

LHDA holds a mini stakeholder conference in Butha Buthe



The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) held a mini stakeholder conference on the 20th May 2026, in Butha Buthe as part of preparations for its main summit later this spring. The meeting revealed both technical challenges and a shift in communication style with communities.

The conference brought together diverse stakeholders — community representatives, chiefs, council members, government ministries, district administrators, and members of parliament. Discussions centred on environmental conservation, water access, labour recruitment, financial literacy, and community development projects around the 'Muela Hydropower Station.

'Muela Operations Branch Manager Lehlohonolo Molapo outlined pressing issues: malfunctioning pumps, leaking pipes, and slow water distribution to villages. He explained that these problems hindered access to clean drinking water. Molapo also highlighted financial literacy training for compensation recipients, developed with banks, to help communities manage funds sustainably.



Community representative Mosiuoa Sekantsi noted a significant change in LHDA's approach. "I can sense a shift from asymmetric communication, where LHDA dominated discussions, to symmetric communication where both sides share power," he said. He emphasized that persuasion and partnership were more effective than threats in encouraging conservation of rangelands and wetlands.

Chief Executive Tente Tente reinforced this shift, admitting that while LHDA excelled in infrastructure, it had fallen short in addressing social issues. "It is imprudent to do the same thing every day and expect different results," he remarked, signalling a new direction in stakeholder engagement.

Member of Parliament Dada Jumar praised the initiative, pledging to raise issues of inheritance, environmental conservation, and water access in parliamentary committees. He stressed that communities should benefit from local resources, drawing parallels to Angola's oil wealth.

The mini conference served not only as preparation for the upcoming national summit but also as a turning point in LHDA's relationship with communities. By shifting from directive communication to collaborative dialogue, LHDA is positioning itself to better deliver on both its infrastructure mandate and its social responsibilities.