



LEADERSHIP FORUM AND ACCOUNTABILITY SUMMIT REPORT



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AG	Attorney General
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
DCEO	Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
FY	Financial Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
IGF	Inclusive Growth Fund
KPAs	Key Priority Areas
LNDC	Lesotho National Development Corporation
NSDP II	National Strategic Development Plan II
NSS	National Security Service
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PRO	Public Relations Officers
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMS	Short Message Service
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VAT	Value Added Tax

FOREWORD

The convening of the Leadership Forum and National Accountability Summit represents a historic milestone in the governance trajectory of the Kingdom of Lesotho. For the first time since Independence, leaders from the Executive, Legislature, Judiciary, statutory bodies, civil society, the private sector, and local communities gathered in unified purpose to account directly to the citizens of our country.

Accountable leadership is the bedrock upon which sustainable national transformation is built. As a nation facing multifaceted global economic uncertainties, climate impacts, and domestic development imperatives, we must move decisively from commitments to measurable results.

The achievements and ongoing reforms documented in this report, spanning macroeconomic management, human capital development, infrastructure, and institutional governance, demonstrate our institutional resilience. However, they also highlight the significant work that remains to be done to address youth unemployment, service delivery gaps, and economic vulnerabilities.

This Summit is not an end in itself, but the beginning of a strengthened culture of accountability and performance. It establishes a platform for regular engagement between Government and citizens, reinforces evidence-based decision-making, and promotes collective responsibility for achieving our national development aspirations.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all participants, including Government institutions, Parliament, the Judiciary, constitutional and statutory bodies, local authorities, civil society, the private sector, development partners, the media, and the people of Lesotho. Your active participation has strengthened our shared commitment to building a more accountable, inclusive, and prosperous Kingdom.

Together, through principled leadership, transparency, and collective action, we will continue to accelerate the implementation of the Extended NSDP II and build a resilient, united, and prosperous Lesotho for present and future generations.

Honourable Ntsokoane Samuel Matekane (MP)
The Right Honourable the Prime Minister
Kingdom of Lesotho

PREFACE

The Leadership Forum and National Accountability Summit marks a significant step in strengthening accountability, transparency, and inclusive governance in the Kingdom of Lesotho. Convened under the leadership of the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, the Summit provided a national platform for Government and key stakeholders to engage directly with citizens on the implementation of the Extended National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II), national development priorities, and public service delivery.

The Summit brought together the Executive, Legislature, Judiciary, constitutional and statutory institutions, local government, the private sector, civil society, development partners, academia, the media, and citizens. Through high-level panel discussions and plenary engagements, participants reviewed progress, shared experiences, identified implementation challenges, and explored practical solutions to accelerate national development.

This report provides a consolidated record of the proceedings and key outcomes of the Summit. It highlights progress made across the four priority areas of the Extended NSDP II while capturing the strategic issues and recommendations emerging from the discussions.

It also reflects Government's commitment to evidence-based policymaking, performance monitoring, and continuous improvement in service delivery.

The Leadership Forum and National Accountability Summit is intended to become a regular national accountability mechanism that promotes transparency, strengthens collaboration among institutions, and reinforces public confidence in Government. The outcomes of the Summit will inform future planning, policy implementation, and monitoring to ensure that national priorities translate into tangible improvements in the lives of the Basotho people.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Parliament, the Judiciary, constitutional and statutory institutions, local authorities, development partners, civil society organisations, the private sector, the media, and all citizens who contributed to the success of the Summit. Their participation demonstrates a shared commitment to accountable leadership and the collective pursuit of a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient Kingdom of Lesotho.

Honourable Justice Nthomeng Majara
Deputy Prime Minister
Government of Lesotho

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Accountability Summit, held from 1–3 July 2026, marked a historic milestone in the governance of the Kingdom of Lesotho. For the first time since Independence, leaders from the Executive, Legislature, Judiciary, constitutional and statutory institutions, local government, civil society, the private sector, development partners, academia, the media, and citizens convened on a single national platform to account for the implementation of national priorities and engage directly with the public on the country's development agenda.

The Summit demonstrated Government's commitment to transparency, evidence-based decision-making, citizen participation, and results-oriented governance in advancing the objectives of the Extended National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II).

The Summit was organised around the four Key Priority Areas (KPAs) of the Extended NSDP II and combined national performance reporting with high-level panel discussions and public dialogue.

The Government presented its National Scorecard, which showed moderate progress in implementing national priorities despite a challenging external environment characterised by global economic uncertainty, fiscal pressures, climate change, and trade disruptions affecting key sectors of the economy.

Progress was recorded in strengthening public financial management, governance reforms, social protection, tourism recovery, and expansion of access to basic services. However, structural challenges, including high youth unemployment, infrastructure deficits, declining export competitiveness, food insecurity, and service delivery constraints, continue to require urgent and coordinated action.

The thematic cluster discussions focused on accelerating economic transformation, strengthening human capital, developing enabling infrastructure, and enhancing governance and institutional effectiveness.

Across all sessions, participants recognised that sustained economic growth will require stronger private sector participation, increased value addition, economic diversification, improved investment climate, and greater resilience to external shocks.

Particular emphasis was placed on addressing the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, promoting local processing of wool and mohair, preserving agricultural land, improving transport and digital infrastructure, strengthening education and healthcare systems, expanding employment opportunities, and improving access to finance for businesses and entrepreneurs.

Governance discussions reaffirmed the importance of accountable institutions, effective public financial management, judicial independence, parliamentary oversight, anti-corruption efforts, decentralisation, and improved public sector performance.

Participants highlighted the need to strengthen implementation of court decisions, enhance government communication, establish a Media Council and Media Ombudsman, build the capacity of Public Relations Officers, ensure timely payment of government suppliers, improve access to the Inclusive Growth Fund, and preserve the Sesotho language as a pillar of national identity and social cohesion.

The statutory institutions, Parliament, and the Judiciary demonstrated their commitment to strengthening oversight, the rule of law, transparency, and accountability while identifying institutional reforms necessary to improve service delivery and public confidence.

Youth empowerment emerged as the most significant cross-cutting issue throughout the Summit. Participants called for a comprehensive national response to youth unemployment through expanded technical and vocational education, digital and entrepreneurial skills development, improved access to finance, apprenticeships, innovation, and stronger collaboration between Government, the private sector, academia, and development partners.

The monitoring and evaluation team recommended that youth must be active participants in policy design, implementation, and monitoring, and recommended a coordinated national youth employment framework supported by measurable targets, dedicated financing, and strengthened institutional arrangements.

The Summit concluded that accountability must become an enduring feature of public administration rather than a periodic event. Participants emphasised the need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems, improve institutional coordination, enhance citizen engagement, and align planning, budgeting, and implementation with measurable development outcomes.

The Leadership Forum and National Accountability Summit therefore established a new national accountability framework through which Government and stakeholders will regularly review performance, address implementation bottlenecks, and reinforce collective responsibility for achieving the aspirations of the Extended NSDP II, the Sustainable Development Goals, and Africa's Agenda 2063. The report serves as both a record of the Summit's deliberations and a roadmap for strengthening governance, improving service delivery, and accelerating inclusive and sustainable development in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

The Summit in Numbers

500+



Daily Attendance

33



Panelists

12



Moderators

10



Districts Connected
Virtually

6



Rural Schools
Connected

Summit: Leadership Forum and National Accountability Summit

Theme: Building Stronger Communities through Leadership, Accountability and Result-Oriented Service Delivery

Dates: 1-3 July 2026. **Strategic Clusters:** Economic Transformation • Human Capital • Infrastructure • Governance

Public Engagement: Television, Radio, Facebook Live, SMS, Call-in programmes, District Hubs

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The National Accountability Summit was preceded by a Leadership Forum and were both convened by the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho as landmark initiatives aimed at strengthening strategic leadership, institutional accountability and whole-of-government coordination in the implementation of national development priorities.

