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WASCO's M52 million 'mea culpa'

... Utility makes four promises after Lesotho's worst urban water crises

Staff Reporter

For the first time since Mafeteng's devastating water crisis erupted, the Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) has publicly acknowledged that the collapse of the district's main water source was not an unavoidable natural disaster but the result of years of inadequate infrastructure management.

Speaking at the ceremony marking the arrival of long-awaited dredging equipment, WASCO Board Chairperson Thabo Stephen Monyamane told an audience that included Minister of Natural Resources Mohlomi Moleko, that the warning signs had accumulated over many years and that the utility had learned a painful institutional lesson.

"We must be honest about what happened to Rasebala Dam," Monyamane said.

"It was not a sudden failure. It developed progressively through a combination of factors: the growing burden of climate-induced drought on a reservoir system designed for different hydrological conditions; the absence of a systematic silt management programme commensurate with the dam's age and service life; and constraints in the financial and technical resources needed to address these challenges as they compounded over time," he added.

It is the clearest admission yet that Mafeteng's prolonged water shortages cannot be explained by drought alone.

In January 2025, WASCO attributed the crisis primarily to extreme weather and dwindling water levels. But the chairman's speech acknowledged that Rasebala Dam's decline was gradual, foreseeable and insufficiently addressed.

"The silt did not arrive overnight. It accumulated over years, driven by sediment loads from degraded catchments, intensified by drought, and not sufficiently countered by the technical interventions that the dam's age and condition required," Monyamane.

A crisis that was seen coming — and left to grow

Rasebala Dam has supplied Mafeteng town since 1993. It was upgraded once, in 2012, and never comprehensively serviced again. By the time WASCO went public with the numbers in January last year, the dam's storage capacity had collapsed to just 15 percent of its design volume, and the treatment plant built to produce 3.3 megalitres a day was managing barely 1.8.

Newsday's reporting through early 2025 documented what that shortfall meant on the ground.

At Mafeteng High School, principal Ramahetlana 'Matli told the paper his 120 pupils were among the first in town to lose supply whenever a shortage. At Mafeteng Hospital, District Medical Officer Dr Mpho Seleke reported patients unable to get water for bathing or taking medication, and credited emergency tanker deliveries from WASCO and the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) for keeping the hospital functioning at all.

> *WASCO acknowledges that a more proactive, better-resourced maintenance and monitoring regime was required. We say today — that standard will now be the baseline across every asset in our portfolio*

By December 2024, residents had run out of patience. Acting through lawyer Fusi Sehapi and the rights group Advocates for the Supremacy of the Constitution (SECTION 2), they wrote to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Natural Resources demanding action, and later petitioned the Constitutional Court, arguing their right to water was being violated. That case is still before the courts.

What the chairman's speech now confirms is that the technical warning signs were old news inside WASCO long before the public pressure arrived.

A desilting plan for Rasebala existed as far back as 2019, costed then at roughly M29 million. Six years, a drought and an inflation cycle later, the same job is costing the state M52 million, nearly double, and the dam had to be starved down to 15 percent capacity, and Mafeteng along with it, before the money and the machine materialised.

Four commitments, made in public

Facing that record, Monyamane used the platform to bind WASCO to four specific undertakings, commitments the utility will now be judged against.

First, WASCO committed to finishing the Rasebala dredging, under tender RFP No. WASCO 02 (2025), without delay. "We will not allow this project to drift," Monyamane said, adding that it would not be "undermined by poor supervision."

Second, the utility promised what it called full transparency, including genuine engagement with communities around the dam through the stakeholder process already under way. "Consultation is not a box to be ticked," Monyamane said. "It is how institutional trust is rebuilt."

Third, WASCO committed to completing eleven new boreholes across four villages, Matholeng, Motlere, Thabaneng and Ha Seitlheko/Phahameng, within the stated timeframe, alongside progress on the Morija-Mafeteng transmission pipeline.

Fourth, looking further out, WASCO pledged to be technically and institutionally ready to take over and run the Lesotho Lowlands Water Development Project Phase II once government hands it over, the Makhaleng River scheme billed as Mafeteng's eventual permanent water source.

Monyamane capped the four with a broader institutional promise: "No WASCO asset will again reach the condition of Rasebala Dam without triggering a timely and adequately resourced corrective response."

The lesson WASCO says it has learned

The chairman went further than committing to fix one dam. He framed Rasebala as proof that WASCO's whole approach to maintaining ageing infrastructure had failed, and promised that would change. "Ageing water infrastructure demands sustained investment and proactive management," he said. "That lesson is now written in the experience of Mafeteng, and we carry it forward without reservation."

WASCO says it will now roll out a nationwide asset management plan, treating preventive maintenance "not as a cost to be avoided but as the very foundation of service delivery," with regular condition checks on every dam, treatment plant and distribution network the utility runs, and an "early-warning culture" meant to ensure no other district is left to discover its water security has quietly fallen to 15 percent before anyone acts.

Why the scepticism is warranted

WASCO's own account gives Mafeteng residents good reason to withhold applause. This is a utility that, on its own telling, had a fix identified in 2019 and did not fund or execute it until the crisis had already forced schoolchildren to carry water to class and put hospital hygiene at risk. The M52-million project now under way is arriving roughly six years, one Constitutional Court case and one public reckoning later than it needed to.

The Chief Executive, Mpeke Lebohang Makara, described the dredging machine, which WASCO says will also be used at Metolong and Katse dams, as "a smart long-term investment." General Manager for Projects, Lehlohonolo Ncheke, has put the volume of silt to be removed at roughly 900 cubic metres.

Assembly of the machine is expected to take about two weeks, after which the dredging itself is due to run for around six months, with WASCO maintaining it has a contingency plan to keep water flowing to Mafeteng households in the meantime, details of which the utility says will only be released once the Prime Minister formally launches the works.

Monyamane closed his speech by inviting the sector regulator, the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA), to hold WASCO to its word: "We welcome your oversight. Hold us to account."

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Shots fired in Kamoli, Motlomelo war of words

Motlomelo Elias Motlomelo

Lekhetho Makhanya

Lesotho's self-taught mechanic and vehicle manufacturer, Motlomelo Elias Motlomelo, has sharply hit back at the former Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) Commander, Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli, alleging he is a liar and a killer.

Motlomelo, who surprisingly introduced himself as an honorary doctor at a media conference he convened at Mookoli (Motimposo) in Maseru on Tuesday, hit back at the retired army general just one day after Kamoli testified before the High Court, alleging Motlomelo was an insurgent.

On Monday, Kamoli told the court that Motlomelo still had in his possession a rifle belonging to the LDF. Kamoli further testified that Motlomelo was one of the suspected criminals who committed acts of insurgency in Lesotho between 2007 and 2009.

According to Kamoli, Motlomelo and others had managed to disarm members of the LDF, in particular soldiers placed as guards at cabinet ministers' residences and at road checkpoints.

During these attacks on the army, Kamoli added, Motlomelo and his group seized army equipment that included war rifles, an armoured car, and a Land Rover.

Kamoli said they had investigated the insurgency acts in a joint operation by the army, the police, and the NSS, and had hunted down the suspects.

"We managed to confiscate back the army equipment, but the rifle belonging to Motlomelo was never recovered. It is still with him," Kamoli said.

Besides Motlomelo, Kamoli named other insurgents as Thabiso Mahase (the spouse of Justice 'Maseforo Mahase), Warrant Officer Lerotholi (commonly known as Mashai), and Letšolo of Koro-Koro.

Motlomelo fires back

But in a packed press conference, Motlomelo shot down Kamoli's claims, branding him a liar and a killer.

"I watched the court proceedings on the internet and heard when Lt-Gen Tlali Kamoli said there is a rifle belonging to the army that is still in my possession. He is a liar and a killer himself. I only have a gun that is authorised by the Lesotho Mounted Police Service. If I had the army's rifle, why would Kamoli not instruct his soldiers to come and get it from me? I don't like him. He should stop dragging my name into acts of crime," Motlomelo said.

Motlomelo also claimed that he was once tortured by Kamoli and his soldiers.

"They attempted to kill me in 2007," he said.

He added that he had worked hard to build his name over the years.

"Kamoli cannot just ruin my integrity. I am known all over the world for my wonderful work as an exceptional mechanic with skills to manufacture vehicles. Television crews from across the world have come here to interview me," he said.

Honorary doctorate announcement

Motlomelo, who wore his graduation gown when he addressed the media on Tuesday, also took the opportunity to announce that he had been conferred with an honorary doctorate certificate for his mechanical work by an institution from America.

The Founder of Tlome Auto Style Motors, Motlomelo initially started a panel-beating workshop for accident-damaged cars, but this ultimately led him to car manufacturing after he discovered he could rebuild cars from stripped-down parts.

Kamoli's trial continues

Meanwhile, Kamoli is standing trial alongside four other army members, Sergeant Pitso Ramoepana, Second Lieutenant Litekanyo Nyakane, Corporal Heqoa Malefane, and Lance Corporal Mohlalefi Seitlheko, who all face charges of attempted murder and malicious damage to property for the explosive attacks on the homes of Liabiloe Ramoholi (the former First Lady 'Maesaiah Thabane, wife of former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane) in Moshoeshoe II, and former Police Commissioner Khothatso Tšooana in Ha-Abia.

Kamoli also faces an additional charge of obstruction of justice. He has remained in remand prison since his arrest in October 2017.

On Tuesday, he told the court that he had already celebrated nine Christmases behind bars.

"And if this case cannot be finalised this year, I would celebrate the tenth Christmas in remand prison," he said.

"I warned PM Thabane against his love affair at Moshoeshoe II," Kamoli claims

...the incarcerated army commander distances himself from 2014 explosive attacks at Moshoeshoe II and Ha-Abia

...rubbishes claims that he plotted the attacks

Lekhetho Makhanya

The former Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) Commander, Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli, has told the High Court that he warned Prime Minister Motsoahae Thomas Thabane against his relationship with his then-girlfriend, Liabiloe Ramoholi, at Moshoeshoe II in Maseru, before the coordinated late-night explosive attacks on January 27, 2014, at Moshoeshoe II and Ha-Abia.

The attacks targeted the home of Ramoholi (who later married Thabane and became First Lady 'Maesaiah Thabane) in Moshoeshoe II and the residence of then Police Commissioner Khothatso Tšooana in Ha-Abia. The bombings sent shockwaves across the nation.

The trial, presided over by Justice Charles Hungwe, sees Kamoli and several army members – Sergeant Pitso Ramoepana, Second Lieutenant Litekanyo Nyakane, Corporal Heqoa Malefane, and Lance Corporal Mohlalefi Seitlheko –facing charges of attempted murder and malicious damage to property. Kamoli also faces an additional charge of obstruction of justice.

Kamoli's testimony: A warning unheeded

Taking the stand as Accused 1 on Monday, Kamoli testified that he had met with the prime minister ahead of the bombing attacks and raised concerns about his safety.

Led by his defence lawyer, Advocate Letuka Molati, Kamoli told the court that during their meeting, Thabane informed him that since he had no wife, he was in a relationship with his girlfriend residing at Moshoeshoe II, Liabiloe Ramoholi.

"He said he would go and visit her at Moshoeshoe II. I then warned him against that. I said it was not safe anymore for him, as the prime minister, to be seen in love affairs at places like Moshoeshoe II," Kamoli testified.

He suggested that it would be safer if the girlfriend could be fetched by a soldier from his guard and ferried to State House whenever the prime minister wanted to meet her.

"I told him it was risky for the prime minister to be there at any awkward moment," Kamoli said.

However, Thabane did not heed Kamoli's advice. Instead, Kamoli told the court, the prime minister requested that he provide a team of soldiers to escort him to Moshoeshoe II to see his girlfriend there.

Kamoli added that he is a respectful person who heeds the instructions of his elders.

"I am a child well-raised. I was taught well by my father, who always said to me that I should always obey the elderly but not be afraid to speak my mind," he said.

It was on this principle, Kamoli explained, that he did not insist further on his advice to Thabane.

"I listened to him and provided him with a team of highly trained soldiers to always escort him to his girlfriend's place," he said.

Kamoli rebuts Mokaloba's testimony

Kamoli sharply rebuked the testimony of Major General Ramanka Mokaloba, who had previously implied that Kamoli was the one who ordered the bombings at Moshoeshoe II and Ha-Abia.

On July 24, 2024, during his evidence-in-chief, Major General Mokaloba testified that Kamoli had told him about a plan to attack the homes of Liabiloe Ramoholi and Khothatso Tšooana. Mokaloba claimed that in January 2014, Kamoli summoned him to his office at Ratjomose Barracks and outlined a plan to stage shootings near the two residences.

Mokaloba further alleged that Kamoli intended the operation to appear as an internal police feud stemming from a dispute between then Deputy Commissioner of Police Keketso Monaheng and Commissioner Tšooana. According to Mokaloba, Kamoli's ultimate goal was to destabilise the police and position the army as the primary security for Prime Minister Thabane, thereby consolidating his control over the security forces.

But Kamoli dismissed Mokaloba's testimony outright this week, stating that Mokaloba had never even attempted to meet with him to discuss the subject. Kamoli insisted that he had never issued any instructions to anyone related to the attacks at Moshoeshoe II or Ha-Abia.

Security committee meeting drama

Kamoli further testified that after the bombing incident, he was invited to a Security Committee meeting convened by the committee's chairman, then Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing. Also present were the then Director General of the National Security Service (NSS), Mohlakala Lerotholi, and Cabinet Ministers Thesele 'Maseribane and Molobeli Soulo. Kamoli told the court that all members were present except Tšooana.

Instead of attending himself, Kamoli said, Tšooana had instructed Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Masupha Masupha to attend on his behalf.

The members were not happy with Tšooana's behaviour, which Kamoli said they described as "undermining and disrespecting" the chairman of the Committee and Deputy Prime Minister Metsing.

Kamoli said Metsing dismissed Masupha from the meeting, stating that he had invited Tšooana, not Masupha.

"He wanted Tšooana, not Masupha, in that meeting," Kamoli told the court.

