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# Matekane era spending nears M100 billion

**...Parliament still in the dark over audited use**

## Staff Reporter

As Parliament prepares to receive the 2026/2027 national budget next week, it has already authorised approximately M96.6 billion in four consecutive financial years, without updated audited consolidated financial statements being tabled before it.

"The Honourable Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Dr Retselisitsoe Matlanyane, will present the 2026/2027 Budget Speech in Parliament on Wednesday, 18 February 2026 at 09:00am," the Ministry's Principal Secretary, Nthoateng Lebona, announced in a notice this week.

Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane assumed office in October 2022 during the 2022/2023 financial year. That year, total government spending under the Appropriation Act stood at M20,837,355,420, comprising M13.7 billion in recurrent expenditure, M6.7 billion in capital expenditure and M300 million

for the Administration Account.

The first budget crafted under Matekane's leadership was delivered in 2023 for the 2023/2024 financial year, when Parliament approved M21,795,867,793 following Dr Matlanyane's maiden budget speech.

In 2024/2025, expenditure rose sharply to M25,783,569,329, largely driven by increased capital spending.

For the current 2025/2026 financial year, Parliament approved an even larger allocation of M28,202,758,965. Notably, the Administration Account increased from M300 million in previous years to M955,684,354.

In total, from 2022/2023 to 2025/2026, Parliament has authorised approximately M96.6 billion in public spending, of which M75.8 billion was approved under Matekane's administration. The figures exclude any supplementary appropriations that may have been passed during the period.

However, none of these funds have been reported back to Parliament through updated audited consolidated financial statements confirming whether they were used for the purposes for which they were appropriated.

This leaves lawmakers and the public without a verified account of how the money was spent, whether projects delivered value for money, or whether irregularities occurred.

The Constitution states that it is the duty of the Auditor General "to satisfy himself that all moneys that have been appropriated by Parliament and disbursed have been applied to the purposes to which they were so appropriated and that the expenditure conforms to the authority that governs it."

The Auditor General must also, at least once every year, audit and report on the public accounts of the government, including those of ministries, courts, constitutional commissions and Parliament.

"The Auditor-General shall submit every report made by him... to the Minister for the time being responsible for finance who shall, not later than seven days after each House of Parliament first meets after he has received the report, lay it before that House," the Constitution further provides.

In performing these duties, the Auditor General is not subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.

The Public Financial Management and Accountability Act of 2011 further requires that "the Minister shall present audited consolidated financial statements to Parliament within eight months of the end of the financial year to which they relate."

Yet the latest available consolidated government financial statements remain those for the year ended 31 March 2022. The Auditor General's report for that year was only submitted in May 2024.

There have also been accusations that the Minister of Finance has been in possession of the 2022/2023 Auditor-General's report since May 2025 without tabling it in Parliament within the

constitutionally required seven days.

International observers have flagged similar concerns. In its 2025 Article IV Consultation, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) acknowledged some progress in clearing audit backlogs but stressed that significant weaknesses remain in audit planning, commitment controls and expenditure execution.

This week, Opposition Leader Mathibeli Mokhothu wrote to National Assembly Speaker Tlohang Sekhamane raising objections to what he described as irregular mid-term budget reviews, unlawful supplementary budget practices and improper use of the Contingency Fund.

"This correspondence formally registers my objection to persistent and serious departures from constitutional and statutory requirements relating to the Mid-Term Budget Review (MTBR), Supplementary Appropriations, and the use of the Contingency Fund," Mokhothu wrote.

"It further places Parliament and the Executive on clear notice that all fiscal processes for the 2025/2026 financial year must strictly comply with the Constitution of Lesotho, the Public Financial Management and Accountability Act (PFMAA), and established international standards of sound public financial governance," he added.

Mokhothu argued that approximately 99 percent of the expenditures listed in the Mid-Term Contingency Fund Report fail to meet constitutional thresholds of unforeseeability, urgency and exceptional necessity.

"This suggests a troubling pattern of routine or foreseeable expenditure being channelled through emergency mechanisms in order to bypass parliamentary appropriation," he stated.

The IMF raised a similar concern in September last year, warning that the contingency fund "should be a buffer against unanticipated shocks, rather than a channel for de facto earmarked spending, or a substitute for robust contingency planning by Ministries, Departments and Agencies."

## Matlanyane faces tough task of closing the hippopotamus' mouth

### Thoboloko Ntšonyane

As the country turns its attention to the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Dr Retselisitsoe Matlanyane, expectations are mounting ahead of the national budget presentation, with many Basotho waiting to see how it will respond to pressing bread-and-butter issues.

Various sectors have intensified calls for their concerns to be reflected in the much-anticipated fiscal plan. This will be the third budget to be tabled since Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane's administration took office in 2022.

Among those making submissions is the Coalition of Lesotho Public Employees (COLEPE), which has issued a statement outlining a series of demands it wants addressed in the upcoming budget.

Public scrutiny will centre on how the minister intends to stimulate economic growth, expand infrastructure and tackle persistent youth unemployment.

The budget is being crafted against a backdrop of global geopolitical uncertainty and concerns over declining revenues from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), a key source of government income.

According to a 2025 SACU report, member states recorded mixed economic performances in 2023. Eswatini led with 5.0 percent real GDP growth, followed by South Africa at 5.5 percent, Namibia at 4.2 percent and Botswana at 3.2 percent. Lesotho lagged behind at 1.8 percent growth.

COLEPE is pushing for the employer contribution to the Pension Fund to be increased from five percent to 10 percent. It is also calling for a review of the salary structure to allow Grade C positions to receive Grade A salaries, as well as the removal of the notch limit across all grades.

The coalition further demands an increase in the mountain allowance to M3,000 and the introduction of a 100 percent hardship salary differential for employees working in hard-to-reach areas.

It is also urging government to address dilapidat-

ed infrastructure by repairing or upgrading facilities such as classrooms, police stations, health centres and government offices, and to ensure consistent provision of essential resources to improve service delivery.

In its statement, COLEPE reminded government of a commitment signed by the Prime Minister on February 24, 2023, aimed at facilitating social dialogue and addressing poor working conditions, shortages of resources and low salaries.

At the time, government stated: "...owing to a dry Government purse, the 25 percent demand cannot be met in the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year. [However,] the Government commits to employ strategies that will revive and increase revenue in the foregoing Fiscal Year and, therefore commits to expedite the formation of Public Sector Bargaining Council: a platform necessary for bargaining in November 2023 in preparation for the 2024/2025 salary increase as

demand by COLEPE."

It has also previously been indicated by the Ministry of Finance that government intends to reduce the wage bill from 18.5 percent of GDP to 14 percent.

Beyond organised labour, the minister is also expected to face pressure from backbenchers in both the governing coalition and the opposition, who are likely to push for interventions to address challenges affecting their constituencies.



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Staff Reporter

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Project Preparation and Development Facility (PPDF) has approved US\$1.83 million (about M29.194 million) to support the Lesotho–Botswana Water Transfer Project, a major regional initiative aimed at addressing water scarcity and strengthening climate resilience across Southern Africa, SADC announced on Wednesday.

The funding will support two key preparatory components: an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) covering the proposed dam and water conveyance infrastructure, and a comprehensive feasibility study that will assess the financial, legal, and institutional frameworks necessary to ensure the project’s long-term sustainability.

The project involves constructing a multipurpose dam, primarily on the Makhale River, and a roughly 700-kilometer piped conveyance system to transfer water from Lesotho’s water-rich highlands through parts of South Africa to Botswana.

It will supply water for domestic, industrial, and agricultural use, while also potentially generating hydropower. Estimates include around 30 MW at the dam site and additional capacity along the route. The total estimated capital cost for the full project is in the range of \$2 billion.

Beyond alleviating Botswana’s growing water shortages, driven by population growth, urbanization, and climate variability, the initiative offers broader regional benefits.

# SADC approves over M29 million to advance Lesotho–Botswana water transfer project



Lesotho stands to gain revenue from water exports, similar to its existing arrangements under the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), opportunities for expanded irrigation and food security, and hydropower development.

South Africa could benefit from additional water supplies in transit areas facing unmet demands, while the project promotes transboundary cooperation within the Orange-Senqu River Basin.

The project is coordinated under the

Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM), involving Botswana, Lesotho, and South Africa, with Namibia as an observer in some discussions.

It aligns with SADC’s goals for regional integration and sustainable resource management.

The PPDF operates within the SADC–German cooperation framework, funded by the German government and implemented jointly by KfW (German Development Bank) and the Development Bank

of Southern Africa (DBSA), SADC said this week.

“The collaboration underscores the importance of international partnerships in driving sustainable infrastructure development and regional integration,” it said.

Previous preparatory work has included desk studies, for example, funded by the World Bank, prefeasibility assessments, supported by the African Development Bank and others, and institutional/financial analyses.

The current funding marks a significant step toward full feasibility and eventual implementation.

SADC emphasised that these preparatory investments are foundational for a transformative project that will enhance water, energy, and food security for future generations, exemplifying effective regional collaboration in managing shared resources amid climate challenges.

It said: “By investing in preparatory studies, SADC is laying the groundwork for a transformative project that will secure water, energy, and food systems for generations to come, a milestone in regional cooperation and sustainable resource management.”

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# Communities voice frustrations as multi-billion water project advances



Maputsoe community participating in a one-day workshop on the Lesotho Lowlands Water Development Project (LLWDP)

## Ntsoaki Motaung

Communities in Leribe and Mafeteng have expressed a mix of hope and frustration as the Lesotho Lowlands Water Development Project (LLWDP) moves forward, with residents saying years of water shortages, unpaid bills, and broken promises have eroded public trust.

This week, 4D Climate Solutions, contracted under the LLWDP, held one-day workshops in Leribe, Mafeteng, and Mohale's Hoek to update communities on the progress of the project. The sessions were intended to raise awareness about the infrastructure rollout, but quickly became platforms for residents to air grievances about longstanding water challenges.

Maputsoe residents cite debt and distrust

In Maputsoe, Leribe, residents said the water crisis has left them financially strained and skeptical of official assurances.

Clifford Santi, speaking from the office of Area Chief Ha Nyenye, said trust in authorities has worn thin.

"We no longer have trust in anyone who promises to end our water crisis. We are now saying we will believe it when we see it happening," Santi said.

He acknowledged that some infrastructure work has begun, but said past billing disputes remain unresolved.

"Because we had WASCO (Water and Sewage Company) taps, people continued to receive bills despite the fact that there was no water. Many refused to pay because they said they cannot pay for water they did not consume. Some were later told they owed M8,000, M10,000, or even M15,000," he said.

According to Santi, some residents have resorted to applying for new connections under relatives' names to avoid settling old debts.

'Manehello Mhlotse, a member of the Mafeteng Electoral Division and Maputsoe Urban Council, said the shortages forced residents to fetch water at night.

