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01 May - 07 May 2026

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Vol 08 No 11

M 6.00

## News

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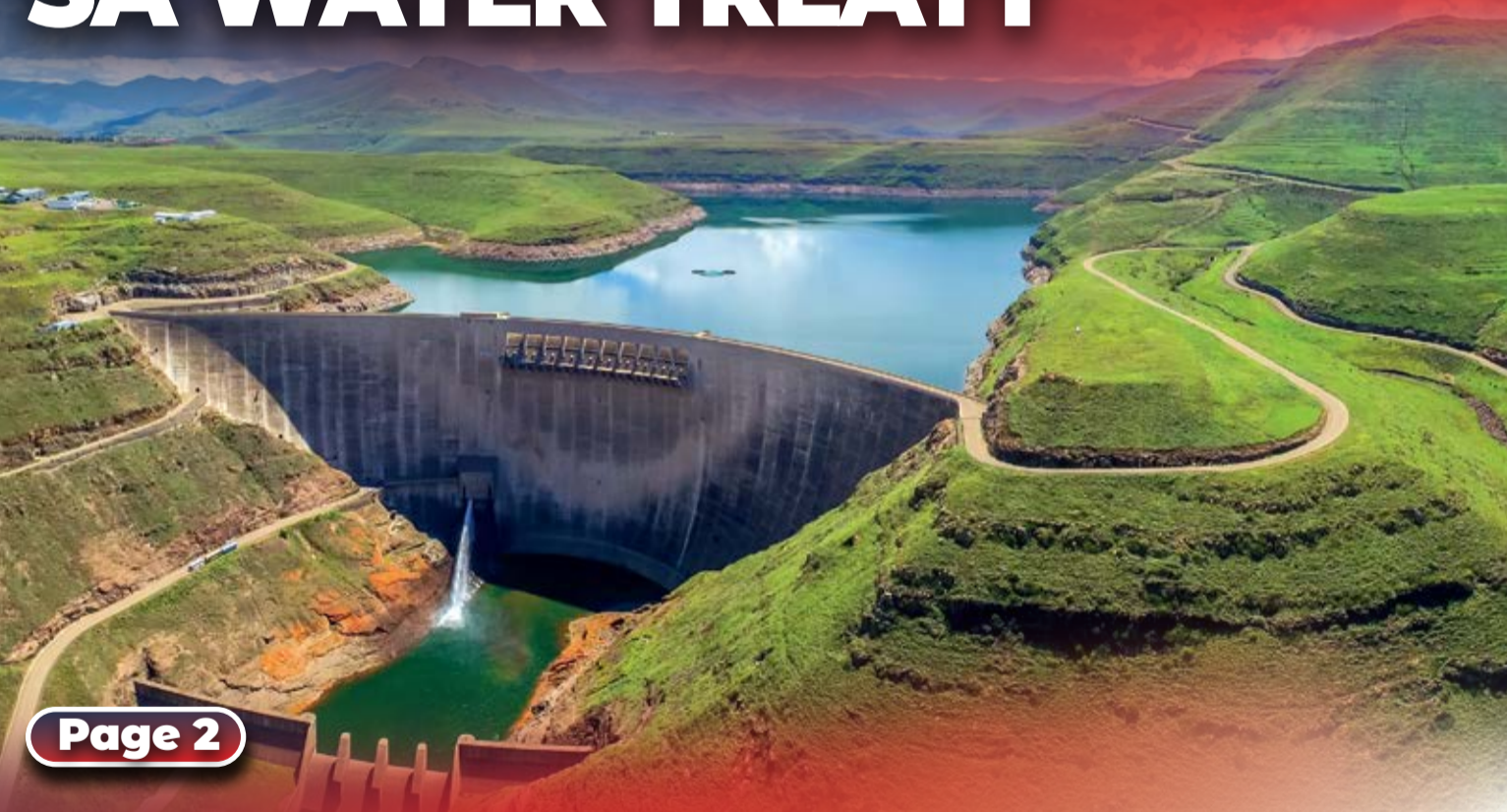
Page 3

## News

**EU vows to stay in Lesotho despite shift to regional model**

Page 4

# OMBUDSMAN CALLS FOR FULL REVIEW OF LESOTHO-SA WATER TREATY



Page 2



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# Ombudsman calls for full review of Lesotho-SA water treaty

## Ntsoaki Motaung

The Ombudsman has issued a landmark report calling for a comprehensive review of the 1986 treaty governing the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), concluding that the current legal framework fails to adequately protect the rights and welfare of communities displaced by the multi-billion-dollar Polihali Dam.

In a 50-page investigation report following site visits and testimony from Mokhotlong district residents, Ombudsman Advocate Tlotliso Polaki found that while the project serves “national development priorities”, significant “procedural deficiencies” have left farming communities facing hardship.

The Ombudsman highlighted critical shortcomings in the governance and operational framework of the multi-billion maloti project, which is governed by the 1986 Treaty between Lesotho and South Africa.

The project, implemented primarily through the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), involves large-scale dam construction, water transfer to South Africa, and hydroelectric power generation in Lesotho.

Phase II, including the Polihali Dam, continues to displace communities and spark complaints over compensation, resettlement, environmental impacts, and disruptions to livelihoods.

The recommendations for the review of the Treaty appear in section 8.3 Recommendations for Legislative and Regulatory Reform of the report.

They focus on operationalising key legal instruments and reviewing the foundational Treaty itself.

On secondary legislation, the Ombudsman stated: “The Minister responsible for water affairs should issue secondary legislation in the form of regulations determining operational responsibilities to implement the LHDA Order of 1986 and its amendments.

“These are crucial for operationalising LHWP around land acquisition and other administrative functions and should cover the management and implementation of the LHDA, ensuring fulfillment of Treaty duties. This should be undertaken within twelve months (12) from the issuance of this report.”

The LHDA Order of 1986 established the Authority as the body responsible for implementing the Lesotho portion of the project.

However, the Ombudsman found that the absence of detailed regulations has hampered effective land acquisition processes and day-to-day administration, contributing to delays and disputes with affected communities in areas such as Mokhotlong and other highlands districts.

The report further called for a comprehensive review of the 1986 Treaty: “The Treaty should be reviewed in all aspects to address existing shortcomings to foster a more equitable, development-oriented partnership.



Katse Dam

“Due to ongoing issues, the Treaty should be reviewed to address shortcomings in protecting rights and welfare of affected communities, focusing on improving compensation and addressing environmental impacts and gender-based considerations.”

This recommendation echoes long-standing concerns raised by civil society organisations, including the Seinoli Legal Centre, and communities affected by both Phase I (Katse and Mohale dams) and the ongoing Phase II works.

Critics have argued that the original Treaty prioritises water delivery to South Africa and revenue for Lesotho (in the form of royalties and electricity sales) while insufficiently safeguarding the rights of vulnerable mountain communities, particularly women who often bear disproportionate social and economic burdens from displacement and environmental changes.

### Homes damaged, health affected, livelihoods disrupted

The Ombudsman’s investigation documented physical damage to housing. The report states: “The Ombudsman’s team established during an inspection at Masakong and Ha Tlhakola that houses had cracks as alleged, while one had totally collapsed.”

One resident, ‘Masebenzile Lengoasa, disclosed that “her house started cracking in 2023 during tunnel construction and blasting” and that “the house collapsed on 5th November 2024,” though her husband “escaped without injuries.”

According to the LHDA’s submissions, 48 damaged houses have been repaired, 28 under the Dam Project and 20 under the Tunnel Project. However, the report notes that a “Non-Conformance Report (NCR) was issued to the Resettlement Housing Contractor for proceeding with blasting activities in Masakong without first completing the required asset condition survey.”

Residents reported significant environmental impacts. While some villagers indicated dust pollution “was not excessive and was manageable,” the investigation established that in Tsekong village, “most of the dust blew in their direction and has resulted in respira-

tory illnesses for some of the children and residents.”

The report further states that “noise during blasting was consistently described as unbearable.” The Ombudsman recommended that “professional-grade sound barriers” be installed along residential borders of the site, “particularly for villages like Masakong and Ha Tlhakola in close proximity to construction.”

Beyond physical damage, the report describes deeper losses.

“For affected households and communities, land loss represents not merely a financial transaction but the severance of cultural and ancestral connections.”

Residents expressed that “livelihoods had been disrupted, leading to food insecurity through loss of grazing land, agricultural fields, and access to natural resources.”

The report also documented concerns about “loss of access to medicinal herbs, wild foods, and traditional brushwood (fuel),” noting that these are “rarely compensated at rates allowing for modern replacements (electricity/gas).”

### Treaty’s ‘not inferior’ standard found wanting

The 1986 LHWP Treaty contains a binding obligation.

As quoted in the report: Article 7, Paragraph 18 “explicitly stipulates that the project must ensure affected people are ‘enabled to maintain a standard of living not inferior to that obtaining at the time of first disturbance.’”

The report describes this as “a binding obligation on both governments and implementing authorities.”

However, the Ombudsman found this threshold problematic. The report states: “The ‘not inferior’ threshold in the Treaty is considered by some too low a bar for a multi-billion-dollar project. Modern best practices suggest affected people should be active beneficiaries of project wealth.”

The investigation further found that “the standard of living of many communities transitioning from self-sufficiency farming to cash dependency carries the risk of long-term poverty when cash reserves run out.”

The Ombudsman concluded that “the LHDA generally meets its procedural obligations (it has a policy, holds meetings, and makes payments). However, it often struggles with substantive obligations — specifically ensuring that the quality of life for affected communities actually improves or remains stable over the long term.”

The report also raised concerns about the 50-year compensation period. Residents “argue should be lifetime or 99-year entitlement to ensure intergenerational security.”

The Ombudsman recommended that the LHDA “re-evaluate compensation packages for affected families already compensated in Mokhotlong district and adjust for market value or lost income.”

### Compensation delays dating back to 2012

As of 31 December 2025, Phase I compensation arrears stood at M142,227,353.59, with “Future Compensation Costs” of M473,071,149.91.

Phase II arrears were M6,760,710.74, with future costs of M24,997,942.40.

The report states: “The allegation that there have been unreasonable delays in compensation disbursements is substantiated. Complaints dating back to 2012 remain unresolved, and delays have caused significant financial distress and insecurity.”

One community representative raised a specific grievance: “In 2012, the LHDA affected a total of 69 community thickets and fuel trees where land was acquired for dam construction, yet no compensation has been paid. The LHDA’s response was that money would remain in the custody of the Authority.”

Another resident alleged that “grazing land has been affected but no compensation has been made.”

Regarding compensation adequacy, the Ombudsman found: “The allegation that compensation rates are inadequate and insufficient to sustain long-term livelihoods is partially substantiated.”

The report noted that “compensation based on the 2017 Policy utilises land valuation rates that fail to reflect current market value or future income loss.” Some households, the investigation found, “were forced to relocate without adequate compensation or livelihood restoration.”

