

Advancing knowledge and skills to bridge academia and industry



In September 2025, third-year civil engineering students from the University of Pretoria (UP) and students of civil engineering, social work, environmental sciences, law and accounting from the University of the Witwatersrand, undertook an educational visit to the LHWP II, at Polihali.

The visit was aimed at deepening the students' appreciation and understanding of the civil engineering discipline, while also serving as a source of inspiration for the next generation of engineers. It further formed part of their academic requirement to bridge theoretical studies with real-world applications.

During the visit, the students received an overview of the Project and the components currently under construction. They engaged with construction teams, site managers, and resident engineers working on the major bridges, the Polihali Dam, and the Polihali Transfer Tunnel. Site tours offered them the opportunity to observe ongoing works firsthand, providing a close-up view of progress and the complexities of large-scale infrastructure delivery.

Students were also introduced to the multidisciplinary nature of the Project, learning how professionals across engineering, social sciences, law, and finance collaborate to deliver a development of this magnitude in line with best practices and international standards.

Chairperson of the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering Student Council, Sinothile Warona Koali remarked:

"It was an extraordinary experience for our students to witness firsthand the scale and magnitude of the Polihali Project. The insights gained and exposure to such world-class engineering works have been invaluable to their academic and professional development."

Similarly, the University of Pretoria students expressed fascination with the structures under construction, posing insightful questions design approaches and construction methods employed. These interactions sparked meaningful discussions and enriched their understanding of the challenges and innovations involved in implementing large-scale engineering projects.

For the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), these visits present a valuable opportunity to share knowledge about the Project with young people. They form part of LHDA's commitment to ensuring that this regional flagship initiative contributes not only to water security and energy generation, but also to the empowerment of the next generation of professionals. By fostering stronger links between academia and industry, the Authority is making a meaningful contribution to regional human capital development.

These engagements also serve as platforms for building lasting collaborations with institutions of higher learning. They advance knowledge-sharing, research, and innovation while inspiring young people to pursue academic excellence. In addition, they open pathways for students to access opportunities at the Project as interns or young professionals, where they can receive mentorship, progress toward professional registration, and work alongside global experts engaged in the implementation of Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP II).

