





CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	v
MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER	vii
FOREWORD	viii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	13
2.0 METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OF PREPARATION OF THE REVIEW	15
3.0 POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	18
3.1 Incorporation of the SDGs in National Frameworks	18
3.2 Lesotho Response to “Leave No One Behind”	20
4.0 LESOTHO PROGRESS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	24
4.1 GOAL 1: END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE	24
4.1.1 Lesotho Progress on Poverty Indicators	25
4.1.2 Lesotho Poverty Indicators	25
4.1.3 Poverty and Gender	28
4.1.4 Overall Inequalities Statistics: The Gini Index	28
4.1.5 Child and Adolescent Poverty	30
4.2 GOAL 2: END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE	31
4.2.1 Lesotho Hunger Indicators	31
4.2.2 Lesotho Action Programmes	33
4.2.3 Poverty and Hunger - Next Steps Going Forward	35
4.3 GOAL 4: ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL	36
4.3.1 Lesotho Progress on Education Indicators	36
4.3.2 Lesotho Action: Policy Frameworks and programmes in Sub-Sectors of Education	38
4.4 Goal 8: PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL	50
4.4.1 Lesotho Economic Growth and Employment Indicators	50
4.4.2 Job Creation and Decent Work	53
4.4.3 Economic Productivity, Competitiveness and Diversification	53
4.4.4 Lesotho Action and Programmes	54
4.4.5 Addressing Youth Employment	56
4.4.6 Tourism as a vehicle for Job creation and Economic Growth	58
4.4.7 Domestic Financial Institutions and Access to Financial Services	59
4.4.8 Next Steps Going Forward	60
4.5 Goal 10: REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES	62
4.5.1 Lesotho Commitment to Reducing Inequality of All Forms	62
4.5.2 Lesotho Action: Policy Frameworks and Programmes	63
4.5.3 Lesotho GEWE for the SDGs and Inclusive Development	64
4.5.4 Lesotho Bridging Economic Inequality Gap	65



4.5.5 Lesotho Women's Empowerment and Leadership	65
4.5.6 Child Protection Progress	66
4.5.7 Social Protection Programmes and Initiatives	66
4.5.8 Lesotho Progress with Youth Programmes and Initiatives	72
4.5.9 Volunteers for the SDGs	72
4.5.10 Supporting People with Disabilities	74
4.5.11 Lesotho Migration Programmes and Initiatives	74
4.5.12 Lesotho and Development Assistance	75
4.5.13 Next Steps Going Forward	76
4.6 Goal 13: TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS	77
4.6.1 Lesotho and Climate Change Effects	77
4.6.2 Lesotho Programmes and Initiatives to Combat Climate Change and Mitigate its Effects	80
4.6.3 Next Steps Going Forward	83
4.7 Goal 16: PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS.	84
4.7.1 Lesotho Indicators of Progress on Peaceful and Inclusive Societies	84
4.7.2 Lesotho Action in Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Society	85
4.7.3 Promoting the Rule of Law and Access to Justice	88
4.7.4 Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms	88
4.7.5 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	90
4.7.6 Providing legal identity for all, including birth registration	90
4.7.7 Promote and Enforce Non-discriminatory Laws and Policies for Sustainable Development	90
4.7.8 Promote Public Access to Information and Freedom of the Press	90
4.7.9 Next Steps Going Forward	90
4.8 GOAL 17: STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	92
4.8.1 Financial Resource Mobilization	93
4.8.2 Government of Lesotho Resource Mobilization Efforts Through Increased Exports and Debt Payment	95
4.8.3 Technology	97
4.8.4 Government Wage Bill (public spending)	98
4.8.5 Institutional and Coordination Mechanism for SDGs	100
4.8.6 Financing SDGs Implementation and Activities	100
4.8.7 Data, Monitoring and Accountability	100
4.8.8 Data Innovation and Citizen Engagement	100
4.8.9 Next Steps Going Forward	101
5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS	102
6.0 REFERENCES	103
7.0 ANNEXES	109



LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1.1: Urban-rural and Regional Poverty Dynamics, 2002/2003 – 2017/2018

Table 4.1.2: Changes in Inequality, the Gini index

Table 4.2.1: Proportion of Moderate or Severe Food Insecurity in the Population by Residence

Table 4.3.1: Pre-primary Enrolment and Additional Schools needed for accessibility by District

Table 4.3.2: Secondary Education rates by Gross and Net enrolment rates by gender

Table 4.3.3: Secondary Education Enrolment by Ecological Zones

Table 4.6.1: Summary of Financial Requirements by Sector (Adapted from DMA, 2019)

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: NSDP II Pillars and SDGs

Figure 4.1.1: Poverty by demographic characteristics, 2017/2018

Figure 4.1.2: Poverty headcount rate by head's education, 2017/2018

Figure 4.1.3: Poverty and gender of household head, 2017/2018

Figure 4.1.4: Changes in inequality, the Gini index

Figure 4.2.1: Food Consumption Score by District and Settlement– Urban and Rural

Figure 4.2.2: Prevalence of Malnutrition by Type

Figure 4.3.1: Expenditure in the Education Sector as a Percentage of GDP and National Budget, 2014/15-2018/19

Figure 4.3.2: ECCD centres ownership

Figure 4.3.3: Percentage of Pre-Primary Education Enrolment by background Characteristics

Figure 4.3.4: Early childhood care Net enrolment rates by gender

Figure 4.3.5: Lesotho School Net Attendance Rate

Figure 4.3.6: Primary Schools Completion Rates

Figure 4.3.7: Adjusted Lower Secondary School (Form 1-3) Net Attendance Rate

Figure 4.3.8: Adjusted Upper Secondary School (Form 4-5) Net Attendance Rate

Figure 4.3.9: Gross Enrolment Ratios I HEIs 2012/13-2015/16

Figure 4.4.1: GDP Annual Growth Rate (2013-2018), Lesotho

Figure 4.4.2: GDP Growth and Per Capita

Figure 4.4.3: Real GDP Growth Over time

Figure 4.4.4: Sectoral Contribution of Annual GDP (%)

Figure 4.4.5: Unemployment Rate by Sex and Youth Unemployment Rates, 2014/15-2015/16

Figure 4.4.6: Number of Employee per sector, 2014-2018

Figure 4.4.7: Youth are disproportionately affected by unemployment

Figure 4.4.8: Percentage Distribution of Youth Population by Residence and Level of Education

Figure 4.4.9: Travel and Tourism Direct Contribution to Employment (2014-2018)

Figure 4.4.10: Number of commercial bank branches, ATMs and NFBIs per 100, 000 adults (per-cent changes)

Figure 4.5.1: Share of Women in top positions

Figure 4.5.2: Composition of Social Assistance Spending

Figure 4.5.3 Graduation Community Development Model (CDM)

Figure 4.5.4: Lesotho's overall score for Migration Governance Indicator (MGI)

Figure 4.5.5: Net Official Development Assistance (ODA), in Millions of US Dollars

Figure 4.6.1: Annual Temperature Scenarios for Lesotho

Figure 4.6.2: Rainfall Scenarios for Lesotho

Figure 4.6.3: Number of food insecure people in Lesotho

Figure 4.7.1: Proportion of population that feels safe walking alone around the area they live

Figure 4.7.2: Basotho's Perceptions of the Levels of Corruption, 2014 and 2017

Figure 4.7.3: Perceptions of Basotho on Corruption amongst the Police and Judges, 2003-2017.100

Figure 4.8.1: Total Government Revenue as a Proportion of GDP

Figure 4.8.2: Total Government Revenue (by Source) as a Proportion of GDP

Figure 4.8.3: Foreign Direct Investment as a Proportion of Budget

Figure 4.8.4: Official Development Assistance as a Proportion of Budget

Figure 4.8.5: Remittances Overtime: Volume (in US dollars) and as a Proportion of GDP

Figure 4.8.6: Debt Service as a proportion of Total Exports of Goods and Services

Figure 4.8.7: Debt Service as a proportion of Total Revenue and GDP

Figure 4.8.8: Government Wage Bill over time

Figure 4.8.9: Lesotho National NSDP and SDGs Institutional and Coordination Structure

Figure 4.8.10: SDGs share (percentage) of the total relevant conversations by day

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AIR	Apparent Intake Rate
AOI	Agricultural Orientation Index
AU	African Union
BOS	Bureau of Statistics
CARI	Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators
CGP	Child Grants Program
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
DRWS	Department of Rural Water Supply
ECCD	Early Child Care and Development
EE	Energy Efficiency
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
INDF	Interim National Development Framework
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LDHS	Lesotho Demographic and Health Survey
LEC	Lesotho Electricity Company
LNDC	Lesotho National Development Cooperation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
HEI	High Education Institute
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HMIS	Health Management Information System
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MoH	Ministry of Health
MPI	Multi Poverty Index
MVA	Manufacturing Value Added
NDRS	National Disaster Reduction Strategy
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NIR	Net Intake Rate
NMES	National Monitoring and Evaluation System
MPI	Multi-Poverty Index
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
NSS	National Statistical System
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OVC	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Poverty Reduction Programme
PA	Public Assistance Programme
PSRP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RLI	Red List Index
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals



SADC	Southern African Development Authority
SES	Socioeconomic Status
TB	Tuberculosis
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change
WASCO	Water and Sewerage Company
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization



The Right Honourable Dr. Motsoahae Thomas Thabane

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

The Kingdom of Lesotho is committed to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as demonstrated by the integration of SDG agenda and other international development commitments into the current medium-term development plan – the National Strategic Development Plan II, 2018/19 – 2022/23 (NSDP II). Implementation has also been facilitated by the establishment of institutional structures, where at the highest level is the multi-stakeholder oversight committee that is chaired by I, the Prime Minister.

It is the first time that Lesotho participates in the formal voluntary Review process and we are grateful for being selected to be among the cohort of 51 countries under review in 2019. The Government of Lesotho perceives the annual VNR as an ingenious mechanism to allow introspection at national level, assess progress made ourselves and by peers and learn from our own and other country experiences. The process also allows us to celebrate the achievements and identify development gaps and priority areas where urgent and strategic interventions are necessary, mobilise participation and partnerships towards the implementation of the 2030 agenda and therefore the National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II). I am also delighted that we managed to reach out to all the key stakeholders in the VNR process and that their voices are included in the report.

However, I note with deep concern the persistent and high levels of poverty, hunger, malnutrition in particular, as they largely mirror the combined Lesotho's progress with regard to other SDGs. I wish to call on all Basotho to conscientiously contribute positively by taking deliberate actions in our differentiated responsibilities to combat these enemies of human progress. I also take this as a platform to call on the international community to provide the necessary assistance to support us to pursue the goals in a smarter and faster pace.

I wish to acknowledge with gratitude the support we received from the UN family under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator in Lesotho, the European Union and all other partners that contributed in different ways towards the preparation of this report.

It is an honour and privilege to present the first Voluntary National Review report of the Kingdom of Lesotho to the nation, High-Level Political Forum and the international community at large.

The Right Honourable Dr. Motsoahae Thomas Thabane
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho



Honourable Dr. Tlohelang Peter Aumane

FOREWORD

The Ministry of Development Planning is responsible for coordinating all policy and planning development efforts in Lesotho, which therefore includes domestication of Agenda 2030 and to shepherd the SDG annual reviews and preparation of the annual or VNR reports. I am truly happy to have achieved this major milestone this year through an inclusive consultation and validation approach led by the Government of Lesotho. There were consultations with the Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies; the Private Sector; Nongovernmental Organizations; Civil Society Organizations; Development Partners, Youth Groups, academia, women, people with disabilities, LGBT community and obtained voices from the districts. The voice of the diaspora was also derived from the different engagement platforms.

This report articulates Lesotho's review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2019. It covers in detail the country's progress made in the implementation of the 6 SDGs, which are focal areas for VNR 2019 and presents a broad brush overview of the other 11 goals. The focal areas are: SDGs 4: Quality Education; SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG10: Reducing Inequalities, SDG13: Climate Action, 16: Peace and Strong Institutions, and 17: Partnerships. The report highlights progress, achievements, good practices, challenges, lessons learned and areas of support the country needs to fast-track the achievement of SDGs by 2030.

The country has also prioritised SDG 1: No Poverty and SDG 2: Zero Hunger informed by the unfinished business particularly for goals that the country was off-track at the end of the implementation period of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 and by other regional development agendas. Furthermore, foresight and scenario analysis was undertaken for Sustainable Development Goals in order to inform the country's SDGs mapping and strategic actions. Data Gap Analysis was also conducted and a data gap of 47 percent was registered, especially in relation to disaggregation and this calls for strengthening national statistical system.

We note that relatively good progress has been made in integrating SDGs into plans and policies, but the challenge remains on effective operationalization of these frameworks and reaching the bottom 40 percent (poorest of the poor). Furthermore, Lesotho is classified as Least Developed Country (LDC) faces significant economic, political social, and environmental challenges, which require integrated and multi-sectoral response. The Government is therefore committed to take the lead in addressing these issues, and anticipates favourable response by all partners to increase private investment, facilitate beneficial trade and overall development assistance as well as to build state capabilities for development management.

Honourable Dr. Tlohelang Peter Aumane
Minister of Development Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Lesotho is highly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This commitment is operationalised through the National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II), 2018/19 – 2022/23. The NSDP II is also aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063 and the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan. SDGs reflect the aspirations of Basotho as articulated in the National Vision 2020, living in a country of stable democracy, united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours, with a healthy and educated human resource base. Access to inclusive and quality education and health services, safe drinking water and basic sanitation will be guaranteed. The principle of “Leave No One Behind” is core to national values and development imperatives.

Lesotho recognizes the transformative goal of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The country is also committed to other global frameworks including the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Istanbul Programme of Action, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR). Lesotho has domesticated (nationalized) SDGs and mainstreamed them in the country’s new development framework. Therefore, the implementation of SDGs will be part and parcel of accelerating the following: i) decent and productive employment creation and inclusive economic growth; ii) a further energized and dynamic private sector; iii) a modernized public service that supports the private sector and is anchored on the principle of “people-centred development”; and iv) good governance and accountability system.

Lesotho recognizes that the achievement of SDGs requires effective multi-stakeholder partnerships, consultations and monitoring of and reporting on progress made in addressing 2030 Agenda. The Agenda is not just for and about government initiatives, it involves national multi-stakeholder participation including the private sector, civil society organizations, women’s groups, children, youth, academia and other special groups, communities and local government and the media. The participation of the UN and other development partners is also critical. Therefore, effective national high level leadership and coordination coupled with effective public and private institutions is key to the country’s success in the implementation of the SDGs, within the existing national frameworks.

Review Process

Led by the Government, the Lesotho VNR 2019 was participatory and inclusive, including all levels and sectors of government, the private sector, civil society/NGOs, academia, women and youth, and the media for ownership and awareness creation towards SDGs. A National VNR Conference was held to validate the findings of the VNR followed by a presentation to the Cabinet for approval before final submission and presentation at the HLPF.

In the spirit of “Leaving No One Behind” the Lesotho VNR 2019 drew contributions across different sectors and institutions including government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), development partners, the private sector, academia, CSOs/NGOs, women’s groups, people with disabilities, youth, and children. The National University of Lesotho (NUL), played a think-tank role and was tasked with producing analytical reports on six (6) SDGs under review. International SDG VNR Consultant was also engaged to provide technical support to the review and guide/facilitate stakeholders’ consultations, review and consolidate background papers and finally the Lesotho 2019 VNR report.

Policy and Enabling Environment

Lesotho has mainstreamed regional and international commitments into the national priorities. These include: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, AU Agenda 2063, and SADC RISDP. This commitment is facilitated through the **National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II) 2018/19-2022/23**. The NSDP II is the instrument through which Lesotho National Vision 2020 is pursued. This is defined through four key priorities areas: i. Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Growth, ii. Strengthening Human Capital through investment in Health, Nutrition, Skills development, Social protection and Migration, iii. Building Enabling infrastructure, iv. Strengthening Governance and Accountability.

The plan puts emphasis on private sector de-

velopment and gives priority to pursuing people centred development. It re-enforces the Government’s commitment to further bring development to the people of Lesotho by empowering them to participate fully in the development process, thereby preserving their dignity by uplifting their potential to partake in the prosperity that will be generated in the next five years. The GoL recognizes that the targets of the NSDP II, and subsequently SDGs, will be achieved only if the economy is supported by macroeconomic stability, peace and effective institutions, which are a pre-condition for economic growth and private sector development. As such, strengthening macroeconomic resilience, combating climate change, producing healthy and educated human capital, effective public finance management (PFM), governance and coordination, are imperatives for Lesotho’s development.

The Government of Lesotho, through a consultation process, created Sustainable Development Coordination structure and mechanism. The national institutional architecture and co-ordination mechanism builds on the existing government structures and also includes accountability institutions such as the Parliament. The highest structure is the National Oversight and Advisory Committee, chaired by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister.

The Cabinet sub-committee on SDGs chaired by the Honourable Minister of Development Planning aims to ensure effective coordination, advocacy, implementation and monitoring of sustainable development agenda.

The National Technical Steering Committee for the implementation of sustainable development agenda is chaired by the Principal Secretary for Ministry of Development Planning, with a multi-stakeholder membership including: Ministries Principal Secretaries (PSs), UN Country Team (UNCT), Development Partners, Heads of Government Agencies, Heads of CSOs, Heads of NGOs; Chief Executives, and Heads of Trade Unions. Its responsibility is to give technical direction and quality assurance to the implementation, monitoring of and reporting on SDGs.

Status of SDG Progress

Lesotho recognizes the interrelatedness and indivisibility nature of SDGs. Addressing the indivisible SDGs requires effective institutions and access to justice (SDG 16) and partnerships, including financial resources (SDG 17). In addition to the 6 (six) SDGs reviewed in depth in this report, Lesotho decided to highlight progress made in SDGs 1 and 2 as they relate to the ultimate goal of the NSDP II.



1 NO
POVERTY



The GoL has successfully reduced absolute poverty in the last five years. Between 2002/2003 and 2017/2018, Lesotho's overall national poverty and extreme poverty headcount ratios declined from 56.6 percent to 49.7 percent and from 34.1 to 24.1 percent. A change in the level of inequality was also recorded during the same period. Gini index was 51.9 in 2002/2003 and fell by 6.3 Gini points to 44.6 in 2017/2018. But about 65.4 percent of all children (aged 0-17 years) are multi-dimensionally poor.

Going forward, Lesotho prioritizes reducing poverty levels and inequalities (nationally

and in the districts) by rolling out and sustaining the gains of the last five years using evidence-based and result-based management. These will be achieved by, among others, enhancing food security, improving agricultural productivity through research and development, use of technology, optimizing agriculture land use, encouraging and supporting smart and precision agriculture/farming.



2 ZERO
HUNGER



Food and nutrition insecurity in Lesotho is related to poor performance and low productivity in the agriculture sector. The population at risk of food insecurity in Lesotho varies each year with a projection of 640,000 people to be food insecure during the period of July 2019 to June 2020. This is due to a combination of droughts, lack of financial resources (due to rising poverty) to purchase inputs to increase productivity, and land degradation. Moreover, weak management of the sector and limited extension service delivery to farmers contribute to sub-optimal application of modern agricultural methods, pest and disease outbreaks (such as army-worm infestations), limited grazing land and stock theft. Although chronic and acute malnutrition has declined since 2004, the nutrition situation in Lesotho is characterised by

high stunting rates in children under the age of five years, wide-spread micro-nutrient deficiencies in children, adolescents and adults, overweight and obesity in some segments of the population, and the growing incidence of diet related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) which are costing lives and imposing a burden on the health budget. Going forward Lesotho will focus on the following:

- Reducing poverty levels and inequalities across the country, by rolling out and sustaining the gains of the last five years and using evidence-based and result-based management.
- Enhancing food security, by improving productivity through research and development, use of technology, optimizing agriculture land use, encouraging and supporting smart and precision agriculture/farming.
- Funding, effectively implementing and monitoring the economic, social and environmental programmes articulated in the NSDP II.
- Mobilizing financial and human resources for NSDP II through national, regional and international partnerships.
- Balancing social protection/humanitarian assistance with development agenda – building community and households resilience.
- Effectively implementing and monitoring of “Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition” – REACH- initiatives.
- Strengthening of health systems and nutrition programmed for attainment of good health.



Lesotho recognizes that inclusive and quality education and training, together with health (SDG 3), is part of human capital development and critical enabler for achieving sustainable development in the country.

Lesotho is almost achieving universal primary education (UPE), with gender parity (GER 0.95 and NER 1.0). Pre-primary enrolment (children aged 3-5) stands at 30 percent (2017), with 49.9 percent male while 50.1 percent were female. Over the years, there has been a growth in both the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) and the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER). Primary school net enrolment rate is 87 percent (female 86.9 percent and male 87.1 percent) (2017). Net Secondary School enrolment rate is 43.3 percent with female at 52.1 percent and male 34.6 percent (2017). There are regional variations and disparities, with poorer districts recording lower enrolments in basic education. The situation is worse for children with disabilities, herd boys and OVCs – child headed households.

The Government notes concerns relating to capacity challenges of Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions in terms of availability of space, suitability of curriculum provided and quality of assessment mechanism. In order to ensure that every Mosotho has access to affordable and quality technical and vocational education, the Government adopted the TVET policy in May 2019. Promoting access to higher education is one of the policy goals of the sector. However, this has proved to be a big challenge which needs to be addressed to ensure access to higher education by eligible people. This is evidenced by declining enrolments in almost all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Lesotho has one public university and two private universities. Enrolments in registered higher institutions in 2015/16 decreased to 21,586 students compared to 21,664 in 2014/15. There were more female learners at 60.5 percent compared with their male counterparts at 39.5 percent.

Going forward, Lesotho will focus on addressing the challenge of financial gap and good expenditure mix between recurrent and development expenditure. It will also address efficiency and effectiveness in resource allocation and use, in particular targeting inclusive pre-primary and secondary education sub-sectors. The country will focus on improving secondary school enrolment for boys and girls through actions such as school fee subsidies, addressing teenage pregnancy and child marriage by ensuring that girls have access to information and health services, supporting menstrual health and management, and implementing zero tolerance for violence policies at school level. Focus on improving the quality of education at all levels is also critical, through investment in teaching-learning infrastructure and facilities, teacher development and monitoring learning outcomes. It is also critical for the country to strengthen collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data on education – including down to district level – as effective and timely collection of sex, gender and diversity disaggregated data is critical for analysis, monitoring, evaluation, and evidence-based policy making.



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Lesotho has a potential to be a strong and prosperous nation capable of robust economic growth and jobs creation. This is demonstrated by its macro-economic policy and programmes which have been largely conducive for strong economic growth. In the 1970's and 1980s, the gross domestic product (GDP) grew at annual average of 8 percent. Annual GDP has been growing by an average of 4.5 percent between 2008 and 2014, which was 40 percent faster than the average in the sub-Saharan Africa.

Since the adoption of the SDGs in 2015, Lesotho has not been able to achieve the set target of 5 percent annual growth rate. The country's growth rate is also below the global growth of 3.7 percent and the average growth rate sub-Saharan African region of 3.1 percent in 2018. During the period 2013-2018, the annual GDP grew at a rate of 1.9 percent on average. This is lower than the growth rate of 2.2 percent achieved during the period 2013-2015.

The rate of unemployment increased from 25.8 percent in the second quarter of 2014/15 to 32.8 percent in the second quarter of 2015/16. More

women are unemployed compared to men. There are also regional disparities, where there are more unemployed people in poorer districts. Young people are disproportionately affected by unemployment and experience high rates of inactivity, unemployment and low access to earning opportunities, with unemployment rate of 29 percent males and 34 percent for females.

The creation of additional decent jobs and faster economic growth are primary determiners of poverty alleviation in Lesotho. The Government is therefore committed to promote inclusive economic growth and private sector-led job creation in the next five years and beyond as demonstrated by the Big Fast Results (BFR) approach to investment focusing on the four NSDP II priority sectors namely; agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and creative industries and technology and innovation. Other areas of focus include: creation of enabling environment and supporting the growth of local trade, micro-and small-business in all the districts; developing policies that promote local traders; creation of a conducive socio-cultural and policy environment that is sensitive to women, adolescents, youth and people with disabilities; policies such Youth Policy and legislation such as Domestic Violence Bill and Disability Equity Bill need to be fully operationalized by the responsible line ministries. Investing more in women empowerment programmes will facilitate their entry into the labour market. This will also ensure their protection from abuse and their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) needs are adequately met to increase their productivity.



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



The GoL recognizes and appreciates the fact that there are many Basotho (children, adolescent, people with disabilities, youth, women, and elderly, and special groups like Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI Community)) across the country who are vulnerable. If these groups are not specifically targeted they will continue to lack choices and opportunities required to actively participate and benefit from development progress.

Lesotho has a relatively robust social protection system. These include the following: Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), Child Protection, empowering Adolescents and Youth, Child Grants Programme, OVC Bursary, Programme for People with Disabilities and Migrants, Old age pension and building community and households economic resilience. Strengthening national and district coordination structures and mechanisms to effectively address inequalities and effectively manage social protection programmes across the country remain a key area of focus, together with collecting, analysing and usage of disaggregated data by age, sex, gender, regions

and socio-economic status among others. Supporting and strengthening routine social protection and emergency response mechanisms is a critical factor. Moreover, the country will focus on addressing in a comprehensive and inclusive manner the challenges of health, HIV and AIDS and Gender Based Violence (GBV), sexual abuse and violence at home, at work and in learning institutions. The use of credible and up-to-date data; and allocation of adequate resources (financial and human) for GEWE programmes, including Gender Responsive Budgeting (across MDA and local government) remain critical going forward.



13 CLIMATE ACTION



Lesotho is highly vulnerable to adverse impact of climate change due to its location, size and topography. Climate change and environmental degradation represent a great threat to Lesotho's implementation of SDGs, and in particular addressing poverty, hunger and creating decent jobs and stimulating economic growth (SDGs 1, 2, 8, 9). The challenges of climate change also hinder the country from reducing inequality (SDG 10), promoting gender equality (SDG 5) and protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development (SDGs 6,

7, 11, 12, 14 and 15). In the past ten years, Lesotho has experienced successive and cyclic climate shocks such as recurrent droughts, dry spells and floods, which have negatively affected communities and households' livelihoods, with serious consequences on food security.

The droughts have also contributed to an increase in internal displacement and migration. Migration has been identified as one of the coping mechanism during the drought. There is a highly mobile cohort of women (52 percent) compared to men (47 percent) in Lesotho. Migration of women to South Africa in search of jobs means that they have to leave children behind with husband or relatives and in some cases children are left as heads of households and are exposed to abuse.

Lesotho has established policy and institutional frameworks to address and manage climate change effects, including the development of the National Strategic Resilience Framework 2015-2025, the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP), 2017-2027; Energy Policy 2015-2025. Effective implementation of these policies and programmes will be significant in achieving SDGs. Lesotho therefore needs continued support and partnerships to be able to effectively combat climate change and build effective community and households resilience, including capacity to build early warning systems, relevant technologies and capacity building on development of proposals for bankable projects for climate change adaptation and mitigation.



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Lesotho is committed to good governance, pursuit of peaceful and inclusive societies and access to justice for all while building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Albeit its chequered history of episodes of instability and political unrest, the search for peace and stable institutions that will support sustainable and inclusive development have been paramount endeavours of the people of Lesotho. Lesotho is on the road to creating lasting and sustained stability. The national dialogue and reform agenda engagements and consultations are on course as articulated in the Government's blue print **"The Lesotho We Want: Dialogue and Reforms for National Transformation – Vision, Overview and Roadmap"**.

Lesotho has made significant strides towards the improvement of conditions of prisons and places of detention. The country has embarked on several legal and institutional reforms in order to address different forms of Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and reduce corruption and bribery of all forms across the country. It is committed to ensuring that there is responsive, inclusive,

participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. At the international level, Lesotho ratified, among others, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995, Convention on the Rights of a Child (1992) and International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (2005). It has put in place; Children Protection and Welfare Act, 2011, the Registration of Births and Deaths Act 1973, the National Identity Cards Act 2011, Education Act 2010, Lesotho Citizenship Order 1971 and Lesotho Passports and Travel Documents Act 1998. Article 14 (1) of the Constitution of Lesotho protects the freedom of access to information and disseminating it. But there are limitations to this clause as stipulated in Article 14(2) of the Constitution.

Going forward, Lesotho's priorities include: Building national and local level peace architecture which include peace and stability institutions and platforms at all levels; Strengthening the judiciary: special courts including Children's Court, increasing relevant human resources, including the number of judges and other legal officers; and addressing the data/evidence challenge and fast-tracking initiatives on ending child marriage across the country.



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Lesotho has learned that mobilizing partnerships from various sectors and promoting inclusive engagement and multi-stakeholder consultations and participation, is not only critical for prioritization of SDGs, but is also necessary for monitoring and reporting on progress made on implementing the goals. Such partnerships can be built through involvement of MDAs, the private sector, CSOs, UN and other development partners, and special groups like children, adolescent, youth, women, and people with disabilities.

Lesotho has partnership policy that is being reviewed and is the process of developing a national partnership and coordination strategic plan to strengthen engagement mechanisms with all partners and structures including development partners, civil society, the private sector and special groups. Processes for resuscitation of major financing arrangement, Millennium challenge Corporation in the US, in particular, has been rebooted and programme preparatory funds have been approved.

The country has a mixed picture in internal resource mobilization. Total government revenue

was about 54 percent of GDP in 2010, 44 percent of GDP in 2012 and 46 percent of GDP in 2015. In 2017, it was about 36 percent of GDP. The GoL's efforts to mobilize resources for the implementation of SDGs is further hampered by the decline in other sources of financial resources, particularly, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Official Development Assistance (ODA). FDI's increased from about 1 percent of GDP in 2010 to about 13 percent in 2015. However, it has since dropped to about 4.8 percent of GDP in 2017. The ODA increased from about 58 percent of the budget in 2010 to about 96 percent of the budget in 2013. In 2015, ODA was about 88 percent of the domestic budget, and it dropped further to reach about 76 percent of the budget in 2017.

The Government is developing fiscal adjustment reform programme to regain sustainability. In an effort to contain the balancing wage bill, public sector census has been undertaken to identify human capital capacity needs. Going forward, strengthening Public Finance Management (PFM) and accountability across government MDAs is critical.

To increase revenue base, Lesotho has to come up with new innovative sources of revenue. Lesotho has to take advantage of lucrative markets in the EU member states, under EU and ACP Partnership Agreement; and USA through AGOA; and venture into other trade deals regionally and internationally. However, this needs building effective national partnership and coordination structure/mechanism with focus on effective governance and prudent financial management.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Lesotho is committed to fast-tracking the implementation of SDGs and working with various partners, including communities, children, youth and special groups, to achieve the three dimensions of Agenda 2030 being: economic, social and environmental. Lesotho has demonstrated that this is possible. The nation has already mainstreamed SDGs in the NSDP II.

The effective funding, implementation, monitoring and reporting on NSDP II targets is a sure way of effective implementation of SDGs. Lesotho commits that it will develop effective coordination and monitoring structures and mechanisms to bridge the data gap and make accountability part of SDGs national, regional and international reporting.

Lesotho's participation in the 2019 VNR process has been a good learning experience for the Government across MDAs, the private sector, CSOs, academia, and special groups like children, the youth, women and people with disabilities. Through this process, advocacy, public education and awareness about SDGs across districts in Lesotho – rural and urban, and among various stakeholders, have been reinforced. What remains critical is that the country's effective implementation of NSDP II and SDGs lies in sustaining political stability and increased good governance, mobilizing and harnessing existing resources, and innovation and use of technology. This will require strong leadership, effective coordination, and sustained monitoring and reporting on the progress Lesotho is making on people-centred development.

The Lesotho VNR 2019, and the multi-stakeholder consultations and engagement in particular, revealed that for the country to effectively

achieve 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063, it should address the following three imperatives:

i. Taking effective action to combat climate change and its effects by building community and households' resilience, implementing effective adaptation measures, supporting and protecting agriculture sector and addressing rural poverty and inequalities of all forms;

ii. Building strong health systems and addressing new HIV infections among the adolescent, youth and factory workers; and

iii. Accomplishing the Lesotho National Dialogue and Reform Agenda, thus promoting stability and peaceful and inclusive society, with strong and effective institutions.

Lesotho will put more emphasis on evidence-based decision making and planning, monitoring and evaluation. Financial prudence, effective citizen engagement and enhancement of accountability at national and district levels, will be strengthened to become part of implementation of NSDP II and SDGs. The Kingdom of Lesotho is committed to undertaking annual reviews of the SDGs as a means of holding the Government accountable for the achievement of this transformative Agenda.



By the year 2020 Lesotho shall be a stable democracy, a united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours. It shall have a healthy and well-developed human resource base. Its economy will be strong, its environment well managed and its technology well established.
(National Vision 2020)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Lesotho is highly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This commitment is operationalised through the National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II), 2018/19 – 2022/23. The NSDP II is also aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063 and the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan. SDGs reflect the aspirations of Basotho, that are articulated in National Vision 2020, living in a country of stable democracy, united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours, with a healthy and educated human resource base. The principle of “Leave No One Behind” is core to national values and development imperatives.

Lesotho recognizes the interrelatedness and indivisibility nature of SDGs. For example, with effective implementation of programmes on climate change mitigation and adaptation (SDG 13), Lesotho will reduce poverty and hunger and create decent jobs (SDGs 1, 2, 8), and reduce inequalities and gender based violence (SDGs 10, 5). With reduced poverty, hunger and increased decent jobs, Basotho will have access to improved universal health and education services (SDG 3, 4), clean water and sanitation and affordable energy (SDG 6, 7). Addressing the indivisibility nature of SDGs requires effective institutions and access to justice (SDG 16) and effective partnerships, including adequate financial resources (SDG 17). It is from this understanding that Lesotho developed the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II), which is human development oriented and an instrument for prioritisation, implementation, monitoring and reporting on SDGs.

Throughout Lesotho’s 52 years of independence, there have been a number of development strategies, resulting in important development gains for the people: children, adolescent, youth, women and men including the vulnerable groups: people with disabilities, orphans, and returned migrants. The most recent, NSDP I (2012/13 to 2016/17) implementation resulted

into an uneven performance and disappointing development results. Nonetheless, there were four main areas of encouraging accomplishments that the country is building upon, replicating and extending under NSDP II, namely: (1) Emerging dynamism in Lesotho’s private sector; (2) Emerging consensus on embarking upon public sector modernization; (3) Effective interface between development partners and line ministries; and (4) Emerging progress and shortfalls at Ministry level; and huge progress on Social Protection.

While some progress was made towards attainment of the strategic goals set out in the NSDP I, several challenges, some of which were outside the control of the country, impeded the full realization of NSDP I goals and targets. These included the following:¹ (1) chronic political uncertainty that resulted in politicization of civil service management; (2) Institutional fragmentation and lack of coordination; (3) NSDP design flaws concerning poverty reduction and employment creation, (4) weak link between NSDP priorities and spending patterns; (5) the fall of donor support, and; (6) untimely monitoring and evaluation and weak implementation management. These challenges/weaknesses provided lessons that were reflected in the design of NSDP II, which gives a sharper focus on the potential strategies that can accelerate the achievement of “people-centred development”. The overall target of NSDP II is, therefore, employment creation and achievement of inclusive economic growth. The achievement of these macro targets are believed to ultimately lead to poverty reduction, social inclusion and protection of the environment in the country. This ties with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Lesotho recognizes the transformative goal of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The country is also committed to other global frameworks including the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Istanbul Programme of Action, the Sendai Framework for Risk Reduction. Lesotho has domesticated (nationalized) SDGs and mainstreamed them

¹National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II) 2019-2023.

in the country's new development framework. Therefore, the implementation of SDGs will be part and parcel of accelerating: i) decent and productive employment creation and inclusive economic growth; ii) a further energized and dynamic private sector; iii. a modernized public service that supports the private sector and is anchored on the principle of "people-centred development", and; iv) good governance and accountability system.

Lesotho recognizes that the achievement of SDGs requires effective multi-stakeholder partnerships, consultations and monitoring of and reporting on progress made in addressing 2030 Agenda. The Agenda is not just for and about government initiatives, rather it involves national multi-stakeholder participation that includes the private sector, civil society organizations, women's groups, children, youth, academia and other special groups, communities, local government and the media. The participation of the UN and other development partners is also critical. Therefore, effective national high level leadership and coordination, coupled with effective public and private institutions, is key for the country's success in the implementation

of the SDGs within the existing national frameworks.

The Government of Lesotho (GoL) has shown commitment of working with multi-stakeholder groups in the 2019 Voluntary National Review (VNR) process. Through this process, the Government has learned important lessons and opened a new chapter in its development agenda. Top of the list is that Basotho and their partners/friends have to face the development challenges together, and commit to act and address them together, faster and in a sustainable way. Engagements during the Lesotho National SDGs VNR Validation Conference 2019, highlighted Lesotho's good progress on domestication and implementation of SDGs. However, this has not been "faster and bigger" as is expected by Basotho, especially the bottom 40 per cent, the vulnerable groups, the youth and special groups like people with disabilities and those affected by climate change and HIV and AIDs effects. Basotho's expectations, going forward, is a more coordinated, well-funded and innovative approaches and practical initiatives that will produce bigger and sustainable outcomes and impacts.



Multistakeholders consultation for the 6 goals

This Report outlines the progress Lesotho has made in addressing development concerns and social issues, in particular the journey towards in the implementation of SDGs. Lesotho VNR 2019 Report has been guided by 2019 VNR theme “**Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality**”. Apart from setting the stage in the introduction, **Chapter II** describes the methodology and process used in Lesotho VNR 2019. **Chapter III** presents policy and enabling environment, including Leave No One Behind initiatives. **Chapter IV** presents the progress on the focus of 2019 VNR - SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17, integrated with other SDGs. Chapter V, discusses means of implementation of SDGs in Lesotho, in particular, the framework and strategy for mobilizing financial resources. **Chapter VI** presents conclusions, key sector messages, challenges and the next steps towards fast-tracking implementation, monitoring and reporting on SDGs in Lesotho.

2.0 METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OF PREPARATION OF THE REVIEW

Following the Government of Lesotho’s decision to participate in 2019 VNR, the Ministry of Developing Planning (MDP) was mandated to coordinate the VNR processes which involved reaching out to stakeholders, advocacy, sensitization and providing guidelines. With the leadership of the Honourable Minister for Development Planning, a technical team lead by the Principal Secretary (PS) was responsible for collecting and collating all inputs from various stakeholders.

The Lesotho VNR 2019 followed a participatory and inclusive process covering all levels and sectors of Government, the private sector, civil society/NGOs, academia, women and youth, and the media, for ownership and awareness

creation towards SDGs. A National VNR Conference was held to validate the findings of the VNR, which was later presented to the Lesotho Cabinet for approval before final submission and presentation at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

Lesotho 2019 VNR process was undertaken within the existing national structures of planning, monitoring and reporting. A Lesotho VNR 2019 coordination and technical committee was formed, chaired by the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Development Planning. The committee developed VNR road-map, including stakeholders’ consultation plan, timelines and outputs. The process commenced with sensitisation of the nation about the exercise, as part of requirements to monitor and report on the implementation of NSDP II and SDGs. The process was widely supported by various development partners and other stakeholders to support the review process.

In the spirit of “Leaving No One Behind” the Lesotho VNR 2019 drew contributions from across different sectors and institutions including government MDAs, Lesotho UN, EU Commission and other development partners, the private sector, academia, SCOs/NGOs, women groups, the people with disabilities, youth, and children. The process engaged National University of Lesotho (NUL) that played a think-tank role and produced analytical reports on the six (6) SDGs under review² and technical support from UN system facilitate stakeholders’ consultations, review and consolidation of the final Lesotho VNR 2019 Report.

The following stakeholders’ consultations were organized and facilitated by the MDP:

- Multi-stakeholder sensitisation workshop that also agreed on the 2019 VNR roadmap.
- Briefing meeting for key Government Ministries responsible for implementation of the six SDGs under review.²

²MoDP/UNDP Lesotho commissioned the National University of Lesotho, to produce six (6) evidence based background papers during the Lesotho VNR 2019. The papers targeted the 6 VNR 2019 Goals: G 4: Quality Education, Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, G 10: Reduce Inequalities, G 13: Climate Action, G 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and G 17: Partnerships for the Goals. These papers were produced in a consultative manner and were validated through multi-stakeholder approach.

- CSOs and NGOs Consultation Workshop.
- A two-day Multi-Stakeholder Consultative Workshops on SDGs bringing together stakeholders from Government MDAs, Parliament, CSOs, women and youth groups, People With Disability (PWD), academia and media.
- Youth and Children VNR Consultation Workshop.
- The Private Sector VNR Consultation Workshop.
- Extended Cabinet Subcommittee on Sustainable Development meeting for presentation of progress on VNR process.
- Presentation of progress on VNR process to the National Assembly SDGs Committee.
- Two- day Lesotho VNR 2019 National Conference for validation and ownership of the Report. This conference was organised in a panellist format which was preceded by presentations of the analytical reports on the six goals. It drew attendance and inputs from various stakehold-

ers that include Government MDAs, the Parliament, District Authorities, the Private Sector, UN and other Development Partners, CSOs/ NGOs, Youth, Women's Groups, PWD, academia and the media.

- Media briefing on National TV and radio.
- Technical VNR 2019 Planning Committee to finalize Lesotho VNR 2019 Report.

The National VNR Validation Conference discussions were boosted by live-stream coverage through social media platform supported by Vodacom Lesotho outreaching to more than 2,000 people across the country. The Conference was preceded by districts consultations with the support of UN Lesotho Youth Advisory Panel (UNYAP) engaging with citizens, including youth, adults, elderly, PWD and other marginalized groups on VNR and Lesotho's progress towards the implementation of SDGs. The messages drawn from these consultations were presented at the Conference.



