



# Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

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## FIRST LESOTHO HIGHLANDS WATER PROJECT PHASE II CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AWARDED

**Maseru, 10 October 2018** – Construction works on Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project are underway following the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) awarding the first construction contract for the Polihali North-East Access Road (PNEAR) to Sinohydro SA and Nthane Brothers Joint Venture. The contractor is expected to be on site by the beginning of November, marking the start of Phase II's six-year construction period. The contract is valued at approximately M235 million.

“Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project comprises the construction of the Polihali Dam and Transfer Tunnel, hydropower generation, social and environmental programmes. In line with the tendering strategy to achieve the policy objectives of the Phase II Agreement, construction works for Advance Infrastructure including access roads is restricted to contractors registered in Lesotho or South Africa. To foster capacity building and economic growth, the governments have also made provisions in the policy for sharing of the value of all infrastructure works on an equal monetary basis between consultants and contractors registered in Lesotho and in South Africa.

Phase II of the LHWP offers contractors work continuity for a number of years and the opportunity to gain valuable experience on a large infrastructure project. The combination of local, regional and international expertise at the consulting and contracting level will also contribute to skills transfer and capacity building within the construction and engineering sector,” comments Minister of Water, Honourable Samonyane Ntsekele.

The Polihali north-east access road project entails the upgrading of the existing approximately 16 km-long, gravel road to a Class A surfaced road. The road, which runs from the town of Mapholaneng in north-eastern Lesotho and the Polihali dam site, will provide access to the dam site for construction vehicles and improve ease of movement for communities in the surrounding areas.

Construction is expected to take 20 months.

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The Polihali north-east access road is one of the critical advance infrastructure components of Phase II, the majority of which must be completed prior to the construction of the main Phase II works: the Polihali dam and transfer tunnel.

“It’s taken years of planning and preparation to get to this point. This is what we have been waiting for,” added Tente Tente, Divisional Manager Phase II at the LHDA.

Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project builds on the successful completion of Phase I in 2003. It delivers water to the Gauteng region of South Africa and utilises the water delivery system to generate hydro-electricity for Lesotho. Phase II will increase the current supply rate of 780 million cubic metres per annum incrementally to more than 1 270 million cubic metres per annum. At the same time, it will increase the quantity of electricity generated in Lesotho and is a further step in the process of securing an independent electricity source to meet Lesotho’s domestic requirements.

## **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, ‘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 form of the hydropower component is subject to agreement on the outcome of a further feasibility study which is currently underway.

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

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