

**KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

**MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORT**

**ON THE**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS**

**FROM LESOTHO’S 2ND CYCLE REVIEW**

**UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR)**

**UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

MARCH 2018

**I. Methodology and consultation process**

1. Lesotho was reviewed in January 2015. She accepted 138 recommendations upon which the current Mid-term Report is premised.
2. A consultation workshop was held on 28 June 2017, to assess the implementation of the accepted recommendations, which would inform the preparation of the Report. Participants were drawn from Governmental Ministries, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). A Multi-Sectoral Task Team comprising of representatives from Government, NGOs and CSOs was established.
3. The Task Team convened on 5 July 2017 to build on the information acquired during the previous workshop. A working document was thereafter developed by the Human Rights Unit (the Unit)of the Ministry of Law, Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights and the Legal Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations. The document was then submitted to the Multi-Sectoral Task Team for comments and further deliberations. The drafting of the report received technical and financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

**II. Follow-up to the previous review: Implementation of accepted recommendations**

1. **International Obligations and Technical Assistance**

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| 113.1. Take the necessary steps to accede or ratify the core international human rights instruments   |  | | --- | | that they are not yet acceded to (Kuwait);  114.1. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Montenegro); | | 114.2. Intensify efforts to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Denmark); | | 114.3. Sign and ratify OP-CAT as recommended by Spain in 2010 (Spain); | | 114.4. Ratify OP-CAT (Togo); | | 114.5. Accede to OP-CAT (Chile); | | 114.6. Ratify OP-CAT and simultaneously strengthen investigations of complaints (Costa Rica); | | 114.7. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); | | 114.8. Ratify the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, fully implement the Children’s Protection and Welfare Act, and ensure effective law enforcement (Germany); |   114.9. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture; and the Optional Protocol to the   International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal);   |  | | --- | | 114.10. Sign and ratify OP-ICESCR, which was recommended by the Spanish delegation in the first cycle (Spain); | | 114.11. Ratify OP-ICESCR (Uruguay); |   114.13. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  (Benin);  114.14. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Benin); |

1. All the core international human rights instruments have been ratified. The Optional Protocols on the Convention against Torture, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have not yet been ratified. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is yet to prepare Cabinet Memoranda seeking approval for the ratification of these.

**B. Cooperation with treaty bodies and special procedures**

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| 113.45. Pursue the strengthening of its cooperation with treaty bodies, step up its efforts in   domesticating international human rights legal instruments by supporting its request to   strengthen capacities in the areas which it has set out (Niger);  113.46. Seek technical assistance to meet its human rights obligations, including the  submission of its overdue reports to the relevant treaty bodies (Sierra Leone);  113.47. Hand in its initial report to the Committee against Torture as soon as possible  (Denmark);  113.48. Train and prepare public officials responsible for preparing State reports (Gabon);  113.49. Submit overdue initial and periodic reports to the various human rights treaty bodies,  some of which have been overdue since 1994 (Ghana);  113.50. Consider issuing a standing invitation to the special procedures (Ghana);  113.51. Extend a standing invitation to all mandate holders (Latvia);  113.52. Accept the visit request by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human  rights, in particular with a view to creating necessary institutional capacities to strengthen   cooperation with the bodies of the international system for the human rights protection  (Mexico);   113.74. Continue the implementation of all obligations of the CRC, in particular to combat  violence against children and forced labour (France); |

5.1 Lesotho ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CRMW) in 1 January 2006 and the initial report was due since 2007. As such, Lesotho prepared her report under the simplified reporting procedure which was submitted on 30 November 2015. The initial report was considered by the Committee during its twenty-fourth session on 12 and 13 April 2016. The recommendations were disseminated to various stakeholders and an action plan is presently being drafted which will assist in tracking the progress on the implementation of the recommendations.

5.2 Lesotho’s report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) has been due since 1994. There is a draft report in place and a task team has been formed which will update the report. Technical assistance was sought from Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) so as to pave way for the finalization of the report. The periodic report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is ready for submission to Cabinet for approval. The initial draft report on the Convention Against Torture is also ready for submission to the Cabinet.

5.3 A workshop was held on 20 – 22 January 2016 whose purpose was to address the backlog of state party reports and propose an effective mechanism to ensure timely reporting and follow-up on the implementation of recommendations from various treaty monitoring bodies. The workshop was fully sponsored by the OHCHR Pretoria.

5.4 OHCHR organized a training workshop on training of trainers on state party reporting with particular focus on the United Nations Human Rights systems. The training was held for Government officials from the Southern Africa Region from 26 – 30 September 2016. 4 officials from Lesotho participated at this training.