SDG 13 Panelists



Youth raising issues of their concern at the consultation workshop

To support the multi-stakeholder engagement of the Lesotho VNR 2019 and to drive innovative approaches in engaging citizens as well as using new forms of data to track progress in SDGs, the MDP, supported by the UN Lesotho, engaged in two novel initiatives: a social media network analysis and a real time monitoring of citizen perceptions. Both initiatives were aimed at crowdsourcing progress, sentiments and gain insights towards the perceived change in the status-quo of SDGs. Additionally, using both initiatives allowed for a retrospective analysis of the public discourse surrounding SDGs

but also enabled a direct feedback on areas of question.

Availability of quality data is fundamental for monitoring progress towards the attainment of the SDGs, and ensuring accountability within government and across sectors. The Lesotho Bureau of Statistics (BoS), as the custodian of official statistics, supplied most of the data used during the Review. The data was also supplemented by the Lesotho SDGs indicator Baseline Report and other baseline studies.³

³Kingdom of Lesotho Sustainable Development Goals Indicator Baseline Report, 2016. Lesotho Poverty Trends and Profile Report 2000/2003-2017/2018 (2019).

3.0 POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Incorporation of the SDGs in National Frameworks

Lesotho has mainstreamed the regional and international commitments into its national priorities. These include: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Agenda 2063, and SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development

Plan (RISDP). This commitment is facilitated through the **National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II) 2018/19-2022/23**. The NSDP II is the instrument through which Lesotho National Vision 2020 is pursued, and is defined through four key priority areas (See Figure 3.1). Through NSDP II, Lesotho recognizes the integratedness and indivisibility nature of SDGs and is committed to addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.

Figure 3.1: NSDP II Pillars and SDGs



NSDP II is a centrepiece of all development efforts in Lesotho for the next five years. The Plan is also implementing the final years of the goals set out in the National Vision 2020. It has identified development opportunities which are key levers to getting Lesotho on a sustainable development path. It further identifies key challenges (root causes) that hinder the country from achieving its potential output and the private sector development. By addressing the root causes of Lesotho's underdevelopment, the country is positioning itself towards graduation from Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The Plan puts emphasis on private sector development and gives priority to pursuing people centred development. It re-enforces the Government's commitment to bringing further development to the people of Lesotho by empowering them to participate fully in the devel-

opment process, thereby preserving their dignity and uplifting their potential to partake in the prosperity that will be generated in the next five years. The GoL recognizes that the goals of the NSDP II, and subsequently SDGs, will be achieved only if the economy is supported by macroeconomic stability, peace and effective institutions, which are a pre-condition for economic growth and private sector development. As such, strengthening macroeconomic resilience, combating climate change, producing healthy and educated human capital, and effective governance and coordination are imperatives for development in Lesotho.

Lesotho Government therefore emphasizes the necessity to pursue sustainable inclusive economic growth as the most effective route for poverty reduction and reducing inequalities across the country. Lesotho has therefore set

³Kingdom of Lesotho Sustainable Development Goals Indicator Baseline Report, 2016. Lesotho Poverty Trends and Profile Report 2000/2003-2017/2018 (2019).

out the growth strategy anchored on four productive sectors that have the greatest potential to create jobs and achieve sustainable inclusive growth. The four sectors were chosen on the basis of the following four features:

- Job creation potential
- Inclusive economic growth potential
- Comparative advantage existence or potential
- Sector's multiplier effect or impact across multiple sectors.

3.2 Lesotho Response to “Leave No One Behind”

The “Leave No One Behind” principle is a bedrock of Lesotho's development state, especially with respect to legislation, governance, sustainable development considerations, and democratic institutions of the state. Lesotho is committed to promote Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE), as well as human rights in its development agenda and endeavours. The Constitution ensures



Sign Language interpretation for hearing impaired persons

the foundation for a non-racist, non-sexist and human right-based society where race, class, gender, sex, religion, diversity, age, social security and protection from harm, among others, are primary considerations.⁴

The GoL recognizes and appreciates the fact that there are many Basotho (children, adolescent, people with disabilities, youth, women, men and old people) across the country who

are vulnerable and if not specifically targeted they could lack choices and opportunities required to actively participate and benefit from development progress. The Government has therefore put in place inclusive and empowering programmes and safety nets to support such people. Below are some highlights on these strategies

GoL recognizes and appreciates the fact that there are many Basotho (children, adolescent, people with disabilities, youth, women, men and old people) across the country who are vulnerable and if not specifically targeted they could lack choices and opportunities required to actively participate and benefit from development progress.

3.2.1 GEWE for the SDGs

Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) is an imperative goal and strategy in Lesotho. The Government of Lesotho is committed to women's empowerment. Compared to men, women constitute 51 per cent of the country's population hence gender has been mainstreamed in the NSDP II.

Despite existing cultural and political dynamics, the GoL continues its commitment to develop gender responsive policies, programmes, plans and budgets. This is done to ensure improvements, progress and success on the following: i) prevention and eradication of sexual and gender – based violence (SDG 5); ii) child abuse and exploitation (SDGs 5, 16); iii) infant and maternal mortality (SDGs 3, 1, 2); iv) unequal division of unpaid care work, inequalities in the control over productive resources and inequalities in access to paid employment (SDGs 8, 10, 16); v) food insecurity and hunger (SDGs 1, 2); gender disparity in decision-making positions (SDG 16).

To address these challenges and the unfinished business of MDGs, the GoL through a participatory process developed a ten-year Gender and Development (GAD) Policy 2018-2028. The Policy is implemented through multi-sectoral approaches with the participation of all Government ministries, local authorities, CSOs, Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), academia, the private sector and development partners.

The Policy is aligned to the international and regional instruments including the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action; the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015, AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, among others. At the local level, it is aligned to the national frameworks such as the NSDP and the National Vision 2020. Gender equality forms a critical area of concern in the GAD Policy.

Addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV):

The GoL is committed to address domestic violence through various initiatives that include:

- o Developing capacities within the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) and the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) to address GBV in emergencies initiatives rolled out over the 2018-2019 Season;

Gender focused reviews of the National HIV/AIDS Policy;

- The Prevention and Eradication of Gender Inequality Programme;
- The Domestic Violence Bill;
- The Ending Child Marriage Act.
- The Gender for Equality and Justice Assessment (2016-2020) leading to the development of key indicators for monitoring gender in Lesotho; and,
- Establishment of a national simplified and integrated referral system for GBV survivors, and child protection.

The GoL and various groups recognize that more needs to be done to promote GEWE and reduce inequalities based on sex and gender in both the public, private and social spheres across the country. One major area is harmonization of customary laws with civil laws to remove inequalities and empower women economically, socially and politically.

3.2.2 Child Protection

Children (aged 0-17 years) are one of Lesotho

⁴Lesotho Constitution, (1993)

tho's greatest resource. They make up to half of the country's population and every one of these children has the potential to make positive contribution to the future of the nation. For this to happen, children must be protected from violence, abuse, harm, exploitation and neglect so that they can grow to their fullest potential (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 16).

The Government conducted a mapping and assessment of Lesotho's child protection system in 2014, and in 2019 conducted VAC survey, that produced high level priority indicators to be used for decision making and programming on child protection across the country.

Lesotho enacted Children Protection and Welfare Act 2011, which made access to basic services like education and health a human right.⁵ The Government, with support from development partners, conducted a mapping and assessment of Lesotho's child protection system in 2014, and in 2019. The Government also conducted Violence against Children (VAC) Survey.⁶ The survey produced high level priority indicators that are used for decision making and programming on children protection across the country.

The Government and other stakeholders, including advocacy groups, recognize the need to strengthen the ability to generate and use evidence for decision making, programming and monitoring impact of child protection interventions nationally and in the districts. They also recognize that there are structures at national and district levels to coordinate child protection responses. However, these structures need capacity enhancement to be able to, among others, produce credible disaggregated data, coordinate and monitor the effectiveness of the existing interventions on child protection and social protection.

3.2.3 Youth for the SDGs

Lesotho has a young population, with about 32 percent of population aged below 15, while

those aged 15-34 years accounts for approximately 38 percent of the total population.⁷ With unemployment rate of about 25 percent and 36 percent estimated youth unemployment, youth population in Lesotho faces challenges that are multi-dimensional and interlinked. These challenges also include, incidence of HIV, limited sexual and reproductive rights/health services, limited skills tailored to labour market needs and access to finances. Moreover, low completion rates for secondary education, limited opportunities for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) exacerbates youth's vulnerability.

GoL and partners, put emphasis on the need for macroeconomic and fiscal policies to support measures that have the potential to create employment. In this regard, the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation through the Department of Youth developed the National Youth Policy 2017-2030 (NYP) in collaboration with youth. There is also an implementation plan to guide the execution of the Policy. The Policy aims to empower the youth by increasing their access to education and training (SDG 4), health services (SDG 3), decent jobs (SDG 1,2,8), leadership and political participation (SDG 16,17) and environmental protection programmes (SDG 6,7,11,13,14,15). Many efforts and studies have been carried out to understand the underlying issues facing young entrepreneurs through engagements at different platforms.

3.2.4 Volunteers for the SDGs

The Government recognizes volunteers as critical partners for the implementation of the 17 SDGs. This is seen as a strategy to promote broader national ownership, a human rights-based approach, gender equality, participation, inclusion and sustainability. Over 100 young Basotho volunteered and offered services during the VNR 2019, including mobilization, advocacy, and participating in consultation workshops.

⁵Lesotho Children Protection and Welfare Act 2011

⁶Lesotho Violence Against Children Survey 2019. High Level Priority Indicators.

⁷National Census, 2016.

The GoL's recognition of the value addition of volunteer action dates back to 2009 as demonstrated through the development and implementation of the National Volunteer Corps for young graduates' project. This project enabled the country to retain new graduates from universities and vocational training institutions. Additionally, the intervention has impacted positively on employment opportunities, sustainable livelihood, household security, natural resource and environmental management.

With about 38 percent of the population of Lesotho between the ages of 15 and 34 years, policies and programmes targeting youth are crucial as national strategies to ensure that no one is left behind in development planning and implementation. In 2015, a volunteer programme that is aimed at enhancing youth engagement in development frameworks enabled young people's involvement especially in the hard to reach rural communities. Furthermore, the programme enabled the country to leverage volunteer involving structures and networks to improve their collective contribution, inputs and coordination on the implementation of various SDGs.

From 2015, through formal and non-formal structures, volunteers have been mobilized and are active across different development sectors and are contributing to various SDG related programmes. For example, 64 UN Volunteers have supported SDG related programmes in rural areas while community based volunteers, are the pillars for preventative health, hygiene, water and sanitation and food security interventions, which are critical sectors linked to SDGs 1, 2, 3 and 6.

3.2.5 Humanitarian Assistance to Vulnerable and at Risk Population (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 13)

The vulnerability of Lesotho and the Basotho due to the effect of climate change, HIV and AIDS, political instability, and global economic melt-down has called for humanitarian assistance over the last decade. The GoL, supported by various development partners, the private sector, religious organizations and NGOs,

has put in place various humanitarian response programmes and initiatives across the country.

The 2018 LVAC reported that more than 320,000 people (50,000 in urban areas) in Lesotho would require humanitarian assistance during the 2018/2019 lean season.⁸ It is also estimated that the population at risk of food insecurity will increase to 640,000 people during the period of July 2019 to June 2020. The country has put in place the National Drought Emergency Response Plan 2019 to respond to the current drought effects.

3.2.6. The National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA)

The Government of Lesotho identified the need to increase the efficiency and coverage of social protection programmes, to improve the institutional coordination, to harmonize legal frameworks, and to consolidate social assistance programmes across the country. The Government therefore established the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA). The NISSA is a single national integrated data platform for targeting that was developed with financial support from the European Union (EU) and technical assistance from UNICEF and it is housed in the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD).

NISSA is a single national integrated national data platform for targeting, aimed at increasing the efficiency and coverage of social protection programmes, improve institutional coordination, harmonize legal frameworks, and consolidate social assistance programmed across the country.

It currently holds information on approximately 333,245 of Lesotho's rural households and 64 community Councils. MoSD plans to expand NISSA coverage to 12 urban areas before end of 2019 where a further estimated 216,000 households reside. The poverty classification is then used to target beneficiaries of MOSD programs such as Child Grants Programme (CGP) and OVC Bursary program. NISSA in conjunction with delivery systems of CGP have subsequently been used to deliver an Emergency Grant and can be used to target for oth-

⁸Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee Report, 2017/2018.

er social assistance programmes outside the MoSD.

a) Child Grants Programme

The Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) was introduced in different Community Councils across the country from 2009. The Government of Lesotho launched the CGP through the technical and financial support from UNICEF and the EU, respectively, and was fully taken over by the Government in 2013. The CGP, which is unconditional in its nature and constitutes the first cash transfer, targeted at the poor and ultra-poor households of Lesotho, is under the administration of the (MoSD). The objective of the CGP is to improve the living standards of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) by reducing malnutrition, improving their health status, and increasing school enrolment among the OVC, through the provisions of a quarterly cash transfer to beneficiary households. The transfer value is linked to the household size.

b) Supporting People with Disabilities

Recent estimates on the extent of disability in Lesotho ranges from 2.5 to 3.5 percent of the population.¹⁰The Constitution of Lesotho provides that Lesotho adopts policies designed to provide for training facilities, including specialized institutions, public or private; and place People with Disabilities (PWD) in employment and encourage employers to accommodate them. Lesotho ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in December, 2008, with the purpose of promoting, protecting and ensuring that PWD in Lesotho enjoy their human rights.

The Government, and other stakeholders, including Lesotho National Federation of Organization of the Disabled (LNFOD), has pursued the strategy of disability mainstreaming in NSDP II, and specific development programmes in all sectors. Two important frameworks exist: National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy, and the **National Disability Mainstreaming Plan (NDMP)**. The Ministry of Social Development, in consultations with LNFOD, is in the process of enacting disability specific legislation that will establish a clear legal framework for the pro-

motion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. A draft Bill has been completed and validated by all relevant stakeholders and will soon be tabled before the Parliament for enactment into law.

c) Migration

Lesotho has made migration a major theme of Lesotho's foreign and public policies, as is reflected in Vision 2020 and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP). Lesotho has actively participated in the Global Compact on Migration (GCM), Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), and other inter-governmental policy dialogue forum. The forum called **National Consultative Committee on Migration (NCC)** has played a key role to address the migration issues in Lesotho. The NCC is consisted of inter-Ministerial, multi-sectoral stakeholders dealing with migration issues in Lesotho including academia and migrants' associations. NCC is chaired by Ministry of Home Affairs and co-chaired by IOM.

Lesotho has achieved significant progress in the development of migration related policies in recent years. Labour Migration Management Policy was developed by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) in March 2018. Border and Migration Management and Assessment was conducted in May, 2018, and based on which, Immigration Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual was produced in November 2018.

The Eighth Amendment to the Constitution to allow the dual citizenship for the first time in Lesotho's history was passed in December 2017. To effectively involve Basotho living abroad in development of the country, the Government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations (MoFA) started diaspora engagement in South Africa in preparation of diaspora policy development.

In the next five years and beyond, the Government of Lesotho will continue its efforts and initiatives to make sure "No One is Left Behind" in accessing and benefiting from development initiatives across the country. The Government

¹⁰Lesotho Population and Housing Census (2016)

will work with all stakeholders to ensure that policy and enabling environment for SDGs is strengthened and effective. The Government will therefore reach out to various stakeholders and partners and develop a national SDGs partnership and coordination strategy for effectiveness, efficiency and accountability to the people of Lesotho, and the regional and international partners.

4.0 LESOTHO PROGRESS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This section presents the progress made by the Kingdom of Lesotho towards the implementation and achievement of SDGs, guided by 2019 VNR Theme “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality” and six goals under review: SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17. In addition to these six goals reviewed in depth in this report, Lesotho highlighted progress made in SDGs 1 and 2 as they relate to the ultimate goal of NSDP II, “to create private sector-led jobs and eradicate extreme poverty”.

4.1 GOAL 1: END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE



4.1.1 Lesotho Progress on Poverty Indicators

The NSDP II puts emphasis on private sector development and gives priority to pursuing people centred development. It re-enforces the Government's commitment to bring further development to the people of Lesotho by empowering them to participate fully in the development process, thereby providing them dignity, and uplifting their potential to partake in the prosperity that will be generated in the next five years.

(NSDP II, 2018/19-2022/23)

Addressing poverty and reducing inequality in the Kingdom of Lesotho was one of the key challenges by the end of the implementation of MDGs in 2015. With SDGs, Lesotho has re-committed herself and strives to give all citizens equal opportunities and full access to economic and social opportunities and to live a decent and dignified quality of life. It is for this reason that the NSDP II emphasizes the necessity to pursue sustainable inclusive growth and creation of decent jobs as the most effective route for poverty reduction. The Government has introduced strategic measures to empower the people and support the poor and the most vulnerable. The Plan targets increased inclusive growth in four key priority sectors namely, **Agriculture, Manufacturing, Tourism and Creative Industries, and Technology and Innovation.**

Targeting, supporting and strengthening macroeconomic resilience for inclusive growth and employment creation is critical. Another area is investing in smart agriculture and increasing rural wealth, promoting inclusive trade and entrepreneurship, in particular supporting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMES). To achieve these, the GoL will effectively manage government spending and remove any inefficiencies in spending. It will ensure low and stable inflation rates which is not only key to achieving the nation's competitiveness but also important for protection of incomes of the poor; ensuring sustainable levels of fiscal deficits and maintaining sound external balances. Fiscal policy will be targeted at providing public goods and services that improve national welfare and support the private sector development.

Lesotho tourism sector has potential for creating decent work for young people and accelerating economic growth. GoL, therefore, will increase additional resources and invest in creating enabling environment that will attract

local, regional and local investors to the sector. This will include creating relevant legal and policy frameworks, investing in packaging and marketing Lesotho Tourism, quality assurance, and creating incentives to investors.

4.1.2 Lesotho Poverty Indicators

The GoL has successfully reduced absolute poverty in the last five years (Table 4.1.1 below). Lesotho, through the BoS, produced the Lesotho Poverty Trend and Profile Report (2019). The Report provides information that is critical for monitoring and evaluation of the country's development plans, providing key evidence to monitor and evaluate progress towards poverty and inequality targets set in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II).

To measure poverty, Lesotho, through the BoS, uses a welfare indicator is measured against a pre-determined threshold (the poverty line) below which a household or individual is deemed poor. Lesotho uses a consumption-based welfare measure to measure poverty, referred to as the consumption aggregate. The cost-of-basic-needs (CBN) method is used to determine two consumption-based poverty lines for the country – the food or extreme poverty line as well as the upper bound poverty line (referred to in this report as the national poverty line).

Lesotho realised a decline in poverty for both national and extreme poverty between 2002/2003 and 2017/2018. The overall national poverty and extreme poverty headcount ratios declined from 56.6 percent to 49.7 percent and from 34.1 percent to 24.1 percent, respectively (table 4.1.1). In absolute terms, 484,000 people are estimated to have been living in extreme poverty in 2017/2018, while 997,000 lived under the national poverty line.

Table 4.1.1: Urban-rural and Regional Poverty Dynamics, 2002/2003 – 2017/2018

	Extreme poverty (percent)		National poverty (percent)	
	2002/2003	2017/2018	2002/2003	2017/2018
National	34.1	24.1	56.6	49.7
Urban	22.2	11.2	41.5	28.5
Rural	37.7	30.8	61.3	60.7
Maseru Urban	17.6	9.7	33.7	24.7
Other Urban	25.0	12.4	46.3	31.4
Rural Lowland	38.2	25.8	62.4	54.4
Rural Foothill	43.8	33.1	66.8	63.6
Rural Mountain	33.7	37.2	56.9	67.8
Rural Senqu River Valley	34.2	35.2	55.5	67.9

Source: BoS, 2019. *Lesotho Poverty Trend and Profile Report 2000/2003 – 2017/2018*.

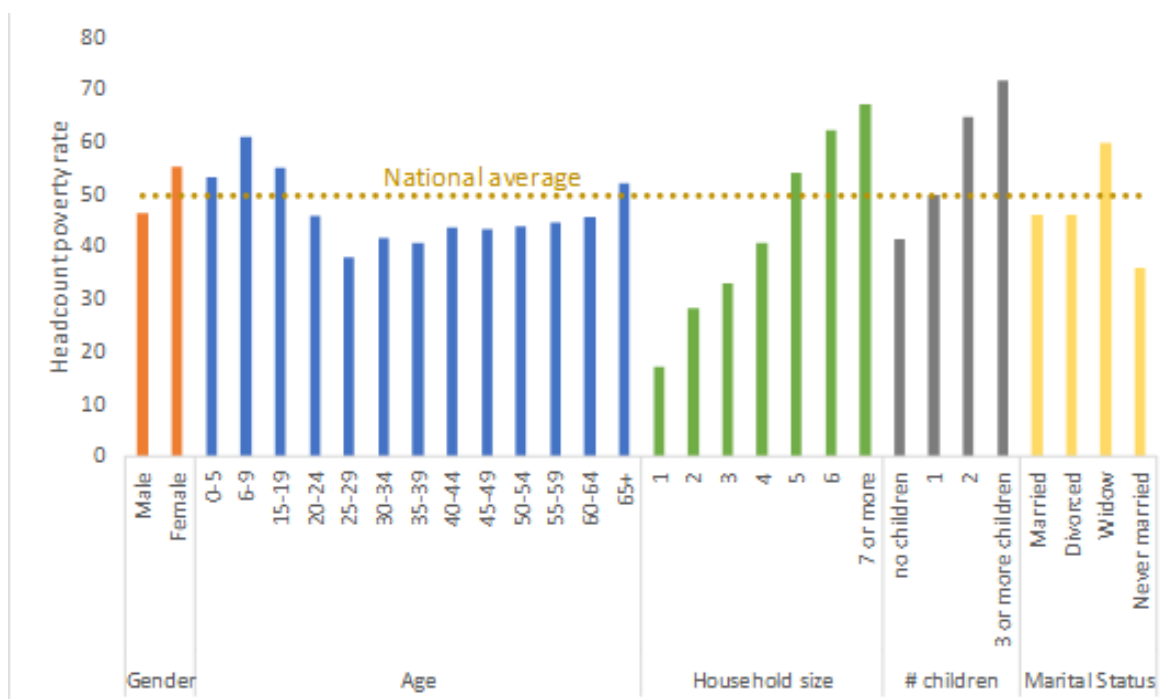
In Lesotho, poverty has a clear regional dimension, with regions that are largely rural having the highest poverty rates. While there was a significant decline in poverty levels in urban areas, rural areas experienced slower reduction in poverty. Between 2002/2003 and 2017/2018, the number of Basotho living in poverty declined marginally from 61.3 percent to 60.7 percent of the rural population, and from 41.5 percent to 28.5 percent of the urban population (table 4.1.1). However, the extreme poverty headcount ratio declined by 6.9 percentage points in rural areas (from 37.7 percent to 30.8 percent) during the same period, compared to 10.9 percentage points in urban areas (from 22.2 percent to 11.2 percent).

A profile of the poor in Lesotho suggests that Basotho living in female-headed households, Basotho living in households headed by widows or widowers, children, large families, the less educated, and the unemployed are the most prone to being poor. The relationship between poverty rates and age from the 2017/18 data shows a typical U-shaped pattern, with poverty being higher among the youth and the elderly and lower among the working-age population (Figure 4.1.1). Together, children under 16 and the elderly (60+) account for approximately 48 percent of the poor. In general, the poverty rate is the highest among the households with three or more children under six years old.

¹¹BoS (2019). *Lesotho Poverty Trend and Profile Report 2000/2003 – 2017/2018*.

To measure poverty, Lesotho, through the BoS, uses a welfare indicator is measured against a pre-determined threshold (the poverty line) below which a household or individual is deemed poor. Lesotho uses a consumption-based welfare measure to measure poverty, referred to as the consumption aggregate. The cost-of-basic-needs (CBN) method is used to determine two consumption-based poverty lines for the country – the food or extreme poverty line as well as the upper bound poverty line (referred to in this report as the national poverty line).

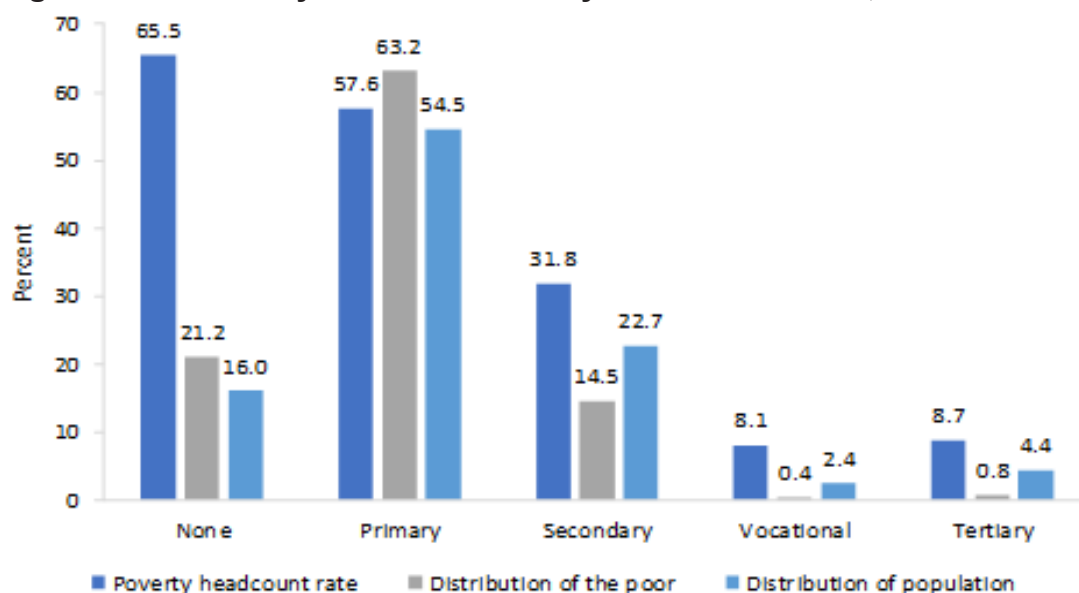
Figure 4.1.1: Poverty by demographic characteristics, 2017/2018



Source: Calculations based on the 2017/2018 Lesotho CMS/HBS. Children are defined to include 0-6 years of age. Marital status is for the head of household.

Poverty declines with rising levels of education (Figure 4.1.2). In 2017/2018, 65.5 percent of people were living in households whose head did not have a formal education versus 4.4 percent of those living in a household whose head attained university education. Further, people living in households whose head did not have formal education constituted 21.2 percent of the poor, and 16.0 percent of the population.

Figure 4.1.2: Poverty headcount rate by head's education, 2017/2018

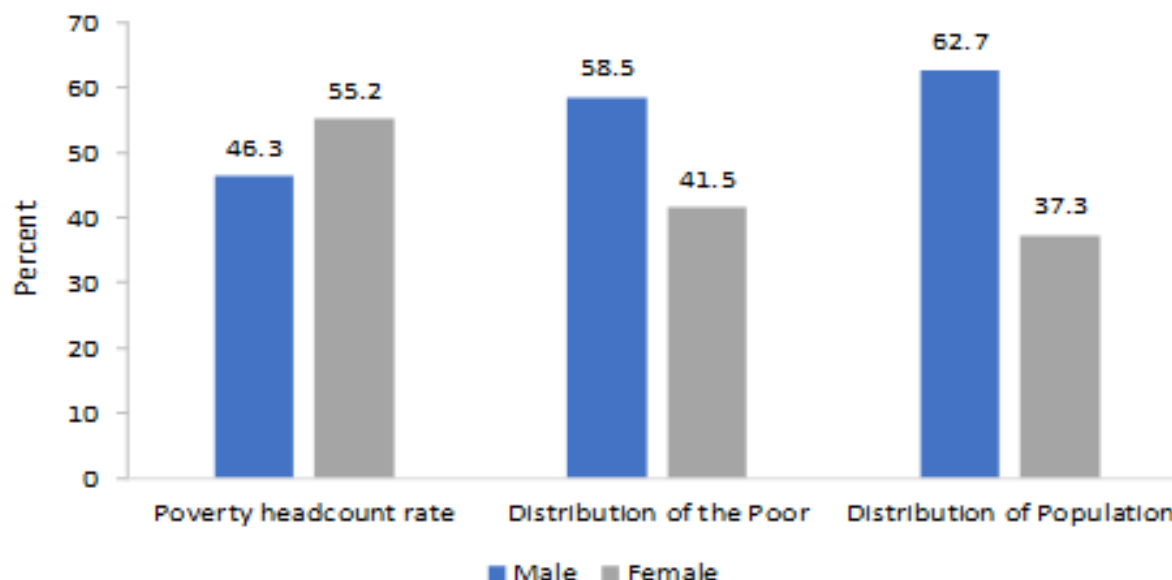


Source: BoS, 2019. Lesotho Poverty Trend and Profile Report 2000/2003 – 2017/2018.

4.1.3 Poverty and Gender

Poverty is more pronounced among female-headed households. In 2017/2018, 55.2 percent of people living in female-headed households were poor compared to 46.3 percent in male-headed households. However, most of the poor (58.5 percent) are living in male-headed households in 2017 (Figure 4.1.3). The majority, 62.7 percent, of the Basotho population resided in household headed by males.

Figure 4.1.3: Poverty and gender of household head, 2017/2018



Source: (BoS, 2019). *Lesotho Poverty Trend and Profile Report 2000/2003 – 2017/2018*

National poverty and inequality rates disguise large sub-national variations in poverty, particularly between urban and rural areas. While there was a significant decline in poverty levels in urban areas, rural areas experienced slower reduction in poverty. Between 2002/2003 and 2017/2018, the number of Basotho living in poverty declined marginally from 61.3 percent to 60.7 percent of the rural population, and from 41.5 percent to 28.5 percent of the urban population (Table 4.1.2 below). However, the extreme poverty headcount ratio declined by 6.9 percentage points in rural areas (from 37.7 percent to 30.8 percent) during the same period, compared to 10.9 percentage points in urban areas (from 22.2 percent to 11.2 percent). There were also significant differences in poverty levels and poverty trends between ecological zones: the Mountains and Senqu River Valley were the poorest in 2017/2018 while the Maseru Urban was the least poor. Moreover, these two poorest regions experienced an increase in the poverty rate while there was a reduction in Maseru Urban, other urban regions as well as in Rural Lowlands and the Foothills. A profile of the poor indicates that the subpopulation groups that exhibit the highest poverty

levels are people living in female-headed households, households in which the head is a widow or widower, large families, household with relatively large dependency ratios, and children. In addition, the profile shows that poverty is highest among households with limited access to basic services including health facilities (SDG 3), education and training services (SDG 4), energy (SDG 7), water and sanitation facilities (SDGs 6).

4.1.4 Overall Inequalities Statistics: The Gini Index

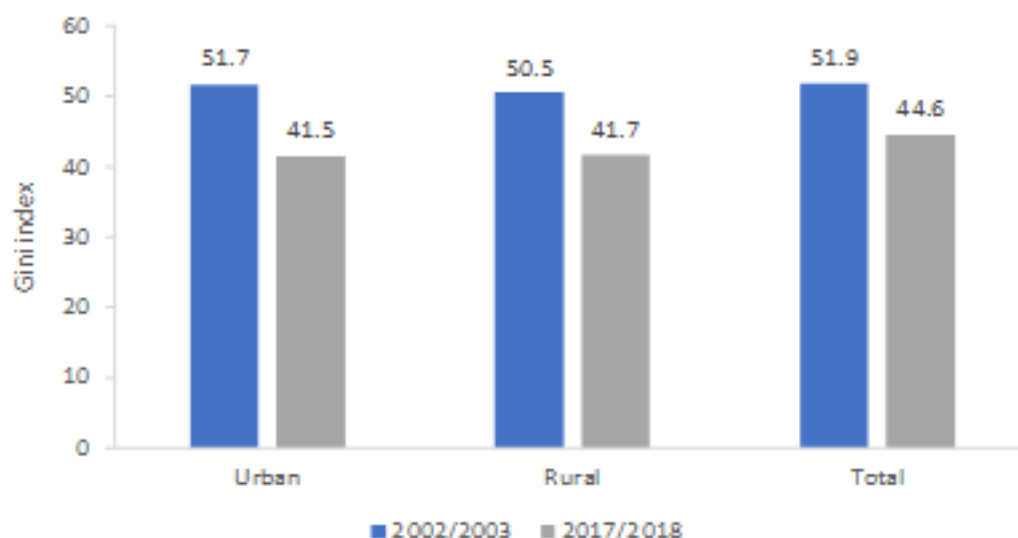
A significant change in the level of inequality was recorded between 2002/2003 and 2017/2018. Using the Gini Index as a measure of inequality, the findings indicate that the consumption per adult equivalent Gini Index was 51.9 in 2002/2003 and fell by 6.3 Gini points to 44.6 in 2017/2018. In urban areas, the Gini Index fell from 51.7 in 2002/2003 to 41.5 in 2017/2018. The corresponding change in rural areas was from 50.5 to 41.7. The drop in the Gini Index is partly explained by changes in the survey instrument which collected data on actual consumption in 2017/2018 compared to consumption expenditure in 2002/2003.

Table 4.1.2: Changes in inequality, the Gini index

	Gini Index	
	2002/2003	2017/2018
National	51.9	44.6
Urban	51.7	41.5
Rural	50.5	41.7
Maseru Urban	52.3	40.9
Other Urban	49.9	41.8
Rural Lowland	48.8	41.8
Rural Foothill	52.6	39.5
Rural Mountain	50.6	41.0
Rural Senqu River Valley	53.1	40.5

Source: BoS, 2019. *Lesotho Poverty Trend and Profile Report 2000/2003 – 2017/2018*.

The Gini Index in rural areas was 41.7 in 2017/18, while the Gini Index in urban areas was 41.4 (Figure 4.1.4 below). Thus, inequality is almost the same in urban and rural areas, and lower than the national level. The consumption per adult equivalent Gini Index, a measure of inequality, declined nationally as well as in urban and rural areas between 2002/2003 and 2017/2018. The Gini Index declined from 51.9 to 44.6. ¹²In urban areas, the Gini Index fell from 51.7 to 41.5 and from 50.5 to 41.7 in rural areas.

Figure 4.1.4: Changes in inequality, the Gini index

, Source: (BoS, 2019). *Lesotho Poverty Trend and Profile Report 2000/2003 – 2017/2018*.

4.1.5 Child and Adolescent Poverty



Lesotho has a relatively young population with nearly a half of the inhabitants under the age of 18.¹³ A study of child and adolescent poverty in Lesotho, using UNICEF Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) methodology in 2018 indicates that about 65.4 per cent of all children and adolescent (aged 0-17 years) are multi-dimensionally poor, that is they are simultaneously deprived of three or more dimensions of well-being. ¹⁴Box 4.1.1 gives the summary of the findings of child poverty by dimension of deprivation. The Basotho children are at the forefront of vulnerability and experience several deprivations at a time.

Deprivation is more than lack of income and resources to sustain livelihood (SDG 8). It comprises malnutrition; limited access to education, health and other basic facilities and services (SDGs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7); discrimination and violence and lack of protection (5, 10, 16). ¹⁵Alleviation of child poverty is one area of development, which is central in SDGs, as articulated in SDG 1. Target 1.2 aims at reducing at least by half, the proportion of children, men, and women living in poverty in all its dimension according to national definition by 2030.

Box 4.1.1: Child Poverty by Dimension of Well-being

1. Across age groups, between 84-88 percent of children are deprived with respect to housing (SDG 1, SDG 11),
 2. HIV and AIDs affect 74 percent of children aged 0-23 months, and 63 percent of children aged 24 – 59 months (SDG 3, 10).
 3. Nutrition intake is not adequate for 77 percent of children aged 0-23 months (SDGs 1, 2).
 4. Child protection rate has higher deprivation for children aged 0-23 months and 24-59 months (79 And 72 percent respectively) compared to children aged 5-12 years and 13-17 years (36 and 42 percent respectively) (SDG 16).
 5. Education is a vulnerability for 17 per of primary school children and 67 percent of secondary school children (SDG 4).
 6. Water deprivation rate range between 29 – 32 percent among children of four age group (SDG 6).
 7. Sanitation deprivation is 64 percent for children aged 0-23 months, and between 48 and 54 percent for children aged 2-17 years.(SDG 6).
 8. Between 7 and 10 percent of all children are deprived with respect to information (SDG 16).
- MoDP BoS/UNICEF Lesotho

¹⁵Ibid.

¹²The consumption per capita Gini Index fell from 51.8 to 44.9 between 2002/2003 and 2017/2018.

¹³MoH and ICT International, 2016.

¹⁴MoDP/UNICEF (2018). *Child Poverty in Lesotho: Understanding the Extent of Multi- overlapping Deprivation*. BoS sets 65.4% as baseline rate for child poverty in Lesotho to allow for future monitoring and progress tracking.

Box 4.1.2

Profiling Multidimensional Child-Poverty in Lesotho

- 1. 65.4 percent of all children (aged 0-17 years) are multidimensionally poor.*
- 2. Multidimensional child poverty is significantly higher in rural area compared to urban areas (72 and 43 percent respectively).*
- 3. At regional level, Maseru has the lowest proportion of multidimensional poor children (56 percent), while Mokhotlong and Thaba-Tseka have the highest multidimensional poverty rates among children (85 and 84 percent respectively).*
- 4. The proportion of multidimensional poor children is higher in mountain locations compared to lowlands (82 and 52.7 percent respectively).*
- 5. Difference in child deprivation based on gender are relatively small for younger children. For older children, the gender disparities are more visible, particularly with respect to education, which affects 72 percent of boys aged 13-17 compared to 50 percent of girls in the same age group.*
- 6. Orphan-hood is a condition that enhances multidimensional child poverty.*
- 7. Multidimensional poverty rates are higher for girls experiencing early pregnancies compared to girls who have not been pregnant (92 and 69 percent respectively).*

The GoL is committed to ensuring that child poverty is addressed comprehensively and in a sustained manner in the next five years and beyond. Apart from stimulating economic growth and attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the Government is investing heavily in the social sectors to promote inclusive and quality education and health, accessible to all Basotho children and adolescent. There are also initiatives /programmes to address child protection with an objective of creating a society in Lesotho where every child, adolescent and young person is safe, protected and thriving.

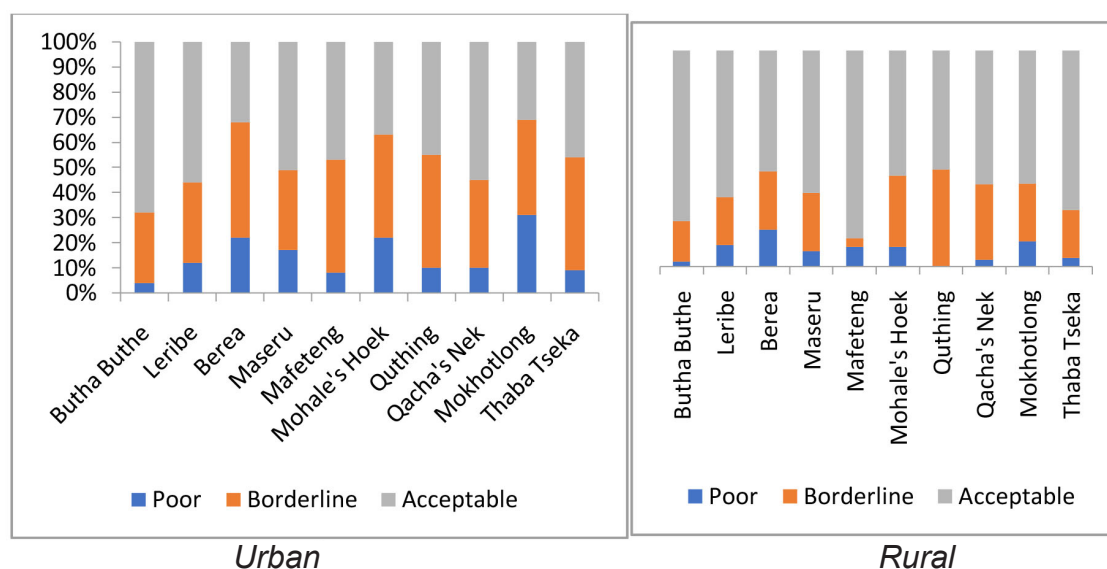
4.2 GOAL 2: END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

4.2.1 Lesotho Hunger Indicators

Lesotho is committed to addressing hunger and undernutrition. This has been demonstrated by several policy frameworks and programmes that are in place, most importantly National Vision 2020 that seeks to ensure a healthy and well-developed human resource base. The Food and Nutrition Security Policy (2017), the proposed Food and Nutrition Strategy and the Zero Strategic Review Report (2018) all provide a framework to address the multi-dimensional causes and consequences of malnutrition. All these high-level initiatives and many others symbolize GoL's efforts to achieve the WHO Targets 2025, the African Union Agenda 2063 Goals as well as the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 2.2 - "to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030".

Food and nutrition insecurity in Lesotho is related to poor performance and low productivity in the agricultural sector. The population at risk of food insecurity in Lesotho varies each year with a projection of 640,000 people to be food insecure during the period of July 2019 to June 2020. This is due to a combination of droughts, lack of financial resources (due to rising poverty) to purchase inputs to increase productivity, land degradation, weak management of the sector, limited extension service delivery to farmers contributing to sub-optimal application of modern agricultural methods, pest and disease outbreaks (such as army-worm infestations), limited grazing land and stock theft. In the 2017/18 consumption year 224,664 people in the rural areas and about 82,278 people within urban settlements have been estimated to be food insecure. Lesotho currently relies on imports from South Africa to meet 70 percent of its food security needs.

