

FOR THE GUYLIES & THE GIRLIES

WhatsApp • TikTok • X • Instagram • Facebook • YouTube

Dial *100# or Buy Via EcoCash or Mpoi

Ts & Cs Apply

Get **3.5GB** Weekly Combo for just **M30**



66 100 100

ECONET
Telecom Lesotho

Inspired to change your world

Newsday

...pacing standards

15 May - 21 May 2026

www.newsdayonline.co.ls

Vol 08 No 13

M 6.00

News
LNDC reports net loss of M54 Million
Page 4

News
Judge Makara warns against erosion of judicial independence
Page 6

A DECADE OF BROKEN PROMISES: THE DEATH OF LESOTHO'S AMBITION TO CAPTURE ITS DIAMOND WEALTH

Page 2



HOUSE INSURANCE

From Only **M50** monthly Premium

Get a Quote Now



What is Covered?

- ✓ Accidental Loss/Damage
- ✓ Accidental Damage to Geyser
- ✓ Floods
- ✓ Fire
- ✓ Wind & Storm
- ✓ Earthquake
- ✓ Any Damaging Impact
- ✓ Glass
- ✓ Keys, Locks & Remote Control
- ✓ Alternative Accommodation
- ✓ Emergency Services Expenses
- ✓ Medical Benefit
- ✓ Accidental Death
- ✓ Trauma Counselling

Contacts: 6359 5519/ 5950 8180

Email: info@adequate.co.ls

Sekhametsi Place, Ground Floor

Terms & Conditions apply

KEEPING BASOTHO COVERED

Elevate your farming game with Lesotho's ONLY Agriculture Publication.

Get Local Wisdom, Global Vision:
Seamlessly blend traditional Lesotho farming practices with cutting-edge global trends. Simply join our WhatsApp community and Follow our socials for your daily information and interaction.



www.seahlolo.co.ls



A decade of broken promises: the death of Lesotho's ambition to capture its diamond wealth

Kananelo Boloetse and Bereng Mpaki

Lesotho's government has given little clarity on why it has stalled and rolled back on projects intended to ensure more of the country's diamond wealth is captured and retained domestically.

For much of the last decade, since the adoption of the Minerals and Mining Policy in 2015, the government's official position has been to upend the traditional model of getting royalties from companies extracting and exporting raw diamonds. The policy sought to ensure that diamond mining spins off into sustainable socio-economic development domestically.

To achieve this, the policy proposed that local cutting, polishing, valuation, and trading industries be established in the country.

In practical terms, the government proposed to construct a number of facilities.

Firstly, it proposed to construct a diamond centre. This was envisaged as a centralised facility for handling diamonds domestically, including valuation and pricing, sorting and certification, and potentially also cutting and polishing. This would, in principle, have ensured that more of the value of Lesotho's diamond wealth was retained in the country.

The construction of a geosciences lab was also planned for: This was to be a technical and scientific facility which could analyse the country's natural resources. It would have had the ability to test geological samples, support geological research and mineral exploration, and save costs by reducing the country's reliance on foreign labs and consultants.

A period of progress

For a brief period between 2021 and 2022, the Lesotho government, under Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro, made tangible moves to finally construct these facilities. Sites were inspected, budgets discussed, and commitments made to establish a diamond centre and a geoscience laboratory.

In January 2021, Mining Minister Serialong Qoo pledged to deliver the promised diamond centre within the year.

In February 2022, Qoo inspected the proposed site, at an industrial area in Maseru, for a geoscience laboratory. He said that the design phase, costed at M2 million, was at an advanced stage and that construction was imminent pending final utility quotations.

Accompanying the minister at the inspection, Ngakane Ngakane, Lesotho's Director of Geosciences, confirmed that approval for the lab had already been granted in 2016. Its construction had been delayed by bureaucracy and political instability, he said. Plans included a reported M84 million allocation for construction.

These developments suggested the policy and promised facilities were finally moving toward implementation. Then progress stalled, as Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane took office after the October 2022 elections.

As at 2026, more than a decade after the policy's adoption and years after Qoo's promise of imminent construction, Lesotho still has no diamond cutting or polishing industry, no



Letšeng Diamonds offices on the corner of Old School and Kingsway Roads in Maseru, Lesotho on Monday, 13 April 2026. Photograph Khosi Matheka/SAAJP

geoscience laboratory, and no diamond centre.

Perplexing stall

Former minister Qoo said, during a recent interview at his home in Mokhotlong, that the plans had been at an advanced stage in 2022 but were never carried forward. He attributed the halt to a lack of political will of his successors in the Matekane government.

This stall stands in contrast to other projects under the Matekane administration, such as upgrades to central Maseru, which demonstrate the government's capacity to execute infrastructure projects when prioritised.

Current Natural Resources Minister Mohlomi Moleko has shifted focus away from domestic beneficiation, emphasising diversification, branding, and regional approaches. He has suggested Lesotho's diamond output may be too small to sustain local processing—marking a departure from the 2015 policy's vision.

When he was asked about local beneficiation during an interview at the Mining Indaba 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa, he said: "With us, it is a bit difficult in the sense that our volumes are too small. We have high-quality stones, but the volumes are too small. I think we do five percent of what Botswana does."

"So, it becomes difficult, if we have four

mines, to now start putting in laws which say a certain percentage of the production from these four mines should go for local beneficiation, because we need volumes even to set up those value chains.

"My feeling is that the only way it can be done is in collaboration with other countries. For instance, if Botswana, South Africa, and Lesotho were to say, we are harmonising our laws, aligning them to say that we benefit regionally."

He suggested that Botswana, for example, could serve as an auction centre for the region's diamonds.

Efforts to get a comment from Moleko before publishing this story were unsuccessful. The Commissioner of Mines, Pheello Tjatja, said he was on two weeks' leave and could not respond to the questions sent to him.

A decade of broken promises

The Matekane administration's quiet retreat from implementing key promises of the 2015 Minerals and Mining Policy is but the latest in a decade-long failure by successive governments.

On 22 May 2015, then Minister of Finance Mamphono Khaketla said in her budget speech that the final draft Minerals and Mining



Policy was about to be tabled before the Cabinet for approval. It was adopted later that year.

In Khaketla's budget speech in 2016, she gave parliament a glimpse of what implementation might look like. Her proposed M39.9 million budget for the Ministry of Mining included proposed amounts of M3.2 million for geochemical mapping, M4.5 million towards the construction of a geoscience laboratory, and of M5 million was proposed for a diamond centre.

"These efforts will enhance government revenue collection, as well as create employment in the future. A sum of M5 million is proposed for establishing a diamond centre. This facility will enable the ministry to value diamonds before they leave the country. It will also be utilised to introduce beneficiation in the diamond industry," she said.

In 2026, nothing tangible has come from these promises. Lesotho still ships nearly all its high-quality diamonds, famous for exceptional size and price per carat, from mines like Letšeng in rough form to hubs such as Antwerp and Dubai. The country pockets royalties and taxes, but the lion's share of value addition, jobs, and industrial spin-offs goes elsewhere.

A missed opportunity in contrast to Botswana's success

Lebohlang Thotanyana, former Minister of Mining, believes Lesotho missed a historic opportunity to transform its mineral economy.

"The policy was meant to remove the mineral curse of having a rich country in minerals but having poor people. Its lack of implementation is a missed opportunity to say the least," Thotanyana said, during an interview at his home in Berea in February.

He was Minister of Mining between 2015 and 2017 when Khaketla was minister of finance. He noted that the policy drew inspiration from the Africa Mining Vision, a continental strategy encouraging African countries to process minerals locally before export.

According to Thotanyana, Lesotho could have become a continental leader in beneficiation. Instead, other countries moved faster.

Lesotho stands in contrast to countries like Botswana, which committed to diamond beneficiation as early as the 2000s. The Diamond Trading Company Botswana, a 50/50 joint venture between the government and De Beers, was established in 2006. By 2013, De Beers had moved all its international trading activity, for Botswana operations, from London to Gaborone.

Botswana also continued to sharpen its legislative edge during the same period that Lesotho dithered. In 2015, as Lesotho adopted its policy, Botswana's parliament was debating a motion calling for comprehensive beneficiation legislation.

By 2017, Botswana amended its Precious and Semi-Precious Stones Act to give the government first option to buy diamonds of exceptional size or quality, a move explicitly motivated by a desire to maximise the value of the country's most precious diamonds domestically.

In 2022, Botswana adopted a new Minerals

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
Nisoaki 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
www.newsdayonline.co.ls

FACEBOOK
Newsday Newspaper LS
X
@LsNewsday

INSTAGRAM
Newsday Lesotho

PRINTER
Rising Sun Printers

Policy explicitly aimed at “value addition activities along the value chain and effective participation by citizens”.

The economic consequences of Lesotho not following suit are profound. Take, for instance, the iconic Lesotho Promise diamond extracted in 2006. It was sold for about US\$12 million; its polished value soared past US\$50 million. Extrapolating from such examples, it is likely that Lesotho has forfeited hundreds of millions of dollars in potential revenue, with negative knock-on effects on employment and downstream industries, over the years.

Political instability caused implementation stall

Political instability bears much of the blame for the country’s failure to implement the 2015 policy. Coalition governments have collapsed repeatedly since 2012 and derailed continuity on multi-year infrastructure projects.

“With all the plans we had in the works, there was a government change mid-term, and this means all the plans fell away when the new government took office, as they had a different idea of running the state affairs,” Thotanyana, Lesotho’s Minister of Mining from 2015 to 2017, said.

In 2017, a motion of no confidence toppled the Mosisili-led government and Thotanyana lost his job. Snap elections ushered in a new coalition led by Prime Minister Thomas Thabane, with Moeketsi Majoro as Minister of Finance. On paper, the mining policy survived the transition.

In his maiden budget speech that year, Majoro said that the Ministry of Mining was “spearheading the construction of a geoscience laboratory to diversify mineral extraction and attract investment.”

Over the next two years, Majoro would repeatedly assure parliament that progress was underway.

But the words were not matched by action.

The extent to which the old status quo remained untouched can be seen in the wording of lease renewals between the government and some of Lesotho’s largest diamond mines. In October 2019, the lease of Letšeng Diamonds was renewed for ten years. This lease



Geoscience laboratory site on Motšoenne Road at the Industrial Area in Maseru, Lesotho on Monday, 13 April 2026. Photograph Khosi Matheka/SAAJP



An undated hand out image supplied by Letšeng Diamond Mine shows an aerial view of the Letšeng Main and Satellite pipes that produce the world’s most valuable diamonds.

agreement showed that the government’s royalty regime remained fully tied to rough exports, with no provisions to incentivise or mandate local processing.

In 2023, the pattern repeated at Liqhobong

diamond mine. Its lease was renewed for another ten years in November 2023, again under unchanged conditions.

The missing framework

Experts point to another critical reason for

the failure of the 2015 Minerals and Mining Policy: the absence of a supporting legal and regulatory framework.

Mabusela Mabohla, a small-scale miner and outspoken advocate for beneficiation in Lesotho, said that the mining policy would have seen better progress had there been a supporting legal and regulatory framework to anchor it.

A Minerals and Mining Bill was drafted in 2017, he said, but never passed into law.

“In order to turn the policy aspirations into reality, we needed to enact supporting legal and regulatory framework, so as to crystallise the national vision on how to exploit our mineral resources more equitably,” he said, during a recent interview.

What Basotho lost

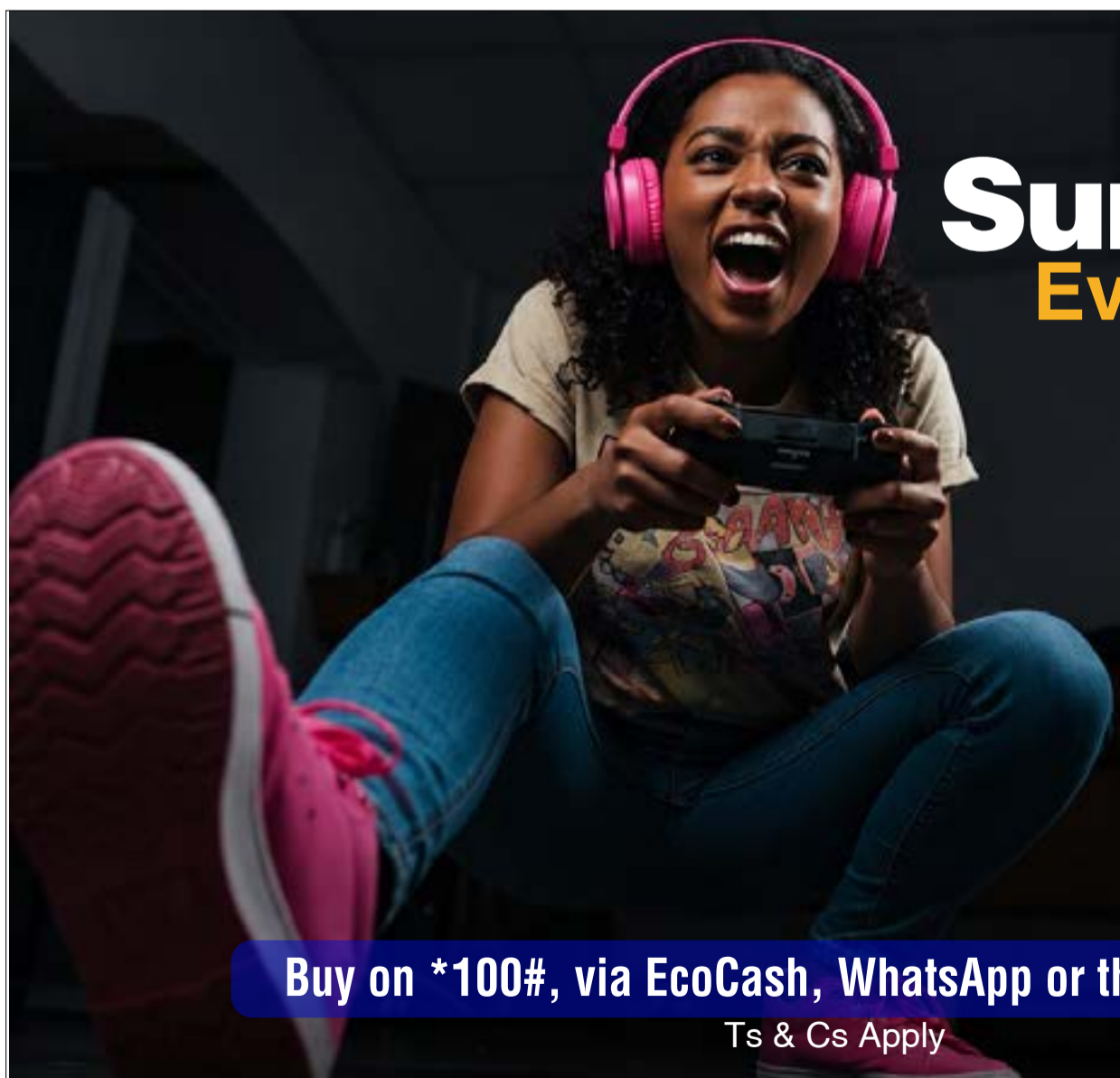
The contrast with Botswana grows starker by the year. By 2023, employment in Botswana’s diamond cutting and polishing sector had surged to over 4,200 people, up from 2,200 just a year earlier.

In August 2025, President Duma Boko visited Stargems Botswana, a diamond cutting and polishing company that has trained over 1,100 Botswana, with 76 percent local employment and a P380 million investment in local facilities. Botswana is now pursuing an “aggressive drive for mineral beneficiation” as a central pillar of its economic transformation.

Lesotho, by contrast, has nothing to show for a decade of promises. No cutting and polishing industry. No geoscience laboratory. No diamond centre. No jobs.

The Minerals and Mining Policy of 2015 remains a dead letter, a document of ambition without implementation, of vision without follow-through. And as successive governments come and go, the diamonds keep flowing out, and the opportunities keep flowing with them.

This report has been produced by the Southern Africa Accountability Journalism Project (SA | AJP), an initiative of the Henry Nxumalo Foundation with the financial assistance of the European Union. It can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.



WhatsApp | 66 100 100

Surf more

Every week

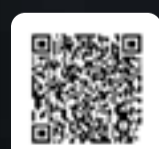
get 3GB

1500 MB

+ **1500** MB

for just

M35



Scan the QR code to download the Econet App

Buy on *100#, via EcoCash, WhatsApp or the Econet App

Ts & Cs Apply

LNDC reports net loss of M54 Million



Lesotho National Development Corporation

Thoboloko Nfšonyane

The Lesotho National Development Corporation reported a net loss of M54.4 million for the 2023/24 financial year, a sharp reversal from the M75.2 million profit recorded the previous year, as worsening operational performance and a major contraction in current assets raise questions about the corporation's financial sustainability and efficiency.

A closer examination of the recently published annual report for 2023/2024 shows that the corporation's operating loss stood at M107.1 million, worsening from the M87.8 million operating loss recorded in 2022/23.

While the corporation generated revenue of M150.8 million during the year, expenditure rose to M204.3 million, according to the report's financial performance trends. This means the corporation continued spending

significantly more than it generated from operations.

The corporation's overall loss was partially cushioned by investment and non-operational income, though the report also indicates that revenue declined sharply compared to the previous year.

The balance sheet presents a mixed picture. Total assets increased by just over nine percent to M3.212 billion, largely due to the capitalisation of government-funded infrastructure projects at the Belo and Tikoe industrial estates, according to Board Chairperson Mrs. Palesa Matobako.

However, the report also shows a significant decline in current assets, which include cash, receivables and short-term investments. These fell from approximately M2.58 billion to M906 million during the financial year.