The Ombudsman also documented confusion among community members. “There is a lack of clear understanding that exists between communal and individual household compensation beneficiaries,” the report states, noting “the influx of communal compensation complaints received.”

The policy stipulates that compensation for communal assets such as grazing land, brushwood, medicinal plants, useful grasses, and wild vegetables “will be made available for investment in community development and managed by the LHDA,” but this provision appears poorly understood by affected residents.

**Newsday** (+266) 2231 4267 / 5945 8983

Carlton Centre  
3rd Floor  
Room 302  
Kingsway  
Maseru

MANAGING EDITOR  
Lerato Matheka  
managingeditor@newsdayonline.co.ls

NEWS EDITOR  
Kananelo Boloetse  
editor@newsdayonline.co.ls

SUB EDITOR  
Bereng Mpaki

NEWS ROOM  
Ntsoaki Motaung  
Seabata Mahao  
Thoboloko Ntšonyane

INTERNS  
Mamello Rakotsoane  
Refloee Molise  
Kananelo Mokhele

CONTRIBUTORS  
Theko Tlebere  
Motsamai Mokotjo

PRODUCTION  
Bataung Monaheng  
Khosi Matheka

VIDEOGRAPHER  
Tumelo Taole

DISTRIBUTION  
Lehlohonolo Mantsoe

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

WEBSITE  
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# Mpotjoane pledges energy independence for Lesotho

**Ntsoaki Motaung & Thoboloko Ntšonyane**

Newly appointed Minister of Energy and Mining, Lejone Mpotjoane, has pledged to push Lesotho towards energy independence following a sweeping cabinet reshuffle that saw three new ministers sworn in at the Royal Palace on Thursday.

Mpotjoane was removed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations and reassigned to head the newly established energy and mining portfolio.

The move comes as Lesotho grapples with persistent electricity shortages, rising tariffs, and heavy dependence on imported power.

Speaking shortly after the swearing-in ceremony, Minister Mpotjoane underscored his commitment to serving the nation and hit the ground running with a strong focus on energy independence.

He said his immediate task is to accelerate ongoing efforts to provide electricity to Basotho households, particularly through the African Union's ambitious Mission 300 project, which aims to electrify 300 million households across Africa by 2030.

"The work is already in progress. My job is to intensify the efforts that are already being made," he said. He emphasised the need for Lesotho to move towards greater energy self-reliance by harnessing the country's abundant natural resources, especially water.

"We cannot continue to have many households electrified while the cost of electricity keeps rising. We must produce our own elec-

tricity," Mpotjoane declared.

He added that Lesotho should leverage its water resources to generate affordable, locally produced power, reducing dependence on external suppliers and stabilising electricity tariffs for ordinary Basotho.

On the mining front, the new minister acknowledged Lesotho's global reputation for high-quality diamonds but expressed determination to explore and develop other mineral resources.

Mpotjoane also touched on the construction sector linked to energy and mining projects, stressing the importance of Basotho ownership and participation.

"We have seen that big construction companies in this country are mostly owned by foreign nationals. We must ensure that major construction firms are increasingly owned by Basotho so that when huge projects are implemented, they are led by local companies. This way, we will not be left vulnerable when foreign companies depart. The capacity must remain in the hands of Basotho," he said.

The reshuffle also saw Limpho Tau, previously Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, replacing Mpotjoane.

Mamokete Ntšekhe takes over the Ministry of Health, while Voeswa Tsheka assumes the combined Home Affairs and Police portfolio.

Tsheka pledged to rebuild trust between law enforcement and the public, aligning her approach with the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) motto "Lepolesa Mothusi Mot-



*Minister of Energy and Mining, Lejone Mpotjoane*

soalle" (The Police is a Helper and a Friend).

She acknowledged ongoing challenges in the passport section but said she would prioritise solutions after settling into office.

Lebona Lephema was appointed Minister of Trade, Industry and Business Development, replacing Mokhethi Shelile, while Thabo Mofosi was moved from Agriculture to head the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, taking over from Letsema Adontši.

Selibe Mochoboroane, who previously served as Minister of Health, now takes charge of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition.

'Makatleho Motsoasele has been appointed to the Prime Minister's Office, where she

described her role as supporting leadership and coordinating key government functions, including disaster response.

"I am still familiarising myself with the role, but it essentially involves being the eyes and hands of the Prime Minister," she said.

The proposed appointment of Nkhethoa Seetsa to the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship fell through after he declined the position citing health reasons.

The changes extend beyond the political leadership. Several permanent and principal secretaries have also been reassigned, with Mpopo Tšoele moving to the Ministry of Defence and National Security, 'Mabataung Khalane transferred to Local Government.

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# EU vows to stay in Lesotho despite shift to regional model

## Thoboloko Nfšonyane

The European Union (EU) has moved to calm growing concern over its future presence in Lesotho, declaring that its commitment to the country "remains strong" even as it restructures its operations.

"The EU stands with Lesotho. Our commitment and our friendship remains strong. We are making some adjustments to how we operate, but the EU Delegation will remain in Lesotho, and we will share more details in due time. Together, we will keep building a brighter future for all," said Head of Delegation, Ambassador Mette Sunnergren.

Her remarks come amid revelations by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Lejone Mpotjoane, earlier this week that the EU plans a transformation to diplomatic presence affecting Lesotho and several other countries, a move that will see some services shifted to a regional office in Pretoria, South Africa.

But Sunnergren struck a firm tone, insisting the bloc is not pulling out.

"The European Union Delegation to Lesotho wishes to assure all our partners and the people of the Mountain Kingdom that we are staying in Lesotho and remain firmly committed to supporting Lesotho's

sustainable development," she said.

"Our partnership with the Kingdom of Lesotho will continue, and our collaborative programmes and initiatives will proceed in close cooperation with regional and national partners."

She added: "We reaffirm our steadfast and unwavering commitment to the people of Lesotho and the Government of Lesotho."

Government has already indicated that while the ambassador and her deputy will remain in the country, some staff will be relocated to Pretoria, with others potentially losing their jobs, a consequence of what Mpotjoane described as a broader EU restructuring directed from its headquarters in Brussels.

Despite the uncertainty, Sunnergren said the EU is repositioning itself, not retreating.

"As we look to the future and adapt to evolving circumstances, we are thoughtfully evaluating how we organise our work on the ground, so that our engagement in Lesotho remains effective, responsive, and aligned with our shared priorities," she said.

She emphasised that the relationship between Lesotho and the EU goes beyond local presence.

"Let it be said clearly: Lesotho and the European Union are partners not only here

at home, but also on the international stage," Sunnergren said. "As I have often recalled, Lesotho is one of our like-minded friends, sharing common values, a common belief in democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, and a common vision for a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world."

"In that spirit, the European Union remains fully engaged and dedicated to advancing our shared objectives with the people and Government of Lesotho," she added.

The EU is one of Lesotho's most significant development partners, backing key sectors including clean energy, governance, water and sanitation. It has also been a major funder of the country's national reforms programme, committing about €8.5 million under the 11th European Development Fund to strengthen the rule of law, human rights and democratic institutions.

Another flagship initiative, the €27 million 'Metsi a Lesotho' programme, aims to expand access to clean water and safeguard critical resources, part of what the EU has described as nearly five decades of partnership anchored on water development.

Under its current cooperation framework for 2021-2027, the EU has committed more than €119 million (about M2.3 billion) to Lesotho.



Head of Delegation, Ambassador Mette Sunnergren

Sunnnergren said that cooperation will continue uninterrupted.

"We also look forward to the upcoming Annual Partnership Dialogue and the LEAD Conference, which will take place during Europe Month ((May)," she said.

# Basotho with Lesotho-registered vehicles in SA may face travel disruptions

## Thoboloko Nfšonyane

The South African Revenue Service (SARS) will soon require owners of Lesotho-registered vehicles entering South Africa to complete a temporary importation declaration, renewable every six months.

Failure to comply could lead to complications, including potential challenges to the vehicle owner's status when returning to Lesotho.

In a memo to external stakeholders, SARS announced that all foreign-registered motor vehicles, including those from Southern African Customs Union (SACU) countries such as Lesotho, must now undergo temporary importation formalities upon entering South Africa.

"We wish to inform you of the upcoming enforcement of the requirement for all foreign-registered motor vehicles, including those from SACU countries, to complete a temporary importation declaration when entering South Africa," the memo stated.

This measure aligns with Section 15 of South Africa's Customs and Excise Act, which requires the declaration of all goods, including vehicles, upon entry.

From 1 June 2026, Lesotho motorists will need to submit electronic customs declarations in advance through the South African Traveller Management System (TMS) or the SARS MobiApp. This allows for preliminary processing, verification, and approval before reaching the border.

SARS says the new process will improve operational efficiency, reduce congestion at border posts, and speed up the movement of travellers.

### Proof of status required

SARS spokesperson Siphithi Sibeko said Lesotho nationals residing in South Africa on spousal, work, or study permits who are found in the country after 1 June 2026 must be prepared to produce their permits or contracts.

These documents will serve as proof that they were lawfully in South Africa when the new requirement took effect.

"Going forward, when they return home to Lesotho, they will have to follow the declaration process and renew their temporary importation permit every six months," Sibeko explained.

He added that the law takes effect on 1 June 2026, but motorists can already declare their vehicles in advance. Declarations can be completed conveniently from home via the SARS website or MobiApp, which generates a reference number. Upon arrival at the border, officials will finalise the document for the vehicle.

Motorists can also visit the nearest border post and request assistance from officials using kiosks available there.

To register or cross the border, vehicle owners must present the vehicle's certificate of registration that matches the details on their national identity document (ID) to prove ownership.

### FATF compliance and background

Sibeko previously indicated that the move forms part of SARS's efforts to meet Financial Action Task Force (FATF) requirements on proper registration and monitoring of individuals and vehicles.

"It must be borne in mind that the registration referred to involves both individuals and vehicles. This is to ensure proper adherence to Customs law, especially as it relates to vehicles registered in neighbouring countries operating on South African roads," he said.

South African police have already begun informing some local motorists about the changes, with two Basotho motorists confirming this to this publication.

Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) confirmed it is aware of the development but stressed that it is a purely South African arrangement and does not directly affect RSL operations.



Maseru border

RSL Acting Commissioner-General, Rakokoa Makoa, on Thursday said the changes will impact all Basotho and announced a nationwide campaign to educate the public.

The system was introduced as a pilot project in January and will become compulsory in June. It was first implemented at airports and has since been rolled out gradually.

RSL Head of Strategic Partnerships and Public Relations, Phello Mphana, said applicants must have their passports stamped to obtain the permit. He noted that other SACU member states, including Eswatini and Botswana, already operate similar systems.

RSL emphasised that it does not intend to replicate any law. It also stated that drivers crossing the border in vehicles they do not own must carry an affidavit from the owner confirming permission to take the vehicle into South Africa.

SARS has assured that frequent travellers will not be negatively affected. The temporary importation declaration is valid for six months and allows multiple crossings during that period without needing renewal.