The Summit reflected Government's commitment to promoting a culture of transparency, performance management and citizen-centred governance, while reinforcing public trust and confidence in state institutions.

The Summit was convened against the backdrop of significant political, economic and social challenges, including global economic uncertainties, climate change impacts, food insecurity, high youth unemployment, fiscal constraints and increasing public expectations for efficient, responsive and accountable public services.

While Government has made notable progress in implementing reforms and advancing the objectives of the Extended National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II),

it recognised the need for a structured national platform where leadership could transparently account for progress achieved, openly deliberate on implementation challenges and agree on practical measures to accelerate service delivery and national transformation.

1.2 Purpose of the Summit

The purpose of the Summit was to create a national platform for collective reflection, accountability and strategic dialogue on the country's development agenda.

For the first time since Independence, leaders from the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary, together with senior public officials, development partners, diplomatic missions, civil society organisations, the private sector, faith-based organisations and other stakeholders, convened to assess Government performance and collectively shape Lesotho's development trajectory.

The Summit represented an important shift towards a governance model based on openness, evidence-based decision-making, collaboration, performance monitoring and measurable results.

1.3 Objectives of the Summit

The overarching objective of the Summit was to strengthen strategic leadership, policy coherence, collective accountability and citizen-centred service delivery in support of Lesotho's national development agenda.

Specifically, the Forum sought to:

- Review Government's performance against the commitments and priorities outlined in the Extended National Strategic Development Plan II and other national policy frameworks;
- Promote accountability by providing Government leaders with an opportunity to report directly to citizens on achievements, challenges and planned interventions;
- Strengthen collaboration and coordination across all arms of Government and between Government and non-state actors;
- Facilitate constructive dialogue between leaders and citizens on priority national issues affecting governance and socio-economic development;

- Share regional and international best practices in governance, leadership and accountability, including lessons from the Republic of Rwanda; and
- Develop actionable commitments that will strengthen institutional performance, improve service delivery and guide future planning, budgeting and resource allocation.

The Summit further underscored Government's commitment to institutionalising accountability as an integral component of public administration rather than treating it as a one-off event.

Through regular performance reporting, strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems, enhanced citizen participation and improved coordination across ministries, departments and agencies, Government seeks to build a results-oriented public sector that is capable of delivering inclusive, effective and sustainable development outcomes.

The outcomes of the National Accountability Summit are expected to contribute towards strengthening public trust, improving policy implementation, reinforcing accountability at all levels of Government and accelerating progress towards the realisation of the aspirations of the Extended NSDP II and other international development frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063 and SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

1.4 Methodology

The report was prepared using a participatory and evidence-based approach, drawing on multiple sources of information generated during the Leadership Forum and National Accountability Summit.

Information was consolidated from:

- National Address;
- Report from the Leadership Forum;
- National Scorecard presentations;
- High-level panel discussions;
- Moderated plenary discussions;
- Questions and submissions from participants attending physically and virtually;

- Questions received through television, radio, livestreaming, Facebook and SMS platforms;
- Rapporteurs' reports;
- Presentations by Ministries, Departments and Agencies; and
- Presentations from Parliament, the Judiciary and Statutory Institutions.

The report therefore represents a comprehensive record of both Government performance presented during the Summit and the issues raised by citizens and stakeholders.

2. SUMMIT ORGANISATION AND PARTICIPATION

The Summit was held from 1 to 3 July 2026 at the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre. The Summit adopted an inclusive whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, bringing together representatives from government, parliament, the judiciary, statutory and oversight institutions, academia, the private sector, civil society organisations, development partners, community representatives, youth, the media, and members of the public.

The Summit attracted more than 500 participants each day, reflecting broad national engagement and strong public interest in strengthening accountability and improving development outcomes.

The programme was supported by 33 Panelists drawn from key sectors and institutions, who shared perspectives on national priorities, implementation progress, challenges, and proposed solutions. A team of 12 moderators facilitated the discussions, ensuring structured dialogue, meaningful participation, and effective engagement between leaders, institutions, and citizens

National and district leaders, from central government to district and community levels, actively participated throughout the three-day dialogue. The Summit provided an important platform for leaders and public institutions to account for progress, present national and sectoral performance, respond directly to citizens' questions, and deliberate on practical measures to strengthen service delivery, transparency, and accountability.

To extend participation beyond the physical venue, the proceedings were connected to all ten districts through District Administrator offices. In addition, six selected schools in hard-to-reach rural areas were equipped to participate virtually and engage directly with the main conference.

The wider public followed and contributed through television and radio broadcasts, livestreaming, Facebook and other social media platforms, moderated call-in programmes, and SMS channels. Citizens were able to submit questions, concerns, and inquiries, which were addressed by responsible leaders and institutions during the summit.

The programme covered key national priorities, including the national performance scorecard; report from national leadership forum, inclusive economic growth and job creation; human capital development; enabling infrastructure; governance and accountability systems; as well as dedicated sessions involving statutory institutions, Parliament, and the Judiciary.

This extensive participation strengthened national ownership and positioned the Summit as a significant platform for public accountability, citizen engagement, and collective action towards improved development results in Lesotho.

The Summit adopted an interactive format combining high-level presentations, panel discussions, plenary engagements, and stakeholder dialogue. Presentations were organised around four strategic development clusters, with each cluster comprising contributions from relevant Ministries, agencies, and institutions responsible for implementing national programmes.

Following each presentation, participants engaged in moderated discussions focusing on achievements, implementation challenges, lessons learned, and practical recommendations for accelerating progress.

Cross-cutting issues, including youth employment, climate resilience, gender equality, digital transformation, decentralisation, institutional coordination, and improved public service delivery, were integrated throughout the discussions.

The inclusive nature, scale of participation, and quality of engagement demonstrated the Summit's role as a national platform for strengthening accountability, rebuilding public trust, and advancing collective efforts towards sustainable development in Lesotho.

3.OPENING AND CONTEXT SETTING

The opening session established the strategic direction for the Accountability Summit, with speakers underscoring the importance of accountable leadership, effective implementation of national priorities and citizen-centred governance.

While each speaker approached the theme from a different perspective, they shared a common commitment to strengthening transparency, improving public sector performance and accelerating the delivery of sustainable development outcomes for the people of Lesotho.

3.1 National Address: The Right Honourable the Prime Minister

The Right Honourable Ntsokoane Samuel Matekane, the Prime Minister of Lesotho, reaffirmed Government's commitment to accountability, transparency and results-oriented governance, describing the Summit as an important platform for reporting progress, reflecting on implementation challenges and strengthening public trust.

He emphasised that the success of the Extended NSDP II should be measured by tangible improvements in the lives of Basotho, particularly through accelerated economic transformation, improved service delivery and sustainable employment creation.

He further called for stronger coordination across Government institutions and closer collaboration with the private sector, development partners and citizens to accelerate national development.

3.2 National Leadership Forum Report: Honourable Deputy Prime Minister

The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister, Justice Nthomeng Majara outlined the report from the Leadership forum and reiterated as follows:

- Accountability must drive national transformation: Government reaffirmed that accountable leadership is the foundation of sustainable development. The focus must shift from promises to measurable results, ensuring that every ministry and public institution is judged by the improvements it delivers in the lives of Basotho through better services, job creation, improved infrastructure, and good governance.
- Progress has been achieved, but significant challenges remain: The country has recorded notable gains in agriculture, tourism, health, education, infrastructure, and governance, demonstrating that coordinated reforms can deliver tangible outcomes. However, high youth unemployment, food insecurity, declining education completion rates, infrastructure gaps, and implementation constraints continue to limit inclusive development and require urgent action.
- Government has made clear, measurable commitments: Over the next twelve months, Government has committed to accelerating job creation, empowering youth, expanding digital public services, strengthening food security, improving health and education, expanding infrastructure, enhancing public safety, improving access to justice, and deepening governance reforms. These commitments are intended to produce visible improvements in citizens' daily lives.
- Implementation and accountability will be strengthened: Government will introduce a results-based implementation framework supported by clear performance indicators, quarterly reporting, stronger coordination through the Office of the Prime Minister, and improved monitoring systems. Success will be measured by outcomes and impact rather than activities completed or funds spent.
- National development requires collective responsibility: Building a capable, ethical, and prosperous Lesotho demands partnership between Government, citizens, the private sector, civil society, development partners, and communities.

