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# JOB BLOODBATH

- 10 000 textile workers laid off
- Experts predict further retrenchments
- Industry appeals to govt

## Also Inside



Health workers go on strike

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# JOBS BLOODBATH

By Neo Kolane  
Junior Reporter

A massive 10 000 workers have lost their jobs in the ailing clothing and textile industry since the beginning of this year; with more expected to be sent home packing in the near future.

The sector, which is the second largest employer after the government, continues to perform poorly largely owing to declining orders from the United States, the major importer of Lesotho's apparel.

Devastating effects of the Covid-19 are also still being felt as desperate local firms close shop or lay off employees for months on end hoping that the industry will gradually pick up. But this is unlikely, experts say.

Local companies this week painted a gloomy picture of the industry and expressed fears the job losses are likely to continue as there is no end in sight to the current challenges.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has also worsened the textile industry's quagmire in the past two years as orders dwindle further due to lack of demand for Lesotho's apparel.

The regional manager of Lesotho Precious Garments (PTY) Ltd, Lengana Tšepe, told *theReporter* in an interview on Tuesday that the company was limping.

Tšepe said the ongoing economic meltdown affecting both African and Asian countries, which was precipitated by the Russia and Ukraine war was impacting negatively on the Maseru based company.

He said Americans have reduced their spending on clothing and were instead now focusing on basic needs such as food, whose prices continue skyrocketing due to the war. Russia and Ukraine are two of the world's biggest producers of wheat which they export to many countries including Lesotho.

"American consumers who buy most of Lesotho's apparel are now having to make a choice between buying clothes and food; they prioritise food. This has a negative impact on our textile industry," Tšepe explained.

"These and other factors that are beyond the control of the company are severely affecting our business," he noted.

He further expressed fears and there were clear signs that retrenchments in the sector would continue in the country as the dire situation persists for most companies.

"Experts have advised that the crisis is likely to continue for the better part of this year and this is worrisome."

Tšepe said Precious Garments (PTY) Ltd sources materials for its products from Taiwan before exporting them to the United States. But



## GARMENT INDUSTRY HIT BY JOB LOSSES

with transport costs ever escalating, the company was increasingly finding it more difficult to survive.

This has resulted in thousands of people losing their jobs, he said.

"Instead of us making profit, we have made losses," he added.

Lesotho Precious Garments (PTY) Ltd has retrenched 700 workers between March 20 and April 20, 2023.

According to the Lesotho National Development Corporation's (LNDC) Industry Status Report dated March 2021, at least 6064 workers in the clothing and textile sector lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 induced economic meltdown.

The report further states from March 2020 to March 2021 factory closures and downsizing immensely contributed towards job lay-offs.

"Two factories namely, Coating Company and Huan Sheng ceased operations, while Presitex and CGM merged. Nien Hsing International combined its five companies into three and is planning to combine the three companies into one," reads the report.

It also notes that lack of demand on the global market had led to widespread retrenchments in the sector.

"Another contributing factor to the job losses is the decline in purchase orders as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic," it added.

The report however, indicates that the textile sector still remains a top employer in the country.

"The manufacturing industry constitutes 88, 8 percent of total employment in the industry despite the 12, 9 percent decline.

"Printing and embroidery sectors experienced the most employment decline of 82, 4 percent as a result of a company that shut down, followed by clothing and textile sector at 12, 9 percent."

Another report titled Impact of Covid-19 on manufacturing Industry in Lesotho: Case study of LNDC- Assisted Companies released in November 2020 highlights that some factories were forced to retrench workers and placing some on temporary layoffs.

"The employment levels for 2020 have been relatively lower compared to the same period in 2019. The lowest employment rate was recorded in April 2020 at 30 741, which is 24 percent lower than the one recorded in the same period in 2019. This decline is due to lockdown and company closures," the report says.

"Some companies were forced to retrench workers while some factory workers had their hours cut during the lockdown. The highest reported employment level was 43 542 in February 2020, which was higher than that of the same period in 2019."

The November 2020 report however re-

vealed that the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on the production of the manufacturing sector was not as bad as they had anticipated.

It also indicated that the impact of COVID-19 lockdown on the manufacturing industry has been minimal and below the levels anticipated. The same report went on to recommend that various relief measures be implemented to reduce the effects of COVID-19 on local companies.

"The need to support and implement trade and trade-related initiatives cannot be overemphasised as the pursuit for the private-sector-led growth can meaningfully be achieved when interventions targeted at empowering and strengthening the operations of the private sector particularly in trade and investments are prioritised.

"The potential to turn around the state of the economy and relief to government challenges that include high deficit and wage bills can be explored through focusing and committing to implementation of relevant business environment reforms to entice the private sector to participate," the report added.

Lengana urged the government to assist the clothing and textile industry with subsidies on electricity and water.

He said although this would not be enough, it would go a long way in helping the struggling factories get back on their feet.

"It would not be helpful for the government to give factories cash bail outs. It would be of no use because additional money will not bring any orders that create or help retain jobs," he added.

Commenting on the huge job losses in a separate interview, the Deputy Secretary of the National Clothing and Textile and Allied Workers Union (NACTWU), Tšepang Makakole, said it was sad that workers were being retrenched yet there was no visible effort made by the government to see to it that the struggling factories are stable.

Makakole said the desperate situation in the clothing and textile industry could only be reversed if new investors come in.

There were many factories in Butha Buthe nearing completion but they did not have water and electricity, he pointed out.

"The question is, how will they work without such vital utilities?" he quizzed.

Makakole also said the government had in January this year promised to reopen factories that were closed in Maseru in two months but this never happened.

"They (government) spokes about it at the beginning of the year but now its four months and we're still waiting," he noted.

He added that the government should assist in sources markets for local products beyond South Africa and United States.



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# Health workers go on strike

By **Mantšali Phakoana**  
Senior Reporter

Health professionals say they will not be reporting for duty from today due to non-payment of their salaries for the month of April.

The health professionals join a growing chorus of criticism from discontented civil servants who have been incessantly firing a broadside at the government over the past week for its failure to pay their salaries for the past month.