"We used to stay awake waiting for water to be opened at night because during the day only factories and businesses were supplied," she said.

While welcoming the project, she raised concerns about construction standards.

"Some roads were damaged during pipe installation and were not properly repaired. When it rains, movement becomes very difficult because of the mud," Mhlotse said.

### Cost of water for vulnerable households

For some residents, the crisis has had severe social and economic consequences.

'Matšepang Ratolo, who lives with her husband and child, and both adults have disabilities, said buying water has been costly and physically demanding.

"This project is going to change my life and the lives of other people living with disabilities," Ratolo said.

"As it stands, I buy a 20-litre container for M5 and pay someone at least M20 to fetch two containers for me."

Ratolo, who works as a street vendor, said the expense is difficult to sustain given her inconsistent income.

### Mafeteng youth raise water quality concerns

In Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek, where drought has frequently affected households and livestock, residents are looking to the planned Makhale River dam for relief.

Reitumetse Mantsoe, representing youth from Ha Motlere, questioned the quality of water supplied during drought periods.

"In times of drought, WASCO gets water from nearby dams. Sometimes it comes out of the taps looking dirty and smelling awful," Mantsoe said, adding that some residents have fallen ill.

He expressed hope that the project will be completed as scheduled in 2027 to provide a lasting solution.

### Economic expectations and environmental concerns

Residents also see the LLWDP as a potential boost to agriculture and employment.

Moeketsi Matlosa of Matheneng in Mafeteng said a reliable water supply could encourage young people to pursue farming.

"Now that the country is facing high unemployment, I hope that once the project is completed, it will encourage youth to go into farming and produce for sale," he said, noting that water shortages have limited his livestock and vegetable production.

Lebohang Thulo, representing a livestock owners' committee, urged project implementers to protect natural water sources.

"We plead with the project not to destroy our natural water sources but to protect them," Thulo said.

He added that arable land is increasingly being used for housing because farmers can no longer rely on rainfall, and called for water to be directed toward fields to support large-

scale farming.

### WASCO assures a permanent solution

Responding to the concerns, Pelesa Motsieloa of WASCO Hlotse acknowledged the severity of past droughts.

"The peak of the crisis was during the drought years of 2015, 2019, and 2020," Motsieloa said.

He said the LLWDP is designed to ensure long-term water security.

"The project is there to make sure that people in Leribe, Mafeteng, and Mohale's Hoek do not run short of water, even in times of extreme drought," he said.

Motsieloa added that once completed, households will be able to apply for yard connections, while urging residents to avoid water wastage.

### Background to the project

The LLWDP is a multi-billion maloti initiative first conceptualised in 2008 to supply water to Lesotho's lowlands. Unlike the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, which exports water to South Africa, the LLWDP is intended solely to meet domestic demand.

Phase II, currently under implementation, is financed by a consortium of international partners. The World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) is providing approximately €68.4 million for Zones 2 and 3 (Hlotse and Maputsoe), while the European Investment Bank and the European Union are jointly contributing about €123 million for Zones 6 and 7 (Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek). The Government of Lesotho is also providing counterpart funding.

Despite the scale of investment and a targeted completion date of 2027, residents say the true test of the project will be whether it finally delivers reliable, affordable water after years of shortages and unfulfilled expectations.

## Montši in hot water over home affairs job placements



Mapuleng Montši

## Thoboloko Ntšonyane

Mapuleng Montši has found herself at the centre of a scandal over allegations of accepting "thank you" payments linked to job placements at the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Prosecutors allege that Montši unlawfully received M70,155 between October 2017 and April 2018 in exchange for facilitating employment for individuals.

She faces charges of bribery under the Prevention of Corruption and Economic Offences Act No.5 of 1999, as amended, and money laundering under the Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Act, No.4 of 2008, as amended.

During cross-examination, the 53-year-old accused denied receiving bribes, claiming instead that she had borrowed money from some of the individuals involved. She also challenged testimony from a Vodacom Lesotho officer who stated that M-Pesa was the channel through which she allegedly received the payments.

Montši admitted to forwarding the names of ten job seekers to the Home Affairs Director of Human Resources, 'Mamphuthi Mathetsa, who subsequently arranged their employment. She noted that at the time, she was employed at the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC).

When questioned by Advocate Rathithi of

the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) about why the people she helped were not supporting her in court, Montši said: "I am surprised. I don't know why I am being implicated; I don't know who is behind all this."

One witness, Motšokane Motebang, whom Montši claimed to have helped, testified that he had never given her money. While Montši described him as "just a friend," Motebang told the court they had a romantic relationship.

Two other witnesses, who said they are churchgoers with Montši, confirmed she had assisted them in securing jobs. Montši, however, denied knowing them. She attributed inconsistencies in her previous court statements to "misunderstanding and miscommunication," asking the court to consider her testimony on Thursday.

Montši also distanced herself from another witness, Motake Tšehlana, stating he obtained employment through political connections and his proximity to the then Principal Secretary at Home Affairs, noting that Tšehlana's mother was a prominent figure in the ruling party.

She is represented by Advocate K. Monate, with Magistrate Thamae Thamae presiding. The case continues.



# Official Press Release

## LHDA LAUNCHES TBM NAMING COMPETITION PHASE II – SCHOOLS EDITION



LHDA has launched the second Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) Naming Competition – Schools Edition. It invites high school learners to participate in the naming of the TBM that will excavate the Polihali Transfer Tunnel from the Polihali end.

The competition officially opened on 4 February 2026 and will close on 25 February 2026. It is open to Grade 11 learners in high schools nationwide, with a limited number of entries per school.

Targeting Grade 11 learners is a deliberate effort to contribute to educational development by strengthening research, critical engagement with complex ideas and writing skills that entail construction of logical, evidence-based arguments and creativity. The move further encourages early exposure to infrastructure development, engineering, and broader STEM-related careers and aims to foster national pride and a sense of ownership among young people, ultimately transforming a major technical milestone into a shared national moment.

Competition participants should consider the following criteria and terms and conditions:

- The competition is for **Grade 11** students only
- All submissions must be made through the approved Ministry of Education and Training channels only
- Each participant should submit one entry, with one name.
- Entries must be written in English, while the proposed name should be in **Sesotho**.
- The proposed name should include a motivation or explanation in **450 to 600** words.
- Students whose entries form part of **the top 10 names**

may be subjected to an interview process.

- The proposed name should reflect the features and or the work of the TBM, it can be a one-word name/ compound name/a phrasal name
- The suggested name may not include the following names that were published by the LHDA as part of the top ten names in the Katse TBM naming competition- Khuiti ea - ngoaha Kholo KENK2, Thakali, Tebello, Sebata and Mokunyane, Lepoqo, Raboshabane, Mokhachane, Morena Molapo

Just like in the first phase of the TBM naming competition, LHDA will engage a panel of judges that will select the 10 most meaningful and creative names which will be announced across the same platforms. Subsequently, the LHDA will open a national vote to determine the winning name, which will be bestowed on the TBM. The contestant who proposes the winning name will become part of LHWPII history, receiving recognition at the naming ceremony, and be awarded prizes and honours.

The Polihali to Katse Transfer Tunnel is a key component of Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. It will facilitate the gravity transfer of water from the Polihali reservoir to the Katse reservoir. Both tunnel boring and drill and blast methods are used to excavate the tunnel from the Leribe and Polihali ends. The Polihali TBM arrived in the country in July 2025, while the first TBM – Khuiti- ea-Ngoaha-Kholo (KENK2) launched excavation from the Leribe side in January, 2025.

**End.**



# Newsday Business

## Former Accountant General Mahase appointed IoD Lesotho boss

### Staff Reporter

The Institute of Directors (IoD) Lesotho has announced the appointment of former state Accountant General 'Malehlohonolo Mahase as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective January 2026.

IoD Lesotho said in a statement this week that Mahase's appointment marks an important step in advancing its mandate and supporting the implementation of Lesotho's corporate governance reforms.

Established in 2003, IoD Lesotho is a membership body mandated to promote and strengthen good governance across the public and private sectors.

"IoD Lesotho is confident Mrs. Mahase is well suited to lead the institution, given her demonstrated commitment to integrity, transparency and accountability—principles central to good governance and to the IoD's mission," IoD Lesotho said in a statement.

It further indicated that Mahase brings extensive

national, regional and international leadership experience to the role as she most recently served as Accountant General of the Kingdom of Lesotho, where she received plaudits for her stellar leadership upon her exit in late 2025.

Mahase has also previously held the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Lesotho Institute of Accountants (LIA). She is also the founding partner of Tirong Chartered Accountants, with a strong professional background in audit and assurance.

Her governance experience includes service on several boards and board committees, including the Public Officers Defined Contribution Pension Fund, the National Housing and Land Development Corporation (NHTC), and Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital, among others, the IoD said.

Mahase has represented Lesotho in key platforms that advance public financial management and professional standards, regionally and internationally.

She served on the Board of the Eastern and South-



Malehlohonolo Mahase

ern Association of Accountants General, where she later rose to Chairperson.

She also served as a founding Chairperson of the African Association of Accountants General, a con-

tinental body of Accountants General. During her tenure at LIA, she represented Lesotho in regional and international engagements, including meetings of the Pan African Federation of Accountants (PAFA) and the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC).

IoD Lesotho noted that as Lesotho positions itself to compete in an increasingly fast-changing global environment shaped by technology, innovation and sustainability, the need for strong governance and ethical leadership remains critical.

"The country has taken a significant step forward through the development of its corporate governance code, the Mohlomi Code, which provides an important framework for responsible leadership, effective oversight, stakeholder inclusion and sustainable value creation."

"IoD Lesotho invites corporate leaders, boards, professionals and government institutions to join the national drive to build a stronger governance culture. The Institute's work includes membership registration, director and board development training, and providing a platform to help identify and deploy suitable board members.

"Its training is aligned to core Mohlomi Code principles, including: Effective leadership and oversight; Clear accountability and responsibility; Identifying and managing risk effectively; Stakeholder engagement and consideration of stakeholder interests; Intergenerational value creation through sustainable decision-making and resilience-building."

## Horticulture hub to drive job creation

### Seabata Mahao

The Managing Director of the Competitiveness and Financial Inclusion (CAFI), Chaba Mokuku, says the Lesotho Horticulture Incubation and Training Centre (LHITC) in Mahobong is poised to transform the country's agricultural landscape while uplifting local communities.

Mokuku made the remarks on Wednesday during a tour of the centre and two fruit farms in Mahobong, describing the large-scale agricultural investment as a catalyst for rising household incomes and job creation.

"This massive project has improved income levels for families, and we are witnessing a broader ripple effect within the local economy," Mokuku said.

He noted that the benefits extend beyond farming, with informal traders, particularly street vendors who transport produce to markets, also gaining from the initiative.

