



Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

P.O. Box 7332, Maseru 100, Lesotho • Telephone: (+266) 22 246 000 / 22 311 280 • Fax: (+266) 22 310 665 • Email: lhwp@lhda.org.ls

LESOTHO HIGHLANDS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Heavy rains experienced in the Lesotho Highlands Water Project areas

Maseru, 29 January, 2021 – The recent heavy rainfall in most parts of the country including the highlands of Lesotho, as reported by the Lesotho Meteorological Services has impacted on the river flow levels and induced flooding in and around work areas within the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. In the Polihali area, the floods have affected the diversion tunnels construction site.

No employees have been injured and the site has been evacuated to ensure the safety of all employees.

At this juncture, we can confirm that the river has overtopped the temporary bridge which allows access to the construction site and the outlet and inlet portal berms. There is some flooding in the tunnels and some equipment and temporary offices have washed away. The full impact of the flooding will only be known when the flood waters have receded.

There will be temporary interruption to the works and operations will resume once the effects of the floods have been addressed. However, neither Phase II nor Phase I permanent infrastructure is threatened.

The Phase I infrastructure that includes the Katse and Mohale Dams and the 'Muela Hydropower Plant is secure. Dam levels are rising as is to be expected but there is no imminent danger of the dams spilling or of the need to release water downstream. The Mohale reservoir level has risen from 34.0% on Thursday the 28th to **36.10%** today, the 29th. The Katse reservoir level has risen from 59.67% on Thursday the 28th to **62.49%** today.

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority advises the public to exercise care around the rivers and road cuttings. The ground is also saturated and may be unstable.

The LHDA is monitoring the situation and will provide update as and when the need arises.

End.