

LESOTHO SUCCESS STORIES OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED



The Kingdom of Lesotho takes pride in all initiatives of SADC. Lesotho is one of the seven founding Members States that met on 1 April 1980 to meet around political independence, peace and security in the region. The agenda evolved over the years, and in 1992 the member states signed a treaty to focus on Regional Economic Integration, with an added focus on Peace and Security.

Therefore, the launch of the SADC SUCCESS STORIES series is taken with grave seriousness and pride, and the launch was nothing short of a cultural celebration of positivity, witnessed by key NCPs (National Contact Persons) from all 16 Member States.



Left to Right: Mr Calicious Tatalife, Hon. Lejone Mpotjoane, Hon Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane, Mr. Thorsten Schäfer-Gümbel, Dr. Axel Bayer

The Minister of Finance and Development Planning Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane said, she was disappointed Lesotho was not the first country to launch the SADC Success Story, but vowed that they will be the first to launch the next three to four editions. She applauded SADC for keeping to its agenda items and ensuring that Lesotho is respected as an independent sovereign nation, despite a few public misinterpretations due to their borders being solely surrounded by South Africa.

She went on to thank the German government for their continued support and investment in Lesotho, not only through the SNRL Programme but on numerous studies and investments that have added to some of the seven success stories highlighted in the publication. "We have more success stories in Lesotho, these are just a few that are complete, and I will be asking my team to start drafting the next booklet whilst ensuring this publication is seen by all Lesotho citizens from the rural areas and in the Diaspora. I now declare the SADC Lesotho Success Stories officially Launched," She concluded.



On receipt of the publication, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Lejone Mpotjoane, spoke of his role in selling the country and pointing out that despite the size of Lesotho, the country has the ability through its 'every drop counts philosophy' to provide water to the region and also electrify the region through renewable energy power generation.



The German Government representative, Dr Axel Bayer, responded to the Minister of Finance by expressing the Federal Government's intent and continued commitment towards sustainable development investments in key sectors such as Agriculture, Water, Infrastructure, Trade, and beyond to create a bright future for all. He stated that his presence is a testament to the pride Germany has in their investment undertakings in Lesotho, and further thanked the sterling work of its implementing arm conducted by GIZ, with Country Director to Botswana, Mr. Thorsten Schäfer-Gümbel, in attendance.



The celebration closed off with a group photo and a site visit to the Metolong Dam and water supply program phase one, situated in the district of Maseru. The project is one of the seven highlighted success stories alongside, The Coordinated Border Management program, run by the Lesotho Revenue Authority, LRA. Financial Inclusion Pilot Project on Diaspora remittances, which has seen a saving of 4.2 Million Euros in transfer fees over 3 years, supported by the Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL).

Tarring the SANI PASS corridor, the highest mountain pass on the African continent, stretching 46.41 km, is a vital route for trade and tourism. The LESIS Project, a 2-year digital soil mapping program that supports the global food security agenda, The Khubelu Sponges project on water conservation and storage for livestock and the wetlands, and a digital B2B job and vacancy portal for the youth to increase job creation primarily focused at the youth, that like many African countries is forms the majority of the population.



He concluded by adding that the positive impact of such high-level achievements is a model that can be replicated, and serve as a call to action to other Member States and others outside the SADC regional block, to remind us of the potential of the region, to encourage countries to look inwards and build a prosperous future in the region for the next generation. Let us recognize that our role is not complete, and we look forward to being a part of another two booklets on success stories, through leveraging on collective expertise and resources to address complex challenges and achieve common objectives”.