While such movements can result from infrastructure investment, reclassification

of assets, project expenditure or other accounting adjustments, the summary report does not provide detailed explanations for the sharp contraction in current assets.

Property, plant and equipment also recorded a substantial decline during the year. Although the report references ongoing infrastructure projects and capital works, it provides limited detail on the underlying movements in industrial assets.

The corporation's equity position increased to M2.77 billion, supported largely by government grants and infrastructure investments. The report notes that the Government of Lesotho continued to support major industrial estate projects during the financial year.

At the same time, retained earnings declined by 9.2 percent to M529.6 million, indicating pressure on internally generated reserves.

On its core mandate of employment

creation and industrial development, the corporation reported retaining 34,151 jobs in the manufacturing sector. However, only 683 additional jobs were created during the year, while six companies closed and only two new companies commenced operations.

The report further shows that employment in LNDC-assisted industries has declined from more than 51,000 jobs in 2020 to 34,151 in 2024, representing a decline of approximately 33 percent over four years.

The corporation did report several positive developments. It engaged 251 suppliers during the year, with 96 percent of procurement spending benefiting local enterprises. The Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme also facilitated M207.8 million in supported loans for Basotho businesses cumulatively since its establishment in 2011.

A new Board of Directors assumed office during the reporting period and completed governance training through the Institute of Directors South Africa. The corporation also adopted its first Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policy.

At the same time, the report acknowledges continuing gaps in environmental policies and procedures and describes the adoption of integrated reporting standards as "work in progress."

The corporation additionally identified several strategic risks facing the institution, including funding challenges for capital projects, concentration risk, high rental arrears, cyber threats, litigation risk and undue political influence.

Then Interim Chief Executive Officer Molise Ramaili highlighted several institutional reforms during the year, including the implementation of a Performance Management System, strategy execution tracking software and supply chain finance initiatives. Ramaili has since been replaced by Thabo Khasipe.

The report suggests that while LNDC continues to play a central role in Lesotho's industrial development agenda, its operating model remains under pressure from rising expenditure, declining revenues, weakening retained earnings and continued dependence on government support.

The financial statements were internally compiled by Mrs. Rethabile Tšilo-Liphilana and audited by CGT and Associates on behalf of the Office of the Auditor General.

Ntsoaki Motaung

The Centre for Development in Social Justice (CDSJ) has called for greater scrutiny of fathers in child neglect cases, arguing that Lesotho's justice system disproportionately holds mothers accountable while often overlooking paternal responsibility.

The organisation raised the issue following the recent conviction of a 23-year-old woman in Thaba-Tseka for leaving her three children (aged 4, 8, and 11) in unsafe circumstances. The Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) handled the matter, and the court sentenced the mother in line with existing child protection laws.

CDSJ noted that the woman had her first child at around age 12, raising questions about earlier failures to protect her as a minor and to identify the adult responsible for the pregnancy.

The organisation says similar cases have emerged in recent months, including a 25-year-old woman charged after her children were left with an eight-year-old sibling, a 21-year-old charged over a toddler found crying alone at night, and a 20-year-old sentenced after leaving her children to seek financial support.

In most of these reported cases, according to

CDSJ, the fathers are rarely traced or charged, even though the law requires joint parental responsibility.

Section 20 of Lesotho's Children's Protection and Welfare Act states that both parents, whether married or not, have primary responsibility for raising and maintaining their children. The country is also a signatory to regional instruments such as the Maputo Protocol and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which emphasise shared responsibilities.

CDSJ said the pattern reflects a systemic

issue. "We must stop criminalising women at the point of their collapse and start asking who helped create the crisis in the first place," the organisation stated. "Justice must protect the child from neglect, but it must also ask who neglected the girl before she became the accused mother."

The centre stressed it is not defending child neglect and acknowledges that every child deserves safety, food, and proper supervision. However, it argues that sustainable child protection requires consistent enforcement of paternal duties, including maintenance and

support.

CDSJ has recommended that whenever a mother faces neglect charges, authorities should conduct a mandatory inquiry into the father's identity and conduct. Where abandonment or failure to provide support is established, both parents should face accountability.

The call has sparked public discussion on gender equity in family responsibilities and the effectiveness of child welfare enforcement in Lesotho. Women's rights groups and legal stakeholders are urged to examine the pattern and consider practical reforms.

Young mothers criminalised while fathers disappear

STARLINK | Authorized Reseller

T-CONNECT

Big ideas. Big bandwidth.

Lesotho's most ambitious businesses have one thing in common – they don't let anything slow them down. Not distance, not location, not a weak connection. Connect Core uses Starlink satellites to deliver 150Mbps directly to your growing team, every district, every town, every corner.

CONNECT
CORE

150Mbps



FROM

M 3,800 P/M

(36-MONTH CONTRACT)

DESIGNED FOR GROWING TEAMS
THAT NEED MORE FIREPOWER

No terminal costs with free installation
FUP 550GB



SCAN FOR
MORE PLANS

+266 5968 5426

+266 5901 6704

connect@tconnect.africa

Judge Makara warns against erosion of judicial independence

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

A High Court judge has sharply criticised what he described as a creeping erosion of judicial independence, insisting that Lesotho's courts must remain free to decide cases without interference from the executive or legislative branches.

In remarks delivered during a contentious hearing, Judge Molefi Makara emphasised that courts are duty-bound to act impartially and without fear, favour or prejudice. "Courts should be seen to be independent of both the executive and the legislature," he said.

The comments came as the High Court heard an urgent application filed by Prof. Kananelo Mosito, the suspended Pro Vice-Chancellor of the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and President of the Court of Appeal.

Prof. Mosito is seeking to block the university from recruiting a new Vice-Chancellor while the incumbent, Prof. Isaac Fajana, remains in office. His contract expires on July 31, 2026. Prof. Mosito argues that the university's recruitment process, which was advertised on April 10 and closed on May 11, violates the National University of Lesotho Order of 1992.

That law, he contends, grants the Pro Vice-Chancellor the right to act in the Vice-Chancellor's ab-



Judge Molefi Makara

sence. The university proceeded with the search after Prof. Fajana informed officials in October 2025 that he would not seek a second term.

The case has raised delicate questions about judicial impartiality. The university has filed interlocutory applications challenging the High Court's jurisdiction, arguing that the dispute belongs in the Labour Court. It has also sought the recusal of all High Court judges, citing Prof. Mosito's dual role as President of the Court of Appeal, which reviews High Court decisions.

University lawyers contend that the relationship could compromise the judges' ability to rule impartially and have asked for foreign judges to preside.

Judge Makara rejected the jurisdictional challenge, affirming that the High Court has authority over the matter. Rulings on the recusal application and a related request for a stay of execution remain pending.

In broader remarks from the bench, Judge Makara warned against any drift toward parliamentary supremacy at the expense of constitutional suprem-

acy. "We are not under parliamentary supremacy," he said. "We are under constitutional supremacy."

The Latimer House Principles, a Commonwealth framework, governs relations among the three branches of government. The principles call for mutual respect, prohibit undue influence on the judiciary, and envision lawful checks and balances among the legislature, executive and judiciary.

There have been instances in which government institutions and ministries have failed to comply with court orders without facing contempt proceedings.

In 2022, a magistrate imprisoned a woman for defying a court order granting her ex-husband access to their child. The High Court upheld the contempt finding, praising the magistrate for protecting the dignity of the judiciary and rejecting the woman's claim for compensation.

"Impartial courts are expected to protect rights and hold everybody found wanting to account," Judge Makara said.

He expressed particular concern about efforts to restructure Lesotho's legal framework in ways that could subordinate the judiciary.

"There is a challenge to re-architect the law in such a way that parliament is realistically independent of the executive," he said. Overprotecting legislative intent, he warned, risks allowing the executive to dictate justice, especially given the country's shifting political fortunes.

"The danger is that parliament can make a law establishing tribunals or specialised courts presided over by people friendly to the establishment," Judge Makara added. "And whenever you come to this court, we simply say parliament has decreed it. This will characterise a danger."

Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane has previously cautioned against unsubstantiated attacks on judicial officers, stressing that public confidence in the judiciary depends on delivering judgments, even unpopular ones, in accordance with the rule of law.

The university's case against Prof. Mosito, which also involves his suspension, continues to unfold, testing the boundaries of institutional autonomy and judicial authority in Lesotho's young democracy.

Calls grow for Lesotho to ratify AU social protection protocol

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

Pressure is mounting on the government to ratify the African Union's Protocol on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security, with civil society organisations, legislators and the media this week demanding that Lesotho finally lock in legally enforceable protections for its most vulnerable people.

The protocol, a binding treaty under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, would compel Lesotho to align national laws with continental standards, strengthen social safety nets and provide citizens with enforceable remedies when their rights to social protection are violated.

"Ratification is not a symbolic gesture, it is a legal lifeline," said Nkoti Mabula, executive director of the Seinoli Legal Centre, which convened a multi-stakeholder meeting in Maseru this week to address the country's deep social protection deficits. The gathering targeted legislators from the portfolio committees on social development, health, law and economic affairs, alongside civil society, community groups, the media and organisations representing vulnerable populations.

The advocacy drive is a joint project of the Africa Platform for Social Protection, Seinoli Legal Centre and the Migrant Workers Association of Lesotho (MWAL).

'No one in their right mind wants to see suffering'

Speaking at the event, Lerato Nketše, MWAL's executive director, said advocacy must be broad-based. "Everyone must be brought on board," he said.

Mamello Phooko, a member of parliament who also leads Lesotho's delegation to the Pan African Parliament, made the case for universal social protection with a gender-responsive lens. "Pensions, disability benefits, unemployment protection, maternity protection, injury protection, child support, food



security support, and support during disasters and crises, if we realised all these, we would have achieved social protection," she said.

Phooko pointed to specific gaps: health services that fail to reach remote communities, roads washed away by heavy rains during disasters, and the complete absence of unemployment protection despite the country's high jobless rate. She also raised alarm about young people left out of social protection regimes.

Turning to marginalised groups, she did not mince words. "Herdmen, I have never seen what the government is doing beyond the work of NGOs. We have treated them as if they are not people." Sex workers, she added, suffer similar neglect.

MP Malekale Lehohla Malakane called on the Ministry of Social Development to craft an exit strategy for grant recipients. "Beneficiaries ought to graduate from dependency to become self-reliant," she said, recounting how she shares her salary with community members in need. "You see a child not going to school because they have no shoes, and I help them. I don't wait for their parents to report it."

But she also alleged that the beneficiary rolls are bloated with people who should not be there. "There are people who are born into Social Development and die still registered as

beneficiaries. One beneficiary of the National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) receives a stipend, attends the National University of Lesotho (NUL), yet still gets a M750 grant."

Progress made, but deep fissures remain

Senator Seabata Motsamai, a veteran civil society actor, noted that the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) II (2021-2031) is building toward a comprehensive harmonisation of the social protection landscape. But he underscored the scale of need: a 49 percent poverty rate and high vulnerability to shocks such as droughts and pandemics.

Lesotho has come some way since the introduction of old-age pensions in 2004, which initially covered citizens aged 70 and above. The first National Social Protection Strategy (2014/15-2018/19) set strategic direction; in 2018, the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) and a social registry housed in the Ministry of Social Development recorded more than 488,000 people, improving targeting and delivery. The longer-term NSPS II (2021-2031) laid out an extended roadmap.

Legal reforms have also been introduced, including the Customary Widows Act and the Counter Domestic Violence Act (both 2022), the Persons with Disabilities Equity

Act (2021), and a National Mechanism on Reporting and Follow-up (2024) to improve compliance with international treaty bodies.

Yet substantial obstacles remain. Financial constraints loom large: expanding coverage and introducing new benefits would require sustainable revenue and fiscal planning. Political instability and a slow record of domesticating international instruments have hindered timely adoption of laws.

Motsamai also pointed to structural drivers of vulnerability: education-job mismatch, limited industrialisation, dependence on the informal economy, and the effects of migration.

'Many plans that never see the light of day'

Among the identified barriers to ratification are financial implications, cross-ministerial coordination failures, gaps in health and social insurance, and low public awareness.

Civil society has now laid down a clear set of demands: the government must sign the protocol at the next AU summit, fast-track pending social assistance policy, establish a Lesotho Social Security Organisation, and initiate a cabinet-mandated gap analysis. For parliament, CSOs are calling for the enactment of a Social Protection Framework Act and enabling legislation for unemployment and maternity benefits.

The urgency has been sharpened by recent political polemics. The Ministry of Social Development recently told pensioners at Ha-Mohale to travel to Nazareth to collect their monthly grants. Minister Pitso Lesaoana defended the arrangement as a cost-saving measure, arguing that transporting small groups is expensive. Critics point out that old-age pensions can now be paid through mobile money services — a solution that would bypass the entire logistical fiasco.

MP Mamello Holomo warned that without follow-up and a committed timeframe, it is impossible to know what is lacking. "The country has many plans that never see the light of day," she said. "We need to know what has been a stumbling block so that we can address it. We are willing to do this."

Ombudsman roasts Home Affairs over passport chaos

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

In a damning investigation that lays bare the inner decay of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ombudsman, advocate Tlotliso Polaki, has found that systemic maladministration, executive paralysis, and outright lawlessness have denied thousands of citizens their fundamental rights, while former office bearers unlawfully cling to diplomatic passports with impunity.

The 51-page report, Investigation into Systemic Failures and Administrative Injustices within the Ministry of Home Affairs, released this week, paints a picture of a department in freefall: passports taking up to two years to issue, naturalisation applications languishing without decision since 2022, and a recruitment system that hands jobs to political cronies while passport books run dry.

“The crisis is not one of complexity,” Ombudsman Polaki wrote in her final determination. “It is one of execution.”

‘Night wakes’ and lost livelihoods

Investigators fanned out across seven of the country’s ten districts, interviewing 320 members of the public. What they found was a service in profound distress.

At the Maseru Mall offices, the team observed citizens queuing from 2am, a practice dubbed “night wakes,” just to secure a place in the day’s limited quota for identity cards. One respondent with a physical disability described being met with “taunts and jibes” by officers when he sought information about his passport, applied for in early 2024.

A 35-year-old Mosotho woman who applied for a passport in November 2023 still had not received it more than a year later. She works in South Africa and requires the document to commute to her job. The delay, the report noted, has “directly undermined her ability to earn a livelihood.”

Of those interviewed, 65 percent said they were given no reasons for denials or delays. Forty-two percent were told documents were unavailable due to a lack of government materials. Corruption was reported in at least four offices, with bribes ranging from M300 to M600.

The Ministry’s own Service Charter promises passports within 21 working days. The investigation found that some applicants have waited up to two years.

Diplomatic passports: ‘Not souvenirs of past office’

Perhaps the most explosive findings relate to diplomatic passports.

The report confirms that numerous former office bearers, including Members of Parliament (MPs) and former



Minister of Home Affairs and Police Voeswa Tsheka

mission staff, continue to hold diplomatic passports well beyond the legally prescribed three-month surrender period.

When the Director of Passports was asked why the law had not been enforced, he attributed the failure to an alleged lack of “political will” from senior authorities.

Polaki rejects this outright.

“The suggestion that enforcement depends on ‘political will’ is misconceived,” she wrote. “The statute imposes a duty of an administrative nature, not a discretionary indulgence contingent on political considerations. Failure to act... amounts to maladministration and perpetuates an unlawful state of affairs.”

The report also raises concerns about diplomatic passports issued under loosely defined roles such as “political” or “economic” advisors, and persistent allegations that renewals are facilitated through informal payments.

“Diplomatic passports are not souvenirs of past office,” Polaki stated. “They are instruments of the State, issued for narrowly defined official purposes and subject to explicit statutory control.”

Naturalisation paralysis drives away skilled professionals

The investigation also uncovered a naturalisation crisis that risks driving away the very professionals Lesotho cannot afford to lose.

Dr Shah Mohammad Abdul Hadi, a specialist orthopaedic doctor who has served Lesotho for eleven years, applied for naturalisation of his children in September 2022. His children, who completed secondary education in Lesotho, are now unable to apply for university places in South Africa because they lack Lesotho identity documents.

Their applications have been pending

in the Minister’s office for over two and a half years, with no decision.

Dr Shaidi Shahzahan, a senior specialist radiographer with over nineteen years of service, faces a similar plight. Respondent after respondent told investigators that skilled expatriate doctors are considering leaving Lesotho for countries with more efficient and predictable administrative systems.

The Court of Appeal had already ruled in May 2025, in the case of Amberkar Abdul Aziz & 15 Others v Minister of Home Affairs, that a delay of approximately eight years in processing naturalisation applications was “manifestly excessive and unjustified.” The court issued a writ of mandamus compelling the Minister to decide within 60 days.

Yet, the Ombudsman found, applications continue to rot in the Minister’s in-tray.

Irregular hiring: patronage over performance

Behind the service delivery collapse lies a human resources scandal.

Whistleblowers inside the Ministry told investigators that temporary staff are appointed directly from the Minister’s office, bypassing the Public Service Commission entirely. Appointments are allegedly based on political affiliation, not merit.

The result? An inflated wage bill that devours funds meant for passport books and identity card consumables. Many of these temporary staff, the report notes, have “little meaningful work and are, in effect, redundant.”

The Principal Secretary denied any impropriety but was “evasive” when pressed, stating that the recruitment process was managed by the Minister’s office and that she was not involved. The

Ombudsman described that admission as “a damning indictment of a breakdown in proper administrative procedures.”

Remedies and deadlines

The Ombudsman has issued a sweeping set of directives with firm deadlines. Within 30 days: a public apology from the Minister; a full audit of all diplomatic passports; surrender notices to unlawful holders.

Within 60 days: clearance of all passport and identity document backlogs; final decisions on all long-pending naturalisation applications.