The ministry of public service, labour and employment notified civil servants through a circular dated April 21 2023, of what it called 'a possible delay' in the payment of salaries for April due 'systematic and technical problems encountered during implementation of new codes for merged ministries'.

In a statement issued on Wednesday this week, the Coalition of Health Professionals accuses the ministry of not communicating the reasons for the non-payment of salaries to health workers.

"We were last paid our salaries on March 16 2023, but the ministry failed to meet its obligation for the past month and without any explanation and communication on what could possibly be the hindrance to other salaries being paid.

"The livelihoods of our members depend on their salaries and failure to get them has caused some of our members to lose their rented accommodation. They are also struggling to even make it to work because they do not have the funds to do so, and as such, we will not be re-



LESOTHO NURSES

porting to duty from Friday until the matter is resolved by the ministry of health," the statement read.

The Coalition of Health Professionals' decision comes shortly after the Lesotho Public Service Staff Association (LEPSSA) had accused the government of disregarding workers' rights.

LEPSSA's secretary-general Motebang Leboela, told theReporter on Tuesday: "The sad part is that the government did not bother to involve workers' unions in their decision even though it knows that workers will always seek our intervention every time they are failed."

Leboela lamented that as other workers were celebrating Workers Day on Monday, civil servants were morose because they had not been paid their salaries.

She added that some of them could not even make it to functions organised to celebrate Workers' Day due to lack of funds and the

stress of knowing they were not able to meet their daily needs.

"Some of the workers have bank loans and any delay of salary payment results in penalties from the banks."

In a similar vein, the Lesotho Nurses Association announced on Sunday that nurses were not in a position to celebrate because they were not paid.

The association criticised the government for not respecting workers' rights.

"These are signs of a nonchalant government that has no respect for workers," the association said in a statement.

Speaking to theReporter on Tuesday, the minister of public service, labour and employment, Richard Ramoetsi, said only three government departments were not paid because they had not submitted their employee lists.

According to Ramoetsi, government bodies like parliament, ministries of trade, industry,

business development and tourism, natural resources, and health had already submitted their lists.

"Only four government entities were behind but I was told that ministry of health had already submitted its list and, as we speak, Central Bank is already processing their payments. I believe by end of today they would have been paid.

"The merging of government ministries effected by the current coalition government has led to the delay in the payment of salaries for civil servants. As a ministry, we await all the employees' names before we can proceed to compile our payroll which we will then submit to the ministry of finance to make payments.

"This is a three-pronged matter; and if it is incomplete, we will not be able to pay. I am not even blaming anyone, but it is the system," Ramoetsi noted.

One of the affected ministries is that of trade and industry. Its public relations officer, Mantletse Maile, disputed the minister's claim, insisting the ministry of trade had submitted its list of employees on Friday last week.

Maile told this publication that ministry of trade officers learned from treasury that all other lists had already been submitted to the Central Bank of Lesotho.

Meanwhile, theReporter yesterday learned that nurses had still not received their salaries.

It also discovered that even some ministry of communications, science, and innovation employees were among ministries that had not been paid.



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**COLUMNS**

**EDITORIAL**

## Govt should act to save textile industry

**The myriad challenges threatening Lesotho's clothing and textile industry have been well-documented over the years, yet successive governments have failed to take any meaningful action to save jobs.**

At one point, the sector employed about 45, 000 people but the number continues to dwindle largely due to over-reliance on the United States as the major buyer of Lesotho's apparel. Promised were made to look for alternative markets but this never happened.

As one of our stories in this edition shows, a massive 10 000 workers have lost their jobs in this industry since the beginning of this year, with more expected to be sent home packing in the near future. Sad but true!

But without trivialising the devastating effects of the Covid-19 on the vital industry, which are still being felt up to this day – the government cannot find comfort in this reality. We expect it to intensify and fulfill the pledge it made a few months ago to hit the ground running to look for markets for our products in South Africa and other countries.

The government also promised to assist Basotho entrepreneurs to enter the lucrative clothing and textile industry. It is time to act, otherwise the affected workers, their families, and the general citizenry will accuse of the government of the usual political rhetoric that previous administrations were known for.

The ball is the government's court. It must walk the talk.

# comment & analysis

05 May 2023

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## Africa's agricultural paradox – so much potential for farming, so many barriers to success

By **Wandile Sihlobo**

Africa is a continent that struggles with high unemployment, poverty and low economic growth. Growth in agriculture is two to three times more effective at reducing poverty than an equivalent amount of growth generated outside agriculture.

Agriculture is an essential driver of employment and economic activity in most African countries. For example, roughly 60% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa is engaged in smallholder farming. About 23% of sub-Saharan Africa's GDP comes from agriculture.

However, the strategic role of the sector as a driver to advance economic development has been hampered by a number of exogenous factors. The Russia-Ukraine war and Covid 19, continue to compromise the resilience of its agricultural sector.

These major challenges come against the backdrop of existing problems that have already been affecting the agricultural sector in the past.

### These include:

- Climate change with its associated shocks, such as frequent droughts, flooding, famine, etc;
- Biosecurity, primarily the weaknesses in managing animal diseases, eg, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), foot and mouth disease (FMD), and African swine fever;
- We see pest infestations, such as the fall armyworm (FAW), and locusts regularly in the East African region – whose frequency and intensity is also emerging as a consequence of changing weather patterns;
- Low farm and off-farm productivity remains a major challenge and will continue to be a constraint even in this environment where most people are excited about the promise of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- Lack of adequate infrastructure, which increases transaction costs for farmers and agribusinesses operating in the continent

of Africa;

• Conflicts or wars, like what we are witnessing in Sudan, Mozambique, and parts of West Africa;

• Fragmented food value chains; and

• More recently, rising input costs, partly because of the Russia-Ukraine war.

Therefore, we need to tackle these challenges collectively and in a holistic fashion in order to maximise the value of the agricultural sector in Africa.

We are a continent that struggles with high unemployment, poverty and low economic growth. We know from the literature that growth in agriculture is two to three times more effective at reducing poverty than an equivalent amount of growth generated outside agriculture. Moreover, the advantage of agriculture over non-agriculture in reducing poverty is largest for the poorest individuals in society and extends to other welfare outcomes, including food insecurity and malnutrition.