Penalties for non-compliance will be determined based on the merits of each case, Sibeko said.

### Context behind the changes

Sources indicate that the policy was partly triggered by cases where some South African citizens, particularly those living near the Le-

sotho border, registered second-hand vehicles (often Asian imports) in Lesotho to bring them into South Africa. Such vehicles are generally not permitted in South Africa, as the country seeks to protect its domestic automotive industry, preserve local jobs, and avoid the entry of older, less safe vehicles.

While importing vehicles can offer cheaper options and better mobility, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has warned that the influx of older vehicles into low- and middle-income countries can heighten road safety risks and environmental harm.

Over 90 percent of the global burden of traffic injuries occurs in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). "The influx of older, less safe, and higher-emission vehicles into these regions has long raised serious concerns regarding road safety, environmental impact, and public health," UNECE notes.

No other SACU member state has introduced a similar arrangement yet.

SARS has called on all owners of SACU-registered vehicles to comply with the temporary importation declaration process. The agency said it is engaging with Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) to ensure smooth implementation.

"We will continue to engage with our Customs colleagues in Lesotho so that we work together and ensure a seamless process," Sibeko said.



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# Newsday Business

## 'Fuel pricing not based on arbitrary decisions'

### Seabata Mahao

The Petroleum Fund has clarified how fuel prices are determined in Lesotho, shedding light on the complex mix of global and domestic factors that ultimately influence what motorists pay at the pump.

This initiative was highlighted during a media symposium held in Maseru last week, where journalists were guided through the country's fuel pricing framework from international procurement to final retail pricing.

The engagement aimed to improve the quality of petroleum reporting, enhance transparency, and build public confidence in the systems used to regulate fuel prices.

Makananelo Kome, the Fund's Chief Executive Officer explained that fuel pricing is influenced by a combination of international and domestic variables, underscoring the need for clear and responsible communication.

"Petroleum pricing and supply systems are not always easy to interpret. They are influenced by several factors, including global oil prices, exchange rates, transport and logistics costs, as well as taxes and levies," she said.

"It is important to emphasise that pricing is based on structured mechanisms, not arbitrary decisions," Kome added.

She also highlighted the complexity of the petroleum supply chain, noting that fuel undergoes several stages before reaching consumers, including importation, transportation, storage, and distribution.



**A media symposium held in Maseru last week, where journalists were guided through the country's fuel pricing framework from international procurement to final retail pricing.**

"Each stage presents its own challenges, which are important for accurate reporting," she said.

Further deliberations emphasised that fuel prices in Lesotho are guided by the Basic Fuel Price (BFP) model, which captures the cost of importing fuel, including international oil prices, shipping, insurance, and exchange rate movements.

Given Lesotho's complete reliance on imported petroleum products, fluctuations in global crude oil prices and the performance of the Loti/Rand against

the US dollar have a direct and immediate impact on domestic fuel costs.

Beyond these international influences, local logistical considerations also play a critical role. Fuel must be transported from regional depots to service stations across the country, with costs shaped by distance, terrain, and infrastructure conditions.

These factors, combined with storage and distribution expenses, contribute significantly to the final pump price.

In addition, the pricing structure incorporates regulated industry margins to sustain oil companies and service stations, alongside statutory taxes and levies such as the road maintenance levy, oil levy, and value-added tax (VAT).

According to the Fund, these components are essential for ensuring cost recovery, financing infrastructure, and generating government revenue.

Kome also recognized the critical role played by the media in disseminating informative information on petroleum fuel issues.

"We deeply appreciate the critical and central role the media plays in informing the nation and shaping public understanding. This engagement is intended to be a platform for collaboration, learning, and open dialogue."

She noted that fuel pricing remains a sensitive and far-reaching issue, affecting transport costs, the cost of living, and overall economic stability.

"The petroleum sector remains central to Lesotho's economy and daily life. It directly affects transport, the cost of living, and overall economic stability. Simply put, petroleum issues affect every Moseho, whether directly or indirectly," she said.

Kome concluded by calling for responsible journalism, warning that misinformation particularly on economic matters such as fuel pricing, could have serious consequences for public confidence and national stability.

"Reporting on petroleum and economic matters requires fairness, accuracy, and responsibility, as misinformation can have serious consequences on public confidence and national stability," she said.

## Hope for Quthing learners

### Seabata Mahao

First National Bank Lesotho (FNB Lesotho), in partnership with Vodacom Lesotho Foundation, UNICEF Lesotho and the Ministry of Education and Training Lesotho, has launched the 'Ha U Felle Mona' Programme in Quthing.

The initiative is designed to support learners who did not achieve their desired examination results, with a strong focus on rebuilding academic confidence and resilience.

It represents a coordinated response to the growing concern that poor performance in national examinations continues to limit opportunities for many Basotho learners, particularly in rural communities.

Unveiled this week, the programme targets both the financial and emotional barriers that often prevent learners from continuing with their education after disappointing results. At its core is a commitment to ensure that failure is not treated as a final outcome, but rather as a stepping stone toward future success.

Delivering remarks at the launch, FNB Lesotho Chief Executive Officer Delekazi Mokebe shared a deeply personal account of her own academic struggles, using her journey to inspire affected learners.

"I know the pain of examination setbacks only too well. I did not pass my Form 5 as I had hoped and had to sit for supplementary exams. At that moment, it felt as though my dreams were slipping away,"

Mokebe said.

"Yet today I stand before you as a Chief Executive Officer to say: your results are not your future."

Her testimony set the tone for a programme anchored not only in material support, but also in mentorship and encouragement.

A key component of the initiative is the sponsorship of supplementary examination fees for 50 learners who are expected to sit for the November 2026 session. This intervention directly addresses one of the most significant barriers facing struggling students, as many are unable to afford the cost of rewriting examinations and are consequently forced to abandon their studies.

By removing this financial hurdle, the programme ensures that deserving learners are given a second opportunity to improve their results and pursue further education.

Mokebe emphasised that the initiative aligns with broader national development priorities, particularly in expanding access to education and nurturing future talent.

"We are standing alongside learners who did not perform as expected and reminding them that one examination does not define their future," she said.

She further noted that beneficiaries of the programme could later qualify for FNB's scholarship opportunities, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, which are critical to Lesotho's economic growth and innovation.

Beyond financial support, the programme also places strong emphasis on emotional well-being, recognising the psychological impact of academic setbacks.

Speaking on behalf of UNICEF Lesotho, Thato Mchone highlighted how poor results can affect a learner's confidence and self-worth.

"Poor academic results can profoundly affect a child's confidence and sense of self-worth. This initiative speaks directly to a child's heart. It tells them they remain capable, valuable and full of potential," Mchone said.

This holistic approach underscores the understanding that academic recovery requires more than just access to exams, it also demands a supportive environment that encourages learners to persevere despite setbacks.

Minister of Education and Training Ntoi Rapapa welcomed the initiative, describing it as a timely intervention that complements government efforts to improve educational outcomes across the country.

"As the Ministry, we are committed to ensuring that every child has a fair opportunity to learn and succeed. This programme removes barriers preventing learners from returning to write supplementary exams and provides much-needed encouragement," Rapapa said.

He further called on parents, educators and communities to play an active role in supporting learn-



**The CEO of FNB Lesotho, Delekazi Mokebe at the launch of Ha u felle mona**

ers who are given this second chance, stressing that collective responsibility is essential in helping them succeed.

The 'Ha U Felle Mona' Programme also incorporates mentorship and guidance elements, offering learners insights into alternative educational pathways and career options.

This ensures that even those who may not immediately achieve their desired results are equipped with the knowledge and support needed to navigate their academic journeys.

### ESTATE NOTICE

Notice in terms of section 61(b) of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024:  
**ESTATE LATE MAPHETHENE MABASO**

E461/2026

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 61(b) of the administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024 calling upon all creditors of the deceased to lodge their claims with the administrator of the deceased's estate within thirty (30) days of this publication.

The address at which the said claims can be lodged is mentioned hereunder

ADDRESS: BOX 1034  
THUOATHE BARUTING

BEREA  
CELL NO. (+266) 5057 4457

NAME: MAPALESA TS'OSANE  
ADMINISTRATOR



## Ombudsman finds respiratory illnesses linked to Polihali Dam construction

**Ntsoaki Motaung**

Dust from blasting at the Polihali Dam construction site has blown directly into a nearby village, causing respiratory illnesses among children and residents, the Lesotho Ombudsman has found in a new investigation into the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase II.

The report, released on Tuesday this week following site visits and testimony from affected communities in Mokhotlong district, documents a range of health and safety concerns linked to the multi-billion-rand project.

According to the investigation, Tsekong village faces a particularly severe situation.

The report states: "It has been established that most of the dust blew in their direction and has resulted in respiratory illnesses for some of the children and residents."

Other villages near the construction site also reported health impacts, though to a lesser degree. While some residents indicated dust pollution "was not excessive and was manageable," the investigation found that "noise during blasting was consistently described as unbearable."

The investigation also examined water pollution.

The report notes that "pollution of water sources with dust and debris during construction was an anticipated impact." Mitigation measures including silt traps and erosion control structures have been implemented.

The report states that "monitoring results to date indicate that although water in areas immediately proximal to disturbance may at times appear aesthetically unpleasing, overall quality remains within acceptable limits for relevant uses such as animal drinking."

To prevent further health risks, the Ombudsman



*The Ombudsman Adv Tlotliso Polaki*

ordered the immediate relocation of three affected villages.

The report states: "The LHDA should relocate the three (3) villages within six (6) months following the issuance of this report to avoid unnecessary casualties given the current state of houses and proximity to construction activities."

The report notes that Masakong, Ha Tlhakola and Tsekong were not initially scheduled for the first wave of relocation.

However, "due to complaints about disturbing dust and unbearable noise from construction works, a decision was reached that the community be relocated together with communities in the first batch."

The Ombudsman also recommended that "professional-grade sound barriers" be installed along residential borders of the site, "particularly for villages like Masakong and Ha Tlhakola in close proximity to construction," and that the

LHDA "enforce construction hours and implement regulated periodic watering to minimise dust pollution."

Beyond physical health, the report documents economic and social disruption affecting wellbeing. The Ombudsman ordered that "interim financial support should be provided to families whose livelihoods have been 'suspended' during this period so that living conditions are no lesser than prior to relocation processes."

## Lupus warriors to gather for Lesotho's first-ever lupus brunch

**Ntsoaki Motaung**

For the first time in Lesotho, people living with lupus, their caregivers, and health workers will come together this May for a special gathering aimed at shining a light on a disease that remains largely unknown to many Basotho.

The Lupus Warrior Brunch, organised by Beka & Co., will take place on Sunday, May 10, 2026, at Maseru Mall (former Westpack store). The event coincides with World Lupus Day and forms part of global Lupus Awareness Month.

Speaking ahead of the event, Beka & Co. spokesperson Thembeke Magaga Mokhalinyane said the timing was intentional.

"Lupus is real and it exists in our communities. Those living with it need understanding, support, and to know they are not alone," said Mokhalinyane.

