Lesotho's longest-running entertainment platforms, boost regional collaborations, and create more opportunities for artists through enhanced corporate partnerships.

Top winners of the night

Rapper and vocalist Litšepe LR dominated the ceremony, taking home Artist of the Year and Music Project of the Year for his acclaimed EP Kopano Ke Matla.

Full List of Winners — 2025 Lesotho Music Awards

- Artist of the Year: Litshepe LR

- Song of the Year: Hohle Ke Lesotho — City-zeen LS

- Best Male Artist: Wave Rhyder

- Best DJ: Sefali

- Best Event Content Creator: Mahali

- Event Influencer of the Year: Pontšo

- Best Music Content Creator: Serly

- Best Newcomer: Leo Rush

- Best Collaboration: Sweetie Lavo — Shashie, Lwah Ndlunkulu, Redash, Nollzuss & Muziqal Guru

- Best International Feature: Dumelang — Kharishma ft. Sannere

- Best International Act: Kamoh Xaba

- Music Project of the Year: Kopano Ke Matla — Litshepe LR

- Best Hip Hop Artist: Atii Zee

- Best Afro-Pop Artist: Omali Themba

- Best Producer: Shev Shengu

- Best House Producer: Tedy Trenchbaby

Honorary Awards

- Lifetime Achievement Award: Malome Vector

- Most Valuable Player: Ntate Stunna

- Best Music Journalist: Chris Theko

- Record of the Year: Moea Qhomane



Chris Theko

The organisers of the highly anticipated LNIG Hollard Gospel Xplosion say everything is set for an unforgettable worship experience when the annual festival returns next week under the theme "Echoes of Glory: The Sound of Jubilee."

Speaking during a recent Praise & Press Brunch held at Mmesesi Lodge, event director Nthabeleng Mokitimi-Dlamini assured gospel music fans that preparations are complete and expectations are high for a day of powerful worship.

"We believe that after today, we might as well start preparing for 2026. We have done everything we can as a team. We have put in our expertise, our time, and our resources. We surrender the rest to God. It is all in His hands," she said.

Dlamini emphasised that the Gospel Xplosion remains deeply rooted in both faith and excellence.

"This event was birthed in faith and it is executed with excellence. Every team member shows up with their gift, because everything we do, we do it unto the Lord," she said.

"We are not event organisers. When we do the LNIG Hollard Gospel Xplosion, we are doing our part for the Kingdom."

From logistics to infrastructure setup, compliance, and safety measures, organisers say all systems are fully operational. Dlamini con-

LNIG Hollard Gospel Xplosion ready to rock



firmed that all necessary permits and compliance certificates have been secured, security personnel have been briefed, and up to three ambulances will be on standby throughout the event.

She revealed that VIP tickets have already sold out, reflecting the strong demand and enthusiasm for this year's edition.

"That tells you the demand and excitement

for Gospel Xplosion," she added.

According to Dlamini, the 2025 festival will feature several exciting enhancements, including improved stage production, multilingual worship, and a more diverse performance lineup.

"If you thought last year's stage was impressive, wait until you see what we are unveiling this year," she said.

"For the first time, we are including a non-gospel artist, our own award-winning star. We also have multilingual performances and will run lyrics on screen so everyone can worship without missing a moment."

In response to feedback from last year's attendees about the early closing time, organisers have extended the event to run until 5 a.m. To ensure convenience and safety, taxi partnerships have been arranged to provide reliable late-night transport.

"Anytime someone wants to leave, there will be transport available. The safety of our patrons is very important to us," she said.

LNIG Hollard's Head of Brand and Marketing, Liepollo Tsekoa, reaffirmed the company's commitment to the Gospel Xplosion as its headline sponsor. She praised the organising team's thorough preparations and expressed confidence in the event's success.

"We are committed as LNIG Hollard to the success of the event. Since the organisers approached us and sold the beautiful event concept to us, we have no doubt that they have put everything in place for the success of the event come Saturday," Tsekoa said.