Within 6 months: workforce rationalisation; revision of the Service Charter; installation of CCTV in all Passport and NICR offices.

Within 12 months: procurement diversification (at least two international suppliers); full digitalisation strategy; a compliance report to the Ombudsman.

On diplomatic passports, Polaki has directed that any passports issued outside the law must be revoked, and that an independent investigation be instituted into allegations of corruption and improper renewals.

Crucially, the report also demanded safeguards to protect officials from intimidation, coercion, or undue political pressure. Where a Minister is found to have engaged in bullying or undue interference, the matter must be referred to the Prime Minister for possible censure, suspension, or removal.

‘A theft of public resources’

Polaki does not mince words in her conclusion.

“The failure to issue a passport is not merely a delay; it is a denial of the right to seek a livelihood, to access healthcare, and to reunite with family,” he writes. “The failure to process a naturalisation application is not merely an administrative backlog; it is a declaration of legal limbo... The irregular recruitment of staff is not merely a procedural shortcut; it is a theft of public resources that directly undermines the State’s ability to function.”

If the Ministry fails to implement the recommendations, the Ombudsman has warned, she will submit a report to the National Assembly for Parliament to take “appropriate action.”

“This Office will remain seized with this matter until full compliance is achieved,” Polaki wrote.

For the thousands of Basotho waiting, some since 2023, for documents that would allow them to work, study, and move freely, that day cannot come soon enough.



Lesotho businesswoman joins regional manufacturers' body

Ntsoaki Motaung

In a major boost for regional industrial integration, prominent Mosotho entrepreneur 'Mamphuto Jessie has been appointed to the Advisory Board of the African Manufacturers Foundation (AMF).

Jessie, a well-known figure in the Lesotho business community, joins a high-level continental leadership team headed by the former President of Mauritius, H.E. Dr. Ameenah-Gurib-Fakim.

With over 14 years of experience across multiple sectors, Jessie brings a wealth of knowledge to the Foundation. She currently serves as the Managing Director of several major companies, including Avis Budget Rent-a-Car Lesotho and M&J Mining.

Beyond her corporate success, she is a dedicated advocate for women in industry. She holds key roles as the Chairperson of the Federation of Lesotho Women Entrepreneurs (FLWE) for the Maseru District and the founder of the Lesotho Women in Mining Association (LEWIMA).

The AMF, which promotes the Made and Celebrated in Africa movement, expressed great confidence in her ability to help drive the continent's industrial agenda.



Mamphuto Jessie, founder of the Lesotho Women in Mining Association, joins the AMF leadership to help drive the Made and Celebrated in Africa movement.

AMF CEO Mr Lebo Radebe praised the appointment, stating, "Ms 'Mamphuto Jessie represents visionary African leadership committed to empowerment, industrialisation, and sustainable economic growth. We are honoured to welcome her to the African Manufacturers Foundation family."

Jessie's appointment is seen as a strategic move to unite manufacturing efforts across the continent. Her background in supply chain management and mining is expected to be a major asset as the AMF works to improve how African resources are processed and sold globally.

Jessie, who holds a degree in Public Relations and Communication Science, is also deeply passionate about mentoring the next generation of female leaders.

The public will have a chance to see the Foundation's work in action later this year. The African Manufacturers Foundation will host its official launch and a Digital Manufacturing Exhibition on August 28, 2026, in Sandton, South Africa.

This event will showcase the future of African industry and the Made in Africa products that Jessie and the Advisory Board aim to champion.

Taxpayers urged to beat deadline



Revenue Services Lesotho during the campaign reminding Basotho to file before the failing season ends on June 30

Refiloe Molise

Revenue Services Lesotho(RSL) has intensified its 2025/26 tax filing awareness campaign, urging taxpayers across the country to submit their tax returns and settle outstanding payments before the June 30 deadline in order to avoid penalties, additional charges and last-minute delays.

The campaign, which was recently held at Makoanyane Square, brought together RSL officials, stakeholders and members of the public as part of efforts to promote tax compliance and educate Basotho about the importance of paying taxes towards national development.

Speaking during the campaign, RSL's acting Commissioner General, T'SepoRaletooane said the tax filing season provides taxpayers with an opportunity to declare their income and submit all required documents for tax assessment.

He warned that failure to submit tax returns on time could result in penalties and unnecessary financial pressure for both individuals and businesses.

"We encourage taxpayers to file and pay their taxes early instead of waiting until the final days before the deadline. Last-minute filing and payments often create unnecessary pressure and delays," said Raletooane.

He further stated that early submission helps taxpayers avoid long queues and system congestion that are usually experienced towards the end of the filing season.

Raletooane also stressed the importance of proper financial record keeping among businesses, saying accurate records play a major role in ensuring effective tax compliance and business growth.

"We advise businesses to maintain proper financial records, including general ledgers, cash books, sales ledgers, purchase ledgers and petty cash records. Proper record keeping assists businesses in monitoring profits and losses while simplifying the preparation of financial statements," he said.

SepiritiLetlatsi, Head of Marketing and Client Education at RSL, said taxpayers are encouraged to use the digital platforms introduced by RSL to make filing easier and more convenient.

"We want taxpayers to make full use of the available digital platforms and avoid waiting until the deadline approaches. Filing early helps reduce congestion and delays during the filing season," said Letlatsi.

He added that the RSL mobile application allows taxpayers to access selected services and complete some tax-related processes directly from their phones without visiting RSL offices.

Also speaking during the campaign, Marketing and Client Education Officer, Mohale

Motenalapi said tax filing is the responsibility of every Mosotho earning income within the country.

"It is indeed that time of paying taxes. When we talk about paying tax, we mean filing, and filing is reporting how the business has worked throughout the year from the beginning until the end," said Motenalapi.

"So it is our responsibility as Basotho to make this happen. Filing started on April 1 and expectations are that everyone who lives in Lesotho and makes money is supposed to make a report. Having done the report means one has complied and done what is supposed to be done," he added.

Motenalapi explained that every individual or business earning income in the country is expected to declare all sources of income.

"When we make a report, expectations are to publish all sources of income, including money made from selling, buying and delivering services," he said.

He further encouraged taxpayers to make use of online filing systems and mobile money platforms introduced by RSL.

"We can also file through the internet using Revenue Services Lesotho platforms, and one can only do that if they have a tax number. Taxpayers can also file through mobile money platforms such as the commercial banks, M-Pesa and EcoCash," he said.

NOTICE OF LOST LEASE

NOTICE is hereby issued that the Executor of the late MASECHABA MARY LITABE & ZECHARIAH LITABE intend to apply for issuance of certified copy of registered Lease to immovable property registered under NO.13282-405 in favor of MASECHABA MARY LITABE & ZACHARIAH LITABE in respect of every right or interest on and to the building (s) and other developments express or implied in certain PLOT NO.13282-405 situated at MAPELENG, MASERU URBAN AREA in the DISTRICT of MASERU.

All persons having objection to the issue of the said copy are requested to lodge such in writing to the Land Registrar within three weeks from the last publication of the notice.

APPLICANT'S NAME & ADDRESS
THEOLO ISHMAEL MAKHELE (EXECUTOR)
RASEKOAI, RAMPAI & LEBAKENG ATTORNEYS
HOPLANG BUILDING ROOM 1 & 6

P.O.BOX 1899
MASERU
ADDRESSES
LAND REGISTRAR

LAND ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITY
LEROHOLI ROAD
P.O.BOX 11856
MASERU 100

Stakeholders push for acceleration of renewable energy adoption

Refiloe Molise

Stakeholders in Lesotho's energy sector have called for urgent action, stronger partnerships and increased investment in renewable energy ahead of the upcoming Lesotho Energy Access Dialogue (LEAD) 2026 conference scheduled for May 19 to 20 at the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre.

Speaking during a press conference held at Lancers Inn on Wednesday, representatives from the European Union (EU), the National University of Lesotho (NUL), financial institutions and private sector partners stressed the need to move beyond discussions and accelerate implementation of renewable energy solutions in the country.

Delivering the keynote remarks, European Union Ambassador to Lesotho, Mette Sunnergren, said LEAD 2026 comes at a critical moment as Lesotho continues to face energy access challenges while the world grapples with climate change and rising energy costs.

She said the conference builds on the commitments made during the inaugural LEAD conference in 2025, which focused on policy reform, youth participation and private sector capacity building in the energy sector.

"The world as we know it is transforming. Climate change is no longer abstract but a lived reality. The present increase in oil prices continues to negatively affect each one of us," she said.

Sunnergren reaffirmed the EU's commitment to supporting Lesotho's transition towards sustainable and inclusive energy systems through initiatives such as the Global Gateway Initiative, under which the EU plans to mobilise €300 billion by 2027 to support sustainable infrastructure and energy transitions globally, with a strong focus on

Africa.

She noted that despite ongoing efforts, nearly half of Lesotho's population still lacks access to electricity.

"Energy poverty remains a critical challenge in Lesotho. At least 47 percent of the population still lacks access to electricity," she said.

She added that the EU continues to support renewable energy development in Lesotho through mini-grids, solar home systems, improved cooking stoves, hydropower infrastructure and policy support programmes.

Sunnergren also called on stakeholders to adopt bold and time-bound targets to achieve universal energy access by 2030 while ensuring that women, youth and vulnerable communities are included in the country's energy transition.

"Energy is the great enabler of education, healthcare, industry and dignity. Together we can turn Lesotho's energy challenges into opportunities for prosperity," she said.

NUL Energy Research Centre representative Palesa Nkaile said this year's conference will focus on practical implementation strategies under the theme "Moving from Commitments to Action."

Nkaile explained that LEAD aims to accelerate universal energy access and strengthen energy security through multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships that bring together policymakers, regulators, financiers, developers, academics, civil society organisations and youth representatives.

She said one of the major concerns identified during LEAD 2025 was the gap between policy development and implementation, which prompted this year's action-oriented



Mette Sunnergren, European Union Ambassador to Lesotho, delivering her keynote address remarks at Lesotho Access Dialogue (LEAD) 2026 press conference held at Lancers Inn

approach.

"We are really pushing to move the needle. This year we are responding directly to the implementation deficit that was identified during LEAD 2025," she said.

According to Nkaile, the conference is expected to attract around 200 participants from Lesotho, the region and abroad. Activities will include roundtable discussions, presentations on financing opportunities, networking sessions, matchmaking meetings and exhibitions showcasing products and services from energy sector stakeholders.

She said organisers expect the conference to produce tangible implementation processes, partnerships, funding opportunities and policy recommendations that can accelerate renewable energy access in Lesotho.

Financial institutions also highlighted the

growing importance of renewable energy financing and collaboration in driving economic development.

Nedbank Lesotho's Managing Director, Nkamu Matete said the bank partnered with LEAD because of its commitment to sustainability and renewable energy.

"As the Green Bank, sustainability and renewable energy are at the centre of what we do. LEAD was a perfect fit for us," he said.

Matete revealed that one of the commitments Nedbank made during last year's conference was to begin powering its ATM network with solar energy.

"The rollout is happening as we speak," he said, adding that partnerships between competing institutions such as Nedbank and Standard Lesotho Bank demonstrate the importance of collective action in addressing the country's energy challenges.

Matete said both banks contributed a combined M400,000 towards LEAD 2026 as diamond sponsors.

He described energy access as essential for economic growth, job creation and national competitiveness.

Meanwhile, LNIIG Hollard's General Manager, Kefuoe Ramokhele said the insurance company joined LEAD because its vision aligns with the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) commitments.

Ramokhele said LNIIG Hollard recently introduced Lesotho's first renewable energy insurance solution aimed at reducing investment risks in clean energy projects.

"We are moving beyond traditional insurance solutions to products that create better futures for Basotho communities," he said.

He explained that the insurance solution is designed to de-risk renewable energy investments, support developers and help projects move smoothly from planning to implementation.

"Insurance plays a role in ensuring that financiers and developers have the confidence to invest in renewable energy projects," he said.

Ramokhele added that partnerships between government, financiers, developers, academia and civil society are essential for achieving a successful energy transition in Lesotho.

ETL pledges clearer calls, faster connections with VoLTE

Seabata Mahao

In response to faster, clearer and more reliable mobile communication demands, Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) is strengthening its network infrastructure and expanding advanced technologies such as Voice over LTE (VoLTE) to improve customer connectivity experiences across the country.

VoLTE is a modern communication technology that enables voice calls to be made over a 4G LTE network rather than older voice networks. The innovation offers several advantages, including High Definition (HD) voice quality, quicker call connection times and uninterrupted internet access during voice calls.

According to ETL's acting General Manager for Products and Services, Ketja Nhlapo, the technology marks an important milestone in enhancing communication services in Lesotho.

"VoLTE is designed to significantly improve the quality of voice communication by providing clearer audio, faster call setup times and a more seamless calling experience for our customers," said Nhlapo.

Unlike conventional mobile calls that depend on legacy network technologies, VoLTE uses the efficiency of 4G infrastructure to deliver clearer and more natural-sounding conversations. Calls connect almost instantly, reducing delays commonly experienced



Ketja Nhlapo, ETL's acting GM - Products and Services

when dialing.

The technology also allows users to continue browsing the internet, streaming content or using online applications while engaged in a phone call; a feature increasingly valued in today's digitally connected environment.

ETL says its continued investment in network expansion has laid a strong foundation for the nationwide rollout of advanced communication services.

"All 382 ETL network sites are now 4G capable, and we will soon be commissioning six more, bringing the total number of 4G sites to 388, while 149 sites are already 5G capable. This positions us strongly to deliver en-

hanced connectivity experiences and support future digital innovations," Nhlapo explained.

Industry analysts view investments in 4G and 5G infrastructure as critical to supporting economic growth, digital inclusion and business competitiveness, particularly in emerging markets where reliable communication services increasingly underpin commerce, education and public services.

Beyond voice improvements, ETL's VoLTE offering also introduces native video calling functionality on compatible smartphones. The feature enables customers to place video calls directly through the mobile network without relying entirely on third-party appli-

cations.

Nhlapo noted that communication habits are changing as consumers and businesses seek more interactive ways to connect.

"Video calling enables families, friends and businesses to communicate in a more personal and engaging way. These technologies are becoming increasingly important in supporting both social and professional interactions," he said.

Importantly, ETL says the service operates using traditional airtime or calling minutes rather than requiring separate internet-based applications.

"All these without the need for data or internet, unlike third-party applications, just using traditional calling minutes or airtime," Nhlapo added.

To access VoLTE services, customers typically require a VoLTE-compatible smartphone, a 4G-enabled SIM card and access to ETL's 4G coverage network. Most modern smartphones already support the feature.

Nhlapo said ETL remains focused on investing in technologies that enhance customer experiences while supporting Lesotho's broader digital ambitions.

"The future of communication is becoming faster, clearer and more immersive, and ETL is committed to ensuring customers continue benefiting from world-class connectivity solutions," he concluded.



Ntsoaki Motaung

In a historic gathering at the National Assembly, the Parliament of Lesotho officially launched the Parliamentary TB Caucus, marking a significant step in the nation's fight against tuberculosis.

The event brought together local leaders and international experts to confront a disease that continues to kill more people in Africa than almost any other infectious condition.

While the mood was hopeful, speakers did not shy away from the grim reality facing Lesotho today.

Mokhothu Makhalanya, Chair of Chairs for Parliament Portfolio Committees, opened the proceedings by reminding the audience that TB is often ignored because it lacks the dramatic profile of other global health crises.

Makhalanya noted that, unlike COVID-19 or HIV, TB is a quiet disease that takes lives slowly and silently. He stressed that the greatest irony is that TB is entirely curable. If the nation focuses its resources and energy on eliminating the disease now, it will not only save thousands of lives but also safeguard the country's financial future by reducing long-term healthcare costs.

The urgency of the situation was underlined by the Minister of Health, Mamokete Ntšekhe, who provided the latest data on the epidemic.

In 2024 alone, an estimated 13,000 Basotho fell ill with tuberculosis. Perhaps most alarming was the revelation that nearly half of those affected remain undiagnosed.

These missing patients continue to live in their communities without treatment, unintentionally spreading the infection to their families and neighbours.

Lesotho currently holds a tragic record, ranking as the country with the highest TB burden in Africa and the fourth highest in the world.

Lord Nick Herbert, Chairman of the Global TB Caucus, travelled to Maseru to support the launch. He shared that the movement began a decade ago with only a few concerned lawmakers and has now grown to include over 3,000 parliamentarians in 161 countries.

Herbert explained that while medicine and money are important, the most critical ingredient for success is leadership. He urged members of the Lesotho Parliament to use their unique voices to speak for those who have no voice, the victims living in poverty who are most affected by the disease.

The Speaker of the National Assembly, Tlohang

Parliament declares war on TB as new caucus launches

... Speaker of National Assembly leads commitment to end the 'silent killer' that claims thousands of Basotho lives every year.



Sekhamane, formally accepted the role of TB Champion. He stated that Parliament has a critical role to play in changing this sad reality.

"As legislators we are entrusted with the responsibility to enact laws that strengthen the health and well-being of women and children who live with HIV and to improve treatment services. Our resource allocation and oversight responsibilities are equally important. We must not only ensure that adequate resources are allocated for TB programmes, but it is also incumbent upon us to follow these resources with relentless rigour and probity to ensure they are used efficiently and that

commitments made by government and partners translate into tangible improvements in the lives of our people."

In a powerful gesture of commitment, the Barcelona Declaration was read to the House, a document that outlines a global strategy to end TB within a single generation.

By endorsing this declaration, the Parliament of Lesotho has pledged to ensure that every patient has access to quick and accurate diagnosis, regardless of their ability to pay.