"Awareness in Lesotho is still very limited, which is why we are bringing this important conversation home."

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease in which the body's immune system mistakenly attacks healthy tissues and organs. It commonly causes extreme fatigue, joint pain, skin rashes, and in severe cases, can lead to organ damage.

The condition disproportionately affects women and is frequently misdiagnosed, particularly in countries where public awareness remains low.

The inaugural brunch will combine expert health talks, personal storytelling from lupus patients, live music, and wellness checks. Healthcare profession-

als and wellness practitioners will address lupus and broader autoimmune care, with doctors and nurses expected to form part of the programme.

At the heart of the event will be Basotho lupus warriors bravely sharing their personal journeys. "Their voices are central to this gathering," Mokhalinyane emphasised, adding that some warriors are open to speaking with the media to help raise further awareness.

Attendance is limited to 70 people to create an intimate and meaningful experience. The guest list includes individuals living with lupus, caregivers, parents of children with autoimmune conditions, health professionals, and interested members of the public.

Tickets are priced at M200, with organisers working alongside sponsors to provide complimentary and subsidised tickets for those who cannot afford to pay.

Beyond the meal, attendees can expect practical health information, peer support, wellness resources, and gift bags. The event has also been designed with accessibility in mind, taking into consideration the fatigue and mobility challenges often faced by lupus patients.

Organisers hope the brunch will mark the beginning of sustained support for the lupus community in Lesotho. Plans are already underway to establish ongoing awareness campaigns, community engagement initiatives, and potential support groups.

"We aim to make this an annual platform that continues to grow awareness and build a strong, supportive community," Mokhalinyane said.

BEKA & CO. BRUNCH

WE INVITE YOU  
TO JOIN US FOR THE

## LUPUS WARRIOR BRUNCH

MAY 10TH 2026 | 12:00

**Maseru Mall  
(former westpack store)**

Lupus Warriors Brunch is a refined awareness event celebrating strength and resilience beyond lupus. The brunch features expert health talks, lived experience storytelling, live music and connection in an elegant, supportive setting designed to inform, inspire and uplift.

THEME: SHADES OF PURPLE.

TICKET

### M200

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SCAN TO BUY A TICKET












Theko Tlebere

# Common Concern

## Who calls the shots between Ministers and Principal Secretaries in Lesotho?

Lately, I have decided to write about issues that I find essential among the Basotho nation. For the good part of it I will be looking at issues from a scholarly perspective so that our arguments teach rather than make a point. The issue of who calls the shots between Ministers and Principal Secretaries is debated in many platforms, with many people so opinionated that our youth end up confused and not knowing what is right. This week I want us to look at the constitution of Lesotho as amended in order to understand what is expected from both ministers and principal secretaries. I know people like Ntate Tlohang Sekhamane and Ntate Tsukutlane Au who have been both principal secretaries and ministers at some point may give us a practical explanation. But for now we shall simply look at what the constitution says.

The determination of the authority between Ministers and Principal Secretaries in Lesotho must be ascertained through constitutional provisions, specifically as amended, rather than through prevailing political customs, party hierarchies, or standard governance protocols. Upon examination of the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution Act, 2025, the legal framework becomes evident: Ministers possess political direction and control over their respective ministries, whereas Principal Secretaries, now designated as Permanent Secretaries, serve as the administrative, executive, and accounting authorities of those ministries. The law thus establishes a dual yet distinct authority, rather than a mere master-servant dynamic.

A significant aspect to note is the alteration in legal terminology. The 2025 amendment repeals the former section 96, replacing it with a new provision regarding the Government Secretary. It further repeals the prior section 97 and substitutes it with a provision concerning "Permanent Secretaries". While the term Principal Secretaries may still be utilised in everyday discourse, the revised constitutional text now refers to them as Permanent Secretaries. The accompanying Government Notice explicitly states that the Act designates Principal Secretaries as Permanent

Secretaries under the Government Secretary and clarifies that their appointments shall be made by the Public Service Commission, rather than by the Prime Minister as was previously practiced.

This modification is not merely superficial; it fundamentally alters the legal framework governing executive administration. Under the amended section 96, a Government Secretary is established within the public service as the head of the civil service. The Government Secretary is appointed by the Prime Minister from a shortlist of three candidates recommended by the Public Service Commission through a transparent, merit-based, fair, and competitive process. The Government Secretary is appointed for an initial term of five years, which may be renewed for an additional five years contingent upon satisfactory performance. Consequently, the leadership of the civil service is no longer subject to arbitrary political discretion but is situated within a more structured constitutional process.

The most pertinent provision regarding the relationship between the Minister and the Permanent Secretary is articulated in the amended section 97. It delineates that a Permanent Secretary, as an office within the public service, is accountable for the supervision of a Government ministry, for which a Minister has been assigned the responsibility to exercise general direction and control. This provision encapsulates the distribution of power: the Minister retains "general direction and control," while the Permanent Secretary is charged with "supervision" of the ministry. The law does not stipulate that the Minister personally supervises the ministry nor does it assert that the Permanent Secretary operates without ministerial guidance. It delineates two distinct roles: political direction and administrative supervision.

Thus, if the inquiry pertains to who holds political authority, the answer is the Minister. The Minister serves as the political head of the ministry, embodying government policy, Cabinet priorities, and political accountability. The Minister has the prerogative to determine the policy direction of the ministry, subject to the constraints of the Con-

stitution, Acts of Parliament, Cabinet decisions, and available budgetary resources. For instance, a Minister may prioritise agricultural subsidies, health workforce reform, road infrastructure, school feeding programs, youth employment initiatives, or police reform, depending on the portfolio. This exemplifies the meaning of "general direction and control," conferring genuine constitutional authority upon the Minister.

Conversely, if the question pertains to administrative authority and compliance, the answer is the Permanent Secretary. The amended section 97 designates the Permanent Secretary as the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Accounting Officer of the relevant ministry. These titles carry significant legal implications. A Chief Executive Officer is not merely an administrative clerk, nor is a Chief Accounting Officer simply a messenger for the Minister. The Permanent Secretary bears institutional responsibility for management, administration, public finance, internal controls, and lawful implementation. While a Minister may provide lawful policy direction, it is the duty of the Permanent Secretary to ensure that implementation adheres to legal standards.

This is where numerous political misunderstandings may arise within Lesotho. Certain Ministers may assume that their political seniority mandates that every administrative directive must be followed without question. Such an interpretation is not supported by the amended Constitution. "General direction and control" does not confer the authority to circumvent procurement legislation, manipulate appointments, authorise unlawful payments, interfere with technical recruitment processes, or instruct personnel to disregard financial controls. Should a Minister's directive be unlawful, irregular, or beyond budgetary authority, the Permanent Secretary's legal obligation is not one of blind compliance; rather, it is to safeguard lawful administration.

Conversely, some Permanent Secretaries may also misinterpret their role. Administrative supervision does not grant the Permanent Secretary political superiority over the Minister. A Perma-

nent Secretary cannot obstruct lawful government policy solely due to personal disagreement with the Minister's political priorities. The ministry exists to execute government policy within the confines of the law. Where the Minister issues lawful policy direction, the Permanent Secretary is required to translate that policy into actionable administrative measures, work plans, budgets, programs, and institutional procedures.

What then is the legal hierarchy of authority? At the political echelon, the Cabinet and Ministers establish policy. At the civil service level, the Government Secretary heads the civil service. At the ministry level, the Permanent Secretary supervises the ministry, serving as both Chief Executive Officer and Chief Accounting Officer. In terms of appointments, Permanent Secretaries are appointed by the Public Service Commission through a transparent, merit-based, fair, and competitive process, serving five-year terms that are renewable once upon satisfactory performance. This framework mitigates the perception that Permanent Secretaries are personal political representatives of individual Ministers.

The appointment issue holds significant importance. A line Minister does not possess the authority to appoint the Permanent Secretary. The amended Constitution delegates this responsibility to the Public Service Commission, which employs a merit-based selection process. Consequently, a Minister may collaborate with a Permanent Secretary, direct policy through that office, and hold the ministry politically accountable; however, the Minister does not possess ownership over that officer. The Permanent Secretary is a member of the public service, not the personal appointee of the Minister.

Practically speaking, the optimal understanding of the relationship can be summarised as follows: the Minister determines the policy objectives; the Permanent Secretary manages the legal execution of those objectives. The Minister articulates the government's intended achievements, while the Permanent Secretary delineates how the ministry will implement that decision within the bounds of the Constitution, statutory law, budgetary allocations, procurement regulations, human resource policies, and public finance procedures. When both parties adhere to their respective roles, government functions effectively. When either party oversteps their jurisdiction, conflict ensues.

For Lesotho, this distinction transcends technicality; it is fundamental to the principles of constitutional governance. Ministries cannot operate effectively if Ministers are relegated to symbolic roles. Conversely, the public service cannot maintain its professionalism if Permanent Secretaries are treated as political subordinates. The law seeks equilibrium: democratic political leadership on one side and lawful professional administration on the other. This is the constitutional mandate. The future is NOW!

## Economic sovereignty begins with knowledge

### ... Why Lesotho must empower trade platforms now

#### Kananelo Boloetse

There is a quiet vulnerability that sits at the heart of many small economies. It does not always announce itself in times of stability. It waits, patiently, for disruption. And when disruption comes, it reveals just how dependent a nation has become on systems beyond its control.

Today, the world is once again flirting with instability. Rising geopolitical tensions, including the ongoing strain between the United States and Iran, serve as a stark reminder that global supply chains are not immune to conflict. When powerful nations collide, the shockwaves travel far beyond their borders, rippling through fuel markets, trade routes and commodity prices.

We are already witnessing the early tremors. Fuel prices are climbing. The cost of goods is tightening its grip on households. For countries like Lesotho, these are not distant headlines. They are immediate economic realities.

But perhaps the greater risk lies closer to home.

Lesotho's economic structure is deeply intertwined with that of South Africa. From fuel supply to retail goods, from manufacturing inputs to logistics corridors, much of what sustains daily life in Lesotho flows through its neighbour. This relationship has long been practical and beneficial. Yet it also creates a single point of failure.

If South Africa were to experience significant

disruption, whether through economic strain, political instability or indirect consequences of global conflicts, Lesotho would feel the impact almost instantly. Shelves would thin. Costs would rise further. Businesses would struggle to source inputs. The fragility would no longer be theoretical.

This is not alarmism. It is economic realism.

And it is precisely why Lesotho must begin to think more deliberately about resilience, particularly in the realm of consumables and trade.

The question is no longer whether global disruption will occur. It is how prepared we are when it does.

One of the most effective, yet often overlooked, tools for building this resilience is knowledge-driven trade empowerment. Platforms that educate, connect and equip entrepreneurs to participate directly in global markets are not luxuries. They are strategic assets.

When Basotho entrepreneurs rely heavily on intermediaries, particularly for sourcing goods, the country inadvertently imports not just products, but added costs, delays and dependency. Each additional layer between producer and consumer weakens competitiveness and limits control.