Figure 4.2.1: Food Consumption Score by District and Settlement– Urban and Rural



Source: Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis Report 2017

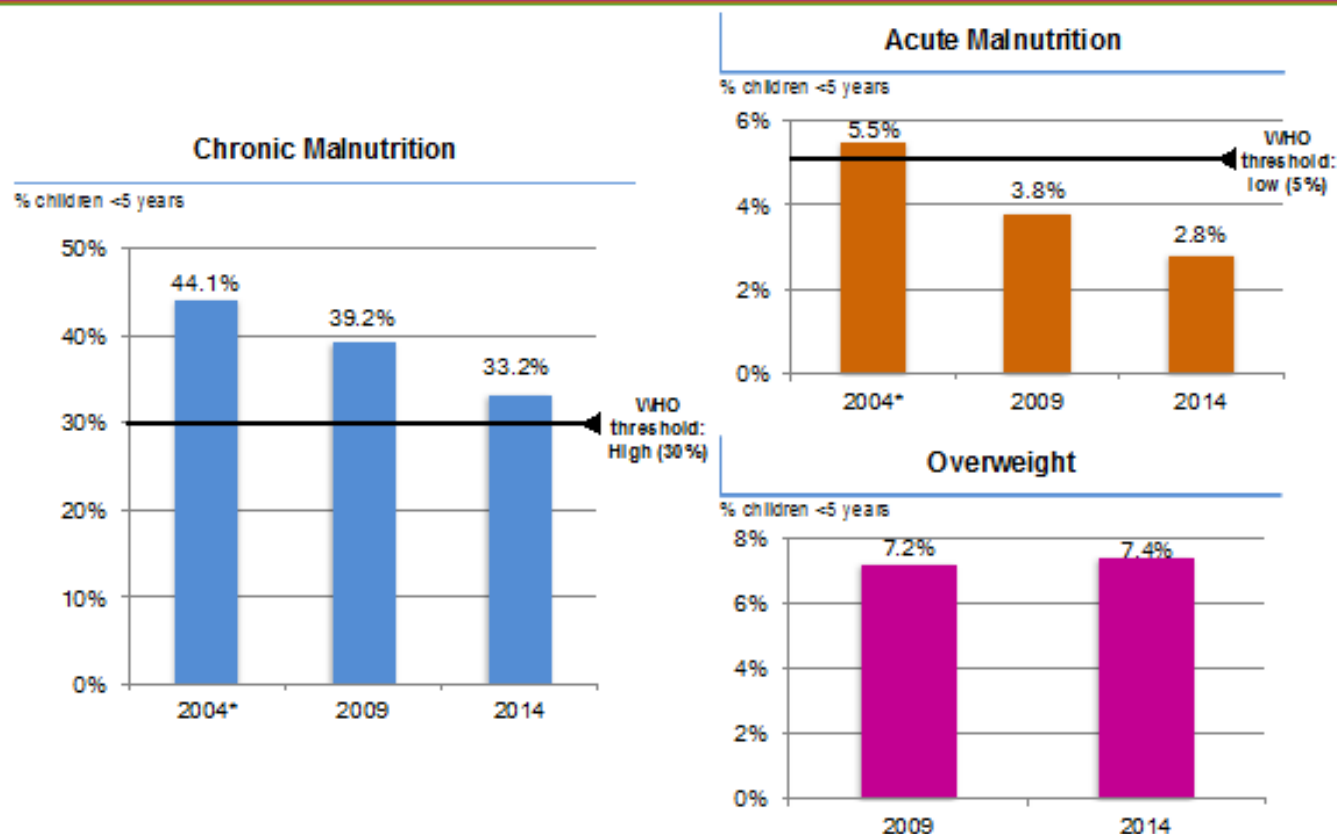
Table 4.2.1: Proportion of Moderate or Severe Food Insecurity in the Population by Residence

Residence	Moderately Food Insecure	Severely Food Insecure
Urban	27.5 %	7.9 %
Rural	38.7 %	15.1 %
Total (for Population)	34.4 %	12.3 %

Source: Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis Report 2017

Although chronic and acute malnutrition has declined since 2004 (Figure 4.2.2), the nutrition situation in Lesotho is characterised by high stunting rates in children under the age of five years, wide-spread micro-nutrient deficiencies in children, adolescents and adults, overweight and obesity in some segments of the population, and the growing incidence of diet related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) which are costing lives and imposing a burden on the health system.

Figure 4.2.2: Prevalence of Malnutrition by Type



Note: The 2004 data was converted using the WHO Conversion tool on 2006 growth standards

Sources: DHS 2004, 2009, 2014

Stunting: At least one in three children under the age of five years is stunted (33.2 percent according to the Lesotho Demographic Health Survey of 2014). Whilst both chronic and acute malnutrition in this age group of children has decreased since 2004, stunting remains high and above the WHO public health threshold of 29 percent for moderate prevalence. Chronic malnutrition is high across all districts, especially in Butha-Butha (40.3 percent), and the mountain districts of Mokhotlong (47.7 percent) and Thaba-Tseka (40 percent). The population density varies by districts with the largest number of children chronically malnourished in the higher population districts of Maseru, Leribe and Mphahle's Hoek. Two of the districts with the highest stunting rates (Mokhotlong and in Thaba-Tseka) have extreme concentrations of poverty. The majority of the population in these districts is in the lowest wealth quintile (53 and 55

percent, respectively). About 45 percent of the adult population in Lesotho is stunted (COHA Lesotho, 2016). The consequences of stunting on other SDGs is key to note. These include negative effects on cognitive functions required for successful educational outcomes, and poor maternal health outcomes.

Wasting: The prevalence of wasting remains low across all districts, (under five percent). The districts with the largest number of children under five with acute malnutrition are Maseru, Leribe and Berea.

Micro-nutrient deficiencies: According to the LDHS, 2014 Report, half of all children have some form of anaemia whilst more than one in four women (27.3 percent) of age 15-49 years have anaemia. The prevalence of anaemia in women and children has remained a critical

¹⁶(WHO, 2007)

¹⁷DHS, 2014

¹⁸Ibid

¹⁹Lesotho IPC Acute Food Insecurity, 2016-17

²⁰UNICEF Annual Report 2016

public health issue since 2004 and has increased in recent years. Vitamin A deficiency among pre-school aged children was identified as a severe public health problem in 2005, with 32.7 percent of these children being affected. However, updated data is missing. The same applies to iodine deficiency in all school-aged children as one-fifth were deficient in 2002 but more recent statistics are not available.

Lesotho is a mountainous country, with about two-thirds of the land characterized as not arable. But, agriculture is the backbone of the rural economy with about 58 percent of the population earning their living from it.¹⁶ However, the sector's contribution to GDP has been declining, largely due to adverse climatic conditions, thereby reaching a low of 6.9 percent in 2016. This compares with 16 percent in the early 1980s. The sector employs 9 percent of the urban population, and 54 percent of their rural counterparts. and supports livelihoods of over 80 percent of the rural population.¹⁷ While it is the main livelihood source for a majority of the rural population, the ability of Lesotho to produce its own food has declined in recent decades.¹⁸ This was largely the result of an El Nino drought, soil infertility and land degradation.¹⁹ Together, these factors exacerbated vulnerability to recurrent shocks, and entrench food insecurity and undernutrition. The result has been a sharp decline in food production and a failure to plant new crops by a large proportion of farmers. In addition to the formally trained and employed extension officers, the Government of Lesotho uses the lead farmer extension model where the lead farmers are drawn from the communities to further train and mentor others. Negative effects induced by the El Niño phenomenon left 640,000 people (58 percent children) food insecure.²⁰

4.2.2 Lesotho Action Programmes

Eradicating hunger and malnutrition are long-standing priorities in Lesotho because they are related to poverty (SDG 1), access to social services like education (SDG 4) and health (SDG 3), gender-based/sex-based violence (SDG 5, 10) and limited participation in com-

munity/country's development (SDGs 13, 16). Therefore, eradicating hunger and reducing malnutrition through comprehensive and sustained multi-sectoral approach is imperative for the country. The Government is also aware of the necessity to support to the poor and vulnerable groups to ensure access to food that is safe, nutritious and sufficient.

i. The Government has created the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office's (FNCO) under the Prime Minister's Office to provide leadership and coordinate response to hunger and nutrition in Lesotho. It has also launched a programme called "Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition" – REACH- to galvanize efforts, implementation, monitoring and reporting on hunger and nutrition programmes and initiatives.

ii. Lesotho, with the UN support, finalised the Lesotho Food and Nutrition Policy, and the Cost of Hunger in Africa Study (Lesotho Chapter), which together with the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN) were launched in 2016, by His Majesty King Letsie III who is also AU Nutrition Champion and FAO Special Ambassador for Nutrition.

iii. Capacity assessment was commissioned in August 2017, through REACH support with the aim of focusing primarily on the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office's (FNCO) capacity to leverage multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder nutrition coordination process while ensuring effective engagement of all key actors. The capacity assessment was also undertaken to identify gaps in capacity for the line ministries and stakeholders to effectively engage in SUN process at all levels. This was one of the recommendations of the nutrition situation analysis conducted in 2015.

iv. Lesotho developed National Food and Nutrition Strategy and Costed Action Plan (FNSAP) for Lesotho for the period 2019-2023, with a vision: "A well-nourished, healthy and productive nation". This document articulates and defines the national medium-term strategy for food and

nutrition security together with a costed action plan, both of which shall guide the design and implementation of food and nutrition security programmes, projects and related actions by all stakeholders. It presents evidence-based high-return investments that have been identified and prioritised through a multi-sectoral consultation approach. The strategies are aligned with national development priorities as articulated in the NSDP II as well as the regional and international policies and protocols on food and nutrition security.

4.2.3 Poverty and Hunger - Next Steps Going Forward

- Reducing poverty levels and inequalities (nationally and in the districts) and reducing inequalities across the country, by rolling out and sustaining the gains of the last five years and using evidence-based and result-based management.
- Enhancing food security, by improving productivity through research and development, use of technology, optimizing agriculture land use, encouraging and supporting smart and precision agriculture/farming.

- Adequate funding, effective implementation and monitoring the economic, social and environmental programmes articulated in the NSDP II.

- Mobilizing financial and human resources for NSDP II through national, regional and international partnerships.

- Balancing social protection/humanitarian assistance with development agenda – building community and households resilience.

- Strengthening national coordination and engagement structures for effective prioritization and monitoring of, and reporting on SDGs.

- Revitalizing FNCO's overall coordination architecture by reviewing and reforming the governance structures for multi-sectoral coordination.

- Effective implementation and monitoring of “Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition” – REACH- initiatives.

- Strengthening of health and nutrition programmes for attainment of good health.

4.3 GOAL 4: ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL



4.3.1 Lesotho Progress on Education Indicators

“As the youth, we acknowledge and appreciate the efforts made to ensure that every child has access to education, efforts like the Free Primary Education for All, the school feeding scheme, introduction of the special education program in Lesotho College of Education and NUL. However, we can’t overlook the fact that our education system is not accessible and equitable to every child. We still have only two church-owned schools for visually impaired (VI) learners and one high school for those with speech and hearing impairments country-wide. The visually impaired learners have limited access to books and other learning materials, and we say, because SDG 4 reference disability, we call for implementation of strategies that are disability sensitive and further recommend placement of qualified special education teachers, and the provision of accessible learning materials at schools in all the 10 districts. This will enable learners with disabilities to have equal access to quality and equitable education without having to migrate to Maseru like the non-disabled. Education is a right for all, and not just for the privileged. We strongly call for a rights-based approach to inclusive, quality and equitable education to ensure that every child including those in remote and hard to reach areas completes a full cycle of quality education without hustle. While working on that, we need to be engaged on how best our educational needs can be met.

“Nothing for Us, Without Us”

(Youth Voices from Mafeteng District, May 2019)

Lesotho has a 3-7-3-2 formal education structure. There are three years of Pre-primary Education (Childhood education), which has an official entry age of three; Primary Education (grades 1-7), with an official entry age of six and a duration of seven grades. Secondary Education is divided into two cycles: Lower secondary and Upper secondary. Lower secondary (Junior Secondary) consists of grades 8-10 and culminates into the Junior Certificate (JC), and Upper Secondary consists of grades 11-12 and culminates into the Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) - O level. Then Tertiary Education, which includes Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and University Education.

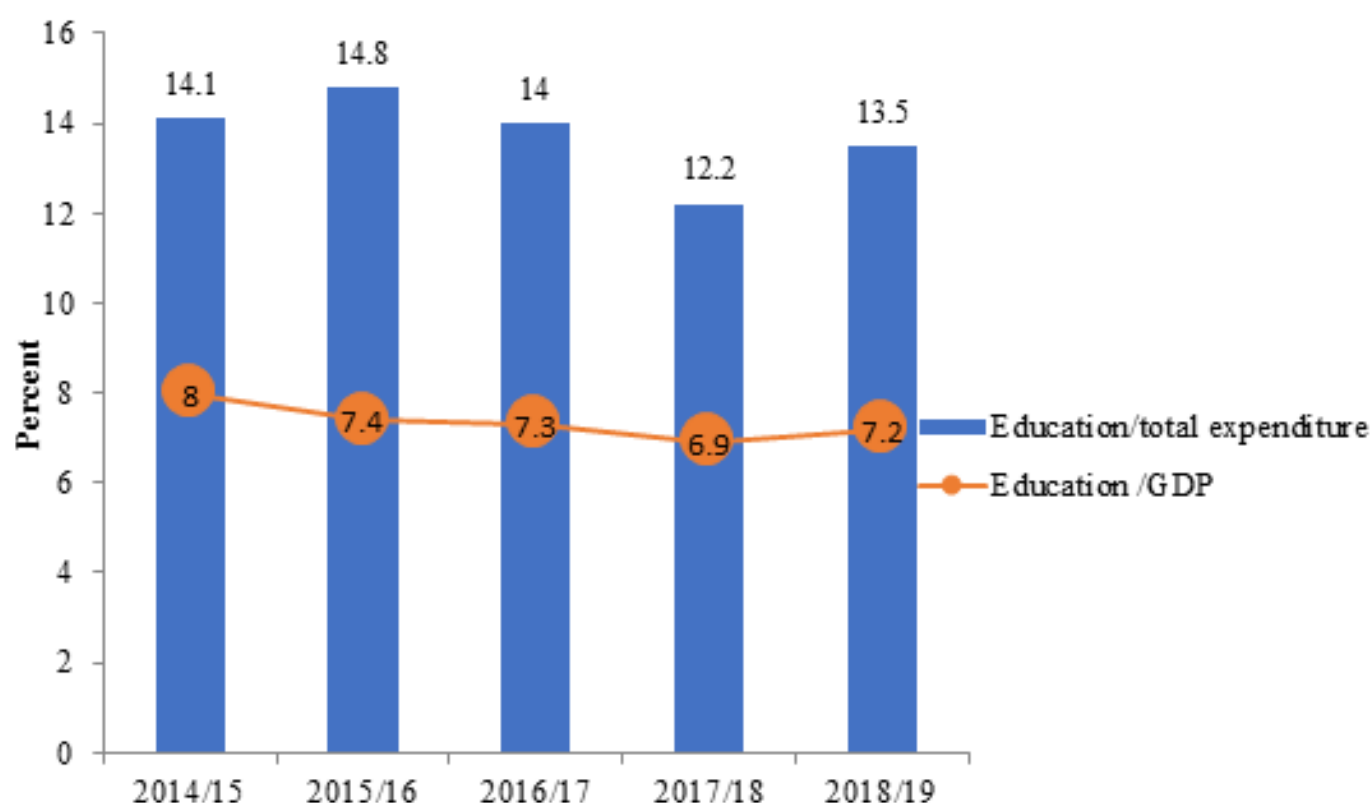
Lesotho recognizes that inclusive and quality education and training, together with health (SDG 3) is part of human capital development and critical enabler for achieving sustainable development in the country. Without human capital development, achieving SDGs by 2030 will be a tall order in Lesotho. The Government of Lesotho, therefore, envisages the provision

of an equitable basic education to all the people as a key developmental goal.

Basic education is seen as an essential part of social and economic development. It is regarded by the Government as a fundamental human right. It is also seen as an essential pre-condition for mid-level employment and secondary and post-secondary education and training. The GoL counts on development of partnerships with religious organisations, the private sector, NGOs, communities, and development partners to increase educational opportunities to all Basotho children.

High spending in the education sector reflects the Government's priority of providing free primary education. Figure 4.3.1 indicates public spending in education between 2014/15 – 2018/19 financial years. Indeed, primary education received the largest share of spending in accordance with the country's provision of free primary education.²¹ By contrast, spending on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and Secondary education is very low.

Figure 4.3.1 Expenditure in the Education Sector as a Percentage of GDP and National Budget, 2014/15-2018/19



The GoL is committed to providing all children in Lesotho with free, inclusive and quality primary education. Therefore, the Government has come up with legal and policy frameworks that provide enabling environment for effective and inclusive teaching and learning, leading to effective learning outcomes. Each subsector of education namely pre-primary, primary, secondary, TVET and tertiary as well as non-formal education are all targeted by investment in order to improve access, quality, inclusiveness, teaching-learning materials and learning outcomes.

The GoL, through the Ministry of Education, has developed the Education Sector Plan 2016-2026 and the Action Plan 2017-2020. The education sector objectives are summarized in Box 4.3.1

Box 4.3.1: Education Sector Objectives

- 1. To improve access, efficiency and equity of education and training at all levels.**
- 2. To improve the quality of education and training.**
- 3. To ensure that curricula and materials are relevant to the needs of Lesotho, are consonant with the appropriate standards and gender responsive.**
- 4. To ensure that both vocational-technical and non-formal education programs respond to the needs of industry and the communities in general.**
- 5. To develop and implement a common system of regular collection and reporting of information on the current status and future demand and supply, and on priority educational areas in the country.**
- 6. To progressively achieve the equivalence, harmonization and standardization of the education and training systems nationally, regionally and internationally.**
- 7. To effectively participate in regional and international educational sector development initiatives.**
- 8. To promote gender equality and ensure empowerment disadvantaged groups.**
- 9. Address the challenges posed by HIV and AIDS in education and training.**

The current Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) highlights a concern related to quality and matching the production of graduates with labour market demands. During the recent Joint Education Sector review in 2018, the Ministry of Education and Training announced key priority interventions for the next three years that included: introduction of a multi-tier model; introduction of AS-level qualification and A-Levels qualification in secondary schools; evaluation of phasing out primary school level qualifications; development of TVET funding model; and implementation of centralised and automated application system to regulate entry and funding of tertiary students. Building capacity of teachers and developing a comprehensive teacher policy is also priority.

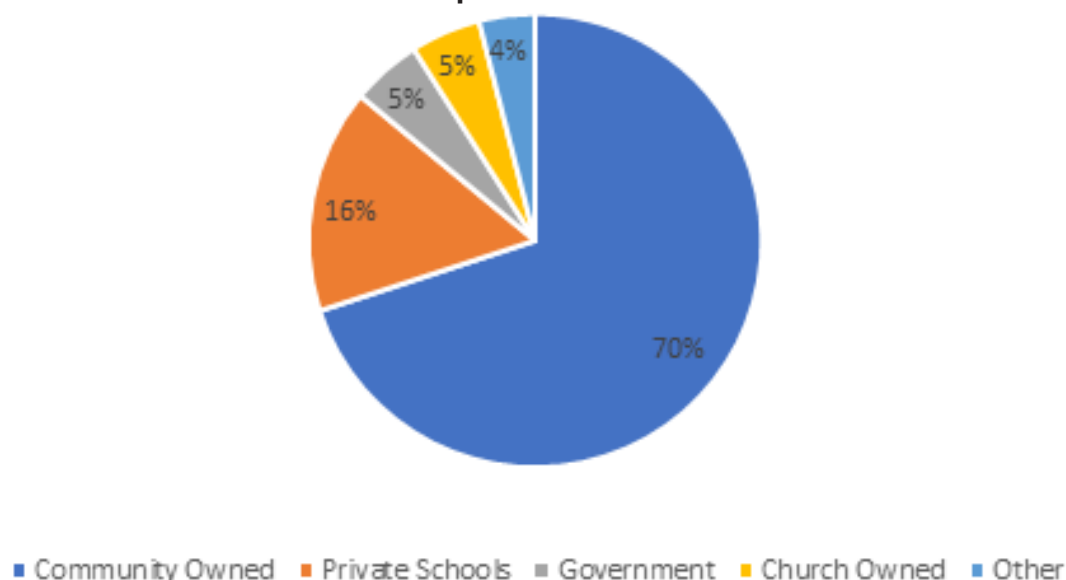
4.3.2 Lesotho Action: Policy Frameworks and programmes in Sub-Sectors of Education

4.3.2.1 Pre-primary Level of Education

One of the key objectives of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) is to ensure that Pre-primary education and development services are made universal, of high quality, comprehensive and respond to all the local needs, language and cultures across the country. Although Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) education is generally a private sector affair (Figure 4.3.2), the Government of Lesotho places emphasis on the importance of a Mosotho child attending at least reception class before enrolling into primary education, although it is not compulsory. The emphasis is due to known benefits of ECCD education on learning outcomes globally²².

²¹UNICEF. 2018. Lesotho Budget Brief. Maseru UNICEF.

Figure 4.3.2: ECCD centers ownership



Source: Educational Statistics 2015, 2016, 2017

The GoL through the MoET adopted the **National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (NPIECDD) in 2013**, which currently guides the provision of early childhood care and development (ECCD). The Policy presents the national initiative for a holistic child and family development. It is underpinned by respect for and involvement of parents, grandparents, adoptive parents and legal guardians in facilitating access and participation in high-quality and cost effective integrated ECCD education in their communities. The Policy promotes advocacy for community's awareness and the enabling of access to ensure that every child between three and five years is enrolled in ECCD that stimulates his or her language, cognitive, physical, social and emotional development, including the ability to regulate their behaviour²³. MoET currently allocates only 0.36 percent (this is an increase from 0.23 percent in 2015) of its annual budget to ECCD.

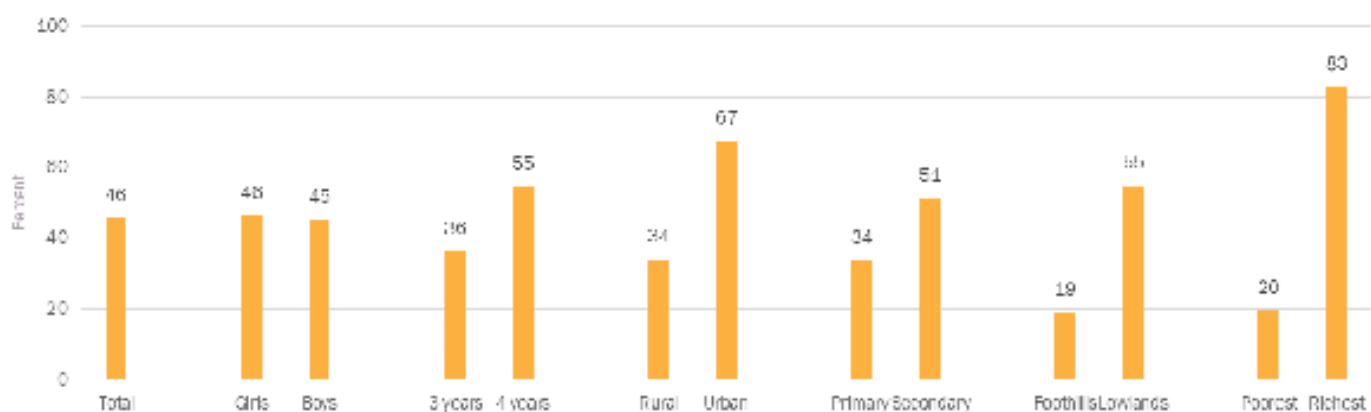
The MoET, with the support of the World Bank (under the Early Learning Partnership Initiative) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), together with UNICEF and GIZ, conducted the Early Childhood Care and Development National Study in 2018. The overall

objective for the Study was to produce data on child development and the quality of learning environments. Specifically, the study focused on gaining a better understanding of: 1) **key characteristics of preschools, teachers, and enrolled families**; 2) **how children are developing and what factors are associated with child development**; 3) **the quality of preschools and what factors are associated with higher levels of quality**; and 4) **the costs associated with improving child outcomes**. Results from the Study are informing the development of monitoring tools that can be integrated into the education management information system and used by partners to provide ongoing information related to early childhood education.

According to the 2016 Lesotho Population Census, there were 43, 935 five-year olds in the entire population. Only about 40 percent (13,181) of the five-year olds were reported to be enrolled in pre-schools, and 1.5 percent had left school for unspecified reasons²⁵. Pre-primary education enrolment varies by districts, with the poorest regions, those in the mountain in particular, having less learning centres and thus enrolment (Figure 4.3.3 and Table 4.3.1 below)

²²Broekhuizen at al. 2016. Classroom quality at pre-kindergarten and kindergarten and children's social skills and behavior problems. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 36, 212–222

Figure 4.3.3: Percentage of Pre-Primary Education Enrolment by Region



Percentage of children aged 36-59 months attending an early childhood education programme, by background characteristics

Table 4.3.1: Pre-primary Enrolment and Additional Schools Needed for Accessibility by District.

Enrolment By District	Percent Enrolled	Schools	
		Current	Additional
Botha Bothe	20	19	63
Leribe	9	28	103
Berea	13	27	95
Maseru	9	34	152
Mafeteng	19	30	88
Mohale's Hoek	14	27	81
Quthing	13	19	48
Qacha's Nek	21	18	55
Mokhotlong	16	15	34
Thaba-Tseka	17	24	65
Totals	13	241	1796

Source: MICS/BOS data 2018

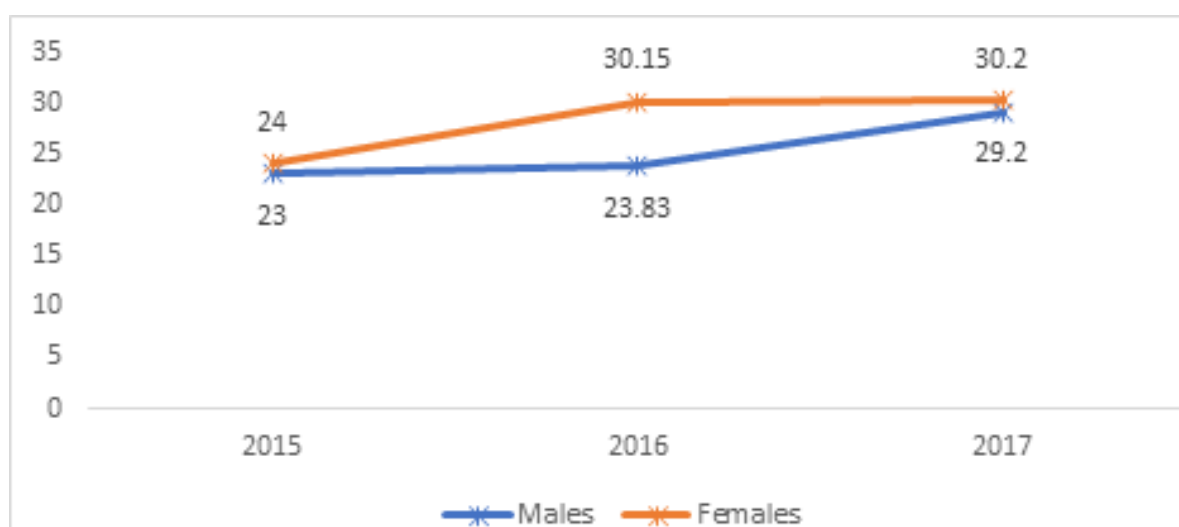
The enrolment in reception classes show that government must build new reception classes if it is to achieve universal ECCD education and eliminate the gap between the enrolled five years old and those not enrolled (Table 4.3.1.above). Figure 4.3.4 shows the ECCD and GPI for both male and female from 2015 to 2017. Among children aged three to five in 2016, 49.9 percent of them were males while 50.1 percent were females, showing that girls are slightly advantaged at this level.

²³Ministry of Education and Training. 2013. *The National Policy For Integrated Early Childhood Care And Development*

²⁴Lesotho MoE&T (2018). *Early Childhood Care and Development National Study*

²⁵Kingdom of Lesotho. 2016 *Lesotho Population and Housing Census Analytical Report*. Maseru: Bureau of Statistics.

Figure 4.3.4: Early childhood Care Net enrolment rates by gender



Source: Educational Statistics of 2015, 2016 and 2018.

Available data indicates that children living with disabilities enrolled in ECCD schools were less than two percent between 2015 and 2017 nationwide, although this data is not comprehensive enough.

The GoL recognizes that ECCD in Lesotho requires additional investment to improve and increase infrastructure and quality of care and education offered at this level. The Government is therefore investing and call for support in promoting the following:

Expanding IECCD complimentary approaches countrywide: The MoET is taking measures to promote extension of parental education on integrated ECCD, focusing on home-based approaches to child care and development. This includes the provision of learning and teaching materials as well as equipment for promoting the home-based approach. The input of communities, the private sector and development cooperation partners shall be specifically enlisted for these supplementary actions.

Streamlining the Child Development Centres registration process: There are efforts to expand and promote integrated ECCD and achieve a 100 percent access for age group of

three to six by 2030. The regulatory and legislative regime under which integrated ECCD activities are undertaken shall be streamlined. As part of this, the Ministry shall ensure that the requirement to register child care centres are gazetted and work towards the registration of unregistered centres.

Attaching Reception Classes to every GOL/Community primary school: In order to expand access, especially to the poorer mountain regions, the Government is piloting the attachment of reception classes to every primary school. The target is that by 2030 reception classes shall be attached to existing primary schools.

Providing subsidy to disadvantaged children: Mindful of the high poverty prevalence levels, the Government is providing subsidies to children from poor families. The subsidy mainly targets children that are orphaned, disabled and neglected.

Integration of children with special needs into ECCD: The Government is undertaking a study to establish the magnitude of the challenge of addressing children with special disabilities and design the best strategies on how to integrate them into the ECCD programmes.

They include children that are visually impaired, with hearing impairment, physically disabled, OVCs, and the neglected children including children in the street.

Key Achievements

- Development of the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (NPIECCD)
- Establishment of 240 reception classes attached to primary schools
- Establishment of ECCD Unit in the MOET
- Lesotho College of Education (LCE) has started in-service training of ECCD teachers and is developing an Early Childhood Education (ECE) Diploma. These efforts are complemented by training provided by the Inspectorate Department of the MoET.

Next Step Going Forward

- Addressing the issue of ownership and its negative impact on access and quality of pre-primary education.
- Funding Pre-primary education: The current allocation of only 0.3 percent of the total education budget to ECCD is inadequate and needs

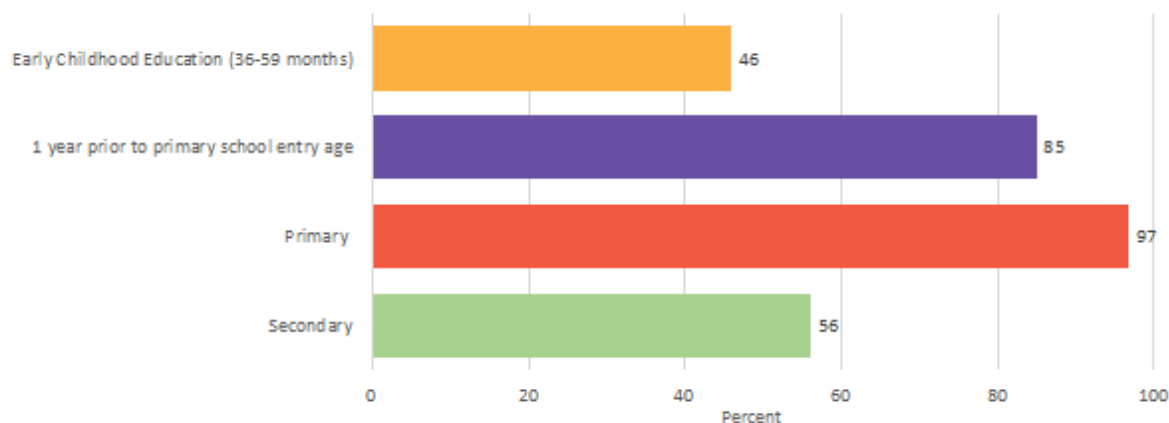
to be reviewed.

- Expanding access rate to ECCD to all school-age children across the country.
- Supporting, expanding and sustaining school feeding programme to pre-primary education is one of the critical strategies that will increase school participation.
- Strengthening quality assurance in pre-primary programmes, quality of teachers, facilities and increasing access nationally, particularly for the poorest and those in rural areas.
- Bridging gender gaps in pre-primary education: male enrolment in pre-primary education is lagging behind. However, this varies from district to district.

4.3.2.2 Lesotho Primary Education Level

The GoL introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2000 which resulted in a surge in enrolment. Over the years, there has been a growth in both the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) and the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER). Lesotho is almost achieving universal primary education (UPE), with gender parity. Figure 4.3.5 indicates the school net enrolment by sub-sectors of education.

Figure 4.3.5 Lesotho School Net Enrolment Rate: MICS/BOS data 2018



The Government developed several laws and policies to demonstrate its commitment to the Education for All agreement. The legal and policy framework governing primary education is as follows:

1. Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAP) is worth noting for its change from examination-oriented focus to competency-based

teaching and learning. It also recognised language diversity as it added Sign Language as part of the language policy along with Sesotho and English Languages²⁶.

2. The Education Act of 2010, which declares primary education as Free and Compulsory²⁷.

3. Child Protection and Welfare Act of 2011, Section 11 which declares education as a right and outlaws any form of discrimination or bar-

²⁶Ministry of Education. 2009. Curriculum and Assessment Policy. Maseru: MOET.

²⁷Kingdom of Lesotho. 2010. Education Act of 2010.

²⁸Kingdom of Lesotho. Children's Protection and Welfare Act of 2011.

²⁹Kingdom of Lesotho. 2014. The National School Feeding Policy.

rier to facilitate children's access to education .

4. The National School Feeding Policy which commits the Government to provide at least two meals on each school day in all public primary schools²⁹.

5. The Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy commits MoET to provide psychosocial support to the education workforce including teachers and to learners infected and affected by HIV/AIDS³⁰.

6. Inclusive Education Policy which mandates teachers to use learners' individual needs and hence its alignment with CAP demands integration of assessment with teaching and learning.³¹

7. Education Language Policy will enable inclusion of children from the language minority groups, including Sign Language³².

Since the introduction of free primary education in the year 2000, the number of teachers has increased by 50 percent, contributing to lower student-teacher ratio, notwithstanding the great geographical disparities. With almost 15,900 teachers, Lesotho has achieved a student-teacher ratio of 30 for the country as a whole, with a ratio of 33 in primary schools and 25 in secondary schools.

Only 14 percent of teachers in primary education are unqualified with a pupil teacher ratio of 33 for all teachers and 34 for qualified teachers. Botha-Bothe and Leribe enjoy the lowest percentage of unqualified teachers at 8 and 9 percent respectively while Quthing and Thaba-Tseka have the highest percentage of unqualified teachers at 22 and 20 percent respectively. The MoET has committed itself to improving the quality of primary education through upgrading teacher qualifications to at least diploma level. Most teachers in Lesotho are qualified but learning outcomes are still not good. This means that more investment needs to be made in this area including on-going coaching/mentoring for teachers and regular assessment of learning as well as putting improvement plans in place.

Next Step Going Forward

- Improving quality of teaching and learning outcomes, particularly in relation to level of spending.
- Improving efficiency in financial management. About 92 percent of the education budget in 2018/19 was allocated to recurrent items, primarily salaries. This reflects a spending imbalance between other recurrent expenditure items and capital expenditure and makes it difficult to invest in other inputs to increase the quality of education.
- Addressing regional and wealth quintile disparities in enrolment, learning and completion.
- Effectively implementing inclusive education policy to increase access and quality for learners with disabilities.

4.3.2.3 Lesotho Secondary Education Level

In Lesotho, secondary education is divided into two levels, namely lower and upper secondary. The lower secondary education level (Form A to C) has a national terminal examination called the Junior Certificate (JC). Students who pass JC enrol in upper secondary (Form D to E). Students who enrol at this level sit for Lesotho General Certificate in Secondary Education (LGCSE) at the end of the two years to pave way for enrolling into tertiary education.

In the 2017/18 fiscal year secondary education received 28 percent of the annual education budget, which increased to 32 percent in the 2018/19 budget (4 percent increase)³³. However, the recurrent budget takes a huge bulk of the allocated budget as it increased from 89.9 percent in 2014/15 to 91.8 percent in 2018/19 with the capital budget declining from 10.1 percent to 8.1 percent for the same period. At the same time grants from donors, which made up 88 percent of the development budget in 2014/15, have declined to only 38 percent 2018/19 with the Government turning to loans that have increased from almost nothing in 2015/16 to 68 and 53 percent in 2017/18 in 2018/19 respectively.³⁴

One of challenges to secondary education (particularly in rural areas) is lack of access

³⁰Ministry of Education and Training. 2012. *The Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy*. Maseru: MOET.

³¹Ministry of Education and Training. 2018. *Inclusive Education Policy*. Maseru: MOET.

³²Ministry of Education and Training. 2019. *Language in Education Policy*. Maseru: MOET.

to secondary schools. There is a need to build more or expand primary school to include lower secondary. This can only be done with an increase in capital budget.

In Lesotho, the transition rate from primary to secondary increased from 76.9 percent in 2015

to 77.3 percent in 2016. The GPI associated with both the GER and NER show that educational enrolment in secondary education is in favour of females. However, the most important indicator about both the GPIs is that, males turn to enrol into secondary education a bit older than the school official age of secondary level.

Table 4.3.2: Secondary Education rates by Gross and Net enrolment rates by gender

Year	Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)			Net Enrolment Rate (NER)		
	Males	Females	GPI	Males	Females	GPI
2015	47.3	64.5	1.4	30.4	47.3	1.6
2016	51.9	70.4	1.4	34.0	52.3	1.6
2017	51.5	69.4	1.3	34.6	52.1	1.5

Source: Educational Statistics of 2015, 2016 and 2018.

Table 4.3.3 below shows that there were more students in secondary education from lowlands for the period under review, with Maseru having the highest proportions of secondary enrolment. Lower enrolments were observed in Mokhotlong, Thaba-Tseka and Qacha's Nek. Data from the 2016 Census Report show a 7.5 percent participation difference for females across ecological zones as it ranges from 81.3 percent for females in the foothills to 88.8 percent in the lowlands. The NER for females in the mountainous zone is 2.5.

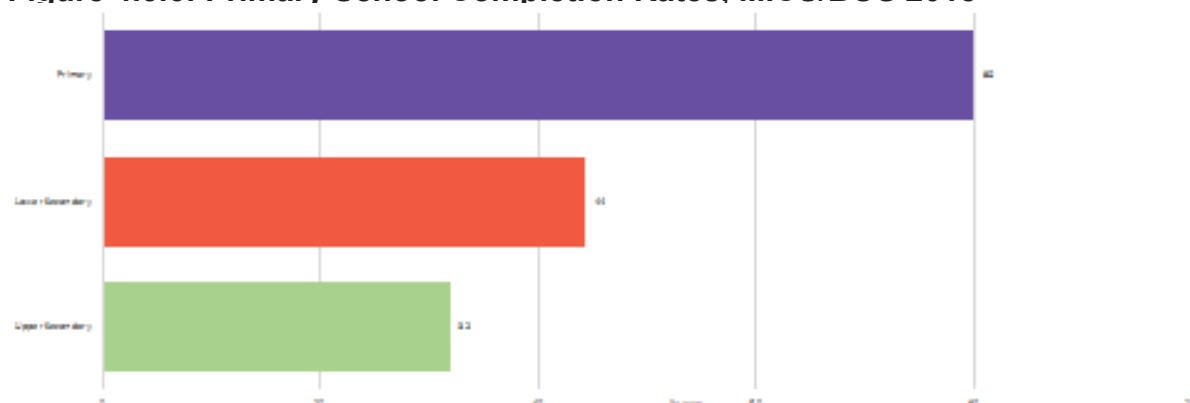
Table 4.3.3: Secondary Education Enrolment by Ecological Zones

Year	Lowlands		Foothills		Mountains		Senqu Valley	River
	Males	Female	Males	Females	Males	Female	Males	Females
2015	41426	51157	3996	6195	6032	11241	3641	5013
2016	41577	51648	3800	5969	6024	11145	3631	8617
2017	41972	51249	3947	6194	6021	11049	3489	8760

Source: Educational Statistics of 2015, 2016 and 2018.

Secondary school participation in Lesotho has faced challenges and consequently declined as shown in Figures 4.3.6 and 4.3.7 below.

Figure 4.3.6: Primary School Completion Rates, MICS/BOS 2018



³³UNICEF. 2017. Lesotho Budget Brief. Maseru: UNICEF

³⁴UNICEF. 2018. Lesotho Budget Brief. Maseru: UNICEF.

Figure 4.3.7 Adjusted Lower Secondary School (Form1-3) net Attendance Rate

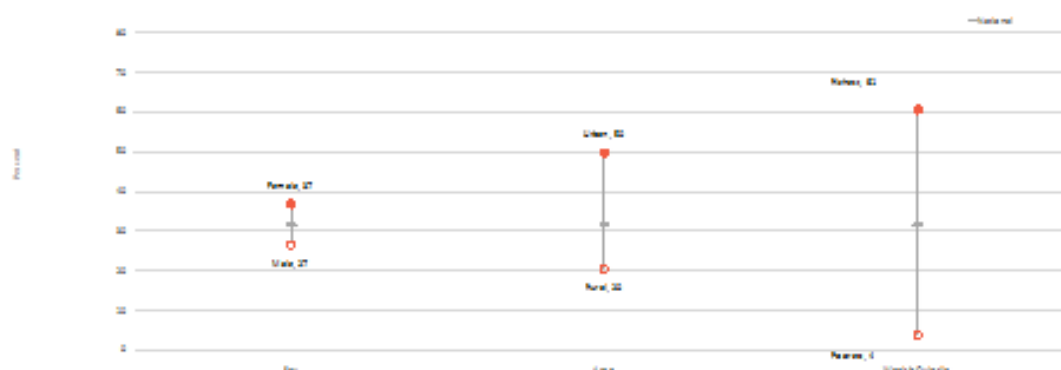


Source: MICS/BOS 2018

The Lesotho 2016 Census Report indicates that some of the factors that adversely affect completion rate at Secondary education include social challenges such as teenage pregnancy at 19 percent and child marriage at 24 percent. Child labour, herding animals and initiation schools are factors that hinder boys' participation in secondary education.

Evidence also shows that learners experience violence in schools, including sexual violence. These vulnerabilities are most prevalent among adolescents in rural areas and those with poor family backgrounds.