Shortly thereafter, Kamoli said, Lerotholi received a call from the then Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, David Sehloho.

"Sehloho told Lerotholi that the Director General of NSS should not have attended the meeting because they had already established that it was Honourable Metsing and I who were involved in the bombing attacks at Moshoeshoe II and Ha-Abia," Kamoli said.

He said all members were surprised by the revelation. Kamoli also testified that PS Sehloho had confessed that he was the one who instructed Tšooana not to attend the meeting because it had been convened by the suspects in the bombing attacks.

Kamoli's surprise at police investigations

Kamoli said he contacted Tšooana the following day to request an update on the investigations relating to the bombings. He expressed surprise when the police commissioner told him that they had already made progress with the assistance of the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Kamoli said he was surprised because the police were supposed to conduct the investigations together with the army, as had been instructed by Prime Minister Thabane.

The trial continues before Justice Hungwe in the High Court.

The January 27, 2014 attacks occurred during one of the most turbulent periods in Lesotho's coalition government, formed after the 2012 general election.

Prime Minister Thabane's coalition administration, which included the All Basotho Convention (ABC), Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) led by Deputy Prime Minister Metsing, and the Basotho National Party (BNP) led by 'Maseribane, had become deeply divided over governance and control of the country's security institutions.

Relations between LDF, under Lieutenant General Kamoli, and the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS), led by Commissioner Tšooana, had deteriorated sharply.

Tensions were fuelled by allegations of political interference, rivalry between the military and police, and competing loyalties within the coalition government.

The bombings intensified an already volatile political and security crisis that culminated months later in the suspension of Parliament, the attempted removal of Kamoli as army commander, and the August 30, 2014, military operation that forced Prime Minister Thabane to flee temporarily to South Africa, the subsequent Southern African Development Community (SADC)-brokered Maseru Facilitation Process, and the snap general election of February 2015.

Kamoli has been in remand prison since 2017 on multiple charges.

The trial, which has been running intermittently for several years before the High Court, forms part of a broader series of criminal proceedings arising from Lesotho's political and security instability between 2014 and 2017, a period that prompted repeated interventions by SADC and ultimately the establishment of the regional commission of inquiry led by Justice Mphaphi Phumaphi after the killing of former army commander Lieutenant General Maaparankoe Mahao in June 2015.

Former LDF Commander, Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli

Former Prime Minister Motsoahae Thomas Thabane

Former Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing

'Maesaiah Thabane (Liabiloe Ramoholi)

IEC mulls harmonised national and local government elections

IEC Commissioners

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has flagged the need to synchronise national elections and local government elections, a move the Commission says will save the country significant amounts of money and reduce administrative costs.

At a press conference this week, the IEC said it is currently participating in a joint technical engagement with the Ministry of Local Government to explore the legal, operational, financial, and policy considerations for harmonising the National Assembly and Local Government Elections.

"These discussions are intended to identify practical approaches that could improve electoral efficiency, reduce the cost of conducting elections, enhance voter participation, and minimise voter fatigue. The process will also determine the legislative, institutional, and operational reforms that may be required to support such harmonisation," the Commission said.

Cost savings and voter fatigue

IEC Chairperson, Dr John Maphephe, said the Commission does not want to hold elections from time to time, but instead wants to give voters time to explore other initiatives that could advance the country.

With elections funded through taxpayers' money, the Chairperson said it is appropriate for the Commission to recommend cost-saving measures where necessary.

National elections are scheduled to be held in early 2028, provided there are no snap elections. IEC Commissioner Pontšo 'Mamatlere Matete said if the proposition is considered, there will be no clash with local government elections, as the law stipulates that councillors' tenure in office should not exceed five years.

She noted that the Commission had already carried out a successful study by holding by-elections in constituencies where candidates had died, at the same time as local government elections, and the process proved effective.

Matete estimated that the Commission could save the country approximately 90 percent of the local government election budget through harmonisation. She added that there would be no duplication of election work, such as printing or transporting ballot papers.

"This is why harmonising elections will make the process more efficient and cost-saving," she said.

While no decision has yet been taken regarding the Commission's proposition, the IEC said it will remain in talks with all relevant stakeholders to explore the possibility of holding joint elections.

'Best loser' bill raises concerns

Weighing in on the proposed "best loser" bill, a private member's proposal sponsored by Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) member Mootsi Lehata and seconded by All Basotho Convention (ABC) proportional representation (PR) member Lebohang Hlaele, Chairperson said that according to best practice, the law should not be changed a year before elections.

The bill seeks to replace the existing party-list system for the 40 PR seats with a "best loser" model.

Under the proposal, PR seats allocated to political parties would be filled exclusively by their unsuccessful constituency candidates, those who obtained the highest percentage of votes but lost their races. Independent candidates would be expressly excluded from PR seat allocation.

"Ours is to provide professional advice on the proposed reforms for the electoral system," Dr Maphephe said.

The Commission noted that several factors need to be taken into account, including election administration, constituency delimitation where applicable, ballot design, voter education, election technology, and results management.

While the current electoral regime requires parties to submit the names of PR candidates before elections, the proposed bill suggests that candidates' names be submitted after counting, so that the "best loser" can be determined based on performance results.

Dr Maphephe further indicated that this bill would not align with current laws, which require the publication of election results within seven days of polling day.

Meanwhile, Dr Chelete Monyane argued that the proposed amendment has created a "mismatch" problem with current electoral legislation. He noted that while the system works in Mauritius, it has also caused challenges there.

Dr Maphephe said the final decision rests with Parliament as the lawmaking body.

A civil society organisation has also urged Parliament to reject the proposed bill, arguing that it violates several provisions of the Constitution and would fundamentally alter the character of the country's electoral system.

Advocates for the Supremacy of the Constitution (SECTION 2) appeared before the Portfolio Committee on Law and Public Safety on Wednesday this week to make oral submissions on the National Assembly Electoral (Amendment) Bill 2026. The organisation had earlier submitted a detailed written analysis outlining its constitutional concerns.

In its submission, SECTION 2 argued that the Bill is materially inconsistent with Sections 16, 20, 57, 58, and 59 of the Constitution.

Recruitment of substantive director of elections

On the recruitment of a substantive Director of Elections, the Commission said 27 applications were received for the coveted position.

The Chairperson said they have engaged a consultancy company to screen candidates and recommend five for interviews by the Commission. The company has vetted the candidates and conducted pre-interviews.

During the interviews, all political parties will be present to witness the proceedings but will not have any influence, as the final hiring decision rests solely with the Commission.

Restoration of duty-free access for Lesotho exports to the US welcomed

Staff Reporter

The Government of has confirmed that Lesotho products will once again enter the United States market duty-free, effective July 29, 2026.

This follows the expiry of Section 122 tariffs, which were imposed in February 2026 after a U.S. Supreme Court decision abolished reciprocal tariffs. The removal of the universal 10 percent tariff means Lesotho's textiles, apparel, and fisheries products now return to zero-tariff status, providing immediate relief to local exporters.

In a related development, the U.S. completed Section 301 investigations on 60 countries in February 2026, imposing duties between 10 percent and 12.5 percent. Lesotho was not included in that list and will therefore continue to enjoy duty-free access.

Lesotho currently benefits from duty-free access under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) for eligible products. AGOA is set to expire on December 31, 2026, and is currently undergoing modernisation, which may include revised eligibility rules and a greater focus on reciprocal trade.

The government said it is actively engaging with U.S. officials to secure a timely renewal of AGOA, which supports over 30,000 jobs in Lesotho's manufacturing sector.

The U.S. Trade Representative is holding consultations with stakeholders on AGOA modernisation, and Lesotho has participated to ensure long-term access and provide certainty to investors and buyers. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development says it will continue to monitor the process and provide updates.

The government said it remains committed to strengthening trade ties with the United States through deeper economic cooperation and more permanent market access.

Through the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC), the country is also working to attract U.S. private investment aimed at integrating the textile value chain and adding more value to the local manufacturing sector.

When the system works: what Mafeteng water crisis shows about democracy's feedback loop

Ntsoaki Motaung


St John's High School students in Mafeteng

Democracy is usually judged by its elections. But between elections, it is judged by something less visible and far harder to sustain, whether the ordinary complaint of an ordinary citizen can travel from a dry tap in a rural district all the way to a cabinet minister's decision, and come back as water. From late 2024 to early 2025, Mafeteng became an unplanned test of that circuitry. The results, while incomplete, are instructive.

The theory: three links in a chain

Strip away the technical detail of dams and dredging, and Mafeteng's water crisis is really a case study in a simple democratic mechanism with three links. First, citizens experiencing a harm have to find a way to voice it, individually, through representatives, or through the courts. Second, that voice needs a carrier capable of putting it in front of people with power and keeping it there long enough to matter, usually the media. Third, and most decisive, the institutions on the receiving end have to actually respond – not with a statement, but with money, machinery and a timeline.

Any of the three can fail. Citizens can suffer in silence, or complain into a void. Media can ignore a rural story that has no obvious national audience. Government and utilities can absorb criticism indefinitely without changing course. Lesotho has plenty of history with each of those failure modes. What makes Mafeteng worth examining is that, this time, none of the three links broke.

Link one: citizens found their voice, formally

Mafeteng residents did not simply complain, they organised. Working with lawyer advocate Fusi Sehapi and the rights organisation Advocates for the Supremacy of the Constitution (SECTION 2), residents put their grievance on the record in writing, addressing a formal letter to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Natural Resources in December 2024, and copying the Prime Minister. They also engaged their Members of Parliament directly. When those did not produce an immediate remedy, they escalated further, petitioning the Constitutional Court on the argument that their right to water, read into the right to life under Section 5 of the Constitution, was being violated by the state's own utility.

This is what a functioning civic channel looks like, grievance translated into legal and political language, using the institutions the Constitution provides, rather than resignation or unrest. It is worth noting that this required residents to have access to legal representation and an organised rights group willing to act, an advantage not every distressed community in Lesotho can count on.

Link two: the media stayed on the story

The second link is where Mafeteng's case is most distinctive. Newsday's coverage of the crisis was not a single dramatic exposé but a sustained run of reporting across months – court petitions, ministerial correspondence, WASCO's own statements, and repeated visits to the people living the crisis day to day: a school principal describing his pupils as the first in town to lose supply, a hospital doctor detailing patients unable to get water for medication or bathing, WASCO's caretaker chief executive acknowledging the scale of the hardship in his own words.

That sustained attention did two things a single story could not. It kept the human cost of a technical failure, siltation, storage percentages, megalitres per day, legible to a public that does not naturally engage with dam engineering. And it created a public record that made it difficult for any official response, or lack of one, to go unnoticed. When WASCO's own chairman, Stephen Monyamane, stood at the podium this week, he explicitly credited that Newsday reporting with keeping the crisis "in the national conversation," a rare instance of an accused institution naming its watchdog by name and thanking it, rather than treating scrutiny as hostility.

Link three: institutions moved, and said so publicly

The third link is the one democracies most often fail to close, because acknowledging a problem costs a government or utility nothing, while fixing it costs money, time and institutional humility. Mafeteng's case shows partial success here, but success nonetheless.

The Disaster Management Authority (DMA) deployed water tankers to the hospital and schools. The Prime Minister travelled to Mafeteng in person rather than issuing a statement from Maseru, a choice WASCO's chairman, Monyane, this week called a deliberate signal that "the people of Mafeteng would not be left behind." WASCO issued tenders for dredging under the Public Procurement Act, moved on plans for eleven new boreholes, and, after a delay whose length is itself worth scrutinising, took delivery of the dredging equipment now assembling at Rasebala Dam. Government resources were committed to a M52-million project, and the Ministry of Natural Resources has tied the fix to the longer-term Lesotho Lowlands Water Development Project Phase II.

Just as significant as the actions is the language used to describe them. Monyamane did not simply announce a project, he offered something closer to an institutional confession, telling the audience that "the progressive siltation of the reservoir... was not countered by a systematic desiltation programme" and committing WASCO, on the record, to four specific and checkable undertakings, timely completion of the dredging, genuine community consultation, delivery of the boreholes and pipeline, and operational readiness for the Makhaleng River scheme when it arrives. A government institution publicly binding itself to measurable promises, in front of the community it failed, is not a common feature of Lesotho's public life. It happened here because the first two links held long enough to make silence costlier than a response.

What this is not: a case for complacency

It would be a mistake to read Mafeteng as proof that the system works well. It is closer to proof that the system can work, under pressure, when every part of it functions near its best, and that this is still far too rare a combination.

The chain took the better part of two years to close, and only closed after storage capacity had already collapsed to 15 percent, children were carrying water to school, and a hospital was struggling to maintain basic hygiene. A desilting plan for Rasebala Dam had existed since 2019, costed then at roughly M29 million; by the time political and legal pressure forced action, the same job cost M52 million, and the human cost in between is not one that can be reversed by a machine. Democracy's feedback loop, in this case, worked, but slowly, expensively, and only after avoidable damage had already been done.

There is also the question of durability. WASCO's four commitments are promises, not outcomes. The High Court case brought by Mafeteng residents remains open, which means the community that forced this response has, sensibly, declined to treat a ceremony and a speech as a substitute for a completed remedy. And the deeper structural question Monyamane himself raised, why an ageing dam was allowed to silt down to 15 percent of capacity before "a timely and adequately resourced corrective response" arrived, has been answered so far with a promise of future vigilance, not yet with evidence of it.