However, when entrepreneurs are equipped with the knowledge to source directly, negotiate with manufacturers, understand logistics and diversify supply chains, something powerful happens. Dependency begins to loosen. Agency begins to grow.

This is where platforms such as trade symposiums, sourcing expos and global commerce networks become critical.

They serve as bridges between local ambition and global opportunity.

An entrepreneur who learns how to import goods directly from international suppliers can reduce costs and pass those savings to consumers. A retailer who diversifies sourcing channels becomes less vulnerable to regional disruptions. A manufacturer who understands global procurement can maintain production even when traditional supply lines falter.

These shifts may appear incremental at first, but collectively they reshape the economic landscape. They move a nation from passive participation to active engagement. More importantly, they begin to address a deeper issue, the over-reliance on external economies for basic consumables. True economic resilience is not only about accessing global markets. It is also about strengthening local production capacity over time. And that process begins with exposure, knowledge and strategic partnerships.

The irony of globalisation is that while it connects markets, it also exposes weaknesses. Countries that do not actively build internal capacity and diversified trade networks often find themselves at the mercy of forces they cannot influence.

Lesotho cannot afford to remain in that position.

Empowering platforms that facilitate trade

knowledge, international sourcing and entrepreneurial development is therefore not a peripheral agenda. It is central to national growth.

Such platforms do more than transfer information. They unlock confidence. They create networks. They inspire a shift in mind-set, from dependency to participation, from limitation to possibility.

The private sector, media and development institutions all have a role to play in this ecosystem. Supporting these initiatives, amplifying their reach and ensuring accessibility to a wider audience can accelerate their impact significantly.

Because when knowledge spreads, opportunity multiplies.

And when opportunity multiplies, economies strengthen.

The current global climate is a warning, but it is also an invitation. An invitation for Lesotho to rethink its position within the global economy. An invitation to reduce its exposure to external shocks. An invitation to empower its entrepreneurs with the tools needed to navigate an increasingly complex world.

In the end, resilience is not built in moments of crisis. It is built in moments of preparation.

The nations that thrive are those that invest early in their capacity to adapt.

For Lesotho, that investment must begin with empowering the very platforms that open doors to global trade, reduce dependency and lay the foundation for a more self-reliant future



## History and origin of May Day [International Labour Day]

### Bahlakoana Lebakae

Many people sacrificed their lives during the Haymarket Massacre on May 4, 1886, in Chicago during a workers' strike. A bomb was thrown by an unidentified person. Police then fired into the crowd. When the violence ended, seven police officers and at least four workers were dead, with scores more wounded. Most historians agree that many of the police casualties resulted from friendly fire in the chaos. International Workers' Day is now celebrated worldwide to commemorate May Day.

International Labour Day (May Day) aims to continue the struggle for and promote the requirement of an eight-hour workday. Earlier, working conditions for labourers were very severe, with shifts lasting 10 to 16 hours a day, often in unsafe environments. Deaths, injuries, and other dreadful conditions were common at workplaces during the 1860s. Working people remained highly agitated until the eight-hour workday was eventually declared.

In the United States, the May Day Riots of 1894 broke out in Cleveland, Ohio, as thousands of unemployed workers protested during the severe depression caused by the Panic of 1893. Then, in 1904, the International Socialist Conference in Amsterdam issued the following statement: "All Social Democratic Party organisations and trade unions of all countries [shall] demonstrate energetically on May First for the legal establishment of the eight-hour day, for the class demands of the proletariat, and for universal peace." It declared that "it is mandatory upon the proletarian organisations of all countries to stop work on May 1, wherever it is possible without injury to the workers."

#### INTERNATIONAL LABOUR DAY THEME

International Labour Day themes are planned by members of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Some themes are mentioned below.

The ILO focuses on ensuring a healthy psychosocial working environment for all workers.

This theme highlights the importance of managing: workload, time, roles and organisational culture, and prevention of burnout, violence, and harassment.

#### Origins and History of the ILO

The ILO was created in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, reflecting the belief that universal and lasting peace can be accomplished only if it is based on social justice.

The ILO Constitution was drafted between January and April 1919 by the Labour Commission set up by the Peace Conference, which first met in Paris and then in Versailles. The Constitution incorporated ideas tested within the International Association for Labour Legislation, founded in Basel in 1901. Advocacy for an international organisation dealing with labour issues began in the nineteenth century, led by two industrialists: Robert Owen (1771–1853) of Wales and Daniel Legrand (1783–1859) of France.

The driving forces for the ILO's creation arose from security, humanitarian, political, and economic considerations. Summarising them, the ILO Constitution's Preamble states that the High Contracting Parties were "moved by sentiments of justice and humanity as well as by the desire to secure the permanent peace of the world..."

Against a background of exploitation of workers in industrialising nations, there was keen appreciation of the importance of social justice in securing peace. There was also increasing understanding of the world's economic

interdependence and the need for cooperation to achieve similarity in working conditions among countries competing for markets.

Reflecting these ideas, the Preamble declares:

- Whereas universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice;
- And whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship, and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required;
- Whereas also the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries.
- The areas of improvement listed in the Preamble remain relevant today, for example:
  - Regulation of hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum working day and week
  - Regulation of labour supply, prevention of unemployment, and provision of an adequate living wage
  - Protection of the worker against sickness, disease, and injury arising out of employment
  - Protection of children, young persons, and women
  - Provision for old age and injury, protection of the interests of workers employed in countries other than their own
  - Recognition of the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value
  - Recognition of the principle of freedom of association
  - Organisation of vocational and technical education, and other measures
- Early Days

The ILO made signal contributions to the world of work from its early days. The first International Labour Conference, held in Washington in October 1919, adopted six International Labour Conventions, which dealt with hours of work in industry, unemployment, maternity protection, night work for women, minimum age, and night work for young persons in industry.

The ILO was located in Geneva in the summer of 1920, with France's Albert Thomas as the first Director of the International Labour Office (the Organisation's permanent secretariat). Under his strong impetus, 16 International Labour Conventions and 18 Recommendations were adopted in less than two years.

A Committee of Experts was set up in 1926 as a supervisory system on the application of ILO standards. The Committee, which exists today, is composed of independent jurists responsible for examining government reports and presenting their own report each year to the Conference.

#### Depression and War

The Great Depression, with its resulting mass unemployment, was the order of the day. In 1932, it was realised that handling labour issues also requires international cooperation. The United States became a member of the ILO in 1934, although it continued to stay out of the League of Nations.

In 1946, the ILO became a specialised agency of the newly formed United Nations. In 1948, still during the period of Phelan's leadership, the International Labour Conference adopted Convention No. 87 on freedom of association and the right to organise.

#### The Post-War Years

America's David Morse was Director-General from 1948 to 1970, during which time the number of member states doubled. The ILO established the Geneva-based International Institute for Labour Studies in 1960 and the International Training Centre in Turin in 1965. The Organisation won the Nobel Peace Prize on its 50th anniversary in 1969.

The 11th ILO Director-General, Gilbert F. Hougbo, was elected for the period of 1 October 2022 to October 2027. He is a former Prime Minister of Togo (2008–2012), born 1961, and former President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

#### WHY TRADE UNIONS MATTER: FROM SLAVERY TO STRUGGLE

Without trade unions, it would be pure slavery. Wages have never increased by 100 percent.

History informs us of the current class struggles, which are over 500 years old. If we miss out on history, we will miss out on the bigger picture. Capitalism changes colours but does not change the maximisation of profit: the exploiter against the exploited people of Africa.

1450–1850: Slavery of Africans – In mercantile capitalism, labour was bought cheaply or almost free of charge. For example, a geologist found Africans playing their 3,000-year-old games with precious stones, then acquired the land where the minerals came from and forbade any trading of such metals. To date, we as Africans do not know the value of our minerals, how much is being extracted, or how much is left: oil, platinum, gold, diamonds, gas, etc.

#### Berlin partitioning of Africa

1950–1970: Nationalism in Africa – African countries were set to become independent, yet they did not control their economies or the world order of finance monopoly capitalism. That system was designed to export capital to African nations to compound interest. Banks became section chumps to suck out wealth and perpetuate the dependency of states and individuals.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank imposed austerity programmes that transferred business from states to privatisation through so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes. Workers are subjected to taxation and stressful advertisements that make choices for them, while governments are coerced into prostituting states for Foreign Direct Investment without considering actual local direct investments, including making foreign-investor-friendly laws.

From 1975 to 2026: Neoliberal Capitalism has succeeded in its aim to redistribute wealth from:

- Wages to profits
- Labour to capital
- Poor to rich

No single African has redistributed in the opposite way. Real increases in wages in real terms have declined. The rich are getting richer, and the poor are getting miserably poorer. The Gini coefficient distribution of wealth is becoming obscured.

As Basotho, we need as a nation to have a Plan B after the expiry of AGOA, which employed around 55,000 workers, predominantly young women (80–95 percent) who face a triple barrier to oppression: race, gender, and sex. With AGOA's future uncertain, these women are particularly vulnerable.

#### Trade Union and Employers' Organisations

What are trade unions and employers' organisations?

They are legal entities registered under the Labour Act No. 3 of 2024. Their role is to act as watchdogs for the Ministry of Labour, which

is the custodian of labour law. These entities are governed by the Registrar of Trade Unions, Employers' Organisations, and Collective Bargaining Councils.

Both entities are supposed to work hand-in-glove with the Department of Labour in alerting and protecting workers'/employees' rights and interests within the world of work. The hierarchy of labour laws is as follows: ILO Conventions and Recommendations, African Union Charter, Constitution of Lesotho, collective bargaining agreements, Labour Act 2024, and contracts of employment.

Unfortunately, the two entities are perceived as leading their respective constituencies instead of receiving their mandates according to their own constitutions. At times, they seem to sell rights and interests to the highest bidder for personal benefit. In other words, there is a "race to the bottom" when it comes to wages.

The Ministry of Labour should spearhead the government of Lesotho, trade unions, employers' organisations, academics, legal entities, non-governmental organisations, the ILO, the AU, and the Basotho population at large. All have the responsibility to direct the labour movement to observe its mandate and responsibilities.

A series of job summits could be held on three regional bases, with the apex summit held at the national level. One of the tasks would be to produce a proposal for national job creation.