5.5 A national training workshop for Government officials and CSOs on human rights treaty body reporting was held by OHCHR Pretoria in collaboration with UNDP Lesotho from 21 - 29 May 2017. The objective of the training was to explain the functions of treaty bodies and how to report to various treaty monitoring bodies. Further, to identify how Government structures can efficiently work with international human rights mechanisms and how they could be formed.

5.6 It was identified that Lesotho lacks an effective mechanism to ensure timely reporting and follow-up on the implementation of recommendations from the various treaty monitoring bodies. Missions have been undertaken to Lesotho by OHCHR to work on the establishment of a National Mechanism on Reporting and Follow-up. The process to establish such is underway.

**C. Women’s rights and human trafficking**

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| 113.2. Include in the Constitution and other legislation provisions prohibiting discrimination  against women in matters such as adoption, marriage, divorce, devolution of property, burial   and death (Canada);  113.4. Incorporate the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against   Women in its domestic law (Netherlands);  113.5. Incorporate the principle of gender equality in its domestic law and prohibit by law  discrimination on the grounds of gender and domestic violence (Costa Rica);  113.6. Continue to align its national laws, specially the sub-constitutional legislation and  customary legal practices, with its international human rights obligations, particularly in the  field of gender equality and prevention of violence against women, where special programmes  and policies would be highly welcomed (Brazil);  113.7. Prioritize the adoption and enactment of the Domestic Violence Bill and put in place  further comprehensive measures to prevent and address gender-based violence, including the  establishment of institutions for victim support (Germany);  113.8. Enact the Domestic Violence Bill into law, ensuring that future cases of domestic  violence are dealt with decisively (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);  113.9. Incorporate the principle of gender equality into all areas of law by repealing or  amending all existing discriminatory legislation, in order to achieve full de jure equality for  women in Lesotho, in compliance with the State’s international treaty obligations (Latvia);  113.11. Consider amending discriminatory provisions and administrative regulations relating to  family, marriage, divorce and share of marital property, with the aim to eliminating  discrimination against women (Namibia);  113.12. Ensure full gender equality in marriage and family relations, including by expressly  prohibiting gender-based discrimination and repealing remaining discriminatory provisions  (Slovenia);  113.53. Further strengthen the understanding of gender equality, in order to eliminate  patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes (Slovenia);  113.54. Take necessary measures to actively combat violence against women and promote  gender equality, in particular by reforming discriminatory legislation against women (France);  113.55. Take more effective measures to address cultural practices that foster discrimination  against women (Ghana);  113.56. Enhance efforts to fight all forms of discrimination against women by ensuring effective  implementation of existing legislation (Italy);  113.61. Implement progressively and effectively the legislations and policies on trafficking in  persons (Ethiopia);  113.62. Provide legal remedies and assistance for victims of trafficking in persons (Sierra  Leone);  113.63. Continue the fight against trafficking in human beings by implementing a  comprehensive program to combat these practices and support the victims (France);  113.64. Enforce all laws that protect children from trafficking and exploitation, and their uses in  illegal activities (Libya);  113.65. That Lesotho ensures the effective implementation of its human trafficking legislation  (Trinidad and Tobago);  113.66. Ensure the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of human trafficking as well as   to endure necessary assistance to victims (Turkey);  113.68. Continue efforts in implementation of the National Action Plan to end Gender Based  Violence Against Women (South Africa);  113.69. Provide comprehensive protection for women exposed to violence (Turkey);  113.70. Prevent and combat domestic violence (Djibouti);  113.71. Enact the law on domestic violence in order to overcome the Penal Code’s  shortcomings in covering domestic violence cases (Turkey);  113.72. Intensify efforts to adopt laws and measures to address domestic violence more  effectively (Philippines);  114.15. Adopt legislative measures to check trafficking in women and girls (Ghana);  114.21. Implement the July 2014 national anti-trafficking action plan and enact implementing  regulations for the 2011 anti-trafficking act, including by making the changes necessary to  ensure that trafficking cases are prosecuted in the magistrate courts, not just the high court  (United States of America);  114.22. Endeavour to investigate all cases of gender violence, punish the perpetrators and  compensate the victims (Ghana); |

6.1According to Lesotho Millennium Development Goals 2015 Report, Lesotho has made progress in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. Noted progress is in education and non-agricultural wage employment. Further, the Government, in conjunction with UNDP trained Senate Committee and Women's Caucus on Sustainable Development Goals and Gender focused issues.

6.2 The Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR) simplified, translated and popularized the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006. The simplified version is being disseminated in the districts by giving copies to community leaders, organisations and the public at large during public gatherings or forums.