The Accountability Summit reinforces the shared responsibility to safeguard public resources, strengthen public trust, and work together to deliver meaningful and lasting improvements for all Basotho.

3.3 Shared Experience from The Republic of Rwanda: Minister of Finance – Hon. Godfrey Kabera

Minister Godfrey Kabera commended the Government of Lesotho for institutionalising the Accountability Summit as an important platform for promoting transparency, accountability and good governance.

Drawing on Rwanda's development experience, he underscored the critical role of strong national unity and identity, visionary leadership, robust performance management systems and a culture of accountability in driving sustainable development.

He further emphasised the importance of strengthening institutional capacity, accelerating digital transformation, and embedding evidence-based planning and decision-making within a long-term national vision. He encouraged Lesotho to continue fostering regional cooperation and peer learning as catalysts for innovation, effective public sector performance and inclusive socio-economic transformation.

4. NATIONAL SCORECARD

The Honourable Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Honourable Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane, presented the Government's performance assessment against the national targets outlined in the Extended NSDP II.

The presentation provided an overview of progress achieved through the National Scorecard, which serves as a mechanism for tracking implementation performance across the four Key Priority Areas (KPAs) of Extended NSDP II.

Overall, the assessment indicated moderate progress in the implementation of national priorities, demonstrating Government's continued commitment to advancing inclusive economic growth, strengthening human capital development, accelerating infrastructure development, and promoting effective governance and accountability.

While significant milestones and notable achievements have been recorded across various sectors, implementation has been affected by external economic shocks, fiscal constraints and persistent structural challenges that continue to impact the pace of national transformation.

The Scorecard highlighted both areas of progress and areas requiring intensified interventions, providing an evidence-based foundation for strengthening policy implementation, improving coordination and accelerating efforts towards the achievement of NSDP II objectives and broader national development aspirations.

4.1 Macroeconomic Performance

Economic performance during the reporting period was characterised by both resilience and vulnerability. Real GDP growth improved steadily from previous years and reached 4.9 percent in FY2024/25 before declining sharply to 1.4 percent in FY2025/26 as a result of the United States' tariff measures affecting Lesotho's textile exports.

Given the country's heavy dependence on the textile and apparel industry under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the external trade shock resulted in reduced industrial production, lower investment, and employment losses.

These developments underscore the need to accelerate economic diversification and strengthen the resilience of the economy against external shocks.

Despite the challenging economic environment, the Government made significant progress in strengthening fiscal management and public financial administration.

Key reforms included the establishment of the Tax Policy Unit, implementation of the Procurement Act of 2023, approval of the Fiscal Rules Policy, measures to contain the public sector wage bill, and continued expansion of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS).

Additional reforms, including the introduction of VAT e-invoicing, improvements in the Integrated Revenue Management System, publication of the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Assessment, and improved performance in the Open Budget Survey, demonstrate the Government's commitment to enhancing transparency, accountability, and fiscal sustainability.

However, growing VAT refund obligations continue to place pressure on domestic revenue mobilisation, highlighting the need to strengthen digital tax administration, risk-based verification, and audit systems.

Overall National Performance Assessment

The National Scorecard demonstrates that Lesotho continues to make steady progress towards implementation of the Extended NSDP II despite significant domestic and external challenges. Performance across the four Key Priority Areas indicates that Government has maintained reform momentum while recognising that accelerated implementation is required to achieve national targets.

Key Priority Area	Key Priority Area
KPA I Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth and Private Sector-Led Job Creation	Moderate Progress
KPA II Strengthen Human Capital	Good Progress
KPA III Build Enabling Infrastructure	Moderate Progress
KPA IV Good Governance and Accountability Systems	Good Progress

Summary of Major Achievements and Challenges

The Summit acknowledged that Lesotho has made measurable progress in implementing the Extended NSDP II), particularly in strengthening macroeconomic stability, improving public sector governance, expanding social protection, and enhancing service delivery.

These achievements demonstrate the Government's commitment to maintaining reform momentum despite a challenging domestic and global environment. At the same time, participants recognised that significant structural and implementation challenges continue to constrain the pace of development and require sustained policy attention.

Major National Achievements

- Improved macroeconomic management, contributing to greater economic stability.
- Continued implementation of fiscal and public financial management reforms to strengthen fiscal sustainability and accountability.
- Recovery of the tourism sector following recent economic disruptions.
- Expansion of social protection programmes, improving support for vulnerable households.

- Increased digitalisation of government services, improving accessibility and efficiency.
- Continued expansion of electricity and water services to underserved communities.
- Institutionalisation of performance contracting to strengthen accountability and results-based management.
- Operationalisation of the Inclusive Growth Fund to support entrepreneurship and economic inclusion.
- Continued advancement of constitutional and broader governance reforms.

Key Takeaways

The Summit concluded that while Government has registered important achievements in strengthening economic governance, improving public administration, and expanding access to essential services, these gains must be accelerated through more effective implementation.

Participants emphasised that addressing unemployment, strengthening institutional capacity, improving coordination, expediting procurement processes, clearing payment arrears, and enhancing resilience to climate change should remain priority areas to sustain development outcomes and achieve the objectives of the Extended NSDP II.

KPA 1: Enhancing Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth and Private Sector-Led Job Creation

Performance under Key Priority Area I presented a mixed picture. The tourism sector recorded a strong recovery, with international arrivals increasing significantly and accommodation revenues improving, supported by implementation of the National Tourism Master Plan and increased international promotion of Lesotho as a tourism destination.

Commercial agriculture maintained relatively stable production levels and continued contributing to exports and rural livelihoods, although productivity gains remain modest.

The mining sector continued operations and advanced several institutional reforms, including the review of mining legislation, digitisation of geological information, and promotion of local participation in artisanal and small-scale mining.

Nevertheless, mineral sector revenues remained below target and employment creation was lower than anticipated. Manufacturing, particularly the textile industry, remained the country's largest source of formal private sector employment but continued to face significant external market volatility, reinforcing the importance of diversifying export markets and strengthening industrial competitiveness.

KPA II: Strengthening Human Capital

Progress under Key Priority Area II demonstrates continued investment in human capital development. Government achieved improvements in early childhood education, technical and vocational education and training enrolment, and expansion of social protection programmes targeting vulnerable populations.

Health and nutrition indicators also showed gradual improvement in selected areas, reflecting ongoing investments in health service delivery. Social protection coverage increased from 5.23 percent to 8.92 percent of the vulnerable population, indicating continued efforts to reduce poverty and strengthen household resilience.

While these achievements are encouraging, continued investment is required to improve education quality, health outcomes, and the effectiveness of social protection systems.

KPA III: Building Enabling Infrastructure

Implementation under Key Priority Area III yielded mixed results. Significant progress was achieved in expanding access to safe drinking water, particularly in urban areas, while access to sanitation services also improved.

Access to electricity increased modestly, and overall energy supply continued to grow. However, Lesotho remains highly dependent on imported electricity, underscoring the need to accelerate domestic renewable energy investments.

Road infrastructure remains one of the most significant implementation challenges. Both the Road Network Condition Index and Gravel Road Index deteriorated during the reporting period, indicating that road maintenance has not kept pace with infrastructure needs. Continued deterioration of transport infrastructure threatens national competitiveness, increases transport costs, and undermines private sector development.