So, what to do with all these challenges?

There are some policy considerations that I believe African agricultural ministers can reflect on. Four overarching issues should remain critical priorities for African governments:

First, African governments must improve land governance, which is fundamental for long-term investments. We know that roughly 86% of all the continent's rural land plots are still unregistered. We cannot expect any meaningful levels of investment, infrastructure development and farm productivity improvements in an environment in which land ownership and use rights are inadequate.

To use South Africa as an example – in parts of the country with strong property rights, we continue to see secure use and ownership rights that provide incentives to engage in robust agricultural activity, which essentially sustain our food security and exports.

Meanwhile, in the former homeland regions of South Africa, with weak land governance, such robust agriculture is non-existent to a large extent. Of course, I am simplifying a more complicated argument, because these rights need to be couched in other important

variables and factors such as infrastructure, institutions, skills, and agricultural finance, but you get the main point.

Second, African governments must create an enabling policy environment. This includes clear competition and merger regulations, tax incentives for SMEs, a regulatory environment that promotes quality standards in input and output markets, predictable trade policies, digitalisation of customs procedures, and harmonisation of border regulations.

Third, once we have the above matters adequately addressed, we could focus on attracting long-term investment in Africa's agriculture. Here, I am not only talking about the private sector investments by local (MSMEs) and global investors, but also public sector investments, i.e. public infrastructure expansion of border infrastructure, roads and connectivity (IT).

Fourth, we must also address the issue of informality in Africa's agriculture and food industry. In an article I co-authored with agricultural economists Edward Mabaya of Cornell University and Lulama Ndibongo Traub of Stellenbosch University, we noted that “across all of the continent's regions, except southern Africa, informal employment as a percentage of total employment in the agricultural and non-agricultural sector is above the global average of 64% for emerging and developing markets economies.

“More than 80% of the continent's population relies on open-air, largely informal markets for their food. Poor sanitary conditions in many of these markets raise concerns about food safety for households that depend on them.

“Suppose African countries are to ensure resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. In that case, they must upgrade food value chains by shifting production and employment from informal micro-enterprises to formal firms offering wage employment with income security and health benefits for employees. This will also ensure improvements in food safety within the system.”

In essence, we need policy reform and implementation, investments, and technical innovation, which lead to competition and efficiency gains in Africa's agriculture.

Notably, African governments, this time around, should increase the pace of policy reform to continue stimulating private-sector investments. They must also ramp up public investments to strengthen regional food value chains, AfCFTA implementation, etc. DM

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# Leruo

05 May 2023

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## Driving financial literacy in Lesotho – Money Month Campaign 2023

By **TKay Nthebe**

Poor money management and low financial literacy are among the biggest sources of stress for many households in Lesotho. To tackle this, the Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL) in collaboration with players within the financial services industry launched the Money Month Campaign 2023 (MML) in Butha Buthe on Thursday, 27 April 2023. Prior to the launch, I sat down with Ntate Ephraim Moremoholo, Chairperson of the National Financial Education Steering Committee (FESC) to unpack what Basotho can expect from the Money Month Campaign 2023.

**TKay: For Basotho who do not know you, who is Ntate Moremoholo?**

Ntate Moremoholo: I am the Chief Corporate Communications at the CBL and the Chairperson of FESC. This committee coordinates all financial literacy activities in Lesotho, comprising government ministries, development partners, the CBL as the secretariat of the committee, mobile money issuers, micro-finance, banks, insurance and asset management companies and pension funds.

**TKay: Why is the Money Month Campaign important Basotho?**

Ntate Moremoholo: FESC's responsibility is to educate the public on financial matters. As a country, we also have a financial inclusion agenda, whereby the Government of Lesotho is committed to ensuring that every Mosotho understands and has knowledge of available products and services within the financial sector. The hope is that when people are informed and know about these financial products and services, every Mosotho will be able to use them. This is important because it is also part of the Global Financial Inclusion agenda.

**TKay: Why does Lesotho have to celebrate the campaign for a month instead of a week?**

Ntate Moremoholo: Lesotho is unique, with a mountainous terrain where some places are very remote



and hard to reach. Based on our unique circumstances, the campaign is extended to a month instead of a week, so that we have enough time to reach and educate Basotho, especially those in remote areas. We have also adopted the same theme as the Global Money Week (GMW) 2023, 'Plan your money, plant your future'.

**TKay: What are some of the challenges facing Basotho?**

Ntate Moremoholo: Some of the challenges facing Basotho are high levels of indebtedness, people living beyond their financial means, and not budgeting, saving or investing for the future. Furthermore, some Basotho do not aware of available products and services.

**TKay: Which target groups does the campaign aim to reach?**

Ntate Moremoholo: The GMW campaign focuses mainly on youth and children. What makes the MML

different is that it does not only focus on youth and children but includes all stakeholders participating in the financial sector for example youth in business, people with disabilities, women's associations, public servants, teachers and the business community.

**TKay: What does the theme 'Plan your money, plant your future' mean to you?**

Ntate Moremoholo: Translated to Sesotho, 'Rala chelete ea hao, Roalla le sa sele'. For me, it is important to remember that it is never late to acquire financial literacy skills and knowledge about managing money. It is important to take responsibility for your finances and to make sound financial decisions.

For personal finance and financial planning hacks, follow Leruo available every Friday in The Reporter newspaper, and listen to Leruo Radio on Wednesday and Thursday mornings on the Ultimate Radio and Bokamoso FM respectively.