Figure 4.3.8 Adjusted Upper Secondary School (Form 4-5) net Attendance Rate



Source: MICS/BOS 2018

Although Lesotho has policies on Inclusive Education and Education Language as enablers, there has been fluctuation in the number of students living with disabilities in primary education sub-sector. The NER of learners with disabilities is lower than that of their non-disabled counterparts and so is the NER for children from minority groups, especially Xhosa language speakers. There were 8 235 enrolled in 2015 in which 60.1 percent were females and 39.1 percent were males, while 7 335 in 2016 of which 59.9 percent were females and 40.1 percent males. In 2017, there were 8 652 with 59.2 percent females and 40.8 percent males.

Box 4.3.2: Innovation for Access to Education by Vulnerable Groups

Despite secondary education not being free, the Government of Lesotho has made a major contribution towards funding vulnerable learners including orphans. There are three innovative interventions that the GoL took to make equitable access to education easier. First, it supports vulnerable children by awarding them bursaries to enable them to participate in secondary education “where the demand for fees, books and other supplies is much higher than that of primary schools”³⁵. Second, along with bursaries for the vulnerable, the GoL introduced a book rental scheme policy to reduce heavy burden of expensive books for parents. Lastly, the Government undertook a fees rationalisation in all public secondary schools in the country to ensure that all children have access to secondary education.

Next Steps Going Forward

- Effective implementation of education priorities in the NSDP II and ESSP 2016-2026 with clear targets.
- Addressing push factors such as teenage pregnancy, child marriage and violence that limit progression and subsequently affect availability of skilled, educated and health productive workforce.
- Supporting and increasing male participation in secondary education particularly those in poor districts.
- Supporting and increasing secondary school attendance in rural areas particularly in foothills and mountains where attendance is 41 percent and 37 percent respectively.
- Revamping secondary education through revision of CAP in view of skills sets that address the fourth industrial revolution and properly aligned with programmes at TVET and tertiary levels that are equally relevant.
- Allocating more resources for effective management of secondary education. More resources are needed to increase access at the secondary level particularly for the most disadvantaged including students with disabilities.
- Strengthen management and monitoring of bursary scheme for vulnerable learners to increase their participation at secondary education level.

4.3.2.4 Lesotho Tertiary Education Level

The Tertiary education sub-system in Lesotho comprises Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), with non-formal education

sub-sector cutting across all sectors. The GoL is committed to and places emphasis on expanding TVET and university education opportunities in order to produce more learned and skilled labour force.

TVET sub-Sector: The Government notes concerns relating to capacity challenges of TVET institutions in terms of availability of space, suitability of curriculum provided and quality of assessment mechanism³⁶. In order to ensure that every Mosotho has access to affordable and quality technical and vocational education, the Government adopted the TVET Policy in May 2019. The policy environment includes facilitation of increased access and enrolments in TVET by introducing the modularised programmes that are flexible with multiple entry and exit points and introduction of TVET evening classes. Further, the formation of the Lesotho Skills Authority (LSA) adds a balancing factor to managing TVET institutions. The LSA is also mandated to register and accredit TVET institutions.

TVET is largely financed by the Government and supplemented by student fees set at minimum levels. In 2015/16 financial year TVET schools received 1.4 percent of the educational sector's budget. In the financial year 2016/17 the allocation remained the same but increased to 1.8 percent in 2016/17 and decreased to 1.7 percent in 2018/19.

Higher Education Sub-Sector: The legal framework for Higher Education sub-sector is provided by Higher Education Act of 2004. This Act was enacted to strengthen the regulation of

³⁶Ministry of Social Development. 2012. National Strategic Plan on Vulnerable Children. Maseru: Ministry of Social Development. p.25

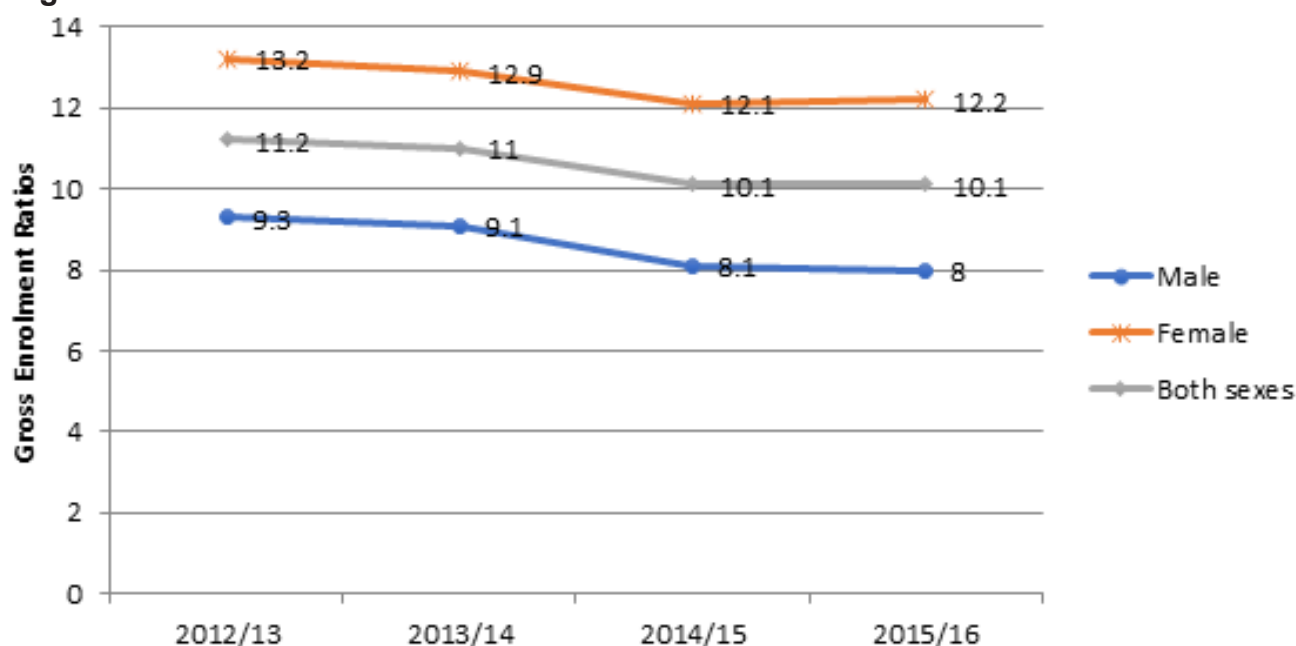
Higher Education (HE) in Lesotho through the establishment of Council on Higher Education (CHE). The CHE is a statutory body established in 2010 by Lesotho to focus on developing and implementing a system of quality assurance for higher education, which includes 'quality promotion, quality assurance and to advise the Minister of Education and Training'. In 2013, the government promulgated Higher Education Policy, which mandates HEIs to promote access for students and ensure that Lesotho's higher education system produces graduates with knowledge, skills and values to contribute to the nation's development, as well as the capacity to respond to challenges and exploit opportunities that will arise in the future.³⁷

Public HEIs in Lesotho receive funding from the GoL. They received 5.4 percent of the budget allocated for education in 2017/18 and the allocation was increased to 11.5 percent in 2018/19 fiscal year³⁸. Although the budget for HEIs seems

relatively small, GoL becomes the highest spender on tertiary education due to the loan bursary scheme. Lesotho has one public university and two private universities, which have proven to lack capacity to provide enrolment for all eligible candidates with Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of 10.1 percent in 2015/16.

Promoting access to higher education is one of the policy goals of the sector. However, this has proved to be a big challenge, which needs to be addressed to ensure access to higher education by those eligible. This is evidenced by declining enrolments in almost all HEIs. According to Higher Education Statistical Bulletin, enrolments in registered higher institutions in 2015/16 decreased to 21,586 students compared to 21,664 in 2014/15 (a decrease of 0.4 percent)³⁹ (Figure 4.3.9). There were more females' learners with 60.5 percent compared with their male counter parts who accounted for 39.5 percent.

Figure 4.3.9: Gross Enrolment Ratios in HEIs 2012/13-2015/16



Source: Higher Education Statistical Bulletin, 2012/13 & 2015/16

Next Steps Going Forward

- Considering the loan (bursary) low repayment rate (4 percent), it is necessary to develop strategies of recovery so that the most needy students could benefit.
- There is a need to improve quality and availability of TVET and non-formal education if Lesotho is to increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.
- There is need for a labour market analysis to ensure courses offered meet the needs of employers.
- The MoET is currently considering a three-stream system at secondary schools, which would

³⁷Kingdom of Lesotho. 2013. Higher Education Policy. Maseru: CHE

³⁸UNICEF. 2018. Lesotho Budget Brief. Maseru. UNICEF.

³⁹Council of Higher Education. 2016. Higher Education Statistical Bulletin. Maseru: CHE

include vocational and technical training parallel to the traditional academic route. However, building and expanding existing TVET schools could be a more viable option.

4.3.2.5 Non-Formal Education

The Government of Lesotho has embraced Non-Formal Education (NFE) as one of the most important vehicles to promote national development. The Ministry of Education has therefore, through consultation and participatory approach developed and launched a Non-Formal Education (NFE) Policy in 2018. The NFE Policy clearly spells out how NFE programmes should be coordinated, registered, monitored and by the governing organization, which is responsible for NFE matters therewith. The Policy will contribute towards ensuring responsive literate and occupational skills training for economic and socio-economic growth of the country. One of the strategic policy areas is the Establishment of NFE department or office or Open College or Open University, with full complement of staff and upgrading of NFE positions.

- The Open College or University will provide both short and long Courses, ranging from the period of one or two (2) weeks, one (1) month, three (3) months, six (6) months and even a one (1) year programme, awarded accordingly.
- The Open College or University will develop programmes that bridge the gap between the Upper Basic Education and the university education.
- Establishment of Open College or Open University – OC or OU has less cost as it uses the available human resources to provide both the credited and non- credited courses and programme.

The Ministry of Education and Training offers NFE courses through different institutions at various levels: These institutions include, Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC), Institute of Extra-Mural Studies (IEMS), Lesotho College of Education and the Lerotholi Polytechnic. The main NFE providers in Lesotho are the NGOs such as the Lesotho Association of Non-Formal Education (LANFE), Good Shepherd Sisters (GSS), Lesotho Girl Guides Association (LGGA), Kick4Life and others. Currently

the participation rate in Non-Formal Education is estimated at around 11 000 according to the Statistics Bulletin of 2016/17. There are also various initiatives supported by NGOs (Box 4.3.3 below).

Box 4.3.3: Innovation in Non-Formal Education Programme

Sepheo is an NGO based in Maseru, Lesotho that works with families and individuals on the fringes of society. These include street children, girls exchanging sex for money or goods, those with violent and dysfunctional caregivers, children who have dropped out of free primary school and those who have been abused, severely neglected and exploited. In 2014, Sepheo opened a full-time therapeutic primary school tailored to the needs of children deemed unreachable, ensuring those traditionally left behind are retained in school and progress academically. The school utilises:

- **A combination of online and classroom learning that allow children to catch up on their education at their own pace. When ready, children sit the same Primary Leaving Exam as students in regular schools, ensuring they are eligible for mainstream high schools, vocational schools and employment;**
- **Global best-practice resources in both mathematics and reading, allowing children to track their own progress and celebrate milestones;**
- **Daily reading classes using small group tutoring to systematically progress children through benchmarked literacy material; and**
- **Dedicated social workers working both with the children at school and at home with their families.**

Counselling, physical training and life skills are built into the school timetable, as are activities designed to help children with attention, emotional healing, conflict resolution and relationship building. Children receive two nutritious meals a day and earn their school uniform through good attendance, sleeping at home and learning to show respect for self and others. The Sepheo program has a 95 percent success rate keeping children off the streets and in families and communities. The significant majority of graduates go on to mainstream high school and employment.

Sepheo, Lesotho, June 2019

4.3.2.6 Sexuality Education and menstrual hygiene

Lesotho has made tremendous efforts to reduce costs of menstrual hygiene products by removal of the related tax earlier this year. Many young girls, especially in rural and poor families face cost barriers in accessing menstrual hygiene products and this often affects their ability to attend school. The work being done to reduce these barriers and help overcome menstrual stigma and discrimination will go a long way to helping young girls access school education free from shame and discomfort.

GoL recognizes these challenges and is committed to invest more on comprehensive sexuality education to ensure that children and adolescents have the knowledge and skills to protect their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Studies have shown that sexuality education is effective in changing sexual behaviours and gender norms and can lead to a

reduction in teenage pregnancy and spread of HIV and other STIs.

Violence against children and adolescents is a real concern in Lesotho including in school settings. The Violence against children survey published in 2019 highlighted this grim reality. Among those who experienced sexual violence in childhood, it showed that of 6.2 percent of those girls missed school due to this sexual violence. The survey also indicated that classmates and schoolmates were among the most common perpetrators of sexual violence for both boys (13.5 percent) and girls (10.7 percent).

Finally, challenges in the collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data on education especially at district level, is an obstacle in designing targeted programmes that will ensure inclusive and equitable education for all.

4.4. Goal 8: PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL



“Unemployment is one of the biggest issues that this country has, some of the most apparent causes of this is politicization of job positions, nepotism, favoritism. People are not hired on the basis of merit, and this hinders the economic growth of our country and the individual livelihoods of everyone, especially young people. People are exploited in informal employment sectors, and our patriarchal society puts young women in an impossible position, where they are expected to trade their bodies and sexual favours for employment. Despite this there is a large number of youth who are showing potential and making efforts towards propelling their own lives through entrepreneurship. We suggest that small trade centres which showcase local produce and products be developed in each district in order to remedy this.”

Youth Voice from Qacha's Nek District, May 2019

4.4.1 Lesotho Economic Growth and Employment Indicators

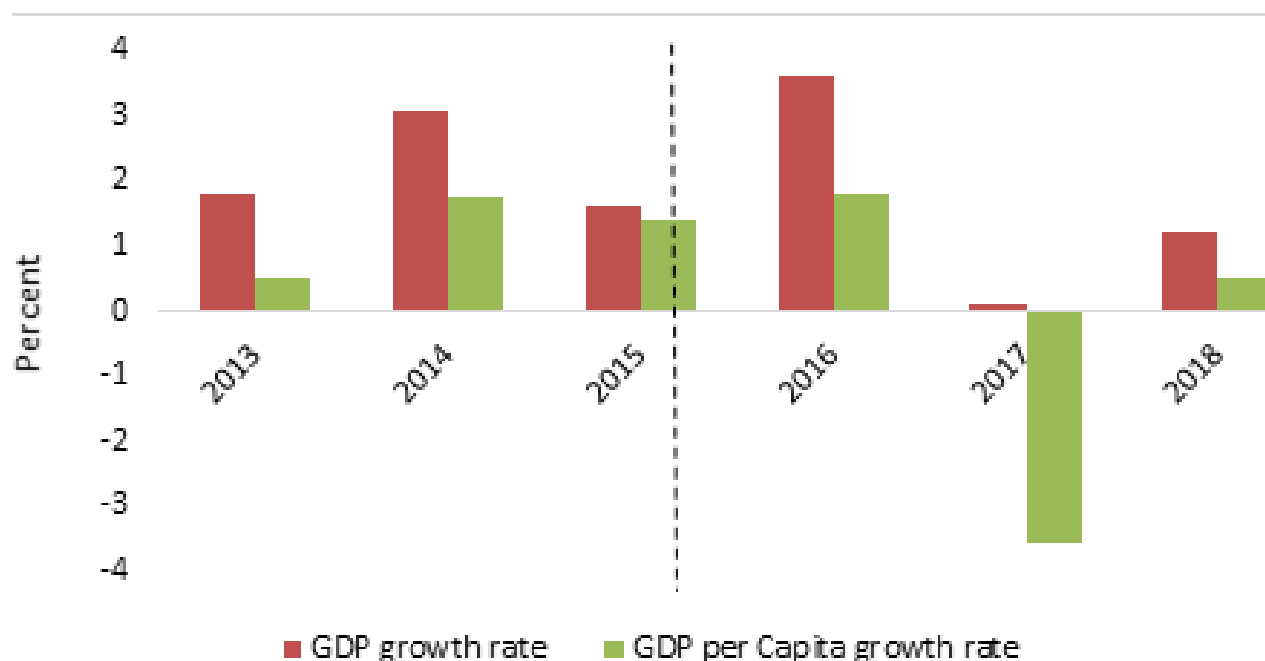
The Kingdom of Lesotho has a potential to be a strong and prosperous nation capable of robust economic growth and jobs creation as demonstrated by its macro-economic policy and programmes, which have been largely conducive to strong economic growth. In the 1970s and 1980s, the gross domestic product (GDP) grew at annual average of 8 percent. But during the 1980s and 1990s, the growth slowed down, but

remained relatively strong, averaging 3.9 percent and 4.2 percent. Annual GDP has been growing by an average of 4.5 percent between 2008 and 2014, which is 40 percent faster than the average in the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). However, such growth has not been inclusive and poverty remains widespread.

Figure 4.4.1 presents a visual illustration of trends in the annual GDP and GDP per capita growth rates over the past five years (2013-2018).

⁴⁰The GDP annual growth rate is the annual percentage change in the value of GDP from the previous year. The dotted line indicates the cut-off period after which the SDGs were implemented.

Figure 4.4.1: GDP Annual Growth Rate (2013-2018), Lesotho

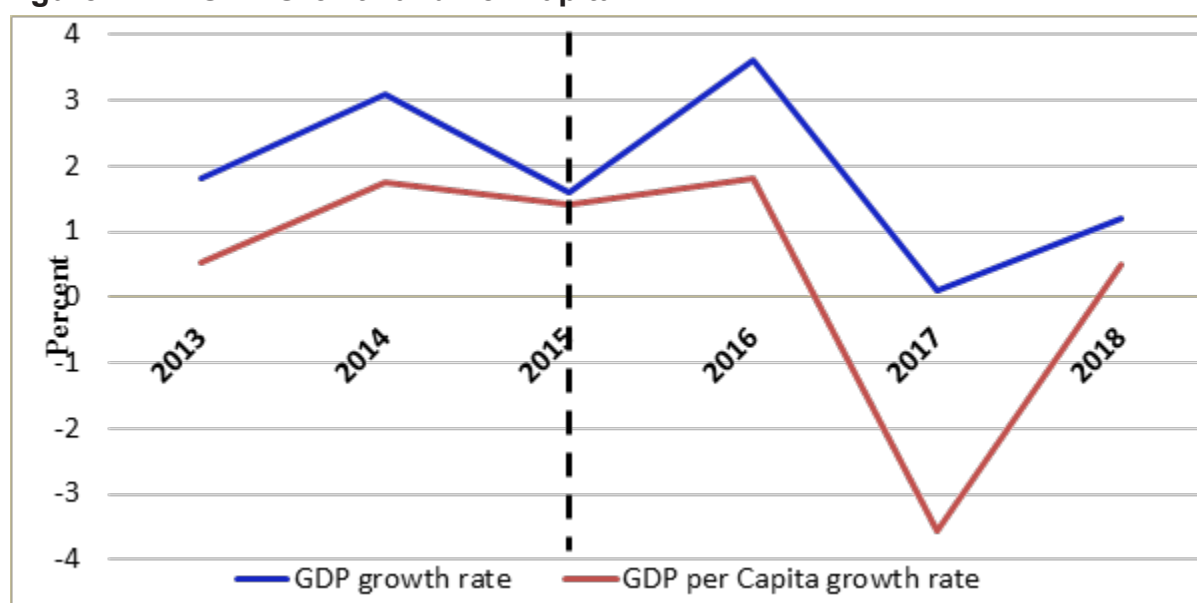


Source: Lesotho National Accounts (2018)

Lesotho has experienced lower economic growth since 2015 with GDP growth at 1.2 per cent and GDP per capita growth at 0.5 percent. These are due to both internal and external factors, including low domestic investment and FDI, slow growth of the private sector MSMEs in particular, slow economic growth in South Africa, and global oil and financial challenges. Figure 4.4.2 presents sectoral analysis of Lesotho's annual GDP growth over the two periods

2015 (left panel) and 2018 (right panel). The primary sector had the lowest contribution to GDP, but the share improved from 9.8 percent in 2015 to 11.2 percent in 2018. The improved performance was due to a significant increase in the contribution of the mining sector despite, a decline in the contribution of agriculture due to changing climatic conditions in recent years (Central Bank of Lesotho, 2017).

Figure 4.4.2: GDP Growth and Per Capita

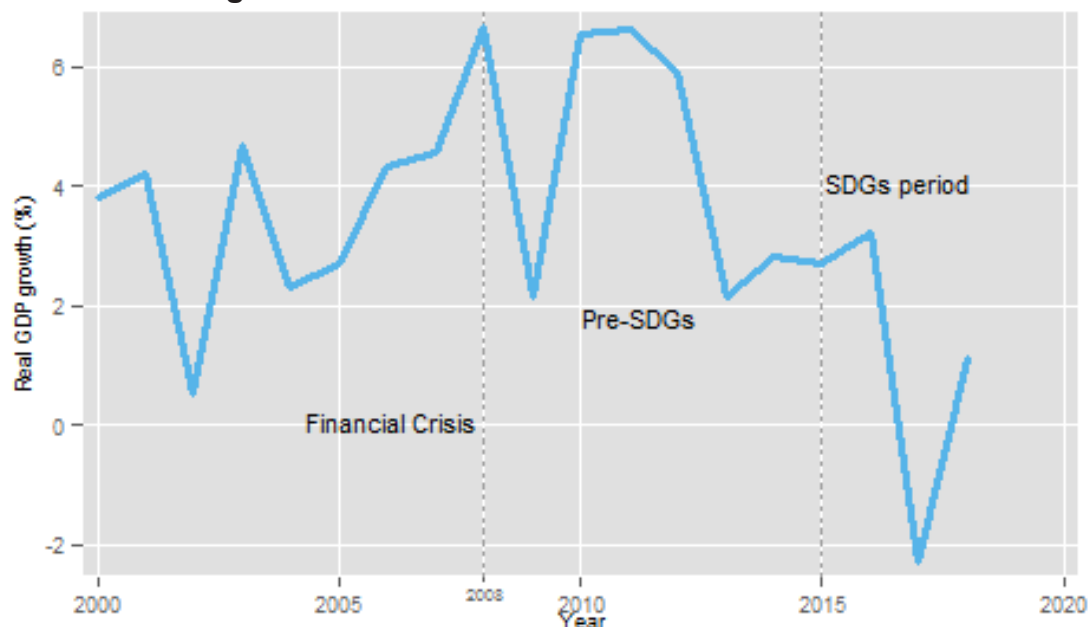


The Real sector

Figure 4.4.3 indicates the real GDP growth rates. The economy grew by about 6.5 percent in 2008 and 2010. While economic growth dropped to 2.1 percent in 2009, it recovered in 2010 and 2011, before dropping to 2.1 percent in 2013. The economy experienced -2.1 percent growth in 2017 before recovering by 1.1 percent in 2018. It is evident that weak political

institutions have had a negative effect on the country's ability to grow and generate employment and hence its ability to increase revenue to finance the 2030 Agenda's Goals. Lesotho's economic growth has largely responded to both global and local macroeconomic and political developments as with most indicators discussed above.

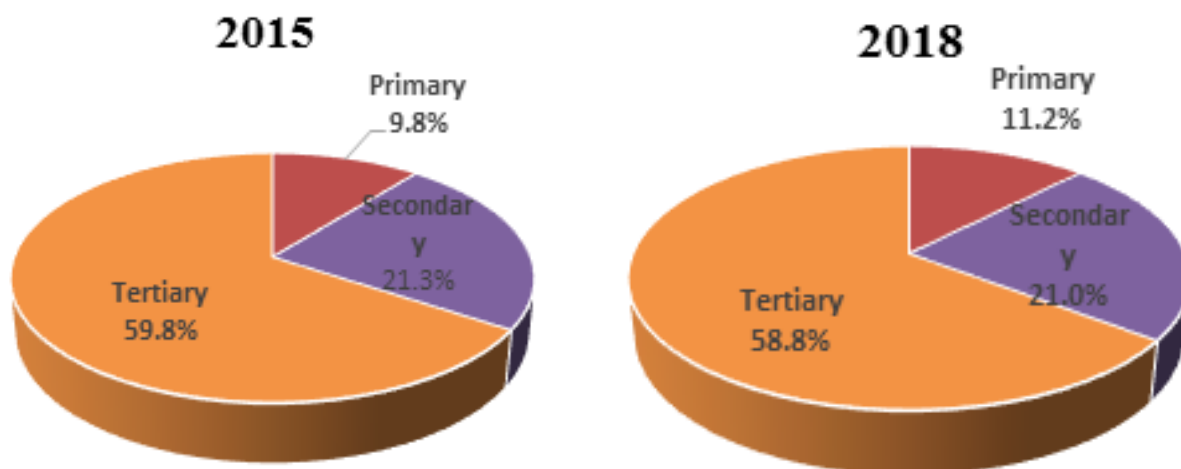
Figure 4.4.3: Real GDP Growth Over time



Data source: Central Bank

The contribution of the secondary sector to GDP remained consistent in the two periods as around 21 percent. The moderate performance in the sector was mainly due to improvements in the manufacturing sub-sector attributed to increased domestic demand in 2016. However, this positive impact was countered by the slow growth of exports of textiles into the US market. The tertiary sector contributed the largest share to GDP growth. The sectoral contribution remained consistent at 59.8 percent before the implementation of SDGs in 2015 and during the implementation period (2016 - 2018) at 58.8 percent⁴¹.

Figure 4.4.4: Sectoral contribution of Annual GDP (percent)



⁴¹Lesotho National Accounts (2018),

The large segment of the economy comprises of the informal business. In 2014, the 2014/15 Continuous Multi-Purpose Survey (CMS) show that 38 percent of the total working population were employed in the informal sector. During the same period, the sector employed more females at 45 percent than males at 33 percent. The MSMEs sector is also important for Lesotho's economy. In 2014, the sector contributed 44.2 percent of GDP.⁴²

Lesotho is a member of a number of regional economic arrangements, including the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the South African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Monetary Area (CMA) among others. Through these arrangements, Lesotho has been able to source the majority of its imports from South Africa duty-free (under SACU) and at zero currency conversion-related transaction costs, as the Loti is at par with the Rand (under CMA). The country's products also enjoy access to international markets through trade preferences provided under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). Lesotho's international competitiveness has improved over the recent years, compared to its counterparts in the SACU region and within SADC. In 2017, Lesotho ranked 100th out of 190 countries globally in the World Bank's Doing Business 2018 Report. It ranks eighth in the Ease of Doing Business in Sub-Saharan Africa. Several positive developments have contributed to

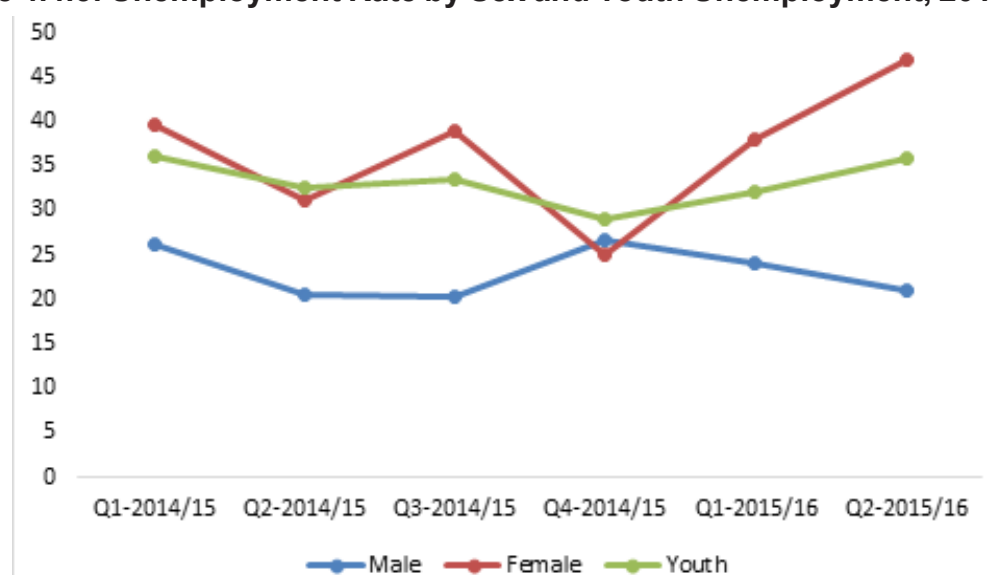
the improvement, including the opening of the One-Stop Business Facilitation Centre and the establishment of the Credit Bureau.

4.4.2 Job Creation and Decent Work

The Government of Lesotho recognises that creating decent employment to address the increasing number of people in need of jobs is one of the major challenges the country is facing. The rate of unemployment increased from 25.8 percent in the second quarter of 2014/15 to 32.8 percent in the second quarter of 2015/16⁴³. Figure 4.4.5 also shows that the rate of unemployment is higher among females. The rate of unemployment for women increased from 31.2 percent in the second quarter of 2014/15 to 40.7 percent in the second quarter of 2015/16 while the rate of unemployment for men changed slightly from 20.6 to 20.9 percent in the same period. In addition to facing higher unemployment rates, women are mostly employed in low-paying jobs such as in textiles and agricultural sectors.⁴⁴

Figure 4.4.5 continues to show that the rate of unemployment is relatively high among the youth. Youth unemployment rate increased from 31.2 percent in the second quarter of 2014/15 to 35.8 percent in the second quarter of 2015/16. The high rate of unemployment among youth is mainly due to limited job opportunities in the private sector and the mismatch between skills demand and supply⁴⁵.

Figure 4.4.5: Unemployment Rate by Sex and Youth Unemployment, 2014/15-2015/16



⁴²Matsoso, 2015.

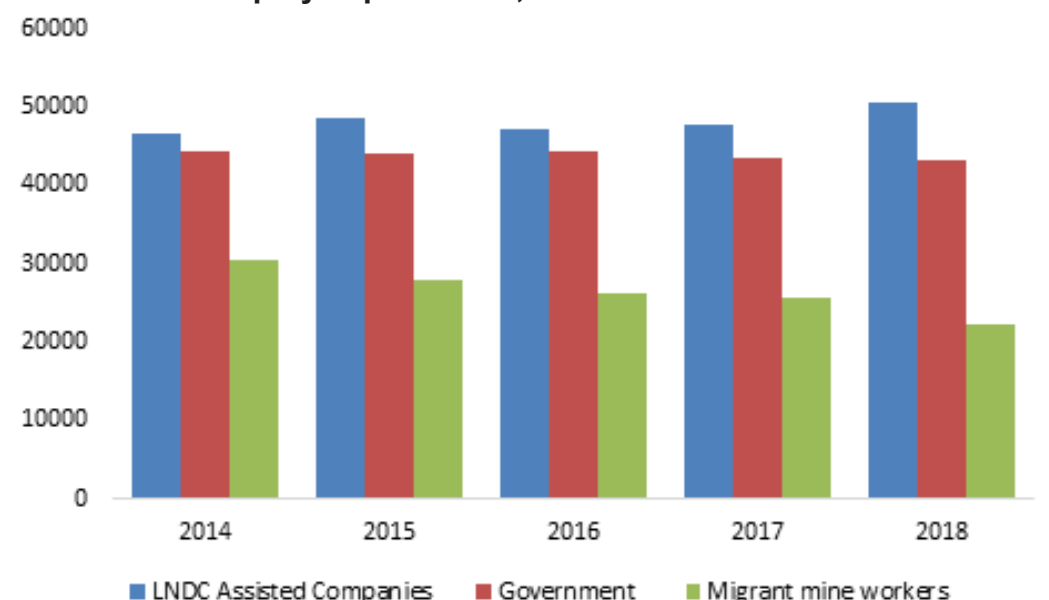
⁴³Continuous Multipurpose Surveys

⁴⁴Government of Lesotho(undated) Country Diagnosis Report

Figure 4.4.6 shows that the country has not progressed fast enough in creating job opportunities since 2014. This was due to the subdued demand for Lesotho products in the US markets. ⁴⁶There was a slight increase in employment in the Lesotho National Develop-

ment Corporation (LNDC) - assisted companies between 2016 and 2017, but the number of employees remained below the 2014 level. Employment in the LNDC - assisted companies increased significantly between 2017 and 2018 as a result of establishment of new firms. ⁴⁷

Figure 4.4.6: Number of Employee per sector, 2014-2018



Source: Central Bank of Lesotho Annual Reports (2015, 2016 and 2017)

4.4.4 Economic Productivity, Competitiveness and Diversification

According to the Ease of Doing Business Ranking, Lesotho's international competitiveness improved over the past six years, from 144 out of 189 in 2012 to 100 out of 190 countries in 2017/18. Lesotho's exports have grown slowly since 2015 but remain concentrated in few products and markets. Exports to South Africa have become more diversified with 148 products at HS 6-digit level, compared to the 31 products destined to the US and 10 to the EU markets. To diversify the export sector, new products have been developed and new markets have been explored. Specifically, Lesotho has started exporting dried fruit/rosehip and plants used for pharmaceuticals to the EU. As a result, exports to EU increased by US\$700,000 between 2011 and 2017. Furthermore, the market for trout has expanded to Japan and South Africa over the past six years.

4.4.5 Lesotho Action and Programmes

In line with the theme "People-Centred Development" Lesotho has put in place programmes and initiatives that are expected to stimulate economic growth and creation of decent jobs,

particularly for the youth. NSPD II has articulated the key pillars for growth as follows:

- Promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth (All SDGs).
- Strengthening human capital (SDGs 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 13)
- Building enabling infrastructure (SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13)
- Strengthening governance and sustainability system (SDG 5, 13, 16 and 17)

NSDP II emphasizes the necessity to pursue sustainable inclusive growth as the most effective route for poverty reduction. It sets out the growth strategy anchored on four productive sectors that have the greatest potential to create jobs and achieve sustainable inclusive growth. The four sectors in NSDP II were chosen on the basis of at least four features:

- Job creation potential
- Inclusive economic growth potential
- Comparative advantage existence or potential
- Sector's multiplier effect or impact across multiple sectors

The Government has introduced strategic

measures to empower the people and support the poor and the most vulnerable. The strategic targets increased inclusive growth in four key priority sectors namely, **Agriculture, Manufacturing, Tourism and Creative Industries, and Technology and Innovation.**

Targeting, supporting and strengthening macroeconomic resilience for inclusive growth and employment creation is critical. Another area of importance is investing in smart agriculture and increasing rural wealth, promoting inclusive trade and entrepreneurship, in particular supporting MSMEs. To achieve these, the GoL will effectively manage government spending and remove any inefficiencies in spending; ensure low and stable inflation rates which is not only key to achieving the nation's competitiveness but also important for protection of incomes of the poor. It will also ensure sustainable levels of fiscal deficit and maintaining sound external balances. Fiscal policy will be targeted at providing public goods and services that improve national welfare but at the same time support

the private sector development.

Lesotho tourism sector has potential for creating decent work for young people and accelerating economic growth. GoL, therefore, will increase additional resources and invest in creating enabling environment that will attract local, regional and international investors to the sector. This will include creating relevant legal and policy frameworks, investing in packaging and marketing Lesotho tourism, quality assurance, and creating incentives for investors.

In order to overcome job creation related challenges experienced in the implementation of NSDP, the country adopted the **Big Fast Results (BFR)** methodology to create a producer-based economy led by the private sector in 2018. So far, the country has implemented the first two stages of this methodology, namely setting strategic direction and Lesotho Economic Labs (Box 2).⁴⁸

Box 4.4.1: Lesotho Economic Labs **Economic Labs**⁴⁹

In 2018, Lesotho adopted the Big Fast Results (BFR) methodology in order to achieve the NSDP II key priority area of promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth and private sector-led job creation. The implementation of BFR is coordinated by the Ministry of Development Planning.

The BFR methodology focuses 80 percent of its efforts on identifying strategic projects that create jobs and private investment and the remaining 20 percent efforts on facilitating the Government to commit in building the required infrastructure. In Lesotho, it focuses on generating more GDP, investment and jobs focusing primarily on the four productive sectors namely Agriculture, Tourism & Creative Arts, Technology & Innovation and Manufacturing.

Implementation of the BFR methodology began at the end of 2018 with a Cabinet workshop for Government ownership. The second stage, which is the Lesotho Economic Laboratory was implemented at the beginning of 2019 for a period six weeks. This stage is a 5-step approach to objectively identify and unlock investments for the productive sector. The stages are explained below;

Project Identification

All potential project owners were requested to complete an initial investment form to determine the investment value and potential jobs creation for the productive sectors

Round 1 Assessment

Each project owner provides relevant documents to prove feasibility and implementation readiness

⁴⁵Government of Lesotho(undated) Country Diagnosis Report

⁴⁶Central Bank of Lesotho Annual Report, 2016

⁴⁷World Bank 2018a

and the projects are then categorized based on the star-rating system

Round 2 Assessment

Project owners complete the standardized project and financial assessment forms and highlight pertinent issues which require government intervention to unlock the investment.

Problem solving

Various problem-solving sessions are conducted by relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies to resolve issues and accelerate project implementation.

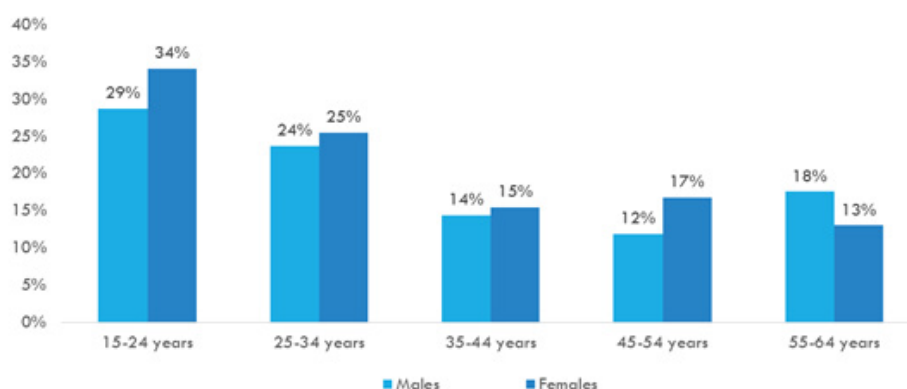
Implementation Plans and KPIs

Detailed implementation plan of each project is documented to ensure ease of tracking and monitoring for the future Delivery Unit and implementation team. KPIs are formulated based on milestones for each project to measure the success of implementation.

4.4.6 Addressing Youth Employment:

Lesotho is committed to achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women, youth and people with disabilities and equal pay for work of equal value. In its SDG Baseline Report⁵⁰, Lesotho acknowledges the increasing number of youth entering the labour market without job prospects. Young people are disproportionately affected by unemployment and experience high rates of inactivity, unemployment and low access to earning opportunities (Figure 4.4.7). Specifically, youth living in rural areas and with low levels of educational attainments are consistently and significantly worse off in terms of their likelihood of being productively employed (Figure 4.4.8).

Figure 4.4.7. Youth are disproportionately affected by unemployment



Source: CMIS (2015)

⁴⁸Economic Laboratories Summary Report

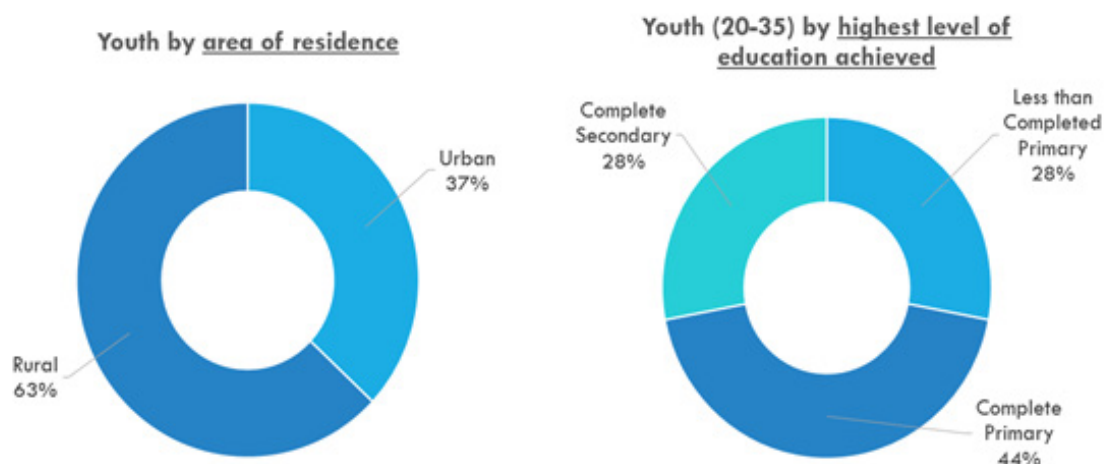
⁴⁹Concept note on BFR methodology

⁵⁰Kingdom of Lesotho. (2016). Sustainable development goal indicator baseline report.

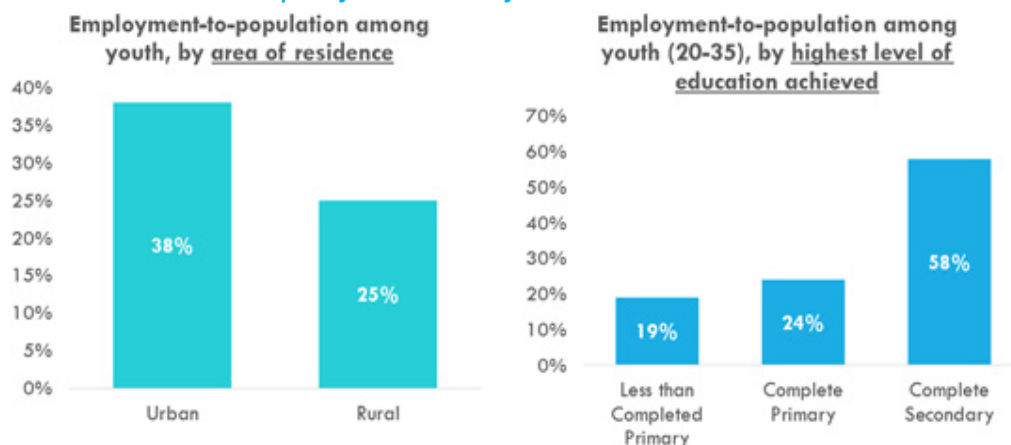
If the current large cohort of young Basotho would be productively employed, the country could leverage demographic opportunity for inclusive economic growth. Recent simulations show that by improving education, employment and productivity among the younger generations,⁵¹GDP per capita in Lesotho could more than triple by 2050. However, with the status quo, a child born in Lesotho has a productivity rate of 37 percent at 18 years of age.⁵²The consequence of an underproductive youth is the imminent tragic loss of human and economic potential.

