



LHWP Phase II hands over critical Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, laptops weighing scales and Village Health Workers hiking boots to strengthen primary healthcare

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) in collaboration with the ministries of Health and Education and Training, today celebrated a significant milestone in public health advancement with the official handover of a set of health Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, scales, laptops, and Village Health Workers' (VHW) hiking boots. This initiative is part of the implementation of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase II (LHWPII) Public Health Action Plan (PHAP), a comprehensive public health response developed to address community health challenges in the LHWP II areas.

LHDA handed 90 800 IEC materials to the Ministry of Health (MoH) and 427 VHW hiking boots while the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) received laptops and weighing scales for implementation of the School Health Programme at eleven high schools in the Phase II area.

The handover ceremony held at the Polihali Operations Centre, Mokhotlong on 15 May, was attended by the Mokhotlong district leaders and senior officials from MoH and MoET, health implementing partners and representatives from hospitals, health centres, village health workers and school principals in the project area.

Mr Phenithi, the MoH Head of Communications indicated that the IEC materials cover a range of high-priority health topics including cancer, diabetes, hypertension, smoking, family planning and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). He confirmed that they were designed through a collaborative process involving the MoH's Health Education Department, technical teams and health partners (Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association, Baylor and SolidarMed). The process included testing for cultural relevance and simplicity through engagement of the other health professionals, community and Mapholaneng high school language teachers.

Director of Primary health Dr Maama commended the LHDA for this initiative which is in line with the Ministry's call to invest in disease prevention as the materials have been tailored to strengthen communities' understanding of health conditions prevention, management and encourage healthy habits.

Dr Marole, the Chief Education Officer- Secondary Education expressed gratitude to the LHDA for implementing the school health programme. He indicated that the tools they received would not only enhance their efforts in ensuring that learners are healthy but will also go a long way in supporting the digitisation of education in schools. When he gave a vote of thanks, the Mokhotlong District Administrator emphasised the need for accountability to ensure that the IEC and the tools that the two ministries received would be used for the intended purpose.

The 11 laptops and weighing scales will be used for School Health Programme, which is implemented at Mokhotlong, Seeiso, St James, Maboloka, Sekonyela, Mapholaneng, Khotsang, St Martins, Laghetto, Katse and Mamohau high schools. They will support growth and nutrition monitoring initiative introduced to schools to assess children's patterns of growth. The weighing scales will be used for monitoring weight and height of learners while the laptops will be used for nutrition classifications.