"We have achieved a lot. There is a snowball effect resulting from this project," he said.

Mokuku attributed the project's progress to financial backing from the World Bank, which has disbursed M100 million towards the initiative. The project has also been identified by His Majesty King Letsie III as one of Lesotho's flagship development programmes.

"Without the World Bank's support, we would not have been able to achieve what we have achieved," Mokuku added.

Beyond agriculture, the project is beginning to contribute to tourism by attracting visitors interested in learning about its operations and impact.

"This project has also promoted tourism, as people frequently visit the facility to learn more about its operations," Mokuku said.

Looking ahead, he said plans are under way to establish nurseries in the area to support expan-

sion, while fruit processing initiatives, including juice production, are being considered.

"The intention is to scale up production, and we are exploring opportunities to process fruits into juice," he said, adding that the quality of produce from the centre compares favourably with that of neighbouring countries.

"The quality of fruits produced here is better than those in South Africa."

The centre is expected to play a central role in promoting economic diversification, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability in the agricultural sector.

LHITC's Director Mariana du Prez said the centre has intensified efforts to enhance farmers' market-oriented skills.

"We have enhanced market-oriented competencies, including value addition and buyer negotiation," du Prez said.

She explained that the centre is facilitating farmers' access to domestic, regional and international markets, while promoting climate-smart agricultural practices.

"The centre is actively promoting sustainable production methods to mitigate risks associated with climate vulnerability," she said.

Du Prez added that LHITC aims to improve farm-level competitiveness by increasing access to knowledge, technology and finance.

"Our goals include increasing productivity and farm income through sustainable intensification and diversification of horticultural production," she said.

The centre is also facilitating access to disease-free planting material, modern orchard management practices and business planning support to help farmers meet commercial lending requirements.

World Bank's Country Director Dr Dinara Djoldosheva reaffirmed the institution's commitment to supporting Lesotho's economic growth and job creation, particularly among young people.



CAFI Project Manager, Chaba Mokuku

"The World Bank remains committed to supporting the Government of Lesotho in initiatives that drive economic growth and employment, especially among the youth," Dr Djoldosheva said, expressing satisfaction with the progress made at the centre.

"This project is about promoting private sector-led economic development, and we are very open to supporting the government's priorities," she added.

LHITC's Manager Nthako Supu said the centre is currently enjoying a strong citrus harvesting season.

"We have citrus fruits in abundance during this harvesting season," Supu said.

He revealed that the centre has secured supply arrangements with major retailers across the country, as well as markets in parts of South Africa's Free State Province.

"We are now supplying large shops throughout

Lesotho, and we have also secured markets in parts of the Free State Province," he said.

According to Supu, 50 tonnes of produce have already been distributed this season, with projections indicating that more than 500 tonnes will reach the market.

Professor Setsomi Molapo of the National University of Lesotho (NUL) reaffirmed the institution's commitment to collaborating with CAFI to ensure the project's sustainability.

"We want to affirm our commitment to working closely with CAFI so that this project becomes a success," Molapo said.

He said NUL will continue equipping Basotho farmers with technical skills, particularly in horticulture, and emphasised the critical role of research.

"Research will be critical for this project, as it broadens people's understanding and supports better decision-making," he said.

Molapo stressed the importance of ensuring the facility remains operational even after the project phases out.

"We would like to see this facility continue serving farmers, especially those who did not have the opportunity to attend tertiary institutions," he said.

Describing horticulture as a key pillar of Lesotho's economy, Molapo expressed concern over the country's continued reliance on imported citrus fruits.

"Horticulture is one of the pillars of our economy, yet we continue to import large volumes of citrus fruits," he said, warning that food security must remain a national priority.

"Any country that cannot feed itself is in danger."

### Notice of Change of Address

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 82(3) of the Companies Act 2011, MNN Centre for Investigative Journalism is intending to change its registered office address from Transformation Resource Centre, No.1 Oak Tree Garden Qoaling Road, Old Europa Maseru Lesotho to House No.21 Ha-Mosalla Thaba-Bosiu Maseru Lesotho from the 11th February 2026.

The application to have the said registered office address changed, will be done with the register of Companies after the third publication of this notice.

### ESTATE NOTICE

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

**ESTATE LATE MICHAEL TS'ELISO THAANYANE E595/2025**

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act.2 of 2024 calling upon spouse, all heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend a meeting before the Master of the High Court in Maseru on **MONDAY 9th MARCH 2026 at 11:00 am** for the purpose of:

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

Dated at Maseru on this **9th DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026**

Master of the High Court  
Magistrate Court

Old Prosecutors Office  
Maseru

### ESTATE NOTICE

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

**ESTATE LATE REFILOEHAPE BONIWE NHLAPO E61/2021**

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act.2 of 2024 calling upon all heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend a meeting before the Master of the High Court in Maseru on **TUESDAY 2ND MARCH 2026 at 11:00 am** for the purpose of: Proposing some person/persons to be appointed by the Master as Executor dative.

Dated at Maseru on this **3RD FEBRUARY 2026**

Master of the High Court  
Magistrate Court

Old Prosecutors Office  
Maseru





# Newsday Health

## Taolana's Truth: Overcoming lifetime of stigma, seizures and silent suffering



Minister of Health Selibe Mochoboroane signing a pledge on International Epilepsy Day

### Ntsoaki Motaung

The trauma of 2008 is still clearly remembered by Limakatso Taolana. It was the year her life changed forever, not because of a slowly developing illness, but because of one horrifying moment.

After witnessing the body of her beloved grandmother, who had been brutally murdered in a ritual killing, Taolana's body went into shock. She began experiencing seizures almost immediately. In an instant, she was no longer just a young girl. She was a patient living with epilepsy.

Her story stands at the centre of a broader struggle in Lesotho, highlighted during this year's International Epilepsy Day. It shows that epilepsy is not only a medical condition but also a social battleground marked by stigma, misunderstanding, and an urgent need for systemic change.

For Taolana, the seizures were only half the battle. The social "seizures" – exclusion and name-calling – often hurt even more. During her school years, especially around 2012 when her condition worsened, she endured ridicule from those meant to protect her.

"My school days were the hardest because even the teachers stigmatised me and called me names like 'mashoa a tsoha'," she recalled.

The label filtered down to her classmates. She was excluded from games and school activities, treated as fragile and different. The isolation followed her into adulthood.

When she found love, she nearly walked away from it. She told her boyfriend they could not marry because of her condition. He refused to leave, and they eventually married, but the shadow of epilepsy lingered.

Even in her marital home, Taolana faced suspicion. When frequent seizures made it difficult for her to complete household chores, relatives accused her of pretending in order to avoid work.

At one point, she stopped taking her medication to prove she was not lazy or using her illness as an excuse to travel to town for check-ups. The decision was dangerous and nearly cost her life.

It was only after a frightening moment behind the wheel – when she managed to pull over seconds before a seizure struck – that she fully accepted her condition.

"I had to admit that there are things I will need to let pass me because of my condition," she said.

Taolana's experience is not unique. Nthabeng Hlalele, founder of Epilepsy Lesotho, says stigma remains the main reason many Basotho avoid seeking medical help.

"Some may end up taking their own lives because they do not feel like part of the community," Hlalele said.

The fear of being labeled or excluded keeps children out of classrooms and adults out of the workforce.

Official figures reflect only part of the reality. 'Malitaba Litaba, Head of the Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Division at the Ministry of Health, said approximately 5,000 epilepsy patients are registered in Lesotho. The true number is likely much higher due to limited diagnostic capacity.

"We lack MRI and CT scans to effectively do the work," Litaba explained.

Without proper imaging tools, many cases are classified as idiopathic, meaning the cause is unknown. Although medication is available in Lesotho, accurate diagnosis remains a challenge, affecting the effectiveness of treatment.

Medical professionals are also examining cultural and environmental factors that may contribute to brain trauma. Dr. Mosiuoa Lesuho, an Officer Cadet from the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF), has recommended banning the traditional game known as ho kalla, noting that some head injuries linked to epilepsy result from the practice.

He also highlighted preventable causes in children, including birth complications such as oxygen deprivation during delivery and falls from elevated surfaces. Additionally, he called for clearer policies on driving licences for people living with epilepsy to enhance public safety.

Lesotho's situation mirrors a wider global challenge. Dr. Lucy Mapota, representing the Office of the Director General of Health Services,



Taolana tells her story as expert patient of Epilepsy

es, said 15 million people worldwide are living with epilepsy and approximately 140,000 die each year.

However, hope remains. Dr. Sirak Hailu, Head of TB/HIV at the World Health Organisation (WHO), said while an estimated 50 million people globally live with epilepsy, up to 70 percent could live seizure-free with consistent access to affordable daily medication.

"Epilepsy is not contagious," Dr. Hailu emphasised. "In most cases, it can be effectively managed at the primary health care level."

However, in low-income countries such as Lesotho, nearly 80 percent of people with epilepsy live in areas where treatment gaps are

significant, driven by a shortage of trained health workers and persistent myths.

Minister of Health Selibe Mochoboroane acknowledged that Lesotho has historically prioritised communicable diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis, often overlooking non-communicable diseases like epilepsy.

"The damage is now huge," Mochoboroane said, noting that NCDs are now among the leading causes of death in the country.

He has called on the ministry to shift toward stronger scientific research to better understand the root causes of such diseases in Lesotho.

In response to global treatment gaps, the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) and WHO have launched the Intersectoral Global Action Plan (IGAP), which sets ambitious 90-80-70 targets: 90 percent of people with epilepsy aware of their condition, 80 percent with access to affordable medication, and 70 percent of those treated achieving seizure control.

This year's theme, "Epilepsy Pledge: Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges," is a call to action.

For Taolana, that bridge means a society that offers employment instead of judgment, understanding instead of stigma, and medical support instead of myths.

### Thriving Together

STRENGTHENING MARRIAGE THROUGH CONNECTION AND GROWTH

**Save The Date**  
14 February Saturday 2026  
5pm - 10pm

**Postponed to the 21st March 2026**

Mr. Marumo  
Financial Audit, Risk-Specialist & Financial Advisor

Adv. Limakatso Mejale  
Lawyer, Child's rights Advocate, Author, Entrepreneur

Mr. Mochaba  
Psychotherapist, Marriage-Counselor & Life coach

College  
Cash 6343 6260 (Thato Matheka)  
mpesa 5160 6998  
Registration: M200

Entrance fee:  
Couple - M500  
Single - M350  
(snacks included)



We cannot create employment.  
We cannot build economic inclusivity.  
We cannot grow domestic capability.  
Not while the state is outsourcing almost everything.

This is the contradiction at the heart of our governance model. We speak about youth empowerment, local enterprise development, and inclusive growth. Yet in practice, the state contracts out its thinking, its planning, its implementation, its auditing, its legal strategy, its communications, almost every core function that should define a capable government.