Why Matekane may return despite inexcusable flaws

Nkopane Mathibeli

"The best argument against democracy is a five minutes conversation with the average voter" – Winston Churchill

In this piece, we focus on the political psyche and state of mind related to the election of the government in Lesotho. On what basis do Basotho decide which government to elect? My intention with the last two instalments was to outline the evolution of a political factor to which the differences between Lesotho and Botswana's development trajectory are attributable, i.e. the political wisdom and virtue of both the country's political elite and electorate. As we proceed with Botswana as a benchmark in this introspective conversation, it is of critical importance to bear in mind that for its founder to build its tribes into the proud and united nation we see today, a simple philosophy of virtuous traditional Tswana leadership (the chieftaincy) - as expressed by the Setswana words "*Kgo-si ke kgosi ka morafe*" - was adopted. Basotho have theirs, "*morena ke morena ka sechaba*". What do they mean, and what is the relevance of their meaning here?

They simply mean that the legitimacy of a chief was determined by his ability to guarantee the welfare of each of his subjects. Having demonstrated how Khama integrated this chiefly obligation into Botswana's bureaucracy/state machinery and how as a result, the state's subservience to the electorate became a condition for latter's loyalty to the national/political leadership, as stated earlier, here we look at all these in the context of Lesotho. For instance, how did the political state of mind among Basotho evolve? We will sum up by examining whether Matekane can possibly exploit the political psyche of the voters to escape the fate of being a one term Prime Minister. But doesn't that look plausible given the saddest anomaly of our nation? Maybe we must first highlight this anomaly.

A fractured foundation of nationhood

Having previously paid homage to Seretse Khama, it would be grossly remiss of me not to mention that in terms of visionary leadership and a meticulous formulation and execution of development plans, Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan was undoubtedly at par with President Seretse Khama and that was attributable to one factor common to them. Both Khama and Jonathan were descendants of chiefly lineages and hence as executive heads of their respective states, reconfiguring those States to the default settings of the chieftaincy such that the primary obligation of the Executive Head of State was to use the full capacity of the State for the those sole benefit of the electorate was second nature to them. Both were equally robust in thought and so built equally solid foundations for the transition of their respective countries. So where did Lesotho stray? My take is that it strayed at the point where the founda-

tion of its nationhood was fractured. Let us start with what actually constitutes the foundation of our nation. As a point of departure, this nation was founded around the chieftaincy/monarchy.

As previously alluded to in the previous instalment, when building this nation, King Moshoeshoe I adopted the wisdom dispensed by his mentor. Briefly, two of its most important principles that placed the chieftaincy/monarchy at the centre relate to two policies that were, in turn, central in giving Basotho an identity. The first was a wealth distribution policy called *mafisa*, formulated from the principle: share your wealth with your subjects. As a policy, the King loaned cattle to poor families. The second was a social development policy formulated from the principle: take care of the weak and vulnerable. It



was actualised by, among others, cultivating *ts'imo ea lira*

being a field controlled by a chief and whose harvest was for the exclusive use by vulnerable individuals (orphans, widows, etc.) These are just but two of the policies that rallied Basotho to identify with and pay allegiance to their King and, by extension, the nation he founded and led. Our identity revolved around the King and Country. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case today, despite still having a King, a country and on top of that, a national flag, motto and a coat of arms. Before we round up by looking at the usual loophole through which Matekane, like many before him, may slip through, let us briefly step back into our past for answers as to why and how this foundation was fractured.

Intentional destruction

According to L.B.B.J. Machobane in his seminal book (Government and Change in Lesotho, 1800 – 1966), one Emile Rolland, a Lesotho-born and bred son of British missionaries then (1868)

resident at Morija, used his knowledge of Lesotho, its people and culture to write a 34-page memorandum for the consideration of the then Queen of England. Its purpose was to ease the difficulty of his compatriots in dealing with King Moshoeshoe I, who despite seeking British protection against Afrikaner invasion, refused to budge on his main condition for the protection he sought, i.e. to continue ruling his country with its own laws while the British only provide protection against invasion. Surprised by his bullishness in spite of negotiating from a position of weakness, they were further surprised by the degree of loyalty the chiefs he had placed around the country had for him. This, they discovered when they tried

but failed to bypass him by "buying" the chiefs. The ultimate goal of

Rolland's memorandum was to make the British gov-

ernment aware of how and why the King's power and influence are deeply entrenched and how, as a counterattack, the chieftaincy, as his right hand, could gradually be weakened. Rolland's plan worked out very well because, as a result of all laws inspired by the insight of his memorandum, the chieftaincy began to lose power/influence, hence some frustrated chiefs resorted to ritual murders (liretlo).