We are eager to get your comments about this column and the topics we cover. You can reach out to us at: [talk2us@alliance.co.ls](mailto:talk2us@alliance.co.ls)

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## BUSINESS



### Gem Diamonds 13% Revenue Hike in Q1

Gem Diamonds announced a 13 per cent increase in Q1 rough sales from Letseng, in Lesotho, the highest dollar per carat kimberlite diamond mine in the world. It raised \$36.7m. The London-listed miner said it achieved an average \$1,431 per carat during the quarter to 31 March 2023, virtually unchanged from the previous quarter. The highest price paid was \$282,889 per carat for a 6.63-carat pink diamond, the third highest dollar per carat achieved for a Letšeng rough diamond. A 58.07-carat Type Ila white diamond sold for \$34 441 per carat, the company said in a trading update. Seven diamonds sold for more than \$1m each during the quarter, A 122 carat Type II white diamond recovered in Q1 will be sold in Q2. The total number of carats sold during the quarter was up 14 per cent to 25,687 and sales were up 13 per cent to \$36.7m. In March Clifford Elphick, the company's CEO, said: "Demand for Letseng's large, high-value diamonds remains strong. The re-opening of China, the second largest diamond market, is expected to pave the way for a rapid rebound in economic activity, which bodes well for diamond prices in 2023."

05 May 2023

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# Alliance bankrolls school soccer tourney

By **Neo Kolane**  
Junior Reporter

Alliance Insurance Group is once again sponsoring the Alliance High School Soccer Tournament this year with a whopping M25 000.

This was disclosed by Alliance Insurance's head of group marketing and corporate communication, 'Makeabetsoe Mabaleha at the unveiling of the 2023 edition of the competition in Maseru this week.

Mabaleha disclosed that the tournament is now on its second year:

She revealed that in the football fraternity Alliance Insurance has been the main sponsor of the major some of the premier league teams for over a decade, namely, Matlama FC, Lioli FC, LCS FC as well as Linare FC which is the youngest beneficiary with just over two years.



**ALLIANCE INSURANCE'S 'MAKEABETSOE MABALEHA**

"With this tournament, Alliance aims to reignite the love of sport amongst our schools and a sense of oneness. School is known to teach kids skills such as teamwork, perseverance and decision making, which they can be able to apply as-

pects of their lives.

"It is through this tournament that we want to show Basotho that we are serious about the development of Lesotho and Basotho.

"We continue to promote and be involved with the hope that premier league teams will be able to scout new talent through this tournament, and give young pupils, a ray of hope in this field," she said.

A representative of the Lesotho Institutions Sports Association (LISA), Thabiso Phetoka said the first leg of the tournament will be played on Saturday May 13, 2023 in different districts.

Phetoka said the winner will not only walk away with the title of being the Alliance High School Tournament champs and prize money, but they will also have an opportunity to be curtain raisers at the Alliance Winter Challenge where they will lock horns with last year's winners - St Rose High School.

Alliance Winter Challenge is a soccer tournament that is meant to assist the teams that are affiliated with Alliance.

At the same occasion, a representative of the Lesotho Sports Recreation Commission (LSRC) Litšitso Motšeremeli indicated that all sports in the country fall under LSRC.

Motšeremeli said as LSRC it was easy to choose football because it is a sport which every Mosotho knows.

"I would like to see the relationship formed by Alliance Insurance with LISA growing, so that every child who is eager to play sport can benefit from Alliance Insurance.

"LISA is giving an opportunity to all talented Basotho to be part of the premier league; and that it beautiful.

"As LSRC, we would like more under 17's, 18, 19 and 20 to be part of the premier league, next year," he said.

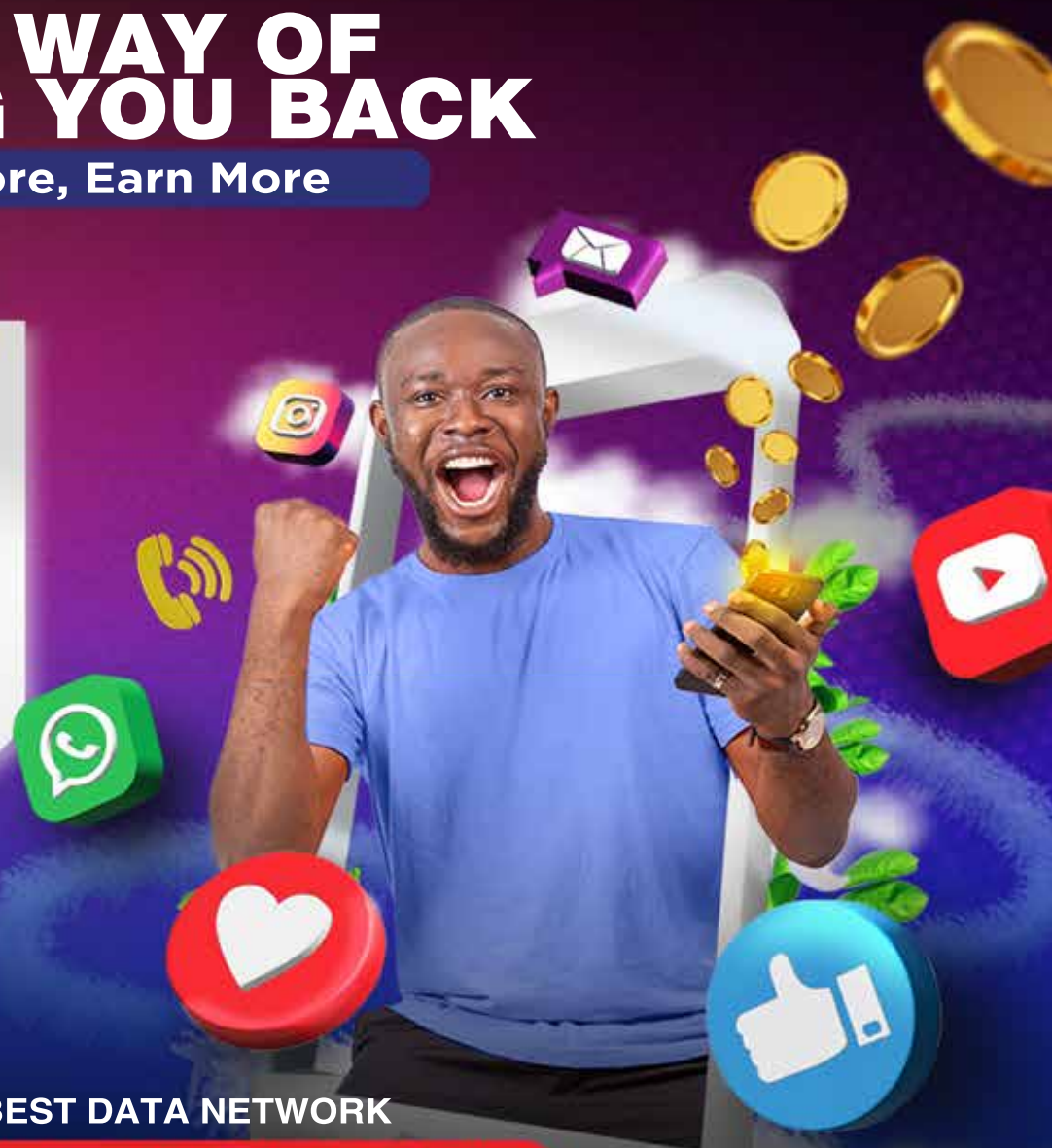
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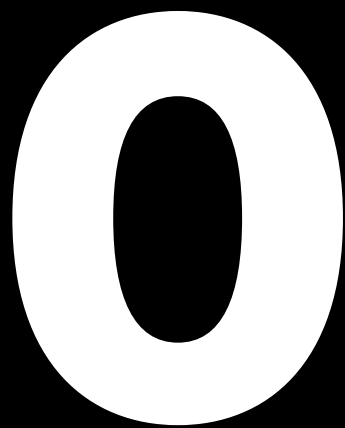
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OPPORTUNITIES