A government that outsources its core responsibilities does not develop muscle. It develops dependency. And dependency is expensive.

There is a dangerous illusion at play: the state behaves like a wealthy corporation with unlimited liquidity, able to hire consultants for every task and commission external service providers for functions that should exist permanently within the public service.

But we are not a rich country.

We are a fiscally constrained economy, heavily reliant on volatile revenues and a narrow tax base. Every loti spent must be strategic. Every contract must build long-term value. Instead, outsourcing has become governance by convenience.

When policy expertise is required — outsource.

When systems fail — outsource.

When projects stall — outsource.

And when things collapse? We blame “capacity constraints.”

But who hollowed out that capacity?

There is a difference between strategic procurement and structural outsourcing.

Strategic procurement strengthens the state. It brings in temporary expertise while ensuring knowledge transfer to public servants. Structural outsourcing weakens the state. It replaces public capability with permanent external dependence.

We are drifting toward the latter.

Young professionals enter the public service but are sidelined while consultants do the substantive work. Ministries become contract managers rather than policy engines. Institutional memory disap-

Every election in Lesotho brings a familiar promise: this time we will do things differently. Yet, almost inevitably, those who win the political power and enter the big offices, take their seats at the head of the table, and soon find themselves entangled in the internal conflicts of their ruling party, igniting a fever of factionalism. We have witnessed this cycle so frequently that we now discuss party splits as if they were mere weather phenomena, inevitable, natural, and beyond human control. However, splits are not natural occurrences; they are manufactured outcomes resulting from misaligned incentives, weak political party internal regulations, blurred distinctions between party and state, and leaders who confuse governing a state with managing a political organisation.

Therefore, the challenge facing the Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) extends beyond mere concerns about road repairs, reform progress, or improving performance indicators. The more profound question is whether a party can govern without fracturing from within. In Lesotho, this is a significant challenge.

History that we all know highlights the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), the Democratic Congress (DC), the Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL), the Movement for Economic Change (MEC), the Alliance for Democrats (AD) and even the All Basotho Convention (ABC) during the tumultuous “Malumara” and “Likatana” period that ultimately led to the formation of Basotho Action Party (BAP), all of them did not splinter in isolation. Their most destabilising conflicts arose while they were in power, when decisions made in the cabinet and Parliament became inseparable from internal party rivalries.

Consequently, the damage inflicted was national rather than merely internal. When a ruling party starts to bleed internally, the state quickly becomes a casualty. Cabinet cohesion weakens, parliamentary stability falters, coalition agreements become rigid, governance slows, and ordinary citizens suffer due to delayed services and stalled reforms.

To avoid repeating this pattern as a country, we must confront the reality of the cycle itself. Lesotho’s political history reveals a persistent issue: a party wins power, government authority reshapes the party, and the party eventually fractures under the burden of that power. The collapse of the LCD and the emergence of the DC were not simply personal disputes; they were conflicts exacerbated by the pressures of governance (remember the ‘Ijamollo and litimamollo’ factions). Similarly, the later formation of RCL by Hon Keketso Rantšo, who was then secretary general of LCD, reminds us of a turbulent time in the then ruling LCD under Mothetjoa Metsing.

It didn’t rain but it poured for LCD because even



Dr. Tšeliso Moroke

# Common Concern

*How the country moves*

## A state that outsources its own future

pers because the knowledge sits in private firms, not in government systems.

This model does not build a developmental state. It builds a brokerage state — one that manages invoices rather than national transformation.

If government spending does not circulate within domestic productive capacity, it cannot stimulate inclusive growth. Outsourcing large government functions often results in short-term contracts instead of long-term public employment, high consultancy fees instead of sustained skills development, and profits concentrated among a few rather than broad-based job creation.

Meanwhile, graduates remain unemployed. Skilled professionals migrate. The state complains of shortages while paying millions externally for expertise that could have been cultivated internally.

Employment is not created by issuing tenders alone. It is created by building systems that require permanent skills, permanent institutions, and permanent accountability.

Let us speak honestly. Outsourcing is not always about efficiency. Sometimes it is about discretion. External contracts can allow inflated pricing, weak

oversight, political patronage networks, and reduced institutional accountability.

When government capacity is weak, oversight becomes weak. When oversight is weak, leakages multiply. When leakages multiply, public trust collapses.

A poor country cannot afford a procurement culture that mimics wealthy economies without their fiscal buffers. Acting rich while structurally poor is not modernisation. It is misalignment.

If we are serious about inclusive growth, state capacity is not a bureaucratic issue — it is economic policy.

A capable government designs policy internally, implements projects effectively, monitors outcomes rigorously, retains technical knowledge, and reduces unnecessary expenditure. This requires professionalising the civil service, investing in continuous training, enforcing performance accountability, digitising systems to reduce leakages, and limiting outsourcing to genuinely specialised and temporary functions.

Capacity-building is slower than signing contracts. But it is cheaper in the long run. And it is

transformative.

We must adopt discipline before outsourcing any function. Is it core to government? Do we have people internally who could be trained to do it? Is there a structured knowledge transfer requirement? Are we measuring long-term cost, not just immediate convenience?

If we fail to ask these questions, we are not governing, we are managing decline.

The country must choose.

Do we want a state that merely administers transactions? Or a state that drives development?

A nation that outsources its thinking cannot control its destiny. A government that does not invest in its own capacity cannot credibly promise inclusive growth.

We cannot weaken the institution that shapes economic outcomes and still expect economic transformation.

The state must stop behaving like a wealthy consumer of services and start acting like a disciplined builder of institutions.

Because how the country moves is determined by how the state is built.

## Governing without breaking the party: Lessons from Lesotho’s “splits-in-power” era and what RFP must do to finish strong

the formation of MEC in 2016 by Hon Selibe Mochoboroane, who was also secretary general of LCD at the time, was a culmination of a power struggle within the party, which reinforces the same dynamic: internal competition becomes existential once state power is at stake. The DC’s internal divisions, culminating in the creation of AD just before the 2017 elections, further illustrate that government is not a neutral playing field; it is a high-stakes environment where internal rivals vie for access, influence, and succession.

The ABC’s internal struggles, which led to years of instability and the eventual splintering into BAP, reinforce this lesson: when the line between party conflict and state control blurs, the party turns into a battlefield, and the government becomes collateral damage. It does not even end there; even the party suffers, as we can all attest by the poor performance of ABC in the 2022 elections.

Many leaders make a critical mistake when discussing unity. They treat it as a moral stance, believing it can be achieved through loyalty speeches, public warnings, and disciplined slogans. However, unity within a ruling party is not primarily a moral achievement; it is an institutional phenomenon. It relies on credible rules that regulate ambition, constrain retaliation, manage succession, and establish safe pathways for competition. Without these institutional safeguards, power acts like a solvent, eroding trust, corroding structures, and transforming ordinary disagreements into major rifts.



Theko Tlebere

The harsh reality is that government decisions directly impact the stability of political parties. Governing introduces a new currency: appointments, promotions, tenders, board positions, committee influence, access to information, proximity to the leader, and control over who gets heard. Even when leaders assert they are acting based on merit, politics is not driven solely by official explanations.

It operates on perceptions that solidify into factional narratives. A reshuffle, for instance, if not state Sam Matekane was to do it, would not transcend into mere administrative adjustment; it would become a signal of who is rising and who is being sidelined. And that would mean serious trouble in Parliament because it is clear most ruling party Members of Parliament (MPs) are eager and ready to join the executive, but the problem would be who shall be appointed, and all party loyalists are happy.

A good stalemate example is the energy ministry vacancy that has been left to an acting capacity for more than a year now, just to manage the internal politics of the ruling party.

The appointment of a principal secretary is not just a bureaucratic decision; it indicates which faction is gaining control. A parastatal board appointment is not merely governance; it serves as a reward mechanism. In such a climate, intra-party competition shifts from ideological and programmatic debates to a more perilous focus on access and exclusion. Being able to manage all this for me is critical for a ruling party. I will still dwell on the

issue of whether the current ruling party is managing that very well in some other writings that I will do this year.

This complexity makes leadership in a ruling party uniquely challenging. A party leader in government is accountable to two different constituencies: the country, which demands stability, delivery, competence, and reform, and the party, which seeks representation, internal voice, fairness, recognition, and opportunities for ambition. When these expectations clash, leaders often resort to shortcuts that may appear efficient in the short term but are detrimental in the long run.

Some leaders govern through the party, using the cabinet and public service as tools for internal discipline. Others manage the party through government, transforming party structures into waiting rooms for state benefits and leveraging public appointments as bargaining chips. In both scenarios, the outcome is the same: the party ceases to function as an organisation with rules and instead behaves like a survival marketplace.

In the context of the current ruling party RFP, the elective conference emerges as a moment of significant risk. Ideally, an elective conference represents the pinnacle of internal democracy. However, in Lesotho’s experience, it often becomes a battleground for internal conflict, determining control over candidate lists, parliamentary leadership, disciplinary mechanisms, and proximity to state power. A conference in a ruling party is never merely about positions; it concerns the future distribution of power and access. Therefore, our observation about the lack of an elective conference in the RFP is not paranoia; it reflects the understanding that, in Lesotho, conferences can either strengthen institutions or ignite factional strife, depending on how they are prepared for and managed.

The key analytical insight, highlighted by Lesotho’s recent history, is that political parties tend to fracture when factions perceive internal losses as threats to their survival. Without credible assurances for the losing side, internal competition becomes a matter of existential consequence. If the prevailing sentiment is that the victor claims everything while the vanquished face purging, exclusion, humiliation, or a bleak future, contests become fiercely combative. Members fight as though their political lives are at stake, and indeed, they may be. This fear of extinction drives preemptive rebellion, prompting individuals to leave not out of animosity toward the party, but because they believe there is no secure place for them if they lose...

Let me stop here this week, next we will dig deeper into what a ruling party should do to govern itself, with institutions that are strong enough to wield power without being corrupted by that power.... The Future is NOW!





# Class as Injustice: Naming the system we fear to call by name in Lesotho

Rethabile Mathealira-Molapo

In Lesotho, we speak of poverty, unemployment, and “lack of opportunities” as if inequality were an unfortunate by-product of personal failure or simple hard luck, something to be mitigated through development programs or temporary relief, without views of sustainable systemic transformation. Because we do not ever say the word: Class.

What does class mean in a country with harrowing poverty rates?  
Formally, by Marxist standards, class is defined by the relationship to the means of production - that is, by who owns income-generating assets (that multiply profits exponentially) and who must sell their labour to earn a living.  
For our purposes, we require a slight redefinition of class to fit in line with our unique circumstances and practical experiences and the manner in which it plays itself out in our particular context.