The gradual waning of the chieftaincy at last left the monarchy exposed to a total onslaught, the ultimate end of which was section 91(2) of the constitution. It says that whether the King agrees or disagrees with anything demanded by the Prime Minister, such will be done by the Prime Minister, but will be considered done by the King. This is wrong, especially being a brainchild of people whose constitutional monarch has an executive royal prerogative. To rectify it, the expert report on constitutional re-

forms rightly recommended we follow a somewhat British route. Constitutionally, what differentiates their Head of State from ours? The British may not have their constitution codified. However, in 2014, their parliament's political and constitutional reform select committee, in conjunction with King's College London, embarked on a three-pronged project of constitutional review. The outcome here was three blueprints. Included among them was one depicting what a codified constitution would look like. Its contents were drawn from their statutes, conventions, common law and historical documents. In essence, it presented the situation as it obtains. Regarding functions of the Head of State, here is what it says, which is a direct opposite of 91(2) of our constitution. Its 4(10)(c) says: In the performance of any function under this Constitution or Act of Parliament, the Head of State shall act in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, except where the Head of State is required thereunder to act at the discretion of the Head of State (when the Head of State shall exercise an independent judgement). Until we rectify our constitutional anomaly, the electorate will always revert to its default setting regarding the election of national political leadership.

The better devil syndrome

Here is where Churchill's words come in. In spite of tangible grievances pertaining to embezzlement, nepotism and maladministration raised by the opposition against the government, it remains highly likely that a sizeable portion of the electorate will see Matekane as the better devil, as they comparatively did to incumbents and opposition in the past. This better devil comparison has sadly become a benchmark of eligibility in our context. Isn't that tragic? It, of course, is. Unlike Botswana who use the state's subservience to the electorate as such a benchmark, we remain firmly in the grip of this terrible sickness – the better devil syndrome. But who is to blame here, politicians or the electorate, but more precisely, which factors make it likely to work in Matekane's favour in the coming elections? It is precisely what Churchill means by "*the average voter*". To appreciate who the average voter is in the context of our Kingdom, a glance at any Education Report of the Bureau of Statistics will be helpful. On average, these reports indicate that 53% of people who by virtue of age constitute the electorate have only attained primary education; 45% only secondary/high education, while only 2 percent reached the tertiary level. This has big implications which deserve to be thoroughly explained in future. That notwithstanding, this is not the only factor. Again, it does not exclusively benefit Matekane's electoral fortunes; his predecessors with similarly inexcusable flaws of embezzlement, nepotism and maladministration duly benefited. Is this our fate or merely a phase in our transition?

Maroala stun Lioli in rare victory

Seabata Mahao

In one of the biggest upsets of the Vodacom Premier League (VPL) season, debutants Maroala FC shocked reigning champions Lioli FC with a dramatic 1–0 victory to record their first top flight win.

A second-half strike from Timello Thafeng sealed a historic first-ever top-flight win for Maroala, who had gone six matches without tasting victory. The result stunned Lioli, who had been looking to extend their winning streak to three games after impressive back-to-back victories over Lijabatho (2–0) and Linare (4–2).

The defeat leaves Lioli stuck on nine points, a missed opportunity to move into second place and close the gap on log leaders Majantja FC, who top the standings with 13 points.

A jubilant Maroala coach Kenny Mohoanyane hailed the win as a defining moment for his side and a signal that the newcomers are ready to compete at the highest level.

“This was a David versus Goliath battle,” Mohoanyane said.

“Before the match, I told the players we are no longer an A Division side, we are a Premier League team, and we must compete with everyone.”

He praised his players for their discipline and commitment, saying the victory would serve as a major confidence boost.

“The players did very well and stuck to our game plan. This win will be a huge confidence booster,” he said. “We are a small team with talented players. We just need patience.”

Mohoanyane also revealed his motivational message to the team before kickoff, reminding his players that “it only takes a minute for someone’s life to change.”