The economy has not been able to create enough jobs despite consistent growth in the past decade, where GDP grew on average 4.2 percent, mainly driven by agriculture and manufacturing (apparel)⁵³. Wage employment opportunities are limited, especially among youth with only 34 percent being in wage employment. The Government is the formal sector's largest employer with one of the highest wage bill in the world (21 percent of GDP).⁵⁴However, only 8 percent of the employed youth have access to public sector jobs ⁵⁵.

Figure 4.4.8. Not all youth are the same...



...not all of them are equally affected by the same constraints



Lesotho HBS (2018)

⁵¹Bruni, Rigolini and Troiano (2016). *Forever Young? Social policies for a changing population in Southern Africa*.

⁵²World Bank. 2018. *Human Capital Index: Lesotho profile*.

⁵³World Bank (2018). Chapter1: *Economic context and private sector profile in Unlocking the potential of the private sector: a focus on apparel and horticulture & ICT*.

⁵⁴World Bank (2015). *Lesotho Systematic Country Diagnostics*.

⁵⁵As the profile of public sector employees is skewed towards highly educated workers (61 percent of public sector workers completed at least secondary education compared to only 13 percent among workers in other occupations), job opportunities in this sector are almost irrelevant to youth with less than secondary education.

The Government has instituted commendable policies, strategies and programs framed in the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2017-2030 that guides government interventions and is to “empower all Basotho Youth through the effective integration of youth into socio-economic development issues of the country”. To this end, the first set of goals and actions envisaged in the NYP explicitly target youth economic empowerment and skills development. It puts inclusivity of disadvantaged youth at the center and recognizes the role of self-employment and entrepreneurship in unlocking youth’s economic potential. These initiatives include the following:

- In 2018, the country developed the **Decent Work Country Programme 2019-2023**, which is aligned to the NSDP II and the SDGs and provides a framework for implementation of the decent work agenda. It covers promotion and protection of the rights of workers and advocates for providing an enabling environment for sustainability of SMMEs.

- The country adopted a **Youth Policy** in 2017. This Policy provides a framework for empowerment of youth. It aims at enabling youth to develop social, economic, cultural and political skills with a view to enhancing their participation in the development process. The Policy also provides a framework for creation of employment for youth. In addition, the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports, and Recreation has been imple-

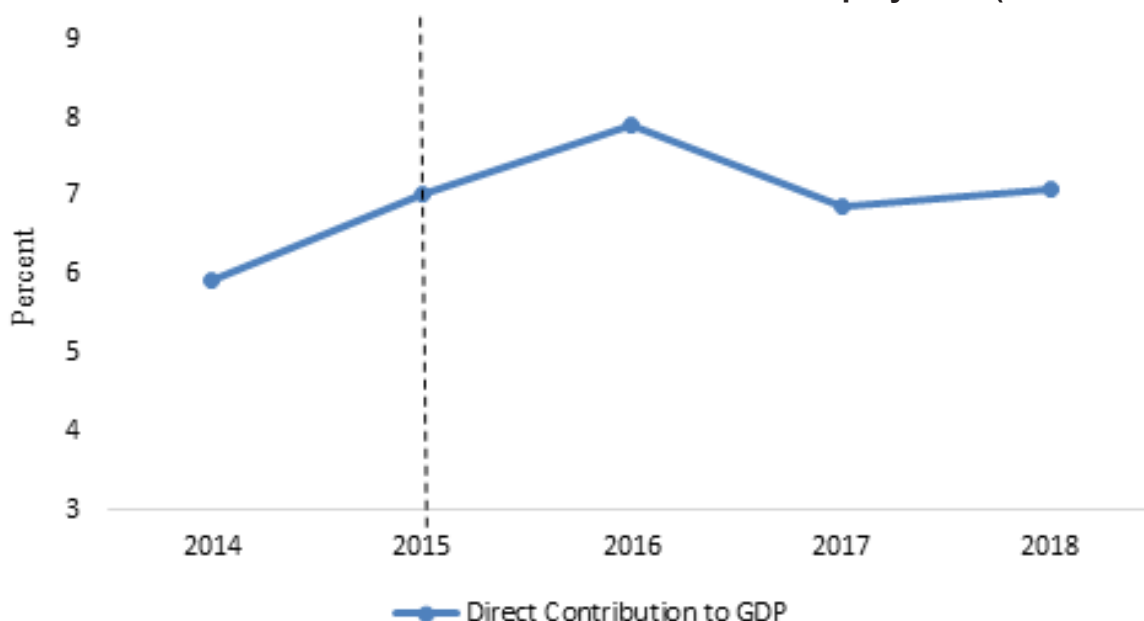
menting Youth Employment Promotion since 2012. This program conducts entrepreneurial trainings for young potential and existing youth entrepreneurs in the 10 district and has since trained more than 2000 youth and women. The program also links youth to technical trainings, markets and information on opportunities available for youth entrepreneurs.

- Institutions of higher learning have implemented programs aimed at promoting entrepreneurship among youth. These include the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology which has established the Limkokwing University’s Entrepreneurship Acceleration Platform (LEAP) with the vision of achieving sustainability and a lasting economic growth in the country. On the other hand, the National University of Lesotho (NUL) launched the Innovation Hub in 2018. These programmes empower students to think beyond employability and embrace entrepreneurship and in turn contribute to employment creation for the youth.

4.4.7 Tourism as a vehicle for Job creation and Economic Growth

Lesotho Tourism sector has great potential of contributing to faster economic growth and creating decent jobs. Figure 4.4.9 indicates the contribution of travel and tourism to employment beyond 2016. In 2016, there was an increase in the contribution of employment by travel and tourism, but experienced a decline in 2017 and 2018.

Figure 4.4.9: Travel and Tourism Direct Contribution to Employment (2014-2018)



Source: Travel and Tourism Economic Impact (2018)

Employment in the tourism sector also varies by gender. In 2017, the proportions of skilled and unskilled employees constituted 49 percent and 51 percent respectively. Out of the skilled employees, males constituted 41 percent while females constituted 59 percent which means the skilled employees are predominantly females. From 2016 to 2017, 16 new accommodation facilities were established, and this has contributed to increased employment. Besides new accommodation facilities, there was Maletsunyane Braai Festival in 2017 that led to more tourists visiting Lesotho and establishment of rural homestays.

The GoL has therefore developed **Tourism Action Plan**, which articulates the national tourism master plan for the next 20 years. The master plan has been divided into two 5-year short- and medium-term priorities and one 10-year long term priority. These are reflected in the Action Plans, namely the Tourism Development Areas Plans for six priority areas and

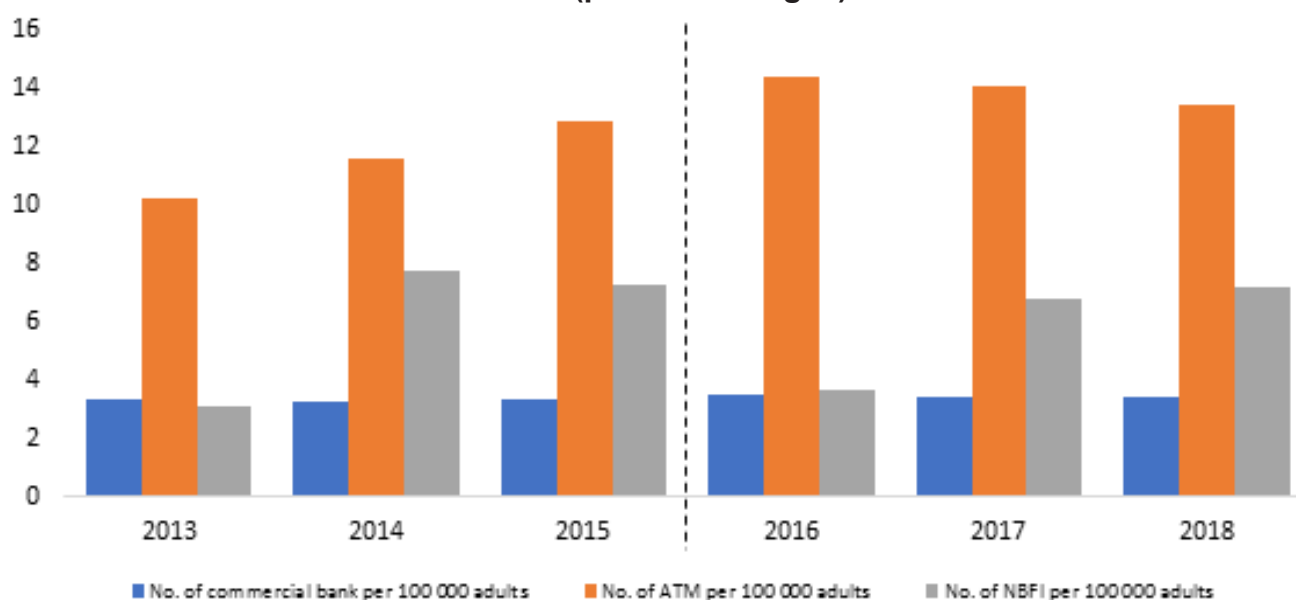
this Tourism Action Plan. There is also the National Tourism Policy that incorporates all the stakeholders in tourism industry. This policy is inclusive and addresses gender dimensions and community benefits. During 2017, the World Bank approved US \$13.4 million as additional financing for the second Private Sector Competitiveness and Economic Diversification Project (PSC II). Part of this funding is going towards the construction of a Tourism and Handicraft Information Centre that will serve as a reference point and retail centre for both tourists and locals.⁵⁶

4.4.8 Domestic Financial Institutions and Access to Financial Services

Lesotho recognizes is committed to increasing access to financial services as a critical vehicle for inclusive growth and private sector competitiveness. In Lesotho, banks remain key financial institutions to facilitate access to formal financial services. Figure 4.4.10 presents Basotho accessibility to formal financial services

as computed by the number of commercial banks branches, Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) and Non-Bank Financial Institutions (NBFI) per 100, 000 adults.

Figure 4.4.10: Number of commercial bank branches, ATMs and NFBIs per 100, 000 adults (percent changes)



Source: Central Bank of Lesotho (2019)

The Central Bank of Lesotho data shows that over the period 2015-2018, the number of commercial branches only increased by three, from 47 branches in 2015 to 50 in 2018. As a result, the proportion of commercial banks remained at three branches per 100,000 adults. However, the number of ATMs increased from 180 in 2015 to 196 in 2018, translating to 12 machines per 100,000 adults in 2015 to an average of 13 ATMS in 2018. The number of NFBIs increased from 101 in 2015 to 105 in 2018, which is seven institutions per 100,000 adults over the period 2016-2018.

At the district level, the data for 2018 shows that the highest number of commercial branches is in Maseru (67) while the lowest is Thaba-Tseka and Qacha's Nek. Similarly, the number of ATMS is greater in Maseru (440) while Qacha's Neck has the least number (12). During the same period, the branches for NFBIs were more in Maseru (32) and the least in Thaba-Tseka (2). This shows that the interventions in the financial sector have not been effective for the districts to increase access to financial services in the rural districts such as Thaba-Tseka and Qacha's Nek.

The improvement is also evident through the share of the population that have access to financial institutions or mobile money service providers in recent periods. The share of adult population that own an account with a financial institution or a mobile service provider increased from 18.5 percent in 2011 to 45.6 percent in 2017. This improvement also reflects across the gender groups. The proportion increased from 16.9 percent of females in 2011 to 46.5 percent in 2017 while it also increased from 20.2 percent for males in 2011 to 44.6 percent in 2017. The data shows that in the share of the poorest 40 percent to total population that has an account at the financial institution or a mobile money service provider also increased from 7.1 percent in 2011 to 32.4 percent in 2017.

In January 2014, the GoL launched the Lesotho Credit Bureau, under the Credit Reporting Act of 2011, to improve access to credit infor-

mation and streamlined the processes and procedures for transferring property. The Bureau also reduces the level of indebtedness in the country and, in so doing, encourages safe lending, which positively impacts the country's economic development. By 2016, the Bureau had collected data from 19 credit providers on more than 90,000 borrowers with about 4,000 queries per quarter. The actual impact of the Bureau was reflected in 2017 where Lesotho's ranking in terms of 'accessing credit' improved from 152 to 82 out of 190 countries. Consequently, during the same period Lesotho's overall performance in ease of doing business improved. The coverage has currently extended to 7.1 percent of adult population. The bureau also disaggregated its records by gender, increasing the share of overall beneficiaries from 3 to 7 percent.

The use of digital technology and connectivity is important to the future of all economic sectors including banking. In 2017, Lesotho Post Bank signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to facilitate collateral for SMMEs and simplify their access to finance. Lesotho Post Bank further introduced the new digital channels in 2018. These include internet banking facilities, mobile banking as well as merchant banking. These products were implemented to increase access to finance and reduce the cost of banking transactions. In addition, the Central Bank of Lesotho developed a Collateral Registration Bill, which was published in 2018 to protect consumers from financial institutions.

4.4.9 Next Steps Going Forward

- Creation of a conducive socio-cultural and policy environment that is sensitive to women, adolescents, youth and people with disabilities remains critical. This includes enacting Domestic Violence Bill and Disability Equity Bill and operationalising the Youth Policy.

- The creation of additional decent jobs and faster economic growth are key to poverty alleviation in Lesotho. Therefore, the current skills mismatch need to be addressed in order to realise the outcomes of the recently adopted Le-

¹⁷<http://www.lesothoreview.com/contents/tourism>

sotho Economic Labs.

- In the next five years, the Government will need to strengthen efforts, working with various partners, to mobilize resources and effectively implement the NSDP II.

- Lesotho needs to create enabling environment and enhance ease of doing business and attracting FDI and regional and global businesses. Investment in tourism promotion, diversification of tourism products, packaging and marketing is critical going forward.

- Promotion of trade, in particular through MSMEs, is critical and urgent.

- The country needs comprehensive and robust

labour market statistics and systems.

- While the GoL is committed to global labour laws, standards and requirements, creating healthy and HIV/AIDs free working environment, it needs to strengthen efforts towards promotion of labour rights for decent employment.

- Investing more in women empowerment programmes to make it easier for them to get into to the labour market and ensure their protection from abuse and their SRHR needs are adequately met. to increase their productivity.

- Increase mobile and outreach services to factory workers where women are 91 percent of the work force.

4.5 Goal 10: REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES



While we recognize the progress our Government has made in empowering women and young girls through education, anti-GBV campaigns and other efforts, we believe that to achieve a truly equal society, it is of extreme importance that the institutions of learning, employment and government are decentralized to afford every citizen an equal chance. We need to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and eliminate any kind of corruption and politicization of job positions and opportunities. Every citizen of this country, every young person, has the right to fair treatment and protection against discrimination. Our schools and places of employment should re-evaluate the influence of religion and its potential to deny some of the most basic social needs, and rights of our people, especially the young. Members of the LGBTI community, people with disabilities, women and anyone that forms a minority group in Lesotho, is as much a citizen as the rest of us. As we align ourselves with the principle of “Leave No One Behind” the following issues cannot go without mention: high rates of teenage pregnancy, early child marriage, unsafe abortions that result in a high maternal mortality as well as youth unemployment. This is why we urge every stakeholder and citizen to prioritize this principle in their individual and joint efforts to implement and achieve ALL the SDGs.

Youth Voices, from Thaba-Tseka, June 2019

4.5.1 Lesotho Commitment to Reducing Inequality of All Forms

Lesotho has made good progress in lifting people out of poverty. But large disparities remain in the country, including disparities in income, access to food, health care, social protection, education, and land, among others. According to 2018 UN Human Development Report, Lesotho ranks 159 out of 189 countries in terms of Human Development Index (HDI). This HDI of 0.52 places Lesotho within low human development countries. If we take into account inequalities in Lesotho, the HDI drops by 31 percent to 0.359.

In terms of gender inequality, Lesotho is ranked 135 out of 189 countries on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) with a value of 54.4 percent. GI shows the loss in potential human development due to inequality between female and male achievements in three dimensions; reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Poor access to health, SRH, HIV services especially for women and young people leads to high levels of teenage pregnancy and maternal mortality. In addition, there are high levels of gender-based violence with one study reporting that 84 percent of women in Lesotho have experienced violence in their lifetime.

Lesotho recognizes that there exists various dimensions and drivers of inequality in the coun-

try. The dimensions cut across four domains and are manifested across the population, regions and sectors: The domains include the following:

i. Child poverty and inequality domain: child poverty by dimension of deprivation, including lack of income and resources to sustain livelihood (SDG 8), malnutrition; limited access to education, health and other basic facilities and services (SDGs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7); and discrimination and violence and lack of protection (SDG 5, 10, 16).

ii. Economic domain: equality of outcome or result (equality of income and wealth), right to decent start in life, access to material resources such as income, employment, housing, land and other physical assets, livelihoods, among others (SDGs 8, 10, 16, 17).

iii. Equality of opportunity domain: equality of access (or of life chances), includes access to basic services like health, education and training. It also includes access to food, and nutrition, water and sanitation, shelter, and information among others (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,6).

iv. Political domain: political participation, civil equality and civil engagement, voting, equality before the law and access to justice (SDGs 16, 17).

v. Social domain: membership in society and equality of treatment, friendship, kinship, family, clan, neighbourhood, community, and social movements (SDGs 5, 10, 16, 17).

Based on studies and experience across the country, the main drivers of inequality in Lesotho include: Age (children, adolescent, youth, old), gender, ethnicity, location (distance from main roads, terrain and physical accessibility, migrant situation, citizenship status, language, religious affiliation, health condition, ability and disability, and sexual orientation).

Lesotho cannot talk about inequalities without talking about risks and vulnerability. Every two to three years, Lesotho faces droughts and other weather related crisis. Government-led assessment indicates that there is a minimum of 200,000 people hungry every year and about

400,000 people on average every year.

Lesotho is therefore determined to address all dimensions of inequalities. This is a pre-condition for the country to achieve the three dimensions (economic, social, and environmental) of 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The GoL recognizes and appreciates the fact that there are many Basotho (children, adolescent, people with disabilities, youth, women, young and old people) across the country that are vulnerable and if not specifically targeted they could lack choices and opportunities required to actively participate and benefit from development progress.

Lesotho has made encouraging progress in reducing inequalities of all forms across the country. The Government has therefore put in place inclusive and empowering programmes and safety nets to support such people. Despite the encouraging progress, the inequality gap – economic, social, political and environmental still persist. The most hit hard are the poor and most vulnerable children, adolescents, youth, women headed households, special groups including people with disabilities, migrants, sex workers, and trans-genders, in particular those in rural areas and urban poor.

4.5.2 Lesotho Action: Policy Frameworks and Programmes

To address the inequality challenges, Lesotho has made good progress in developing relevant legal and policy frameworks and plans. There are also various programmes and initiatives targeting those left behind and discriminated against, thus not enjoying the fruits of development and social progress in Lesotho. In all these initiatives, gender equality and women's empowerment is cross-cutting and has been mainstreamed.

In 2003, the Government of Lesotho adopted its Gender and Development (GAD Policy) with the view to achieve gender equality and empower women in various sectors. There are also other relevant legislations namely, Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006, Amendment of Companies Act of 2011, Financial Institutions Act 2008, Labour Code Wages Act 2012, National Assembly Electoral Act 2011, Enactment of Sexual Offences Act 2003, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2011, Children's

Protection and Welfare Act 2011, Education Act 2010, Penal Code 2010, and Land Act 2010, among others.

Recognizing the various dimensions of inequalities in Lesotho, the NSDP II emphasizes the necessity to pursue sustainable inclusive growth as the most effective route for poverty reduction and providing greater opportunities to access inclusive and quality social service. Economic growth is not an end in itself but it is the only reliable mechanism for achieving sustained reduction in the number of people living below poverty line. The benefits of growth are therefore influenced by the pattern of income distribution. A highly unequal distribution reduces the impact of growth on the incidence of poverty, whereas an effective pro-poor growth strategy will improve income distribution by ensuring that the benefits of growth are broadly shared resulting in inclusive growth.

4.5.3 Lesotho GEWE for the SDGs and Inclusive Development

The country is committed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) as a development strategy given that women form 51 percent of the country's population. Gender mainstreaming is a cross-cutting issue in the NSDP II, thus forms part of addressing economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development across the country (**SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17**).

Lesotho participated in the 4th World Conference of Women in 1995, and signed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the same year. The country is committed to undertake a comprehensive national-level review of the progress made and challenges encountered in implementing the Platform for Action for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women. It has just prepared Beijing +25 Review Report, where it looked back at five years of progressive milestones of achieving both the strategic objectives and actions of the Declaration.

Despite existing cultural and political challenges, the Government of Lesotho continues to be committed to mainstreaming gender into all policies, programmes, plans and budgets. The NSDP II mainstreamed gender in all thematic areas with clear indicators aligned to the SDGs.

This is done in order to see improvements, progress and success with regard to prevention and eradication of sexual and gender-based violence, HIV, exploitation, infant and maternal mortality, unequal division of unpaid care work, inequalities in the control over productive resources, food insecurity and hunger, inequalities in access to paid employment, gender disparity in decision-making positions. Inclusive, targeted and sustained efforts will be required to tackle underlying challenges that hamper progress towards gender equality in Lesotho.

The ten-year Gender and Development (GAD) Policy 2018-2028 is implemented through multi-sectoral approaches inclusive of all Government ministries, local authorities, civil society organisations, faith based organizations, academic institutions, and private sector and development agencies. The Policy is aligned to the international and regional instruments including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW; Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action; the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015, AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, among others. At the local level, it aligns to the national protocols such as the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and Vision 2020. Gender equality forms a critical area of concern in the GAD Policy. Within this context, the Policy aims to achieve the national vision, mission, goals, objectives and guiding principles.

Addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV): The GoL committed to finalization of laws to address Domestic Violence (2018). With the support of development partners, other positive efforts include:

- Developing capacities within the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) and the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) to address GBV in emergency initiatives rolled out over the 2018-2019 Season;
- Gender focused reviews of the National HIV/AIDS Policy;
- The Prevention and Eradication of Gender Inequality Programme;

- The Domestic Violence Bill;
- The Ending Child Marriage Act.
- The Gender for Equality and Justice Assessment (2016-2020) leading to the development key indicators for monitoring gender in Lesotho; and,
- Establishment of a national simplified and integrated referral system for GBV survivors, and child protection.

The 2018 Global Gender Gap Index Report indicates that there are major shifts in the status and conditions of women. To some degree, there is a narrowing of the gender gap, while there is a widening inequality in general between the rich and the poor. In 2018, Lesotho was ranked at 81 on Global Gender Gap Index having closed about 69 percent of its overall gender gap and ranked 14 in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Report further shows that Lesotho slips several ranks due to stagnant progress on wage equality. The country is ranked number one in terms of educational attainment and 86 on political empowerment and 88 on economic participation and opportunity.

Lesotho Government is concerned that adolescent girls and women, especially the poor and those living in rural areas, are vulnerable to health challenges and HIV/AIDS, GBV, sexual abuse and violence at home, at work and in learning institutions. This need closer attention and inclusive programmes.

4.5.4 Lesotho Bridging Economic Inequality Gap

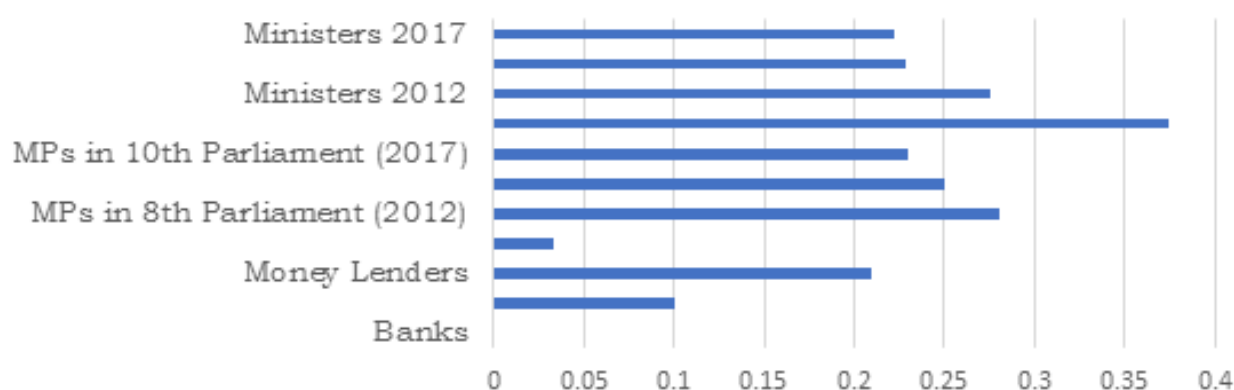
The GDP growth rate averaged 4.5 percent between 2010 and 2014, then declined to 2.5 percent in 2015 and recovered to about 4.6 percent

in 2017. Analysis using information from 2010 and 2017 Household Budget Surveys (HBS) indicates a decrease in inequality between the two survey points. The Gini coefficient declines from 55.7 in 2010 to 41.2 in 2017. This is due to two factors: First, the income share of the poorest 40 percent increase from 3.4 to 5.38, between 2010 and 2017. This is equivalent to annual growth rate of 9.7 percent. Second, the income share of the richest 10 percent fell by 28 percent during the seven years.

4.5.5 Lesotho Women's Empowerment and Leadership

Lesotho Government has made significant progress with regards to women's participation and representation in leadership and decision-making positions. To highlight a few achievements, the country has a female Chief Justice, Governor of Central Bank, President of the Senate and had a female Speaker of the National Assembly. The figure 4.5.1 below shows the share of Basotho women in top positions in selected sectors. The private sector, viewed through the financial sector, has the lowest proportion of females in top positions. For instance, all executives in the four banks are male and there is only one female to ten males across the insurance companies. Low women representation ultimately translates to limited access of women to enhance gender economic planning that advocates for women economic empowerment and well-being. The lower employment rates for women in positions of power is evidence of the lower perceived status of women in the country. The employment segregation means earnings inequality or gender poverty gap in favour of males. That is, female headed households tend to have higher levels of poverty.

Figure 4.5.1: Share of Women in top positions



The 2018 Global Gender Gap Index Report indicates that there are major shifts in the status and conditions of women in Lesotho. To some degree, there is a narrowing of the gender gap, while there is the widening of the inequality gap in general between the rich and the poor. In 2018, Lesotho was ranked at 81 on Global Gender Gap Index having closed about 69 percent of its overall gender gap and ranked 14 in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Report further shows that Lesotho slips several ranks due to stagnant progress on wage equality. The country is ranked number one in terms of educational attainment, 86 on political empowerment and 88 on economic participation and opportunity.

The GoL and various groups recognize that more need to be done to promote GEWE and reduce inequalities based on sex and gender in both the public, private and social spheres and institutions across the country. One major area is harmonization of customary laws with civil laws to remove inequalities and empower women economically, socially and politically. Supporting and empowering special group of women including sex-workers, adolescents and young girls living with disabilities, and factory workers, is also another area of challenge that needs attentions.

4.5.6 Child Protection Progress

Children are one of the Lesotho's greatest resource. They make up approximately half of the country's population. Every one of these children has the potential to make positive contribution to the future of the nation. For this to happen, children must be protected from vio-

lence, abuse, harm, exploitation and neglect so that they can grow to their fullest potential (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 16). Lesotho passed Children Protection and Welfare Act 2011, which made access to basic services like education and health a human right.⁵⁷ The Government conducted a mapping and assessment of Lesotho's child protection system in 2014 and 2019. With support from development partners, it conducted Violence Against Children (VAC) Survey.⁵⁸ The Survey produced high level priority indicators that are being used for decision making and programming on children protection across the country.

The Government and other stakeholders, including advocacy groups, recognize the need to strengthen the ability to generate and use evidence for decision making, programming and monitoring the impact of child protection interventions nationally and in the districts. They also recognize that there are exist structures at national and district levels to coordinate child protection responses. However, these structures need capacity enhancement, including being able to produce credible disaggregated data, coordinate and monitor the effectiveness of the existing interventions on child protection.

4.5.7 Social Protection Programmes and Initiatives

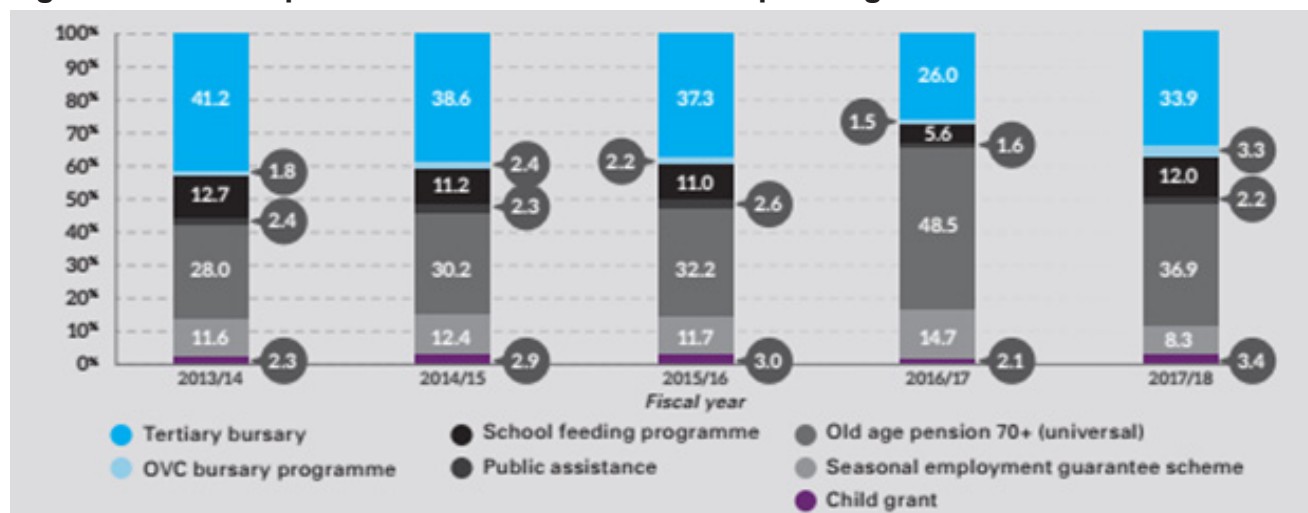
The Government recognizes the preventive, protective and transformative functions of social protection in reducing poverty and inequality, guaranteeing human rights, promoting human development and economic growth. The GoL and partners, therefore, uses social pro-

⁵⁷Lesotho Children Protection and Welfare Act 2011.

⁵⁸Lesotho Violence Against Children Survey 2019. High Level Priority Indicators.

tection programmes and interventions as a means to establish fairness and justice (equity) across all sectors through redistribution of national resources. It also has one of the highest social assistance expenditures in Sub-Saharan Africa. They include fee-free primary schooling, school feeding programme, bursaries in higher education, subsidised health care and drugs, and generous social transfers. Figure 4.5.2 below shows that, as of 2017, the social protection landscape comprised of seven programmes which underscores the commitment of the Government in reducing inequality. Besides these seven programmes, there is also an Agricultural Input Subsidy programme, which provides farmers with seeds and fertilizers.

Figure 4.5.2: Composition of Social Assistance Spending



Source: UNICEF Lesotho, (2017). *Social Assistance Budget Brief*

According to Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), about 131,552 children directly benefitted from the social protection system in 2018. Of these, 108,412 children from 37,738 households benefitted from the Child Grants Programme and 70,674 households from the bursary programme for orphaned and vulnerable children. About 50 per cent of the beneficiaries are girls. The Government allocated an additional US\$2 million to the social assistance programme. Evidence-led advocacy, improvement of public finance, strengthening of the social protection system and partnership with Government ministries, the European Union, The World Bank, private organizations, non-governmental organizations and United Nations (UN) agencies contributed to the achievement of the results.

Considerable progress has been made in strengthening the social protection system. MoSD established district social protection coordination committees in 10 districts. About 40 percent of the committee members are women. A Social Protection Strategy Implementation Plan, along with an M&E framework, has been finalized to support implementation, coordination and monitoring of social protection interventions. An additional 22 community councils

implemented the integrated social safety nets approach. Cash payments through mobile technology have been increased to 3,200 child grant beneficiary households, up from 2,000 in 2017. A seven-member mission from MoSD gained knowledge on how to expand mobile payments in Lesotho through South-South co-operation with Kenya. MoSD absorbed four UNICEF-supported positions, thus strengthening the capacity of the Ministry to manage and implement social assistance programmes.

An integrated community development approach, using citizen service centres, was implemented in 26 councils. A total of 1,733 citizens, including 351 children (50 percent girls), were provided with public services through the centres. Four hundred savings and internal lending committees, with 7,519 (6,262 female and 1,257 male) members, were formed. The implementation of the SPRINGS (sustainable poverty reduction through income generation, nutrition and access to public services) intervention helped poor households gain access to fresh produce through more than 7,000 keyhole gardens. To expedite poverty reduction, MoSD has prepared a community development plan to link the cash assistance programme with livelihoods. The SPRINGS evaluation findings

reveal that the combination of the cash grants and livelihoods resulted in improved nutritional knowledge and consumption patterns, increased

hygiene and sanitation levels and more money saved and borrowed (more than 100 and 70 per cent increase, respectively, with respect to the comparison mean).

Box 4.5:1 Innovation in Developing Single Data Platform from Targeting Those in Need of Support

Lesotho National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA)

The Government of Lesotho (GoL) identified as a priority the need to increase the efficiency and coverage of social protection programmes, to improve the institutional coordination, to harmonize legal frameworks, and to consolidate social assistance programmes. When fully functional, the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) will become a single national registry for all social protection programmes and serve as an integrated system for targeting. The NISSA is a single data platform for targeting that was developed with financial support from the European Union (EU) and technical assistance from UNICEF and it is housed in the MoSD. It currently holds information on approximately 333,245 of Lesotho's rural households and 64 community Councils. Ministry of Social Development plans to expand NISSA coverage to 12 urban areas before end of 2019 where a further estimated 216,000 households reside.

In the NISSA Database, each household is categorized into one of four poverty groups based on five characteristics namely income, food security, participation in agriculture (land husbandry), ownership of livestock and ability of households to send children to school.

The Proxy-Means Test (PMT) formula is independently computed from variables collected using a Revised NISSA Form (attached) in order to assign poverty scores for all households. A set of PMT cut-off scores have been developed to assist with reduction of inclusion and exclusion error. The poverty classification is then used to target for beneficiaries of MoSD programs such as Child Grants Programme (CGP) and OVC Bursary program. NISSA in conjunction with delivery systems of CGP have subsequently been used to deliver an Emergency Grant and can be used to target for other social assistance programmes outside the Ministry of Social Development.

NISSA is a nationwide single integrated web-based database in which socio-economic information on all households is stored to identify vulnerable population, and target beneficiaries eligible for different social protection programmes. According to the MoSD Social Protection Annual Review 2018, a total of 115,000 households were recertified and 30,116 new households were registered from 27 Community Councils in NISSA in 2018. The data collection is on-going in seven councils. The ongoing data collection will enable the database to reach a minimum of 320,000 households in all the 64 rural councils by end of March 2019. According to NISSA data about 29 percent of the households are under poor and very poor category. The recertified data presented opportunities for updating programme information and beneficiaries for CGP and OVC Bursary. To support process of data collection, a new server and 100 more tablets were procured and handed over to MoSD for collection and storage of the data. The new server has improved synchronisation of data from the field to the central hub. The NISSA uses an MIS which is hosted by the MoSD. The MIS assists the MoSD with targeting of beneficiaries using an in-built PMT formula. The PMT, together with the community-based categorization process, enables the MoSD to get the results of deserving poor and vulnerable beneficiaries. To consolidate gains made with the introduction of NISSA as a single registry and to ensure sustainability, a total of 10 MoSD staff were provided with knowledge on NISSA Management Information System (MIS). They learned how to use the system in administering processes such as payment, case management, generation of M&E reports and application of PMT. In preparation for NISSA decentralisation, wiring has been completed in three districts of Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek. On the other hand, Thaba-Tseka, Mokhotlong, Leribe, Berea, Quthing and Qacha's Nek districts were wired but not fully connected to the Lesotho Government Data Network (LGDN). Botha-Bothe district wiring is currently underway. Limited human resources and technical skills were the main challenges in 2018.

Key Constraints/Challenges in Achieving Results:

Constraints were mostly found in the domains of the enabling environment, supply and demand. The social protection coordination mechanism is not yet functional due to frequent changes in leadership. Overall system building interventions and implementation of the community development model were also slow due to inadequate and expert human resources in MoDS and the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship. Weak institutional accountability relationships between duty bearers and service receivers weaken the overall implementation of social protection programmes. External interference delayed the implementation of NISSA. After the NISSA training started, some outsiders who were not selected as enumerators assembled and started demonstrating. The recruitment process had to be redone, thereby delaying implementation. MoSD also has a limited budget to expand the cash assistance programme vertically and horizontally. Assistance is needed in terms of capacity building, research and effective management, and technology.

4.5.7.1 Child Grants Programme:

The Child Grants Programme was introduced in different Community Councils across the country from 2009 onwards. The Government of Lesotho launched the CGP with technical and financial support from UNICEF and the EU, respectively, and was fully taken over by the Government in 2013. The CGP, which is unconditional in its nature and constitutes the first cash transfer targeted at the poor and ultra-poor households of Lesotho, is under the administration of the Ministry of Social Development. The objective of the CGP is to improve the living standards of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) by reducing malnutrition, improving their health status, and increasing school enrolment among OVC, through the provisions of a quarterly cash transfer to beneficiary households.⁵⁹ The transfer value is linked to the household size, wherein households with up to two children receive a quarterly payment of LSL 360 (USD 25).⁶⁰ Those with three to four children LSL 600 (USD 42), and households with five and more children receive LSL 750 (USD 52) on a quarterly basis – covering on average 21.5 percent of a household's income.⁶¹ The benefit is delivered to the households in-cash, either through the private security firm or through the local commercial bank.⁶²

The CGP is targeted through a combination of Community based Targeting and Proxy Means Test (PMT), followed by a community validation process. CBT categorises each household into four Poverty categories (namely Ultra Poor, Poor, Moderate and Well Off). The PMT employs a range of wealth indicators such as household assets, dwelling conditions to compute poverty score for all households. Households with Children who are validated as Poor

and Ultra Poor and fall below a certain PMT score are enrolled as beneficiaries of CGP after a process of Community Validation which is meant to reduce inclusion and exclusion errors. CGP benefits around 90,000 children from 36,200 households in 58 Community Councils. The current CGP expansion in six remaining Community Councils will increase beneficiary households to 42,500 and estimated 105,000 children.

Box 4.5.2: Innovation in School Feeding Programme to Schools in Lesotho

Innovation: Lesotho Local Purchase Initiative

The Government of Lesotho, in partnership with WFP, provides at least one nutritious and safe meal to 390,000 students per day in primary schools and early childhood centres. The National School Feeding Policy promotes the home-grown school feeding approach that prioritizes sourcing of nutritious and safe food locally. WFP is supporting the Government to procure food locally in line with WFP's target to procure at least 10 percent of all food requirements from Local Smallholder Farmers (SHFs) globally. The annual demand for food in the Lesotho National School Feeding Programme is 10,530 MT of maize meal, and 2,106 MT of pulses, with WFP procuring 60 percent of both maize meal and pulses. The Local Purchase Initiative provides a new livelihood opportunity for smallholder farmers in Lesotho to increase food production on a commercially viable basis and improve rural households' food and income security by catalysing agricultural value chains development. The Local Purchase Initiative injects cash into rural economy and has

the potential to help the Government to reduce the import bill.

Partnerships

The initiative is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), Ministry of Agriculture and Food security (MAFS), Ministry of Small Business Development, Marketing and Cooperatives (MSCM), FAO, LENAFAU, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Local Government Chieftainship and Ministry of Trade and Industry among others.

Lesotho Country Context

The country is predominantly comprised of smallholder farmers that produce only 30 per cent of the country's annual cereal requirements. These farmers face a myriad of challenges that impede their potential to become established market actors in the Home-Grown School Feeding and other formal markets. The challenges include low production volumes, poor quality, low/poor on-farm storage capacity, marketing challenges, long distance from profitable markets, lack of insurance against risk and difficulties in accessing financial resources.

Capacity Building Intervention

These challenges are being addressed by working closely with the Government and other development partners to enhance the capacity of the smallholder farmers across the entire value chain. WFP is using pro-smallholder food procurement approaches to support the Government in purchasing food commodities from smallholder farmers for the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme. The farmers' capacity is enhanced on quality standards, post-harvest handling & storage practices, business skills, financial literacy and access to market information. This initiative provides smallholder farmers with an entry point to formal markets and presents the Government with a model for demand-side agricultural market support.

Progress

WFP rolled-out the Local Purchase Initiative in 2017, and to date, over 6,000 MT of maize meal and beans worth USD2 million has been procured from over 400 farmers (34 percent women).

4.5.7.2 OVC Bursary

The OVC Bursary programme was introduced in 2000, primarily as a response to the impact of HIV and AIDS, which left many children orphaned. The objective of the OVC Bursary is to provide educational support to orphans and vulnerable children by increasing their access to education. With the introduction of free primary education, the OVC Bursary re-focused on targeting pupils in secondary education.⁶³ Until 2012, the bursary was under the administration of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), after which it was transferred to the newly-formed MoSD. At the central-level, a Senior OVC Bursary Administrator oversees the programme, supported by OVC Bursary Administrators, who manage the programme at the district-level. In 2018, an estimated 23,000 beneficiaries (OVCs) were supported with the budget of LSL 63,766,511 while for the current financial year LSL 70,000,000 has been budgeted for 28,000 beneficiaries.