RETAIL NEWS:

Prime sells out on Checkers Sixty60 in 1hr 30mins

Tweens and teens around the country lined up for hours on Monday to get their very own bottle or bottles of Prime Hydration. Prime has become an international viral sensation following its hugely successful launch in January, 2022 by YouTube sensations Logan Paul and KSI. Last month it was announced that Prime will be widely available to local fans at the supermarket price of R39.99 as Checkers was confirmed the official South African retail partner. Checkers said Prime Hydration will be available from most stores on Checkers Sixty60 again from midday on Monday, while stocks last. "Customers could place advance orders on Sixty60 from 10pm last night, and the allocated stock sold out within 1.5 hours. "The launch of Prime Hydration at Checkers stores across South Africa was met with an overwhelmingly positive response from customers," Checkers said. "Except for a few stores, most Checkers supermarkets still have sufficient stock of the world-wide drink phenomenon." Purchases are limited to eight per customer, two per flavour.

05 May 2023

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# NUL student develops online shopping App

By Seleoe Nonyane  
Junior Reporter

Network and software developing company, Code Empire Technology Company, has introduced Roma Online Shopping - an online shopping platform for the community of Roma.

The founder and chief executive officer of Code Empire Technology Company, Kotoane Makuetje told this publication that the company has developed many software and network applications, but ROS which is their flagship product which was launched recently.

He said that ROS is a platform where the public is just a click away from purchasing food stuffs from the comfort of their homes, and have them delivered in a moment's notice.

Kotoane said he believes Lesotho could benefit from knowledge put to good use thereby, making ROS a live example of his belief.

Kotoane hails from Khubetsoana in Berea and he is a fourth-year Computer Science,

Statistics and Economics student at the National University of Lesotho.

"I had to use the knowledge I had acquired; I went out there to meet people who could help make the hypothesis a reality."

"I needed to help turn Lesotho into a digital paced world and increase employment chances", he said.

Kotoane explained that to again access to the shop, one needs to download the APK file from the company's Facebook page, that will take them to the website. On the website they will find several shops around Roma and fill up a basket with items of their choice.

"The process of buying is easy and reliable. One must go to the website; pick a shop they want to buy from. The database gives a prompt message that an order has been placed.

"A runner is sent to that shopper and within an hour they buy and deliver the stuff to the live location sent by the client requesting the service.

"The service fees are paid through mobile



THE BRAINS BEHIND ROS KOTOANE MAKUETJE

money agents," he added.

He said the idea is to offer a broad online shopping experience to all Basotho nationwide.

"As part of our expansion, we have plans to push forward the market and explore other

opportunities," Kotoane said.

He said initially the idea came to him in 2021 after he had witnessed the lockdown and its troubles which came with the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, he mentioned that the project of building the ROS started in December 2022, and it was just completed recently.

"I needed to help turn Lesotho into a digital paced world and increase employment chances", said Kotoane.

"I had to use the knowledge I had acquired and I went out there to meet people who would help make the hypothesis a reality."

He said he did not work on this project all by himself as there are several people who were involved in making the building of ROS website and software application a success.

"Some were contractors and others interns; all of them played a role in building something that could have otherwise been difficult to achieve, that is having the website up and running in a time of 4 months," he said.



Kingdom of Lesotho  
Ministry of Health

Invitation for BIDS  
BID REF: MOH/S/001/2023/24

## Provision of Catering Services to Government Hospitals.

1. The Government of Kingdom of Lesotho intends to utilize its funds towards the cost of improving Health Services to eligible catering services.

2. The Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Health now invites sealed bids from suitably qualified bidders for provision of catering services at Ministry of Health hospitals (Eligible bidders are defined as those licensed food/catering traders in the Kingdom of Lesotho) and bidding will be conducted through Procurement Public Procurement Act, 2023.

3. Bid documents are obtainable from Procurement Office of the Ministry of Health, Corner Constitutional Road and Linare Road, Maseru, Lesotho from 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023 to 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 at a non-refundable fee of M2,000.00(Two Thousand Maloti only). The Government Hospitals and institutions are as follow:

Table 1

Lot	Name of Hospital	District	Estimated Capacity	Site Visit Date & Time	Bid Security Amount
1	Botha Bothe Hospital	Botha-Bothe	127	01-05-2023 @ 10:00 Hrs	20,000.00
2	Motebang Hospital	Leribe	151	01-05-2023 @ 12:00 Hrs	30,000.00
3	Berea Hospital	Berea	128	01-05-2023 @ 15:00 Hrs	20,000.00
4	Bots'abelo/Senkatana	Maseru	70	02-05-2023 @ 09:00 Hrs	20,000.00
5	Mohlomi Hospital	Maseru	150	02-05-2023 @ 10:30 Hrs	30,000.00
6	Mafeteng Hospital	Mafeteng	170	03-05-2023 @ 09:00 Hrs	30,000.00
7	Nts'ekhe Hospital	Mohale 's Hoek	130	03-05-2023 @ 11:00 Hrs	20,000.00
8	Machabeng Hospital	Qacha 's Nek	80	04-05-2023 @ 11:00 Hrs	20,000.00

4. Bidders may bid for any lot of their choice or all lots accompanied by sites visit certificates and bid securities for selected lots however only one lot will be awarded to the compliant and most advantageous bid.