In contrast, Lioli coach Bongani Maseko expressed frustration at his team’s complacency, suggesting they underestimated their opponents.

“It was an unacceptable performance. I think we won the game before we played it,” Maseko said. “From the stands, it was clear



Maroala wanted it more than us.”

He admitted that Lioli’s congested fixture schedule, balancing CAF Champions League matches with domestic games, might have contributed to fatigue, but refused to use that as an excuse.

“We have a strong squad and have been rotating players. Everyone given a chance must perform to the expected standard,” he said firmly.

The shock defeat came just days after Lioli produced a commanding performance in their 4–2 win over Linare FC on Sunday, October 26, at the Saxophone Technical Centre. In that match, Litšepe Marabe, Sihle Maso, Tholang

Makuru, and Hlompho Kalake found the net for the champions, while Linare’s Tšepang Sefali and Tumelo Makha scored consolations.

However, the midweek loss to Maroala has raised questions about Lioli’s consistency and their ability to defend the league title amid a packed schedule.

Past weekend results

Lioli FC 4–2 Linare FC, Bantu FC 1–0 Machokha FC, LMPS FC 1–1 Matlama FC, LDF FC 1–0 LCS FC, Majantja FC 2–0 LU FC, Members FC 3–0 Manonyane FC, Lifofane FC 2–0 Maroala FC.

Upcoming Fixtures (Week 7) November 1, 2025:

- Lijabatho vs Manonyane — Morija Ground (15:00)
 - Bantu vs Majantja — S. Russell (15:00)
 - LDF vs Lifofane — Ratjomose (15:00)
- November 2, 2025:**
- Linare vs LU FC — S. Thejane Stadium (13:30)
 - Lioli vs LMPS — S. Thejane Stadium (15:30)
 - Maroala vs Liphakoe — LCS Ground (13:30)
 - Members vs Machokha — LCS Ground (15:30)
 - Matlama vs LCS FC — Bambatha Tšita Sports Arena (15:00)

COSAFA Women’s Championship Postponed to 2026

Seabata Mahao

The Council of Southern Africa Football Associations (COSAFA) has confirmed the postponement of the much-anticipated 2025 COSAFA Women’s Championship, citing challenges in finding a suitable host nation within the original timeframe.

In a statement, the regional football governing body said that despite extensive efforts to stage the tournament as planned, no member country was able to meet the infrastructure, logistical, and security standards required for an event of such scale.

COSAFA expressed regret over the postponement but emphasised that the decision was made to safeguard the long-term success and integrity of the tournament.

“We remain committed to hosting a high-quality championship that will not only showcase the best of women’s football in the region but also contribute to its continued growth,” the statement read.

The COSAFA Women’s Championship is one of the most prominent fixtures on Southern Africa’s football calendar, attracting national teams, scouts, and fans from across the region.

While the delay has disappointed some stakeholders, many view it as a necessary step to ensure the tournament meets international standards and delivers lasting impact.

National associations, coaches, and players

have largely welcomed the move, noting that the extra preparation time will strengthen women’s football development across the region.

“While we are eager to compete, it’s important that the tournament meets international standards,” one women’s football official said.

“This gives us time to strengthen our teams and ensure we are ready to deliver top-quality football when the tournament takes place.”

COSAFA confirmed that consultations with potential host nations are ongoing, with the championship now rescheduled for the first quarter of 2026. Specific venues and dates are yet to be announced as discussions continue to identify facilities capable of hosting a safe and successful event.

The postponement also underscores broader challenges facing women’s football in Southern Africa. Despite steady progress in participation, investment, and development programmes, many countries continue to struggle with inadequate infrastructure and logistical capacity for large-scale competitions.

Nonetheless, COSAFA remains optimistic, and believes the additional time will allow member associations to improve their hosting capabilities, upgrade facilities, and strengthen event management skills, all essential for staging a world-class tournament.