The Speaker emphasised that TB is not just a medical problem but a development challenge that

hurts the nation's economy and keeps families in poverty.

Health officials also highlighted the difficult obstacles standing in the way of progress.

Dr Llang Maama, Acting Director General of Health Services, spoke about the deep connection between TB and poverty. She explained that many patients struggle to stay on their medication because they do not have enough food to eat.

"Taking strong TB drugs on an empty stomach is painful and difficult, leading some to stop their treatment early," she said.

She warned that this non-adherence can lead to drug-resistant TB, which is much harder and more expensive to cure.

The rugged terrain of Lesotho also makes it difficult for healthcare workers to reach people in remote villages, meaning geography itself remains a barrier to health.

Public Health Officer Dr Sirak Hailu from the World Health Organization urged the new caucus to turn their political promises into specific activities with clear deadlines. He reminded lawmakers that the global goal is to end the TB epidemic by 2030.

"While Lesotho has made some progress in reducing the number of deaths in recent years, the current pace is not fast enough to meet the target. The new caucus is seen as the engine that will drive the country toward a future where no Mosotho has to die from a disease that can be cured with a simple course of medicine," he said.

Why African mothers are still dying during or after childbirth

Ntsoaki Motaung

The numbers are as shocking as they are heartbreaking. In Africa, a 15-year-old girl faces a 1 in 57 chance of dying during pregnancy or childbirth.

To put that into perspective, a girl the same age in Australia has a risk of just 1 in 21,000. This massive difference is not because Africa lacks the medical knowledge to save lives.

It is, according to top leaders from the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU), a moral failure rooted in broken systems rather than a lack of science.

Every single day, on average, more than 700 women die globally from causes linked to pregnancy and childbirth. Africa alone accounts for a staggering 70 percent of these maternal deaths. The tragedy is that most of these lives could be saved with simple, timely care and access to quality supplies.

The heads of UNFPA, the African Union, AUDA-NEPAD, and the UN Economic Commission for Africa recently released a joint statement highlighting that the glaring injustice of maternal deaths in Africa often stems from basic logistical failures.

They argue that "A woman does not die because



we cannot save her, she dies because the ambulance has no fuel." Other times, the supplier was not paid on time, or life-saving medicines remain stuck in a warehouse instead of reaching the clinic.

These are simple but life-or-death issues: whether a family can find transport, whether a midwife is on duty, or whether the clinic cupboards are stocked.

In Lesotho, the situation reflects these broader continental challenges. According to the 2023/24 Lesotho Demographic and Health Survey (LDHS),

the maternal mortality ratio stands at 530 deaths per 100,000 live births.

While this is an improvement from the 1,024 deaths reported in the 2014 survey, it remains significantly higher than the global target of 70 deaths per 100,000 live births.

The data reveals a startling gap between service use and actual health outcomes. In Lesotho, 92 percent of births are attended by skilled health personnel and 86 percent of deliveries take place in a health

facility. Furthermore, 82 percent of women attend at least four antenatal care visits.

Despite these high coverage figures, women continue to die at alarming rates, often due to postpartum haemorrhage. This suggests that the issue is not a lack of women seeking help, but rather suboptimal quality of care and the inability of facilities to manage emergencies effectively.

Only seven African countries are currently on track to meet the global goal of reducing maternal deaths.

In places like Lesotho, overcoming these hurdles requires ensuring that every clinic is part of a well-supported system where midwives are equipped with the tools and skills to quickly diagnose and treat complications.

The authors of the joint statement believe Africa can lead its own way out of this crisis. They point to a New Public Health Order that moves away from heavy reliance on international aid and focuses on an African-led agenda.

This includes enabling African countries to produce their own high-quality medicines through dynamic local pharmaceutical manufacturers and building strong intra-African supply chains.

As the leaders stated, "We have the knowledge and resources to end preventable maternal mortality today."

The roadmap exists, but it requires strong political will to fix the systems that are currently failing mothers. When a mother survives, her whole family and the economy benefit. Every dollar invested in family planning can yield up to \$27 in economic returns.

As the leaders noted, "the failure to act is the most expensive choice of all. If we are serious about a sustainable future, we must ensure childbirth is a safe, empowering experience for every woman."

Khothatso Maoela's journey of resilience against lupus

Ntsoaki Motaung

In Lesotho, many women carry an invisible burden. It is a disease that mimics others, steals energy, skin and hair, and is often dismissed by communities as just a simple cold, "serame".

This is the reality of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE), commonly known as Lupus.

For Khothatso Maoela, the battle began not with a clear diagnosis, but with the joy of new life that soon turned into a nightmare of physical pain. Her story was among those shared during a recent Lupus awareness gathering organised by the Lupie Love Foundation.

The event sought to shine a light on a disease that the Ministry of Health acknowledges has remained invisible for too long.

Maoela's journey into chronic illness started in 2023. At the time, she did not even know she was pregnant. Feeling unwell, she visited a health facility and was shocked to learn she was already seven months pregnant.

The pregnancy was far from joyful. She was constantly ill. When the time came to deliver, she underwent a C-section, but her body refused to heal.

"The wound did not heal," Maoela recalled. "I was in and out of hospital because the wound kept getting infected. At one point, I was admitted for care of the C-section wound until it healed."

Just three months into her time as a nursing mother, locally known as "setsoetse," her symptoms took a frightening turn. Painful black spots appeared on her body, even under her feet, making it impossible to walk. A distinctive butterfly rash spread across her face, leaving her skin pink and raw.

Perhaps more painful than the physical symptoms was the lack of understanding from the medical community. When she sought help for the facial rash, she was met with judgment rather than treatment.

"When I got to the hospital, I would be told I use dangerous creams on my face," Maoela said. "I went to the hospital every week while still a nursing mother. I tried many facilities. When I had to explain what was wrong, I didn't know what to say because my whole body was in pain."

This confusion is common. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Lupus is a long-term autoimmune disease that can affect almost any part of the body. Its symptoms, fatigue, joint pain, rashes and more, mimic many other illnesses, making diagnosis notoriously difficult.

For Maoela, the breakthrough came at Baylor Clinic, where a doctor finally gave her suffering a name: Lupus. He explained it simply as "masole a mmele a itoantšang," the body's immune system fighting itself.

As the disease progressed, Maoela found herself trapped in a rapidly failing body. Doubt from peers and the high cost of private healthcare made her question the diagnosis at first, but her body would not let her deny the truth.

Even with a name for her condition, financial barriers blocked her path. Referred to Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital (QMMH) for tests, she was told the facility could not perform them. She was directed to private labs, where the costs were overwhelming.

"When I got to the lab, I found out that their



Khothatso Maoela tells her Lupus Journey of Hope, Resilience and living with purpose.

fees were expensive," she explained. Influenced by friends and neighbours who insisted it was just "serame", she tried to convince herself they were right.

"I told myself that and decided to rule out that it is Lupus."

But the disease could not be ignored. Her condition worsened until she could barely move because of the pain. Her teeth felt loose, blood and pus filled her mouth, making it impossible to eat. Her hair fell out in clumps. At times, her cognitive function was so affected that she could not understand what her friends were saying, it felt like they were speaking a foreign language.

"I was so sick that when I went to hospital, they would tell me there is nothing they can do. They didn't even know what medication to give me because they couldn't say what was wrong," she said.

"I decided not to go for tests because they were expensive."

Eventually, she had no choice. Taken to a private facility, she was told upon arrival that she had Lupus. Tests were later done to confirm the diagnosis, and her healing journey began.

The struggles Maoela faced are echoed by medical professionals in Lesotho. Dr Makamole Lelimo explained that Lupus is a

disease in which the immune system loses its ability to distinguish between foreign invaders and the body's own healthy cells.

"Imagine that every one of those soldiers is attacking itself," Dr Lelimo noted. He highlighted that the disease is deeply gendered, with approximately 9 out of 10 people diagnosed being women, and it disproportionately affects people of African descent.

Sejojo Pharo, a Cancer and Palliative Care Advocate, added that while the exact cause of Lupus remains unknown, it is linked to genetics, environmental factors such as ultraviolet light, and hormonal shifts, particularly high estrogen levels. This partly explains why Maoela's symptoms intensified during and after pregnancy.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Country Disease Outlook for Lesotho (2023) shows that Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) now account for 45 percent of deaths in the country. While Lesotho has made progress against HIV and TB, rare and chronic conditions like Lupus continue to fall through the cracks.

Dr Llang Maama, Acting Director General of Health Services, admitted that the medical community has often missed Lupus.

"With my more than 30 years of practice, I saw a Lupus patient once. Most of the time, it is invisible. We focus on infectious diseases, and we may not think of Lupus unless we are aware of it."

The financial burden remains one of the greatest challenges. Private tests can cost more than M6,000, while weekly medication can reach M2,000. In a lower-middle-income country like Lesotho, where GDP per capita is roughly US\$1,107, such costs are devastating for many families.

In response to this gap, the Lupie Love Foundation was established. Its founder, Thembeka Mokhalinyane, started the organisation from personal experience after her own Lupus diagnosis last year.

"Last year at this time, life took a turn," Mokhalinyane shared. "May is Lupus awareness month, and I was diagnosed last year in the same month."

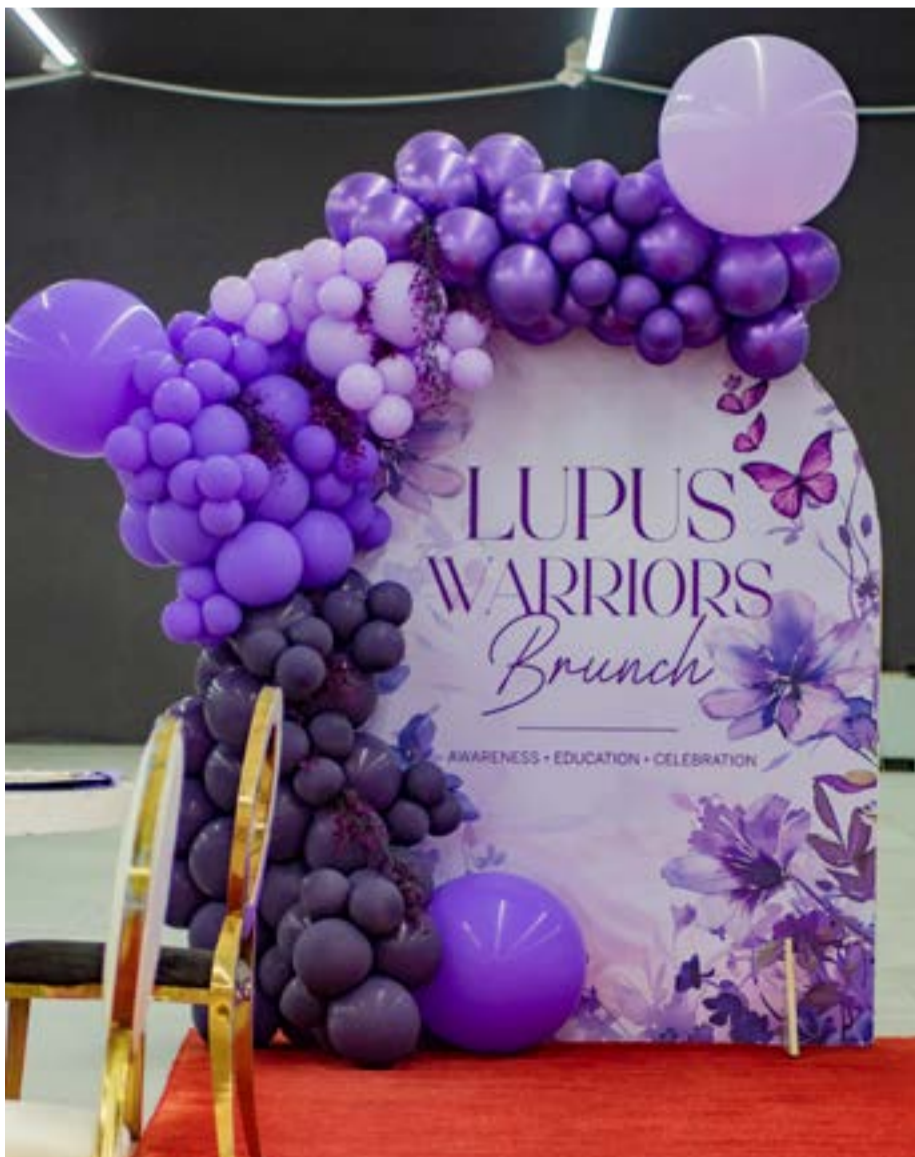
The foundation provides the community support that Maoela says is essential. "Lupus affects every aspect of life, including mental health," she admitted. "As of now, I can forget where I am going. As patients, we need support from family, at home and at work."

Khothatso Maoela's story is not only one of sickness. It is a call to action for the Lesotho government to make necessary medications available in public facilities and to train clinicians to recognise the invisible signs of Lupus early.

Despite cracked skin, memory loss, and the butterfly rash that marks her face, Maoela continues to rise. She has moved from not knowing why her body was failing her to becoming a voice for others suffering in silence, often dismissed as having a mere cold.

As Dr Maama said during the World Lupus Day commemoration, the Ministry of Health is committed to ensuring rare diseases are better understood, protected, and treated.

For Maoela and the "Lupies" of Lesotho, visibility is the first step. Until then, they lean on one another, their resilience, and the hope that one day their bodies will stop fighting them so they can live in peace.



Lesotho's diamonds: A decade of empty promises and self-inflicted poverty

For ten years, Lesotho's leaders have spoken eloquently about harnessing the country's diamond wealth for the benefit of its people. The 2015 Minerals and Mining Policy promised a bold break from the old extract-and-export model. A diamond centre for valuation, sorting and processing; a geoscience laboratory to build local technical capacity; and a genuine local cutting and polishing industry that would create jobs and retain more value at home.

Yet in 2026, we have nothing to show for it but more rough diamonds leaving our borders and more opportunities flowing away with them.

This is not mere bureaucratic delay. It is a pattern of political negligence that borders on dereliction of duty. Sites were identified, budgets were allocated, designs were prepared, and ministers made public pledges, only for new governments to quietly abandon the projects.

Under Prime Minister Dr Moeketsi Majoro, momentum briefly built with site inspections and timelines. Then came the change of administration in late 2022, and the familiar cycle resumed. New priorities, fresh excuses, and the same outcome, stagnation.

Former Mining Minister Serialong Qoo has rightly pointed to a lack of political will. Successive coalitions have treated long-term national projects as disposable, restarting the clock with every change of government.

The consequences are measurable and painful. We continue to export high-quality rough diamonds, stones that fetch record prices per carat on the world stage, and receive royalties while the real money is made elsewhere in cutting, polishing, branding and retail.

The story of the Lesotho Promise diamond, sold rough for around US\$12 million only to realise over US\$50 million once polished, is a stark reminder of what we forfeit with every shipment. Hundreds of millions in potential revenue, thousands of potential jobs, and industrial spin-offs have been lost while we dither.

Compare this to Botswana, which has turned diamond beneficiation into a national success story. Through consistent policy, legislation, and public-private partnerships, Botswana has built a cutting and polishing sector employing thousands of its citizens.

It has not allowed small production volumes to become an excuse for inaction; instead, it has pursued regional collaboration where useful while securing domestic gains. Lesotho, meanwhile, now hears its own minister suggesting our volumes are "too small" and that we should rely on regional harmonisation with neighbours. This marks a quiet retreat from the 2015 vision and effectively concedes defeat before trying.

Political instability is partly to blame, but it cannot be the perpetual alibi. Botswana faced its own challenges yet maintained policy continuity on diamonds. The deeper failures in Lesotho are the absence of a supporting legal framework — the long-dormant Minerals and Mining Bill — and the lack of cross-party commitment to a national vision that transcends electoral cycles. Without legislation that mandates or incentivises local beneficiation, every new government can simply ignore the policy.

Basotho deserve better. Diamonds are a finite, non-renewable resource. Every rough stone exported without value addition is a missed chance to fight poverty, create skilled employment, and build genuine economic sovereignty. The current administration has shown it can execute infrastructure projects when it chooses to, witness upgrades in central Maseru. The same urgency and focus must now be applied to the diamond sector.

The 2015 policy should not gather dust as another dead letter. Government must revive the diamond centre and geoscience laboratory without further delay, pass the necessary mining legislation, and create real incentives for local beneficiation. Political leaders across the spectrum should treat this as a national imperative, not a partisan football.

Lesotho's diamonds are among the finest in the world. It is time our leadership stopped selling them, and our future, short. The era of broken promises must end. Our people have waited long enough.



No Comment

Tholang Tseka,
Chairperson & Founder,
Basotho Biodiversity
Organisation

**Common
Concern**

I saw it in the sky: My testimony on Lesotho's early snow and floods

I saw it first over the Thuathe Mountains.

It was the end of April. The clouds did not look like winter. They were ribbed, linear, cut against the wind like gridwork. We, Basotho, have names for our clouds. These had no name. In other places, they call them chemtrails.

I wrote in my field book: "Sky marked. Air heavy. Disaster coming. Snow will be too early." I left Lesotho the same day.

I had a wedding invitation in Botswana. Kgosi Gao Monnathebe of Logaba, Kanye, who sits in Ntlo Ya Dikgosi, Botswana's Senate, had invited Afrikan Young Indigenous Leaders (AYIL) to witness his wedding to Kago. Kings, Queens, Chiefs and Princesses from South Africa, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe filled the venue.

From Gaborone, I travelled by bus to Namibia for church activities. I stayed one week at Augustineum School Hostel in Windhoek. Every single day was sunshine. No rain. No storm. Not even a threatening cloud.

Then my phone started buzzing.

I opened the pictures. Homes half-submerged in water. Cars were

buried to the windows in snow. This was May. Our snow does not come in May.