5. There shall be mandatory sites visits as stated in the table 1 above and bidders are requested to participate and be on time to the stated location for the lots they are intending to bid.

6. Bidders must submit Bid forms and Activity Price Schedules for each hospital they bid for under financial proposal and other documents under technical proposal.

7. Bid evaluation will be carried out on Lot basis and bidders are requested to submit two separate envelopes for technical and financial bids enclosed in one envelope.

8. Qualifications requirements include amongst others:

- Business experience of not less than five years in food/catering service
- A qualified Nutritionist of not less than five (5) years' experience.
- Annual volume of relevant work in any of the last year five (5) years of not less than the amount indicated in the bidding document per hospital.
- Liquidity or credit lines of credit not less LsM3,000,000.00

9. Bidders may obtain further information from the following address from 0800a.m to 1630p.m. The Procurement Manager, Procurement Unit, Ministry of Health- Headquarters, Ground Floor, Corner Constitution & Linare Roads,

10. Bidding will be conducted through Procurement Public Procurement Act, 2023.

11. Bids must be delivered to the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Auditorium Ministry of Health on or before **25-05-2023 10:30hour**. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the bidders and their authorized representatives who choose to attend at **11:00hrs on 25-05-2023** at the above given address.

12. During Bid Opening following will be announced from the Technical Bid Valid Copies of Traders License, Tax Clearance Certificate and Value Added Tax (VAT) clearance certificates and Certificate of Bona fide Tendering, Site Visit Certificate, Bid Security for tendered lots and lots tendered for. Bidders must be aware that non-compliance with this requirement may invalidate their bids

13. **Disclaimer: The Ministry also reserves the right to cancel the tenders before the submission or opening of tenders, postpone the tender submission/opening date and to accept or reject any or all tenders. The Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest or any bid.**





KINGDOM OF LESOTHO



## SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE (SPN): Invitation for Bids

**IFB No:** LS-LLWDP III-0050-GO-OCB  
**Purchaser:** Ministry of Natural Resources – Department of Water  
**Project:** Lesotho Lowlands Water Development and Sanitation Project Phase III  
**Contract title:** Supply, Delivery and Installation of Automated Agromet Weather station.  
**Country:** Kingdom of Lesotho  
**Loan No.:** 2100150043397  
**Procurement Method:** Open Competitive Bidding (National)  
**Issued On:** 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023

1. This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice (GPN) for this project that appeared in UNDB online of 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023, the African Development Bank Group's Website, Sunday Express Newspaper of 29<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and Public Eye Newspaper of 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023.

2. The Kingdom of Lesotho has received Financing from the African Development Fund in various currencies towards the cost of Lesotho Lowlands Water Development and Sanitation Project Phase III, it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for supply, delivery and Installation of Automated Agromet Weather station.

3. The Ministry of Natural Resources Department of Water now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply of supply, Installation and delivery of Automated Agromet Weather Station.

4. Bidding will be conducted through the Open Competitive Bidding National (OCBN) method as specified in the Banks Procurement Policy for Bank Group Funded Operations dated October 2015 and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement framework.

5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain more information or inspect bidding documents

at the below address.

6. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Three Hundred Maloti (LSL 300.00). The method of payment is a direct deposit in our bank account and details of bank account can be requested from the email address below.

7. Bids must be delivered to: Ministry of Natural Resources – Department of Water, Bokamoso Suites, Corner Maseru Avani 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor and deposited in the Tender Box situated at the Ministerial Boardroom on or before **24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 10: 30hrs**. Bids will be opened publicly on the same day at **11:00hrs** in the presence of Bidders designated representatives and anyone who choose to attend at the address above. Electronic bidding will not be permitted and late bids will be rejected.

8. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of Thirty Thousand Maloti (LS 30,000.00).

9. The Address referred to the above is:  
 Procurement Section  
 Lesotho Lowlands Water and Sanitation Project Phase III  
 LNDC Development House, Block D, Level 9  
 Kingsway Rd  
 Maseru 100.  
 Lesotho

Email: [ramaqelef@gmail.com](mailto:ramaqelef@gmail.com). cc: [matlalanerapapa@gmail.com](mailto:matlalanerapapa@gmail.com)



MINOPEX LESOTHO (PTY) LTD  
 Suite 11, Second Floor, Lenyora House, 22 Nightingale Road, Maseru /  
 P.O. Box 865 / Buthe-Buthe / 400  
 Tel: +266 2222 1334 Email: [minopex@minopex.com](mailto:minopex@minopex.com)

### TENDER- SUPPLY OF IDLERS AND PULLEYS

Minopex Lesotho (Pty) Ltd, invites requests to tender from registered companies for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF IDLERS OR AND PULLEYS** for Letséng Diamonds treatment plant. The contracting company is required to supply the goods in line with the product specifications.

#### COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Tender documents may be requested electronically from [tenders.lesotho@minopex.com](mailto:tenders.lesotho@minopex.com) from 8h:30 on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 16h:00. Tender documents will be issued within 24 hours and no Tender documents will be issued on requests received after the closing deadline.

**The request for tender document must indicate if it is for Idlers or Pulleys or both as these are separate tenders.**

The request must include the following mandatory documents for the tender document to be issued:

1. Company registration documents (Certificate and Company extract not older than 3 months)
2. Traders licence
3. Tax clearance
4. Vat registration certificate
5. Proof of previous supply

**All mandatory documents must be submitted before the deadline on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 16h:00 for the request of Tender documents.**

Submissions must be made in ELECTRONIC COPY via email, with the subject TH/IDLERS/0523 for Idlers and TH/PULLEYS/0523 for pulleys. All Tender submissions must be submitted no later than Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 at 16h:00.