Class is not determined by ownership of the means of production per se. Rather, it is a relational concept that combines control, income, and structural power to shape social advantage. While ownership of productive assets can confer relative economic freedom, the scale and capacity of that ownership determine the degree of structural advantage. Similarly, access to stable income, institutional positions, or networks can create immense privilege even in the absence of ownership.

Class favours both those who have acquired their status through merit, within the logic of a country’s given political-economic system and those who acquire it through illegitimate means. The latter, leading to predictable levels of unpredictability, which can cause despair and helplessness among those who believe in seeking opportunities through fair means, as they come to learn that “hard work” does not necessarily or always pay as they were raised to believe.

Class, therefore, exists in the relationship between those who hold these advantages and those who do not, shaping life chances, influence, and the ability to participate fully in social, economic, and political life.

Class is not about lifestyle, aspiration, or taste; it is about predictable advantages and disadvantages built into society. It shapes who survives, who thrives, whose voice is heard, and whose suffering is ignored.

This article seeks to examine class through the lens of unfair advantages created by how opportunities are accessed in Lesotho.

To name class as injustice is to confront a truth that most of us prefer to evade. It is uncomfortable because those of us in positions to speak, professionals, academics, policymakers, civil servants, and development workers, are often beneficiaries of the very system this article calls us to critique.

But it is also the case that even among professionals, civil servants, and other seemingly privileged groups, class exerts power: some enjoy advantages, while others occupy positions on the disadvantaged side, constrained in what they can say, do, or demand. Class controls not only material resources but also social authority and influence; it is also power over

voice and action; it dictates who can speak, whose grievances will be acknowledged, and whose will be silenced. In this sense, class is both a structure of opportunity and a mechanism of censorship and oppression, shaping lives across the full spectrum of society.

## Colonial Roots of Structured Inequality

The origins of class injustice in Lesotho are neither accidental nor natural. They lie in the deliberate social engineering of British colonial administration. The colonial state did not rule merely through coercion; it relied on differentiation. A small Basotho elite; teachers, clerks, interpreters, and local officials, was trained and granted access to education, wages, authority, and institutional legitimacy that the majority population was denied.

These advantages were neither incidental nor earned purely through merit. They were strategically conferred to facilitate governance and control. Over time, the advantages granted to this group solidified into durable class positions. Descendants inherited not just material wealth, but social networks, cultural fluency, and these advantages paved their way to emigrate to greener pastures elsewhere on the continent and abroad, as well as to ascend to positions of leadership and influence.

Class as structured inequality in this case is predetermined, patterned, and reinforced across generations.

## Post-Independence Reproduction of Class

Independence did not dismantle colonial hierarchies; it repurposed them. Political affiliation became the new gatekeepers of opportunity. Scholarships, employment, public contracts, and social protection were increasingly distributed through political loyalty, party affiliation, and proximity to those in power.

Today, this continues through the expanded pathways of networks, connections, and the individualised “luck” of knowing the right people in any sector, including private and development.

In such a system, access to opportunity is never neutral. Advantage predictably accrues to those already near power, reproducing class hierarchies in ways that are deeply unjust. Merit and effort are no longer the primary determinants of mobility. Opportunity is a privilege for some and is shut off to others.

## Life Chances as Moral Evidence

Class injustice is not theoretical. It is most visible in its effects on life chances. Access to healthcare, quality education, secure homes, nutrition, and social protection is structured by class. These are not markers of comfort; they are conditions for survival and dignity.

When a child’s life expectancy, vulnerability to illness, and access to education are dictated by class rather than collective societal obligation, inequality becomes moral and political injustice. Avoidable suffering, preventable disadvantage, and blocked opportunity are structured outcomes, not misfortune. Class as injustice is evident not only in material deprivation but in the predictable patterns of

exclusion. Those outside networks of privilege face barriers at every turn, while those within networks inherit advantage almost by default. This is not about lifestyle choices; it is about life chances.

## Cultural and Ideological Concealment

Class persists partly because it is concealed. Lesotho’s narrative of homogeneity; shared language, shared history, “collective struggles” obscures hierarchy. We speak of poverty, unemployment, and “lack of opportunity” as technical problems, depoliticised and neutral, rather than as products of structural design.

Culture and aspiration also obscure reality. Privilege is widely desired; elite lifestyles, Westernised norms of civility, education, and consumption are admired. These markers signal class, but they do not create it. Privilege in this case is moralised as merit, while exclusion is reframed as personal failure. Structural inequality becomes disguised as individual choice.

## Individualisation and the Illusion of Mobility

Despite the acknowledgement of unprecedented unemployment rates, political party patronage, connections to access jobs, looting of public funds and a myriad other reasons, we sometimes point to individual upward mobility as proof of fairness. Exceptional cases of success are celebrated, but they obscure the structural reality. Individual achievements do not dismantle systemic exclusion, they often depend on existing class advantage, either from having personal resources to pursue said opportunities through legitimate channels or processes, extraordinary access to networks or political proximity.

Class is systemic, patterned, and reproduced. One person’s mobility is not evidence of justice; it is an exception within an unjust

system. Structural inequality persists because society rewards those who maintain its invisibility.

## Complicity of the Privileged and the Limits of Equality Discourse

Those most able to articulate class critique often benefit from the system. Interventions frequently focus on mitigation rather than transformation, aiming to integrate a few into existing structures rather than dismantle the hierarchies themselves. True transformation demands courage about the need for structural change: redistribution of power and resources, institutional transparency, and mechanisms that challenge advantage rather than merely reward compliance.

Equality discourse that ignores structural privilege risks reproducing injustice. Inclusion without transformation is not justice; it is the preservation of hierarchy under the guise of progressive development.

## Naming Class as the First Step to Justice

Naming class as injustice is a call to action. It asks that we, as a society, recognise who benefits and who is burdened, interrogate the networks that perpetuate inequality, and redistribute access, opportunity, and resources to ensure life chances are not predetermined by birth or connections.

Accountability is not abstract, it is collective, material, and actionable. Until we name class, confront the privileges that sustain it, and act to dismantle it, inequality will remain misrepresented as misfortune, moralised as failure, and protected by those who have the most to lose from truth.

To speak honestly requires a willingness to risk privilege, comfort, and the social and material advantages that silence protects. Naming class as injustice doesn’t just demand moral courage, but action towards dismantling systems of inequality and pursuing equality in solid, tangible ways. So, let’s talk about class!



## Lesotho Highlands Water Project – Phase II



### ERRATUM FOR ADVERTISEMENT

#### FOR

#### CONTRACT 3005G1 THE GEOTECHNICAL DRILLING INVESTIGATIONS: BRIDGES AND QUARRIES

#### Replace:


“The meeting place for clarifications will be at the Polihali Operations Branch, Tlokoeng, Mokhotlong, followed by compulsory site visits on 18 and 19 February 2026 at 09H00.”

#### With:

“The meeting place for clarifications will be at the **Polihali Operations Branch, Polihali Operations Centre, Polihali, Mokhotlong, at 09H00 on 18 February 2026 followed by compulsory site visits on 18 and 19 February 2026.**”

Issued by the Procurement Team  
Khubelu Joint Venture





Job Detail

Job Type  
Classification  
Permanent

Job Title  
Promoter

Reporting to  
Manager: Sales Operations

Department  
Sales

Site  
Premier Lesotho Bakery

How to Apply  
Interested candidates are encouraged to apply through our email: [hr.lesotho@premierfmcg.com](mailto:hr.lesotho@premierfmcg.com). Documents should be sent together (Application, CV, and qualifications) on one email.  
  
Alternatively, applications can be delivered at Blue Ribbon Offices, Thetsane Industrial, Maseru.

Closing Date  
  
14 February 2026

Should you not receive a reply within a month from your application, please treat as unsuccessful.

Internal & External Advert:  
Promoter

Job Purpose

- To fulfil the role of a product and brand promoter who will be responsible for below line promotion activities for example instore, pro-mobile, brand campaigns, product launches and events.

Key Responsibility:

- Increase brand awareness by showcasing Premier Lesotho Bakery products to potential customers in line with the brand positioning
- Improve Sales
- Build brand trust
- Optimize customer interactions /product presentation.
- To ensure full maintain and improve customer service levels as part of the extended Bakery Sales team.
- To support effective instore merchandising in collaboration with relevant merchandiser.

Skill and Attributes Required

Stock control principle	Merchandising according to plan
Customer relationship building	Persuading and influencing
Product demonstration skills	Basic reporting
Personal hygiene requirement	Good communication skills
	Basic etiquette

Qualifications and Experience

- LGCSE/COSC
- Previous experience working in retail/ promotions
- Merchandiser (6 - 12 months) Desirable
- Attention to detail
- Able to travel
- Able to work a flexible schedule

Preferred:


- Knowledge of MS Office/ Excel
- Experience using smartphones and tablets

Other Requirements


- Pressurized environment
- May have to deal with customer complaints
- 6-day position which may require to work Saturdays, Sundays, Public Holidays or as per operational requirements
- Ability to work in a team environment to achieve daily deadlines

Premier

Growing Together



"Premier FMCg is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to Employment Equity and transformation. We encourage applications from all qualified individuals regardless of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. By submitting your application, you consent to the processing of your personal information in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act) of South Africa. We will only use your personal information for recruitment purposes and will keep it confidential in accordance with our privacy policy."



Invitation to Bidders

BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN COMPETITIVE TENDERING  
Re-Advertisement

Supply and Installation of Closed – Circuit Television (CCTC) - [LEGCO/CCTV/03/2026-2027]

1. Lesotho Electricity Generation Company has allocated/received funds to be used for the supply and installation of closed – circuit Television.

2. The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above works.

3. Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures contained in the Public Procurement Act of 2023 and is competitive to all bidders.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding document at the address given below at 8(a) from 8:00 a.m to 16:30 p.m. or on [mnkotsi@legco.co.ls/nkotsi-mankhabu@yahoo.com](mailto:mnkotsi@legco.co.ls/nkotsi-mankhabu@yahoo.com).

5. The bidding document which has been prepared in English may be requested by interested bidders at 8(b) or on [mnkotsi@legco.co.ls/nkotsimankhabu@yahoo.com](mailto:mnkotsi@legco.co.ls/nkotsimankhabu@yahoo.com).

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before **27 March 2026 at 11:00 a.m.** All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of **Five Thousand Maloti Only (M5000.00)**. Bid securities must be valid for until **22 July 2026**. Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 8(d) at **11:30 a.m on 27 March 2026**.




7. There shall be a Compulsory site visit at **Ha Ramarothole in Mafeteng** on the

dates indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.