The Mandate of the National Job Creation of Lesotho is to establish the country's needs in terms of jobs in the interim and in the future. For example:

- Ministry of Labour should provide statistical needs for labour inspectors, legal officers, mediation personnel, DDP personnel, Labour Court, and Labour Appeal Court.
- Ministry of Health should provide statistics on the need for professional doctors and various fields, including psychiatrists for psychosocial issues (as Lesotho has high substance abuse and mental health problems), as well as nursing.
- Ministry of Agriculture should provide the need for professions in farming, fisheries, dairy products, goats, sheep, cattle, horses, poultry, piggery, cash crops, and orchards.
- Ministry of Natural Resources should provide professionals for wind electricity, solar electricity, electrical engineering, mining engineering, surveying, geology, research, and adding value to minerals.
- Ministry of Education should provide the country's needs for professionals in mechanical engineering, civil engineering, water engineering, carpentry and fitting, teaching, and aviation.
- Ministry of Public Works & Transport should provide the country's needs for professional public transport controls, road construction, urban planning, and coordination of electricity, water, and media networks.
- Ministry of Trade should have cooperatives for savings and credit taught at higher learning institutions under the faculty of economics, as well as inspectors of trade laws to check implementation.
- Ministry of Tourism should provide the country's needs for professionals to inspect, evaluate, and promote through marketing.
- Other ministries should follow suit.
- The government of Lesotho should be given a mandate to sponsor the earmarked specific professions identified by the National Job Summit for higher learning as a Lesotho Vision for 5 years up to 2050.

The rationale behind the Job Summit is for the country to move forward.

KHOTSO, PULA, NALA



Kingdom of Lesotho  
Specific Procurement Notice

Request for Bids  
Small Works  
(Two-Envelope Bidding Process)

**Employer:** Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (MAFSN)  
**Project:** Smallholder Agriculture Development Project II (SADP II)  
**Contract title:** Design and Build for Seaka (Lot 1) and Tsikoane (Lot 2) Irrigation Scheme  
**Country:** Kingdom of Lesotho  
**Loan No. /Credit No. / Grant No.:** P165228  
**RFB No:** LS-MAFS-547907-CW-RFB  
**Issued on:** 21st April 2026

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (MAFSN) under Smallholder Agriculture Development Project II (SADP II) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the (SADP II) and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for Design and Build for Seaka (Lot 1) and Tsikoane (Lot 2) Irrigation Scheme. "For this contract, the Borrower shall process the payments using the Direct Payment disbursement method, as defined in the World Bank's Disbursement Guidelines for Investment Project Financing,"

- The Smallholder Agriculture Development Project II (SADP II) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for Design and Build for Seaka Irrigation Scheme (Lot 1) construction period- 6months, location: Quthing and Tsikoane Irrigation Scheme construction (Lot 2) period- 6months, location: Leribe.
- Bidding will be conducted through national competitive procurement using Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers 6th Edition February 2025 ("Procurement Regulations"), and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Regulations.
- Bids will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation process set out in the bidding documents. The following weightings shall apply for Rated Criteria (including technical and non-price factors): 60% and for Bid cost: 40%. The weightings are applicable for each lot.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from SADP II, e-mail: [procurement@sadpii.org.ls](mailto:procurement@sadpii.org.ls) and inspect the bidding document during office hours 0900 to 1600 hours at the address given at the end of this RFB.
- Bidders are eligible to bid for both lots but only one (1) bidder can be allocated/ awarded one (1)

irrigation scheme (lot) at a time.

- Bids must be delivered to the address at the end of this RFB on or before **1400 hours on 26th May 2026**. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. The outer Bid envelopes marked "ORIGINAL BID", and the inner envelopes marked "TECHNICAL PART" will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend, at the address below at SADP II boardroom, **1430 hours on 26th May 2026**. All envelopes marked "FINANCIAL PART" shall remain unopened and will be held in safe custody of the Employer until the second public Bid opening. Additionally, the outer envelope should be marked "do not open" and should clearly indicate the Lot being submitted as follows:
  - Design and Build for Seaka Irrigation Scheme - Lot 1
  - Design and Build for Tsikoane Irrigation Scheme- Lot 2
- All Bids must be accompanied by the following:
  - Bid Security of LSL 300,000.00 for Seaka (Lot 1) and / Bid Security of LSL 260,000.00 for Tsikoane (Lot 2)** and
  - Local Labor Method Statement for both lots.

- Attention is drawn to the Procurement Regulations requiring the Borrower to disclose information on the successful bidder's beneficial ownership, as part of the Contract Award Notice, using the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Form as included in the bidding document.

- The address(es) referred to above is (are):

Procurement Office  
Moshoeshoe II Livestock  
P.O Box 24  
Maseru 100  
Lesotho

telephone number: +266 22312578

email address: [procurement@sadpii.org.ls](mailto:procurement@sadpii.org.ls)

web site address: [Procurement – SADP II](http://Procurement – SADP II) or <https://www.sadpii.org.ls/procurement/>

- Substitute "contracts" where Bids are called concurrently for multiple contracts. Add a new para. 3 and renumber paras 3 - 8 as follows: "Bidders may Bid for one or several contracts, as further defined in the Bidding Document. Bidders wishing to offer discounts in case they are awarded more than one contract will be allowed to do so, provided those discounts are included in the Letter of Bid." Insert if applicable: "This contract will be jointly financed by [insert name of cofinancing agency]."

- Bidding process will be governed by the World Bank's Procurement Regulations"
- A brief description of the type(s) of works should be provided, including, location, quantities, construction period, application of margin of preference and other information necessary to enable potential Bidders to decide whether or not to respond to the Request for Bids. Bidding Document may require Bidders to have specific experience or capabilities; such qualification requirements should also be included in this paragraph.

- If electronic procurement will be used, insert link or web site address and any additional relevant information, as appropriate
- The office for inquiry and issuance of Bidding document and that for Bid submission may or may not be the same.
- Substitute the address for Bid submission if it is different from address for inquiry and issuance of Bidding document.



Kingdom of Lesotho



Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)  
for the Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Maintenance (DBFOM)  
of a Strategic Fuel Storage Facility

Date: 27th March 2026

EOI Number/Ref number: [PF/EOI/2025/2026-02]

**1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Government of Lesotho is seeking expression of interest from accomplished construction companies to undertake the Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Maintenance, Testing and Commissioning responsibilities for a 30-day strategic fuel storage facility at Maqhaka in Berea, Lesotho. This project is critical to ensuring security of fuel supply.

The facility encompasses eleven bulk storage tanks, along with loading and offloading pumps, valve chambers, fire systems, control systems, effluent handling systems, truck loading and offloading gantries, administrative, security, MCC building complexes and access road.

The eleven (11) bulk storage tanks are of the following capacities:

- Four (4) 2730m<sup>3</sup> tanks for the storage of petrol (ULP 93&95)
- Four (4) 3650m<sup>3</sup> tanks for the storage of diesel (50ppm)
- Three (3) 930m<sup>3</sup> tanks for the storage of illuminated paraffin (IP)

Complete the Engineering, Procurement, Construction and Commission for the Strategic Fuel Storage Facility in accordance with internationally accepted standards (e.g. SANS) as well as relevant international standards (ISO, API, IEC etc.) to ensure sufficient operation;

**2. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The services required under this assignment include:

- Complete the Strategic Fuel Storage Facility, testing and commissioning in accordance with internationally accepted and relevant standards to ensure sufficient operation;
- Detail the ownership representation ensuring involvement of the State
- iii) Provide a detailed financing structure including the funding sources, a clear risk sharing plan and allocation among project stakeholders
- Demonstrate expertise on procurement of petroleum products for the state
- Elaborate how petroleum products will be procured without alienating existing players and avoiding the creation of monopolies
- Propose how other interested groups may participate
- Propose how products will be procured from the international market
- Propose the operating and maintenance model

The Ministry of Energy invites suitably qualified construction companies to submit an expression of interest. The companies may form joint ventures to enhance their chances of qualification.

**3. EOI SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The following should be included in the submission:

- Company Overview or Company Profile;
- A track record of the company demonstrating experience in large-scale DBFOM projects, ideally within the energy

sector (e.g contract);

- A client reference list of at least three (3) clients that similar work has been implemented for;
- Project organogram illustrating the roles of each team member;
- CV and qualifications of each proposed team member;
- Demonstrate financial stability and ability to secure project financing;
- Past 5 year's audited financial statements;
- Company registration documents, Valid Tax Clearance Certificate (TCC) and a comfort letter from a reputable bank.
- Description of the Company's quality assurance policies and procedures.
- Additional Certifications/procedures applicable to perform the services

**4. SUBMISSION DETAILS**

Expression of interest must be submitted by email to the address below by Monday, the 8th June 2026, at 12:00 hrs Central African Time (CAT) and clearly titled "EOI for DBFOM for Maqhaka Strategic Fuel Storage facility".

Attention:

Mr. Teboho Moloantoa  
Petroleum Fund  
LCCI Building  
Orpen Road  
Maseru, Lesotho

Submission Address: [supplier@petroleum.org.ls](mailto:supplier@petroleum.org.ls)

Attention: **Late submissions will not be considered.**

**5. EOI EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Expression of Interest Evaluation Criteria		Points
A.	Relevant DBFOM Experience	15
B.	Technical Qualification and Personnel	20
C.	Ownership Model and financing structure	10
D.	Quality assurance, HSSE Systems and compliance with standards	10
E.	Financial Capacity	20
F.	Local Participation & Capacity Building	10
G.	Procurement and sales/trading model	15

**6. DISCLAIMER**

This EOI is issued for information-gathering and shortlisting purposes only and does not constitute an invitation to tender. The Government of Lesotho reserves the right to accept or reject any EOI, to annul the process, or to amend the scope without incurring any liability.



Unravelling Corruption

## DIRECTORATE ON CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC OFFENCES

**Invitation for Bids (IFB):  
PROVISION OF SECURITY SERVICES**

Tender No.: DCEO/PROC/2026/2027-1

1. Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) has received financing from the Government of Lesotho and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the Provision of Security Services. The Directorate now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders clearly marked "Bid for Provision of Security Services."

2. Bidding will be conducted through Open National Competitive Tendering procedures as specified in the Public Procurement Act 2023 and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Act mentioned.

3. The services to be procured are as follows:

Item	Description	Quantity	Specifications
1	Security Guard	3	Unarmed security guards at DCEO Headquarters during the day
2	Security Guard	2	Armed with firearm security guards at DCEO Headquarters during the night
3	Security Guard	2	Unarmed security guards at Maseru Tourist Information and Crafts Centre (DCEO Offices) during the day
4	Security Guard	1	Armed with firearm security guard at Maseru Tourist Information and Crafts Centre (DCEO Offices) during the night
5	Security Guard	1	Armed with firearm security guard at DCEO Post Office Building
6	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO North Regional office Butha-Buthe during the day
7	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO North Regional office Butha-Buthe during the night
8	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO South Regional office Mphahle's Hoek during the day

9	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO South Regional office Mphahle's Hoek during the night
10	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO house (Masowe 1) during the day
11	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO house (Masowe 1) during the night
12	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO house (Motheo) during the day
13	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO house (Motheo) during the night

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the **DCEO Procurement Unit** during office hours: 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Friday at the address given under paragraph 6 below.

5. A complete set of bidding document in **English** may be purchased by interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **LSL2, 000.00 (Two Thousand Maloti only)**. The method of payment shall be cash, payable to the **DCEO Finance Office**.