I sat in that Namibian sun and asked the only question a Mosotho who reads the sky can ask: Who is inducing this early snow and floods in Lesotho?

I have heard about the Aphelion Phenomenon. I understand seasons. But this is beyond aphelion. This is beyond climate change as a phrase used to end conversations.

I am a Princess of Khotong, Thuathe. I am Chairperson and Founder of the Basotho Biodiversity Organisation. I serve as an Interim Committee Member for Multi-Discipline Creatives at the Maseru Information Tourism Crafts Centre (MITCC).

I am a Global Ambassador for Lesotho with the Pan-African Leadership Institute. I am a poet, musician, fashion designer, permaculturist, and IT practitioner. My book, "Whispers of the Ancestral Land," will be released soon.

I say this not for titles, but for credibility. I was trained to observe. To document. To link sky to soil, to policy, to people.

Unusual skies. Then unseasonal, de-

structive weather. If this is natural, then our early-warning systems failed us. If this is induced, Lesotho must raise it with SADC and the African Union. The Senqu feeds the Katse. The Katse feeds South Africa. What happens in our mountains does not stop at our borders.

I returned to Botswana last week. Flags are flying at half-mast in honour of Former President Festus Mogae, 1939–2026, who passed away a few days ago. The whole nation is mourning. Yet my country is mourning homes, roads, and the graves we cannot reach because of the snow.

Kgosi Gao Monnathebe asked AYIL to enlarge the tent. To me, that means making room for hard questions. So I am asking mine, publicly.

We are Basotho. We have read this sky for a thousand years. When the elders say "the sky is wrong," we listen.

The clouds over Thuathe did not lie. Now we must tell the truth about what followed.

Tholang Tseka is currently working on the Maasai Tourism Cultural Festival, scheduled for Arusha, Tanzania, 24–26 June 2026.



Is the construction of the Senqu Bridge considered development?

Theko Tlebere

Being a National Development scholar myself, I have learned to closely follow development debates on social media and try to look at them from a view that will educate rather than just debate. The inauguration of the Senqu Bridge, a few weeks ago in Mokhotlong, presented us young people of this country a pivotal question: Does the construction of a bridge inherently constitute development? The response is nuanced. A bridge may serve as a substantial catalyst for development, contingent upon its capacity to enhance the quality of life for individuals, broaden economic opportunities, safeguard communities, and yield enduring national benefits beyond the ceremonial aspects of its inauguration. But before I get deeper into our arguments for today, I will first give a detailed scholarly in-context explanation of what development is, and then we can talk about the Senqu Bridge later.

Development is a multidimensional process through which individuals, institutions, and communities enhance human well-being by engaging in and implementing socially responsible decisions. These decisions are intended to improve individuals' life chances without diminishing opportunities for others. Consequently, development transcends mere economic growth, infrastructure expansion, or increased income; it encompasses the intricate interplay of economic, sociological, and ethical dimensions of social change.

From an economic perspective, development emphasises the enhancement of material conditions and access to resources. Sociologically, it entails the transformation of social structures, relationships, and institutions that influence individuals' opportunities. Ethically, it necessitates that these advancements promote public welfare, equity, and accountability. Oberle, Stowers, and Darby (1974) articulate a definition of development as a process wherein a greater number of community members engage in socially responsible decision-making, resulting in an increase in the life chances of certain individuals without compromising those of others.

This definition is significant as it redirects the focus from perceiving development solely as a technical or economic outcome to understanding it as a human and social process, wherein individual behaviour and structural conditions must collaborate to advance both private and collective welfare (Oberle et al., 1974).

Having made that definition, let's turn our focus back to the Senqu Bridge, which transcends the ordinary. That bridge is integral to Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, a significant bilateral initiative between the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa. The bridge spans approximately 825 meters in length and stands approximately 90 meters in height, engineered to maintain road connectivity subsequent to the inundation of existing routes by the Polihali reservoir. It



constitutes a component of the overarching infrastructure associated with the Polihali Dam and the transference of water from Lesotho to South Africa.

In a limited but broad context, the Senqu Bridge qualifies as development. It represents physical infrastructure that enhances connectivity, facilitating the transit of individuals, goods, services, emergency vehicles, construction materials, and prospective economic activities. For the communities situated in the highlands of Mokhotlong, a dependable crossing is not merely a luxury; it is a prerequisite for access to markets, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, administrative services, and national roadways. Thus, the bridge embodies more than mere concrete and steel; it serves as a conduit through which the state can augment its visibility to remote communities.

Nevertheless, development should not be conflated with mere construction. The efficacy of development must be evaluated by its outcomes rather than the dimensions of the structure itself. A nation may erect formidable infrastructure while its citizens remain impoverished, unemployed, displaced, or excluded from the attendant benefits. Consequently, the Senqu Bridge must be assessed not solely as an engineering feat, but as a significant development intervention.

The most compelling argument for the bridge's developmental value lies in its role within a project capable of generating national revenue. The Lesotho Highlands Water Project enhances Lesotho's status as a supplier of water to the Gauteng province of South Africa, specifically to Johannesburg. Recent reports indicate that the project is anticipated to elevate Lesotho's water exports from approximately 780 million cubic meters annually to over 1.27 billion cubic meters annually upon the completion of Phase II. For a small, landlocked economy with limited industrial capacity, revenue derived from water royalties and the associated infrastructure presents a crucial avenue for development financing.

This consideration is of paramount

importance. Lesotho has historically grappled with issues of unemployment, poverty, fiscal constraints, inadequate industrial diversification, and significant reliance on external income sources. Should water revenue be transparently managed and allocated towards health, education, agriculture, rural infrastructure, energy, and productive sectors, then the Senqu Bridge would become a component of a comprehensive national development strategy. Conversely, if such revenues are misappropriated for recurrent expenditures, elite contracts, ineffective procurement processes, and political favouritism, then the bridge may devolve into a symbol of squandered potential.

There is another aspect that should not be ignored while talking about the Senqu Bridge: the employment aspect is equally significant. Reports indicate that the construction of the bridge resulted in the creation of approximately 1,200 jobs, primarily for residents of Lesotho. This is particularly noteworthy in a nation where employment opportunities are limited. However, temporary employment during construction is insufficient. Genuine development necessitates skills transfer; local subcontracting, engineering training, maintenance capabilities, and sustained employment associated with the infrastructure corridor. A bridge that provides temporary jobs for Basotho is beneficial; a bridge that cultivates Basotho's technical expertise over an extended period constitutes true development.

The bridge also embodies regional developmental implications. It illustrates that Lesotho is not merely a small nation encircled by South Africa, but rather a strategic ally in regional water security. The South African government has characterised the project as a facet of longstanding bilateral cooperation within the framework of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. This positioning affords Lesotho leverage, contingent upon its judicious application. Water represents a strategic resource; Lesotho must not perceive it solely as a raw export commodity. Instead, it

should engage in water diplomacy to negotiate enhanced infrastructure, energy security, training opportunities, market access, and investment in affected communities.

However, the critical elements of this discourse must not be overlooked. The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) has acknowledged that Phase II necessitates land acquisition from local communities, with approximately 5,000 hectares of land projected to be submerged by the Polihali Dam and reservoir within the Senqu and Khubelu river valleys. This underscores that development incurs costs. Certain households will be compelled to relinquish land, grazing territories, agricultural fields, cultural sites, or established ways of life. Should compensation be delayed, insufficient, or ineffectively administered, the project that is lauded nationally may be perceived locally as a source of loss.

It is critical that villagers from the affected areas learn about the project at the transparency exhibition. A bridge may facilitate connections while simultaneously severing individuals from their land. It may generate national revenue while imposing local sacrifices. It may bolster South Africa's water security while leaving affected Basotho to ponder in thirst and hunger: What, precisely, have we gained? Thus, development must encompass compensation, resettlement justice, livelihood restoration, local procurement, social services, and ongoing consultation with impacted communities.

The Senqu Bridge should also be evaluated in terms of maintenance. Numerous African governments celebrate new infrastructure, but frequently neglect maintenance funding. A bridge constitutes development only if it remains safe, functional, and integrated into a viable transportation system. The thinking should already be directed towards roads deteriorating, maintenance budgets proving inadequate, or local communities being unable to afford transportation costs; the developmental value diminishes. Infrastructure is not established solely on inauguration day; it is sustained through ongoing governance.

Therefore, is the Senqu Bridge indeed a development? Yes, but conditionally. It constitutes development if it enhances mobility, safeguards highland connectivity, supports water revenue, creates local opportunities, strengthens regional cooperation, and leaves affected communities in an improved state. It does not constitute development if it devolves into a mere monument for political figures, a conduit for water exports, or a project whose advantages are national and regional while its burdens are localised.

For the Kingdom of Lesotho, the pertinent inquiry is not merely whether the Senqu Bridge is aesthetically pleasing, costly, or technically remarkable. The essential question is whether a child in Mokhotlong, a farmer in the Polihali region, a small trader, a nurse, a teacher, or a taxi operator will perceive the bridge as a tangible enhancement in their daily existence. If the response is affirmative, then the bridge is a development. If the response is negative, then it is merely infrastructure.

For me, I see the Senqu Bridge as an inception rather than a conclusion. It presents Lesotho with a rare opportunity to convert geographic challenges into development financing, transform water into negotiating leverage, and facilitate social transformation through infrastructure. However, this endeavour will necessitate accountable governance. The bridge has been constructed. The true test of development commences now. The future is NOW!



Lesotho Football Association (LeFA)

PRE-QUALIFICATION OF SUPPLIERS OF GOODS AND SERVICES

REFERENCE NUMBER: LFA/PR/002 – Suppliers to supply goods/Render services at LeFA

Date of Issue: 11th May,2026

Lesotho Football Association is a national association with perpetual succession formed with the vision of developing, promoting football in Lesotho, with the objective of turning the dreams and aspirations of the entire Lesotho society into a reality. Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) is registered under number 94/68 in the societies register, Maseru, under Societies Act 1966. LeFA is mandated to organize, administer, develop and control the game of football consistent with Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) rules and regulations in a manner that will continuously improve the standard of football in the country and enhance competitiveness of Lesotho Football while at the same time providing wholesome entertainment to Basotho.

The purpose of this exercise is, therefore, is to competitively identify suppliers to be included in a pre-qualified list of providing goods and services to LeFA offices in all the ten districts for a period of twelve months from the date of signing the contract. Pre-qualified suppliers are invited to submit bids as appropriate, and whenever necessary; LeFA might enter into a long-term Framework Agreement for the supply of routine services. This exercise and subsequent tendering processes shall be subject to the LeFA Procurement regulations. The Secretary General, on behalf of the association, invites interested eligible dealers to be considered for pre-qualification for categories stated below;

CATERGORY	LOT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
Goods	LFA/001	General Office supplies and Consumables
Goods	LFA/002	Sanitary Products and cleaning Materials
Goods	LFA/003	General Football Wear and equipment
Goods	LFA/004	Protective wear and safety equipment
Goods	LFA/005	Cleaning Material and office sundries
Goods	LFA/006	Motor Vehicle Tyres & spare parts
Goods	LFA/007	ICT Equipment, supplies, accessories, LAN, WAN Network Services, IT services, ICT Hardware Maintenance & Service.
Goods	LFA/008	General Hardware, Plumbing & Electrical Items
Goods	LFA/009	Office Furniture, equipment & Related Items
Goods	LFA/010	Air conditioners and Supply of Maintenance
Services	LFA/011	Printing Services, Promotional Materials and Signage.
Services	LFA/012	Motor Vehicle Service and maintenance
Services	LFA/013	Conference Packages & Accommodation for all district in Lesotho
Services	LFA/014	Logistics; buses, taxis,4*4 Motor vehicles, luxury cars and sedans
Services	LFA/015	Air Tickets and Travel Management Services

Services	LFA/016	Legal Services
Services	LFA/017	Security Services
Services	LFA/018	Branding of Vehicles and other Office Equipment
Services	LFA/019	HR and staff support Consultancies
Services	LFA/020	Laundry and Cleaning Services
Services	LFA/021	Market Services (Full House Marketing and advertising agency, strategy formulation and execution, market research and others
Services	LFA/022	Media (Production of print, social media, media production – editorial content, videography & photography
Services	LFA/023	Catering Services
Services	LFA/024	Land scaping and surroundings cleaning services
Services	LFA/025	Fashion Design, tailoring and dress-making services

Pre-Qualification Criteria

All suppliers wishing to be considered for Pre-qualification should include the following requirements in their proposals. This will be assessed in a pass or fail basis. All bidders should include a checklist indicating inclusion of the requirements listed below in chronological order.

- Business profile including contact address and details of key staff and ultimate beneficiaries.
- Business registration certificate/Traders License
- Tax Clearance certificate
- List of current customers to the business with their contact details and at least written reference from three reputable organizations.
- Physical address and other contact details (postal, physical email and phone)
- Other information to back up the application

Sealed proposals clearly marked "Pre – Qualification of Suppliers for goods and Services" Quoting the Reference Number and Lot Number being applied for, **should be delivered before 14:00 hrs** on the 29th May 2026 to the addresses below;

For further information, contact the Secretary General on phone number +266 63118118

The Secretary General

Lesotho Football Association
Bambatha Ts'ita Sports Arena
Old Polo Ground
Maseru

District Administration Officers

All DiFA Offices (But DiFA Maseru)

NB: Electronic and late submissions will be rejected.



Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

WaMCoP
P.O. Box 24
Maseru 100



General Procurement Notice

Government of: Lesotho
Project/procuring entity: Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project
GPN version: 2026.2
GPN publication date: May 11, 2026

The Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project has received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) towards the cost of Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project and intends to apply part of the financing to payments for contracts for goods, works and services. The procurement program for the 04/2026 - 03/2027-year period will include the following:

Procurements for 04/2026 - 03/2027	
Estimated value - 3,883,082.63 EUR / 75,981,500.00 LSL / 4,479,161.46 USD	
Procurement of Goods, to include:	
1)	Promotional Material
2)	Communication material
3)	Generator and Extension Cord
4)	Mobile Kraals
5)	Feeders and Drinkers
6)	Aprons and Overalls
7)	Additional AI Equipment
8)	Liquid Nitrogen Plan
9)	Semen for AI Program
10)	Fodder seeds
11)	Silage Making Equipment
12)	Concentrates
13)	IEC Material
14)	Animal ear tags
15)	Promotional Attire
16)	Protective clothing for Auctioneering team and CAHWs
17)	Vet Kits and drugs
18)	Video Editing softwares
19)	Corporate Identity Materials
20)	Meeting Amplifier

21)	Tender Box and Trolley
22)	Zippel
23)	Protective Clothing for PCU
24)	Laptops
25)	ICT Equipment
Procurement of Consulting Services, to include:	
1)	Certification of Wool and Mohair Consultancy
2)	SECAP Risk Management Consultancy
3)	EIA Consultancy
4)	Asset Valuation Consultancy
5)	AI Service Provider
6)	Fodder Demo and Silage Making Consultant
7)	Productive Alliance Consultancy
8)	Gender Mainstreaming Strategy Consultancy
9)	MIS and Website Development
10)	Corporate Identity
11)	Valuation of Physical Assets
Procurement of Works, to include:	
1)	Rehabilitation of Bucks and Does Structures
2)	Construction of the NDL
3)	Parkhome

Contracts for goods, works and services will be implemented according to the principles, rules and procedures set out in the current versions of the IFAD Project Procurement Guidelines and IFAD Procurement Handbook. Specific procurement notices for contracts to be tendered under the competitive bidding procedures will be announced as they become available on selected portals, in local newspapers, and other media outlets as appropriate.

Interested eligible bidders and consultants who wish to be included on the mailing list to receive a copy of advertisements, or those requiring additional information, should send an email to the Moroosi Lejota Thakong (procurement@wamcop.org.ls) using the subject line "GPN 2026.2 for Wool and Mohair Value Chain Competitiveness Project" and indicating which of the procurement items they are interested in. **Valid trading licenses must be attached.**



Kingdom of Lesotho

POSITION ADVERTISEMENT

The Ministry of Health has received support from Center for Disease Control (CDC) under the project title "Strengthening Ministry of Health's Capacity (MOH-Cap) for HIV Diagnosis, Treatment and Monitoring in the Kingdom of Lesotho". The Ministry is looking for suitable candidate for the position of **Procurement Officer**

Position title: Procurement Officer
Program: Ministry of Health – CDC Cooperative Agreement
Duty station: Ministry of Health Headquarters – Procurement Unit
Level of effort: Full-time
Duration: Four months; renewable subject to performance and availability of funding
Reporting to: The Officer will report functionally to the Procurement Manager and operationally to the Project Coordinator.

Background:
 A procurement officer is responsible for the acquisition of goods, services, or materials, ensuring cost-efficiency, quality, and compliance. Key duties include identifying supplier sources, negotiating contracts, managing vendor relationships, maintaining inventory records, and ensuring all purchasing processes comply with Donor's procurement rules and the Government of Lesotho's policies and regulations. Work closely with other Procurement unit staff to carry out day-to-day procurement duties.

