



Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

P.O. Box 7332, Maseru 100, Lesotho • Telephone: (+266) 22 246 000 / 22 311 280 • Fax: (+266) 22 310 665 • Email: lhwp@lhda.org.ls

LHWP PHASE II FEEDER ROADS AND BRIDGES MASTER PLANNING KICKS OFF

Maseru, 2 June 2021: The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) has awarded Zutari Lesotho (previously Aurecon Lesotho (Pty) Ltd), the professional services contract for the development of the Master Plan for the Feeder Roads and Bridges under LHWP Phase II. Work on the contract valued at approximately M13 million starts this month.

In undertaking the assignment, Zutari Lesotho (Pty) Ltd. will be working with other Lesotho based firms: Sechaba Consultants (Pty) Ltd., Morija Museum and Archives, Dr. Lerato Seleteng-Kose, and South African Black-owned firms: ROMH Consulting and Leporogo Specialist Engineers CC as sub-consultants.

Development of the master plan for the feeder roads and bridges is part of the process to determine the infrastructure required to support post -construction public mobility around and across the Polihali reservoir to be created under LHWP Phase II. The feeder roads are intended to improve connectivity and access of villages that will be affected by the construction of the Polihali Dam and reservoir inundation. It is one of the many initiatives implemented by LHDA to mitigate the impact of Phase II. The bridges will provide a safe means of reservoir crossing and the linkage to the feeder roads.

The consultant responsible for developing the master plan is expected to commence work on the contract with an extensive assessment of the existing network of roads, methods of transportation and size of population in the areas to be served by the proposed feeder road network and their requirements for access around and across the reservoir.

As with all Phase II developments, stakeholder engagement is crucial to the successful execution of this contract. The consultant will engage with affected communities, local community leaders, district authorities and the Polihali reservoir resettlement consultant and other interested and affected parties to identify the access requirements of the communities both during construction and after reservoir inundation.

Identifying viable options for all feeder roads and bridges that are required to connect villages to each other and to the existing national road networks is also part of the key activities under this contract.

More/



Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

P.O. Box 7332, Maseru 100, Lesotho • Telephone: (+266) 22 246 000 / 22 311 280 • Fax: (+266) 22 310 665 • Email: lhwp@lhda.org.ls

“The LHDA is sensitive to the impact of the LHWP on the affected communities, as major infrastructure projects tend to be disruptive if not carefully planned and managed. Viable options will be prioritised based on the findings of the environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) studies to be completed as part of the feeder roads master plan development process, as will the lessons learned from Phase I regarding the mobility of communities around the reservoir,” confirmed LHDA Phase II Divisional Manager, Ntsoli Maiketso.

The LHDA is working with specialist consultants to mitigate the impact of Phase II on local communities and as far as possible, to limit the need to relocate households. However, the Polihali reservoir with an estimated surface area of 5 000 hectares will result in the physical displacement of approximately 270 households from about 10 villages.

A large number of households from other villages in the Project area will not be affected by relocation, but the reservoir inundation will lead to loss of access or connection to markets and essential services, hence the need for the study to determine potential impacts and develop a master plan for the feeder roads and bridges that will mitigate the impacts.

Ends.

About

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) is multi-phased, multi-billion Maloti/Rand project between the Governments of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa. It comprises water transfer and hydropower generation components with associated ancillary developments. The water transfer component entails the construction of dams and tunnels in Lesotho, enhancing the use of water from the Senqu (Orange) River and its tributaries by storing, regulating, diverting and controlling the flow to effect the delivery of specified quantities of water to South Africa, and utilizing the delivery system to generate hydro-electric power in Lesotho.

The major works of Phase I included the construction of the Katse Dam, the transfer and delivery tunnels, Matsoku Weir, 'Muela Hydropower Plant and the Mohale Dam. The Phase II water transfer component comprises a dam at Polihali and a gravity tunnel that will connect the reservoir at Polihali with the Katse reservoir. The further feasibility studies for the hydropower component of Phase II have concluded that conventional hydropower is the more feasible option to meet Lesotho's energy needs. Three potential sites were identified: two on the Senqu River and a third site at Oxbow on the Malibamatšo River. The plan is to commission the selected option at the same time as the water transfer component, which is 2027.

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) is the implementing and management authority of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, on behalf of the government of Lesotho.

For additional information, please contact:

The Public Relations Manager on +266 22246000 or phakoem@lhda.org.ls or lhwp@lhda.org.ls or visit www.lhda.org.ls