8. Bidders should note the following:  
(a) Documents may be inspected at: **[251 Sekhaila Tlali, Honeymoon Park, Maseru West]**  
(b) Documents will be issued from: **[251 Sekhaila Tlali, Honeymoon Park, Maseru West]**  
(c) Bids must be delivered to: **[LEGCO Foyer, 251 Sekhaila Tlali, Honeymoon Park, Maseru West]**  
(d) Address of bid opening: **[251 Sekhaila Tlali, Honeymoon Park, Maseru West]**


9. The Planned Procurement Schedule (subject to changes) is as follows:

Activity	Date
(a) Publish bid notice	12 February 2026
(b) Site Visit	25 February 2026 at 11:00 a.m
(c) Bid closing date	27 March 2026
(d) Bid Opening Date	27 March 2026 at 11:30 a.m.
(e) Evaluation process	30 March - 01 April 2026
(f) Display and communication of Notice of Tender	15 April 2026
(g) Contract signature	01 May 2026



Lesotho Highlands Water Project – Phase II

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FOR  
CONTRACT 3005G1 THE GEOTECHNICAL DRILLING INVESTIGATIONS: BRIDGES AND QUARRIES



Invitation for Quotations

Khubelu Joint Venture requests Quotations from Geotechnical Contractors, for Geotechnical Investigations Drilling for Bridges and Quarries under Contract: 3005: The Design and Construction Supervision of Feeder Roads and Bridges. The Scope of Permanent Works includes five (5), 3m wide Pedestrian Bridges and six (6), 10m wide Vehicle Bridges. The lengths of the Pedestrian Bridges range from 200m to 700m, and the Vehicle Bridge lengths range from 30m to 432m.

From **05 February 2026**, the Request for Proposals will be available on request for free using the email address: [procurement@pemahn.com](mailto:procurement@pemahn.com), the same email address to be used to request the banking details for a non-refundable fee of **M1000.00** for physical collection of the RFP.

Quotations, in sealed envelopes, labelled “QUOTATION FOR C3005G1 THE GEOTECHNICAL DRILLING INVESTIGATIONS BRIDGES AND QUARRIES FOR CONTRACT LHDA No. 3005: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISION OF FEEDER ROADS AND BRIDGES” and the name of the firm quoting should be hand delivered to:


Khubelu Joint Venture,  
No. 6 Manong Road,  
Hills View, Maseru, Lesotho.

The meeting place for clarifications will be at the Polihali Operations Branch, Tlokoeng, Mokhotlong, followed by compulsory site visits on 18 and 19 February 2026 at 09H00.

The quotations shall be submitted not later than the closing time: QUOTATIONS CLOSE THURSDAY **05 MARCH 2026 AT 11H00**. Original quotes must be delivered before or on the date of this deadline.

Technical and Procurement Queries:  
E-mail: [procurement@pemahn.com](mailto:procurement@pemahn.com) with subject heading “C3005G1 Geotechnical Investigations for Bridges and Quarries”.





Kingdom of Lesotho  
Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development

FEBRUARY 2026  
ITT: 004 of 2026/27

Invitation for Bid

Tender for supply and delivery of Baby formula, Diapers, Hygiene kits and Groceries - ITT: 004 of 2026/2027

Tender for supply and delivery of Baby formula, Diapers, Hygiene kits and Groceries - ITT: 004 of 2026/2027

1. The Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development invites bids from locally registered eligible companies for the supply and delivery of **Baby formula, Diapers, Hygiene kits and Groceries** for Maseru District.

2. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 12th March 2026 at **12:00 noon**. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of a Bid bond from a financial institution recognised by the Central Bank Lesotho.

3. **\*NB\* Tenderers will not be awarded more than ONE Lot**

4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **(M2,000.00) Two thousand Maloti only**. The method of payment will be cash at Accounts Office at Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development, office Maseru. Second Floor 1010 Building.

5. It is mandatory for bidders to submit certificate of bona fide and will be included in the document, their tax clearance certificates from the Lesotho Revenue Authority together with their bids as well as their trader's license. These documents shall either be originals or certified copies by Lesotho Revenue Authority and Trade Department. Non- compliance with this requirement may invalidate their bids.

6. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 14:30hrs on Tuesday 12th March, 2026 at the address given below.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at:  
Procurement Unit  
Gender, Youth and Social Development Headquarters,  
10 10 Building Opposite Pitso Ground  
Second Floor Room 201  
Maseru 100, Lesotho.  
Tel: + 266 – 27003549


Confidentiality  
Due to the nature of this assignment, the Ministry of Gender Youth and Social Development (MGYSD) shall require that documents and any other information acquired by the company from any source during the course of undertaking of the assignment be kept strictly confidential, and that such information shall not be shared with third parties without the express permission of MGYSD.

1.1. **ITT Process**  
The Principal Secretary for Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development now invite sealed bids from eligible bidders for the **supply and delivery of Baby formula, Diapers, Hygiene kits and Groceries - ITT: 004 of 2026/2027:**

LOT 1	
ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	HUGGIES BABY DIAPERS
LOT 2	
2	CLEMENSE ADULT DIAPERS
LOT 3	
3	BABY FORMULA
LOT 4	
4	HYGIENE KITS
5	GROCERIES

**No one Bidder will be awarded more than one Lot, however Bidders**  
**Clarifications:**  
All clarifications and queries on this tender must be addressed to the Secretary Tender Panel, Procurement Unit, Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development Headquarters,  
10 10 Building  
Second Floor Room 201  
Tel: 27003549

Email [nmohomaneva@gmail.com](mailto:nmohomaneva@gmail.com). All requests for clarifications should be received no later than 10 days before 12th March 2026. All requests for clarifications must be in writing through email.



Government of Lesotho  
THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST NO: 1 OF 2026/2027 (CONSULTING FIRM)

A CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST- CONSULTING FIRM TO UNDERTAKE AN ASSESSMENT OF SYSTEMS, DESIGN AND DEVELOP A NATIONAL DATA AND M&E SYSTEM

**1. Introduction**  
In Lesotho, data serves as a cornerstone for setting development targets, establishing benchmarks, and designing systems that translate national development plans into tangible outcomes. Robust national statistical and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are therefore critical to ensuring the availability of reliable data and strategic information to drive effective development initiatives. The national, regional and international development plans depend heavily on the functionality and credibility of these systems. This reliance assumes that national systems are well-established and capable of producing accurate and timely data for tracking developmental progress. It against this background that the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning wishes to engage a consulting firm to undertake an Assessment Of Systems, Design and Develop a National Data and M&E System.

A complete set of bidding documents in English will be available to interested bidders for collection at Planning Procurement Unit office number **124** during office hours (between 8:00 am until 4:30 pm).

Bids must be deposited on or before **24th February 2026 at 12:00HRS** in the tender box situated at Government Complex Phase 2 at Development Planning 2nd floor. Bids arriving after the closing date time shall be rejected. Tenders


will be opened in the presence of bidders or representatives at **14: 30** hours on the same day.

The address for procurement of bidding documents, clarification requests and bid submission is:  
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning  
Procurement Unit P.O. Box 630 Maseru 100.  
Tel no. 22 317433 / 266 22 328187

**Tender Timetable for the expression of interest**

Activity	Dates
ITT Issued	2nd Feb 2026
Clarifications dates	2nd Feb 2026 – 23rd Feb 2026
Deadline for obtaining Tender Document	19th Feb 2026
ITT Close	24th Feb 2026 at 12:00 noon
Tender opening	24th Feb 2026 at 14:30 hours
Evaluation dates	2nd Mar 2026

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



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST  
EXTENDED SUBMISSION DEADLINE  
(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

NB: THIS EXPRESSION OF INTEREST REPLACES THE SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED RELATED TO THE SAME WORKS.

**LESOTHO**  
**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION SADP II PROJECT.**  
Loan No./Credit No./ Grant No.:P165228

**Assignment Title: DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTOR FOR SEAKA IRRIGATION SCHEME, QUTHING DISTRICT,**  
**Reference No.** (as per Procurement Plan): **LS-MAFS-530019-CW-RB**

The Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition-SADP II Project, *has received* financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the *SADP II Project*, and intends to apply part of the proceeds Design-Build Contractor for the Seaka Irrigation scheme.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include Design-Build Contractor for the SEAKA Irrigation scheme, including the development of ESMP.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition-SADP II Project now invites eligible construction firms (“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.

The shortlisting criteria are: *Firms are required to have the following:*

- a minimum of 5 years experience in the design and construction.
- A minimum of two similar major irrigation infrastructure projects which have been successfully completed.

Individual experts’ bio data **will not** be evaluated at this stage.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers World Bank Procurement Guidelines February 2025* (“Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. *[If applicable, insert the following additional text:* In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment:


Firms may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture to enhance their qualifications.

Terms of References can be downloaded from the SADP II website as follows: <https://www.sadpii.org.ls/procurement/>

A Firm will be selected in accordance with the Request For Bids method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours **0900 to 1600 hours**.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form in a sealed envelope to the address **below in person**, clearly written; **‘DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTOR FOR SEAKA IRRIGATION SCHEME, QUTHING DISTRICT,’** by 20th February 2026, at 12:00hrs. Procurement Office  
Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, Livestock offices,  
SADP II Project, Moshoeshoe II P.O.Box 24, Maseru 100, Lesotho  
[procurement@sadpii.org.ls](mailto:procurement@sadpii.org.ls), +266 22312578  
[www.sadpii.co.ls](http://www.sadpii.co.ls)



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST  
EXTENDED SUBMISSION DEADLINE  
(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

NB: THIS EXPRESSION OF INTEREST REPLACES THE SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED RELATED TO THE SAME WORKS.

**LESOTHO**  
**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION SADP II PROJECT**  
Loan No./Credit No./ Grant No.:P165228

**Assignment Title: DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTOR FOR TSIKOANE IRRIGATION SCHEME, LERIBE DISTRICT,**  
**Reference No.** (as per Procurement Plan): **LS-MAFS-530022-CW-RFB**

The Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition-SADP II Project, *has received* financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the *SADP II Project*, and intends to apply part of the proceeds to the Design-Build Contractor for the TSIKOANE Irrigation scheme.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include Design-Build Contractor for the TSIKOANE Irrigation scheme, including the development of ESMP.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition-SADP II Project now invites eligible construction firms (“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.

The shortlisting criteria are: *Firms are required to have the following:*

- a minimum of 5 years experience in the design and construction.
- A minimum of two similar major irrigation infrastructure projects which have been successfully completed.

Individual experts’ bio data **will not** be evaluated at this stage.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants [under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants] by World Bank Borrowers World Bank Procurement *Guidelines February 2025* (“Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. *[If applicable, insert the following additional text:* In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment:

Firms may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture to enhance their qualifications.