KPA IV: Promoting Governance and Accountability Systems

Substantial progress was recorded under Key Priority Area IV relating to governance and accountability. Government strengthened public financial management through expansion of IFMIS, implementation of digital revenue systems, introduction of VAT e-invoicing, and improvements in budget transparency and oversight.

Additional achievements include institutionalisation of government-wide performance contracting, operationalisation of the Inclusive Growth Fund, clearance of Government arrears, increased anti-corruption capacity, improved audit coverage, and implementation of constitutional reforms. These initiatives collectively strengthen public sector accountability, improve service delivery, and reinforce public confidence in Government institutions.

4.2 Strategic High-Level Discussions

The public dialogue session demonstrated Government's commitment to transparency by responding directly to citizens' concerns. The session featured robust and candid discussions, with citizens openly expressing their frustrations and expectations on a wide range of national issues.

Key concerns raised included decentralisation, youth unemployment, migration, relations with South Africa, management of natural resources for the benefit of Basotho, delayed government payments, unfinished infrastructure projects, support for former mineworkers, disability grants, food security, passport services, work permits, water access, road construction, local procurement, mining contracts and national unity.

A particularly prominent issue was the continued challenges surrounding the issuance of passports. Many Basotho voiced their frustration over delays in accessing passport services, highlighting the significant impact this has on employment opportunities, travel and access to essential services.

Residents of Ha Tšosane also raised serious concerns about the Tšosane dumpsite, noting its adverse environmental and health effects on surrounding communities and calling for urgent Government intervention to address the situation.

Government responded by outlining several ongoing reforms and initiatives, including the approval of the Joint Action Development Forum (district-level), implementation of the Youth Employment Programmes, expansion of support for local businesses, continued infrastructure development, improved agricultural support, decentralisation reforms, enhanced service delivery, and stronger collaboration with civil society and the private sector.

4.3 Key Takeaways and Way Forward

The day's discussions reinforced the need to move beyond policy formulation towards measurable implementation and tangible results. Strong emphasis was placed on improving coordination across government, strengthening accountability mechanisms, enhancing public financial management, expanding digital governance, promoting inclusive economic growth and ensuring that citizens remain central to national development.

Participants also underscored the importance of addressing longstanding service delivery concerns raised during the public dialogue, particularly those affecting everyday livelihoods, through timely and responsive action. The session concluded that continued dialogue, regular performance reporting and sustained collaboration between Government, development partners, civil society, the private sector and citizens will be essential to building "the Lesotho that we want."

5. SECTORAL CLUSTER SESSIONS

5.1 Cluster I: Enhancing Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth and Private Sector-Led Job Creation

The first thematic session was moderated by Mr Thabo Khasipe, Chief Executive Officer of the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC).

The panel comprised the Ministers responsible for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition; Trade, Industry and Business Development; Tourism, Sports, Arts and Culture; and Energy and Mining, as well as representatives from the Lesotho Textile and Exporters Association and the Bankers Association of Lesotho.

The session focused on assessing progress under the Economic Transformation and Growth Cluster.



The panel facilitator formally introduced the Panelists and outlined their respective roles and institutional responsibilities in advancing the implementation of Key Priority Area (KPA) I of the Extended NSDP II.

The facilitator then provided a brief overview of the objectives and strategic focus of KPA I, highlighting its emphasis on accelerating economic transformation and growth through increased agricultural productivity, industrialisation, private sector development, trade expansion, tourism development, mining, and energy security.

This context enabled participants to better appreciate the relevance of the discussion and the responsibilities of the respective institutions represented on the panel.

Following the introductory remarks, the moderator invited participants both in the conference hall and those joining virtually from the district hubs and diplomatic missions to actively engage with the panel. Members of the audience were encouraged to raise questions, seek clarification on progress made, highlight implementation challenges, and propose recommendations related to the delivery of KPA I interventions.

This interactive format promoted inclusive participation, strengthened accountability, and created an opportunity for government leaders to respond directly to concerns and suggestions from citizens and stakeholders across the country.

Summary of Deliberations

The discussion focused on critical economic transformation issues affecting Lesotho's productive sectors, particularly agriculture, agro-processing, youth economic empowerment and the development of new sources of income and employment.

The Panelists acknowledged that while agriculture remains a key contributor to rural livelihoods and economic activity, the sector continues to face significant challenges that require urgent and coordinated interventions.

A major issue discussed was the management of the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak, which continues to affect livestock production, livestock movement and access to markets, particularly for wool and mohair producers.

The outbreak has negatively impacted farmers' ability to market their products and has constrained the competitiveness of Lesotho's livestock value chains. The already available wool and mohair have been declared safe from FMD and a procedure to cleanse fleece that is currently being sheared.

The discussion highlighted the importance of strengthening disease prevention and control measures, improving veterinary services, enhancing surveillance systems and ensuring compliance with regional and international animal health standards to restore market confidence and protect livestock-based livelihoods.

The panel further deliberated on the need to move beyond the export of raw wool and mohair products by establishing local processing and value addition capabilities. Participants emphasised that exporting unprocessed products limits the economic benefits derived from one of Lesotho's key natural resources.

The discussion highlighted the importance of investing in local processing facilities, developing skills and technology, strengthening partnerships with investors and creating an enabling environment for the establishment of a domestic wool and mohair processing industry.

Such interventions were viewed as essential for increasing local value retention, creating employment opportunities and improving the competitiveness of Lesotho's textile and manufacturing sectors.

Another key issue raised was the preservation of agricultural land, which continues to be lost due to expanding settlements, infrastructure development and other competing land uses. The Panelists highlighted the importance of protecting productive agricultural land to safeguard food security, enhance agricultural productivity and support long-term economic resilience.

Discussions emphasised the need for improved land-use planning, stronger enforcement of land management regulations and coordinated spatial planning to balance development needs with the preservation of agricultural resources.

The panel also discussed the potential of sports as an emerging economic sector and a platform for youth empowerment. Participants recognised that sports should be viewed beyond recreation and developed as a viable business sector capable of generating employment, entrepreneurship opportunities and economic value.

The discussion highlighted the need for investment in sports infrastructure, professional development of athletes, strengthening sports administration, promoting sports tourism and creating opportunities for young people to participate in sports-related enterprises.



Cluster II: Strengthening Human Capital

The second Panel discussion was moderated by Advocate Lindiwe Sephomolo, the Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Lesotho Employers and Business.

The Panelists were Ministers for Education and Training, Health, Gender, Youth and Social Development, Home Affairs and Police, and Environment and Forestry. Also, the representatives from Lesotho Council of NGOs and Youth Organisation joined the panel.



The moderator introduced the Panelists and outlined their respective portfolios. She then invited members of the public to engage directly with the panel by posing questions relating to the performance, achievements, challenges, and service delivery within each portfolio.

This interactive session provided an opportunity for citizens to seek clarification and hold public officials accountable for the implementation of their respective mandates.

The session examined how investment in people can accelerate inclusive and sustainable development under the Extended II. Deliberations covered education, health, migration and diaspora engagement, social protection, skills development, youth empowerment, social inclusion and the institutional systems required to deliver quality services.

Participants reaffirmed that human capital is both a development outcome and a productive asset. Better education, health, protection and skills improve individual well-being while enabling higher productivity, innovation, resilience and economic participation. The discussion therefore called for coordinated investment across sectors, with particular attention to rural communities, young people, women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

Summary of Deliberations

The Human Capital Strengthening session focused on assessing progress made under the Extended NSDP II in improving the quality, accessibility, and inclusiveness of education, health, social protection, youth development, gender equality, and employment.

The discussions highlighted the critical role of human capital in driving sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, and national development, while acknowledging that significant investments in people are essential for achieving Lesotho's long-term development aspirations.