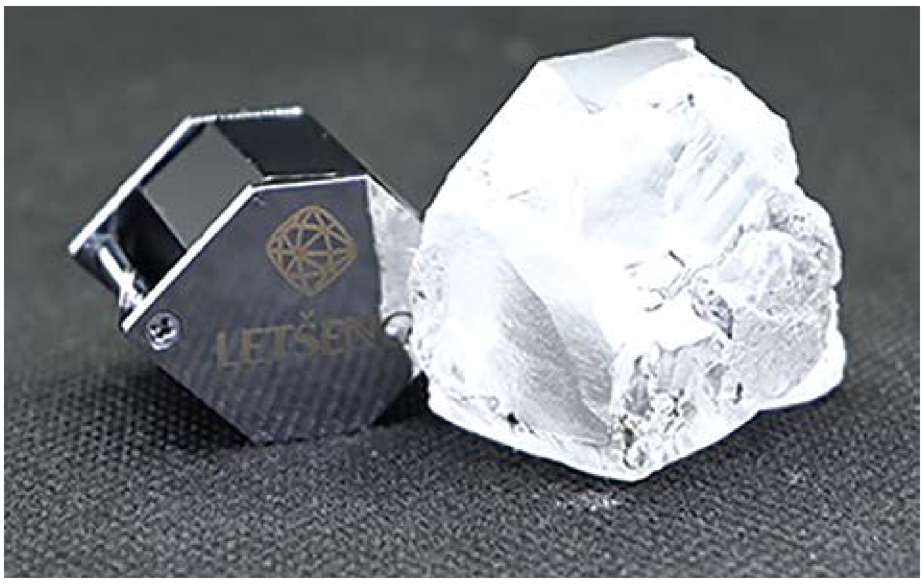
Why the case still matters

None of that undercuts the value of the case study. Democracies are not judged by whether harm occurs, harm to citizens from ageing infrastructure, climate stress and institutional neglect is a near-universal feature of governance everywhere. They are judged by whether there exists a route from that harm, through voice and scrutiny, to a corrective response that is public, specific and can be measured against later. Mafeteng shows that route exists in Lesotho, that it can be walked by an under-resourced rural community with the help of civil society and a persistent local newsroom, and that it can produce a public commitment from an institution that would otherwise have had every incentive to manage the story quietly rather than fix the underlying problem.

The test now shifts from whether the system can respond to whether it can follow through, and whether the next community facing an ageing dam, a failing clinic, or a collapsing service has to wait for its own crisis to reach 15 percent before the same three links engage on its behalf.


Mafeteng Water Crisis

Letšeng unearths jewel of independence



The 346.99-carat Type II white diamond was recovered in June 2026

Bereng Mpaki

Gem Diamonds has recovered a massive 346.99 carat white diamond at its Letšeng mine in Lesotho, and has named the stone the "Lesotho Jubilee" in honour of the country's 60th independence anniversary.

The London-listed miner disclosed the discovery in its Trading Update covering 1 January to 30 June 2026 (H1 2026), released this week.

The diamond, recovered in June, was one of three exceptional +100 carat stones unearthed during the Period, two of which have already been sold. The Lesotho Jubilee itself will go under the hammer after the close of the reporting period.

Beyond the headline gem, the company reported that its highest price achieved in the half was US$32,908 per carat, fetched for a 52.24 carat white diamond.

In total, eight diamonds each sold for more than US$1.0 million, together generating aggregate revenue of US$16.1 million, underlining Letšeng's reputation as one of the world's premier sources of large, high-value stones.

Gem Diamonds said "all operational and financial metrics are trending within issued guidance for 2026," a reassuring signal for investors despite a mixed production picture.

At Letšeng, waste tonnes stripped fell sharply to 308,118 in H1 2026, down 82% from 1,698,817 in H1 2025, while ore tonnes treated edged up 4% to 2,604,145 from 2,504,001.

However, the Satellite Pipe, the mine's higher-grade, higher-value ore source, contributed only 417,734 tonnes, a 48% drop from 802,135 tonnes a year earlier.

That shift in mix, drove the headline production figures down. Carats recovered fell 12% to 41,695 from 47,125, while the grade recovered slipped 15% to 1.60 carats per hundred tonnes (cpht) from 1.88 cpht.

The company explained that "the lower proportion of Satellite Pipe material in the production mix resulted in the overall lower grade, and therefore lower carats recovered during the Period when compared to H1 2025," adding that "production for the remainder of the year will be sourced only from the Main Pipe, while preparations are made for the next cutback in the Satellite Pipe."

Despite fewer carats, revenue told a far more encouraging story. Carats sold dipped only 4% to 42,624, yet total sales value surged 33% to US$59.5 million from US$44.7 million, as the average price achieved climbed 38% to US$1,395 per carat from US$1,008.

The improved pricing comes against a difficult backdrop for the broader rough diamond industry, which continues to grapple with the disruptive rise of lab-grown alternatives.

Gem Diamonds' CEO, Clifford Elphick, said: "Market prices for lower quality, small, rough diamonds remain severely impacted by synthetic diamonds. This has resulted in a number of mines, with this particular size and quality diamond footprint, suspending operations."

Letšeng, he noted, "has been less impacted, with encouragingly strong demand leading to an improvement in prices during H1 2026," owing to its exceptional quality and large diamond recoveries.

"Gem remains focused on continuing to operate the Letšeng mine safely and responsibly, maintain financial discipline, and preserve the long-term value of the business," Elphick added.

Apart from the Lesotho Jubilee, Letšeng is renowned for the production of other historic diamonds. In January 2018, a 910-carat white diamond, the Lesotho Legend was recovered, becoming the fifth-largest diamond in the world.

In August 2011, a 550-carat white diamond, the Letšeng Star became the fourth major recovery at Letšeng since Gem Diamonds' 2006 takeover. It was preceded by the 478-carat Leseli la Letšeng ('Light of Letšeng') in 2008, the 493-carat Letšeng Legacy in 2007 and the 603-carat Lesotho Promise in 2006.

Letšeng has thus produced five of the largest rough white gem diamonds on record. In addition, the 601-carat Lesotho Brown was recovered from the mine in 1967.

Lesotho economy shrinks

Seabata Mahao

Lesotho's economy has lost momentum in recent months, with the country's moderate economic rebound earlier this year proving short-lived, according to the latest Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) statement released by the Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL).

In simpler terms, weaker economic activity means businesses are producing and selling less than before, consumers are spending cautiously, and investment growth remains subdued. It also implies fewer opportunities for job creation and slower income growth if the trend persists.

"Domestic economic activity has weakened. The moderate rebound recorded earlier in the year was not sustained, while recent indicators point to subdued demand in the transport and manufacturing subsectors," CBL Governor Dr Maluke Letete said in the latest report.

His statement indicates that key sectors of the economy are struggling to maintain growth momentum, with transport and manufacturing experiencing weaker demand.

Letete further noted that private-sector credit growth remains subdued, indicating that households and businesses are borrowing cautiously despite relatively stable financial conditions.

Credit growth is often viewed as a useful gauge of economic confidence and business activity because firms typically borrow to finance expansion while consumers access credit to support spending.

"Private-sector credit growth remained subdued and is expected to stay broadly aligned with the medium-term outlook," the statement said.

The CBL, however, expects the economy to continue growing modestly over the medium term, although much of that growth is projected to come from the services sector rather than broad-based expansion across industries.

"Over the medium term, growth is expected to remain modest and supported mainly by the services sector."

The services sector includes industries such as telecommunications, financial services, retail trade, tourism and hospitality, which have increasingly become important pillars of Lesotho's economic activity.

Despite weaker domestic growth, Lesotho's external position remains relatively strong. The country's net international reserves (NIR) stood at US$1,353 million as of July 16, 2026, equivalent to 5.4 months of import cover.

This level of reserves remains sufficient to protect the country's currency arrangement with South Africa against external shocks, according to the CBL.

However, the apex bank expects reserves to decline gradually over the coming months as higher global oil prices increase the country's import bill, with reserves projected to fall to US$1,217 million by March 2027.

Global economic developments continue to present significant risks to Lesotho's economic outlook. Supply disruptions arising from conflict in the Middle East have pushed energy prices sharply higher, contributing to growing uncertainty over future inflation trends.

The MPC warned that downside risks to global growth include escalating geopolitical tensions, increased trade fragmentation and the possible development of a strong El Niño weather phenomenon.

These developments are particularly concerning for commodity-importing, low-income economies such as Lesotho, which are more vulnerable to rising fuel and food prices.

Domestically, inflation has begun to edge upwards, driven mainly by rising transport costs. Food price pressures, however, have remained relatively contained.

The central bank also revised its medium-term inflation outlook marginally upwards, warning that risks remain tilted to the upside.

Among the major risks identified are persistently higher oil prices, the possible withdrawal of fuel levy relief measures, weather-related disruptions affecting food supplies and secondary effects that could lead to higher wages and broader price increases across the economy.

Against this backdrop, the MPC decided to maintain the Central Bank of Lesotho's policy rate at 6.75 per cent per annum.

"The Committee will continue to monitor evidence of second-round effects and stand ready to act decisively, as necessary, to safeguard the peg and preserve macroeconomic stability," Letete concluded.

Econet, UNDP join forces for Lesotho's digital economy

Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that places Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital infrastructure and innovation at the cent

Seabata Mahao

Lesotho's drive to build a digitally competitive economy gained momentum this week as Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) renewed their partnership to advance artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure and innovation.

The agreement, signed by ETL Chief Executive Officer Dennis Plaatjies and UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Dr Taye Amssalu, extends a collaboration that began in 2020 and expanded in 2022.

Unlike previous arrangements, which focused primarily on digital inclusion, the renewed partnership signals a shift towards positioning Lesotho within the global AI economy.

The digital economy offers one of the few realistic pathways Lesotho to diversify its economy, which has traditionally depended on textiles, remittances, water exports and customs revenue

But the question is whether the country has the infrastructure, policy environment and human capital required to participate meaningfully in that future.

Addressing stakeholders at the signing ceremony, Plaatjies argued that telecommunications companies can no longer define themselves simply as providers of connectivity.

"Connectivity is no longer simply about communication. It is a foundation for innovation, economic growth and inclusive development," he said.

Plaatjies revealed that ETL has spent the past several years modernising its network to support advanced technologies such as AI and cloud computing, investments he said place Lesotho in a stronger position than many African countries found themselves in during previous waves of technological change.

For decades, Africa lagged behind in adopting transformative technologies. Electricity took more than half a century to become widespread after its introduction elsewhere; fixed-line telecommunications followed decades later, and internet adoption trailed by more than a decade. According to Plaatjies, AI presents an opportunity to break that historical pattern.

"With AI, we are ready from year zero because of the investments ETL has already made," he said.

Plaatjies disclosed that the broader ETL Group has secured access to AI computing capacity through a partnership with global chipmaker NVIDIA, while ETL itself has developed sovereign cloud and data infrastructure capable of hosting local datasets and AI applications within the country. For policymakers increasingly concerned about data sovereignty and digital independence, locally hosted cloud infrastructure could become an important strategic asset.

Yet Plaatjies was equally clear that infrastructure alone would not deliver digital transformation.

"We recognise that infrastructure is not enough. What matters equally is building the right policy environment and investing in people who will create, manage and innovate with these technologies."

Among the partnership's flagship initiatives are plans to establish a National AI Academy, expand the University Innovation Pod (UNIPOD), promote research collaborations and strengthen entrepreneurship programmes targeting young innovators.

If successfully implemented, these initiatives could help narrow the country's growing digital skills gap while building an innovation pipeline capable of supporting technology startups and knowledge-based industries.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of the agreement is its attempt to move AI beyond theoretical discussion into practical economic application. Rather than treating AI solely as an emerging technology, the partnership identifies sectors where intelligent systems could improve productivity and service delivery, including healthcare, agriculture, education and government.

Plaatjies indicated that ETL will soon introduce locally relevant AI-powered solutions developed specifically for African markets. Such technologies could improve diagnostic services in healthcare, strengthen agricultural extension services, enhance public administration and support small businesses through automation and digital financial services.

According to the UNDP, the partnership aligns with its broader objective of using digital technologies to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Dr Taye Amssalu described digital transformation as one of the most powerful drivers of inclusive development.

"Through this strengthened partnership with ETL, we aim to support Lesotho in building inclusive digital ecosystems that create jobs, strengthen institutions, improve public service delivery and ensure that no one is left behind in the digital age," he said.

The agreement also commits both organisations to supporting Lesotho's emerging Artificial Intelligence policy framework, while promoting ethical, secure and responsible AI adoption. That policy dimension may ultimately prove just as important as the technology itself.

Around the world, governments are grappling with questions of AI governance, privacy, algorithmic bias and cybersecurity. Developing clear regulations early could improve investor confidence while protecting citizens as AI becomes increasingly embedded in public services and private enterprise.

Rather than relying solely on donor-funded programmes, governments and development agencies are increasingly leveraging private sector investment to achieve national development objectives.

In this case, UNDP contributes policy expertise, institutional support and international development experience, while ETL provides commercial infrastructure, technology investment and implementation capacity.

Ntsoaki Motaung

Rh incompatibility: Silent threat in pregnancy, expert warns

Public health experts are urging all pregnant women to get early blood tests to detect potentially life-threatening condition known as Rh incompatibility, a mismatch between the mother's and baby's blood types that can have deadly consequences if left untreated.

Molumaela Lepeli, a PhD candidate, public health specialist, and practicing midwife, emphasizes that this condition is entirely preventable with routine antenatal care. He advises every pregnant woman to have her blood group tested as soon as she visits a clinic, so healthcare providers can check for the presence of the RhD (Rhesus) antigen, a protein found on the surface of red blood cells.

To understand the risk, it helps to know a basic fact about blood types. If your blood has the Rh protein, you are Rh-positive. If your blood lacks this protein, you are Rh-negative.

Problems occur when a woman with Rh-negative blood becomes pregnant with a baby who has Rh-positive blood, a trait usually inherited from the father. In this situation, the mother's immune system may view the baby's Rh-positive red blood cells as foreign invaders, similar to how it would react to a virus or bacteria.

The real danger often emerges in a second or later pregnancy, Lepeli explains.

During the first pregnancy with an Rh-positive baby, the mother's immune system may be exposed to the baby's blood, especially during delivery or if there is any bleeding. This first contact usually does not harm the baby. However, the mother's body "remembers" the Rh protein and produces antibodies against it.

In a subsequent pregnancy with another Rh-positive baby, those pre-existing antibodies can cross the placenta and attack the baby's red blood cells. This immune attack destroys the baby's blood cells, leading to a serious condition called haemolytic disease of the newborn (HDN), also known as Rh disease.