Terms of References can be downloaded from the SADP II website as follows: <https://www.sadpii.org.ls/procurement/>

A Firm will be selected in accordance with the Request For Bids method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours **0900 to 1600 hours**.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below in person, clearly written **‘DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTOR FOR SEAKA IRRIGATION SCHEME, QUTHING DISTRICT’** by 20th February 2026, at 12:00hrs. Procurement Office  
Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, Livestock offices,  
SADP II Project, Moshoeshoe II P.O.Box 24, Maseru 100, Lesotho  
[procurement@sadpii.org.ls](mailto:procurement@sadpii.org.ls), +266 22312578  
[www.sadpii.co.ls](http://www.sadpii.co.ls)



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**Arts**  
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**Chris Theko**

Lesotho-born actor Lebohang Ntsane, best known for his international breakthrough role in *The Forgotten Kingdom*, returns to the screen in the powerful new film *KABELO*, starring alongside acclaimed South African actor Warren Masemola.

Set against the sweeping landscapes of rural Southern Africa, *KABELO* follows the journey of a young shepherd whose dreams stretch far beyond the open plains he tends.

Kabelo is ambitious, restless and determined to escape a life shaped by circumstance, a story that mirrors the lived realities of many young people in Lesotho.

"The story reflects the realities of life and also looks at how the unemployment situation in Lesotho affects young people," said Ntsane.

"So many dreams die because of a lack of resources and proper guidance. Kabelo reflects that, but he also represents how, as young Basotho, we are trying to make things better."

At its core, *KABELO* is not simply about leaving home, but about the emotional and moral cost of chasing dreams without a map. As Kabelo steps into an unfamiliar world, the film explores expectation versus reality, ambition versus survival, and hope versus disappointment.

"One of the greatest lessons I hope people take from the film is that you do not have to let your dreams go," Ntsane explains.

"You need to work towards them in any way you possibly can. Kabelo's journey is a very painful one. He is not skilled in how to navigate it, he is often taken by the current, yet he keeps going."

The authenticity of the performance is rooted in years of preparation. Ntsane reveals that the journey of becoming Kabelo began nearly a decade ago.

"We had to really get into the embodiment of a shepherd, but not just a typical one," he said.

"This is someone who is in that situation but is driven to pursue his dreams. We went deep into the mountains with the director, met shepherds and had long conversations with them to understand how they think and see life. Physically, I didn't need to change much, but emotionally it was an im-

# 'KABELO': A film about big dreams, pain and perseverance

• **Ntsane returns to international screens**

mense extension."

Visually striking, the film uses Lesotho's mountainous terrain as more than just a backdrop. The landscape becomes a metaphor, representing both confinement and belonging, isolation and identity.

Through this setting, *KABELO* speaks to broader African and global themes of migration, youth unemployment and the search for purpose.

According to Ntsane, telling a deeply Basotho story at this stage of his career carries profound personal meaning.

Ntsane first gained international recognition for his role in *The Forgotten Kingdom* (2013), where he delivered a grounded and emotionally resonant performance in a film that introduced global audiences to Lesotho's landscapes, culture, and storytelling.

His role contributed to the film's critical acclaim for its authenticity and quiet power, positioning Ntsane as one of Lesotho's most promising acting talents and paving the way for his continued presence in African cinema.

"I am not the same person I was ten years ago. I have had time to really study the craft of acting, storytelling, characters and emotions. This journey made me fully aware that as Basotho, we are built different. Our stories matter," he reflected.

The film also marks a significant collaboration with Masemola, whose big presence adds weight and depth to the story.

"Working alongside Warren is phenomenal and surreal. It does not cloud you, it makes you a better performer. Acting

is inborn for him; he does it effortlessly. He is warm, generous, and guides with passion. I am grateful to have learned so much from him," Ntsane said.

*KABELO* will appear



2025 event at NOBO Cafe

at the Johannesburg Film Festival on 5 March 2026, placing Lesotho firmly on one of Africa's most important cinematic platforms.

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# Petroleum Fund partners filling stations for safer fuel use

Seabata Mahao

The Petroleum Fund has donated 90 metal jerry cans to filling stations across the country and launched a formal petroleum products safety training programme for fuel attendants.

The initiative, which aims to reduce fire hazards and professionalise service delivery, comes amid growing concern over motorists' widespread use of plastic containers to transport fuel.

Petroleum Fund's Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Advocate 'Makananelo Kome said the donation was a practical intervention to address an immediate safety risk.

"Fuel is a very dangerous resource. As part of our efforts to ensure user safety, we have donated jerry cans to all filling stations after noticing that motorists often use plastic containers, which is extremely unsafe because fuel in plastic containers can easily explode and cause damage," Kome said.

Under the programme, each of Lesotho's 90 filling stations will receive two metal jerry cans, one designated for petrol and the other for diesel. The cans will be available for motorists to borrow in emergency situations and must be returned immediately after use.

"This is an emergency tool, so it always has to be available. Users will borrow the can, collect fuel and return it immediately after use," Kome explained.

To support compliance, the Petroleum Fund has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) and has also engaged filling station operators on the initiative. While there is currently no law enforcing the use of approved containers, Kome said discussions are underway to introduce legislation.

"We are hoping that very soon there will be a law enforcing compliance with this initiative. People are not forced to use the filling station cans, as everyone is free to buy their own. What we are trying to do is to meet those who do not have containers halfway and ensure safety. We also hope that these cans will not be misused," she said.

The jerry can handover coincided with the Petroleum Fund's announcement of a new partnership with the Institute of Development Management (IDM), focused on training and certifying fuel attendants in the safe handling of petroleum products.

Through a two-year MoU, the Petroleum Fund

will sponsor the first cohort of trainees, expected to comprise about 90 fuel attendants, one from each filling station in the country.

"Health and safety are our priority because we are dealing with very dangerous products. That is why we decided to push for filling stations to have certified workers who are properly trained in handling petroleum products," Kome said at the signing ceremony.

She noted that while the Petroleum Fund had previously conducted ad hoc training sessions, the absence of a local institution offering specialised petroleum handling training had been a major constraint.

"As we were training petrol attendants in different filling stations, we noticed that there is a gap because we do not have an institution that offers such training. We were often forced to outsource these services from South Africa," Kome said.

She added that IDM's involvement marks a significant step towards building local capacity, with the MoU running for two years and carrying an option for renewal.

"For this agreement, we will pay for the first cohort of 90 people. This will be a very practical programme, and we are expecting participants who are ready to work," she said.

Kome further encouraged filling station owners to prioritise the hiring of trained and certified attendants, arguing that improved skills would translate into better service standards.

"We all know that the service one gets at filling stations in South Africa is different from what we experience here, largely because attendants there receive proper training. With the introduction of this programme, we are saying let us also improve our services," she said.

IDM Acting Country Director Thibeli Molapo welcomed the partnership, saying the institution will offer short courses structured into three phases: introductory, intermediate and advanced.

"The programme will be delivered in three categories: introductory, intermediate and advanced," Molapo said.

He explained that the introductory phase will run for three days, the intermediate course for five days, and the advanced phase for seven days.

"The programme will focus mainly on the safe handling of fuel to minimise risks. What is important is avoiding danger when dealing with fuel, and we also want to professionalise the service at filling stations," Molapo said.

# RSL, Standard Lesotho Bank unveil new digital tax payment system

Refiloe Molise

The Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) has introduced a new digital tax payment system that allows taxpayers to pay via USSD, internet banking and the Standard Lesotho Bank (SLB) mobile application, a move aimed at making tax compliance easier, faster and more secure.

The launch marks a major shift from long queues and paperwork to a modern, reliable and transparent system.

Standard Lesotho Bank's Chief Executive Samuel Seboka said the launch represents more than a technological upgrade, describing it as a partnership built on trust, shared values and a joint commitment to modernising revenue collection in Lesotho.

"Today, we are not simply launching a system. We are celebrating a partnership," he said.

Seboka explained that the bank and RSL have achieved full integration of services for both physical and electronic collections, ensuring taxpayers have access to efficient, secure and convenient payment channels.

He noted that the launch marks the second iteration of the electronic revenue collection solution, building on the success of the first phase implemented last year and reflecting continuous improvement in service delivery.

He emphasised the role of technology in the initiative, saying, "We see technology as an enabler of efficiency for institutions, an enabler of compliance for taxpayers and an enabler of transparency and accountability for the nation."

Seboka also highlighted SLB's long-standing commitment to Lesotho, noting that the bank is celebrating 30 years of existence and remains dedicated to supporting national institutions and development initiatives in the country.

The Acting Commissioner General of RSL, Obed 'Nete, said the new system is designed to reshape the taxpaying experience by placing convenience, efficiency and trust at the centre of service delivery.

He described the launch as a key milestone in modernising revenue collection and meeting the expectations of 21st-century revenue administration.

"This technology that we are launching today is about making it easier for Lesotho and the taxpaying community in general to meet their tax obligations in a way that is simple, secure and reliable," Nete said.

He explained that the journey toward digital integration began in 2022, guided by the ambition

to build a modern payment gateway that delivers speed, transparency and reliability.

'Nete reflected on the difficulties taxpayers faced in the past, when tax payments were often linked to delays and frustration.

"For many years, taxpaying was associated with long queues at service centers, long queues at the bank and uncertainty," he said.

Taxpayers had to submit returns at service centres, get documents stamped, go to the bank to pay and then return with proof of payment. "All of that is going to be history today."

Under the new arrangement, taxpayers and businesses can now pay corporate income tax, Pay As You Earn (PAYE), Value Added Tax (VAT) and customs duties using the three digital channels. According to 'Nete, bringing these services onto one integrated platform will simplify processes while improving accuracy and reliability in handling payments.

The system was tested through a pilot involving about 500 clients to assess stability and user experience. 'Nete said the trial demonstrated end-to-end processing and positive uptake across all channels.

Since October 2025, the pilot recorded more than 100 customs transactions and over 140 inland transactions, confirming the functionality and reliability of the solution.

He said a major benefit of the system is the elimination of un-receipted payments, where money reaches the bank without clear reference to the type of tax being paid.

"With this, that will be completely eliminated," 'Nete said, noting that automation will strengthen the accuracy of tax returns and payments while reducing under-reporting.

He added that the initiative supports RSL's strategic objective of integrating tax compliance into the daily activities of taxpayers by making payment channels more accessible. He said the launch is more than a technical upgrade.

"It is an investment into transparency, accountability and public trust from our taxpayers."

'Nete thanked SLB, RSL staff, technical teams and the taxpayers who participated in the pilot phase, saying the partnership demonstrates what can be achieved through collaboration.

He described the outcome as part of building a modern, responsive, citizen-centred administration aligned with Lesotho's development goals.

Lebona gave a brief explanation of how taxpayers can use internet banking to make payments.

"We are going to show our clients how to use this platform," he said while demonstrating the process.

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# New Likuena coach upbeat about his appointment

## Mamello Rakotsoane

Newly appointed senior national team coach Atang ‘Bob’ Mafoso is under no illusions about the scale of the task ahead as he looks to turn around the fortunes of the struggling Likuena.