The panel outlined key achievements across the human development sectors, including continued expansion of access to education, implementation of curriculum reforms aimed at improving relevance and skills development, increased investments in technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and ongoing efforts to strengthen foundational learning.

In the health sector, progress was reported in expanding primary healthcare services, improving maternal and child health programmes, strengthening disease surveillance systems, and enhancing access to essential medicines despite fiscal and resource constraints.

A significant portion of the discussion centred on youth unemployment, which participants identified as one of the country's most pressing development challenges.

Panelists acknowledged the growing mismatch between education outcomes and labour market demands and emphasised the need to strengthen skills development, entrepreneurship, innovation, and partnerships with the private sector to improve employability.

The importance of aligning education and training programmes with emerging sectors such as digital technologies, manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, and green industries was repeatedly emphasised.

Participants also discussed the importance of strengthening social protection systems to support vulnerable households and improve resilience against economic shocks. The government highlighted ongoing reforms aimed at enhancing the efficiency and targeting of social assistance programmes while ensuring that vulnerable groups, including women, persons with disabilities, children, and the elderly, continue to receive adequate support.

Gender equality and women's empowerment featured prominently in the discussions. Panelists reaffirmed the Government's commitment to promoting equal access to education, employment, leadership opportunities, and economic participation while addressing gender-based violence and other barriers that limit women's full participation in development.

The need for stronger coordination among ministries and stakeholders to mainstream gender considerations across all development programmes was also highlighted.

The session further underscored the importance of improving governance and financing within the human development sectors. Participants called for increased efficiency in public expenditure, strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems, evidence-based policy implementation, and greater collaboration between Government, development partners, civil society organisations, academia, and the private sector to maximise development outcomes.

During the interactive dialogue, members of the public raised concerns regarding the quality of education, shortages of teachers and healthcare personnel, unemployment among graduates, access to medicines, the effectiveness of youth empowerment programmes, and the adequacy of social protection interventions.

Panelists responded by outlining ongoing policy reforms, recruitment initiatives, investments in health and education infrastructure, and measures being implemented to improve service delivery and create more employment opportunities for young people.

Cluster III: Building Enabling Infrastructure

The third panel discussion was moderated by Mr. Moeketsi Mafereka, a representative of CEO Econet Telecom Lesotho. The Panelists were Ministers for Public Works and Transport, Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, Information, Communication, Science and Technology and Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs. The panel also consisted of representatives from Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Private Sector Foundation of Lesotho.



The moderator introduced the Panelists and outlined their respective portfolios. He invited members of the public to engage directly with the panel by posing questions relating to the performance, achievements, challenges, and service delivery within each portfolio. This interactive session provided an opportunity for citizens to seek clarification and hold public officials accountable for the implementation of their respective mandates.

Summary of High-Level Discussions

The Building Enabling Infrastructure session focused on assessing progress under the Extended National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II) in developing resilient, inclusive, and sustainable infrastructure to support economic transformation, improve public service delivery, and enhance the quality of life of Basotho.

The discussions underscored that modern infrastructure remains a fundamental enabler of industrialisation, private sector development, regional integration, and inclusive socio-economic growth.

The panel highlighted progress made in the development and rehabilitation of road infrastructure, expansion of electricity and water supply networks, implementation of digital transformation initiatives, and investments in public infrastructure.

Government reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening transport connectivity, improving access to energy, expanding digital infrastructure, and ensuring that infrastructure development supports national development priorities while contributing to climate resilience.

Road construction and maintenance emerged as one of the most prominent issues raised by participants. Citizens expressed concern over the deteriorating condition of roads, delays in the implementation of road projects, and inadequate maintenance of existing infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.

The panel acknowledged these challenges and explained that Government continues to prioritise road rehabilitation and maintenance within available fiscal resources while exploring alternative financing mechanisms to accelerate infrastructure delivery.

Environmental sustainability and urban infrastructure management also featured prominently in the discussions. Participants called for the relocation of the Tšosane dumpsite, citing environmental, health, and urban development concerns.

Digital transformation was identified as a key driver of future economic growth and improved public service delivery. The panel outlined ongoing efforts to digitise government services, expand broadband infrastructure, and improve digital connectivity across the country.

Participants, particularly young people, emphasised the need to ensure that Basotho content creators have access to monetisation opportunities on global digital platforms such as Meta and YouTube.

The panel recognised the growing importance of the digital economy and indicated that Government will engage with young people active in social media platforms who are relevant stakeholders to address policy, regulatory, and market barriers that limit participation in the global digital marketplace.

Concerns were also raised regarding the continued encroachment on agricultural land due to unplanned settlements and infrastructure development. Participants stressed the need to strengthen land-use planning and enforcement mechanisms to safeguard productive agricultural land, which is critical for food security and sustainable development.

The panel reaffirmed Government's commitment to integrated spatial planning and improved coordination among relevant institutions to balance infrastructure expansion with environmental and agricultural conservation.

Access to reliable electricity and clean water remained central themes throughout the discussions. Participants highlighted persistent disparities in service coverage, particularly in remote and rural communities, and called for accelerated expansion of electricity and water infrastructure.

The panel acknowledged that while significant progress has been made, resource constraints continue to affect the pace of implementation. Government reaffirmed its commitment to expanding rural electrification, investing in renewable energy, and strengthening water supply infrastructure to improve equitable access to essential services.

The discussion also addressed the proposed construction of a national broadcasting complex as part of efforts to modernise public communication infrastructure and strengthen the country's broadcasting capacity.

Participants noted that such investment would contribute to improved dissemination of information, promote local content production, and support the growth of the creative industry.

Climate change and its impact on infrastructure resilience featured prominently during the session. Participants observed that increasing incidences of floods, droughts, erosion, and other extreme weather events are causing significant damage to roads, bridges, water infrastructure, and public facilities.

The panel emphasised the importance of integrating climate resilience into infrastructure planning, design, construction, and maintenance to minimise future losses and ensure long-term sustainability.

Participants further expressed concern over the country's heavy reliance on traditional sources of public infrastructure financing. Comparisons were drawn with other countries in the region that have successfully leveraged Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), blended finance, infrastructure bonds, climate finance, and development finance institutions to accelerate infrastructure investment.

The panel acknowledged the need to diversify infrastructure financing mechanisms and highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen the legal, institutional, and policy framework for attracting greater private sector participation and mobilising alternative sources of investment.

Cluster IV: Good Governance and Accountability Systems

The fourth panel discussion focused on Governance, Accountability and Institutional Effectiveness and was organized into three main jurisdictions: Part A: Governance under the Executive Arm of Government, Part B: Governance by Parliament and Judiciary and Part C: Governance by Statutory Institutions.

The structure of the session provided a comprehensive platform to assess governance performance, institutional effectiveness, accountability mechanisms, and the role of different arms and institutions of the State in strengthening democratic governance.

Part A: Governance under the Executive Arm of Government was moderated by the Right Honourable Tlohang Sekhamane, Speaker of the National Assembly.

The session brought together the Honourable Ministers responsible for

- **Finance and Development Planning;**
- **Labour and Employment;**
- **Foreign Affairs and International Relations;**
- **Law and Justice;**
- **Public Service and the Office of the Prime Minister; and**
- **Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police.**

The panel also included the Moshoeshoe I Institute of Peace and Leadership; the Institute of Directors Lesotho and the Media Institute of Southern Africa.

Discussions focused on governance within the Executive, including policy implementation, public sector performance, institutional coordination, service delivery improvement, fiscal governance, legal and administrative reforms, decentralization, and strengthening accountability mechanisms across government.



Summary of Deliberations

The Governance under the Executive Arm of Government Session was moderated by Mr. Tlohang Sekhamane, Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly, and brought together the Honourable Ministers responsible for Finance and Development Planning; Labour and Employment; Foreign Affairs and International Relations; Law and Justice; Public Service and the Office of the Prime Minister; and Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police.