JOB SUMMARY

To reinforce the Procurement Unit of the Ministry of Health in discharging its duties in accordance with the Donor's procurement rules and the Government of Lesotho regulations.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Liaise with the program managers to establish the requirements in relation to procurement.
- Assist program manager in preparing the specifications and selection criteria for the goods needed.
- Prepare Request for Quotations (RFQs) clearly indicating the specifications & the quantities of the goods required as well as expected delivery schedules.
- Solicit quotations from suppliers in connection with international and/or national shopping methods of procurement.
- Lead the evaluation process of the received quotations for selecting the appropriate supplier.
- Prepare purchase orders to commence contractual relationship with the selected supplier.
- Draft contract conditions in consultation with the Procurement Manager to ensure that the Employer/Client are adequately catered for before entering into a contract with any supplier.
- Inspect the goods delivered in consultation with the beneficiary program manager to ensure that the supplier has satisfied his contractual obligations and goods delivered are in accordance with the agreed specifications.
- Review invoices submitted by the suppliers and ensure that the contractual terms and conditions are met and recommend them for payment to the authorities accordingly.
- Prepare and issue Acceptance Certificates to the suppliers in relation to the delivered and accepted goods.
- Prepare bidding documents in accordance with the agreed procedures between the Government of Lesotho and Donor Agencies for procurement of goods using National

Competitive Bidding and/or International Competitive Bidding methods.

- Assist program managers to prepare sound Terms of References (TORs) matching the selection criteria.
- Prepare Request for Proposals (RFPs) for consulting services ensuring that the documents are detailed enough to enable the prospective consultants to prepare their proposals on the same footing.
- Lead the evaluation process and prepare evaluation reports to be forwarded to the Tender Panel and the Donor Agencies for approval.
- Compile contract documents for signing by the Employer and the selected supplier/contractor.
- Safe-keep all the documents leading to the award of contract and as well as the signed contract for the purpose of post review and auditing.
- Update the purchase order register and contract registers to ensure that all the necessary information is properly recorded.
- Record all the information regarding the vendors providing the goods normally procured under the Ministry of Health.

Qualifications and Experience:

Bachelor's degree: Preferred in Business Management/ Administration, Finance, Accounting and Logistics, along with strong negotiation and analytical skills, plus a minimum of two (2) years' working experience in Procurement. A Professional Diploma in Supply Chain Management (CIPS Level 6) will be an added advantage.

- Experience in donor funded projects will be an advantage.

Required skills:

- Proficiency in Microsoft office suite packages,
- Hard working and ability to work under pressure to meet strict deadlines,
- Good communication skills,
- Has integrity and upholds highest ethical standards.

Duration and Remuneration:

This position is performance based and is for four (4) months period, with a possibility of an extension based on performance and availability of funding.
 The salary for this position is market related, but will also be commensurate with requisite qualifications and experience.

How to Apply

Written applications, CVs and certified copies of educational certificates should be hand delivered to: **Ministry of Health Headquarters, 3rd Floor, Corner Constitution and Linare Road**, to the attention of: **Human Resources & Administration Officer**, Ministry of Health Headquarters, 3rd Floor, Corner Constitution and Linare Road, P.O. Box 514, Maseru. 100. For more information Contact number: (+266) 63969777 or Email: malisebo.lesitsi@gov.ls

Closing Date for the applications is Friday the 22nd May 2026 at 12:00 noon

ONLY HAND DELIVERED APPLICATIONS SHALL BE CONSIDERED.



Specific Procurement Notice

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

EXTENDED SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTOR FOR SEAKA (LOT 1) AND TSIKOANE (LOT 2) IRRIGATION SCHEME

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-524103-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."

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.*
4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from SADP II, e-mail: 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 .
5. 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.

DEADLINE EXTENSION

6. Bids must be delivered to the address at the end of this RFB on or before 1400 hours on **5th June 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 5th June 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
7. All Bids must be accompanied by the following:
 - (i) **Bid Security of LSL 300,000.00 for Seaka (Lot 1) and / Bid Security of LSL 260,000.00 for Tsikoane (Lot 2)** and
 - (ii) Local Labor Method Statement for both lots.
8. 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.

9. 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
 web site address: Procurement - SADP II or <https://www.sadpii.org.ls/procurement/>

1. 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."
2. 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"
3. 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.
4. If electronic procurement will be used, insert link or web site address and any additional relevant information, as appropriate
5. The office for inquiry and issuance of Bidding document and that for Bid submission may or may not be the same.
6. Substitute the address for Bid submission if it is different from address for inquiry and issuance of Bidding document.



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,"

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.*
4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from SADP II, e-mail: 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 .
5. 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.

6. 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
 7. All Bids must be accompanied by the following:
 - (i) **Bid Security of LSL 300,000.00 for Seaka (Lot 1) and / Bid Security of LSL 260,000.00 for Tsikoane (Lot 2)** and
 - (ii) Local Labor Method Statement for both lots.
 8. 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.
 9. 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
 web site address: Procurement - SADP II or <https://www.sadpii.org.ls/procurement/>

1. 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."
2. 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"
3. 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.
4. If electronic procurement will be used, insert link or web site address and any additional relevant information, as appropriate
5. The office for inquiry and issuance of Bidding document and that for Bid submission may or may not be the same.
6. Substitute the address for Bid submission if it is different from address for inquiry and issuance of Bidding document.


DIRECTORATE ON CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC OFFENCES
ADVERTISEMENT FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) TO REGISTER ON THE SUPPLIER DATABASE FOR COMMONLY USED GOODS, WORKS AND SERVICES

The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) invites interested, reputable and qualified suppliers, service providers and contractors to submit profiles for registration on its Supplier Database for commonly used goods, works and services.

The database will be used for sourcing quotations and procurement opportunities in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Public Procurement Act, 2023 and relevant procurement regulations.

Interested suppliers may apply for registration under one or more of the following categories:

GOODS

1. Stationery and Office Supplies
2. ICT Equipment, Accessories and Consumables
3. Computers, Laptops, Printers and Peripherals
4. Software, Licenses and Related ICT Solutions
5. Furniture and Office Equipment
6. Protective Clothing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
7. Cleaning Materials and Consumables
8. Electrical Materials and Hardware Supplies
9. Plumbing Materials and Supplies
10. Building Materials and General Hardware
11. Toners, Cartridges and Printer Supplies
12. Trophies, Awards and Promotional Gifts
13. Signboards, Billboards and Safety Signage
14. Corporate Wear, Uniforms and Branded Apparel
15. Groceries and Refreshments
16. First Aid Kits
17. Gardening Supplies

SERVICES

18. Catering Services
19. Cleaning of Buildings and Cleaning Services
20. Fumigation and Pest Control Services
21. Maintenance of Public Assets and Facilities
22. Electrical Installation and Maintenance Services
23. Plumbing and Sanitation Services
24. Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Services
25. Vehicle Repairs, Maintenance and Servicing
26. Tyre Supply, Fitting, Wheel Alignment and Balancing Services
27. Panel Beating, Auto Electrical and Spray-Painting Services
28. Printing, Branding and Graphic Design Services
29. Photography, Videography and Media Services
30. Event Management Services
31. Public Address (PA) System Hire Services
32. DJs, Musicians and Entertainment Services
33. Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital Transformation and ICT Consultancy Services
34. Website Development, Hosting and Maintenance Services
35. Cybersecurity and Network Support Services
36. Courier and Delivery Services

37. Security Guarding and Alarm Monitoring Services
38. Waste Collection and Disposal Services
39. Landscaping and Gardening Services
40. Travel Agency and Air Ticketing Services
41. Consultancy and Training Services
42. Legal Services
43. Audit and Accounting Services
44. Recruitment and Human Resource Consultancy Services

VEHICLE HIRE

45. Short-Term Hire of 4x4 SUVs (from 2016 model with less than 120,000 km mileage)
46. Short-Term Hire of 4x4 Double Cab Vehicles (from 2016 model with less than 120,000 km mileage)
47. Short-Term Hire of 4x4 Single Cab Vehicles (from 2016 model with less than 120,000 km mileage)
48. Short-Term Hire of Lowbed Trucks and Heavy-Duty Vehicles
49. Bus and Passenger Transport Hire Services

WORKS

50. Minor Building Construction and Renovation Works
 51. Welding and Fabrication Services
 52. Carpentry and Joinery Services
 53. Painting and Decoration Services
- Any Other Relevant Goods, Works or Services
- The DCEO reserves the right to consider profiles for additional categories of goods, works or services not expressly listed in this advertisement where suppliers demonstrate relevance to the operations of the institution.

Interested applicants should submit the following documents:

- Company profile;
- Certified copy of certificate of incorporation/company registration;
- Valid trader's license;
- Valid tax clearance certificate;
- IBR number
- References for similar work undertaken (Agency, Date, Cost, Contact person and phone numbers); and
- Any other relevant supporting documentation.

Suppliers already registered with the DCEO are encouraged to re-apply to update their records.

Completed applications and supporting documents must be submitted via email to: procurement@dceo.org.ls with the following subject:

"APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION ON THE SUPPLIER DATABASE" on or before **5th June 2026 at 12:00 noon**.

Late submissions will not be accepted for the purpose of this exercise.

For enquiries:

Tel: (+266) 2221 9200

Email: mathias@dceo.org.ls

Attention: Tsele Mathias (Mr.)


NATIONAL DRUG SERVICE ORGANISATION

P.O. Box 1167
Mafeteng 900
Lesotho
Tel: (+266) 2270 0232
Fax: (+266) 2270 1340

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI)

NDSO DISTRIBUTION OF SUPER CEREAL 2026
NDSO/VEHICLEHIRE/2026/05

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Drug Service Organisation (NDSO) is a Government of Lesotho Trading Account established under Legal Notice "Supplement No. 4 to Gazette No. 19 of 2nd March 2007". NDSO operates as the Central Medical Stores for the Ministry of Health and is mandated to procure, store, and distribute health sector goods to health facilities across the country.

As part of its distribution mandate, NDSO has received large consignments of Super Cereal intended for distribution to health facilities nationwide.

NDSO hereby invites eligible and suitably qualified vehicle owners/operators to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the provision of transport services for the last mile distribution of Super Cereal within 10 districts of Lesotho. The vehicles will be contracted under a one year Framework Contract arrangement, whereby services will be utilised only when a need arises during the contract period. The contract is expected to start on 01st June 2026.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Successful applicants will be required to provide delivery vans for the distribution of Super Cereal from district distribution points to health facilities across that particular district.

NDSO will transport goods from its central warehouse in Mafeteng to the districts using its own fleet. Contracted service providers will then be responsible for final delivery within the district.

Each district will require approximately **3 to 10 vehicles**, depending on operational requirements.

3. REQUIRED VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS

Interested applicants must provide the following vehicle types:

- Single Cab 4x4 Van Vehicles
- Single Cab 4x2 Van Vehicles

4. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must submit the following:

1. Certified copy of vehicle owner's national ID
2. Valid Motor Vehicle Licence (up to date)
3. Valid B Permit (Goods Carrying Permit)
4. Valid Certificate of Fitness (roadworthy)
5. Valid Driving Licence for the driver
6. All vehicles must be fully roadworthy and compliant with traffic regulations

5. VEHICLE EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

All vehicles must be fitted with:

- Canopy (water and dust resistant)

- Valid first aid kit
- Good condition tyres
- Operational tools including:
 - ▶ Wheel spanner
 - ▶ Functional jack
 - ▶ At least two warning triangles
 - ▶ Serviceable spare wheel

6. PAYMENT TERMS

Service providers will be remunerated in accordance with the prevailing **Government of Lesotho** transport rates as issued by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. Payments will be processed within ten (10) working days after submission and verification of completed delivery documentation.

The preferred method of payment shall be **EFT** or any other approved government payment mechanism.

7. SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Interested vehicle owners/operators are invited to submit their Expressions of Interest clearly marked:

"EOI: VEHICLE HIRE 2026"

All submissions and request for clarifications must be sent to the Procurement Manager at:

tenders@ndso.org.ls

The District where the vehicle is based should be mentioned in the email.

8. CLOSING DATE

The deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest is:

22 May 2026 at 12:00 noon

Late submissions will not be considered.

9. SELECTION PROCESS

This REOI is not a contract award but a prequalification exercise. Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

NDSO will evaluate submissions based on compliance with mandatory requirements, vehicle suitability, and operational capacity per district needs.

The comprehensive evaluation and assessment score sheet is available at NDSO website at www.ndso.org.ls and shall also be obtainable by sending an email to tenders@ndso.org.ls.

10. VEHICLE INSPECTION AND SHORTLISTING

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for vehicle viewing and assessment at respective district locations, on dates and venues that will be formally communicated by NDSO. An assessment will be conducted to select vehicles that best meet the required specifications and operational needs.

11. DISCLAIMER

NDSO reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Expressions of Interest, either in whole or in part.


THE WORLD BANK
Specific Procurement Notice
**Request for Bids
Goods
(One-Envelope Bidding Process)**

Country: Kingdom of Lesotho

Name of Project: Public Sector Foundations for Service Delivery Project (P174171)

Contract Title: Supply and Delivery of Office Furniture and Equipment for Lesotho Public Procurement Authority

Loan No.: 07492-LS

FB Reference No.: LS-MOFDP-436382-GO-RFB

Publication date: April 02, 2026 (Extended)

1. The Kingdom of Lesotho has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the **Lesotho Public Sector Foundations for Service Delivery Project** and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for **Supply and Delivery of Office Furniture And Equipment For Lesotho Public Procurement Authority** "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, except for those payments, which the contract provides to be made through letter of credit."
2. The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Supply and Delivery of the following Office Furniture and Equipment:**

Items	Quantity
Lot I	
Director General	
Presidential Desk	1
Presidential Chair	1
Cabinetry	
a) Server	1
b) Wall Unit with hinged glass doors	2
c) Wall Unit with hinged solid doors	2

Conference Table	1
Conference Chairs	6
Coat Hanger	1
Visitors Chairs	2
Directors	
Executive Desk	5
Executive Chair	5
Storage Cabinetry	5
4 Seater Round Conference Table	5
Conference chairs	20
Coat Hanger	5
Visitors Chair	10
Managers	
Executive Desk	5
Executive Chair	5
Storage Cabinetry	5
Coat Hanger	5
Visitors Chair	10
Staff	
4-Way Cluster Desk	5
High Back Chair	20
Cabinetry	5
Lot II	
Conference Room	
Conference room Table	1
Conference Room Chair	22

3. Bidding will be conducted through national competitive procurement using a Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank's "Procurement

Regulations for IPF Borrowers" September 2023 ("Procurement Regulations") and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Regulations.

4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Contact Kamohelo Nthafa at kamohelo.nthafa@gov.ls; copy 'Mamaseko Lefothane' at mamaseko.lefothane@gov.ls and inspect the bidding document during office hours from **0900 to 1600 hours** at the address provided below.
5. The bidding document in **English** may be purchased by interested Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **M2000.00**. The method of payment is cash and will be receipted by the Financial Management Specialist at Planning Office No. 263, Second Floor.
6. The document will be shared by email or collected in hard copy from the Project Administrator's Office, Finance House, First Floor, Office no: 1002. from **0800hrs to 1600hrs**.
7. Bids must be delivered in **hard copies (1 original and 5 hard copies)** to the address below on or before **May 26, 2026. at 2:00 pm (SAST)**. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address below.
8. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of **Ten-Thousand Maloti (M10,000.00)**.
9. 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.
10. The address referred to above is:

Public Sector Foundations for Service Delivery Project
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning Tender Box
Finance House, Third Floor
E-mail: kamohelo.nthafa@gov.ls
Tel: +266 2231 6730



Kingdom of Lesotho
Lesotho Public Procurement Authority
5th Floor, Right Wing Post Office Building
Kingsway Road

Standard Invitation to Bidders
BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN COMPETITIVE TENDERING

8th May 2026

Provision of Cleaning Services - LPPA/NCS/L0001

- The Lesotho Public Procurement Authority (LPPA) has received funds from the Government to be used for the acquisition of **Cleaning Services at Corporate Offices of the LPPA**.
- The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above non consultancy services.
- Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open **National Competitive bidding** procedures contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all eligible bidders.
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 8(a) from **0830 Hrs – 1630 Hrs**
- The Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below at 8(b) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **LsL 500.00**.
- Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before **1015 Hrs 19th June 2026 All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 1 % bid price Bid must be valid until 15th May 2026**. Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 8(d) at **1030 Hrs 19th June 2026**
- There shall be a pre – bid meeting/ site visit at **LPPA Corporate Offices** on the dates indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.
- (a) Documents may be inspected at: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
(b) Documents will be issued from: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
(c) Bids must be delivered to: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
(d) Address of Bid Opening: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**

9. The planned procurement schedule (subject to changes) is as follows:

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	8th May 2026
b. Pre-bid meeting/ Site visits where applicable	15th May 2026
c. Request for Clarifications	11th June 2026
d. Bid closing date	19th June 2026
e. Evaluation process	3rd July 2026
f. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	6th July 2026
g. Contract Signature	21st July 2026

Lebekoane Ntoi
Director General



Kingdom of Lesotho
Lesotho Public Procurement Authority
5th Floor, Right Wing Post Office Building
Kingsway Road

Standard Invitation to Bidders
BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN COMPETITIVE TENDERING

8th May 2026

Provision of Security Services - LPPA/NCS/L0002

- The Lesotho Public Procurement Authority (LPPA) has received funds from the Government to be used for the acquisition of **Security Services at Corporate Offices of the LPPA**.
- The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above non consultancy services.
- Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open **National Competitive bidding** procedures contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all eligible bidders.
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 8(a) from **0830 Hrs – 1630 Hrs**
- The Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below at 8(b) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **LsL 500.00**.
- Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before **1515 Hrs 19th June 2026 All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 1 % bid price Bid must be valid until 15th May 2026**. Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 8(d) at **1530 Hrs 19th June 2026**
- There shall be a pre – bid meeting/ site visit at **LPPA Corporate Offices** on the dates indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.
- (a) Documents may be inspected at: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
(b) Documents will be issued from: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
(c) Bids must be delivered to: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
(d) Address of Bid Opening: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**

9. The planned procurement schedule (subject to changes) is as follows:

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	8th May 2026
b. Pre-bid meeting/ Site visits where applicable	15th May 2026
c. Request for Clarifications	11th June 2026
d. Bid closing date	19th June 2026
e. Evaluation process	3rd July 2026
f. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	6th July 2026
g. Contract Signature	21st July 2026

Lebekoane Ntoi
Director General



CORRIGENDUM/ EXTENSION TO THE BID SUBMISSION DEADLINE.