The OVC Bursary makes a direct payment to secondary schools on an annual basis in the name of the respective beneficiary student. The payments are meant to cover tuition and examination fees, registration cost, stationary and books, as well as special subject fees, such as science fees and boarding fees. Thus, the amount of the bursary varies by grade and type of school, however, follows the harmonized fees structure defined by the MoET. Costs that are excluded from the bursary are for school trips and fees for other special subjects, for instance computer science.

4.5.7.3 Public Assistance

The Public Assistance (PA) is Lesotho's oldest safety net programme that provides permanent assistance, as well as temporary assistance to orphans and vulnerable children, severely disabled, severely ill and destitute individuals. Permanent assistance is provided in cash and in-kind on an on-going basis, whereas temporary assistance is provided up to six months for which the needy unemployed, able bodied individuals, are eligible. The cash benefit is LSL 250 (USD 17)⁶⁴ per person, per month, amounting to approximately 87 percent of the adult equivalent poverty line, and provided in cash on a quarterly basis. Typically, districts allocate LSL 250 for a maximum of half the family mem-

bers. In-kind benefits are identified on a case-by-case basis and can comprise food, hygiene kits, and assistive devices for persons with disabilities.⁶⁵

The PA utilizes a combination of categorical targeting and means testing. Potential beneficiaries – that is OVC, severely disabled or ill, and very elderly – apply directly to the MoSD district office or are referred to the office by the Village Chief. Overall, targeting criteria are imprecise and not defined through guidelines. During the application process, applicants must present various documents, including a letter from the Village Chief confirming residency and need, and birth certificate(s). Subsequent to the application at the district office, a Social Worker conducts a home assessment and investigation into the community to validate the information provided by the applicant. Based on the assessment the Social Worker provides a recommendation on eligibility, which is submitted to the Senior Child Welfare Officer for review and a final decision.

Public Assistance serve approximately 12,800

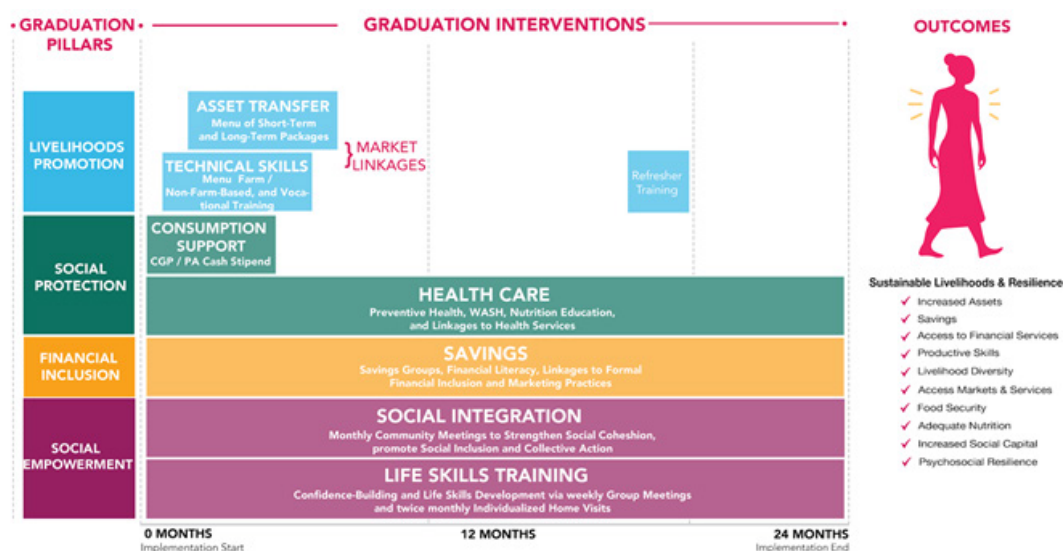
households. However, there is no information available on the category of assistance provided.

The Public Assistance is fully funded by the Government, with an approved budget for transfers for financial year 2019/20 of LSL 37.4 million. Resources for PA are drawn from the recurrent budget and allocated to each district based on a proposal developed by the district, availability of resources, and historical expenditure of each district.

4.5.7.4 Building Capacities of Communities in Lesotho

The Government of Lesotho through the MoSD has developed the Community Development Model as a sustainable intervention to build the capacities of communities to graduate from poverty and social assistance programs through livelihoods establishment (Figure 4.5.3). The model is based on evidence from engagement with communities in various districts national-wide. Community development plan has been completed.

Figure 4.5.3 Graduation Community Development Model (CDM)



All that needs to be done is to facilitate implementation of this plan. But the challenge is that there is a huge financial gap on the resources needed to implement this model. The model is a backbone of the MoSD. This is because the Ministry has shifted from social welfare in social protection/humanitarian assistant to a developmental approach, where beneficiaries are capacitated to generate their own income and rely on their assets and skills to graduate

from poverty. With adequate financial support to implement the model, most beneficiaries, including those in the waiting list and those that might fall into poverty would be assisted through various projects and become income independent.

The Ministry does not only provide grants to children and households. There are also counselling services undertaken though there

is a need for conducive environment when providing these sessions, especially to children. There is a gap in child friendly facilities and assets sensitive to children in order to get to the root cause of their problems and offer full support. Moreover, the MoSD, through its Children Services Department, facilitates adoption of children and placement of children in home care facilities. However, the challenge remains with the exit strategy for these children from home care facilities. Their reintegration into the society and access to economic resources remains a challenge. This exposes them to risks of sexual harassment, abuse, exploitation, child trafficking, among others. It is also the role of the ministry to sensitize the public about children's rights, ending child marriage and all forms of abuse. Support is needed for such victims of abuse, including sustainable programs for juvenile's ex-convicts and street kids.

4.5.8 Lesotho Progress with Youth Programmes and Initiatives

Lesotho has a young population, with about 32 percent of population aged below 15, while those aged 15-34 years accounts for approximately 38 percent of the total population.⁶⁶ With unemployment rate of about 25 percent and 36 percent estimated youth unemployment, youth population in Lesotho faces challenges that are multi-dimensional and interlinked. These challenges also include, incidence of HIV, limited sexual and reproductive rights/health services, limited skills tailored to labour market needs and access to finances, and limited internships among others. With the support of the UN, Lesotho has established National Youth Advisory Panel, to champion youth inclusion and also coordinate youth voices and participation in national and district engagements.

Lesotho through the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR) in collaboration with youth, has developed the **National Youth Policy 2017-2030 (NYP)**. There is also an implementation plan to guide the execution of the Policy. Many efforts and studies have been carried out to understand what issues Basotho young entrepreneurs face through engagements in different platforms.

Aspirations for self-employment exist among youth but most of them say their ambition is limited by lack of knowledge in opening a business as well as lack of start-up funds.

Many efforts and studies have been carried out to understand what issues Basotho young entrepreneurs face through engagements in different platforms. Aspirations for self-employment exist among youth but most of them say their ambition is limited by lack of knowledge in opening a business as well as lack of start-up funds.

Effective implementation of Youth Policy and the plan to empower youth to increase their access to education and training (SDG 4), health services (SDG 3), decent jobs (SDGs 8, 1, 2), leadership and political participation (SDGs 16, 17) and environment protection programmes (SDGs 13, 6, 7, 14, 15) remains a challenge. More support is needed in terms of financial resources, skilled personnel, research and up-to-date data, and use of technology and innovation to support the youth more effectively, in particular those in rural areas. Addressing youth unemployment and reducing new infections among the adolescents and youth remain a big challenge in Lesotho, and needs to be addressed in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

4.5.9 Volunteers for the SDGs

The Government recognizes volunteers as critical partners for the implementation of the 17 SDGs. This is seen as a strategy to promote broader national ownership, a human rights-based approach, gender equality, participation, inclusion and sustainability. Over 100 young Basotho volunteered and offered services during the VNR 2019, including mobilization, advocacy, and participating in consultation workshops.

The GoL's recognition of the value addition of volunteer action dates back to 2009 as demonstrated through the development and implementation of the National Volunteer Corps for young graduates' project. **The volunteer database now has a total of 12,191 registered**

⁶⁶National Census, 2016.

applicants among which to date **1,799 have been placed in different** ministries while 9,824 await placement. The pool is bulging every year as more pool of graduates are registering whilst the absorption only guarantees **104** of the total number of volunteers budgeted under Government every financial year. This project enabled the country to retain new graduates from universities and vocational training institutions. Additionally, the intervention has impacted positively on employment opportunities, sustainable livelihood, household security, natural resource and environmental management.

With about 38 percent of the population of Lesotho between the ages of 15 and 34 years, policies and programmes targeting youth are crucial as national strategies to ensure that no one is left behind in development planning and implementation. In 2015, a volunteer programme that is aimed at enhancing youth engagement in development frameworks enabled young people's involvement especially in the hard to reach rural communities. Furthermore, the programme enabled the country to leverage volunteer involving structures and networks to improve their collective contribution, inputs and coordination on the implementation of various SDGs.

From 2015, through formal and non-formal structures, volunteers have been mobilized and are active across different development sectors and are contributing to various SDG related programmes. For example, 64 UN Volunteers have supported SDG related programmes in rural areas while community based volunteers, are the pillars for preventative health, hygiene, water and sanitation and food security interventions, which are critical sectors linked to SDGs 1, 2, 3 and 6.

4.5.10 Supporting People with Disabilities

Recent estimates on the extent of disability in Lesotho ranges from 2.5 to 3.5 percent of the population.⁶⁷The Constitution of Lesotho provides that Lesotho adopts policies designed to provide for training facilities, including specialized institutions, public or private; and place

People with Disabilities (PWD) in employment and encourage employers to accommodate them. Lesotho ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in December, 2008, with the purpose of promoting, protecting and ensuring that PWD in Lesotho enjoy their human rights.

The Government, and other stakeholders, including Lesotho National Federation of Organization of the Disabled (LNFOD), has pursued the strategy of disability mainstreaming in NSDP II, and specific development programmes in all sectors. Two important frameworks exist: National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy, and the **National Disability Mainstreaming Plan (NDMP)**. The Ministry of Social Development, in consultations with LNFOD, is in the process of enacting disability specific legislation that will establish a clear legal framework for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. A draft Bill has been completed and validated by all relevant stakeholders and will soon be tabled before the Parliament for enactment into law.

The following initiatives exist to support the people with disability:

- Development of **Disability Equity Bill of 2018** which has been tabled before Parliament for enactment.
- Development of the Inclusive Education Policy 2018** to facilitate the implementation of disability inclusive education in mainstream education so as to promote access to education for people with disabilities.
- There is also a Free Vocational Rehabilitation Centre** intended to equip PWDs who are from disadvantaged families with various skills to enable them to start their own businesses.
- The MoSD developed a Policy for Older Persons in 2014. The Policy provides for the establishment of coordinating mechanisms at different levels. This will facilitate for the effective coordination of service provision which will reduce issues of access to services.
- Lesotho is the first country to ratify the AU Protocol on Human Rights and the Rights of Older

⁶⁷Lesotho Population and Housing Census (2016)

Persons. This is the tool that will facilitate the development of programmes that will respond to inequalities affecting older persons.

- The MoSD launched the campaign program to address issues of discrimination, abuse, assault and killings of older persons in 2014. The campaigns have been held in five districts of Mafeteng, Quthing, Botha-Bothe, Thaba-Tseka and Qacha's Nek.

- Income Security: The universal pension program was introduced in Lesotho in 2004 with the qualification age of 70 years and above. However, the Lesotho Policy for older persons defines an older person as anyone who is 60 years and above. The total population of older persons in Lesotho is 171.467.000 which is 8.5 percent of the total population.

- The MoSD has initiated the formation of social clubs for the elderly for promotion of active ageing and healthy lifestyle. To date, there are five active clubs in Maseru and one in Leribe. These clubs are meant to address health related issues as well as loneliness, which contributes to other mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and dementia.

4.5.11 Lesotho Migration Programmes and Initiatives

Government of Lesotho (GoL) has made migration a major theme of Lesotho's foreign and public policies, as is reflected in Vision 2020 and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP). Lesotho has actively participated in the Global Compact on Migration (GCM), Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), and other inter-governmental policy dialogue forum. The forum called **National Consultative Committee on Migration (NCC)** has played a key role to address the migration issues in Lesotho. The NCC is consisted of inter-Ministerial, multi-sectoral stakeholders dealing with migration issues in Lesotho including academia and migrants' associations. NCC is chaired

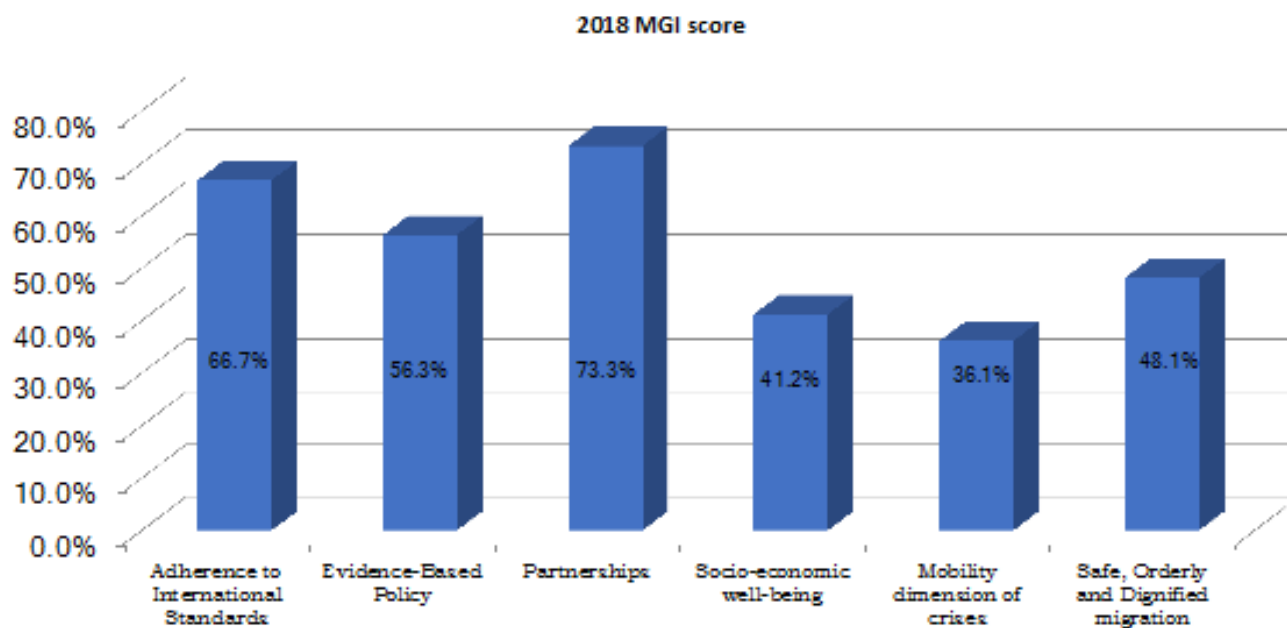
by Ministry of Home Affairs and co-chaired by IOM.

NCC has undertaken a number of interventions which led to the development of frameworks in the area of migration since 2012. These initiatives were funded by the ACP-EU Migration Facility projects. In 2017, NCC was instrumental to review the draft GCM to come up with the Lesotho country inputs which was submitted to GCM Secretariat. Lesotho United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP) 2019-2023 listed "*an overall score of Migration Governance Indicator (MGI)*" as one of the UNDAP Outcome indicators. Similarly, NSDP II articulates the issues of migration and development.

Remittances are estimated at 15.1 percent of GDP in 2016, which mostly originate from South Africa. According to Census 2016, 179,579 Basotho are currently out of the country, 124,386 of them in South Africa, and others in the rest of Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Government of Lesotho has achieved significant progress in the development of migration related policies in recent years (Figure 4.5.4). Labour Migration Management Policy was developed by Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) in March 2018. Border and Migration Management and Assessment was conducted in May 2018, and based on which, Immigration Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual was produced in November 2018. The Eighth Amendment to the Constitution to allow the dual citizenship for the first time in Lesotho's history was passed in December 2017, and the Citizenship and Immigration Bill has been drafted. To effectively involve Basotho living abroad, in the country's development, the Government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations (MoFA) started diaspora engagement in South Africa in preparation of diaspora policy development.

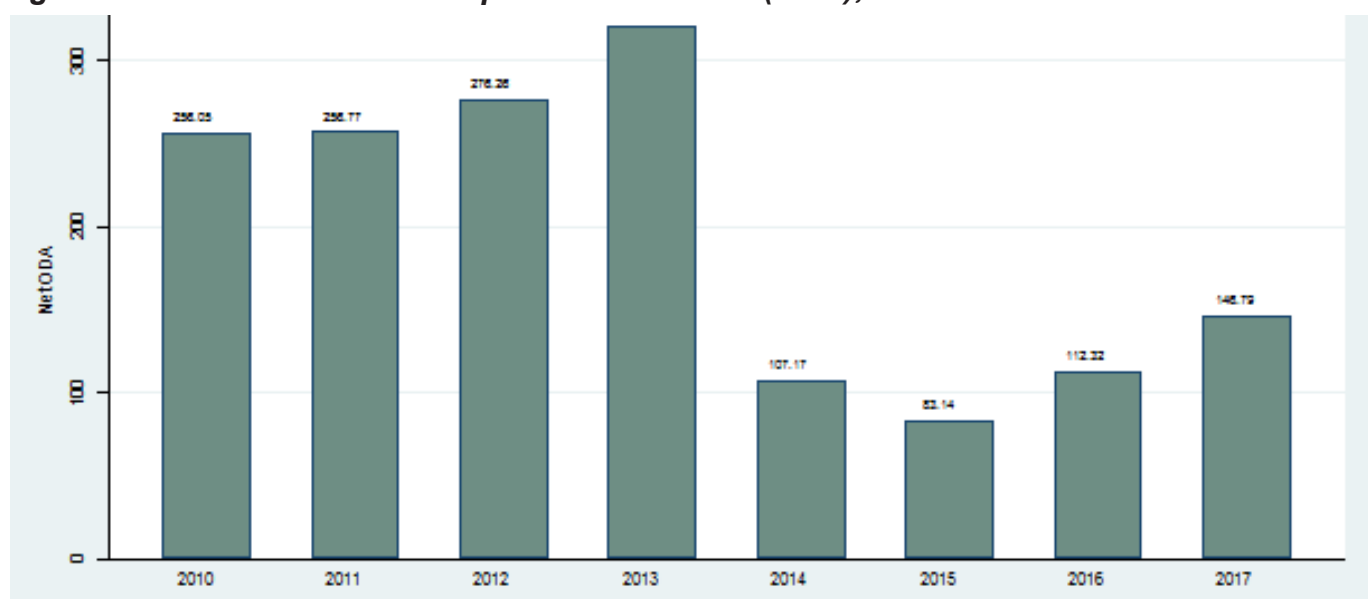
Figure 4.5.4 Migration Governance Indicator (MGI)



4.5.12 Lesotho and Development Assistance

Prior to 2013, Lesotho was among the largest beneficiaries of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Africa. During that period, net ODA to Lesotho showed an upward and steady trend. In 2013 net ODA to Lesotho was USD320.67 million. However, in 2014 it declined by approximately 66.58 percent, to USD107.17 million, which is equivalent to its 1988 level. In 2015, the net ODA to Lesotho declined further by 22.42 percent to USD83.14 million (Figure 4.5.5). Thereafter, net ODA has been increasing by at least 30 percent per annum.

Figure 4.5.5: Net Official Development Assistance (ODA), in Millions of US Dollars



Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DI.ODA.ODAT.CD?end=2017&locations=LS>

Lesotho recognizes that there are global factors that affects ODA flow to the country. Domestic factors such as continued political instability and limited financial prudence are major contributing factors. The GoL is committed to firmly addressing these domestic factors, going forward.

4.5.13 Next Steps Going Forward

Lesotho has made considerable progress in reducing inequalities across the country. However, GoL, working together with various partners including development partners, the private sector, CSOs and local government and communities, is committed to addressing the existing challenges, taking into consideration the available opportunities. The focus will include the following:

- Supporting the implementation, monitoring and reporting on the programmes of reducing inequalities in Lesotho as articulated in the NSDP II.
- Strengthening national and district coordination structures and mechanisms to effectively address inequalities and effectively manage social protection programmes across the country.
- Supporting and strengthening routine social protection and emergency response mechanisms is a critical factor and imperative going forward.
- Addressing in a comprehensive and inclusive manner the challenges of health, HIV & AIDS,

GBV, sexual abuse and violence at home, at work and in learning institutions.

- Finalisation of the Domestic Violence Bill, review and harmonisation of various pieces of legislations and policies, and ensure their effective enforcement.
- Allocation of adequate resources (financial and human) for GEWE programs, including Gender Responsive Budgeting (across MDA and local government).
- Addressing child poverty and child protection through multi-sectoral approach, joint planning and/or joint programmes.
- Strengthen labour market institutions to protect rights and wages of workers, especially vulnerable groups such as children, youth and women.
- Strengthening health systems and institutions in all regions, making them child, adolescent, youth and poor women friendly, and invest more in primary health care and ASRH & R.
- Supporting gender responsive research, monitoring and evaluation structures for reporting, targeting and implementation of SDGs.
- Improve documentation of lessons learned, performance and knowledge management.

4.6 GOAL 13: TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS



photographer: Lehlonolo Chefa

“Lesotho faces a crisis brought by climate change-related disasters like prolonged drought, high temperatures and floods. These have resulted into increased poverty, conflicts, food insufficiency and increased need for assistance. Without addressing climate change and environmental issues, Lesotho will not be able to successfully achieve other SDGs”
(Stakeholder at the VNR Consultative Forum, May 2019)

“To combat climate change we must conserve our rangelands and natural resources, we should not graze our animals on wetlands and we should not build houses on the wetlands, Lesotho has a lot of water that should be used to generate electricity for people in the rural areas so that they stop using cow dung, wood and shrubs for cooking and heating houses as this pollutes the environment”. Initiatives for restoring ecosystems run by Caritas Lesotho, World Vision, Catholic Relief Services and other NGOs should be distributed and made accessible across the country.”

Voice of Youth from Semonkong, May 2019

4.6.1 Lesotho and Climate Change Effects

Lesotho is a country highly vulnerable to adverse impact of climate change. This is because of its location, size and topography. Climate change and environmental degradation represent a threat to Lesotho’s implementation of SDGs. Particular, it poses a challenge towards addressing poverty, hunger and creating

decent jobs and stimulating economic growth (SDGs 1, 2, 8, 9), reducing inequality (SDG 10), promoting gender equality (SDG 5) and protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 14 and 15).

In the past ten years, Lesotho has experienced successive climate shocks such as recurrent droughts, dry spells and floods, which have

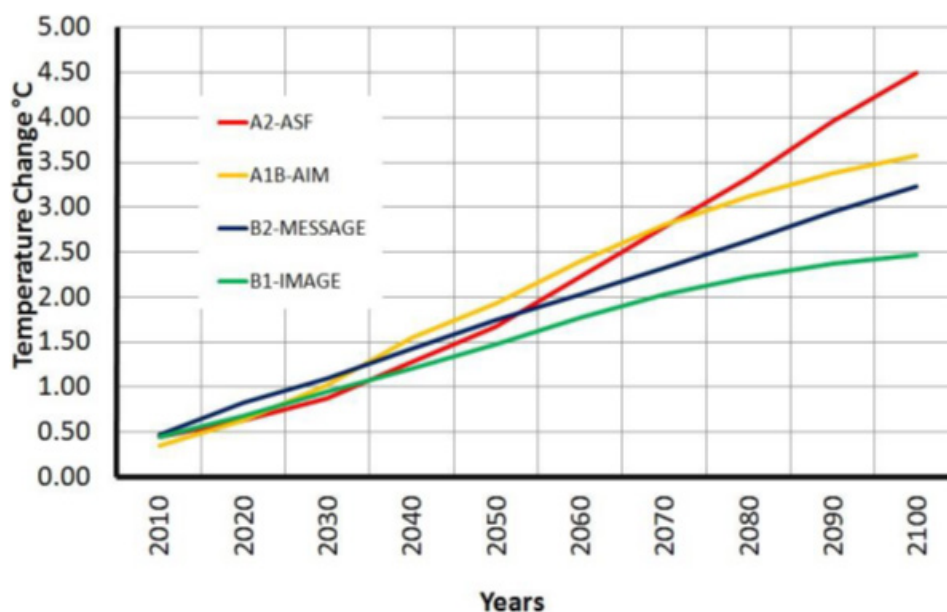
negatively affected communities and households' livelihoods, with serious consequences bearing on people's food security. From 2015, the climate change effects have become more frequent (every 2-3 years) compared to before.

Climate change and vulnerability affects all segments of the population in urban and rural areas, although the rural poor are the most hit. It also affects all sectors of the economy, particularly agriculture. The convergence of multiple vulnerabilities in Lesotho has created a complex risk profile, in which poor households and communities are continually exposed to a wide range of economic, health, protection, environmental, income and climate risks and shocks. Children, girls and women bear the greatest burden as compared to men and boys. With drought and erratic rainfall, women must work harder for their families. This puts added pressure on the girls within the households, who may be forced to drop out of school to help their

mothers manage the heavier burden. Women and girls spend many hours; averaging eight hours, collecting water and looking for cooking energy. This undermines productivity and fuels a cycle of poverty that limits the economic and social capital that would be generated to combat climate change.

According to the Lesotho's First and Second National Communications, the country is likely to experience increase in temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns, increase in the rate of evaporation and increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events. The trend analysis of temperature and rainfall indicate that overall, average annual temperature is projected to increase by 1.78-2.2°C by 2060 (Lesotho Climate Action Report). Figure 4.6.1 shows temperature projections for four different policy scenarios from 2010 to 2100. Overall, all four policy scenarios show increasing temperatures for all the years up to 2100.

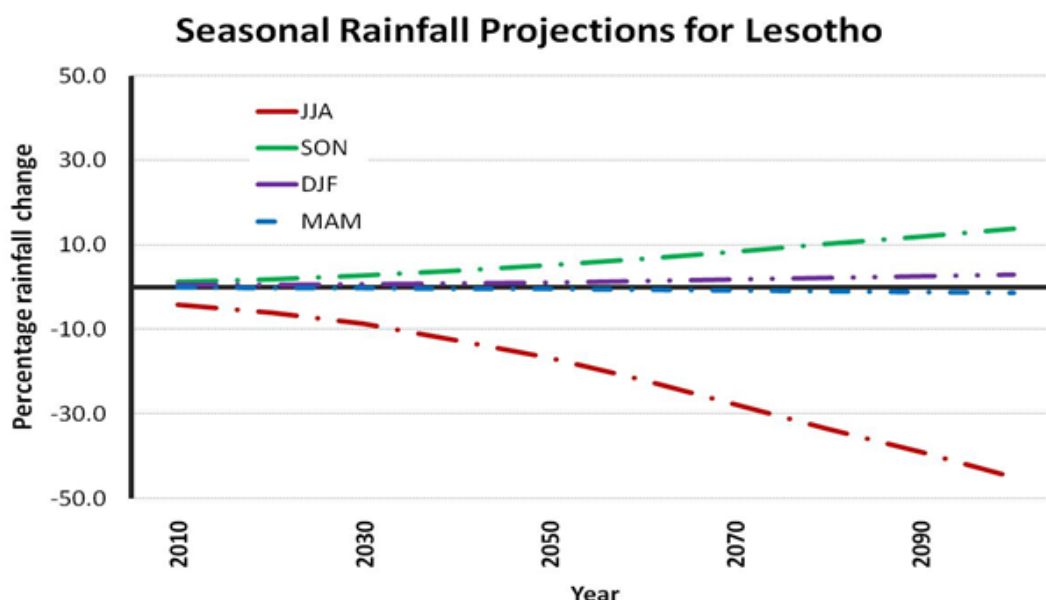
Figure 4.6.1: Annual Temperature Scenarios for Lesotho.



Source: MEMWA (2013)

Most policy scenarios also indicate that rainfall in the northern region of Lesotho is projected to increase considerably between March - May (autumn season) by 2100. Similarly, a slight increase is projected for the southern region for the same season. On the contrary, all scenarios project a decrease in rainfall between June - August (winter season) for the northern region as shown in Figure 4.6.2 (MEMWA, 2013).

Figure 4.6.2 Rainfall Scenarios for Lesotho



Source: MEMWA (2013)

The change in climate is expected to exacerbate existing environmental stresses such as drought, land degradation and loss of biodiversity and thus undermine sustainable development efforts. And if not effectively and sustainably managed, including building communities and households' resilience, achievement of SDGs in Lesotho will be difficult. In the last decade, between 2015-2019 in particular, Lesotho has experienced the heaviest burden of climate change effects. Agriculture, from where 75 percent of the population derives their livelihood, is the most negatively affected, leading to crop failure, food insecurity, hunger, conflicts over grazing land, GBV and child abuse, increased demand for humanitarian assistance and limited access to social services like education and health.

The droughts have also contributed to an increase in internal displacement and migration resulting in a highly mobile cohort of women (52 percent) compared to men 47 percent) in Lesotho. Migration of women to South Africa in search of jobs means that they have to leave children behind with husbands or relatives and in some cases children as household heads. This situation leaves many children vulnerable and exposed to abuse. Likewise, many women who migrate are exposed to GBV including

forced and exploitative labour.⁶⁸

Drought-induced GBV in Lesotho has been established through a baseline study conducted in 2016. This study revealed that GBV incidences increased during the last El Niño drought in 2015/2016. Various categories of affected population who were exposed to GBV risks included adolescent boys and girls, women, elderly men and women, people with disability, people leaving with HIV and AIDS. Reported GBV cases included sexual (22.8 percent), physical (26.4 percent) assaults, socio-economic deprivation (19.5 percent), emotional abuse (20.6 percent), harmful traditional practices (1.4 percent), forced prostitution (1 percent), forced marriage (2.3 percent), denial of education (2.3 percent) theft (3.4 percent), and loss of life 1.1 percent). Families adopted negative coping mechanisms such as withdrawing girls from schools in favour of boys and marrying off girls or to live with relatives.

According to Disaster Management Authority (DMA), (2011), the floods caused damage to property and loss of livelihoods estimated at M462.7 million, equivalent to 3.2 percent of the GDP. DMA Report also indicates that Lesotho experienced a major El Niño induced drought in 2015/16, negatively affecting numerous sectors such as Agriculture and Food Security, Health.

⁶⁸Lesotho Rapid analysis 2019, DMA.

The financial requirements to oversee post-disaster recovery and reconstruction were estimated at over LSL600 million (Table 4.6.1).

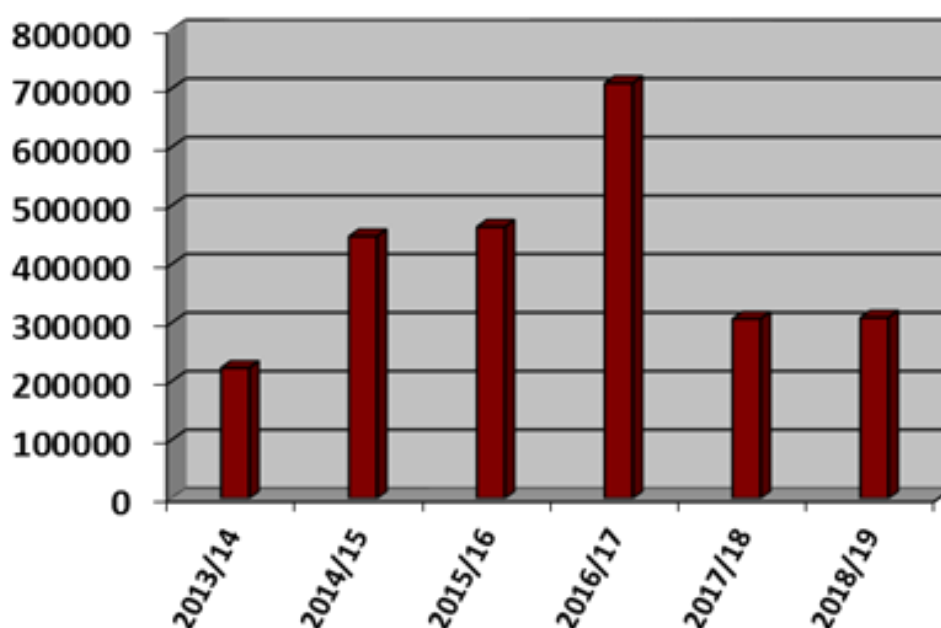
Table 4.6.1: Summary of Financial Requirements by Sector

Sector	Amount Required (Maloti)
Health and Nutrition	59,140,471.00
Agriculture and food security	206,981,573.00
Water and Sanitation	264,238,987.00
Logistics	53,468,400.00
Communications	249,700.00
Grand Total	584,079,131.00

Source: DMA 2019

Recurring droughts have led to a steady decline in subsistence farming, which is a major source of livelihood in rural areas. Droughts induced by the El Nino as well as higher than normal temperatures in 2016 resulted in a steep decline in food production. The total cereal production was estimated at about 30,000 tonnes, two-thirds lower than the previous five-year record. Food security was negatively affected by this reduction in agricultural production and the associated increase in food prices. The vulnerability trends have continued through the last three years up to 2019. Figure 4.6.3 indicates the number of food insecure people in Lesotho in the period 2013-2019 as a result of climate change effects.

Figure 4.6.3 Number of Food Insecure People in Lesotho



Around 66 percent of total primary energy for Lesotho is biomass (wood, crop waste and dung) and remaining 34 percent is modern energy in the form of electricity, coal and LPG (SDGs 7, 14, and 15). The GoL is committed to make sure that Basotho access clean and affordable energy as a strategy for sustainable development. The Government has therefore developed the National Energy Policy 2017, En-

ergy Master Plan 2018, Country Action Agenda and Investment Prospectus, Off-Grid Regulatory framework (draft). With the support of UNDP Lesotho, the Government is implementing a project call "Sustainable Energy For All".

4.6.2 Lesotho Programmes and Initiatives to Combat Climate Change and Mitigate its Effects

4.6.2.1. Legal, Policy and Institutional Frameworks

Lesotho has established policy and institutional frameworks to address and manage climate change effect, including the development of the National Strategic Resilience Framework (2016). This was borne out of a quest for a sustainable solution to address the multi-faceted challenges posed by all types of shocks and stresses. The important role of a National Resilience Framework is to facilitate and increased mainstreaming of climate and disaster risk management in the national and sector plan and strategies.

Lesotho Meteorological Services (LMS) and the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC) play the central role in coordinating and mainstreaming of climate change in respective socio-economic sectors in Lesotho. LMS is the leading agency in climate and climate change issues and the focal point for the planning and execution of activities pertaining to Lesotho's commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. On the other hand, NCCC is a national multi-sectoral climate change coordinating body that coordinates development and implementation of policies, plans and measures to address climate change issues.

Lesotho developed the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP), 2017. The Policy has four pillars: **i. adaptation and climate change risk reduction; ii. mitigation and low carbon development pathways; iii. governance and institutional arrangements; iv. climate finance and investment framework.** The Government of Lesotho and development partners also developed the National Climate Change Policy Implementation Strategy. This strategy has identified three strategic objectives and outcomes towards achieving a long-term vision of building climate change resilience, low-carbon society and prosperous economy and environment within the period 2017-2022.

In 2014, the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation developed in 2014 developed a **Range Resources Management Policy** to promote sustainable management of rangeland resources. The Policy aims to stimulate

sustainable development and management of rangeland resources for enhanced biodiversity, optimum productivity and improved livelihoods of Basotho.

In 2017, the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology put in place the **Energy Policy** to address a number of interrelated issues which include, among others, climate change and environmental sustainability. The Policy was developed with four goals, namely: **To contribute towards the improvement of livelihoods, to contribute towards economic growth and investment, to ensure security of supply, and to contribute towards the protection of the environment.**

The Lesotho National Youth Policy of 2017, which was also developed by the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation, aims to stimulate environmental awareness amongst the youth and their responsibilities towards sustainable environment and reduction of poverty.

4.6.2.2. Lesotho Programmes and Initiatives

In its effort to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters, Lesotho produced a National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) in 2007. As part of its mandate, NAPA documented national circumstances, vulnerabilities and expected impacts from climate change in Lesotho. As such NAPA outlined priorities to use in achieving its goals. Several projects have been carried out that addresses these priorities, namely:

- Improvement of Early Warning to Reduce Impacts of Climate Change and Capacity Building to Integrate Climate Change into Development Plan (2012/13 to 2015/16), funded by Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF).
- Reducing vulnerability from climate change in the Foothills, Lowlands and the Lower Senqu River Basin (January 2015-December 2020). Its objective is to mainstream climate risk considerations into the Land Rehabilitation Programme of Lesotho for improved ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of livelihoods to climate shocks.
- Climate Change Adaptation for Sustainable Rural Water Supply in Lowlands Lesotho (2015 to 2019) funded by AfDB.
- Strengthening Capacity for Climate Change

Adaptation through Support to Integrated Watershed Management Programme in Lesotho (2015-2019): this project is funded by LDCF and GEF and implemented by Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

- Wool and Mohair Promotion Project (WAMPP) (2015-2022): this is the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security project, funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The project targets wool and mohair production sector, which is one of Lesotho's primary exports.
- Integrated Catchment Management – Financed by the European Union (EU). The purpose is to contribute towards effective implementation of Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) in Lesotho through an improved coordination amongst relevant stakeholders.

Other projects that were implemented by development partners and non-governmental organisations include the following:

- Restoring Ecosystems and Livelihoods (REAL) 2015 – to date: its objective is to produce evidence and good practices in reducing the effects of climate change. REAL (funded through CRS' private funds) has been implemented since 2015.
- Diversification for Nutrition and Enhanced Resilience (DiNER) and Keyhole Garden (KG) Response to El Niño Drought Emergency, 2016 - 2018: Implemented in two phases by CRS. DiNER main objective was a response to the 2015-16 El Niño-induced drought in Lesotho.
- Mountain Integrated Conservation Agriculture Project (MICA), 2012 - 2014: The MICA project was implemented in two phases in three districts (i.e. Moleleke's Hoek, Quthing and Thaba-Tseka), in collaboration with Caritas Lesotho and World Vision. The project funding was through OFDA.

Box 4.6.1 Innovation for strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards

One of the major significant innovations for strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in Lesotho is the development of keyhole gardens. Keyhole gardens have been promoted in Lesotho under the auspices of the Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-Safe) project which has since grown to include the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The program's main goal was to enhance food security, through better nutrition, improve climate resilience and increase incomes and savings targeting households affected by HIV and AIDS. Since their inception, 23,150 keyhole gardens have been constructed, impacting approximately 115,590 people. The structures have enhanced year-round production of nutritious vegetables such as spinach, carrots and beetroot, and have enhanced income availability for other household expenses such as school fees.

The basic keyhole garden is a circular, raised-bed made up of layers of soil, ash, manure and other organic material that retains moisture and nourishes the soil, making it more productive than a conventional garden, even during dry or cold months. The gardens can produce vegetables for a family of five all year round. In Lesotho, the garden is usually walled with local stone or brick that retains daytime heat, alleviating low night time temperatures. The raised structure also makes access easier for the chronically ill or elderly. Size can vary, but the basic garden measures 1m high and 2m in diameter. A keyhole-like 'cut out' or walkway design gives growers 'arms-length access' across the garden. 'Grey' water from household washing is added through a central composting basket, watering the garden and continuously infusing the soil with nutrients. Once built, the garden requires little maintenance and, if cared for appropriately, can produce food for up to five years.

4.6.3 Next Steps Going Forward

“Lesotho experiences it all; mountains, lowlands, high temperatures, floods, frost, winds just name it, rivers and clean water, and other natural endowments. How we manage climate change hazard and build resilience across the country and be able to mitigate the outcomes of the hazards is critical for the achievement of other SDGs, in particular goal 1, 2, 3, 8, 10 and 16”

Voice of a Stakeholder, National VNR Conference, June 2019

Lesotho has realized that without effective programmes and initiatives to combat climate change and its negative effects, there will be no significant achievement on SDGs. Lesotho has therefore put in place relevant institutions and is taking action to increase forest cover, save water towers/wetlands, building communities and households resilience, supporting climate science research and availability of data. In addition, Lesotho is supporting mitigation measures including humanitarian response and initiatives that reduce additional pressure on systems affected by climate change like soil erosion and drying water towers.

In response to climate change-related natural disasters and needs, the GoL has prioritized mainstreaming and enhancing resilience and sustainable development. Considering the multi-dimensional nature of the impact of climate change, and response to be put in place, the GoL has committed to engage Development Partners, the Private Sector, CSOs, communities, youth and children to:

- Strengthen in-country coordination at national, rural, and institutional level to support knowledge sharing, increasing synergies and complementarities.
- Develop sound, comprehensive and resilience programmes;
- Build household and community resilience to threats and shocks;

- Develop early warning systems (indigenous and external);
- Address risks and vulnerabilities to climate change and other socio-economic and health challenges;
- Addressing GBV, child and adolescent protection challenges created by climate change effects.
- Seek assistance to leverage on research, technology and innovation in managing climate change and building resilience.

Addressing poverty and hunger, and humanitarian assistance in Lesotho, depends on scaling up initiatives that target building resilience and managing climate change effect on agriculture. This is because 75 percent of extremely poor people in Lesotho live in rural areas and most of them depend on eco-systems on their livelihood. Besides, agriculture sector represents 80percent of destructions and helplessness created by climate change effect.

Lesotho is part of UN CCC. But the next step is to Lesotho has to be supported to effectively implement community and household resilience building agenda: including:

- Building rural economy and supporting rural poor to be economically independent
- Conserving the environment, protecting and conserve natural resources, water in particular
- Supporting rural poor to diversify their income and lead a decent life
- Promoting climate smart agriculture, and moving away from dependant too much on subsistence farming, to increase productivity and food security.
- Protecting and conservation of water and wetlands
- Promoting pro-poor production technologies: e.g. protected agriculture e.g. green houses farming.
- Strengthening capacity to develop bankable projects in order to access available financing windows.