Molumaela Lepeli, a PhD candidate, a highly experienced Health Administrator, Nurse Educator, and Community Health Specialist

Babies with Rh disease can develop severe anaemia (too few healthy red blood cells), which can compromise oxygen supply to vital organs and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes), caused by the rapid breakdown of red blood cells.

In its most severe forms, Rh disease can lead to brain damage, heart failure, or even stillbirth.

Fortunately, Rh incompatibility is easily managed when caught early.

Lepeli explains that if a mother is Rh-negative, she is given one or two injections of a medication called anti-D immunoglobulin during pregnancy. This injection works like a shield. It clears any Rh-positive fetal blood cells from the mother's bloodstream before her immune system can recognise them and start making antibodies.

The injection is typically given at around 28 weeks of pregnancy. It is safe, effective, and may cause only mild side effects such as a rash or flu-like symptoms, which usually resolve quickly.

Babies diagnosed with Rh disease are closely monitored throughout pregnancy. After birth, treatment depends on the severity.

Mild cases may be treated with special blue lights (phototherapy) to reduce jaundice.

Severe cases may require a blood transfusion to replace the damaged red blood cells with healthy ones.

"All pregnant women must attend the clinic as soon as they realise they are pregnant and keep up with all appointments," Lepeli stresses. "This simple step saves lives."

While no formal study has been conducted on Rh incompatibility in Lesotho, Lepeli notes that in his years as a midwife, he has encountered many cases in the country, underscoring that this is not a rare problem.

A study in Nigeria found that while most women knew their own blood type (69 percent) and their partner's (66.8 percent), fewer than half understood that Rh incompatibility could lead to miscarriage or premature birth. More than half knew that Rh-negative mothers need the protective injection, but many mistakenly believed it should only be given after delivery, too late to prevent the immune response in that pregnancy.

The study concluded that although awareness exists, there are still significant gaps in understanding that require more public education.

Ntsoaki Motaung

QMMH finance manager fails to justify M8 million spending

A senior Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital (QMMH) official has been unable to provide clear documentation showing he was authorised to spend nearly M8 million from patient revenue accounts.

Tšele Sehlabo, Finance Manager for QMMH, appeared before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Monday this week to answer queries raised during an internal audit. The audit revealed that Sehlabo used approximately M8 million from the hospital's revenue account for daily operations, without what the committee described as proper written authorisation.

This was not the first time Sehlabo had faced scrutiny over financial decisions. Just last week, he admitted to the same committee that he had single-handedly decided to redirect staff pension contributions, money meant for the Lesotho National Insurance Group (LNIG), to pay hospital suppliers instead. That admission had already raised alarms about internal controls.

During Monday's hearing, committee members pressed Sehlabo for written proof that he had been given the green light to tap into the M8 million from the revenue account. He was unable to produce any such document.

"According to my knowledge, it was authorised," Sehlabo told the committee.

But the committee chairperson, 'Machaba Lemphane Letsie, pushed back sharply: "When the auditor queries something, you have to convince them with documents, not just with knowledge. Knowledge without documents is not enough."

Sehlabo insisted that hospital regulations allow revenue funds to be used for operational costs. However, he acknowledged that such decisions normally involve his immediate supervisor, the Managing Director, who at the time was Moleboheng Tau.

Tau, however, painted a different picture when she testified. She recalled that on March 28, 2025, Sehlabo came to her office warning that operational funds were running low. She said she advised him to formally request permission from the Ministry's Principal Secretary (PS) and to attach a detailed statement showing remaining balances and outstanding expenses.

According to Tau, Sehlabo later submitted figures showing M10 million in available revenue. But she told the committee that he then appeared to have bypassed her entirely and approached the Principal Secretary directly.

"From there, I was not part of the decisions taken," she said.

Sehlabo defended his actions by claiming that the Principal Secretary had told him QMMH did not need formal PS approval to use revenue funds, and that informing the PS was merely a courtesy.

He also noted that this was the first time he had seen a letter from the Managing Director explicitly refusing to grant authorisation without a full expenditure report. He further explained that in March 2026, when a similar funding shortage occurred, he again approached the Managing Director, who then consulted the legal office and the PS. Once more, Sehlabo said, the PS reaffirmed that no formal approval was required.

"In my line of work, there is no written document from my superiors every day saying I am allowed to use a certain amount of money. There is no documentation," Sehlabo told the committee.

The PAC made it clear that it is not interested in seeing lists of individual payments made in March. Rather, the committee wanted proof that Sehlabo had the legal authority to move money from the hospital's revenue account in the first place.

"We do not want March payments. We want the authority," Chairperson Letsie emphasised.

The committee also pointed out that, even if revenue and government subvention funds were combined in the hospital's accounts, Sehlabo should have been able to track how much came from each source, and should therefore know exactly what portion of the remaining balance was revenue.

This case goes beyond accounting technicalities. Hospital revenue accounts typically come from patient fees and other service charges. When such funds are used without clear authorisation, it can undermine the hospital's ability to track its true financial position, potentially affecting procurement of medicines, equipment, and staff salaries.

The PAC hearings are part of Parliament's oversight role, ensuring that public funds, and funds generated by public institutions, are spent transparently and lawfully.

Beyond technology: Why clear systems matter in public service delivery

Dr Theko Tlebere

Over the past two weeks, I have reflected on how Lesotho can improve the way public services are delivered. The first article was prompted by a recruitment process that required me to travel physically to sign a declaration form that could easily have been sent by email. That experience raised a broader concern about the continued dependence on paper-based procedures, even when technology offers faster and less costly alternatives. The second article followed my visit to the National Identity and Civil Registry to renew an expired identity document. I commended the department for issuing my new ID within a few hours, while also questioning why such an efficient service still relied heavily on manual forms and repeated paperwork. This past week, another visit to a government department added an important dimension to that discussion. Modern technology is essential, but technology alone does not create efficiency. Efficient public service also depends on clear, predictable and properly managed systems.

I recently visited the Department of Traffic in Maseru to renew my driver's licence. I arrived at approximately 8:30 in the morning. From the moment I entered the premises, it was clear that there were organised procedures in place. At the main gate security officers asked every person why they had come to the department. They checked whether applicants had the correct documents for the services they were seeking. This meant that people who lacked particular requirements could be advised before entering the building and spending hours in the wrong queue.

That first point of contact may appear minor, but it serves an important administrative purpose. It prevents unnecessary delays, reduces confusion and ensures that applicants understand what is required before proceeding further. The department also has a police officer available to certify copies of documents. This makes the process even more convenient. Instead of requiring applicants to leave the premises and search for another police station, certification can be completed within the same service environment. At the main entrance of the building, another team of security officers again asked applicants what services they required. They checked documents and directed people to the appropriate queues for licence renewals, vehicle-related services and other transactions.

At first glance, checking documents twice may appear repetitive. In practice, however, the second verification ensures that applicants enter the correct queues and that officials at service counters receive files that are ready for processing. The system was clear. People knew where to go. Officials knew what they were expected to do. Applicants were not left moving from one office to another in search of information. Most importantly, the process worked. By 10:00 in the morning, I had received my renewed driver's licence. In approximately an hour and a half, the entire process had been completed. I did not pay any extra money beyond the official charges. I did not have to call anyone I knew. I did not need a personal connection or "konaki," as it was commonly understood in the past.

I simply followed the process, and the process delivered the service. That experience deserves recognition. Public commentary often focuses only on the failures of government departments. Criticism is necessary where services are poor, but it is equally important to acknowledge departments when they demonstrate that efficient, fair and transparent service delivery is possible. The Department of Traffic showed that citizens can receive timely services without favouritism, unofficial payments or personal connections. It demonstrated that well-designed procedures can create order even where a department still relies heavily on paper. This does not mean that the department has completed its modernisation journey. There remains significant room for improvement. Application forms could be completed online before people arrive. Appointments could be booked electronically. Payments could be integrated into secure digital platforms. Applicants could receive automated notifications about the status of their documents.

However, the department has already achieved something important: it has established a functioning administrative system. This is a crucial lesson for public sector reform. Technology cannot compensate for a poorly organised institution. If responsibilities are unclear, queues are unmanaged, information is inconsistent and applicants do not know where to go, introducing computers will not automatically solve those problems. A disorganised paper system can easily become a disorganised digital system. Before any institution digitises its services, it must first understand how those services should move from one stage to another. It must determine who receives the citizen, who verifies documents, who provides information, who processes the application and who resolves problems when they arise.

Digital transformation works best when it supports a clear administrative structure. The Department of Traffic experience therefore adds balance to the arguments made in the previous two articles. Lesotho should continue reducing unnecessary paperwork and introducing electronic services. At the same time, it must strengthen the underlying systems through which services are delivered. Clear systems reduce uncertainty. They save time. They prevent applicants from entering the wrong queues. They reduce pressure on officials because problems are identified early. They also promote fairness because every applicant follows the same procedure.

This is particularly important in public institutions, where citizens should never feel that they require personal relationships to receive ordinary services. When rules are clear and consistently applied, there is less room for favouritism. When service steps are transparent, citizens know what to expect. When official fees and requirements are communicated openly, opportunities for unofficial payments are reduced. Clear systems therefore contribute not only to efficiency but also to integrity and public trust.

There is, however, another question that must be considered. Are the systems I experienced at the Department of Traffic in Maseru also available in other districts? I cannot confidently say whether the same operational standards are applied countrywide. Yet efficient service delivery should not end in the capital. A person renewing a driver's licence in Thaba-Tseka, Mokhotlong, Qacha's Nek, Mafeteng or Botha-Bothe should encounter the same level of organisation, clarity and fairness. Public service standards should not depend on geography. My uncle in Ha Khohlopo, whose nearest town is Thaba-Tseka, deserves the same quality of service that I experienced in Maseru. He should not have to travel to the capital simply because systems are better organised there. Nor should people living in rural districts accept slower or less predictable services as normal.

The purpose of government decentralisation is not simply to establish offices in different districts. It is to ensure that the same standard of service is available throughout the country. This requires standard operating procedures, proper staff training, clear public information and consistent monitoring. Every district office should know what steps must be followed, what documents are required, how queues should be managed and how long services should reasonably take. Where one department or district has developed an effective model, government should study it and replicate it. Good practices should not remain isolated successes. They should become institutional standards.

The experience at the Department of Traffic also reminds us that public sector improvement does not always require large budgets or highly sophisticated technology. Sometimes reform begins with basic organisational discipline: placing knowledgeable personnel at the entrance, checking documents before applicants join queues, providing related services in one location and directing citizens clearly. These are practical measures that immediately improve the experience of the public. Technology can then make those systems even stronger. Online applications can reduce time spent filling forms. Integrated databases can reduce the need to submit the same information repeatedly. Digital payments can improve convenience and accountability. Electronic tracking systems can show where an application is at any given moment. The best public service model is therefore not a choice between technology and human organisation. It is a combination of both.

Over the past three weeks, my interactions with different institutions have produced three related lessons. First, government must reduce unnecessary manual processes and embrace digital solutions. Second, efficient public servants should be supported with modern tools that allow them to perform their responsibilities more effectively. Third, technology must operate within clear and accountable systems. My visit to the Department of Traffic provided encouraging evidence that Lesotho can deliver efficient public services. Receiving a renewed driver's licence within approximately 90 minutes, without unofficial payments or personal connections, is the kind of experience citizens should be able to expect. The next challenge is to ensure that such efficiency is not limited to one office in Maseru. It should be replicated across departments, districts and public services. Whether a citizen lives in the capital or in Ha Khohlopo like my uncle, government should value their time, respect their dignity and provide services through systems that are fair, transparent and easy to understand. That is what efficient public administration looks like. It is not merely about completing transactions quickly. It is about creating institutions that citizens can trust.The Future is NOW!

Editorial Comment: When journalism gives voice to the forgotten

The arrival of dredging equipment at Rasebala Dam in Mafeteng is more than the beginning of an engineering project. It is proof that when the suffering of ordinary people is brought into the public eye, those entrusted with power are compelled to respond.

From towards the end of 2024, up to early 2025, the people of Mafeteng lived through a crisis that should never have reached the levels it did. Schools struggled to provide a safe learning environment. Health facilities battled to maintain basic hygiene. Families spent countless hours searching for water. Businesses suffered losses. Access to clean water, a basic necessity and a fundamental human right, became uncertain.

It would have been easy for this crisis to become just another statistic. Instead, it became a national conversation.

At Newsday, we made a deliberate decision to keep the spotlight on the people of Mafeteng. We reported not only on official statements but also on the lived experiences of those waking up each day without reliable access to water. Journalism serves little purpose if it only records events after they have passed. Its highest calling is to amplify the voices of those who might otherwise go unheard and to hold institutions accountable before a crisis becomes a catastrophe.

The response that followed demonstrates why this role matters. Government officials visited the district. Civil society organisations mobilised. Professionals offered their expertise. WASCO developed and implemented a response that has now reached an important milestone with the arrival of the dredging equipment.

Credit is due to all those who acted. The Ministry of Natural Resources, under the leadership of Mr. Mohlomi Moleko, engaged stakeholders and sought solutions. WASCO acknowledged the seriousness of the problem and committed resources to addressing it. Civil society organisations, legal practitioners, and the people of Mafeteng themselves refused to accept that the situation was normal.

This is how democracy is meant to function. Citizens raise concerns. The media informs the nation. Institutions respond. Solutions are found.

But this milestone should not be mistaken for the finish line.

The real measure of success will be whether the people of Mafeteng enjoy a reliable and sustainable supply of clean water long after the cameras have left and the headlines have faded. That will require consistent communication with the community, careful management of the ongoing works, and sustained investment in water infrastructure so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

The lesson extends beyond Mafeteng. Across Lesotho, communities face challenges that often remain invisible until someone shines a light on them. Journalism has a responsibility to find those stories, tell them truthfully, and ensure that the concerns of ordinary citizens receive the attention they deserve. Public officials, in turn, should view such scrutiny not as hostility but as an opportunity to identify problems early and respond effectively.