04th May 2026

Dear Bidders,

We hereby notify you of an extension to the bid submission date for the following bidding process:

Bid Number:	ADF/e-Gov/G/013
Subject of Procurement:	Supply, Delivery and installation of Digital Studio equipment at Makoanyane Square Studio.
Original Submission Dead-line:	07 May 2026 at 10:00 hrs.
Revised Submission Dead-line:	18 May 2026 at 10:00 hrs.
Revised Public Opening date and time:	18 May 2026 at 10:05 hrs.
Submission address:	Ministry of Information Communications, Science Technology and Innovation, Level 3 Moposo Building and Deposited in the Tender Box at reception area on or before 18th May 2026 at 10:00 hrs. Elec-tronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened the same day at 10:05 hrs, in the presence of Bidder's designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend

Yours sincerely

Kori Lenyatsa (Mr.)
Project Coordinator



Kingdom of Lesotho

REQUEST TO SUBMIT BUSINESS PROFILES

The Ministry of Health (MoH) invites suitably qualified Basotho individuals and companies to submit businesses profiles for the provision of vehicle hire services to support operations across districts in Lesotho. This will form a database of the vehicles that will be used by the Ministry of Health when in need.

The ministry now intends to call upon all relevant transport service who are suitable and eligible to provide transport services under the transport models and criteria that will be stated hereunder:

Transport service providers should:

- ▶ Submit Company profile in hard copy format
- ▶ Submit Valid Company business trading documents (traders' licence, tax clearance, certificate of incorporation and VAT certificate where applicable)
- ▶ in hard copy format
- ▶ Valid roadworthy certificate (VAT11)
- ▶ Valid vehicle insurance that includes the third party
- ▶ Mileage: Not above 100,000 km/h
- ▶ **Vehicle Type: 4x4 Double Cab**

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours [08h00 to 16h30 local time].

The Procurement Manager
Health Headquarters, Ground Floor, Left Wing
Ministry of Health
P.O.Box 514,
Constitution Road
Maseru 100, Lesotho.

All the documents must be submitted to;

The Procurement Unit
Health Headquarters, Ground Floor, Left Wing
Ministry of Health
P.O.Box 514,
Constitution Road
Maseru 100, Lesotho.

Submission Details:

Closing Date: 22 May 2026 at 12:00 noon (Lesotho time)
Submission Method: Hand delivery only

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY- HEALTH



Fees	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months
------	----------	----------	-----------

Subscription	M 72.00	M 156.00	M 312.00
---------------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------

Delivery	M 60.00
-----------------	----------------

Names:..... **Email:**..... **No. Of Copies:**.....
Address:..... **Start date:**...../...../..... **Expiry:**...../...../
Tel:..... **Cell:**..... **Signature:**.....

Payment Method	Newsday Media PTY LTD
----------------	-----------------------

Cash	Bank Deposit	Merchant
	Standard Lesotho Bank Acc#: 9080001310220	EcoCash 92669 3551

**More to share
with our tasty treats**

Select something delicious with our iconic Champion Toffees, Manhattan, Mister Sweet, Super C Sweets, and Candy Tops Eclairs. Packed full of flavour and perfect value for money.



THE ORIGINAL
CHAMPION
The BIG taste that lasts

Candy Tops Making life sweeter
ECLAIRS



mister sweet
MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE



MANHATTAN
The taste of FUN



SuperC
The original energy sweet.





Rorisang Motsamai: Building a legacy beyond gospel music

Chris Theko

In a country where many musicians still struggle for visibility, recognition, and industry support, gospel artist and entrepreneur Rorisang Motsamai is determined to help reshape the future of Lesotho's music and creative industry.

Widely respected as one of Lesotho's sought-after gospel music exports, Motsamai has spent years building his name through inspirational music, live performances, and a consistent commitment to the gospel genre.

However, beyond the microphone and recording studio lies a bigger vision, one focused on building sustainable platforms for artists and professionalising the local music space.

That vision gave birth to Melodious Music, a creative venture he co-founded alongside fellow gospel sensation Tšepo Kherenchane. Together, the pair has emerged as influential figures working to elevate and structure the entertainment industry in Lesotho.

"Our focus has always been the growth of the music industry and upgrading the approach of the music world in Lesotho into honoring artists," said Motsamai.

The duo is also the driving force behind the National Music Awards, an initiative launched in 2024 to celebrate artistic excellence across various music genres in Lesotho. The awards have quickly become one of the country's most talked-about entertainment platforms, providing musicians with long-overdue national recognition.

For Motsamai, the awards are not simply about trophies and glamour, but about restoring dignity and value to musicians who dedicate their lives to entertaining and inspiring society.

"My team and I looked into developing a concept that will be for generations, bringing more focus into honoring those who spend sleepless nights composing songs, spending money, going to stages and making music for households," he explained.

Having spent years navigating the realities of the music industry himself, Motsamai says his journey as an artist exposed him to the many gaps that still exist within the sector.

"I gained experience, though it was a tough one, looking into ventures of how musicians can be well appreci-

ated for their craft, which opens more doors locally and internationally," he said.

His partnership with Kherenchane has also proven instrumental in shaping their shared ambitions for the industry. Both artists, deeply rooted in gospel music, continue to use their experiences to guide the direction of Melodious Music and the National Music Awards.

"I strongly believe in the growth that we have as people directly involved in the music industry. I also believe in our dream because most of the time we sit and discuss the vision," said Motsamai.

Despite the progress, challenges remain. He points to the shortage of established record labels in Lesotho and the struggles many independent artists face in distributing and monetising their work.

"One of the most difficult things is that there are few record labels in Lesotho. Most musicians are independent and struggle to distribute their music," he noted.

However, he believes emerging industry structures and collaborations with institutions are beginning to create solutions for local artists. Motsamai highlighted the role of LESCOSAA, which he says is working to support Basotho artists with assistance from the Ministry of Tourism, Sports, Arts and Culture.

While he admits the journey has not been easy, Motsamai remains optimistic about the future.

"I'm slowly getting there, as it's one of the most difficult careers one would choose. But with the favor of God Almighty, I'm coping and winning," he said.

Looking ahead, the gospel artist and entrepreneur hopes his contribution to the industry will inspire future generations of Basotho musicians to dream bigger.

"I'm hoping for bigger things, like being recognized as one of the leading industry leaders taking the music industry to greater heights. I also hope to see young artists achieve their goals as well," he said.



Rorisang Motsamai

Staff Reporters

South African singing sensation Boohle will grace the stage at Maseru Club on 23 May 2026 as the headline act for FNB Lesotho's fourth annual Africa Day celebration, promising an unforgettable live experience for Basotho music lovers.

The Amapiano hit-maker will be joined on stage by some of the top local entertainers including Cityzeen LS, DJ Thizozo, DJ Lym, Mavele & Tash and Manyarela among others.

The event, themed "Africa in Rhythm," will kick off at 11:00, with the "Umthande" hitmaker expected to deliver a setlist packed with the powerful, soulful vocals that have made her one of South Africa's most sought-after vocalists.

Fans can expect an electric atmosphere as Boohle takes the stage, bringing her signature blend of amapiano and deep house sounds that have dominated airwaves across the continent.

The annual FNB Africa Day celebration has in recent years grown into one of Lesotho's most anticipated entertainment and cultural events, attracting thousands of revelers while also providing a major platform for local artists to share the stage with regional stars.

Since its launch four years ago, the event has become synonymous with celebrating African culture, music and unity while giving Basotho audiences access to some of the continent's biggest performers.

Previous editions of the festival have featured a mix of celebrated South African acts and homegrown performers, helping to elevate the local entertainment scene and boost collaboration between artists from Lesotho and neighbouring countries.

The event has also created opportunities for emerging Basotho musicians to gain exposure before larger audiences, with several local acts benefiting from the visibility brought by the annual showcase.

Last year's edition drew large crowds to Maseru Club, with music lovers praising the diversity of performances, the quality of production and the celebration of African identity through music, fashion and dance.

Organisers said this year's installment is expected to be even bigger, with Boohle's booking already generating excitement among amapiano fans across Lesotho.

This marks Boohle's return to Lesotho following her previous performance in the country, where she captivated audiences with her commanding stage presence and vocal prowess. The Soweto-born artist, whose real name is Buhle Manyathi, has built a reputation for delivering emotionally charged performances that leave crowds spellbound.

Over the past few years, Boohle has emerged as one of the defining voices of the amapiano movement, collaborating with some of the genre's biggest names while consistently producing chart-topping hits.

Her rise to stardom has been driven by her distinctive voice and ability to blend emotional storytelling with infectious dance rhythms, making her a favourite among both younger audiences and old-

Boohle headlines FNB Africa Day extravaganza

er music lovers.

Hits that have taken the region by storm

Music enthusiasts attending the FNB Africa Day event can look forward to hearing a catalogue of current hits that have cemented Boohle's status as an amapiano heavyweight.

Her recent smash hit "Shela," a collaboration with Sam Deep and Nia Pearl, continues to dominate playlists across streaming platforms, while the Kabza De Small and Kelvin Momo collaboration "Camagu (Tribute Mix)" featuring Nkosazana Daughter remains a fan favourite.

Other chart-toppers currently in heavy rotation include "uMthande" with DJ Maphorisa and Xduppy, "Hamba Wena" alongside Deep London, and "Bazali" featuring Kelvin Momo and Mick Man.

The vocal powerhouse has also been making waves with "Imiyalo," a collaboration with Semi Tee that dropped in late April, as well as "Pelo Tse Thata" with Pabi Cooper, Focalistic, and DJ Maphorisa.

Boohle's extensive discography includes standout tracks from her ac-

claimed albums, including the 2022 single "Amawaza" featuring Busta 929 and Mpura, as well as "Love Me" and "Mazikhale" from her third studio album "iSlomo," which remains a staple in amapiano sets nationwide.

The inclusion of top local performers alongside Boohle is also expected to give the event a distinctly Basotho flavour.

Artists such as Cityzeen LS and Manyarela continue to command strong local support, while DJs Thizozo and Lym are expected to keep audiences entertained throughout the day with energetic sets blending local sounds and continental hits.

FNB Lesotho has increasingly positioned the Africa Day celebration as more than just a music festival, using it as a platform to promote African unity, creativity and youth empowerment.

Over the years, the bank has expanded its involvement in arts and entertainment initiatives, recognising the creative industry as an important contributor to economic growth and youth employment.

The Africa Day event has also become an important networking platform for

artists, promoters and entertainment stakeholders from across the region.

With amapiano continuing to dominate clubs, festivals and streaming charts across Southern Africa, Boohle's performance is expected to be one of the major entertainment highlights of the year in Lesotho.

Local entertainment observers believe the event further reflects Lesotho's growing appetite for live music experiences featuring regional stars.

In recent years, promoters have increasingly brought internationally recognised artists to the country, with audiences responding posi-

tively to large-scale live performances.

Tickets for the highly anticipated performance are available through multiple channels, including FNB Public Recipient via the FNB App and Online Banking, Ticketbox, and M-Pesa.

Organisers have urged fans to secure their tickets early, as demand is expected to be high for what promises to be a landmark entertainment event in Lesotho's cultural calendar.

With Africa Day falling on 25 May, the FNB celebration on 23 May serves as an early commemoration of the continent's unity and heritage.

The annual observance marks the formation of the Organisation of African Unity, now known as the African Union, and is celebrated across the continent through cultural activities, music festivals and public events promoting African solidarity.

For Basotho amapiano enthusiasts, the chance to witness Boohle's powerhouse vocals live is an opportunity not to be missed. Get ready for explosive vocals, unmatched energy, and an unforgettable live experience as Boohle takes the stage this Africa Day.

Two years inside Lesotho's war on the accordion

Famo did not die. It reinvented.

Kananelo Boloetse

The day the wheeze became a weapon

On 21 May 2024, the government committed an act so audacious in its cultural illiteracy that it will be studied for decades. It did not simply restrict a genre. It attempted to euthanise a living, breathing vernacular.

Citing a cascade of gangland killings linked to rival Famo factions, most notoriously Terene and Seakhi, the state declared twelve Famo music groups "terrorist organisations". Radio and television stations were ordered to scrub every track. The distinctive patchwork attire of Famo devotees became grounds for detention.

And in a clause that sent a shiver through every journalist and academic in the mountain kingdom, even listening to, or reporting on, certain songs was implied to be complicity in criminality.

The accordion was recast overnight as an accessory to murder.

Two years later, the government will tell you there is peace. Fewer funerals. Safer radio. But those who actually listen, who press their ears to the ground of Lesotho's culture, know better. The absence of accordion is not the absence of conflict. It is the absence of testimony. Silence is not peace. It is a pause. And pauses, in the history of suppressed art, are never empty. They are loading chambers.

What the ban refuses to name

The official narrative, repeated by Prime Minister Sam Matekane's administration, is straightforward. Famo music became entangled with gangsterism. The state intervened to save lives. This is not false. It is merely incomplete – a half-truth that functions as a lie.

The full truth is that Famo's fatal turn was not an organic decay. It was a political hijacking. And the current ban is not a neutral public-safety measure. It is the final act of a political class that first weaponised a folk genre, then abandoned it to the violence it helped unleash.

Let us go back.

Dust, diesel and diatonics: the birth of Famo

To understand the ban's brutality, one must first understand what Famo was never meant to be. Famo was born not in a recording studio, but in the suffocating hostels of 1920s Witwatersrand, places of single-sex confinement, homesickness and diesel fumes.

Migrant workers from Lesotho brought their mohobelo dance steps and their mouth organs. By the 1930s, the diatonic accordion had become the genre's spine. This was music for the man who had walked ten days to a gold mine, for the man who had not seen his daughter in a year. It was gossip set to rhythm. It was grievance harmonised. It was, in the truest sense, folk music: of the dispossessed, by the dispossessed, for the dispossessed.

The lyrics could be tender – praise songs for cattle, laments for eroded grazing lands. They could also be vicious – satirical takedowns of rival chiefs or unfaithful lovers. But for most of the 20th century, that viciousness remained verbal. Famo's weapon was the diss track, not



Renowned famo musician Lehlohonolo Maketsi, widely recognised by his stage name *Mahlanya* and a prominent figure within the *Seakhi* group.

the knife.

The curdling: when diss tracks became death warrants

Something shifted in the 2000s. As Lesotho's post-independence political instability deepened – coups, attempted coups, a revolving door of coalition governments – Famo's factionalism began to mirror the nation's pathology.

The rival groups Terene and Seakhi evolved from musical collectives into semi-organised militias, their loyalty signalled by specific accordion licks and fabric patterns. Control over mining royalties, taxi routes and even funeral societies became entangled with which Famo group you flew. Killings escalated. By 2024, artists, broadcasters and innocent civilians had been caught in the crossfire.

The Matekane government, led by a businessman turned politician, chose the sledgehammer. In his defence, the violence was real. But the response was a textbook case of treating a fever by smashing the thermometer.

The chilling effect: two years of creative atrophy

The legacy of the ban, two years on, is not peace. It is a profound, creeping necrosis of Lesotho's artistic ecosystem.

The silence of the studios: Dozens of career accordionists have not recorded a note in twenty-four months. Some have fled to South Africa. Others have simply stopped – not because they fear arrest, but because the soil of their art has been poisoned by suspicion. How do you write a love song when your neighbour eyes your accordion case as a potential gun holster?

The underground samizdat: As with Sovi-

et-era dissidents or censored hip-hop in Iran, Famo has gone underground. New tracks circulate on WhatsApp groups and side-loaded memory sticks. The quality is raw, the distribution precarious. It is contraband. And like all contraband, it is now more mythologised – and more dangerous – than it ever was on the radio.

The economic devastation: Lesotho's creative economy was fragile before the ban. Famo's live events have evaporated. Piracy, already rampant, became the only distribution model. Some young musicians have traded accordions for shovels and returned to the very migrant labour their grandfathers sang about.

The mirror and the mallet

This is the perennial tragedy of art under siege. Music does not create violence in a vacuum. It reflects. It refracts. It amplifies the fractures that already exist, poverty, political patronage, competition over informal mining revenues, and the brittle machismo that haunts male-dominated genres from American gangsta rap to Brazilian funk proibido.

Famo did not invent Lesotho's gangsterism. Famo documented it, narrated it, and, in its most degraded form, glamorised it. To ban the genre is to confess that you cannot bear to look at the face in the mirror.

Compare Lesotho's response to other moral panics. When Mexico banned corridos tumbados for glamourising cartel violence, the music only grew more defiant, migrating to YouTube channels based in El Paso. When Jamaica's government restricted dancehall lyrics glorifying "badman" culture, the genre birthed a self-censoring "conscious" wave that proved more commercially successful. Suppressed art rarely dies. It mutates, goes subterranean, and

often returns sharper, angrier and more mythic.

Lesotho's ban has not silenced the accordion. It has anointed it.

The unlikely amplification

Paradoxically, the state's crackdown has done what decades of word-of-mouth could not: it has globalised Famo. From Al Jazeera's documentary unit to NPR's All Things Considered, from a Rolling Stone feature headlined "The Deadly Accordion Wars" to academic panels at SOAS, the world discovered that a tiny, landlocked kingdom was fighting a war over a folk instrument.

Art's stubborn resilience

And yet. The real story after two years is not the government's decree, nor the international media's voyeurism. It is the quiet, unglamorous resilience of creators who refuse the binary of victim or villain.

