



LHDA young professionals share insights at Polihali meeting

Thirty participants enrolled in the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority's (LHDA) Young Professionals (YP) Programme shared their experiences during a feedback session held on 24 September 2024 at Polihali. The event, attended by LHDA Chief Executive, Divisional Manager Corporate Services, Human Resources Manager, Polihali Operations Branch Manager, and the YP programme management team, aimed to assess the programme's effectiveness in bridging the experience gap and shaping employable professionals.

Human Resources Manager 'Masempe Lefoka highlighted the programme's success, noting that only four participants remain unemployed, two of whom recently completed their contracts. "The programme continues to address the skills and experience gap, preparing young professionals for future employability," Lefoka said. However, she also acknowledged a challenge: South African youth have been slow to take up this opportunity. Despite this, she emphasised that the programme remains a key pillar of the LHWP's broader mission.

Divisional Manager Corporate Services, Kholotsa Moejane, emphasised the importance of continuous engagement with the YPs to enable introduction of training in skills such as leadership and business. "Regular interaction is essential to ensure the programme evolves and remains relevant to the changing job and business landscape," he stated.

Two YP alumni, Nthisana Matasane and Tsépang Mohajane, who are now full-time LHDA employees, shared their personal journeys, encouraging the current participants to embrace the challenges and opportunities. They underscored the importance of excellence, resilience, and taking advantage of even the smallest tasks to build their professional character.

During the session, the YPs were invited to share their challenges and suggest areas for improvement. They indicated that considerations for enhancing the programme's effectiveness may include standardising living conditions, enhancing mentorship, offering psychosocial support, and taking their inputs into consideration at work.

Architectural technologist Ntseliseng Moutloali, who is placed with ZUTARI on the Mabunyaneng and Khubelu Bridges, found the meeting to be invaluable. "The discussion addressed site-related challenges and provided guidance on how to maximize our experience. As a construction company owner, I particularly appreciated the networking opportunities and felt inspired by the stories of former YPs who have already walked this path."

Civil engineer Mosa Moramang, working with MAM JV – the Polihali Dam consultant, shared a similar sentiment: "The meeting was highly beneficial and should be held more frequently. It serves as a valuable networking platform and gives us a deeper understanding of all aspects of the Project. It's also exciting that the programme includes rotations, which expose us to different fields and areas of Project implementation.

Chief Executive Tente Tente, a beneficiary of a similar programme during Phase I of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, encouraged the young professionals to fully embrace the unique opportunities offered by site-based experience. He highlighted that both the challenges and opportunities, especially those tied to diversity in the construction sector, help develop crucial technical and soft skills. These experiences will be invaluable as job profiles evolve, with diversity becoming increasingly important in today's workplace and in the future.