The people of Mafeteng have reminded the country that united communities can demand accountability and inspire action. Their resilience deserves recognition. Their struggle has already produced progress. It should also leave behind a lasting lesson which is that when citizens speak, when the media listens, and when leaders act, meaningful change is possible.

FARMERS PITSO AGRICULTURAL & EXCELLENCE AWARDS EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition Overview

The Farmers Pitso Agricultural Exhibition is a national agricultural marketplace running alongside the Farmers Pitso Agricultural & Excellence Awards. The exhibition is open to the public through a single Entry/Exit via the Deal N Drive entrance, while the Awards Ceremony inside the Manthabiseng Convention Centre is reserved for ticket holders.

The Exhibition Experience

The exhibition is built around two anchor experiences and a central public activation area:

- **Anchor 1: Jandrell Mechanisation Experience** – Official Mechanisation Partner and exhibition centrepiece.
- **Anchor 2: Royal Nutrition Village** – Supporting His Majesty King Letsie III's Nutrition Agenda.
- **Farmers Square** – Central activation space for announcements, demonstrations, interviews, lucky draws, performances and sponsor activations.
- **Agribusiness Village** - Home to seed companies, fertiliser suppliers, animal health, financial institutions, ICT providers, insurers, government agencies and agribusiness service providers

Exhibition Participation Packages

The existing pricing structure remains unchanged. The update focuses on strengthening the identity of each exhibition section rather than introducing new pricing categories.

1.Royal Nutrition Village

Showcases nutrition, food systems, agro-processing, value addition and healthy diets in support of His Majesty's Nutrition Agenda.

PACKAGE TYPE	APPROXIMATE SIZE	PRICE
Small Gazebo Stall	3m x 3m ($9m^2$)	M600
Standard Stall	6m X 3m ($18m^2$)	M1,800
Premium Corner Stall	6m X 6m ($36m^2$)	M3,500

2.Jandrell Mechanisation Experience & Innovation Village

Centred around the Jandrell Mechanisation Experience, this village hosts innovation, irrigation, machinery, tools and technology. Jandrell's centrepiece activation is reserved exclusively for the Official Mechanisation Partner. Surrounding spaces remain available under the published packages.

PACKAGE TYPE	APPROXIMATE SIZE	PRICE
Machinery Display Bay	6m x 6m ($36m^2$)	M1,200
Large Equipment Stall	9m X 9m ($81m^2$)	M3,500
Premium Marquee Showcase	12m X 12m ($36m^2$)	M7,500

3.Agribusiness Village

Home to seed companies, fertiliser suppliers, animal health, financial institutions, ICT providers, insurers, government agencies and agribusiness service providers.

PACKAGE TYPE	APPROXIMATE SIZE	PRICE
Small Farmer Stall	3m x 3m ($9m^2$)	M600
Standard agribusiness stall	6m X 3m ($18m^2$)	M1,200
Premium Pavillion Space	6m X 6m ($36m^2$)	M2,500

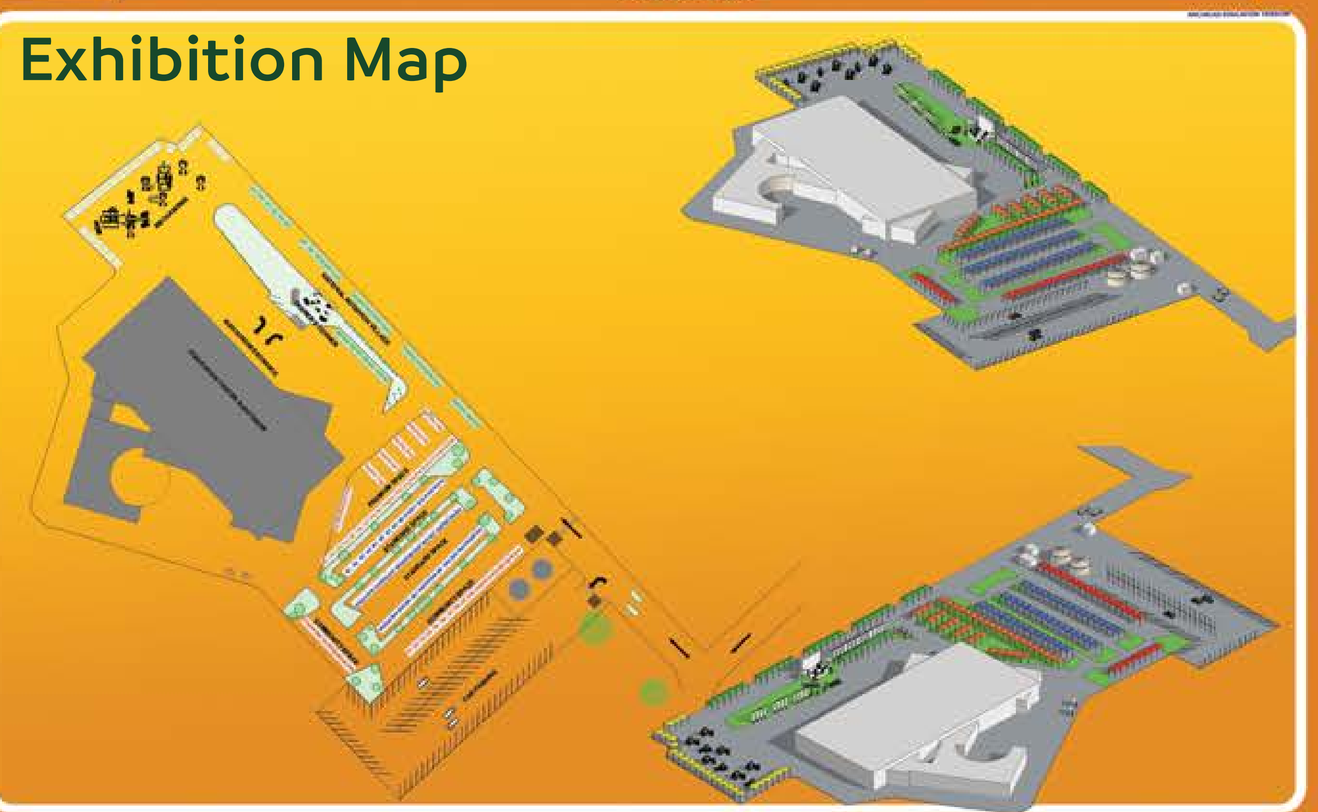
4.Farmers Square

Farmers Square is not an exhibition package. It is the exhibition's central activation space where MC announcements, lucky draws, media interviews, cultural performances, school performances, product launches and live demonstrations take place throughout the event.

What Every Exhibitor Receives

1. Exhibition space allocation.
2. Branding visibility within exhibition grounds.
3. Access to farmers, agribusinesses, financiers, & policymakers
4. Inclusion in event marketing and publicity
5. Opportunity for product demonstrations & activations
6. Networking opportunities during the two-day event.

Exhibition Map



11TH & 12TH SEPT. 2026

Apply Using the Link:

https://seahlolo.co.ls/home/farmers-pitso-awards-2026-exhibition-portal/

5092 0676

ROLL
REGENERATION OF LANDSCAPES AND LIVELIHOODS

IInvitation for Bids

Maseru, Lesotho
08 JULY 2026

Re: Procurement and Distribution of Field Crop Inputs to Support Vulnerable HHS-LSO-2000002340-0240-G-NCB

The *Government of Lesotho* has received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Global Environment Facility (GEF), Food and Agriculture Organization *(FAO) and OPEC Fund for International Development* (OFID) and intends to apply a part of the proceeds of the financing to this purchase. The use of any IFAD financing shall be subject to IFAD's approval, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the financing agreement, as well as IFAD's rules, policies and procedures. IFAD and its officials, agents and employees shall be held harmless from and against all suits, proceedings, claims, demands, losses and liability of any kind or nature brought by any party in connection with **Regeneration of Landscapes and Livelihoods.**

1. The *Regeneration of Landscapes and Livelihoods* includes rehabilitation of sixteen identified landscapes in Lesotho and improvement of the livelihoods of the people in the rural areas, within a period of eight years.
2. This invitation for bids (IFB) follows the general procurement notice that appeared on IFAD website on the **21st April 2026**, Lesotho Times newspaper on the **23rd April 2026** and Public eye newspaper on **24th April 2026** and **Informative on 29 April 2026**
3. The purchaser now invites sealed bids from eligible entities (bidders) for the **Procurement and Distribution of Field Crop Inputs to Support Vulnerable HHS** More details on these goods and related services are provided in the schedule of requirements in this bidding document.
4. This IFB is open to all eligible bidders who wish to respond. Subject to restrictions noted in the bidding document, eligible entities may associate with other bidders to enhance their capacity to successfully carry out the procurement.
5. Bidding will be conducted using the **National Competitive Bidding (NCB)** method, the evaluation procedure for which is described in this bidding document, in accordance with the IFAD Procurement Handbook which is provided at www.ifad.org/project-procurement. The NCB process, as described, will include a review and verification of qualifications and past performance, including a reference check, prior to the contract award.
6. Please note that a pre-bid conference **will not be** held as described in the bid data sheet (BDS), Section III of the bidding document.
7. Bidders interested in submitting a bid shall download the bidding document from the following website: www.rollproject.gov.ls and complete the registration form available on the website

Attn: Procurement Manager ROLL Project
Ministry of Environment & Forestry
Industrial Area, Plot no. 12281-609,
Maseru 100
Lesotho
Tel: (+266) 58730763/ (+266) 58757203
E-mail: *procurement.roll@gov.ls* and copy to ***morakanyane.mafatle@gov.ls***

8. Bids must be delivered to the address and in the manner specified in the bid data sheet– instructions to bidders 23.2, no later than **10:00** local time on the **10 August 2026**.
9. Bidders shall be aware that late bids will not be accepted under any circumstance and will be returned unopened at the written request and cost of the bidder. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security or bid-securing declaration (as required) in the manner and amount specified in the bid data sheet.
10. Please note that electronic bids **shall not** be accepted.

Yours sincerely,
Procurement Manager
Regeneration of Landscapes and Livelihoods Project Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Industrial Area, Plot no.12281-609, Maseru 100, Lesotho
Tel: (+266) 58730763/ (+266) 58757203
E-mail: *procurement.roll@gov.ls*

Procurement and Distribution of Apiculture Tools and Materials To Support Vulnerable HHS-LSO-2000002340-0241-G-NCB

IFAD Investing in rural people
OPEC FUND
gef

WORLD BANK GROUP
IFAD Investing in rural people
JICA
SADPII

Smallholder Agricultural Development Project (SADP II)
Matching Grant Programme

Call for Applications

Background:
The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (MAFSN) has received financial support from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP) under the supervision of Internation Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). The financial support will be managed by the Smallholder Agriculture Development Project II (SADP II) under Matching Grants Programme (MGP) to support investment by commodity-based producer groups and agri-businesses for agriculture-related businesses to support access to markets by formally or informally linking producers to value chain actors through vertical alliance building.

Priorities:
Grant Financing:
Two grant windows are available to applicants:
i. qualifying supported commodity-based producer groups for investments up to LSL1,000,000.00
ii. agri-businesses in win-win partnerships with groups for investments of up to LSL1,500,000.00

Eligible Applicants:
The commodity-based producer groups and/or agri-business activities operating in all ten districts of Lesotho are eligible for grants. Eligible applicants include a) qualifying commodity-based producer groups; b) agribusiness firms willing to make investments that demonstrate win-win partnership with commodity groups. The commodity-based producer groups with women in leadership roles within the group and have a quota of at least 40% youth and at least 50% women will receive priority for grant support. Government Employees are not eligible. Commodity groups and agri-businesses should be registered with Law Office and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development. The land on which the operations will be conducted should be registered in the name of the enterprise (commodity group, agri-business, etc.). Investment support should will be on production and post-harvest equipment.

Beneficiary contribution:
In all cases, successful applicants will be required to make a co-finance contribution in cash to engender ownership and demonstrate commitment. Co-finance cash contributions for the commodity-based producer groups grants for registered associations and cooperatives will be 20% of the funds requested. Agri-business grants for registered agriculture-oriented and privately-owned enterprises, associations and cooperatives will require a 30% co-finance contribution. In both cases, 100% of such contribution MUST BE available before SADP II disburses funds to beneficiaries.

The participation and contribution from different partners should be confirmed by written agreement reached between the principal applicant, the service provider (World Vision International, Lesotho) and/or other partners. In the application, the lead firm must clearly identify and mention the commodity group that it will be working with to implement the grant. The number of group members to benefit from the grant should be clearly outlined and disparaged by sex, age and other parameters

Eligible Expenditures under Grant:
Eligible expenditures shall relate to long term capital assets relevant to the activity. This include costs associated with the purchase and installation of equipment for production, harvesting, post-harvest handling, processing, preservation, storage, grading, packaging etc., the construction of necessary buildings storage, processing, marketing; the purchase and installation pumps, boreholes, tanks etc; product development; alignment with national and international food and safety standards; and marketing campaigns.

Non-Eligible Expenditures under Grant:
The following items would not be covered by the grant amount: (a) Salaries or payment for works and services provided to the project by the grant applicants or its members; b) any expenditures made prior to the date of signature of the Grant Agreement or after closure date of the project; c) land surveys; purchase, rent or leasing of land and existing buildings; d) any expenditure related to operating costs, which are expected to be the direct responsibility of the applicant; e) any expenditure with a hazardous impact on the environment. Each proposal should have an environmental social impact assessment and safeguards management plan as part of its design

Applications should be submitted in four copies (one original plus three photocopies) and delivered by hand at the office of the MGP Secretariat in the District Agricultural Office (DAO) in the 10 districts of Lesotho. Applications submitted after deadline will not be accepted.

Evaluation of the Applications:
All applications received within the deadline will be screened by the MGP Secretariat for compliance with the above rules. The successful applications will then be evaluated by specialized Technical and Financial Reviewers, submitted to the MGC for approval of financial and technical review and finally field verifications will be conducted. The list of successful applicants will be published through public posting at the MGP Secretariat's office. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed by letter, and their original project documents could be returned to them on request.

