

'MUELA BRANCH MARKS WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY WITH COMMITMENT TO PLANT 40,000 TREES FOR LHWP'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

The 'Muela Branch has begun the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority's (LHDA) commitment to plant 40,000 trees as part of the celebrations marking the 40th anniversary of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.

The initiative was launched on 11 June 2026, marking World Environment Day, when the 'Muela Branch team, together with the Ministry of Forestry and Environment and members of the Boinyatso community, planted 1,000 *Salix mucronata* trees along the 'Nqoe riverbank in Boinyatso, Butha-Buthe.

The planting responded directly to an observation by the Environment Section at 'Muela Branch that the 'Nqoe River was rapidly eroding its banks, prompting an initiative to stabilise the riverbank and protect surrounding land.





The 11 June planting marks the beginning of a broader rollout across all four project catchments, namely 'Muela, Mohale, Katse, and Polihali, with the Public Relations and Environment Sections spearheading the planting of 40,000 trees comprising fruit and fuelwood species. The initiative aims to improve livelihoods through soil erosion control, the provision of fuelwood and fodder, the production of thatch roofing materials, and the establishment of windbreaks within project communities.

The programme supports the livelihood improvement objectives enshrined in the LHWP Treaty. It advances LHDA's strategic vision of implementing the Project within the framework of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles, reflecting the Authority's ongoing commitment to environmental conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and community development throughout the Project areas.