Bids must be delivered to the address indicated under paragraph 6 below on or before **26th May 2026 at 10:00 a.m.** Electronic bidding **will not** be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of bidders' designated representatives who may choose to attend at the address indicated below on the same date (**26th May 2026**) at **10:05 a.m.**

6. All bids must be deposited in the tender box situated at the address below:

Ground Floor,  
Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences,  
Old Parliament Road,  
Opposite Police Headquarters,  
P.O. Box 16060,  
Maseru, 100,  
Lesotho.

For enquiries:  
Tel: (+266) 2221 9200  
Email: [tmathias@dceo.org.ls](mailto:tmathias@dceo.org.ls)  
Attention: Tsele Mathias (Mr.)



Road Fund

## INVITATION FOR BIDS

**TENDER FOR CLEANING SERVICES FOR ROAD FUND OFFICES  
(IFB Number: RF/2026/S01)**
**1. Background and requirements:**

The Road Fund Secretariat (RFS) is mandated to collect revenue and disburse funds for maintenance of roads in the country. RFS now invites interested locally registered Cleaning Companies to submit their most favourable bids for the provision of Cleaning Services.

2. Interested eligible service providers may obtain a complete set of Tender Documents in English from the Road Fund Secretariat website: [www.roadfund.org.ls](http://www.roadfund.org.ls).

3. Request for clarifications may be sent in writing to this email address [procurement@roadfund.org.ls](mailto:procurement@roadfund.org.ls) not later than **18th May 2026**.

4. Bids must be delivered to the address (8) below; on or before **3rd June 2026 at 10:30hrs**. Late bids will be rejected. Tenders will be opened in the presence of the Tenderers and/or their representatives who choose to attend in person at Road Fund Secretariat Boardroom on the same date, **3rd June 2026 at 11:00hrs**. Telefax and Email Tenders **will not be accepted**.

5. It is mandatory for bidders to submit the following valid documents: (a) Tax Clearance Certificates; (b) Business Identity Card/Trader's License, (c) Certificate of Bona Fide Bidding. **Non-compliance with these requirements shall invalidate a bid.**

6. Qualifications requirements for award include amongst others: (a) **Business experience in similar jobs**, (b) **Similar contracts of not less than a total of M100, 000.00 in the past Five years**, (c) **Evidence of satisfactory service from 3 referees (3 reference letters) and (d) Other requirements of the tender document**. The margin of preference for local companies shall be applied during evaluation. Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.

7. A **mandatory site visit** will be held on the **12th May 2026** at Road Fund Head Office, at **10:30** hours.

8. The address referred to above for Bid Submission and Bid Opening is: Road Fund Secretariat,

**Former Department of Rural Roads Building,  
P.O. Box 14644,  
Cnr Moshoeshoe and Senate Roads,  
Industrial Area, Maseru, Lesotho**

**Bidders shall ensure that the envelopes/packages containing their bids are properly addressed as indicated under 8 above and are CLEARLY MARKED "Cleaning Services for Road Fund offices - IFB No.: RF/2026/S01".**


**Kingdom of Lesotho  
Ministry of Education and Training**
**Expression of Interest for short term Consultancy of Finance Officers (2)**

**COUNTRY:** Kingdom of Lesotho  
**PROJECT:** Lesotho Education Improvement Project (LEIP)  
**SECTOR:** Education  
**LOAN #:** 7587-LS  
**PROJECT ID NO.:** P500587

The Government of the Lesotho (GOL) signed Loan with World Bank to support implementation of the Lesotho Education Improvement project (P500587) (LEIP) for a total value of US\$ 20 million in August 2024. The project aims to improve basic education service delivery and student retention in targeted schools. Mainly construction of classrooms and pit latrines in primary schools, and workshop, science laboratory blocks and latrines in secondary schools is included in the project. MoET intends to apply part of the proceeds to payments for goods, related services and consulting services to be procured under this project.

The three components of the project are:

Component 1: Improving the quality of teaching in primary and secondary schools

Component 2: Enhancing physical learning conditions in targeted primary and secondary schools, (I) Improving basic infrastructure in targeted primary schools, (II) Constructing laboratories and workshops in targeted secondary schools with the total allocation of US\$ 15 Million.

Component 3: Strengthening project management, and governance of education system.

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) now wishes to recruit a **Two (2) Finance Officers** to be part of the Project Facilitation Unit (PFU) which is responsible for facilitating the implementation of the project.

**Objective:**

The principal objective of this assignment is the provision of consulting services for finance officer to support project financial, accounting management and reporting.

**Qualification and Experience:**

Interested candidates must have:

- a) Educational qualifications:** at least Diploma in Accounting/Business or CAT Stage or CIPFA-Diploma from a recognized University or Professional Institution respectively, bachelor's degree/General Accounting Stage will be an added advantage.
- b) Work Experience:** Be familiar with Government of Lesotho and donor funded projects Financial Management and must have at least successfully completed one (1) similar assignment in the past Seven (7) years.

**Selection Criteria:**

The selection of the suitable candidate will be based on the qualifications and experience as follows: (i) qualifications (30%), (ii) experience (professional, specific and general) (60%); and (iii) other relevant attributes (10%) consistent with the requirements of the Terms of Reference pursuant to the relevant requirements of the World Bank's **applicable Guidelines: Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers July 2016 and updated February 2025 (Sixth Edition)**, setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest available on [www.worldbank.org/procurement](http://www.worldbank.org/procurement).

**Duration:**

The duration of this assignment will be approximately from 6 months with possibility of extension subject to satisfactory performance.

**Details:**

Detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) can be attained from the following address between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on working days: **Procurement Unit, EFU, Site 130 Fokothi, Off Moshoeshoe Road, P.O. Box 1279, Maseru 100, Lesotho. Tel (+266) 22324968.** Attn: Mr. Relebohile Nkalai Email: [relebohile.nkalai@gov.ls](mailto:relebohile.nkalai@gov.ls) with a copy to [nthabi.hleoheng86@gmail.com](mailto:nthabi.hleoheng86@gmail.com).

**Submission:**

Interested consultants should submit their detailed expression of interest and updated Curriculum Vitae (CVs), indicating names and contact details of at least two (2) referees, and should enclose certified copies of educational certificates. The Expression of interest must be hand delivered to the address indicated above on or before **May 05th, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. (local time)**.

Submissions must be clearly titled (including on the submission envelope where applicable): **"Expression of Interest for Finance Officer"**

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# Lesotho-born JAZZWRLD defies odds to clinch Metro FM award

### Chris Theko

Lesotho-born DJ, producer, and songwriter Kamohelo Monese, widely known as JAZZWRLD, has etched his name into the regional music scene after a major victory at the recent Metro FM Awards in South Africa.

Alongside collaborator Thukuthela (Kgotso Dube), the duo secured Best Duo and Best Dance, marking a defining moment in his career and a point of pride for Lesotho.

JAZZWRLD, who is 22 years old, views the recognition as going beyond just industry validation. It carries deep personal meaning tied to identity and origin, he said.

"Personally, as a foreign national from Lesotho, winning such a prestigious award made me proud of who I am and where I'm from," he said.

"Also knowing that I'm the first to do this for my people makes me happy."

The award-winning partnership with Thukuthela was built on alignment and shared intent. Introduced through their manager, Neo Makate, the duo quickly found creative chemistry.

"Our collaboration works because our music is meaningful, and we are committed and dedicated to the sound on the same wavelength," JAZZWRLD explained.

His artistry is influenced by a deeply personal journey characterised by hardship and cultural richness. Born in Maseru and later raised in Carletonville, South Africa, his path into music was far from straightforward.

"The music in our culture is richer than any other sound in the world," he said. "Blending it with South African music and global sounds, and also fusing it with my daily living and what I go through, music is a blend of a lot of things."

"It was never easy. Growing up in Maseru, I left because at home they were poor and could not afford to get me working equipment, even basic education. But here I am now."

This lived experience feeds directly into his sonic identity. Known for merging Afro House with the emerging 3 Step genre, JAZZWRLD's sound reflects both experimentation and storytelling.



"My sound is way out of this world, it's a blend of my journey and the sounds I've encountered through every experience," he said.

With momentum firmly on his side, JAZZWRLD is not slowing down. He has

already set his sights on the next chapter, announcing the release of his debut album.

"On the 1st of May, I'm dropping my debut album, *Secrets of Wrld*. Thukuthela is also going to drop a surprise EP," he

revealed.

As his star continues to rise, JAZZWRLD's story stands as both inspiration and signal, a reminder that talent rooted in authenticity and resilience can transcend borders.

# Econet partners KBS to boost academic excellence in Mokhotlong

## Staff Reporter

Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) has reinforced its commitment to advancing education and digital inclusion by supporting the annual Kobeli Business Solution (KBS) Academic Excellence Awards, recently held at St James High School in Mokhotlong.

At a time when access to digital tools is increasingly central to academic success, the telecommunications giant presented smartphones and trophies to 13 top-performing learners, blending recognition with practical support aimed at bridging Lesotho's digital divide.

The initiative forms part of ETL's broader strategy to shape an inclusive digital future, ensuring that even remote communities are not left behind in the country's technological transformation.

Mokhotlong, widely regarded as the heart of Lesotho's highlands, has emerged as a strategic focus area under the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC)'s 'Re-Bontše Lesotho' campaign, which ETL has actively embraced through targeted interventions.

Speaking on behalf of the company, ETL's Public Relations Specialist Retšelisitsoe Nkhahle said the initiative reflects ETL's deliberate emphasis on education as a cornerstone of sustainable and inclusive growth.

"Education remains one of the most powerful tools to unlock opportunity and transform lives. Through initiatives such as the KBS Academic Excellence Awards, ETL not only celebrating achievement but also investing in the future of our country. Our com-

mitment is to ensure that learners here are equally equipped to participate in Lesotho's digital future," he said.

The awards ceremony drew a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including business leaders, educators, parents and learners, turning the event into a celebration of both academic excellence and the growing importance of technology in modern education.

For many learners in Mokhotlong, where geographical challenges often limit access to resources, the provision of smartphones represents more than just a reward, it is a gateway to information, connectivity and new learning opportunities.

In an increasingly digital world, such tools are essential in levelling the educational playing field between urban and rural areas.

Beyond the awards themselves, ETL used the platform to reaffirm its long-term commitment to strengthening education through improved connectivity, expanded digital access and targeted programmes aligned with national development priorities.

This approach underscores the company's recognition that meaningful educational support must extend beyond symbolic gestures to include tangible, lasting interventions.

The KBS Academic Excellence Awards have steadily grown into a key platform for motivating and recognising high-achieving students in Mokhotlong, a district that continues to demonstrate resilience despite structural and geographic constraints.

By celebrating academic success while simultaneously addressing resource gaps, the initiative plays a dual role in both inspiring learners and equipping them for future chal-



Econet hands over a smartphone to one of the 13 Awards recipients

lenges.

ETL's involvement also highlights the increasingly important role of the private sector in complementing government efforts to improve education outcomes. As digital transformation accelerates, partnerships between corporations, institutions and communities are becoming critical in ensuring equitable access to opportunities.