Application Documentation:
The official application will be managed by World Vision International, Lesotho, in all the 10 districts.

Deadline and Place for Submission of Applications:
The deadline for submission of applications is on or before **August 26, 2026, at 1630hrs**.

Invitation to Bidders

BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN COMPETITIVE TENDERING

02 July 2026

Supply and delivery of 3% Aqueous Film Forming Foam - PRO/1/2026/2027

1. The *Ministry of Public Works and Transport* has been allocated/received funds from Government under Development Budget to be used for the acquisition of 3% Aqueous Film Forming Foam.
2. The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above Goods.
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open national bidding method contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all bidders.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 8(a) from [*0800hrs to 1600hrs*].
5. The Bidding document in English may be obtained by interested bidders from the office of procurement of Transport at Old Traffic Building, next to St Catherines High School
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before *04th August 2026, 1200Hrs.* [If appropriate, include the following: All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 2% of the bid amount. Bid securities or bid securing declarations must be valid until 04th November 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 1200Hrs, 04th August 2026.
7. There *shall not be* a pre – bid meeting/ site visit.
8. (a) Documents may be inspected at:
   Ministry of Public Works and Transport
   Old Traffic Department Building
   Next to St Catherines High School
   Procurement Unit
   Room 223

   (b) Documents will be issued from:
   Ministry of Public Works and Transport
   Old Traffic Department Building
   Next to St Catherines High School
   Procurement Unit
   Room 223

   (c) Bids must be delivered to:
   Ministry of Public Works and Transport
   First Floor of Public Works and Transport Building
   Corner Senate Road & Lepoqo Road, Industrial Area, Maseru
   Opposite Browns Wholesale

   (d) Address of bid opening:
   Ministry of Public Works and Transport
   First Floor of Public Works and Transport Building
   Corner Senate Road & Lepoqo Road, Industrial Area, Maseru
   Opposite Browns Wholesale

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

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	*02nd July 2026*
b. Pre-bid meeting where applicable	*(N/A)*
c. Bid closing date	*04th August 2026*
d. Evaluation process	*05th – 14ht August 2026*
e. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	*17th – 21st August 2026*
f. Contract signature	*24th – 28th August 2026.*

Signature: ____________
Name: Mapaseka Nkone
Position of Authorised Official: Procurement Manager

Invitation to Bidders

BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN NATIONAL COMPETITIVE TENDERING

3 August 2026

Tender For Supply and Delivery of Metrology Equipment - MTIBD/26-27/01

1. The *Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development* has been allocated/received funds *from Government of Lesotho* to be used for the acquisition of *Metrology Equipment.*
2. The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above Goods.
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open national *competitive bidding* method contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all national bidders.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 8(a) from *9:00 am to 4:00 pm*.
5. The Bidding document in English 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 *M1000.00*. The method of payment will be *cash*.
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before *10:00 am on the 7 September 2026*. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of M20, 000.00. Bid securities or bid securing declarations must be valid until 7 December 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 10.00 am on the 7 September 2026
7. There *shall not be* a pre – bid meeting.
8. (a) Documents may be inspected at: Procurement Unit Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development, 2nd Floor, Old LNDC Office Block Maseru Lesotho. Contact person is Head of Procurement Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development email address ghoase.morakabi@gov.ls
   (b) Documents will be issued from: Procurement Unit Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development, 2nd Floor, Old LNDC Office Block Maseru Lesotho.
   (c) Bids must be delivered to: Procurement Unit Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development, 2nd Floor, Old LNDC Office Block Maseru Lesotho.
   (d) Address of bid opening: Ministry's Main Boardroom, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development, 2nd Floor, Old LNDC Office Block Maseru Lesotho.
9. The planned procurement schedule (subject to changes) is as follows:

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	3 August 2026
b. Pre-bid meeting where applicable	Not applicable
c. Bid closing date	7 September 2026
d. Evaluation process	14 September 2026
e. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	17 September 2026
f. Contract signature	30 September 2026

Road Fund

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (CONSULTANCY SERVICES)

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW AND RESTRUCTURING
REFERENCE NUMBER: RF/2026/C1

Background:
The Road Fund is a statutory organisation established to fulfil its mandate of collecting road user charges and disbursing these funds to support road maintenance, rehabilitation and road safety initiatives throughout Lesotho. As part of its commitment to improving organisational effectiveness, service delivery, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability, the organisation seeks to undertake a comprehensive organisational review and restructuring exercise.

The review is intended to ensure that the organisational structure aligns with the organisation's operational requirements, legislative framework, technological advancements, and industry best practices. The exercise will also assess the adequacy of existing staffing levels, reporting structures, governance arrangements, and functional responsibilities to ensure optimal performance.

Road Fund now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the required Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (brochures including the name of the country in which the firm is registered; experience of projects related to the assignment, including brief descriptions of most recent relevant assignments showing location, client, costs and staff involved, etc.).

Purpose of the assignment:
The purpose of this consultancy is to undertake a comprehensive organisational review and develop a fit-for-purpose organisational structure that enhances operational efficiency, improves accountability and promotes sustainable growth.

Objectives:

- Review the current organisational structure and assess its effectiveness;
- Determine whether current staffing levels are adequate;
- Review reporting lines, spans of control, and governance arrangements;
- Assess job roles and functional responsibilities;
- Identify duplication of functions, inefficiencies, and operational gaps;
- Recommend an optimal organisational structure;
- Develop an implementation roadmap for the restructuring process;
- Recommend appropriate change management interventions.

Short-listing Criteria
The shortlisting criteria are: (i) quality of submission, (ii) core business and years in business, (iii) experience of the firm on similar assignments (relevant experience); (iv) technical and managerial capability of the firm; (v) Reference letters on similar assignments from at least 5 clients (vi) firm's experience working in the SADC region, preferably Lesotho; and (vii) for international firms, potential association with local consulting firms.
The margin of preference shall be applied during evaluation.

Duration of the assignment:
The period of engagement is **Twelve (12) to Sixteen (16) Weeks.**
Detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for this assignment can be obtained at the Road Fund website: www.roadfund.org.ls

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours [08:00 hrs to 16:30 hrs local time] or on this email address: procurement@roadfund.org.ls

Submission:
Expressions of interest clearly marked **"Consultancy Services for Organisational Review and Restructuring"** should be submitted to the following Email: procurement@roadfund.org.ls Or hand deliver to Road Fund Offices located at Former Department of Rural Roads Building, Cnr Senate and Moshoeshoe Roads, Industrial Area, Maseru on or before **Thursday 27 August 2026 at 16:00 hrs.**

Disclaimer:
The Road Fund reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal, or to cancel this procurement process at any time if the circumstances so require.

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

NATIONAL DRUG SERVICE ORGANIZATION (NDSO)

INVITATION TO BID

Open National Competitive Tendering

Tender No.: NDSO/CUSTOMERMEETING/2026/07
Subject: Provision of Accommodation and Conference Facilities to NDSO

The National Drug Service Organization (NDSO), a Trading Account for the Ministry of Health in Lesotho, invites eligible bidders to submit bids for the Provision of Accommodation and Conference Services for the NDSO Customer Meeting and Gala Dinner, to be held from **19 to 23 October 2026.**

Bidding will be conducted through Open National Competitive Tendering procedures in accordance with the Public Procurement Act, 2023.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain the Bidding Documents from the NDSO website at www.ndso.org.ls.
Bid Closing Date & Time: 14:00 hours, 13 August 2026
Bid Opening: 14:30 hours, 13 August 2026, in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend

Note: There shall not be a pre-bid meeting/site visit. Late bids shall be rejected.

Address for inspection, submission and opening of bids:
National Drug Service Organisation
Procurement Building
Mafeteng 900, Lesotho

Contact Details:
tenders@ndso.org.ls
Telephone: +266 2221 5300

Specific Procurement Notice

Request for Bids

(One-Envelope Bidding Process)

Country: Kingdom of Lesotho
Name of Project: Department of Rural Water Supply
Contract Title: DRW, System Maintenance Programme, 2026-2027

RFB Reference No.: DRWS/M/GOL2/2026-2027

1. The Ministry of Natural Resources has received financing from the Government of Lesotho(GOL) toward the cost of the Rural Water Supply Projects and intends to apply the proceeds toward payments under the contract for **DRW, System Maintenance Programme, 2026-2027**

2. The Ministry of **Natural Resources** now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders of DRWS category **B, C and D** to submit tenders for **DRW, System Maintenance Programme, 2026-2027**

3. Bidding will be conducted through Open National competitive Tender as specified in Public Procurement Act of 2023.

4. Interested eligible Bidders may inspect the Bidding document during office hours; **09:00 hours** to **16:00 hours** at the **Department of Rural Water Supply Railway station, Railway Station, Next to WASCO Offices.**

5. The bidding documents in **English, will be collected from Department of Rural Water supply, Railway Station, next to WASCO Offices, Maseru from Friday 26 June 2026 to 05 August 2026, at the non-refundable fee of M1 500.00. Payment shall be made to** Accounts Office DRWS Maseru, **Bidders must produce the receipt obtained from accounts office to procurement Unit in order to receive the bidding documents.**

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **05, August, 2026, at 10:00 am**. 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:

Procurement Unit
DRWS Office Khubetsoana,
Resource Centre,
Next to Appropriate Technology Services (ATS)
Maseru

7. All Bids must be accompanied by a **Bid Security of M20,000** in the form of a Bank Guarantee.

8. A Compulsory Pretender meeting shall be held on Monday **13 July, 2026 at 10:00 am** at the DRWS Khubetsoana Resources Centre, Maseru.

9. All questions and clarifications relating to this tender should be directed to The Procurement Unit, Ministry of Natural Resources, Bokamoso Business Suit, Old Christie House, Orpen Road, and Opposite Centre for Accounting Studies Maseru. Tel: 27325160.

LAND ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITY

BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN COMPETITIVE TENDERING

[LAA ICT/Internet Services: 08/07/2026]

The *Land Administration Authority* has allocated funds be used for the acquisition of ***supply and delivery of Internet Services***.

1. The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above supplies.
2. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open national bidding method contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all bidders.
3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 7(a) from ***[08;00am to 05:00pm]***.
4. Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before ***[12:00 Noon)***. 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 7(d) at **[21/08/2026]**
5. There *shall NOT* be a pre – bid meeting as indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.
6. (a) Documents may be inspected at: ***Land Administration Authority***
(b) Documents will be issued from: ***Land Administration Authority***
(c) Bids must be delivered to: ***Director General and Chief Executive Officer***
(d) Address of bid opening: ***P.O. Box 11856, Maseru, Lesotho. Lerotholi Road Opposite, The Royal Palace***

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

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	*08/07/2026*
b. Pre-bidmeeting where applicable	N/A
c. Bid closing date	21/08/2026
d. Evaluation process	*(24th August to 31st August 2026)*
e. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	*(01st to 14th September 2026)*
f. Contract signature	*(15th to 21st September 2026)*

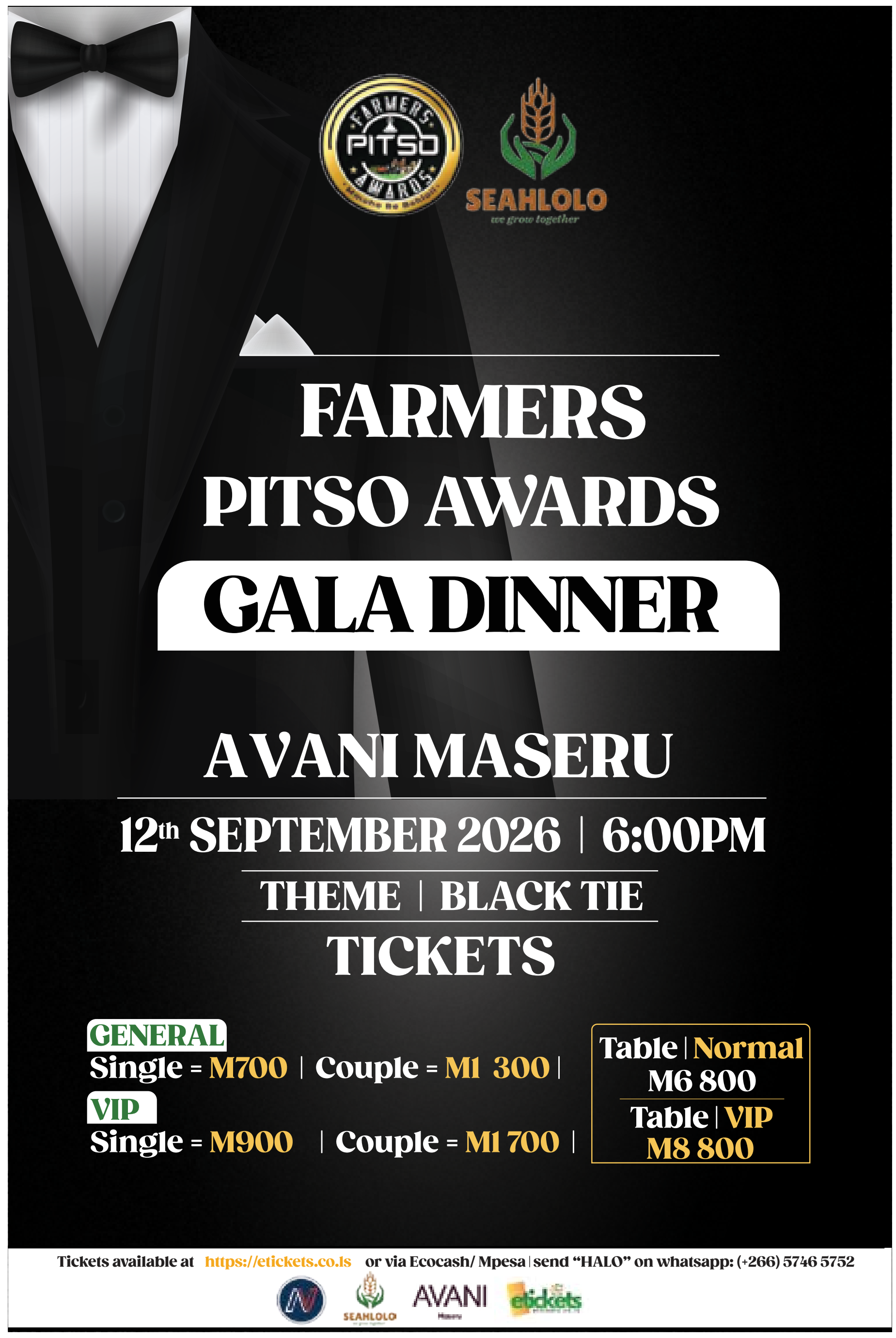
[LAA HRA/ Two (2) SUV Vehicles/08/07/2026]