INTERESTED RESPONDENTS MUST COMPLY WITH THE SUBMISSION CRITERIA AND FORMAT AS DETAILED IN THE TENDER DOCUMENTS.

Should you experience any difficulty in requesting the documents please contact Mr. Thapelo Holoane on +266 2222 1406 or email [tenders.lesotho@minopex.com](mailto:tenders.lesotho@minopex.com)

Commodity/Service	Closing Date for Tender Requests	Closing date for Tender Submissions	Reference
Supply and delivery of Idlers or and Pulleys	Friday, 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 16h:00	Friday, 2 June 2023 at 16h:00	TH/IDLERS/0523 or TH/PULLEYS/0523

The closing date for submissions is 16H00, Friday 2 June 2023, Disclaimer: Minopex Lesotho (Pty) Ltd reserves the right to withdraw this tender at any stage without notice and will neither be responsible for nor pay any expenses or losses which the proposer may incur in response to this invitation



MINOPEX LESOTHO (PTY) LTD  
 Suite 11, Second Floor, Lenyora House, 22 Nightingale Road, Maseru /  
 P.O. Box 865 / Buthe-Buthe / 400  
 Tel: +266 2222 1334 Email: [minopex@minopex.com](mailto:minopex@minopex.com)

### TENDER- SUPPLY OF LEAD INGOTS

Minopex Lesotho (Pty) Ltd, invites requests to tender from Lesotho registered companies for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF LEAD INGOTS** for Letséng Diamonds treatment plant. The contracting company is required to supply the goods in line with the product specifications.

#### COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Tender documents may be requested electronically from [tenders.lesotho@minopex.com](mailto:tenders.lesotho@minopex.com) from 8h:30 on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 16h:00. Tender documents will be issued within 24 hours and no Tender documents will be issued on requests received after the closing deadline.

The request for tender document must include the following mandatory documents for the tender document to be issued:

1. Company registration documents (Certificate and Company extract not older than 3 months)
2. Traders licence
3. Tax clearance
4. Proof of previous supply (Lead or fabrication)

**All mandatory documents must be submitted before the deadline on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 16h:00 for the request of Tender documents.**

Submissions must be made in ELECTRONIC COPY via email, with the subject TH/LEADINGOTS/0523. All Tender submissions must be submitted no later than Friday 26 May 2023 at 16h:00.

INTERESTED RESPONDENTS MUST COMPLY WITH THE SUBMISSION CRITERIA AND FORMAT AS DETAILED IN THE TENDER DOCUMENTS.

Should you experience any difficulty in requesting the documents please contact Mr. Thapelo Holoane on +266 2222 1406 or email [tenders.lesotho@minopex.com](mailto:tenders.lesotho@minopex.com)

Commodity/Service	Closing Date for Tender Requests	Closing date for Tender Submissions	Reference
Supply and delivery of Lead Ingots	Friday, 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 16h:00	Friday, 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 16h:00	TH/LEADINGOTS/0523

The closing date for submissions is 16H00, Friday 26 May 2023, Disclaimer: Minopex Lesotho (Pty) Ltd reserves the right to withdraw this tender at any stage without notice and will neither be responsible for nor pay any expenses or losses which the proposer may incur in response to this invitation





## THE POLICE POST OFFICIALLY OPENED

The Pioneer Mall Police Station post was officially opened last Friday in Maseru.

During the official opening the Commissioner of Police Holomo Molibeli said the facility will assist the Lesotho Mounted Police Service in its visibility policing efforts.

“We are going to make sure that police are available here at all times.

“This post is a very good way of showing collaboration between the police and the business. Therefore, we welcome all the endeavours made by the Pioneer Mall management in ensuring that the already existing police officers who are working here find it easy to perform their duties.

“If a business does not feel safe it will never grow,” Molibeli said.





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# The Big Thoughts



BY KABELO MOLLO

05 May 2023

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:  
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There are things that I keep hearing and reading. The first is that digital is the future, and the second is that AI is going to take our jobs and even ruin our lives. Whether it's Mac G and Sol and their constant clamour to prove more viable than radio, or Koshiek (Fintech disruptor) illustrating why the platforms they've designed are smarter or more sustainable in the future.

Either way there is very definitely a competition of views with regard to the tech boom we are experiencing. I'm an early AI adapter in the sense that I've started using ChatGPT. As I said recently one of my columns was written by the AI bot. I have recently enlisted it to help me write a business plan for a budding young business, and will surely use it again for a task like that...

Geoffrey Hinton the former Google AI head, resigned last week citing his discomfort with the pace at which the technology was progressing and the lack of checks and balances. It is his fear that in its new guise the tools will get in to the wrong hands and bad things will happen.

This is obviously a serious concern from someone well positioned to register such views. Even with all of that in mind I'm upbeat about the future in an AI co-dependent world. Hinton says that computers will very definitely be clever than us, sooner than we think. On Twitter the folks are worried that humans will be replaced by bots. Again, said concerns are perhaps spurred on by lived experience. Mechanization hasn't been kind to many a worker; so why would this be any different?

I speak as a laymen and can only use my rudimentary knowledge and experience on the matter. In order to coax ChatGPT in to writing my column with (rather than for) me I had to insert about six weeks' worth of questions and answers in order for the algorithm to do what I wanted it to. I was training it, not the other way around. Also, when I read back the piece it still didn't quite have the cadence nor stylistic feel I required. The algorithm knew the words I wanted but still couldn't arrange them quite how I needed.

What I'm trying to say is, AI was a really great assistant but wasn't quite able to do my job yet... This last week the music streaming site Spotify released a hip hop track by the AI version of Drake. To my uncultured ear it sounded exactly like a production the Canadian star would make, but to better trained folks they discarded and disregarded it out of hand. There was I suppose, a nuance missing. And So, I go back to my thoughts that perhaps this tool is going to be the greatest assistant ever. It'll input a load of data collated in a short space of time and then the human will add the nuance and experience. AI will make our lives easier; without necessarily "taking our livelihoods".