Reacting to his appointment, Mafoso said that despite the odds, he is confident in his ability to breathe new life into the national team.

The Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) confirmed his appointment this week, following a lengthy selection process that culminated in a series of interviews held in late January 2026. Mafoso replaces Leslie Notši, who was relieved of his duties earlier this year.

He has been handed a two-year contract, with his primary mandate being to guide Likuena to qualification for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations.

“I promise to do better as I trust myself,” he said.

“There will be good results for the national team since I am now the coach.”

Mafoso has yet to appoint an assistant coach but indicated that the process will begin soon. He plans to submit potential candidates to LeFA for a vetting process, emphasising transparency and collaboration.

According to Mafoso, the assistant coach must

be someone who can work well with people and demonstrate self-respect, qualities he intends to instill within the squad.

Acknowledging the magnitude of the task ahead, Mafoso admitted that the role comes with pressure but said he remains optimistic.

“It is a difficult job, but I will work very hard. The team has lost many games in the past, but those losses have helped us grow and learn. I feel happy and nervous at the same time, but I believe good results will come.”

A well-respected figure in African football, Mafoso brings vast experience to the role. He previously served as head coach of Namibian Premier League side African Stars Football Club, where he led the team to the league title at the first time of asking. Mafoso also has an extensive coaching history within Lesotho.

Domestically, he has coached two of the Premier League’s giants, Bantu and Lioli FC, among others.

Importantly, Mafoso is no stranger to the national setup, having previously worked as an assistant coach for Likuena, a factor that is expected to ease his transition into the top job.

LeFA’s president Lijane Nthunya confirmed that Mafoso will focus solely on national team duties, marking a shift from previous arrangements



The new Head Coach of Likuena, Bob Mafoso

where coaches were allowed to handle both club and national responsibilities simultaneously. Nthunya assured the new coach of the Association’s full backing.

“We are going to assist him to choose a coach with the ability to work with people, with self-respect, so that he can transfer these values to the players,” said Nthunya.

Nthunya also issued a stern warning to staff members against leaking sensitive information, cautioning that such actions could severely undermine the Association’s work and objectives.

# Lesotho delivers successful regional baseball, softball tournament



The regional baseball and softball tournament action

## Seabata Mahao

Lesotho has successfully hosted a regional baseball and softball tournament, with Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) supporting the Lesotho Baseball and Softball Association (LBSA) Masters Division to stage the MDLBSA Masters Tournament from February 5 to 7 at Mabote Police Grounds.

The tournament attracted teams and officials from Lesotho, Botswana and South Africa, delivering high-quality competition and reinforcing the country’s growing reputation as a capable host of regional sporting events.

The successful staging of the competition marked another important step in the development of baseball and softball in the Mountain Kingdom.

On the field, South Africa’s Flames dominated the men’s division with a commanding run to the title, displaying experience and tactical discipline throughout the competition.

In the women’s category, Saints of Botswana rose to the occasion, clinching top honours and underlining the tournament’s growing regional appeal and competitive intensity.

Beyond the trophies, the event will be remembered for a major milestone in Lesotho’s sporting development. Seven local technical officials earned internationally recognised certifications during the tournament, significantly boosting the country’s officiating standards.

Two umpires attained Level 1 accreditation, while another two secured Level 2 status. In addition, two scorers received Level 1 certification and one achieved Level 2 accreditation. All cre-

dentials were awarded by a World Baseball and Softball Confederation (WBSC) Regional Trainer, highlighting the event’s international stature.

These certifications strengthen Lesotho’s technical capacity to host and officiate competitions to international standards, further positioning the country to stage bigger regional and international events in the future.

Speaking at the closing and awards ceremony, ETL’s Public Relations Specialist Retšelisitsoe Nkhahle applauded the LBSA for its dedication and vision.

“We applaud the Lesotho Baseball and Softball Association, through its Master Division, for its steadfast commitment to growing the game locally and for hosting such a prestigious and inspiring tournament,” Nkhahle said.

“As Econet Telecom Lesotho, we remain unwavering in our support for sport, which we believe is a vital driver of national development and, most importantly, unity among Basotho.”

The Masters Tournament capped what LBSA’s President Tšeliso Lemphane described as an extraordinary week for the association. During the same period, Lesotho hosted engagements of the Japan–Africa Baseball and Softball Foundation and the WBSC Africa Region 5 Softball Extraordinary Congress.

“This has been a truly historic and successful week for baseball and softball in Lesotho,” Lemphane said.

“Hosting continental and international stakeholders, alongside the Masters Tournament, has elevated the profile of our sport and demonstrated our readiness to operate on a larger stage.”

Lesotho Sport and Recreation Commission’s

(LSRC) President Baba Malephane also praised the organisers for delivering a successful event and called for stronger grassroots development.

“We must work hand in glove to grow baseball and softball in our schools, where we nurture the future stars of our country,” Malephane said.

“We thank ETL and all sponsors for their invaluable support in making this tournament possible.”

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- GOODY BAG
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- MEDAL

**22 FEB 2026**

**MASERU, LESOTHO**

**42.2KM | 21.1KM | 10KM**

**5KM | 1.6KM | AEROBICS**

**START: MAKOANYANE SQUARE**

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5KM	M385.00	M485.00
10KM	M415.00	M515.00
21.1KM	M445.00	M545.00
42.2KM	M495.00	M595.00
AEROBICS	M315.00	M415.00

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# Dead on arrival

## Why Lesotho's AFCON co-bid never stood a chance

**Mamello Rakotsoane**

Lesotho's ambition to co-host the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) with South Africa collapsed before it could even take shape, undone by a stark lack of preparedness and deep-rooted infrastructure gaps that made the proposal a non-starter from the outset.

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) sets demanding standards for host nations; including CAF-compliant stadia, robust transport networks, a CAF-standard international airport, adequate hospitality infrastructure, emergency medical services and modern training facilities.

When these requirements were measured against Lesotho's reality, the gap proved too wide to bridge. The Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) has since formally withdrawn from the co-bid, admitting the initial proposal was made in haste and only later subjected to a sober assessment of the country's readiness.

Addressing a press conference earlier this week, LeFA's President Lijane Nthunya conceded that while the idea was attractive, the fundamentals were missing.

"Seeing the realities on the ground, we realised

that Lesotho is far from meeting the basic hosting criteria," Nthunya said.

LeFA had initially floated the idea with the government and secured interest from Minister of Sports Motlatsi Maqelepo. But beyond early enthusiasm, no firm commitments or guarantees were secured to meet CAF's strict conditions. Nthunya said withdrawing was also meant to protect South Africa's bid.

"We chose to step aside to prevent harming the bid from our friendly neighbour, South Africa," he explained.

The bulk of Lesotho's problems lie on lack of accredited sports infrastructure. Setsoto Stadium, once the country's flagship venue, has been banned for more than five years and remains far from CAF standards, despite the recent installation of artificial turf.

Renovation plans are incomplete and could take years. But CAF requires host stadiums to be ready about 18 months before the tournament.

As things stand, Lesotho does not have a single CAF-compliant stadium and continues to play its international home matches in South Africa. LeFA's Secretary General Mokhosi Mohapi revealed that the association wrote to the South African Football Association (SAFA) to express interest in



Minister of Sports, Hon. Motlatsi Maqelepo

joining the bid but received no response until the final stages of the process, just before the deadline for expressions of interest.

At the same time, the Ministry of Sport contacted its South African counterpart, but no reply has been received to date. When SAFA eventually responded, it advised LeFA to engage CAF directly, a step that required guarantees Lesotho could not provide.

"To host a tournament of AFCON's scale, countries must guarantee CAF compliant stadiums, transport networks, security systems, medical services, training facilities and modern broadcasting infrastructure," Mohapi said.

Host nations must also ensure smooth immigration and customs processes, comprehensive health coverage, tax exemptions and protection of CAF's commercial rights.

"These requirements cut across several government departments, each with its own mandates and targets. There was simply no time to secure such assurances," he added.

Finances presented another major obstacle. CAF requires host nations to assume or share the costs of staging the tournament, including depos-

iting a competition budget into an escrow account before bidding.

"At the time submissions were due, we were still playing on foreign soil because we do not have a stadium under construction. AFCON is within 18 months. Commitment had to be demonstrated, not promised."

Accommodation was equally problematic. Only two hotels met CAF standards. Ongoing upgrading of the Moshoeshoe I International Airport further underlined the country's broader infrastructure weaknesses.

While hosting AFCON would have given Likuena automatic qualification for the 2027 finals, LeFA admitted that such ambitions were unrealistic.

"There were many promises, but delivery has been limited," Mohapi noted.

In the end, LeFA chose not to submit a formal commitment to CAF, fearing that doing so without guarantees could derail South Africa's bid.

"Would we want to be the association that collapsed South Africa's bid simply because there were no guarantees? That is why we did not go ahead and write to CAF committing the country," Mohapi said.

# LSRC to celebrate national heroes



Lesotho Sport and Recreation Commission (LSRC) has announced the highly anticipated Lesotho Sports Awards 2026

**Mamello Rakotsoane**

The Lesotho Sport and Recreation Commission (LSRC) has announced the highly anticipated Lesotho Sports Awards 2026, scheduled for February 21, at Victory Hall in Maseru.

The annual event is expected to honour the country's top athletes, sports administrators and officials for their outstanding contributions, while showcasing Lesotho's growing strength across various sporting disciplines.

Organised by the LSRC, which plays a key role in coordinating and developing sport nationwide, the awards ceremony will recognise excellence in fields ranging from athletics and football to emerging sports codes.

The event not only celebrates individual and team achievements, but also highlights

the LSRC's commitment to fostering a vibrant sporting culture that inspires young people and promotes national pride.

The LSRC has also released the list of categories for this year's awards, which will be held at Mojalefa Lephole Hall in Maseru.

The categories include junior female sportsperson of the year, junior male sportsperson of the year, sportswoman of the year, sportsman of the year, sportswoman with a disability, sportsman with a disability, journalist of the year, team of the year, coach of the year, presidential award, referee of the year and volunteer of the year.

Adding to the excitement, several corporate sponsors have come on board to enhance the celebrations. Bon Hotel will provide complimentary weekend getaways for award recipients, offering them a chance to enjoy a well-deserved break at its facilities.

All for One, a leading local enterprise, will be responsible for producing and presenting the trophies, ensuring each winner receives a lasting symbol of their achievement.

Meanwhile, Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) has contributed financial support towards prizes, further boosting the rewards for outstanding performers.

LSRC's spokesperson Limpho Rakoto expressed enthusiasm for the event, stating, "The Lesotho Sports Awards are more than just a ceremony, they are a testament to the resilience and talent of our athletes. With the support of our sponsors, we are creating an unforgettable night that will motivate the next generation of champions."

Details regarding tickets and the full programme will be announced through the LSRC website and at a press conference in the coming weeks.



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