1. The *Land Administration Authority* has allocated funds be used for the acquisition **of supply and delivery of *Two (2) SUV Vehicles.***
2. The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above supplies.
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open national bidding method contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all bidders.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 7(a) from ***[08;00am to 05:00pm]***.
5. Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before ***[12:00 Noon 08/07/2026)***. 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 7(d) at **[21/08/2026]**
6. There *shall NOT* be a pre – bid meeting as indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.
7. (a) Documents may be inspected at: ***Land Administration Authority***
(b) Documents will be issued from: ***Land Administration Authority***
(c) Bids must be delivered to: ***Director General and Chief Executive Officer***
(d) Address of bid opening: ***P.O. Box 11856, Maseru, Lesotho. Lerotholi Road Opposite, The Royal Palace***

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

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	*08/07/2026*
b. Pre-bidmeeting where applicable	N/A
c. Bid closing date	21/08/2026
d. Evaluation process	*(24th August to 31st August 2026)*
e. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	*(01st to 14th September 2026)*
f. Contract signature	*(15th to 21st September 2026)*

PITSO
SEAHLOLO
FARMERS
PITSO
AGRICULTURE & EXCELLENCE
AWARDS
'MANTHABISENG CONVENTION CENTRE
SATURDAY
FARMERS
AWARD
CEREMONY
TICKET
M200
PLUS A
FREE
M100
FOOD
COUPON
PRIZES TO BE WON | FOOD | MUSIC | AWARDS
12 SEPTEMBER 2026
SADPII
Jandrell
Africa Tanks
Willard
Bata
Afrivet
AVANI
T-CONNECT
foodformzansi.co.za
etickets



PITSO
SEAHLOLO
FARMERS
PITSO AWARDS
GALA DINNER
AVANI MASERU
12th SEPTEMBER 2026 | 6:00PM
THEME | BLACK TIE
TICKETS
GENERAL
Single = M700 | Couple = M1 300 |
VIP
Single = M900 | Couple = M1 700 |
Table | Normal
M6 800
Table | VIP
M8 800
Tickets available at https://etickets.co.ls or via Ecocash/ Mpesa | send "HALO" on whatsapp: (+266) 5746 5752
SEAHLOLO
AVANI
etickets

Elevate
your Brand's
visibility!
Advertise
With Us
and unlock exclusive rates...
Newsday
www.newsdayonline.co.ls
2231 4267

Thope Tse Khang's 'Nka e bula' on course for 10 million views

...as streaming numbers surge

Staff Reporter

Nka e bula, a popular famo track by Thope Tse Khang is emerging as one of the fastest-growing songs in the genre's recent history, with YouTube data tracked over the past six weeks showing a steady climb toward the elusive 10-million-view mark.

The song, from the album series. "Ea Luma Thaba Mathokoane 02," originally uploaded on September 27, 2023, has been logged by this publication at two points this year to measure its trajectory.

On June 18, the video stood at 6,712,803 views and 51,488 likes. By July 30, those figures had climbed to 7,187,560 views and 55,016 likes, a gain of 474,757 views and 3,528 likes in just under 42 days.

That works out to an average of roughly 11,300 new views a day over the tracking period, a pace that has kept the track firmly in the conversation among Lesotho's most-watched Famo releases three years after its release. The artist's official channel itself has grown in tandem, adding close to 1,200 subscribers in the same window, from 22,600 to 23,800.

When might it hit 10 million?

If the song continues gaining views at its current average daily rate, it would cross the 10-million-view threshold in early April 2027, roughly eight months from now. That projection assumes the pace observed over the past six weeks holds steady, which is far from guaranteed: songs often accelerate when they catch a fresh wave of attention (a viral dance challenge, a radio push, or renewed interest around an anniversary), and just as often taper off as novelty fades.

Still, sustaining growth of this kind more than two and a half years after release is unusual for a Famo single, a genre where most releases see the bulk of their views concentrated in the weeks immediately following upload.

That "Nka e bula" is still adding tens of thousands of views a week suggests it has settled into the kind of long-tail popularity, repeat listening, playlist inclusion, and word-of-mouth sharing, that keeps older tracks relevant in Lesotho's music scene.

Why it matters

Famo music, long rooted in migrant labourer traditions and known for its raw, confrontational lyricism, has increasingly found a home on digital platforms, giving artists like Thope Tse Khang a much wider audience than radio or live performance alone could offer. Should "Nka e bula" reach 10 million views, it would place the track as the first Famo songs to hit that mark on YouTube, underscoring the genre's growing digital footprint even as it retains its traditional character.

Forty Basotho students secure prestigious Indian scholarships

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

Forty top-performing Basotho students are set to pursue higher education at universities and institutes across India after securing scholarships offered by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

The students, who recently completed all the requirements for the programme, will begin their studies in the coming weeks under one of India's flagship educational and cultural exchange initiatives.

The ICCR scholarship supports Diploma, Undergraduate, Postgraduate and PhD programmes, giving recipients the opportunity to acquire internationally recognised qualifications while experiencing India's diverse academic and cultural environment.

The programme is open to applicants aged between 18 and 40 years, depending on the level of study.

Over the years, hundreds of Basotho students have benefited from ICCR scholarships, returning home with skills and qualifications that have contributed to national development.

Speaking during a send-off ceremony, the First Secretary (Press, Information and Culture) at the High Commission of India in Pretoria, Dr Sona Soman, said the students would serve as ambassadors for Lesotho while strengthening ties between the two countries.

"You become India's guests and Lesotho's ambassadors," Dr Soman said.

She described the scholarship as more than an opportunity for academic excellence, saying it also promotes international exposure, cross-cultural understanding and tolerance.

"The ICCR Scholarship is one of India's flagship initiatives in educational and cultural diplomacy. Every year, it offers outstanding students from across the world an opportunity to pursue higher education at some of India's finest universities and institutions.

"By earning this scholarship, you have become part of a distinguished community of alumni who have gone on to excel in diverse fields and have strengthened the bonds of friendship between India and their home countries."

Dr Soman said Lesotho is among the largest beneficiaries of the ICCR scholarship programme.

She noted that India places great emphasis on knowledge sharing, capacity building, human resource development

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Forty Basotho students secure prestigious Indian scholarships

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and partnerships for shared prosperity.

"ICCR brings together more than 3,400 students from over 160 countries enrolled in undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD programmes," she said.

The scholarship covers tuition fees, return air tickets, medical insurance, accommodation allowance and a monthly stipend. However, recipients must maintain satisfactory academic performance throughout their studies to retain the sponsorship.

One of the recipients, Mosa Mabekeke, will study for a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Food, Nutrition and Dietetics at Punjab University.

She said the programme would help her achieve her dream of working in a hospital.

"I am someone who loves food, and I want to study how it can improve people's lives," she said, adding that poor nutrition can also have serious health consequences.

Another recipient, Thapelo Kane, will pursue a Bachelor of Technology in Computer Science and Engineering.

He pledged to use the knowledge and skills he acquires to benefit Lesotho and encouraged other young people to seize opportunities whenever they arise.

"Locally there are limited scholarship opportunities, so young people should take advantage of opportunities like these," he said.

Matoka Seetsa, who will study Civil Engineering, said she chose the field because Lesotho needs more infrastructure professionals.

"To my fellow youth, do not give up. There are opportunities out there if we are willing to look for them and make use of them. This is our country; let us put it on the map," she said.

Counsellor for the Asian and Pacific Realm at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Ngaka Ramoroke, congratulated the students and said the expertise they would gain would contribute to Lesotho's economic development.

He said many Basotho who studied in India had returned home to make meaningful contributions to the country.

Ramoroke urged the students to respect India's laws, customs and traditions while conducting themselves in a manner befitting ambassadors of Lesotho.

"Fly our flag high. Everything you do will reflect on us," he said, urging them to register with the Lesotho High Commission in New Delhi upon arrival.

"I implore you to remain faithful to yourselves and to your country. Avoid getting into trouble by all means. Your responsibility is to study hard and make your sponsors proud so that we can negotiate even more scholarships for future generations."

He thanked the Government of India for its continued support, describing the scholarship programme as a reflection of the strong and friendly relations between the two countries.

"Enjoy your studies, but remember that you are going there for education. We are not sending you there to look for jobs. In India, you are there to study."

He reminded the students that although they would be thousands of kilometres from home, they would have the support of the Lesotho High Commission in New Delhi.

ICCR Scholarship alumnus Relebohile Tsoamotse, who completed a Master's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication in India after travelling there in 2021, described the experience as life-changing.

He encouraged the students to embrace every opportunity.

"Take every experience as it comes. Learn not only from your academic programme but also from the culture. Be open to acquiring new skills and meeting new people," he said.

Tsoamotse also urged them to support one another despite being placed at different universities across India.

Another alumna, 'Mapalo Nkheloane, who obtained a Master's degree in Communication and Journalism, reminded the students that they would represent Lesotho throughout their stay.

"Your behaviour reflects your country," she said. "Respect people's cultures and beliefs. India is an incredibly diverse country. Go there and represent Lesotho well."

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, nearly 2,000 Basotho have benefited from scholarships offered by the Government of India and Indian institutions over the years.

Honorary Consul for India in Lesotho, Biju Abraham Korah, congratulated the students and wished them success.

"You are fortunate to have this opportunity to study in India and explore new possibilities through education. We are proud of you and wish you every success in achieving your goals," he said.

Korah described India as a country of immense diversity, with many cultures, languages, religions and traditions, and encouraged the students to embrace the experience and integrate into their host communities.

Kick4Life duo earn prestigious international scholarships

Two of Lesotho's promising young footballers, Bafokeng Ntšeno and Thabo Motsopa

Seabata Mahao

Two of Lesotho's promising young footballers, BafokengNtšeno and Thabo Motsopa, are set to embark on life-changing educational and sporting journeys abroad after securing prestigious international scholarships through Kick4Life.

The scholarships were officially announced during a press conference held at Kick4Life headquarters on Wednesday, where family members, coaches, teachers and education stakeholders gathered to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the two youngsters.

Their departures mean that four Kick4Life graduates will have left Lesotho within the space of a month to pursue higher education overseas, highlighting the organisation's growing success in using football as a pathway to education, leadership and personal development.

Nineteen-year-old Ntšenohas secured a scholarship to Freed-Hardeman University in Tennessee, United States, where he will pursue a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, specialising in Sport and Exercise Psychology. He begins his four-year programme on August 24 while continuing his football career with the university's men's soccer team, which competes in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

Meanwhile, 17-year-old goalkeeper Motsopawill attend the prestigious African Leadership Academy (ALA) in Johannesburg, South Africa, where he starts a two-year Leadership Programme on August 22.

Both scholars completed their secondary education at Lesotho High School before earning the coveted opportunities.

Speaking during the event, Kick4Life coach EpieMuketeMboh praised the pair for their dedication and commitment.

"Ntšenoand Motsopahave taken different journeys, but they share the same qualities—they are committed, eager to learn and always willing to grow," said Mukete.

"As coaches, our role is to recognise potential, create opportunities and help young people see the bigger picture. These scholarships are a reward for the hard work they have put in over many years, and we are incredibly proud of what they have achieved. We know they will continue to grow as leaders and represent both Kick4Life and Lesotho with distinction."

He joined Kick4Life's Soccer School Programme in 2016 at the age of nine, initially playing as a goalkeeper before the Covid-19 pandemic temporarily halted youth football activities. After returning to the game, he rejoined the club for the 2024/25 season from Hunters FC, this time reinventing himself as a defender.

His performances for Kick4Life Juventude quickly established him as one of the team's standout players, earning him several call-ups to Lesotho's Under-20 national team.

Away from the football pitch, Ntšenoalso embraced personal development opportunities, completing a traineeship with Kick4Life Social Enterprises as a Front-of-House Server, where he gained valuable workplace experience in the hospitality industry.

Reflecting on his journey, Ntšenocredited his coach for broadening his ambitions beyond professional football.

"Coach Mukete encouraged me to look at the bigger picture," he said.

"He showed me that there were opportunities beyond professional football—opportunities that could transform my life both academically and athletically. Thanks to his guidance and belief in me, today I am preparing to study in the United States while continuing my football journey."

For Motsopa, the scholarship represents the culmination of just two years of rapid growth.

He joined Kick4Life's Under-15 Development Team in August 2024 before progressing to the Under-17 squad the following year.

His commitment extended beyond football. Earlier this year, he began volunteering as a Life Skills Coach within Kick4Life's Community Programmes Department, where he quickly earned a reputation as a positive role model for younger children.

At the African Leadership Academy, Thabo will combine intensive academic and leadership studies with football, representing the academy in local Johannesburg competitions while continuing to develop his passion for community service through sport.

Addressing guests at the press conference, Motsopareflected on his personal transformation.

"Two years ago, I was a very different person. Today, I'm becoming the person I always hoped to be," he said.

"Kick4Life did not just support me academically; it believed in me, invested in my personal development and gave me opportunities I never imagined possible. I'll carry the Kick4Life flag with pride wherever I go and hope to make both Kick4Life and my family proud."

The two scholarships underscore Kick4Life's commitment to nurturing young people through an integrated approach that combines football, education and leadership development.