PACKAGE:

T - SHIRT

INSURANCE

GOODY BAG

RACE BIB

MEDAL

22 FEB 2026

MASERU, LESOTHO

42.2KM | 21.1KM | 10KM

5KM | 1.6KM | AEROBICS

START: MAKOANYANE SQUARE

FINISH: MASERU CLUB

NORMAL REGISTRATIONS:

1ST JULY – 31ST OCTOBER 2025

LOCAL

INTERNATIONAL

1.6KM

M285.00

M385.00

5KM

M325.00

M425.00

10KM

M355.00

M455.00

21.1KM

M395.00

M495.00

42.2KM

M435.00

M535.00

AEROBICS

M265.00

M365.00

OFFLINE REGISTRATION STEPS:

01

PAY WITH NEDBANK/MPESA/ ECOCASH.

02

SEND PROOF OF PAYMENT TO 62 500 225 VIA WHATSAPP.

03

COMPLETE REGISTRATION FORM.

04

RECEIVE REGISTRATION NUMBER.

PAYMENTS (EVENTFUL MOMENTS):

1199 0280 934

15471

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New LeFA boss to make sweeping changes

Seabata Mahao

The newly elected President of the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA), Lijane Nthunya, has promised a transformation of the country's football landscape, outlining an ambitious agenda that seeks to breathe new life into every corner of the game.

Addressing journalists this week, just days after his narrow victory over long-serving LeFA President Advocate Salemane Phafane (KC) at the 20th LeFA Congress, Nthunya said his leadership would be defined by inclusivity, accountability, and visible progress on and off the pitch.

He defeated Phafane by 27 votes to 24, ending nearly two decades of Phafane's reign.

"I have come to be a servant of football. My goal is to elevate Lesotho's football landscape from its current state and to foster its growth," Nthunya declared, signaling a leadership approach focused on action and community engagement.

At the core of his sweeping reforms is a plan to revive competitive football activity across the country. Nthunya announced that LeFA will reintroduce major domestic tournaments such as the Top 8, Top 4, and the once-popular Top Mount Inter-District competitions, long considered vital for talent exposure and fan engagement.

He said these competitions will not only restore excitement to local football but also create platforms for players to showcase their skills and attract professional opportunities.

"Our football must be alive in every community. We want every district and village to feel part of the national football ecosystem," he said, underscoring his commitment to grassroots and community-based development.

Nthunya also vowed to tackle one of the sport's most pressing challenges, inadequate resources and infrastructure. He revealed plans for every district to

have at least one LeFA-standard football pitch, similar to those already completed in Mohale's Hoek and Leribe.

However, he urged local authorities to take responsibility for maintaining and managing these facilities.

"Infrastructure is the backbone of football development. We cannot rely on just a few venues for national competitions," he noted.

Recognising the financial strain faced by many clubs, Nthunya proposed that LeFA facilitate partnerships between local teams and sports equipment suppliers to ease operational costs and improve professionalism.

"Clubs are struggling

with limited resources. Forming strategic partnerships is essential if we want our teams to grow and compete," he explained.

On the international front, Nthunya expressed his intention to strengthen Lesotho's football ties with developed nations such as England and Spain. He said these partnerships would focus on technical exchanges, coaching education, and youth training programmes that can help modernise the country's football systems.

He also announced plans to engage the government on resolving long-standing issues surrounding Setsoto Stadium, which has repeatedly failed to meet CAF and FIFA standards, forcing

the national teams to play home matches abroad.

"Our football continues to be played outside the country amidst a struggling economy. With government support, we can change this narrative," he said.

Beyond infrastructure and competitions, Nthunya emphasised transparency and open communication with the public and media, areas that have previously drawn criticism toward LeFA.

In a rare show of candour, he condemned the decision to bar journalists from covering the recent congress.

"It is unacceptable that such a significant event was not covered by the media. I pledge to work closely with journalists to ensure LeFA's activities are open and transparent," he vowed.

Nthunya's rise to the LeFA presidency comes after years of persistence. Having previously lost to Phafane in 2021, he said his victory this time reflects a growing appetite for change among football stakeholders.

"After my defeat in 2021, I returned to the drawing board and remained steadfast in my message. I believe that message is now being fully grasped by the football constituencies," he reflected.

His election, witnessed by representatives from FIFA, CAF, the Lesotho Sport and Recreation Commission (LSRC), and the Lesotho National Olympic Committee

(LNOC), marks a defining moment for the country's football leadership.

New elected president of LeFA, Lijane Nthunya



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