4.7 Goal 16: PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS.



4.7.1 Lesotho Indicators of Progress on Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a constitutional democracy; committed to good governance, the pursuit of peaceful and inclusive societies and access to justice for all while building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Albeit its chequered history of episodes of instability and political unrest, the search for peace and stable institutions that will support sustainable and inclusive development have been paramount endeavours of the people of Lesotho. Notable progress includes reforms to the electoral process from the “first-past-the-post” (FPTP) to “mixed-member proportional” (MMP) representation and peaceful alternation of power between contending parties and coalitions. However, Lesotho continued to contend with political instability, which necessitated the intervention of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) since 2014. Unstable coalition governments resulted in the country holding three elections in five years, between 2012 and 2017.

Lesotho has laudably established key governance institutions such as the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO), Office of the Ombudsman and the Independent Election Commission (IEC). Lesotho also has Parliament, Labour Court, and the Directorate of

Disputes Prevention and Resolution (DDPR). Strengthening the capacities of these institutions remains a major challenge and a priority for the Government and its partners, including UN Lesotho.⁶⁹ Ombudsman has limited autonomy and capacity. Its functionality is affected by the fact that it cannot enforce its recommendations and determinations since they are not binding. Overlapping mandates of DCEO and Police Complaints Authority (PCA) is also noted.

The Legislature, the National Assembly in particular, has experienced challenges to its functioning and stability, which has also affected the stability of the Cabinet and the entire political system. The ability of the Legislature to discharge its constitutional responsibilities is severely impeded by the political instability in Lesotho. Coalition governments have become a feature of Lesotho’s political landscape. In general, these coalition governments are fragile, often held together by weak political agreements.

Basotho view an effective local governance system as a critical vehicle for accomplishing the country’s efforts in addressing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular,

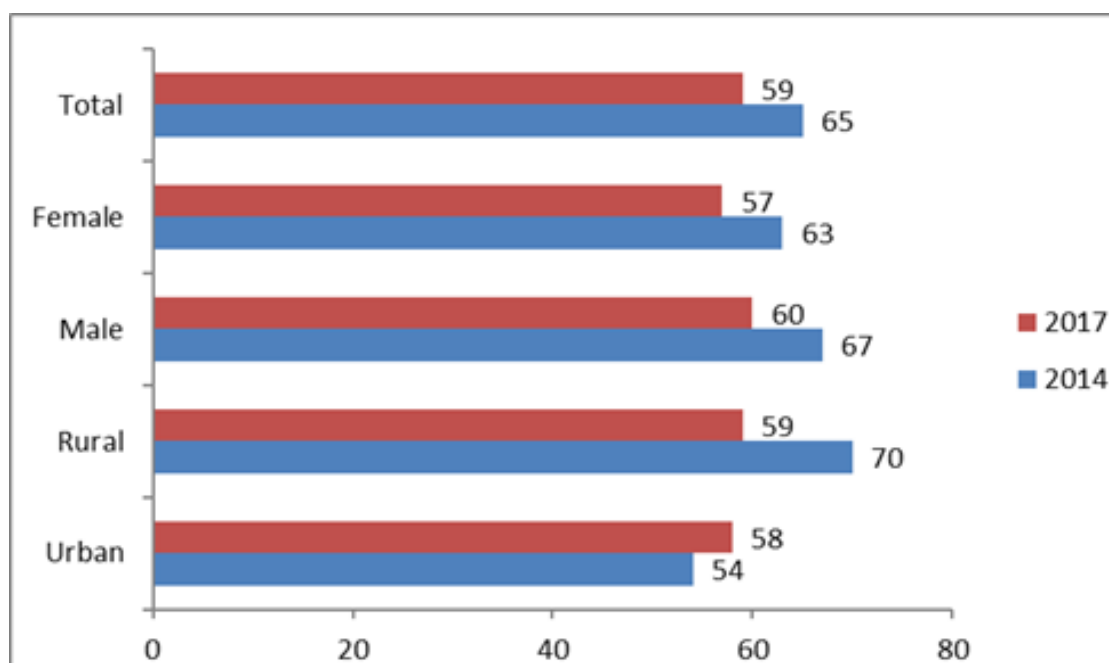
⁶⁹*Ibid.*

reducing poverty, promoting inclusive economic growth and entrenching democratic principles that are vital to the development of the people. In 2014, the Government formulated and adopted the National Decentralization Policy with the purpose of deepening and sustaining grassroots-based democratic governance and promoting equitable local development. The Policy is meant to also enhance citizen participation and strengthening the local government system, while maintaining effective functional and mutually accountable linkages between

central and local governmental entities.⁷⁰

In terms of security, Figure 4.7.1 below, indicates the proportion of Basotho who felt safe walking around alone in the areas that they live between 2014 and 2017. Across the total population in 2014, 65 percent of the population felt safe walking alone in the place that they live, whilst in 2017, 59 percent of the population felt safe walking alone in the place that they live⁷¹. This represented a 6 percent drop in people feeling safe walking alone in the areas that they live.

Figure 4.7.1: Proportion of population that feels safe walking alone around the area they live



When the same data is disaggregated by sex, men generally felt safer than women in both 2014 and 2017 wherein 67 percent of men felt safe in 2014 as against 63 percent of women in the same yearⁱ. In 2017, 60 percent of men felt safe as against 57 percent of women in the same year.⁷² People living in rural areas generally felt safer than people living in urban areas wherein in 2014, 70 percent of Basotho felt safe walking alone in rural areas that they live in 2014 as against 58 percent of for those living in urban areas for the same year. In 2017, 58 percent of people living urban areas felt safe as against 59 percent of people living in rural areas.

4.7.2 Lesotho Action in Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Society.

“In the SDG 16 group discussions this morning, we noted that the national dialogue and reform process is the first national process since independence that attempts to address the root causes of democratic governance challenges in Lesotho. It is the first attempt that the Government and people of Lesotho have afforded themselves an opportunity to reflect on the past challenges and forge a head together building a peaceful and just nation. If successfully completed, it will have generated a consensus reform pathway for Lesotho. The approach taken in the multi-stakeholder consensus

⁷⁰Government of Lesotho, 2014. .

⁷¹Afrobarometer, 2014 and 2017

building grass-root consultations is applying the well rooted traditional structure- Pitso - to engage the Basotho is an innovative way in generating a balance between policy and community level dialogue ...”⁷³

(Group Presentation, Consultative VNR Workshop, May 2019).

4.7.2.1 Lesotho National Dialogue and Reform Agenda

Lesotho is committed to good governance, pursuit of peaceful and inclusive societies and access to justice for all while building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Albeit its chequered history of episodes of instability and political unrest, the search for peace and stable institutions that will support sustainable and inclusive development have been paramount endeavours of the people of Lesotho. Lesotho is on the road to creating lasting and sustained stability. The national dialogue and reform agenda engagements and consultations are on course as articulated in the Government’s Blue Print **“The Lesotho We Want: Dialogue and Reforms for National Transformation – Vision, Overview and Roadmap”**.

The vision of the national reform agenda is “... the transformation of the Kingdom of Lesotho into a just, prosperous and stable country marked by effective and people-focused institutions; national unity of purpose; rule of law, good governance and human rights through: a) the promotion of long-term stability, unity and reconciliation; b) creation of professional, functioning and effective institutions for efficient management of public affairs, service delivery and development and; and c) building a national consensus on and implementation of constitutional changes as needed.

Through the National Reforms Dialogue Act, 2018, the Parliament provided a legal basis for initiation of dialogue and implementation of the reform agenda. The implementation arrangement and process are two phased. Through consultations of all Basotho, Phase 1 of the process looks at national consensus building

and dialogue to agree on the content of the reforms. Phase 2 shall be the actual design and implementation of the reforms as agreed in Phase 1.

The Act established the National Leaders Forum to, provide a forum for leaders to forge political consensus, build trust and confidence, facilitate national dialogue and seek political level consensus. The Act also established the National Dialogue Planning Committee to design and plan the national dialogue plenaries, determine representation, develop final report on the dialogue process, communicate with the public, provide technical support, develop guidelines for and, oversee in-district consultations.

Current status: Upon national concurrence on The Roadmap, the Government, in partnership with UNDP, formulated the Lesotho National Dialogue and Stabilization Project, which secured funding from UN Peace Building Fund to facilitate implementation of the Reform Agenda. The focus is on initial inclusive and participatory dialogue to build consensus and urgent stabilization measures in the security sector. Through the process of shuttle diplomacy, a political settlement was reached that created the implementation arrangement and process mechanisms for the national dialogue and reforms. The process led to two successful National Leaders Forum that approved the Multi Stakeholder National Dialogue (MSND) process. The process further resulted in the “Declaration on the National Dialogue and Comprehensive Reforms” by the political leadership, establishment of a 15-member National Dialogue Planning Committee (with a functional Secretariat to steer the dialogue process and the creation of a political deadlock-breaking mechanism.

In collaboration with UN Women and UNICEF, consensus and capacity for special interest groups - the women, youth, children, elders, traditional leaders - was built to participate in reform dialogues. The groups produced common positions articulating their issues on the reforms. The MSND Plenary I produced a Joint

⁷²Ibid

⁷³Ibid

Communique on reforms and in-district guidelines jointly developed by NDPC and Lesotho Council of NGOs. Basotho were given an opportunity to participate and provide opinions on the reforms through 389 country-wide community level consultations (Lipitso) and 76 district level gateway meetings. Interventions in the security sector include securing the commitment and support of the High Command in the conceptualisation of the security sector policy and strategy. A counselling and psychosocial support programme for members of security sector and their spouses was initiated as well as, security sector human rights due diligence policy assessment and mitigation. The Training of Trainers on human rights and respect for rule of law among the security sector was conducted thereby creating a pool of trainers to multiply the training in their respective formations. A Communications Strategy and materials on national dialogue and reforms have been developed to ensure effective communication on reforms among the Basotho.

The next steps shall include completion of the diaspora consultations, drafting of the general report on consultations, congregating the National Leaders Form III and calling of the MSND Plenary II. The MSND Plenary II shall constitute a decision session on the reforms content and proposals for implementation arrangements to take the process to the next level.

Lesotho Religious Organizations (Christian Council of Lesotho and Catholic Commission for Justice & Peace) are the champions of peace and stability. These organisations have organised inclusive platforms for discussions and consensus building (so far organized 400 multi-stakeholder dialogues, useful, inclusive and open. Reports will be presented to Plenary II).

4.7.2.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

Enactment of the Children Protection and Welfare Act (CPWA) in 2011 was a crucial step in addressing issues of abuse, exploitation, trafficking, violence and torture against children in Lesotho. The Act provides state-of-the-art legislation, combining all elements of children's welfare and protection in one rights-based le-

gal framework.

In 2013/14, the MoSD, with technical and financial support from UNICEF, Global Fund and EU, and World Vision commissioned a child protection system mapping and assessment exercise in order to identify strengths, opportunities, obstacles and gaps in Lesotho's current child protection system; and develop a system that effectively protects children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. The Government also conducted the costing of selected provisions of the CPWA, whose primary aim was to estimate the cost for the GoL to implement, in a phased manner, the different services envisaged by the CPWA.

The Government of Lesotho with support from the centre of disease control (CDC), ICAP and MoSD undertook a comprehensive Violence against Children Survey thus providing a robust evidence to inform the nation on the types, scope and drivers of violence including child marriage. This will inform policy formulation and programming.

In relation to human trafficking in Lesotho and across the borders, there exists the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2011, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Regulations [2017].

The GoL, through the Ministry of Local Government, with the support of UNICEF and the EU, supported the creation of Citizen Service Centres, also known as One Stop Shop, where multiple services are offered to communities from a single office, thus increasing accessibility of services and meeting the service needs of community members, especially rural communities.

The Ministry of Home Affairs in collaboration with the South African Department of Home Affairs, initiated the Special Permit Programme in 2015, whose purpose is to regularise scores of Basotho studying, working and running businesses in South Africa. The continued implementation of this project will go a long way towards addressing human trafficking and exploitation caused by poor border management and irregular migration. Though the MoHA, 45 percent under-five child birth registration has been achieved as of 2016.

As indicated in the Chapter on SDG 10, the GoL

has put in place comprehensive legal and policy frameworks to address factors contributing to the general vulnerabilities of children, including, exposure to sexual violence and abuse. Key among these include: CPWA (2011), the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the Penal Code 2010 and the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006.

Despite the above-mentioned interventions, the stakeholders engagement during Lesotho VNR consultation and validation workshops identified a number of challenges towards fast tracking progress of the eradication of human trafficking and other forms of violence, namely, lack of awareness on issues of human trafficking, lack of harmonised laws, inadequate institutional capacity, irregular migration, poverty and unemployment, lack of financial capacity and corruption leading to ineffective law enforcement. The key message to combating violence and human trafficking is through acceleration of capacity building, improvement of appropriate referral mechanisms and response channels and prioritization of justice and governance in the national budget.

4.7.3 Promoting the Rule of Law and Access to Justice

Lesotho is committed to promoting the rule of law and providing access to justice for all. To this end, Lesotho has made significant strides towards the improvement of conditions of prisons and places of detention. There is a significant number of correctional facilities which have recently undergone massive renovations to bring them to the standard set by the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services is committed to creating an enabling environment by providing a responsive and accountable justice service by offering access to justice, safe custody of inmates including child offenders, rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders. Their priority areas include: i. Safe custody, rehabilitation and re-integration of inmates, ii. Access to Legal Aid, iii. Enhanced use of non-custodial sanctions, restorative justice and diversion programme and iv) establishment of the Children's Court.

4.7.4 Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms

In Lesotho, the fight against corruption is articulated under one of the seven pillars of

Lesotho's National Strategic Development Plan (2012/13-2016/17), which is to "Promote Peace, Democratic Governance and Build Effective Institutions". In the latest Transparency International ranking on the Global Corruption Perception Index, Lesotho is ranked at 74 out of 183 countries.

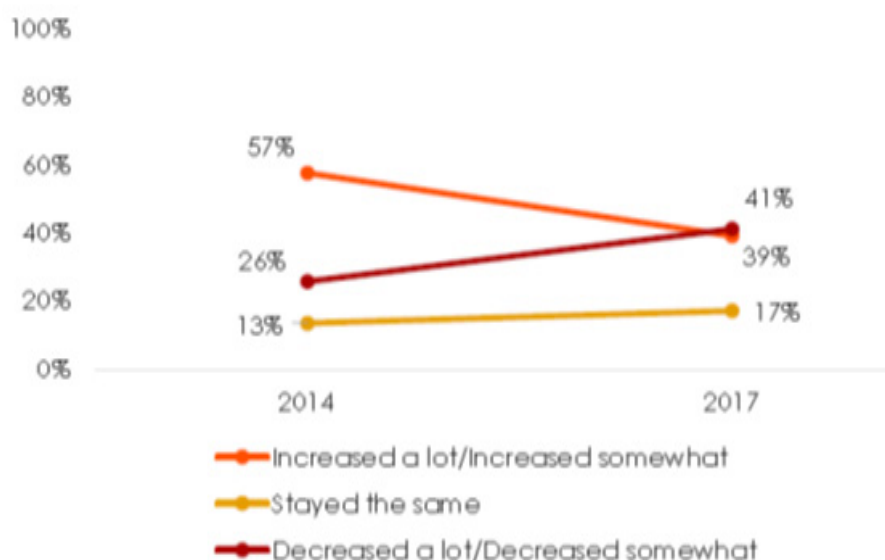
Lesotho has embarked on several legal and institutional reforms in order to address different forms of illicit financial flows (IFFs) and reduce corruption and bribery of all forms across the country. Lesotho has thus established independent institutions/offices to deal with these issues. The following institutions have also been established and operational.

- The Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO),
- Office of the Ombudsman
- Auditor General
- The Independent Election Commission (IEC).
- Judiciary
- Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU)
- Parliament / Accounts Committee
- Labour Court,
- The Directorate of Disputes Prevention and Resolution, and
- Police Complaints Authority.

The independence of these offices and institutions is anchored on the various pieces of regulations, legislation that establish them including the Constitution of Lesotho. Examples of legislation that establish them include, the Prevention of Corruption and Economic Offences Act, 1999, Police Service Act, 1998, and Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Act, 2008.

Available data indicates that Basotho's perception is that corruption had decreased between 2014 and 2017. Figure 4.7.2 shows that the proportion of Basotho who indicated that corruption had increased in the last year dropped from 57 percent in 2014 to 41 percent in 2017. The proportion of Basotho who thought that corruption had decreased in the last year, increased from 26 percent in 2014 to 39 percent in 2017⁷⁴. On the other hand, the proportion of Basotho who indicated that corruption had stayed the same increased from 13 percent in 2014 to 17 percent in 2017.⁷⁶

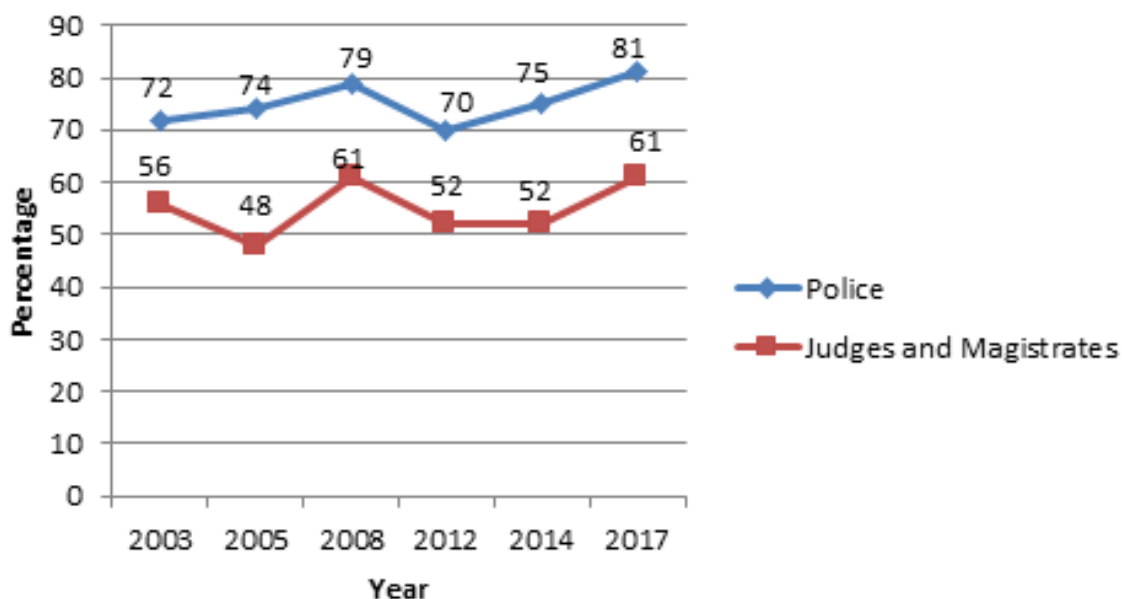
Figure 4.7.2: Basotho's Perceptions of the Levels of Corruption, 2014 and 2017



Source: Afrobarometer, 2019

Figure 4.7.3 below indicates Basotho' perception of corruption amongst the police, magistrates and judges between 2003 and 2017.

Figure 4.7.3: Perceptions of Basotho on Corruption amongst the Police and Judges, 2003-2017



Source: Afrobarometer, 2019.

The findings indicate that from 2013 to 2018 the perception that the police were to a certain extent corrupt increased from 72 percent of the population to 81 percent of the population respectively.⁷⁴ Over the same period the public perception that judges and magistrates were also somewhat corrupt increased from 56 percent to 61 percent over the same period.

Strengthening the independence and capacities of these institutions to perform their duties effectively and efficiently, without fear or favour, remains a major challenge and a priority for the Government and its partners, including UN Lesotho, NGOs, FBOs and Private Sector. They require additional, human, financial, technological and capital resources for them to perform their tasks more efficiently.

⁷⁴Afrobarometer, 2019

⁷⁵ibid

⁷⁶ibid

⁷⁷Afrobarometer 2019.

4.7.5 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Lesotho is committed to making sure that there is responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. At the international level, Lesotho ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995. At the regional level, Lesotho signed the African Union (AU) Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa 2004. Lesotho has also signed the AU Gender Policy, 2009, the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development 1997 and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development 2008.

4.7.6 Providing legal identity for all, including birth registration.

Lesotho has put in place legal frameworks to support the provision of legal identity. These include Children Protection and Welfare Act, 2011, the Registration of Births and Deaths Act 1973, the National Identity Cards Act 2011, Education Act 2010, Lesotho Citizenship Order 1971 and Lesotho Passports and Travel Documents Act 1998. The MoHA, through the National Identity and Civil Registry (NICR), registers all births taking place at the government and church-owned health centres across the country while sensitizing expectant parents on the need to name their children before birth. In an effort to reach unregistered children at community level, NICR has facilitated placement of registration officers in 46 community councils. Moreover, to achieve effective implementation, the NICR organises periodic outreaches throughout the country to conduct registrations of births either on their own initiative or by invitation.

Challenges identified with the registration of births, include lack of understanding, appreciation and awareness on the benefits of registration and deliberate avoidance with preference to register children with alternative identities in other countries such as South Africa. Mountainous and hard-to-reach terrain also pose a deep challenge for communities to access even the closest registration facilities. Insufficient resources to reach all health facilities further exacerbates the delay in reaching the universal registration.

4.7.7 Promote and Enforce Non-discriminatory Laws and Policies for Sustainable Development

Commendable efforts by Lesotho include creation of an enabling environment to ensure participation of non-governmental organisations in development and governance issues. In promotion of meaningful participation of children, the Government adopted Children's Parliament, which brings together children representatives from all ten districts, including those in juvenile correction centres.

4.7.8 Promote Public Access to Information and Freedom of the Press

Article 14(1) of the Constitution of Lesotho protects the freedom of access to information and disseminating it. However, there are limitations to this clause as stipulated in Article 14(2) of the Constitution. The limitations relate to, among others, the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health.

In 2015, the Government rescinded on its moratorium on the issuing of broadcasting licences. Following the lifting of this moratorium the number of radio stations in Lesotho increased from 13 to 24. The print media Lesotho is robust and the country has about 18 private newspapers. There is also unrestricted access to internet services as Lesotho does not have any cyber laws.

With respect to gender related issues, Priority 12 of the Lesotho Gender and Development Policy is "to promote equal involvement and representation of women and men, boys and girls in order to ensure gender sensitive reporting".

4.7.9 Next Steps Going Forward

"Basotho of all classes and shades just want peace, stability and justice to be able to actively participate in development and live quality life, educate our children, access quality health care and security. These can only be attained if and only if there is peace and stability across Lesotho. Politicians should therefore put the interest and need of a Mosotho first"

(Voices of a Mosotho Woman during the VNR consultations, May 2019).

Going forward, to build peace, justice and strong institutions, Lesotho will among others:

- Accelerate the implementation of the National Reforms Agenda
- Build National Peace architecture through building technocrat, administrative and administrative capacity.
- Building local level peace architecture including creation of peace making and peace build-

ing committees.

- Strengthening the law enforcement agencies to meet the needs of special groups including children and people with disabilities.
- Replicate the GBV Centre (Lapeng Centre) across the country.
- Accelerate the enactment of Cyber Security Bill, to curb among others, cyber-internet based violence, especially against children and adolescent.

4.8 GOAL 17: STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

“Although Lesotho has signed international developmental agreements, implementation is slow. For example, corruption (a focus element for SDG 16) continues to sky-rocket...A unilateral approach has so far not yielded any good fruits, precisely it is the reason why we have not made any visible strides as a nation since 2015. Going forward, there is need to join forces as governments, government ministries, the private sector and citizens at grassroots to advance this global mandate. It is imperative therefore to abolish the top down approach of implementation as governments, meaning an inclusion of every voice down to the local government level in prioritizing this reform, and this can be strengthened by the actualisation of the decentralisation policy. Moreover, an incorporation of the sustainable development goals in policy framework and legislature should not just be a campaign promise for politicians but must be the foremost pursuit of our government. In conclusion, we must demonstrate a readiness to shun competition and prejudice to uphold accommodation and collaboration, because a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand”

Youth Voices from Quthing District, May 2019

- Strengthen community structures to effectively undertake sensitization campaigns on the benefits of birth registration.

Lesotho participation in VNR 2019 has indicated that the country has strong will and commitment of building inclusive domestic, regional and international partnerships for addressing the three dimensions of 2030 Agenda: economic, social and environmental dimensions. Production of Lesotho VNR 2019 is a proof that the country has means and is committed to building effective national and district partnerships for effective and efficient implementation of SDGs. Lesotho is a member of WTO, SADC, AU, and SACU with several bi-lateral agreement and integrated relevant regional development plans into national plans. Lesotho is also one of the leading exporters to the USA, through the AGOA and increasing export to RSA, and the European Market.

Lesotho Partnership Policy (2013) and Development partner coordination structures exist at ministerial and technical level, which is being reviewed to strengthen engagement mechanisms with civil society and the private sector. The challenges include lack of clear structures and guidelines for mobilisation and management of external assistance, which resulted in compromising of aid effectiveness. 2010 Survey on Aid Effectiveness to which Lesotho was first time participant revealed the need for increased aid coordination.

Lesotho has learned that mobilizing partnerships from various sectors and promoting inclusive engagement and multi-stakeholder consultation and participation, (involving MDAs, the private sector, CSOs, UN and other development partners, and special groups like children, adolescent, youth, women, and people with disabilities) is not only critical for prioritization of SDGs, but is also necessary for monitoring of and reporting on progress made on implementing the goals. Lesotho has learned useful lessons and no one will be left behind again, going forward.

Women in Lesotho make up the majority of the agricultural labour force and contribute substantially towards sustainable livelihoods and the country's economic development. However, women farmers have little or no capacity to absorb major economic shocks as their productive capacity and productive asset base is considerably smaller compared to that of male farmers. In addition, 59.7 percent of men own fields and make decisions on such fields as compared to 53.5 percent of women who do not own fields but make decisions (Agricultural Production Survey Crops, 2016/2017).

Majority of Women in Lesotho also lack control over decision-making, and have less access to modern technologies, credit and incomes compared to men. This situation exacerbates

gender inequality and increases women vulnerability to gender based violence (CCA, 2017). Thus, gender and age disparity in the field of science, technology and innovation is a challenge in Lesotho.

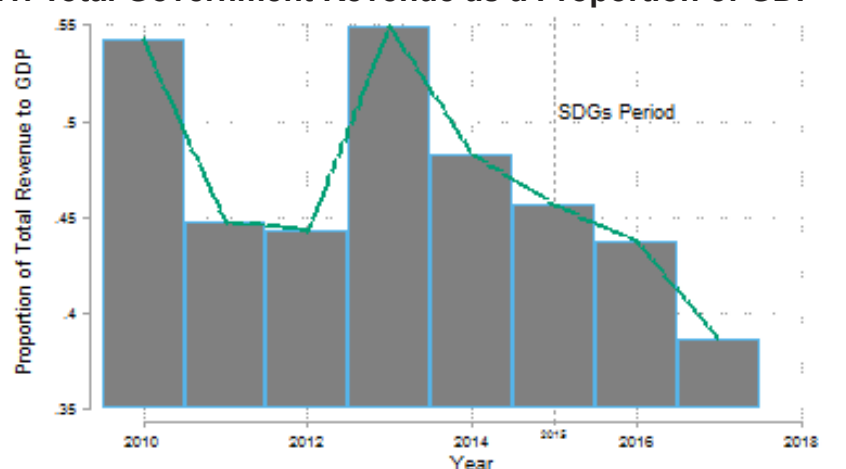
Lesotho has made investments in availing data and improving monitoring and evaluation. However, it is imperative to intensify mechanisms for data disaggregation, to meet the requirements of SDGs “Leaving No One Behind” principle.

4.8.1 Financial Resource Mobilization

Lesotho has a mixed picture in internal re-

source mobilization. Figure 4.8.1 presents total government revenue as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) from 2010 to 2017. Total government revenue was about 54 percent of GDP in 2010, and it plummeted by 10 percentage points to about 44 percent of GDP in 2012. In 2013, total revenue recovered to pick at 55 percent of GDP, but declined again by 8 percentage points to reach 46 percent of GDP in 2015 (the year marking the end of the Millennium Development Goals period). Since 2015, total government revenue has continued to plunge, and in 2017, it was about 36 percent of GDP.

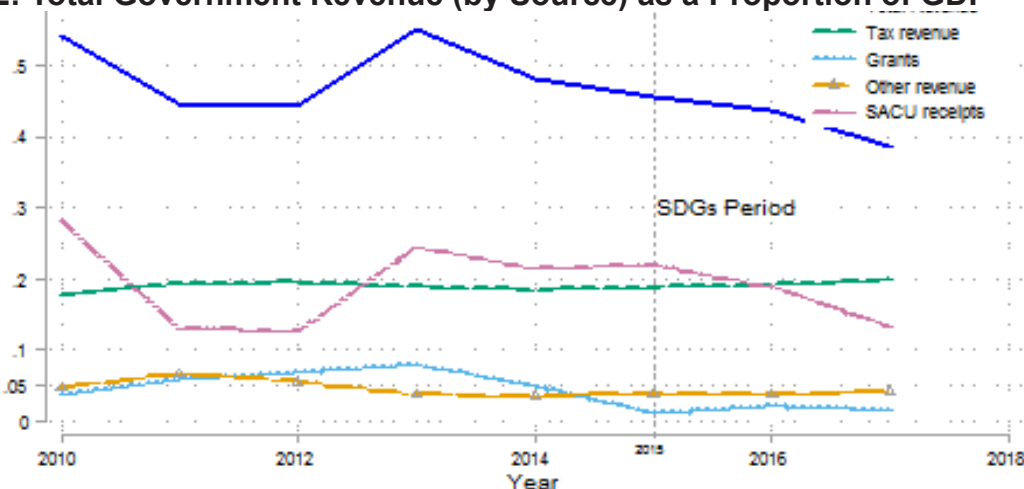
Figure 4.8.1: Total Government Revenue as a Proportion of GDP



Data source: Central Bank of Lesotho

Figure 4.8.2 shows total government revenue as a percent of GDP disaggregated by source. Changes in government revenue are largely driven by changes in SACU revenue receipts, which have dropped by about 6 percentage points between 2010 and 2015, and a further 11 percentage points between 2015 and 2017.

Figure 4.8.2: Total Government Revenue (by Source) as a Proportion of GDP



Data source: Central Bank of Lesotho

While grants to the Government slightly increased from about four percent of GDP to about 7 percent of GDP between 2010 and 2013, it plummeted by about six percentage points between 2013 and 2015, and rough-

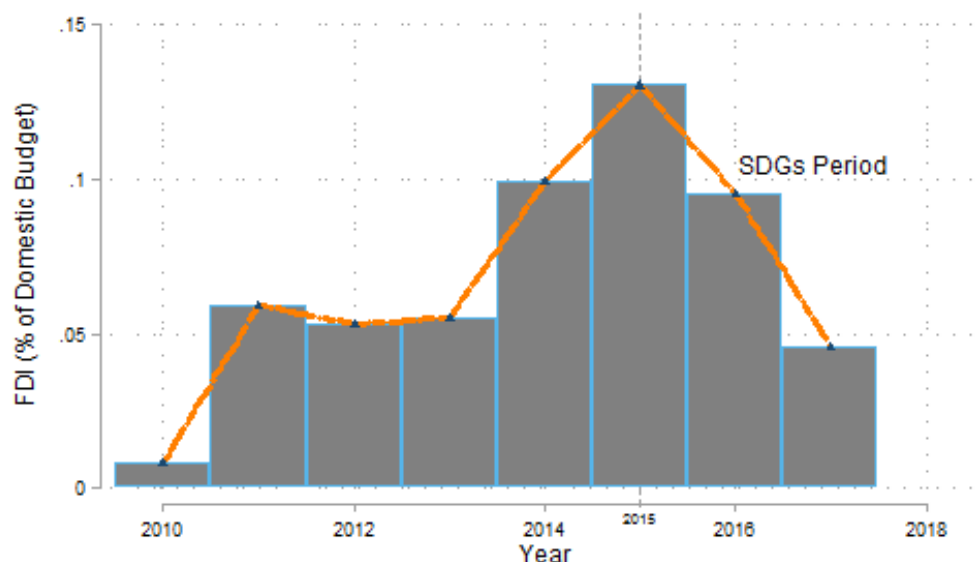
ly stayed constant since then. Domestic tax revenue and other revenue have largely remained constant at about 20 percent and 5 percent of GDP, respectively, with little signs of improvement post 2015.

Figure 4.8.3 presents total government tax revenue in millions of Maloti and a proportion of the national budget from 2000 to 2017. In absolute terms, tax revenue has been strongly increasing since 2000, from about 313 million Maloti to about 6.8 billion Maloti in 2017. In terms of its contribution to the national budget, tax revenue share has increased from about 25 percent of the budget in 2000 to about 54.3 percent of the budget in 2017. This increase in the share of tax revenues to the budget was, however, interrupted by a sharp decline between 2005 and 2010, potentially due to the more than proportionate increase in the national budget. Further, despite this strong increase in tax revenue collections, it has not been enough to offset the observed revenue short fall driven largely by the sharp decline in SACU

revenues seen in figures 4.8.1 and 4.8.2.

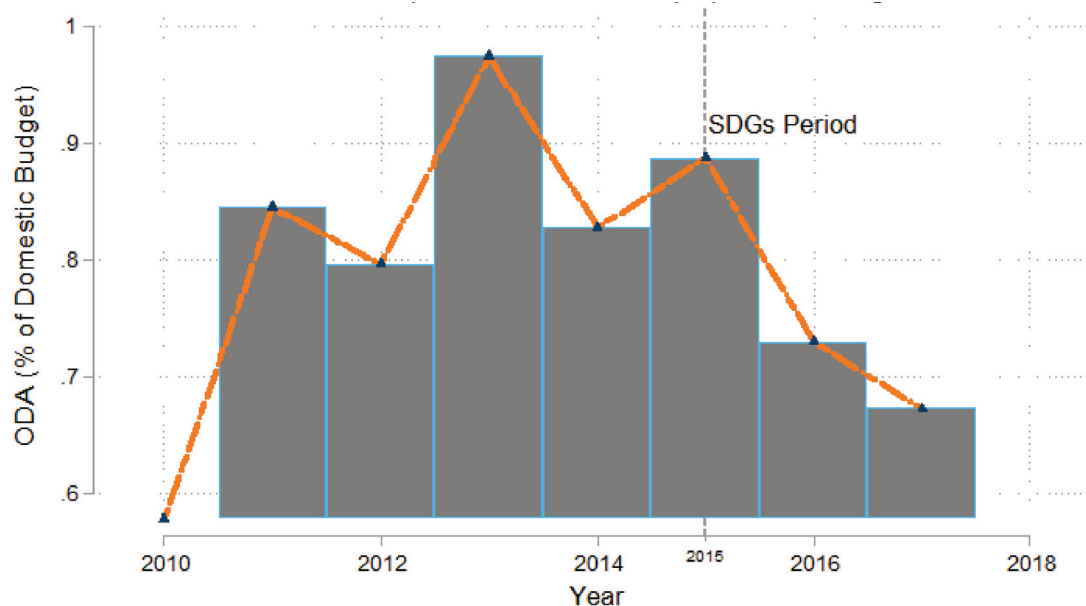
The GoL's efforts to mobilize resources for the implementation of SDGs is further hampered by the decline in other sources of financial resources, particularly, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA) (Figures 4.8.3 and 4.8.4). FDI's importance in the domestic budget increased from about 1 percent in 2010 to about 13 percent in 2015. However, it has since dropped to about 4.8 percent of GDP in 2017. Similarly, ODA increased from about 58 percent of the budget in 2010 to about 96 percent of the budget in 2013. In 2015, ODA was about 88 percent of the domestic budget, and it dropped further to reach about 76 percent of the budget in 2017.

Figure 4.8.3: Foreign Direct Investment as a Proportion of Budget



Data source: Central Banks of Lesotho

Figure 4.8.4: Official Development Assistance as a Proportion of Budget

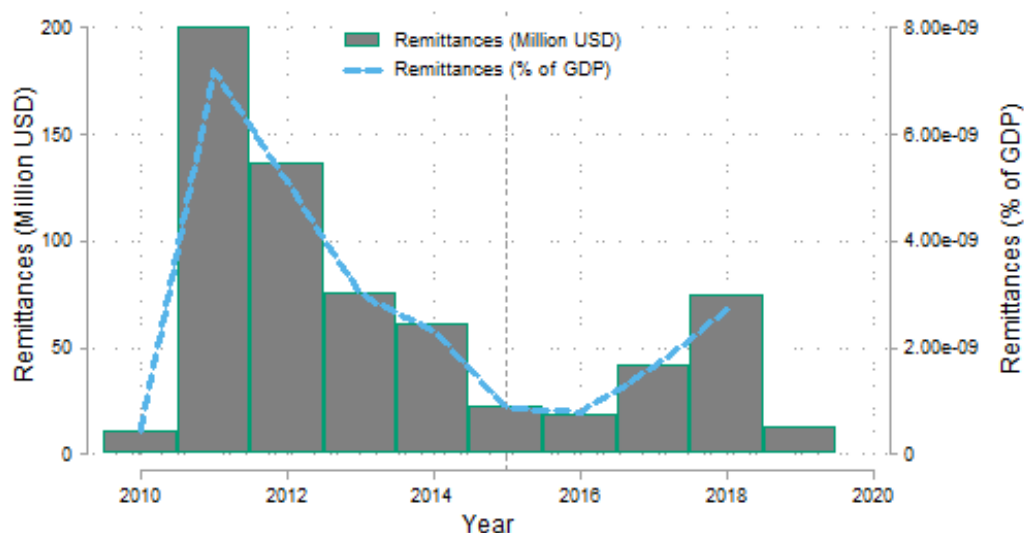


Data source: Central Banks of Lesotho

Figure 4.8.5 below shows the remittances flows (in US dollars and as a percent of GDP) and reflects that remittances increased sharply between 2010 and 2011 to reach about US\$200 million. From there, remittances have been on the decline until 2015/2016 when they reached a low of US\$18 million. This drop in remittances could be linked to decline in the number of migrant mine workers in South Africa. In March 2015, the Shoprite cross-border money transfer service was launched in Lesotho to enable

Basotho living in South Africa to send money to and from Lesotho.⁷⁸ Since then the Loti volume of transfers through this service have increased by an impressive 1910 percent between 2015 and 2018. In the first part of 2019, remittances received through the Shoprite and Mobile Money transfers were about US\$13 million. Given the increasing number of Basotho working in South Africa, this service is likely to continue increasing remittances, which play a part in countering the declining SACU receipts.

Figure 4.8.5 Remittances Overtime: Volume (in US dollars) and as a Proportion of GDP



Data source: Central Bank of Lesotho

Note: Remittances is sum of Shoprite, Mobile Money (MM), Mukuru, InterChange and Commerical Banks inward transfers. 2019 fig. is for Shoprite and MM 1st quarter.

4.8.2 Government of Lesotho Resource Mobilization Efforts Through Increased Exports and Debt Payment

Lesotho has Partnership Policy (2013) that is being reviewed and is in the process of developing a national partnership and coordination strategic plan to strengthen engagement mechanisms with all partners and structures including development partners, civil society, the private sector and special groups. Processes for resuscitation of major financing arrangement, Millennium Challenge Corporation in the US, in particular, has been rebooted and programme preparatory funds have been approved. Figure 4.8.6 shows the country's debt service

(i.e. interest payments on foreign loans) as proportion of total exports of goods and services. The figure indicates that the country's debt service dropped from 2.2 percent in 2010 to about 1.2 percent of total exports in 2011, and then increased to about 3.3 percent, a 2.1 percentage points increase. This massive increase in debt service was largely driven by the weak Loti (which is pegged one-to-one to the South African Rand) during this period.⁷⁹ As of 2017, the country's interest payments have dropped to about 2.7 percent of total exports.

⁷⁸Sekantsi, L.P. (2018). "The Assessment of International Remittance Markets in Lesotho: Implications for Social and Economic Development", *Journal of Payments Strategy and Systems*, Vol. 12, No.2 (Forthcoming).

⁷⁹Notice that the drop in interest payments between 2010 and 2011 coincides with the strong Loti to the US dollar driven by large portfolio inflows in South Africa during the 2010 World Cup (see Figure 8).

