



Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

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Lesotho Highlands Project Celebrates Livelihood Restoration Milestone: communities Earn Trades and Tourism Certificates

Mokhotlong, Lesotho – 11 July 24 – The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), Ministry of Education and Training (MoT), and Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) marked a significant achievement in the Phase II Livelihoods Restoration Programme. A ceremony held in Tlokoeng, Mokhotlong, awarded trades certificates to over 200 artisans and certificates to 39 community members who participated in the community-based tourism training program.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources officiated the event, with representatives from the Ministry of Education and Training Technical and Vocational Education Department (TVED) and the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation Chief Executive also present. Local Mokhotlong district authorities witnessed this momentous occasion.

The Skills Testing and Accreditation Programme is a cornerstone of the Phase II project, aimed at enhancing employment opportunities for Project Area communities. This programme identifies community members with vocational skills who lack formal certification, limiting their employment opportunities within the semi-skilled and skilled categories of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and beyond.

Implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Training's Technical and Vocational Education Department (TVED), the programme evaluates, accredits, and certifies the skills of candidates, thus opening new employment opportunities. For the first time since its inception in 2022, the programme included a two-week refresher training for trades beyond the initial focus on building trades. This year, awardees from Seate, Mphokojane, and Mokhotlong Urban



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received certificates in plastering, roofing, and welding in addition to the previously offered bricklaying and masonry certifications.

The ceremony also saw the first cohort of community members who participated in the community tourism development training program receive their certificates. This initiative, undertaken in collaboration with the LTDC, raises awareness of ecotourism as a viable livelihood option for Project communities. The program empowers residents with the knowledge and skills required for tourism-related enterprises, such as rural homestays, crafts production, tour guiding, and traditional performances – activities with the potential to generate income.

The LHDA's 10-year strategic plan, launched earlier this year, identifies tourism development as a key driver for boosting livelihoods. The recently implemented tourism training program under Phase II aims to prepare Project-affected communities to recognise and benefit from tourism initiatives and infrastructural development established by the project, including a network of interconnected roads, visitor lodges, and other tourist attractions.

Skills development is a crucial component of the broader Livelihoods Restoration Programme, implemented as a critical initiative within Phase II of the LHWP to mitigate the Project's impacts. By empowering residents with the skills and knowledge they need, the program strives to maximize opportunities and project benefits for people living in the LHWP Project area.

End.