The session focused on assessing the effectiveness of the Executive in policy implementation, public sector performance, institutional coordination, service delivery improvement, fiscal governance, legal reforms, decentralisation, and strengthening accountability mechanisms.

The discussions emphasised the need to strengthen the link between national policies, strategic plans, budgets, and implementation frameworks to ensure that Government priorities translate into measurable development outcomes.

Participants acknowledged progress made in strengthening governance systems but highlighted persistent challenges relating to policy implementation, coordination among institutions, monitoring and evaluation, and institutional capacity.

The panel underscored the importance of evidence-based policymaking, improved performance management, digital transformation, and stronger accountability systems to enhance public sector effectiveness.

Public sector performance and service delivery emerged as major areas of concern. Participants expressed concerns regarding delays in accessing government services, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inconsistent responsiveness of some public institutions.

The panel acknowledged these challenges and highlighted ongoing public sector reforms aimed at improving efficiency, strengthening accountability, enhancing institutional capacity, and promoting a more citizen-centred approach to service delivery.

The concerns were also raised regarding the welfare and timely payment of individuals engaged through temporary arrangements, as well as the need for Government to ensure that suppliers and service providers are paid on time to support business continuity, maintain confidence in public procurement systems, and promote private sector participation.

On employment creation and labour market reforms, participants highlighted unemployment, particularly among young people, as one of the country's most critical development challenges.

The panel outlined Government interventions, including skills development programmes, entrepreneurship support, youth empowerment initiatives, employment promotion strategies, and measures aimed at stimulating private sector-led job creation.

The role of the M400 million Inclusive Growth Fund (IGF) was discussed, with participants seeking clarity on accessibility, particularly for rural communities, youth, women, and small enterprises.

The panel highlighted the importance of ensuring inclusive access to financing opportunities across districts to support entrepreneurship and local economic development.

Fiscal governance and public resource management were also central themes. The panel emphasised the importance of prudent financial management, improved budget execution, value-for-money public expenditure, and stronger alignment between resource allocation and national priorities.

Participants noted the importance of strengthening domestic resource mobilisation and exploring innovative financing mechanisms to support development objectives within a constrained fiscal environment.

The discussions further addressed the implementation of the Court of Appeal judgment concerning National Security Service (NSS) officers. Participants sought clarification on the progress made towards implementing the judgment.

In response, the panel reaffirmed Government's commitment to upholding and implementing judicial decisions in accordance with the Constitution and established legal and administrative processes.

The panel further explained that the matter remains subject to ongoing engagements between the legal representatives of the parties to facilitate an appropriate implementation framework. It was noted that the case had been before the courts for approximately ten years prior to the delivery of the judgment and involves a substantial number of applicants.

These complexities have necessitated careful legal and administrative consideration, which has affected the pace of implementation. Government nevertheless reaffirmed its commitment to resolving the matter in a lawful, fair, and orderly manner.

Decentralisation and local governance featured prominently in the discussions, with participants highlighting the need to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to plan, implement, and manage development programmes.

Concerns were raised regarding limited resources, uneven service delivery across districts, and the need for stronger coordination between central and local government structures to ensure that development benefits reach communities.

The session also addressed government communication, media engagement, and access to information. Participants called for the establishment of a Media Council and Media Ombudsman to strengthen professional standards, promote ethical journalism, and provide mechanisms for resolving media-related complaints.

The need to enhance the capacity of Public Relations Officers (PROs) in information dissemination, strategic communication, and timely public engagement was emphasised. Participants further encouraged stronger engagement between political leadership and the media to promote transparency, accountability, and public confidence in government programmes.

The preservation and promotion of Sesotho language and cultural identity was raised as an important element of national unity, social cohesion, and peacebuilding. Participants emphasised the need for Government to prioritise initiatives that protect and promote Sesotho as a national heritage asset, including its use in education, public communication, and cultural programmes.

Part B: Constitutes of Parliamentary arm and Judiciary arm each providing an opportunity to examine their contribution in promoting accountability, oversight, justice, and the rule of law.

These discussions focused on the constitutional roles of Parliament and the Judiciary, strengthening institutional independence, enhancing legislative oversight, improving access to justice, and ensuring effective checks and balances among the arms of the State.

i. The Parliament session was moderated by the Honourable Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane.



Summary of Deliberations

The Parliamentary Arm of Government reaffirmed Parliament's constitutional mandate as a key pillar of democratic governance, responsible for representation, law-making, approval of public resource allocation, and oversight of Government performance.

Established under Section 54 of the Constitution, Parliament comprises the King, the Senate, and the National Assembly, providing the institutional framework for promoting accountability, transparency, and good governance.

The discussions emphasised Parliament's central role in strengthening democratic governance through effective legislation, oversight of the Executive, and representation of citizens' interests.

Particular attention was given to the work of Parliamentary Committees, which scrutinise government policies, programmes, expenditure, and legislation, thereby enhancing accountability and ensuring responsible use of public resources.

The session highlighted Parliament's commitment to inclusivity and public participation through the use of Sesotho, Sephuthi, Xhosa, sign language and English in parliamentary proceedings, in line with constitutional provisions.

Participants also noted ongoing initiatives to improve public access to Parliament through outreach programmes, community engagements such as Kopunyane, and stronger collaboration with civil society organisations and the media.

The Clerk of Parliament was recognised as an important channel for facilitating public access to parliamentary information and services.

The panel reported progress in strengthening institutional development through the implementation of the Parliamentary Strategic Plan, the Parliamentary Policy, and the Tenth Constitutional Amendment.

Parliament has also promoted greater inclusion through initiatives aimed at increasing the participation of women and youth, including the Youth Parliament, Mesangoana Programme, and Women's Day activities.

Despite these achievements, participants identified several challenges affecting Parliament's effectiveness, including limited financial resources, constraints on institutional independence, the need to strengthen the separation of powers, declining public confidence, and the persistence of corruption and unethical practices.

Concerns were also raised regarding the capacity of Parliamentary Committees to effectively execute their oversight responsibilities.

Looking ahead, Parliament reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening oversight, committee performance, public participation, constitutional implementation, and anti-corruption measures, while expanding opportunities for women and young people to participate in parliamentary processes.

The implementation of the Parliamentary Strategic Plan and related institutional reforms was identified as critical to enhancing Parliament's effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to the people of Lesotho.

ii. The Judiciary session was moderated by Dr. Letzadzo Kometsi.



The Judiciary Arm of Government reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the rule of law, protecting constitutional rights, and ensuring the fair, impartial, and timely administration of justice.

Guided by the vision of the Honourable Chief Justice, Sakoane Peter Sakoane, the Judiciary is pursuing reforms aimed at building a transparent, accessible, independent, accountable, and efficient justice system that inspires public confidence.

Summary of deliberations

The discussions highlighted the Judiciary's commitment to judicial independence through transparent and merit-based recruitment processes, including public advertisement of vacancies and merit-based appointments for judicial officers.

The Chief Justice emphasised that maintaining high standards of integrity and professionalism is supported by comprehensive Codes of Ethics for judges, magistrates, court presidents, and administrative staff, which reinforce impartiality, accountability, and ethical conduct across the justice system.

The Judiciary outlined mechanisms that strengthen institutional accountability, including formal procedures for lodging complaints against judicial officers and court personnel.

These mechanisms ensure that complaints are handled fairly and transparently while safeguarding judicial independence and public trust in the administration of justice.

Improving access to justice was identified as a key priority. The Judiciary highlighted ongoing efforts to decentralise court services, expand Legal Aid and pro deo representation, maintain affordable court fees, and modernise court infrastructure to improve accessibility, particularly for vulnerable groups, persons with disabilities, and citizens in remote areas.

To improve the efficiency of justice delivery, the Judiciary has strengthened judicial case management, promoted court-annexed mediation and reciprocal disclosure procedures, and introduced performance targets of 90 days for High Court judgments and 45 days for Subordinate Court judgments.