The future is now. Digital innovation and tech-



## Artificially intelligent

nological disruption isn't coming. It isn't somewhere down the line, no, it's here, right now! Lesotho is a little different in general owing to its least developed status economically but even still tech has found its way into many daily lives. There are kids who live on the internet, eking out economic prosperity in the metaverse proving to us sceptics that it isn't some gimmick or passing fad but rather a real alternative. There are folks tuning in to Sky Alpha HD every day to hear what our crazy on air personalities are thinking. Whatsapp and Facebook have in excess of 500 000 Basotho using them daily. The digital revolution isn't an idea that's coming in ten or so years' time. It is well and truly upon us.

Aside, podcasters selling the doom and gloom of the end of radio continue to be off the mark. In my view they ought to figure out a way they can work in tandem with mainstream media rather than trying to antagonize those traditional media. There is growth in collaboration, and especially in cross pollination. Dr Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh has figured it out, I hope the others will too. The "us and them" mentality the likes of Podcast & Chil seem to have taken is good for soundbites but less so for business from my purview...

That said, I hope we'll embrace the possibilities the future offers up, and rather than be cynical, perhaps an open mind is a better response to these developments.

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

**ADDRESS**

Land Registrar  
Land Administration Authority  
Lerotholi Road  
P. O Box 11856  
Maseru 100

**APPLICANT'S NAMES AND ADDRESS**

HLOMPHO RAMAFOLE  
SEA POINT  
MASERU 100  
LESOTHO  
CONTACT NUMBERS: 59042454



# NEW HOME FOR CREATIVES

By **Seleoe Nonyane**  
Junior Reporter

The ministry of gender, youth, sports, arts, culture and social development, and Nala Community Market this week made a joint call for creatives to showcase their products at the new Tourism Information and Craft Centre.

This emerged at a roundtable dialogue the two bodies had with creatives at Unesco offices in Maseru on Wednesday last week. The artists include those in the arts and crafts, music as well as the film industry.

The Tourism Information and Craft Centre is a new shop that will soon open to promote and sell Basotho products.

The arts and crafts officer of the department of culture, 'Mamaime Motanyane, said the ministry has learned that creatives in the country were finding it difficult to market or sell their products.

Motanyane said in a bid to help them, the ministry went out of its way to secure sponsors to help promote the industry both locally and internationally.

"This is how we ended up having the World Bank on board; it funded this initiative by building the centre.

"We called you here as creatives because, as the ministry, we are just facilitators. We would love to hear from you



PHOTOGRAPHER TŠEPO MOFANA

how you would want the place to operate," he noted.

One of the artists, Tšepo Mofana, was full of praise for the efforts by the ministry, which he said would help grow the sector.

Mofana is a photographer and brains behind the inaugural photography exhibition dubbed 'The Black Experience' which was

held in December 2022 in Maseru.

"The creative industry is very broad, so we also need other knowledgeable people such as those with financial management skills because there is a need for value addition in the creative space.

"I have problems when it comes to pricing my products, and I would like to believe I am

not the only one with this shortcoming.

"So, having a standard price will help us stop charging less than we would, as the cost of production also has to be taken into consideration," Mofana said.

He called for more workshops to be held for creatives in order to help them acquire more skills.

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05 May 2023

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# 'INFERNO' COMES TO LESOTHO



By **Seleoe Nonyane**  
Junior Reporter

The Embassy of Italy Pretoria is bringing Dante's Ballet Inferno to Lesotho, a music, poetry and comedy performance set to take place on May 17 2023 at 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre free of charge.

According to the choreographer of Ballet Inferno, Mario Gaglione, the musical is a result of a 2021 collaboration between Joburg Ballet and the Pretoria-based Italian Institute of Culture.

In an interview with theReporter this week, Gaglione said he was approached by the Institute on the occasion of the 700-year anniversary of the death of Dante Alighieri, one of the fathers of the Italian literature of the XIV Century.

Mario said Dante Alighieri's famous masterpiece "The Divine Comedy", has proven itself to be a timeless piece of art and it is still very relevant musical today.

"Its first section, Inferno, sees the protagonist, Dante himself, in a journey through hell. Parts of this section have been translated into the languages of Zulu, Sesotho, Xhosa and Afrikaans.

"This has been the inspiration behind the creation of the ballet and it represents one of the key elements, together with the wonderful score by Hans Zimmer, which accompanies the story beautifully," he indicated.

Gaglione revealed that the journey of the protagonist, Dante, is narrated through music, dance and spoken word, and it takes the revellers among some of the most iconic sections of the poem, in a scenery filled with desolation and eternal despair.

The choreographer stated that Dante meets several historical and mythical characters from centuries long gone, listens to their stories of life and death and takes the audience face to face with Lucifer himself.

"It's not your typical ballet with tutus and tiaras, but rather a journey through dance that combines Italian literature and an African spirit," he said.

He said he hopes that people will feel transported by the story and will dive straight into the realm of the beyond.

He indicated that even though not everyone might be familiar with Italian literature, in this case this is only a bonus.

He emphasized that the journey is universal and all can

feel the emotions that the characters go through on stage.

"The dancers of the company are wonderful artists and thanks to them my choreographic vision can come to life.

"This will be the first time that Lesotho will host INFERNO. It is a great honour for all of us and my biggest wish is that there will be many more invitations into the country.

As artists, there's nothing more satisfying than touching people's hearts with our craft, and we hope that we will move the audience in Maseru and leave them wanting more.

He expressed that the Italian Institute has been an extremely kind organization and has already promoted the ballet twice, once in Johannesburg and once in Durban.

He said this time the dancers are excited to present it to a new audience.

He warned that the audience should expect to be fully entertained by all the elements of the production: the dancing, the music, the costumes, the story. Adding that above all, they should expect to feel all the emotions of Dante, the beautiful dancer and actor Tumelo Lekana, who will guide the attendees with his steps and his voice through the pits of hell.