In his remarks, KBS Managing Director Teboho Kobeli expressed appreciation for the continued support from ETL and other partners, noting the far-reaching impact of such collaborations.

"We are deeply thankful for the continued

support shown to the young people of Mokhotlong. Initiatives such as these go beyond celebrating academic performance, they instill hope, ambition and a sense of possibility. By investing in our youth, we are laying the foundation for a stronger, more inclusive future for Basotho," he said.

Kobeli stressed that empowering young people through both education and access to technology is essential to unlocking their full potential. He noted that when learners are equipped with the right tools and recognition, they are more likely to pursue excellence and contribute meaningfully to national development.

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# New entrant in Women's Super League confirmed

## Refløe Molise

Emmanuel Queens Football Club (FC) have booked their place in the Women's Super League (WSL) for next season after an outstanding performance in the Women's Southern Promotional Play-offs held in Mohale's Hoek over the weekend.

The Qoaling-based side finished top of the five club's standings with a perfect record, winning all four of their matches to collect 12 points.

They finished ahead of FC Eagles Ladies, who secured second place with seven points, while Majantja Ladies settled for third with five points.

Despite their flawless campaign, Emmanuel Queens Head Coach, Thabang Motseta revealed that the primary objective was to win the tournament, although it was deliberately kept from the players to shield them from pressure.

"The main goal was to win the play-offs, but I did not communicate that to my players. They are still young and I wanted them to play freely and express themselves without pressure," said Motseta.

The club's dominance was largely attributed to effective squad rotation and a development-



focused approach. With a squad of 19 players, Motseta ensured that nearly every outfield player featured in at least two matches, fostering

confidence and unity within the group. "Working with young players has taught me to give everyone a chance. It helped them grow together and trust each other's ability," he explained. The toughest test came against FC Eagles Ladies in what Motseta described as a 'real battle'. With Eagles needing a win to stay in contention, Emmanuel Queens initially struggled

under pressure before the coach made a tactical adjustment that stabilised the club and ultimately secured victory.

Tactically, Motseta's side showed flexibility, operating mainly with a back four while switching between a 4-3-3 and 4-2-3-1 formation depending on the situation. Their defensive organisation and ability to attack in transitions proved to be key strengths throughout the tournament.

Motseta also highlighted the long-term vision behind the team's success, pointing to grassroots development as a major turning point. Starting in 2022, he built a pipeline of young talent through the Emmanuel Youth Development Academy, recruiting girls as young as nine and nurturing them into a competitive unit.

"That was the foundation. I involved parents and focused on discipline. Now we are seeing the results," he says.

Promotion to the WSL marks a significant milestone for the club, but Motseta is realistic about the challenges ahead. With an average squad age of just 16, strengthening the team with experienced players and securing sponsorship are top priorities.

"These players train barefoot and we sometimes walk to matches. To compete at the next level, we need proper equipment and support," says Motseta.

Looking ahead, the club's immediate goal is survival in the topflight.

"Our primary target is to avoid relegation and reach at least 18 points as early as possible. From there, we will see what happens. We are young, but we are ambitious," he added.

Motseta also assured supporters that the team will continue to work hard and called for their continued backing as Emmanuel Queens prepare for life in the Women's Super League

# New Lioli gym lifts football standards

## Mamello Rakotoane and Refløe Molise

Lioli Football Club (FC) has opened a state-of-the-art gym facility, a move widely seen as a crucial investment in player conditioning that could significantly elevate the club's on-field performance.

The gymnasium, launched on April 29 at Teyateyaneng Hall in Berea, forms part of a broader, ambitious transformation strategy that also includes a groundbreaking stadium development project aimed at redefining football standards in Lesotho.

The club said it invested over M600,000 in the modern gym in a deliberate shift toward professionalising its operations and addressing one of the most persistent weaknesses in local football, which is physical conditioning.

For many years, Lioli players relied on basic training routines that fell short of international standards, often leaving them at a disadvantage against better-prepared opponents in continental competitions.

Speaking at the launch, club President Lebohlang Thotanyane was candid about the limitations that have historically held the team back, particularly in high-stakes matches beyond Lesotho's borders.

"Our players have always worked hard, but the truth is they did not have the right tools," Thotanyane said.

"When we compete internationally, we see the difference. Other clubs are faster, stronger and better conditioned because they have access to proper gym facilities and trained professionals."

Beyond simply adding equipment, the club is prioritising scientifically guided conditioning regimes designed to build strength, endurance and resilience, key attributes that directly influence match performance.

"This is not just about having equipment, but about doing things the right way. We want our players to train like professionals so they can compete with professionals," he added.

The facility will primarily serve the team during the day, ensuring players follow disciplined and



consistent fitness schedules aligned with modern football demands. By improving strength, recovery, and injury prevention, the gym is expected to help players maintain peak physical condition throughout the season, ultimately translating into sharper performances on the pitch.

At the same time, the club has opened the gym to the public at a membership fee of M400.00, a move that not only promotes community wellness but also introduces a sustainable revenue stream. This dual-purpose model reflects Lioli's evolving approach, where sporting success is increasingly tied to financial innovation and broader community engagement.

Thotanyane emphasised that the gym project is still ongoing, with plans to introduce additional amenities such as showers, toilets and a sports shop to enhance the overall experience.

He also acknowledged the role of sponsors in making the initiative possible, highlighting the importance of partnerships in driving the club's long-term vision.

While the gym directly addresses immediate performance needs, it is also part of a much larger transformation plan that extends beyond fitness into infrastructure, youth development, and financial sustainability.

Central to this vision is the construction of the new Lioli Football Ground, an ambitious project that could reshape not only the club's future but also the broader trajectory of football in Lesotho.

In outlining the project, Thotanyane made it clear that the club's ambitions go far beyond

building a stadium, positioning the development as a catalyst for systemic change within the sport.

"As a country, we still need meaningful development, especially for young children who must fit properly into our football system. For too long we have relied more on talent than on technical development, and that is why our football has struggled to reach international standards," he said.

This philosophy aligns closely with the rationale behind the new gym, as both initiatives aim to move Lioli away from reliance on raw talent toward a structured, performance-driven model. Improved conditioning at senior level, combined with long-term player development pathways, is expected to create a more complete and competitive football system.

The new football ground is being developed on approximately 48,000 square metres of land allocated by the Lesotho government through Berea Urban Council. Significant groundwork has already been completed, with the government investing over M10 million in earthworks to prepare the site for construction.

Lioli has also committed substantial resources to securing and developing the land, including fencing, pitch preparation, and the installation of essential infrastructure such as irrigation and drainage systems.

Technical teams are currently addressing critical elements like groundwater management to ensure the facility meets high-performance standards.

Beyond the playing surface, the project includes the construction of dressing rooms, internal access routes, and other functional spaces necessary for a professional football environment. Plans are also in place to upgrade surrounding infrastructure, including roads and a bridge near the site, improving accessibility and integrating the stadium into broader urban development plans.

A standout feature of the project is its dual-facility design. Rather than building a single stadium, Lioli is developing two complementary football spaces: a dedicated training ground for daily use and youth development, and a main stadium designed for elite competition.

This approach strengthens the link between preparation and performance, ensuring players transition seamlessly from training environments, now enhanced by the gym, to matchday conditions.

The decision to use natural grass instead of artificial turf reflects the club's intention to meet international standards and host high-level matches, including potential CAF fixtures and international friendlies.

The envisioned stadium will also cater for domestic cup finals and national events, positioning Lioli as a central hub for football in Lesotho.

Off the field, the project is expected to generate economic benefits by creating jobs, stimulating local businesses, and contributing to Berea's development. Plans to expand commercial activities at the old Lioli site, including a taxi rank and shopping infrastructure, further reinforce the club's strategy of blending sport with economic growth.

"We want Lioli to be self-sustaining football today is not just about what happens on the pitch. We need business structures that allow us to invest in facilities, players, and future generations.

"This is about changing the system we want to give young players real opportunities, but that only happens when infrastructure, planning, and development come together," Thotanyane said.



**Seabata Mahao**

Having recently lifted the 2026 People's Cup trophy, Lioli Football Club has set their sight on ending the 2025/2026 Vodacom Premier League (VPL) season on a high.

Lioli were crowned champions of the 2026 People's Cup following a dramatic 5-4 victory on penalties over Bantu FC after a 1-1 draw in the final played at Bocheletsane Stadium in Mantšonyane, Thaba-Tseka, last weekend.

But their league form has been inconsistent this season, as they are currently sitting sixth on the log table on 56 points with three matches to go. The defending league champions are already mathematically out of the title race as they trail log leaders Lijabatho FC by 10 points.

This means that even if they were to win all their remaining games, and Lijabatho loose all theirs, Lioli would still not have enough points to defend their league title.

Reacting to his charges' capture of the People's Cup, Head Coach Halemakale Mahlaha expressed confidence that they can carry their cup form into the league and finish strongly.

"We have to finish this league in a way that is going to give Lioli dignity. We will celebrate today and tomorrow, and then return to the field to prepare and finish the season respectfully," he said.

Lioli's path to glory was anything but easy. They secured their place in the final with a hard-fought 2-1 win over Lijabatho in the first semifinal, while Bantu FC edged Matlama FC 1-0 in the second semifinal.

In the final, Lioli started brightly and took the lead in the 21st minute through Thabang Klaas, who capitalised on early dominance. Bantu, however, gradually settled into the contest, utilising long balls to forwards MotseKhiba and Moeketsi Sekola.

Their persistence paid off just before half-time when Khiba found the equaliser to bring the sides level.

The second half saw both teams make tactical adjustments in search of a winner, but neither could break the deadlock, forcing the match into a penalty shootout.

Lioli held their nerve from the spot to clinch a 5-4 victory, denying Bantu the

# Cup win galvanises Lioli



chance to defend the title they won last year.

For their triumph, Lioli walked away with

M400,000 in

prize money, while runners-up Bantu received M200,000. Semifinalists Lijabatho and Matlama each earned M100,000.

Lioli also dominated individual accolades, with Retšelisitsoe Moepi named Player of the Tournament and Teboho Letuka awarded Goalkeeper of



the Tournament, receiving M5,000 and M2,000 respectively.

Mahlaha emphasised that winning the tournament was crucial for his team, particularly after falling short in their VPL title defence.

"We were very determined to win this tournament. We even started our preparations earlier than usual. Although we have not done well in the league this season, this tournament gave us an opportunity to win something for

ourselves and our supporters," he said.

Reflecting on the final, Mahlaha credited his players' tactical discipline and intelligence, especially against a physically strong Bantu side.

"Physically, Bantu had the upper hand, but our players showed intelligence. We managed the game well and pushed it to penalties. They did a great job," he added.

The coach also expressed gratitude for the support and belief shown by the club's leadership since his arrival earlier this year.

"When I arrived, the club president made it clear that while the league campaign was not going well, he wanted this cup. I am happy that, with God's help, we were able to achieve that," Mahlaha said.



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