These reforms are intended to reduce case backlogs, minimise delays, and ensure timely resolution of disputes.

The session also highlighted the importance of the annual State of the Judiciary Address as a key accountability mechanism through which the Judiciary publicly reports on case statistics, institutional performance, progress in reducing delays, court modernisation initiatives, and strategic priorities for the year ahead.

This promotes transparency and enables the Judiciary to account for its performance to the public.

Part C: The Statutory Institutions highlighted the collective role of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO), Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Office of the Attorney General (AG), Office of the Ombudsman, and Office of the Auditor-General in strengthening accountability, transparency, the rule of law, and sound public financial management.

The discussions underscored the need for stronger collaboration among oversight institutions to improve governance outcomes.



The Facilitator introduced the Panelists and outlined their respective portfolios

The Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) reported significant progress in strengthening the fight against corruption through decentralisation, increased staffing, digitalisation of investigations, corruption prevention initiatives, public education, and youth engagement.

Enhanced government funding has improved investigative capacity, resulting in increased case investigations, convictions, and recovery of illicit assets. The Directorate also highlighted strengthened collaboration with domestic and regional institutions to combat cross-border corruption.

However, challenges remain, including limited specialised skills, delays in investigations and prosecutions, inadequate whistle-blower protection, procurement vulnerabilities, and increasingly sophisticated economic crimes.

Future priorities include expanding corruption risk assessments, strengthening asset declaration compliance, accelerating digital transformation, and increasing public awareness.

Summary of Deliberations

The Statutory Institutions were facilitated by Advocate Mokhorro Makara and provided a platform for reflections from representatives of key accountability and oversight institutions, including the Attorney General, Director of Public Prosecutions, Auditor-General, Ombudsman, and the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO).

The session focused on the constitutional and institutional mandates of these bodies, their contribution to strengthening accountability, transparency, the rule of law, and the fight against corruption, as well as the challenges and reforms required to enhance their effectiveness in promoting good governance.

The Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) emphasized efforts to improve the efficiency of the criminal justice system by strengthening collaboration between investigators and prosecutors. The DPP undertook efforts to reduce the backlogs of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) cases in the Southern and Northern regions by accelerating prosecution processes.

Backlog of criminal cases were reduced by over 170 cases in four districts, and the rate of criminal cases within the Speedy Trial Act has increased from 26% to 33%. Furthermore, the Directorate improved transparency by enhancing greater public access to information on public-interest cases through community leaders and public gatherings.

The DPP highlighted the importance of decentralization of the prosecution services in 2023 and 2026 respectively when the high court expanded in the North and South region.

The Attorney General (AG) highlighted the Office's role in safeguarding public resources through preventative legal advice, strengthening legislative drafting, and ensuring greater alignment between policies and legislation.

The Office also emphasized improved coordination with oversight institutions to ensure that audit findings and Ombudsman recommendations are acted upon promptly.

The Office of the Ombudsman reaffirmed its constitutional mandate to promote administrative justice by providing an independent, impartial, and accessible mechanism for resolving complaints against public institutions.

The Office highlighted progress in decentralizing services through regional offices and reported that 73% of tracked cases had been resolved. Continued efforts are being made to improve access to justice, strengthen investigations into maladministration, and enhance accountability within public administration.

The Auditor-General (AG) presented key findings on public financial management, highlighting persistent weaknesses in financial controls, including a M3 billion cash reconciliation gap, unreturned public funds, and incomplete government asset registers.

The Office emphasised the need for stronger financial discipline, timely submission of financial statements, and full implementation of audit recommendations.

To strengthen accountability, the Auditor-General proposed closer collaboration with Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC), stricter enforcement of the Public Financial Management Accountability Act 2011 (PFMAA), and greater transparency through publication of audit findings.



In line with the State of Disaster declared by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister in July 2025, youth unemployment emerged as one of the most prominent cross-cutting issues discussed throughout the Accountability Summit. Participants consistently highlighted the high levels of youth unemployment as a critical national development challenge requiring urgent and coordinated action.

The discussions underscored the need for accelerated implementation of employment creation strategies, expanded skills development and entrepreneurship programmes, improved access to finance for young entrepreneurs, and stronger collaboration between Government, the private sector, and development partners to create sustainable employment opportunities for young Basotho.

The Summit reaffirmed that young people are a strategic national asset whose creativity, energy and skills must be harnessed to accelerate economic transformation and sustainable development.

Participants therefore called for an enabling environment that supports youth entrepreneurship, innovation, employability, enterprise development and meaningful participation in national decision-making.

The principle of “nothing for the youth without the youth” was emphasised, requiring young people to participate directly in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes that affect them.

Priority interventions identified included expanding technical and vocational education and training, digital skills, STEM education, apprenticeships, workplace-based learning, career guidance and entrepreneurship development.

Education and training institutions were encouraged to work more closely with employers and productive sectors to ensure that young people acquire relevant and marketable skills.

Particular attention was given to opportunities in agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, tourism, sports and creative industries, renewable energy, mining, digital technologies and other emerging sectors.

Participants also called for improved access to entrepreneurship finance, business-development services, incubation and acceleration programmes, mentorship, technology and markets.

Government, financial institutions, the private sector, academia, civil society and development partners were encouraged to develop coordinated pathways that enable young people to move from education and training into employment, enterprise development and sustainable livelihoods.

Financing mechanisms should be accessible to young women, persons with disabilities and youth living in rural and remote communities.

The Summit emphasised the need to accelerate implementation of national youth policies, programmes and institutional arrangements, including the establishment and effective functioning of the National Youth Council.

Participants also called for a comprehensive National Youth Employment Response Plan that clearly identifies priority interventions, responsible institutions, implementation timelines, financing requirements and measurable employment targets. The draft matrix aligned to the deliberations has been developed by the task team.

Youth-responsive planning and budgeting should be mainstreamed across all Ministries, Departments and Agencies rather than being treated as the responsibility of one ministry.

The proposed allocation of resources for youth development should be accompanied by a transparent budget-tracking mechanism and quarterly reporting on implementation, expenditure and results.

To strengthen youth representation, the Summit supported the inclusion of young people in national and sectoral decision-making structures. The announcement that two young people would be included in the Sebatso Committee was welcomed as a practical step towards institutionalising youth participation.

The Summit concluded that investing in youth is essential for inclusive growth, innovation, social cohesion and Lesotho's long-term prosperity. Achieving meaningful results will require moving beyond fragmented and short-term initiatives towards a coordinated, adequately financed and accountable national youth-development system that delivers measurable education, employment and enterprise outcomes.

Summit Commitments and Implementation Framework

The Summit concluded with agreement that accountability should extend beyond dialogue to measurable implementation. Government therefore committed to strengthening monitoring arrangements and reporting progress against agreed actions.