Figure 4.8.6 Debt Service as a Proportion of Total Exports of Goods and Services

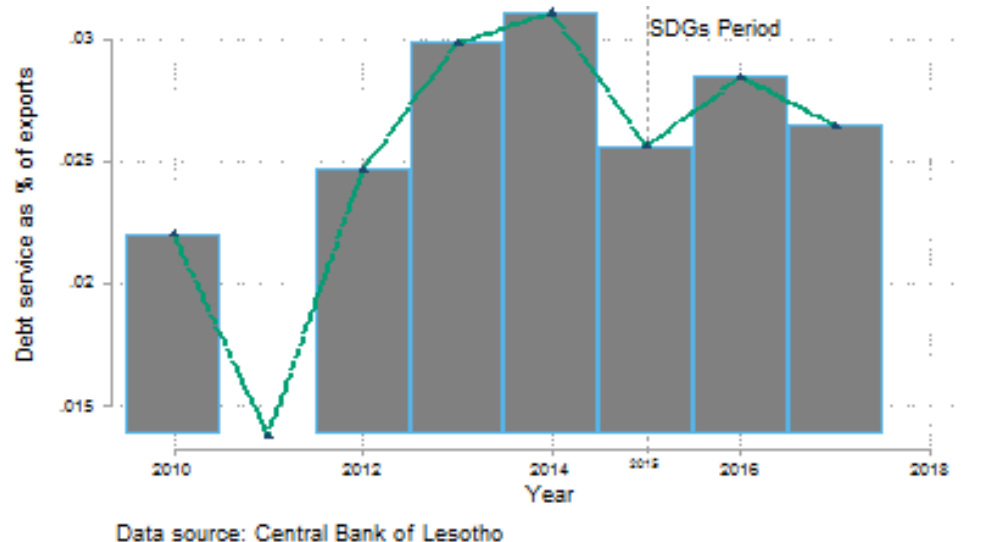
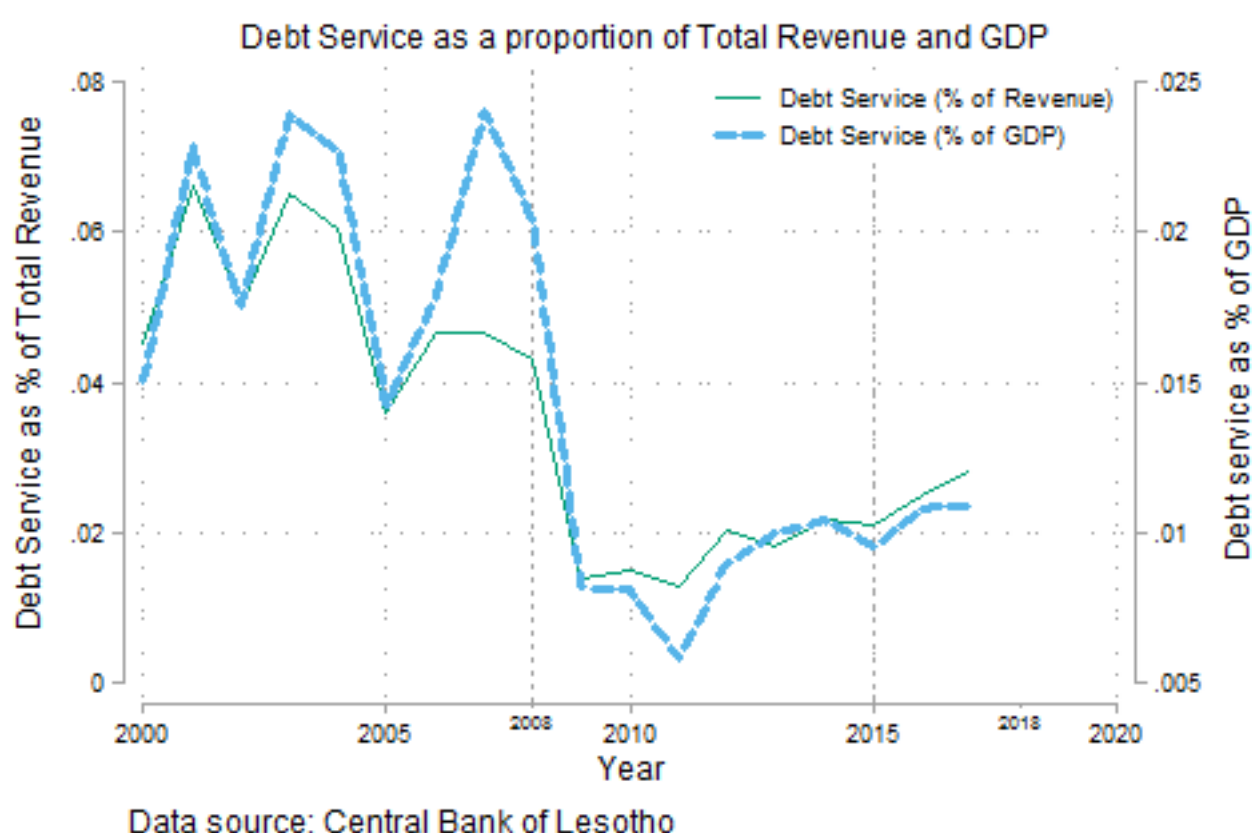


Figure 4.8.7 Debt Service as a proportion of Total Revenue and GDP



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank recommend that the country's present value of public debt to GDP ratio should be below 40 percent, and its debt service to exports and debt service to revenue be less than 20 percent, individually.⁸⁰ The GoL undertakes regular debt sustainability analysis and adopted new analytical framework (IMF/World Bank). Based

on the above analysis, therefore, the country's debt is still manageable. However, the 2016 debt sustainability analysis study has indicated that the country's present value of debt to GDP is already above the 40 percent threshold, indicating a significant threat to debt sustainability. In fact, the IMF projects that Lesotho's public debt to GDP will reach 47 percent in 2022.⁸¹

⁸⁰"Public Debt Sustainability Analysis Report for Lesotho", (December, 2016). Accessed from <https://www.gov.ls/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/LESOTHO-DEBT-SUSTAINABILITY-ANALYSIS-DECEMBER-2016.pdf>. on the 21st May 2019.

⁸¹IMF Country Report No. 18/54. Accessed from <https://www.imf.org/~media/Files/Publications/CR/2018/cr1854.ashx>. on the 21st May 2019.

The Government is developing fiscal adjustment reform programme to regain sustainability, including measures to contain the balancing wage bill. Public sector census was undertaken in 2018, to identify human capital capacity needs and form up the size of the wage bill to facilitate relevant needed reforms.

4.8.3 Technology

Basotho across the country need technology (ICT) to communicate, trade, send and receive money, pay bills and to be informed. In Lesotho, however, only 32.7 percent of Basotho nationwide have access to the internet and the fixed internet connection in Lesotho is still low. Out of Basotho households connected to the internet, only 3.57 percent have done so through fixed connection, while 2.43 percent have done so through fibre or ADSL. The remaining 13.86 percent and 83.68 percent have connected through USB modem or card and mobile phones, respectively. The statistics did not show a significant difference between males and females in adoption of fixed internet by household head.⁸² One of the strategic objectives of NSDP I was to facilitate smooth migration from analogue to digital broadcasting. That was to be achieved through a number of strategies, which included putting in place appropriate technology, developing and implementing public education programmed.

However, Lesotho could not meet the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) cut-off deadline of 17 June 2015 of switching from analogue to digital broadcasting due to the fact that it had to wait for its neighbour, South Africa, to switchover. This would help avoid clashes between analogue and digital signals between the two countries.^{83 84} The country also lacked a policy and a clear road map that would source funding for the process. The switchover process was also delayed by lack of readiness on both content and studio facilities. In order to ensure that of no one is left behind in accessing public services, the GoL has introduced electronic services for its citizens, non-citizens

and businesses, which include e-VISA services, land administration services, construction permits services, labour agents, Lesotho trade portal and e-customs.⁸⁵

The mobile network coverage in the country has increased to 96 percent of inhabited areas and consequently the phone ownership rose to over 79 percent of the population. This is in line with the Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology's strategic objectives of increasing the mobile and fixed phone, radio, television and internet coverages.

On the digital migration front, the Lesotho government has completed 80 percent of the work of converting analogue broadcasting signal to digital. According to the Ministry of Communications' broadcasting Director General, Mr. Dada Moqasa.⁸⁷ Community awareness programs were made countrywide through radio, television and newspapers.

4.8.4 Government Wage Bill (public spending)

One of the factors that limit the Government's ability to finance the SDGs' projects is its high recurrent expenditure, which has been rapidly increasing in recent years. Figure 4.8.8 shows the trends in the government's wage bill, both in million Maloti and as a proportion to the domestic budget. We can see from the figure that, between 2009 and 2011, the wage bill, as proportion to the domestic budget, increased by about 8 percent points from 35 percent to about 43 percent of the budget in 2011, which is equivalent to the increase of three billion Maloti. As of 2017, the wage bill was about 45 percent of the budget. This implies that a small percentage of the Government budget is devoted to capital projects, including those that are important in meeting the 2030 Agenda's Goals. According to the IMF, Lesotho's wage bill is one of the highest in the world, and this threatens fiscal sustainability and achievement of the 2030 Agenda in general.⁸⁸

⁸²Lesotho Communications Authority State of ICT 2016

⁸³Lesotho Times 15 October 2015

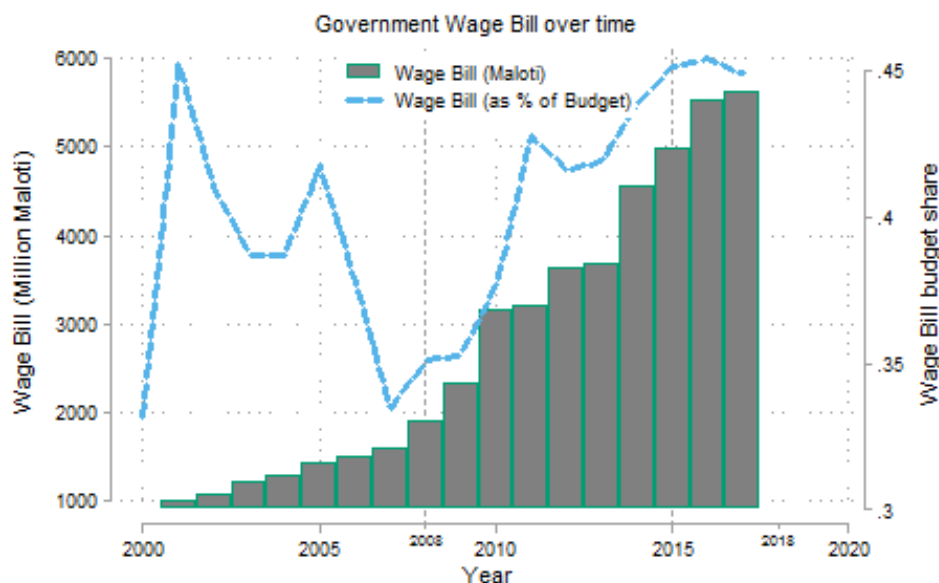
⁸⁴Director General, Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology broadcasting.

⁸⁵Government of Lesotho official website.

⁸⁶Lesotho Communications Authority State of ICT in Lesotho 2016.

⁸⁷Lesotho Times issue of 15 October 2015

Figure 4.8.8 Government bill over Time



4.8.5 Institutional and Coordination Mechanism for SDGs

The success of the 2030 Agenda in Lesotho requires a clear and strong institutional mechanism to lead the coordination and facilitate the implementation and monitoring of SDGs. The Government of Lesotho, through a consultation process, has created SDG Coordination structure and mechanism (Figure 4.8.9). Chaired by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, SDG/NSDP II coordination mechanism brings all stakeholders together and is supported by NSDP II Sectoral Committees. The Government has formed a Cabinet sub-committee on SDGs chaired by the Minister of Development Planning.

The main responsibility of the Cabinet sub-committee is approving SDGs implementation plans, coordination structures and mechanism, advocacy for mainstreaming and funding, monitoring integration and inclusiveness and approval of monitoring and report reports. It is also tasked with providing policy direction and recommendations on SDGs in the context of Lesotho Vision 2020 and NSDP II.

The national institutional architecture and co-ordination mechanism builds into the existing government structures and also includes accountability institutions like the Parliament. The highest structure is the National Oversight and

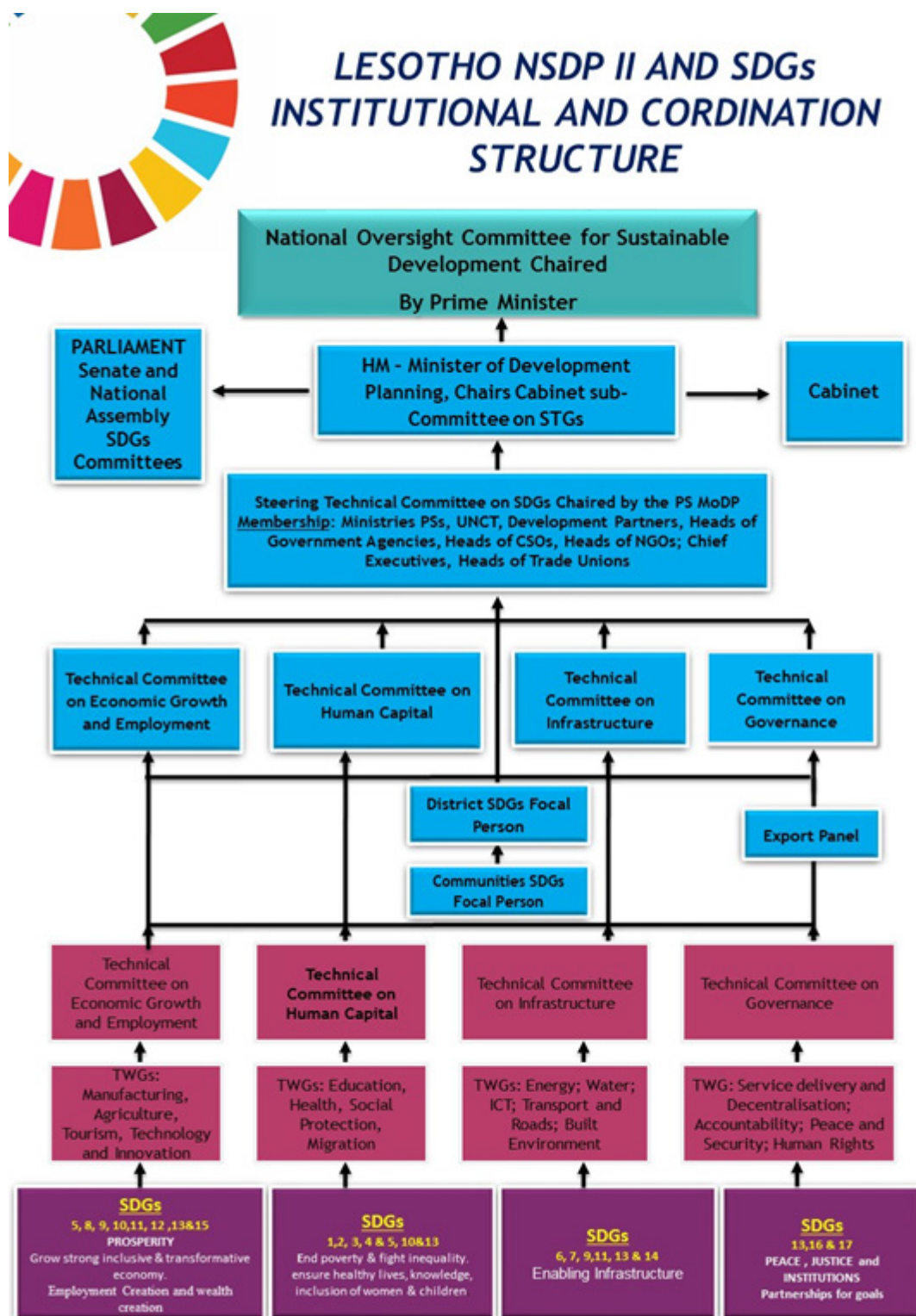
Advisory Committee, chaired by the PM. The membership is drawn from the Senate SDG Committees Chairperson, National Assembly SDG Committee Chairpersons, Minister of Development Planning (MoDP), UN-RC, UNCT, CSO/NGO umbrella (representative), Private Sector (representative), Faith Based Organisations, Women representative, Youth representative, PLD representative, District SDGs Focal Persons.

The National Technical Steering Committee for the implementation of SDGs is Chaired by Hon. Minister of Development Planning. Membership of this Committee include Ministries Principal Secretaries (PSSs), UNCT, Development Partners, Heads of Government Agencies, Heads of CSOs, Heads of NGOs; Chief Executives, and Heads of Trade Union. Its responsibility is to give technical direction to the implementation, monitoring of and reporting on SDGs. The committee is also tasked with quality assurance role.

As shown in Figure 4.8.9, there are various Technical Committees and Technical Sub.-Committees, each tied to NSDP II Strategic Pillars (Priorities). Expert Panel from the academia also plays technical role in the process, through among others, conducting research and critical analysis on SDGs.

¹¹IMF COUNTRY Report No. 18/54. <https://www.imf.org/~media/Files/Publications/CR/2018/cr1854.ashx>. Accessed on the 21st May 2019.

Figure 10.9 Lesotho National NSDP and SDGs Institutional and Coordination Structure



4.8.6 Financing SDGs Implementation and Activities

Since SDGs are mainstreamed in Lesotho's NSDP II, the implementation of SDGs is funded through the public sector financing (annual budgets approved by Parliament). The GoL has developed a Financing Strategy for NSDP II that covers a five-year period. The framework articulates the total financial requirements, available funds and financial gaps. GoL is also in consultations with the UN and other development partners on building partnerships and modalities of funding and providing technical assistance to Lesotho implementation of SDGs.

4.8.7 Data, Monitoring and Accountability

Lesotho recognizes the importance and necessity to collect comprehensive, credible and comparable data in all development and social sectors. Availability of quality data is fundamental for monitoring progress towards the attainment of the SDGs, and ensuring accountability within Government and across all sectors. Therefore, the country has made good progress in this regard. The Lesotho Bureau of Statistics Act of 2001 that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics has been enacted. This Act also establishes the National Statistical Office, Bureau of Statistics (BOS). BOS coordinates the production of both routine and periodic data across various development and social sectors.

Lesotho has selected 152 SDGs indicators through a consultative process with stakeholders. From these indicators, Lesotho is able to report on 81 indicators (53 percent of the selected), of which, 34 Indicators have been customised. The majority of reported indicators however still suffer from lack of disaggregation on a number of variables, particularly disability, employment and wealth status. On the other hand, Lesotho is currently not able to report on 71 indicators which constitute 47 percent of the 152 selected indicators due to complete or partial unavailability of data. However, efforts are underway to close the data gaps on selected

indicators.

Through Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development Project coordinated by UNDP Lesotho, and funded by European Union, BOS has initiatives to strengthen statistical capacity in the country, in particular those of MDAs. It has also conducted diagnostic assessment on national needs and capacity for monitoring SDGs and NSDP together with data gap analysis.

4.8.8 Data Innovation and Citizen Engagement

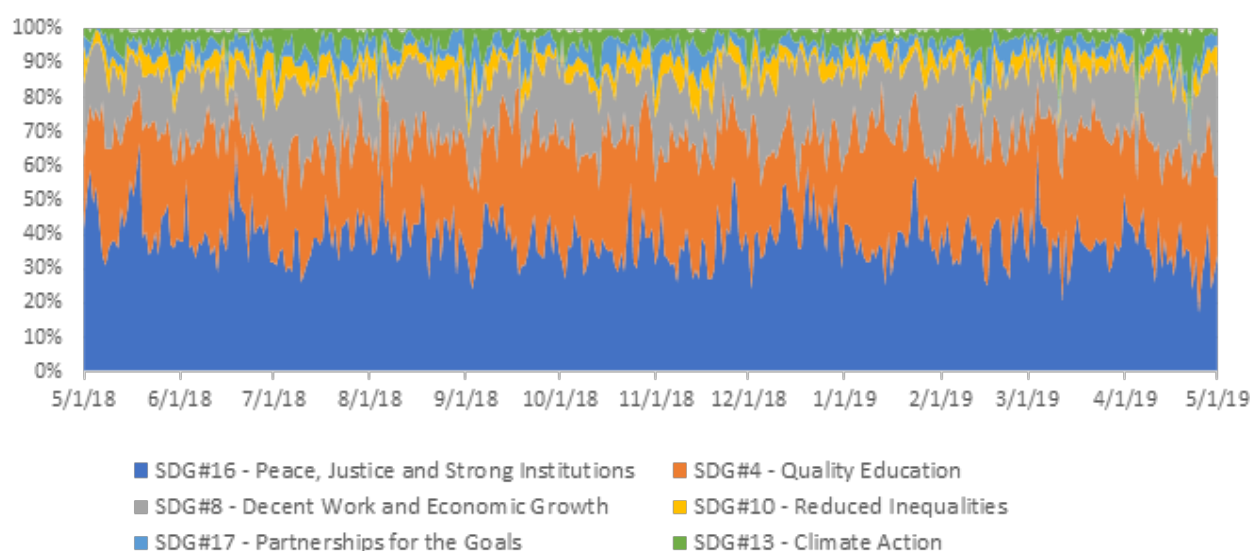
To support the multi-stakeholder engagement of the Lesotho VNR 2019 and to drive innovative approaches in engaging citizens as well as using new forms of data to track progress in SDGs, Lesotho engaged in two novel initiatives: a social media network analysis and a real time monitoring of citizen perceptions. Both initiatives were aimed at crowdsourcing progress, sentiments and gain insights towards the perceived change in the status-quo of SDGs.

In analyzing the outcomes of the social media over the period of 12 months (01.05.2018 – 01.05.2019), a total of 45,262 posts have been identified to relate to the SDGs being reviewed. From the total posts analyzed, the highest interest and engagement by the citizens was on goal 16, followed by goal 4, while had the least posts as indicated below:

1. SDG 16 - Peace Justice and Strong Institutions (18,592 posts)
2. SDG 4 - Quality Education (11,660 posts)
3. SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth (8,689 posts)
4. SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities (2,189 posts)
5. SDG 17 - Partnership for the Goals (2,142 posts)
6. SDG 13 - Climate Action (1,990 posts)

A visualization of each SDGs share (percentage) of the total relevant conversations by day can be found in figure 4.8.10 below. Total relevant conversations are the sum of relevant conversations from each selected SDG.

Figure 4.8.10 Share of Each SDG to the Total Relevant Conversations by Day



In addition to the social media mining exercise, citizens of Lesotho were surveyed about their recent experiences in different areas of their lives relating to SDGs and national development. During this round of micro-perception surveying, a total of 622 citizen participated either via SMS or via Social media with an overall completion rate of 83%. The perception questionnaire was derived from nationally agreed SDG Indicators and the MY World Scientific Question Library developed by the SDG Action Campaign. The questionnaire had a total 11 questions and was structured around 3 broad areas: 1) work environment; 2) public & basic services, 3) societal & personal safety and security.

On the overall, the majority of respondents came from the age between 21-40 (72,74%) with 59% of respondents having completed secondary education, while female respondents (54%) slightly outnumbered male respondents (43%). Furthermore, the majority of respondents came from an urban background (46%) and are currently unemployed (47%) .

4.8.9 Next Steps Going Forward

Lesotho has made good progress in mobilizing resources, enhancing access to technology, improving policy coordination and availability of quality data. But there are challenges, that also provide great opportunities going forward:

- There is need therefore to look for new innovative sources of revenue. Lesotho has to take advantage of lucrative markets in the EU member states, under EU and ACP Partnership Agreement; and USA through AGOA; and venturing into other trade deals regionally and internationally. But this needs effective cooperation and internal environment including improvement of ease of doing business.
- The Government will accelerate completion of the mining sector legal framework review to operationalise the developmental goals of the Minerals and Mining Policy 2015.
- The Government is in the process of public sector reforms to reduce the wage bill and improve service delivery.
- The Government will fast track the review of the National Partnership Policy and development of national partnership and coordination strategy, to enhance national, regional and international collaboration.
- The Government is strengthening Public Sector Investment Committee (PSIC) effective implementation of capital projects.
- The Government is currently reviewing the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS).
- The Government is committed to strengthen the national statistics system that will continuously generate good disaggregated quality data for monitoring and evaluating implementation of the SDGs in Lesotho.

¹²For the purpose of anonymity, respondents could choose to skip or withhold certain demographics, through which a slight misrepresentation might occur.

- The Government is committed to accelerate issuance of residence and work permits to attract foreign investment.
- The Government is strengthening national and district coordination structures and mecha-

nisms across and within MDAs and enhancing multi-stakeholder engagement.

- The Government is making efforts to establish National Human Rights Commission.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Lesotho is committed to fast-tracking the implementation of SDGs and working with various partners, including communities, children, youth and special groups, to achieve the three dimensions of Agenda 2030: economic, social and environmental dimensions. Lesotho has demonstrated that this is possible. The nation has already mainstreamed SDGs in the National Strategic Development Plan, 2018/19-2022/23. The effective funding, implementation, monitoring of and reporting on NSDP II targets is a sure way of effective implementation of SDGs. Lesotho commits that it will develop effective coordination and monitoring structures and mechanisms to bridge the data gap and make accountability part of SDGs national, regional and international reporting.

Lesotho's participation in 2019 VNR has been a good learning experience for the Government across MDAs, the private sector, CSOs, academia, and special groups like children, the youth, women groups and people with disabilities. Advocacy, public education and awareness about SDGs across districts in Lesotho – rural and urban, and among various stakeholders have been reinforced. But more critical, Lesotho's effective implementation of SDGs lies on sustaining political stability and increased good governance and the rule of law, mobilizing and harnessing existing resources, and being innovative and using technology. But this will require strong leadership, effective coordination,

and sustained monitoring and reporting on the progress Lesotho is making in people-centred development.

The Lesotho VNR 2019, and the multi-stakeholder consultations and engagement, in particular, revealed that Lesotho will not effectively achieve 2030 Agenda and AU Agenda 2063 commitments if the following three imperatives are not done:

i. Accomplishing Lesotho National Dialogue and Reform Agenda, thus promoting stability and peaceful and inclusive society, with strong and effective institutions.

ii. Taking effective action to combat climate change and its effect by building community and households' resilience, implementing effective adaptation measures, supporting and protecting agricultural sector and addressing rural poverty and inequalities of all forms;

iii. Building strong health and protection systems and addressing new HIV infections among the adolescents, youth and factory workers.

"We would like to put smiles in Basotho faces. This is because we know what smiles do. Smiles will make Lesotho a better place to live in, to raise children, to support adolescent and the youth and make all smile again and again...."

Voice of Stakeholder, Lesotho VNR Validation Conference, June 2019.

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Indicators	Indicator Value
SDG 1: End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere	
Target 1.1: By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day	
1.1.1: Proportion of population below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)	59.6% at international poverty line \$1.90 a day (2010)
Target 1.2: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	
1.2.1: Proportion of population living below the national poverty line	57.1% (2010)
1.2.2: Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions	45.9% (2009)
Target 1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable	
1.3.1 D: Population covered by social protection systems, distinguished by main social protection schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Age Pension = 85,087 people • Child Grants Programme = 24,500 h/h • OVC Bursary Scheme = 13,172 people • Public Assistance = 11,800 people • School Feeding = 389,000 people • Integrated and Water Shed Management = 115,000
Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance	
Urban	

Indicators	Indicator Value
1.4.2: Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure by Settlement Type and Type of Land tenure	<p>Leasehold = 36.7% Title Deed = 2.9% Form C = 19.2%</p> <p>Peri-Urban</p> <p>Leasehold = 8% Title Deed = 3% Form C = 52.5%</p> <p>Rural</p> <p>Leasehold = 2% Title Deed = 4.2% Form C = 55.9%</p>
Target 1.5: By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other	
1.5.3D: Existence of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies	There exists a National Disaster Reduction Strategy (2017)
SDG 2: End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improve Nutrition and Promote Sustainable Agriculture	
TARGET 2.1: By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round	
2.1.1: Prevalence of undernourishment	52.1%
2.1.1 A: Food Consumption Score	<p>Acceptable = 53.3% Borderline = 34.4% Poor = 12.3% (2017)</p>
2.1.2: Proportion of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderately Food Insecure = 34.4% Severely Food Insecure = 12.3% (2017)
TARGET 2.2: By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons	
2.2.1: Prevalence of stunting	33%

Indicators	Indicator Value
	Women = 30% Men = 19% (2014)
3.4: Tuberculosis incidence per 100 000 population	852 per 100,000 people (2014)
Target 3.7: By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes	
Indicator 3.7.1: Proportion of women of reproductive age (age 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods	Age Group
	Married
	Unmarried
	15 - 19
	20 - 24
	25 - 29
	30 - 34
	35 - 39
	40 - 44
	45 - 50
7.2: Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1000 women in that age group	94 Live Births per 1000 Females Aged 15 - 19 (2014)
Target 3.9: By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination	
9.2D: Case Fatality Rate in Diarrhea & Gastroenteritis by Age and Sex, Lesotho	Age Group
	Male
	Female
	0 - 5
	6 - 12
	13 years and older
	(2014)

Indicators		Indicator Value
TARGET 3.a: Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate		
3.a.I: Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older	Age Group	Prevalence of current tobacco use by sex
		Males
	15 - 19	18.6%
	20 - 24	55.2%
	25 - 29	46.9%
	30 - 34	49.7%
	35 - 39	48.7%
	40 - 44	52.6%
	45 - 49	52.1%
		Females
	15 - 19	0.3%
	20 - 24	2.1%
	25 - 29	5.0%
	30 - 34	8.9%
	35 - 39	11.4%
	40 - 44	23.5%
	45 - 49	25.2%
(2014)		
TARGET 3.b Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all		
3.b.I.D: Proportion of the population with access to medicines or medical treatment		58% (2017)
3.b.I.A: Immunization Coverage by Type	Type	Coverage
	BCG	98%
	DPT	98%
	Pentavalent 1	
	DPT	95%
	Pentavalent 2	
	DPT	85%
	Pentavalent 3	
	Polio 1	96%
	Polio 2	89%
	Polio 3	76%

Indicators	Indicator Value
TARGET 3.d: Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks	
Indicator 3.d.1: International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness	WHO Global Health Observatory Database
SDG 4: Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Life-Long Learning Opportunities for All	
TARGET 4.1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	
4.1.1D: Grade 6 th SACMEQ Reading and Mathematics Achievement Scores	SACMEQ III Maths Score = 476.9 SACMEQ III Reading Score = 451.2
TARGET 4.2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	
4.2.2D: Net Enrolment Rate at ECCD, by sex	29.49% (NER at ECCD in 2016)
4.3.1D: Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) at Higher Education Institutes (HEI) by sex	11% (GER at HEI during 2013/14)
TARGET 4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	
Indicator 4.5.1: Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary GPI = 0.97 (NIR), 0.88 (AIR) • Secondary GPI = 1.6 (NIR), 1.4 (AIR) • GPI in Urban = 0.97 (2014) • GPI in Rural = 1.05 (2014) • GPI among the Lowest Wealth Quintile = 1.11 (2014) • GPI among the Second Wealth Quintile = 1.05 (2014)

Indicators	Indicator Value
4.c.ID: Proportion of Qualified School Teachers by primary and secondary level	Primary = 83% Secondary = 94%
SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls	
Target 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women	
5.1.1: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	Lesotho has multiple laws and policies that promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.
TARGET 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	
5.2.2D Number of Sexual Offence Cases Reported per 100,000 Population	85.53
TARGET 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	
5.3.1: Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	35.4%
TARGET 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	
5.5.1: Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments	Upper House = 23% Lower House = 26% (2018)
TARGET 5.6: Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	
5.6.1: Women making their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (% of women age 15-49)	60.9% (2014)
TARGET 5.a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	

Indicators	Indicator Value
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPI among the Middle Wealth Quintile = 1.03 (2014) • GPI among the Fourth Wealth Quintile = 0.98 (2014) • GPI among the Highest Wealth Quintile = 0.97 (2014)
4.5.1A: Proportion of persons with disability aged five years and above by educational attainment.	Educational Attainment
	Total
	Pre-School 1.5
	Primary 58
	Secondary 15.8
	Dip/Cert after Primary 0.2
	Dip/Cert after Secondary 2.1
	Vocational 0.3
	Graduate 1.2
	Non Formal 2.3
No Attainment	Never 1.4
	Attended 17.4
	Other 0.1
TARGET 4.6: By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	
4.6.1D: Percentage of population in a given age group that is literate (Literacy Rate) by sex	Males aged 15 -24 = 90.6% Females aged 15 -24 = 98.6% Males aged 15 - 49 = 85% Females aged 15 - 49 = 85%
TARGET 4.c: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States	

Indicators		Indicator Value																																											
Target 6.4: By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity																																													
6.4.2: Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources		2.3 (2014)																																											
SDG 7: Ensure Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable and Modern Energy for All																																													
TARGET 7.1: By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services																																													
7.1.1: Proportion of households with access to electricity by residence		Urban = 61.5% Rural = 11.8% Total = 27.8%																																											
7.1.2D: Proportion of households with primary reliance on clean fuels (LPG and Electricity) and technology by source		<table><tr><th colspan="3">Lighting</th></tr><tr><th>Source of Energy</th><th>No. of Households of h/h that use clean energy</th><th>Percentage of h/h that use clean energy</th></tr><tr><td>Electricity</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Grid</td><td>191874</td><td>35.70%</td></tr><tr><td>Electricity Generator</td><td>175</td><td>0.03%</td></tr><tr><td>Electricity Solar</td><td>11759</td><td>2.19%</td></tr><tr><td>Battery</td><td>1333</td><td>0.25%</td></tr><tr><td>LPG</td><td>886</td><td>0.16%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>206027</td><td>38.33%</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Heating</td></tr><tr><td>Electricity</td><td>30431</td><td>5.66%</td></tr><tr><td>LPG</td><td>9309</td><td>1.73%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>39740</td><td>7.39%</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Cooking</td></tr></table>		Lighting			Source of Energy	No. of Households of h/h that use clean energy	Percentage of h/h that use clean energy	Electricity			Grid	191874	35.70%	Electricity Generator	175	0.03%	Electricity Solar	11759	2.19%	Battery	1333	0.25%	LPG	886	0.16%	Total	206027	38.33%	Heating			Electricity	30431	5.66%	LPG	9309	1.73%	Total	39740	7.39%	Cooking		
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Indicators	Indicator Value
5.a.2: Existence of a legal framework (including customary law) that guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control	There exist a number of legal frameworks that ensures equality in its different aspects including women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control. These include the Land Act 2010 and the Customary Law (2018)
TARGET 5.b: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women framework (including customary law) to guarantee women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control	
5.b.1.D: Mobile cellular penetration rate (Mobile Teledensity)	119 (2016/17)
Target 5.c: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls at all levels	
5.c.1.D: Existence of systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	There exist inadequate systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment. However, seats are reserved for women in Parliament and local government levels even though the financial component is lacking (2017)
SDG 6: Ensure Availability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation for All	
TARGET 6.1: By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all	
6.1.1: Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services	Urban = 79% Rural = 77% (2014)
TARGET 6.2: By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations	
6.2.1.D: The proportion of households with improved toilet facilities	Urban = 49.0% Rural = 51.6% (2014)

Indicators		Indicator Value	
TARGET 3.a: Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate			
3.a.1: Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older	Age Group	Prevalence of current tobacco use by sex	
		Males	Females
	15 - 19	18.6%	0.3%
	20 - 24	55.2%	2.1%
	25 - 29	46.9%	5.0%
	30 - 34	49.7%	8.9%
	35 - 39	48.7%	11.4%
	40 - 44	52.6%	23.5%
	45 - 49	52.1%	25.2%
	(2014)		
	TARGET 3.b Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all		
3.b.1.D: Proportion of the population with access to medicines or medical treatment		58%	(2017)
3.b.1.A: Immunization Coverage by Type			
Type	Coverage		
BCG	98%		
DPT	98%		
Pentavalent 1			
DPT	95%		
Pentavalent 2			
DPT	85%		
Pentavalent 3			
Polio 1	96%		
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4.5.1A: Proportion of persons with disability aged five years and above by educational attainment.	Educational Attainment
	Total
	Pre-School 1.5
	Primary 58
	Secondary 15.8
	Dip/Cert after Primary 0.2
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	Vocational 0.3
	Graduate 1.2
	Non Formal 2.3
TARGET 4.6: By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	No Attainment 1.4
	Never Attended 17.4
	Other 0.1
4.6.1D: Percentage of population in a given age group that is literate (Literacy Rate) by sex	Males aged 15 -24 = 90.6% Females aged 15 -24 = 98.6% Males aged 15 - 49 = 85% Females aged 15 - 49 = 85%
TARGET 4.c: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States	

Indicators	Indicator Value
TARGET 3.d: Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks	
Indicator 3.d.1: International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness	WHO Global Health Observatory Database
SDG 4: Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Life-Long Learning Opportunities for All	
TARGET 4.1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	
4.1.1D: Grade 6 th SACMEQ Reading and Mathematics Achievement Scores	SACMEQ III Maths Score = 476.9 SACMEQ III Reading Score = 451.2
TARGET 4.2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	
4.2.2D: Net Enrolment Rate at ECCD, by sex	29.49% (NER at ECCD in 2016)
4.3.1D: Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) at Higher Education Institutes (HEI) by sex	11% (GER at HEI during 2013/14)
TARGET 4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	
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4.c.1D: Proportion of Qualified School Teachers by primary and secondary level	Primary = 83% Secondary = 94%
SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls	
Target 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women	
5.1.1: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	Lesotho has multiple laws and policies that promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.
TARGET 5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	
5.2.2D Number of Sexual Offence Cases Reported per 100,000 Population	85.53
TARGET 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	
5.3.1: Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	35.4%
TARGET 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	
5.5.1: Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments	Upper House = 23% Lower House = 26% (2018)
TARGET 5.6: Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	
5.6.1: Women making their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (% of women age 15-49)	60.9% (2014)
TARGET 5.a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	

Indicators		Indicator Value
12.4.1.D: Percentage of international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that Lesotho is party to		100% (2015)
SDG 13: Take Action to Combat Climate Change		
TARGET 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries		
13.1.1.D: Existence of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies	Lesotho has a National Risk Reduction Strategy	
SDG 15: Protect, Restore and Promote Sustainable Use of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Sustainably Manage Forests, Combat Desertification, and Halt and Reverse Land Degradation and Halt Biodiversity Loss		
TARGET 15.1: By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements		
15.1.1: Forest area as a proportion of total land area.	1.63% (2015)	
15.1.2i: Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type	Terrestrial Biodiversity Liphofung National Monument and Reserve Bokong Nature Reserve Muela Nature Reserve National University of Lesotho (botanical garden)	Area (Ha) 4 1972 45 1.5
		Proportion (%) 0.03% 14.27% 0.33% 0.01%

Indicators	Indicator Value
9.5.1: Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP	0.05284 (2015)
TARGET 9.c: Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide network, universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020	
Indicator 9.c.1.D: Mobile cellular penetration rate (Mobile Teledensity)	119 (2016/17)
SDG 10: Reduce Inequality within and among Countries	
TARGET 10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies	
10.7.2D: Migration Governance Indicator	54.5
TARGET 10.b: Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, Small Island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes	
10.b.1: Total resource flows for development (US \$ Millions)	\$113.16 Million (2014)
SDG 11: Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable	
Target 11.1: By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums	
11.1.1D: Proportion of households living in informal housing structures by residence	Urban = 3% Peri-Urban = 2.77% Rural = 1.95% Total = 2.43%
TARGET 11.6: By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	
11.6.2: Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM _{2.5} and PM ₁₀) in cities (population weighted)	27
SDG 12: Ensure Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns	
TARGET 12.4: By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	

Indicators		Indicator Value	
TARGET 15.2: By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally	Ts ehlanyane National Park	5,300	38.36%
	Sehlabathebe National Park	6,475	46.86%
	Masitise nature reserve	20	0.14%
	Total Area	13,817.5	100%
	15.2.ID: Planted Forest Area 17,000 ha (2015)		
Target 15.3: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world			
15.3.1: Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area		24.1%	
Target 15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species			
15.5.ID: Number of Local Species in Red List Categories	Lesotho Meadow Katydid is the only animal species listed in the IUCN Red List Index as endangered		
Target 15.8: By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species			
15.8.ID: Existence of relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species	Relevant legislation does not exist (2018)		
SDG 16: Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions At All Levels			
TARGET 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere			
16.1.ID: Number of murder cases reported per 100,000 population	47 cases per 100,000 population (2015)		

Indicators	Indicator Value						
16.1.4D: Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live	65% (2017)						
16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children							
16.2.2D: Number of human trafficking cases reported per 100,000 population	1 human trafficking case reported per 10,000 people (2015)						
16.2.3D: Number of Sexual Offence Cases Reported per 100,000 population	86 cases per 100,000 people						
TARGET 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all							
16.3.2: Un-sentenced detainees as a proportion of overall in-mates population	38.8% (2015)						
TARGET 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms							
16.5.1: Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months	1% (2014)						
TARGET 16.9: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration							
16.9.1: Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	Males = 42.4% Females = 44.3%						
SDG 17: Strengthen the Means of Implementation and Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development							
TARGET 17.1: Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection							
17.1.1: Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source							
	<table> <tr> <th>Tax Revenue</th><th>FY 2015/16</th></tr> <tr> <td>Taxes on income, profits, and capital gains</td><td>13.8</td></tr> <tr> <td>Income tax - payable by individuals</td><td>6.4</td></tr> </table>	Tax Revenue	FY 2015/16	Taxes on income, profits, and capital gains	13.8	Income tax - payable by individuals	6.4
Tax Revenue	FY 2015/16						
Taxes on income, profits, and capital gains	13.8						
Income tax - payable by individuals	6.4						

Indicators	Indicator Value
Income tax - payable by corporations and other enterprises	4.2
Income tax - unallowable	3.1
Taxes on property	0.0
Taxes on goods and services	10.2
Value-added tax	8.4
Excise taxes	1.7
Taxes on specific services	0.0
Taxes on the use of goods and on permission to use or perform activities	0.1
Taxes on international trade and transactions	0.9
Other taxes	0.0

Indicators		Indicator Value
16.1.4D: Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live		65% (2017)
16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children		
16.2.2D: Number of human trafficking cases reported per 100,000 population		1 human trafficking case reported per 10,000 people (2015)
16.2.3D: Number of Sexual Offence Cases Reported per 100,000 population		86 cases per 100,000 people
TARGET 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all		
16.3.2: Un-sentenced detainees as a proportion of overall in-mates population		38.8% (2015)
TARGET 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms		
16.5.1: Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months		1% (2014)
TARGET 16.9: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration		
16.9.1: Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age		Males = 42.4% Females = 44.3%
SDG 17: Strengthen the Means of Implementation and Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development		
TARGET 17.1: Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection		
17.1.1: Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source	Tax Revenue	FY 2015/16
		24.9
	Taxes on income, profits, and capital gains	13.8
	Income tax - payable by individuals	6.4

Indicators	Indicator Value	
	permission to use or perform activities	
	Taxes on international trade and transactions	0.1
	Other taxes	0.0
17.4.1: External Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services		4.3% (2016/17)
17.6.2: Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants		5,636 (2016/17)
TARGET 17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts		
17.18.2D: Existence of a national statistical legislation that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	Exists a 2001 National Statistical Act that complies with the fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	
17.18.3: Existence of a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding	Exists an underfunded NSDS plan (Salaries are paid for by the government but costs of statistical activities are met by the government and development partners on adhoc basis)	
TARGET 17.19: By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries		
17.18.3D: Number of population and housing censuses in the last 10 years	Lesotho carried its last census in 2016 and the census reports are available.	

Indicators		Indicator Value
17.1.2: Proportion of domestic budget financed by domestic taxes		
Tax Revenue		FY 2015/16
Taxes on income, profits, and capital gains		43.0
Income tax - payable by individuals		23.8
Income tax - payable by corporations and other enterprises		11.1
Income tax - unallowable		4.2
Taxes on property		7.3
Taxes on goods and services		0.0
Value-added tax		17.5
Excise taxes		14.4
Taxes on specific services		2.9
Taxes on the use of goods and on		0.1