While Ntšeno's journey began in the organisation's Soccer School Programme as a nine-year-old, Motsoparose through the youth development ranks before giving back to the community as a Life Skills Coach.

Lifofane ready for Kaizer Chiefs

Vodacom Premier League (VPL) runners-up Lifofane FC squad

Seabata Mahao

Vodacom Premier League (VPL) runners-up Lifofane FC are putting the final touches to their preparations ahead of Sunday's historic international friendly against South African football giants Kaizer Chiefs' reserve side at Setsoto Stadium.

The match, scheduled for 2 August, 2026, serves as a crucial pre-season test for Lifofane's title credential ahead of the 2026/27 VPL campaign, which kicks off later this month.

It also marks one of the biggest international fixtures involving a Lesotho club and one of the continental powerhouses, in recent years.

Following days of speculation over which Kaizer Chiefs squad would travel to Maseru, the Soweto club confirmed through its official social media pages that it would field its DStv Diski Challenge (iDiski Challenge) team for the encounter.

The reserve side competes in South Africa's elite development league and is expected to provide strong competition for the Botha-Bothe outfit. Lifofane president Letšolo Maliehe said the club remains excited regardless of which Chiefs side turns up.

"Regardless of which Kaizer Chiefs team we are going to play, they are going to bring us the competition we need, so we appreciate their acknowledgement and presence," Maliehe told Newsday Sports.

"If we win this match then next year we might get the chance to play with the first team because they might feel the need to come back for the rematch."

Maliehe believes Sunday's fixture represents far more than a pre-season warm-up.

"This match is going to open a lot of doors for us to be among the elite clubs. We already have a pool of invitations from multiple clubs in South Africa, so this is only the beginning. We have also signed new quality players who have played in elite leagues as a way to show that we are developing our club."

He added that LNIG Hollard, TJ Group of Companies and Hololo Development Fund have partnered with the club as the main sponsors of the event.

The Lifofane president described securing a fixture against one of Africa's biggest football brands as a major milestone in building a long-term relationship with Amakhosi.

"It's something we planned long ago. To build a relationship, you have to start somewhere, and for us, this is a big start. To get approval from the Kaizer Chiefs brand is huge for us, while it also gives Kaizer Chiefs an opportunity to connect with their supporters in Lesotho."

He acknowledged the significance of hosting the Glamour Boys, noting that Lesotho clubs have traditionally played lower-division opposition from South Africa.

"The reality is Lesotho teams have mostly played around the Free State province against lower-division teams. So you can imagine, it's not child's play getting Kaizer Chiefs. They are very protective of their brand and we respect that. We will use this opportunity to learn a lot from them. Maybe in future they would get us involved in their projects."

Despite the friendly status of the encounter, Maliehe expects a competitive contest.

"Let us be frank. This is a pre-season match, but when you take to the field the competitiveness will always show. We are looking forward to this match, and we urge the fans to buy the tickets and fill up the stadium."

The club has strengthened its squad ahead of the new season with the acquisition of former Kaizer Chiefs defender KgotsoMoleko and ex-Magesi FC attacking midfielder TumeloNjoti, adding further intrigue to Sunday's contest.

Meanwhile, Lifofane FC has reminded supporters that the fixture has been officially registered with the Confederation of African Football (CAF), meaning strict safety and security regulations will apply.

In a statement issued on July 29, the club urged fans and vendors to comply with CAF requirements.

"Please note that our game is registered with CAF as it is an international friendly. CAF regulations must be adhered to for the safety and security of players," the statement read.

The club announced that all beverages sold inside the stadium must be served in paper cups or open plastic cups. The sale and distribution of drinks in cans, sealed plastic bottles and glass containers will be prohibited.

"No sealed plastic bottles, glass containers, glass cups or canned beverages will be permitted into the spectator areas, including both the general public and VIP sections," the statement added.

Businesses intending to sell refreshments during the match have also been advised to comply with the regulations.

Tickets for the blockbuster encounter are selling at M60 for general admission, while Royal Stand tickets cost M100.

Mafoso targets fitter, stronger Likuena

Mafoso targets fitter, stronger Likuena

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

Likuena coach Bob Mafoso has made improving the national team's physical conditioning his top priority as Lesotho prepares for the upcoming TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

Mafoso says enhancing the players' fitness levels will be key to improving the team's competitiveness on the international stage, where physical endurance often makes the difference between victory and defeat.

Speaking to journalists this week, he said his mission is to improve the team's performances, noting that Likuena's players do not cover as much ground as their opponents during matches, undermining their ability to compete effectively.

He said the recently concluded pre-season camp, which ended on July 23 instead of the initially scheduled July 30, helped lay the foundation for building stronger and healthier players. However, he stressed that the work must continue through intensive and consistent training programmes.

Mafoso believes improved physical fitness will translate into better stamina and enable the players to maintain high performance levels throughout matches.

The national team coach also apologised to clubs for taking their players into camp. He said all clubs were represented during the pre-season programme, adding that he had engaged Lijabatho FC separately because the club needed time to prepare for its international commitments.

A total of 46 players participated in the camp. He also outlined the player management plan going forward, explaining that players will report to the national team every Monday and Tuesday before returning to their respective clubs for the remainder of the week.

According to Mafoso, success on the pitch requires players to possess four key attributes: mental, physical, technical and tactical aptitude.

He expressed concern over the team's physical output, revealing that Likuena trails its opponents significantly in distance covered during matches. Using the team's June 2026 encounter against Kenya's Harambee Stars as an example, he noted that Likuena covered an average of 71 kilometres on the pitch compared with Kenya's 99 kilometres.

He said improving the team's physical conditioning will be critical if Likuena is to compete more effectively against Africa's top sides.

Likuena are set to compete in the AFCON qualifiers, scheduled to take place between September 21 and October 6 this year. Lesotho has been drawn in Group A alongside Morocco, Gabon and Niger.

Mafoso said Likuena's short distance covered in training is not the issue, stressing that players will need to cope with the demands of covering up to 115 kilometres collectively during competitive matches.

Reflecting on Morocco's recent World Cup performances, which included a draw against Brazil, he said, "We believe we have talent like everyone else."

Beyond physical preparation, Mafoso emphasised the importance of exposing local players to higher levels of competition abroad, arguing that having more Basotho players plying their trade outside the country would significantly improve the national team's performances.

Ahead of the upcoming qualifiers, he said the technical team has approached data companies to obtain match footage for analysis, including Likuena versus Kenya, Lijabatho versus Lifofane, Matlama versus Linare, and LCS versus Manonyane.

The coach also revealed plans for Likuena to play practice matches against South African teams as part of preparations for the AFCON qualifiers.


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Lesotho boxers, runners make Commonwealth history

Seabata Mahao

Team Lesotho continues to display remarkable resilience and determination at the ongoing 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, with the country's boxing contingent making history while athletes in track and field continue to produce inspiring performances despite mixed fortunes.

The biggest headlines belong to Lesotho's boxers, who have guaranteed the Mountain Kingdom at least two bronze medals, ending a 20-year wait for a place on the Commonwealth Games podium.

RapelangMaselela etched her name into Lesotho's sporting history after defeating Tanzania's ZawadiKutaka by a convincing 4-1 points decision in the women's 57kg quarterfinal on July 29 to book her place in the semifinals.

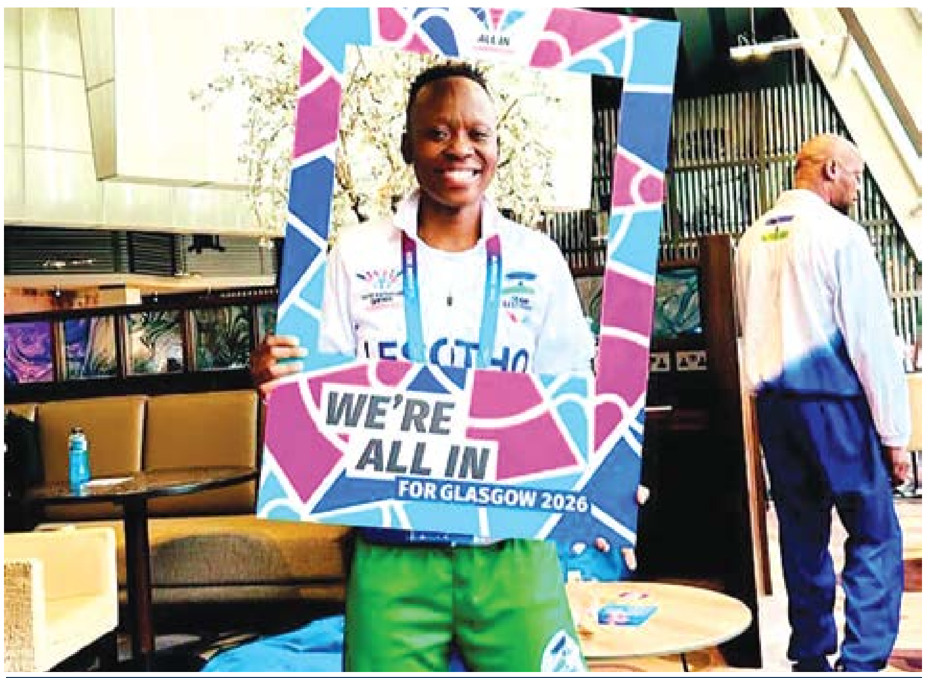
Her victory guarantees at least a bronze medal, as all losing semifinalists in Commonwealth boxing receive bronze.

Maselela has also become the first female boxer in Lesotho's history to reach the semifinals of the Commonwealth Games, marking a milestone expected to inspire generations of Basotho girls to pursue the sport.

Her achievement came just a day after fellow boxer Pooana Khoahli secured Lesotho's first Commonwealth Games medal in two decades by defeating Mauritius' Ziggy Agathe in the men's 65kg quarterfinal.

Khoahli produced another dominant performance to advance to the semifinals, where he will face Australia's Jacob Cassar. Having reached the last four, he is already assured of at least a bronze medal regardless of the semifinal outcome.

The welterweight has been in outstanding form throughout the tournament, winning all of his bouts by unanimous 5-0 decisions. He cruised past De NiroPao of Niue in the round of 32 before eliminating Jamaica's Martez Cope in the round of 16 and Agathe in the quarterfinals.



Rapelang Maselela celebrating after her qualifying match

Khoahli's achievement has sparked celebrations across Lesotho as it ends a medal drought stretching back to the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, where Moses Kopo won Lesotho's last boxing medal after finishing runner-up.

Together, Khoahli and Maselela have rewritten Lesotho's boxing history by guaranteeing two podium finishes while keeping alive hopes of upgrading bronze to silver or even gold.

The Public Relations Officer of the Lesotho Boxing Association (LeBA), TaoleLetšasa, praised the team's historic performances.

"So far Lesotho has two bronze medals even though the boxers are yet to compete for silver. We had six athletes, four men and two women. Three men and one woman have been eliminated while the remaining boxers are still in competition," he said.

"We are hopeful of winning gold medals because we always aim high. It has been 20 years since Lesotho won a boxing medal at the Commonwealth Games. Despite many challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, we can now say the team has reached a historic milestone, especially with the first woman reaching this stage."

Not all of Lesotho's boxers advanced. MathealiraSeholoholo was eliminated in the quarterfinals, while RealebohaSegoete exited in her opening bout. TokaLitabe also bowed out after losing by split decision.

Athletics produce encouraging performances

While medals have so far remained elusive on the track, Lesotho's athletes have continued to demonstrate determination and resilience against world-class opposition.

Distance runner Kamohelo Mofolo delivered one of the country's standout athletics performances by setting a new national record of 28:01 in the men's 10,000 metres after leading the race for much of the 25 laps before the pace intensified in the closing stages.

His coach, James McKirdy, hailed the performance, saying the race unfolded exactly as planned.

"The run for Mofolo was tremendous. We came into the event with the mindset that we would focus on the best possible race given the conditions. We wanted everyone to run an honest and hard race," he said.

McKirdy noted that despite Mofolo's limited experience on the track, he executed the race strategy perfectly.

"Mofolo doesn't have a lot of experience on the track, but he raced the plan perfectly with 5,000m splits of 14:15 and 13:46."

He added that attention has now shifted to Saturday's men's 5,000 metres.

"Our vision is simply to run to the best of our ability. That will be enough," McKirdy said.

Sprint star MojelaKoneshe also provided a major highlight after breaking Mosito Lehata's long-standing national 100 metres record with a blistering time of 10.07 seconds to become Lesotho's fastest man.

Although Koneshe, Neo Ntelele and MokhesengKente all failed to advance beyond the men's 200 metres heats, their performances reflected the growing competitiveness of Lesotho's sprint programme.

Earlier in the Games, Ntelele and Kente also finished seventh in their respective men's 400 metres heats.

In the women's events, MamakoliSenaoane showed encouraging form by qualifying for the 400 metres semifinals after finishing fifth in Heat Three with a time of 53.45 seconds on July 29.

However, her campaign ended in the semifinals on July 30, where she placed sixth in her race in 53.91 seconds, narrowly missing a place in the final.

Senaoane had earlier narrowly missed progression in the women's 200 metres after finishing third in Round One in 24.04 seconds.

Meanwhile, 'ManqabangTsibela also exited the competition after finishing ninth in the women's mile in 4:45.44 on July 30. She had previously finished fifth in the women's 800 metres with a time of 2:03.64.

Elsewhere, MalieaNalane's Games ended in disappointment after she was forced to withdraw from the women's 100 metres shortly after the start due to an apparent muscle injury.

Nation rallies behind Team Lesotho

Although several athletes have been eliminated, Team Lesotho's performances have captured the imagination of the nation. The historic achievements by Khoahli and Maselela, Mofolo's national record, and Koneshe's emergence as Lesotho's fastest man have provided strong evidence of the country's growing competitiveness on the international stage.

With boxing medals already secured and opportunities still remaining to improve their colour, Basotho will now turn their attention to Khoahli's semifinal showdown against Australia's Jacob Cassar and Maselela's pursuit of an even greater slice of history.