Action Plan

Commitments	Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Timeframe	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources	Responsibility (Lead)	Responsibility (Support)
Establish a whole-of-government coordination mechanism	Establish an OPM-led coordination mechanism for Summit commitments and priority Government programmes;	DELIVERY UNIT established WITH CLEAR TORS	30 NOVEMBER 2026	NONE	NONE	Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)	MFD, MPS
	Maintain a central action tracker AND SUBMIT REPORTS TO CABINET;	Monthly performance dashboard produced; Red/Amber/Green status reports QUARTERLY REPORTS SUBMITTED	30 AUGUST 2026; QUARTERLY	TBD	GOL	OPM- TASK TEAM PENDING ESTABLISHMENT OF DELIVERY UNIT (DU)	ALL MINISTRIES DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS
	Convene monthly coordination meetings	MONTHLY AND QUARTERLY coordination meetings held	MONTHLY QUARTERLY	TBD	GOL	OPM – TASK TEAM /DU	ALL MINISTRIES DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS
	Submit quarterly PERFORMANCE reports TO CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE/ INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE	Quarterly PERFORMANCE reports submitted	Quarterly	NONE	NONE	TASK TEAM/DU	ALL MINISTRIES
Institutionalise Accountability Summit as an annual event	Incorporate the Summit into the Government annual planning and	Annual Summit held; Summit implementation	ANNUAL	TBD	GOL/ PARTNERS	OPM	ALL MDAS PARTNERS PRIVATE SECTOR

Commitments	Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Timeframe	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources	Responsibility (Lead)	Responsibility (Support)
	budgeting cycle; establish an annual reporting calendar; prepare and convene the Summit each year; monitor implementation of Summit resolutions between annual meetings.	reports produced quarterly; Percentage of Summit commitments implemented; Annual Government Accountability Report published.					
OBJECTIVE: IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY							
Improve passport service delivery	Clear passport backlog; introduce SMS notifications; implement four-day processing for complete applications	Passport backlog cleared; Four-day processing achieved; Monthly performance reports	August 2026 onwards	To be determined	Government Budget	Ministry of Home Affairs	OPM
Strengthen agriculture and food security	Procure and distribute farming inputs before planting season	Percentage of farmers receiving inputs on time; Weekly and monthly monitoring reports	SEPTEMBER 2026 and ongoing	To be determined	GOL	Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Finance; District Structures; OPM
	Link farming inputs with extension services, finance, markets and commercial production	Agricultural productivity; Number of farmers supported; Household food security indicators	2027/28 Agricultural Season	To be determined	GOL	Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Trade; OPM
ReLOCATE Tšosane Dumpsite	Address legal, procurement and coordination constraints; implement rehabilitation measures	Monthly progress reports; Risk mitigation measures implemented	SEPTEMBER 2026	To be determined	GOL	Ministry of Local Government	Maseru City Council; Ministries of Environment, Health, Finance; OPM
Improve access to the M400 million Inclusive GROWTH FACILITY (IGF)	Expand access to financing for MSMEs and businesses; Simplify application procedures; increase public	Quarterly IGF performance reports; (Number of beneficiaries, Amount disbursed)	30 SEPTEMBER 2026	NONE		Ministry of Finance AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING	Ministry of Trade, Industry AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT;

Commitments	Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Timeframe	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources	Responsibility (Lead)	Responsibility (Support)
	awareness; expand access outside Maseru						POST BANK AND FNB
MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT RESPONSE PLAN	DEVELOP REPORTING MECHANISMS	QUARTERLY REPORTS	SEPTEMBER 2026	NONE	NONE	TASK TEAM/ DU	ALL MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES
Improve infrastructure delivery	ACCELERATE IMPLEMENTATION OF ONGOING ROADS, WATER, ENERGY AND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS PrioritISE AND UPDATE INFRASTRUCTURE projects PIPELINE	National infrastructure dashboard; Percentage of projects completed on schedule	Quarterly	To be determined	Government Budget; Development Partners	PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT, ENERGY AND MINING, NATURAL RESOURCES, COMMUNICATIONS	OPM
Accelerate digital government	Coordinate digitisation of high-volume public services and citizen feedback systems	Number of digitised services; Quarterly digital transformation reports	Aug 2026 – Mar 2027	To be determined	Government Budget; Development Partners	OPM	Ministry responsible for ICT; Service Ministries
CONVENE NATIONAL DIGITAL SUMMIT	ENGAGE DIGITAL STAKEHOLDERS DEVELOP DIGITAL CONTENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ESTABLISH DIGITAL INNOVATION AND CONTENT CREATION HUB	SUMMIT REPORT DIGITAL CONTENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN NUMBER OF CONTENT CREATORS SUPPORTED NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED IN THE DIGITAL SPACE	2026/27	TBD	GOL	MICSTI	ALL MINISTRIES PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS
Commitments	Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Timeframe	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources	Responsibility (Lead)	Responsibility (Support)
Strengthen parliamentary oversight AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	CAPACITATE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES	Quarterly accountability reports submitted	Quarterly	TO BE DETERMINED	Government Budget	Parliament	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
	Conduct SENSITISATION SESSIONS and citizen engagement platforms	Number of consultations held	Quarterly	To be determined	Government Budget	Parliament	

Risks and Mitigation Measures

Successful implementation of the Summit commitments will depend on the Government's ability to anticipate, manage, and mitigate key risks that may affect the achievement of agreed priorities.

The task team has identified several structural, institutional, economic, and environmental risks that require coordinated interventions, strengthened accountability mechanisms, and sustained political commitment.

Implementation Risk	Potential Impact	Mitigation Measures
Limited fiscal space	Constrains the Government's ability to finance priority programmes, infrastructure investments, and service delivery improvements.	Strengthen fiscal discipline, improve expenditure prioritisation, enhance domestic resource mobilisation, pursue innovative financing mechanisms.
Climate-related disasters	Disrupt agricultural production, damage infrastructure, affect livelihoods, and increase pressure on public resources.	Strengthen climate resilience planning, invest in disaster preparedness and early warning systems, promote climate-smart agriculture, and integrate climate considerations into sector planning and budgeting.

External economic shocks	May affect economic growth, SACU revenues, trade flows, foreign investment, and household welfare.	Strengthen economic diversification, build fiscal buffers, enhance export competitiveness, improve resilience of productive sectors, and monitor global economic trends to inform policy responses.
Institutional capacity constraints	Limit effective implementation of policies, reforms, and development programmes due to inadequate skills, systems, and resources.	Invest in capacity building, strengthen institutional structures, improve technical expertise, and promote knowledge transfer.
Weak inter-agency coordination	Results in fragmented implementation, duplication of efforts, delays in decision-making, and reduced accountability.	Strengthen whole-of-government coordination mechanisms, clarify institutional roles and responsibilities, establish sector working groups to improve integrated planning and budgeting.
Delays in procurement processes	Slow down project implementation, infrastructure development, and delivery of essential services.	Accelerate procurement reforms, strengthen procurement planning, enhance compliance monitoring, build capacity of procurement entities, and promote timely decision-making.

Inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems	Limits the ability to track progress, measure results, identify bottlenecks, and take corrective action.	Strengthen results-based monitoring systems, improve data collection and reporting, institutionalise performance reviews, and enhance the use of evidence for decision-making.
Limited private sector investment	Constrains economic diversification, employment creation, industrial development, and innovation.	Improve the business environment, strengthen public-private dialogue, enhance access to finance, promote investment facilitation, and implement targeted measures to attract domestic and foreign investment.

performance monitoring. Government institutions, development partners, the private sector, and other stakeholders will need to work collaboratively to address implementation risks and sustain momentum towards achieving the objectives of the Extended NSDP II.

Priority actions include strengthening planning and budgeting linkages, enhancing institutional accountability, improving monitoring and evaluation systems, mobilising development partner support, and leveraging digital technologies to improve efficiency, transparency, and service delivery.



The Leadership Forum and National Accountability Summit represents a significant milestone in Lesotho's governance reforms and demonstrates Government's commitment to transparency, accountability and citizen-centred development.

Beyond providing a platform for reporting progress, the Summit created an opportunity for Government, citizens, oversight institutions, the private sector and development partners to jointly identify implementation challenges and agree on practical solutions.

The success of the Summit will ultimately be measured not by the quality of discussions but by the extent to which the commitments made translate into tangible improvements in the lives of Basotho.

Government will therefore strengthen implementation, monitoring and reporting arrangements while institutionalising the Summit as an annual national accountability mechanism.

Continued collaboration among all stakeholders will be essential for accelerating implementation of the Extended NSDP II, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, advancing the aspirations of Agenda 2063 and delivering inclusive and sustainable development for the Kingdom of Lesotho.

ANNEXES

- »»»» Programme
- »»»» List of Presenters
- »»»» Participants
- »»»» Presentations
- »»»» M&E Framework
- »»»» Questions