Some Famo musicians have pivoted to peace anthems – subtle, syncopated tracks that mourn the lost without naming names. Famo is refusing to die. It has mutated, gone underground, and found new voices that sidestep or transcend the old gang rivalries. The accordion still breathes, sometimes in exile, often in hidden studios, and increasingly through fresh talents reimagining the genre for a new era.

Famo lives in the new generation

In the past two years, Lesotho has witnessed the rise of a new wave of artists breathing fresh life into the form. Figures such as Sannere, Phoka ea Boroa and Litshepe Lr, among others, have emerged as major forces, blending traditional Famo elements with contemporary production, Sesotho-hop sensibilities, and a cross-border appeal.

Collaborations like Sannere and Phoka ea Boroa's tracks have racked up millions of streams and views, proof that the genre's cultural DNA remains potent even under restriction. These artists, often drawing on older Famo influences while pushing stylistic boundaries, have kept the music culturally vibrant and commercially relevant, especially among younger listeners at home and in the diaspora.

This adaptive vitality reveals the ban's limits. While certain factions linked to violence faced crackdowns, the broader cultural current of Famo has found ways to flow around the obstacles: digital platforms, private gatherings, cross-border releases, and a shift toward themes of pride, love, heritage and endurance rather than pure provocation.

The question we must answer

This episode forces uncomfortable questions. Should musicians self-censor provocative lyrics? Can the state ever legitimately draw lines around incitement without crossing into authoritarian overreach? In a region where creative economies are touted as pathways out of poverty, Lesotho's move sent a chilling signal: Your culture is yours until it becomes inconvenient.

Yet the music's refusal to die offers a more hopeful counter-narrative. Visual artists, poets and theatre-makers in Maseru and beyond have responded with works exploring censorship, memory and Basotho identity. International attention has only grown.

As we mark this uncomfortable anniversary, the accordions have not been fully silenced. They hum through new voices – Sannere, Phoka ea Boroa, Litshepe and others – who carry the tradition forward. Famo's greatest composition may yet be unwritten: one that mourns the lost, indicts the powerful where needed, and imagines a future where the music heals rather than harms.

The ban did not end the violence. But it reminded us, painfully, that when you try to kill art, you often only succeed in revealing how deeply it is woven into the fabric of who we are.

In Lesotho, as across Africa, the accordion still plays. The question is whether we have the courage to listen, and to address the song behind the song.

Refiloe Molise

The Women Super League (WSL) Top 4 semi-final fixtures was officially confirmed on Wednesday during the draw held at the WSL Head Office in Bambatha, Maseru with football lovers expected to witness an exciting weekend of women's football action later this month.

The draw produced two thrilling semi-final encounters, with Lijabatho Ladies Football Club(FC) set to face Berea Ladies FC in the opening match, while Kick4Life Women FC will go head-to-head with LDF Ladies FC in the second semi-final.

The matches will be held on May 23 at Saxophone Thejane in Maputsoe. The first semi-final between Lijabatho Ladies FC and Berea Ladies FC will kick off at 10:00am, followed by the clash between Kick4Life Women FC and LDF Ladies FC at 12 noon.

Apart from the Top 4 matches, supporters will also witness the Women's Championship decider between Emmanuel Queens FC and PK Stars Ladies FC at 2:00pm. The championship decider is expected to determine the strongest side between the northern and southern stream winners.

Speaking during the draw, Women Super League representative Tseliso Ramatla said the league season had reached an important stage after months of competition and commitment from clubs.

"Today is not about many speeches but about concluding the work that teams have been doing throughout the season. After the completion of the league, we now have clubs that performed exceptionally well and qualified for the Top 4 tournament," said Ramatla.

He explained that the tournament is reserved for the top-performing teams in the Women Super League and reflects the growth of women's football in Lesotho.

"The teams that qualified are LDF Ladies, Lijabatho Ladies, Kick4Life Women and Berea Ladies. These clubs worked very hard during the season to reach this level and now they have another opportunity to compete for honours," he added.

Ramatla also highlighted that the event will not only focus on the Top 4 competition but will also celebrate teams that earned promotion

Heavyweights collide in WSL top 4



Tseliso Ramatla, Women Super League representative, delivering remarks during the Top 4 semi-final draw held at the Football Head Office in Bambatha



into the Women Super League structure.

"We also have teams from the northern and southern streams competing in the championship decider. This is important because it shows that women's football continues to grow at all levels," he said.

The finals will continue on Sunday, May 24, at SebatanaRussell in Mohale's Hoek. The day will begin with the third-place playoff at 11:00am before the grand final takes place at 1:30pm.

Closing the event, Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) representative Lekhooa Thabaneng congratulated all the teams that managed to qualify for the Top 4 competition, saying reaching that stage was a sign of determination and hard work.

"Every team wanted to be part of the Top 4, but being here means the clubs worked hard and remained consistent throughout the season. We are proud of the effort shown by the clubs," said Thabaneng.

He also praised the Women Super League committee for successfully organising the competition and helping women's football continue to improve in Lesotho.

"We would like to thank the Women Super League committee under the leadership of Ramatla for the good work they have done this season," he said.

Thabaneng encouraged football supporters from across the country to attend the matches in Maputsoe and Mohale's Hoek to celebrate and support women's football.

"Let us all go to Maputsoe on Saturday and Mohale's Hoek on Sunday to support these teams and continue promoting the women's game," he added.

The WSL Top 4 tournament is expected to attract football fans from different parts of the country as clubs battle for top honours while continuing to inspire young girls to participate in football.

Kick4Life ready for Nedbank 8

Refiloe Molise

Fresh from securing promotion to the Premier League, Kick4Life says it is eager to test itself in the 2025/26 Nedbank 8 tournament as the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) prepares to officially launch the competition with a series of wellness and football activities at BambathaTšita Sports Arena today, May 15.

Kick4Life coach MbohMukete said although the club is celebrating promotion to the topflight league, the main objective remains developing players and helping them reach their full potential.

"The expectation has always been the same. We want to produce the best players for the country. Players who can develop and get to their fullest potential. Winning the league is a plus," said Mukete.

He added that the club is not rushing to make decisions about changing the squad



Kick4Life Juventude FC in camp

despite the challenges that come with Premier League football.

"The next season is still very far. We are focused now on Nedbank Top 8 and Champions of Champions. After that we will

assess the players and see where we find ourselves," he said.

Mbo said the club remains committed to giving young players opportunities and will not stand in the way of footballers who

receive offers from bigger clubs.

"Kick4Life is all about promoting talent. We can never stop any player from going to a better opportunity. If a Premier League club wants one of our players, that is what we want because it gives another player a chance in the first club," he said.

The coach also highlighted the importance of cup competitions in player development, saying tournaments such as Nedbank 8 help players adapt to pressure and different styles of play.

"A cup competition is different from a league competition. It is all in. We go there to compete and to expose players to that kind of environment. We look at their readiness, mindset and physical preparation," he said.

Meanwhile, LeFA and its stakeholders are expected to officially activate the 2025/26 Nedbank 8 tournament in style on Friday morning through several wellness and sporting activities.

The event will begin with a 5.3kilometre wellness walk starting from Setsoto Stadium at 08:00 before proceeding to Bambatha Tšita Sports Arena for aerobics sessions, tug-of-war challenges and football activities.

Organisers say the activation event is aimed at promoting fitness, teamwork and excitement ahead of the highly anticipated tournament.



Seabata Mahao

Lesotho has taken a bold step onto the global stage of sustainable sport infrastructure following the official opening of the FSC Stadium of Life by Kick4Life Lesotho, a groundbreaking facility described as Africa's first stadium constructed entirely with sustainably sourced timber.

The landmark stadium, situated at the Kick4Life Centre in the heart of Maseru, was independently certified by DNV Business Assurance against Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) requirements under project certification, marking a major achievement not only for Lesotho's sporting landscape but also for environmentally responsible construction in Africa.

The launch ceremony drew together government officials, development partners, environmental experts, football stakeholders and international guests, all eager to witness a project that combines football, sustainability, culture and social transformation.

Speaking during the event, Kick4Life's Country Director Motlatsi Nkhahle hailed the stadium as a symbol of innovation and hope for Lesotho.

"This facility exemplifies a paradigm shift in sports infrastructure, combining sustainability, social impact and cultural representation," said Nkhahle.

He reflected on the journey that began after the 2010 FIFA Men's World Cup in South Africa, when Kick4Life first envisioned constructing a stadium that would go beyond football.

The Kick4Life Centre itself was opened in 2011 as part of FIFA's legacy programme and has since become internationally recognised for using sport as a tool for social change.

Over the years, the organisation expanded its footprint with social enterprises such as No.7 Restaurant and the Hokahanya Inn & Conference Centre, both of which generate income to sustain community programmes while creating employment opportunities for young Basotho.

Kick4Life's pioneering model earned global recognition in 2025 when the organisation received the prestigious Laureus Sport for Good Award.

Nkhahle explained that the dream of building a stadium was refined over several years before construction officially commenced in 2019 in partnership with Rise International.

Through Rise International's "in loco" design-and-build training programme, young professionals in the construction sector were involved in the project, which eventually evolved into a remarkable timber stadium concept that attracted support from FSC and DNV.

The stadium features an impressive 8,584 treated eucalyptus poles sourced from FSC-certified plantations in Mpumalanga, South Africa, significantly reducing the use of concrete and showcasing the potential of sustainable building materials in large-scale sports developments.

Project lead architect Pedro Clarke of Rise International said the construction industry is increasingly looking toward forest products as lower-carbon alternatives.

"As the construction sector seeks materials with a lower carbon footprint,



eyes are turning towards forest products," Clarke noted.

The facility also incorporates several unique environmental and cultural features. Among them is the Biodiversity Stand, designed to showcase indigenous flora from Lesotho's ten districts while educating communities about conservation and biodiversity.

Adjacent to the stand is the Theatre of Life, an outdoor amphitheatre built from FSC-approved timber that will host

Stadium of Life ushers in new era



Stadium of Life opens new era for sustainable sport in Lesotho

young women trained as fitness instructors.

For football, the stadium will serve as the home ground for Kick4Life's teams, including the club's women's side, who were crowned Lesotho Women's Super League champions in 2025, and the men's team, currently champions of the A-Division League South Stream for 2026.

Beyond matchdays, the venue will continue to host programmes focused on health education, gender empowerment and life-skills development, while also preparing young athletes for international student-athlete scholarship opportunities.

FSC's Regional Market Development Manager Gerard Busse praised the project as a continental milestone.

"This stadium was not simply built with wood. It was built with responsibility, traceability and purpose," Busse said.

"As Africa's first stadium constructed using sustainably sourced timber, it sends a powerful message to the world: Africa is not waiting to follow global sustainability trends; Africa is defining them."

Greg Markwell, Sales Manager for DNV Business Assurance Africa, described the project as deeply personal and aligned with DNV's mission of safeguarding life, property and the environment.

"We are proud to have supported the FSC Stadium of Life through our independent certification, helping to give confidence that the timber used is responsibly sourced and traceable," Markwell said.

Rise International founder Daniela Gusman added that the stadium represents the future of sports infrastructure by integrating sustainability, social impact and cultural identity into one community-centred development.

Kick4Life Co-founder Steve Fleming MBE also linked the project to the enduring legacy of Africa's first FIFA World Cup.

"With the 2026 FIFA Men's World Cup starting next month, we are proud to continue building on the legacy of Africa's first tournament 16 years ago," Fleming said.

He added that the FSC Stadium of Life continues to push boundaries in both Sport for Good and the wider sports industry.





Lijabatho's meteoric rise



Lijabatho FC squad

Seabata Mahao

Having recently captured their maiden top flight title with a game to spare in the current 2025/26 season, Lijabatho Football Club (FC) have firmly written their name in the upper echelons of Lesotho's club football.

And tomorrow, the unthinkable will become official. The club affectionately known as "Mahala," a nickname that once hinted at their free-spirited, underdog nature, will be draped in champions' gold.

At Setsoto Stadium, following their final league fixture against Matlama FC, Lijabatho will hoist the 2025/26 Vodacom Premier League (VPL) trophy, sealing one of the most astonishing ascents in Lesotho football history.

The coronation comes after a season that felt less like a campaign and more like a prophecy fulfilled. Last weekend, in front of a thunderous crowd that had travelled from every corner of the country, Lijabatho delivered a performance for the ages, dismantling defending champions Lioli FC 4-0.

That emphatic victory was not merely a statement; it was a declaration of a new order. The result catapulted Lijabatho to 62 points, leaving the chasing pack, Bantu and Matlama, gasping for air, mathematically unable to surpass them with only a single match remaining. The title was theirs, with a game to spare.

To understand the magnitude of this moment, one must rewind to the not-so-distant past. Lijabatho FC, rooted in the historic cultural and educational heartland of Morija, spent years as a ghost in the machine of Lesotho's top flight.

While traditional powerhouses traded blows for decades, Mahala toiled in the lower divisions, a little-known entity playing before sparse crowds. Their story is not one of inherited glory, but of forged steel.

The first flicker of promise ignited in 2019. Under the guidance of coach Makepe Motolo, Lijabatho secured promotion from the A Division Southern

Stream with matches to spare, courtesy of a gritty 2-0 victory over Lithabaneng Golden.

Their jubilation, however, was short-lived. Their debut top-flight season in 2019/20 was a brutal reality check. They flirted dangerously with relegation, ending the campaign in the murky waters just above the drop zone.

Only the unprecedented disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic granted them a reprieve, allowing the club to retain its place and, more crucially, to breathe.

In those dark days, few would have bet a single loti on a future title. But while the giants slept on Morija's potential, a quiet revolution was taking root. The club invested in youth development and instilled a stronger organisational structure. Year by year, they climbed. They stopped merely surviving and began competing. The stubborn defensive resilience that would later define their championship run started to take shape.

But the true metamorphosis came with the appointment of a master tactician. Enter James Madidilane, the South African coach with a Midas touch. Having guided Bantu to back-to-back titles in 2016/17 and 2017/18, Madidilane knew the terrain of pressure. He arrived in Morija with a vision and a voice of steel.

"It was a very tough journey for us because the manner in which we started is not the way one would have wanted," Madidilane reflected after the Lioli demolition, his voice hoarse from shouting instructions.

"Nevertheless, I believe the team has fought very hard up until today. The credit must go to the boys because no one, I believe no one, gave us a chance to win the league. Remember after we went top after nine games, people were saying the rightful owners of that position were coming, and that pushed us to work even harder."

Those early doubters were understandable. Lijabatho was the interloper, the village team gatecrashing a party reserved for the elite. But Madidilane forged a squad that was greater than the sum of its parts. While they lacked the star-studded roster of Bantu or the historical weight of Matlama, they possessed a spine of granite.

The attacking spearhead was the phenomenal Basotho international Tumelo Kutlang, a predator who seemed to save his most devastating form for the decisive stages. His movement off the ball and clinical finishing turned tight, tactical battles into commanding victories.

Behind him, a disciplined defensive block, drilled relentlessly by Madidilane, frustrated even the most inventive attacks.

The 2025/26 season was a masterclass in consistency. Lijabatho did not merely win; they suffocated opponents. They turned Morija into a fortress where dreams went to die for visiting teams.

While Lioli stumbled, Bantu drew games they should have won, and Matlama blew hot and cold, Mahala simply stacked points. They refused to break.

And so, we arrive at the eve of history.

Tomorrow's fixture at Setsoto Stadium carries a symbolic weight heavier than the silverware. Matlama, the pride of Maseru, will be forced to form a guard of honour for the newly crowned champions. Regardless of the result on the pitch, the narrative

is already written: Lijabatho are the kings.

The triumph is not merely about pride. It carries a golden ticket. The club will pocket M650,000 in prize money and, more significantly, earn the right to represent Lesotho in next season's CAF Champions League. The continental stage, with its travel and tactical nightmares, awaits the boys from Morija.

"Starting from my time at Bantu, it has never been about me alone, but about the entire technical team and the players we assemble. Without a proper squad, we could not have won the league," Madidilane added, deflecting praise.

As the final whistle blows tomorrow and the trophy is lifted into the Maseru sky, it will signal more than just a title victory. Lijabatho's meteoric rise, from near-relegation in 2020 to champions in 2026, is a seismic shift in Lesotho's football landscape.

It proves that the old guard can be breached. It proves that community-based teams with patience, youth development, and tactical discipline can dethrone the giants.

For Lioli, the defeat was a surrender of the crown. For Bantu and Matlama, the off-season will be filled with soul-searching. But for Lijabatho? The work has only just begun. Madidilane has already revealed that preparations for the CAF Champions League will commence immediately.

Elsewhere on the final day, the drama is thick. Bantu (58 points) face a treacherous away fixture against LMPS at PTC Ground, needing a win to secure second place. Matlama, level on points but trailing on goal difference, could leapfrog Bantu should they upset the champions.

The battle for the final top-four spot is a knife-edge affair between Lifofane (57 points) and Majantja (54 points), who meet in a winner-takes-all showdown at Sebatana Russell Technical Centre. For Majantja, only a four-goal victory will suffice to overtake their rivals.

At the bottom, the trapdoor has already swallowed Maroala FC, who were relegated after a 2-0 loss to Matlama. The final relegation spot will be decided between Members (21 points) and Liphakoe (18 points), with Liphakoe needing a miracle against Machokha and hoping Members lose to Lioli.

But tomorrow, the spotlight belongs solely to Lijabatho. From the dusty lower divisions to the summit of Lesotho football, their exponential rise is a story for the ages. And as the champions lift the trophy with a match to spare, one truth echoes louder than the vuvuzelas: The free spirits have finally captured the crown. Lesotho will never view football the same way again.



Elevate your Brand's visibility!
Advertise With Us
and unlock exclusive rates...