6.3 The Government and CSOs hold 50/50 campaigns intended to advocate for equal representation and participation of women and men in leadership and at all levels of decision making processes. These campaigns are held through forums, public gatherings, media, community dialogues and aligning them to the themes of gender calendar.

6.4 The State commemorates African Women’s Month, International Girl Child Day, Day of the African Child, International Men’s Day and International Women’s Day annually, International Day of the elimination of Violence. Themes for each event are usually aligned to promote gender equality, promotion of the rights of a category in question and alignment with the SDGs.

6.5 Gender Links in collaboration with MGYSR established 50 Centers of Excellence. These are community councils identified to mainstream gender in their planning and programmes. The Centers of Excellence have been empowered on gender mainstreaming and human rights, and this initiative has widely disseminated information on human rights and gender issues at the grassroots level through the assistance of community councilors.

6.6 The MGYSR and the CSOs conduct CEDAW campaigns with the purpose of disseminating information on the Convention. Moreover, the Convention was simplified and translated into the local language (Sesotho).

6.7 Gender and Development policy 2003, which is a primary guideline for advancing gender equality in Lesotho, is under review. A draft of the reviewed policy, Gender and Development Policy 2017 – 2027 is awaiting cabinet approval. This draft policy is aligned to Southern African Development (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development and some provisions of the CEDAW Convention and the SDGs

6.8 Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled (LNFOD) developed Gender Equality Policy 2015 which is key to eliminating barriers to gender equality within the organisation’s operations.

6.9 The private sector offers female awards to a woman who has shown distinctive leadership skills and practices – it could be in politics, business or any economic activity and social empowerment projects; it also offers male award to a man who has shown an outstanding commitment in driving gender equality agenda in Lesotho. Both awards spur individuals to dedicate their efforts to advance women and girls politically, socially and economically.

6.10 The Government through Lesotho Enterprise Assistance Programme (LEAP) subsidises women entrepreneurs by 75% when they participate in international exhibitions as a way of advancing women in enterprise development.

6.12 The Lesotho Law Reform Commission conducted a study that will inform the Domestic Violence Bill. The study was re-conducted because the information which was previously used by the commission was found obsolete. The findings of the study were validated and drafting of the bill is in process.

6.13 The Lapeng Care Centre has been strengthened. The Centre currently operates 24 hours, and it provides psycho-social support and resilience skills to Gender Based Violence (GBV) survivors. The Centre has a permanent social worker, a nurse and a matron. Through UNFPA and UNAIDS support the centre received training for staff on basic developmental counselling to equip them with counselling skills on gender-based violence. ICT equipment were procured and installed at the GBV One-stop centre. An assortment of clothes and pharmaceuticals were procured for the women and children accommodated at the One-stop centre Through the assistance of Population Services International (PSI) the centre has a legal advisor.

6.14 The Government and CSOs continue to conduct GBV campaigns where the public is sensitised on forms and effects of GBV as well as reporting mechanisms and standard operating procedures. Moreover, MGYSR in collaboration with Gender Links trained GBV Survivors on entrepreneurship in ten community councils in 2015. Furthermore, MGYSR continues empowering women’s groups in order to enable them to be economically independent. This strategy is used to eliminate GBV caused by economic factors.

6.15 The Government through the Ministry of Small Business Development, Cooperatives and Marketing development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Policy 2016. The Policy gives guidance on accessibility to credit. It has been noted that a large number of women own Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises.

6.16 The Ministry has strengthened two GBV networks in the district of Maseru. The overall role of the networks is to handle GBV cases at the community level and assist survivors with the reporting procedure. There is also male involvement in GBV prevention programme which aims to engaging men and boys as agents of change in promoting gender equality and creating a healthy living environment. Accordingly, there is Khotla Lesotho, a males NGO, working on GBV prevention and human rights.

6.17 The MGYSR, Ministry of Social Development (MOSD) and CSOs various campaigns aimed at ending child marriage. The Ministry of Social Development has launched a campaign calling for an end to child marriages which will run until end of 2017.

6.18 The Government simplified, translated and disseminated Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act as part of awareness campaigns on human trafficking. Moreover, the Government in collaboration with CSOs hold continuous campaigns on human trafficking, targeting women and girls in both rural and urban areas. The campaigns include Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa cross-border campaigns, public gatherings and door-to-door campaigns. The communities are educated about human trafficking issues emanating from the provisions of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act.

6.19 The Governments of the Kingdom of Lesotho and that of the Republic of South Africa held a joint symposium on labour exploitation and human trafficking in Free State Province in 2015 where they jointly committed to cooperate on promoting the eradication of labour exploitation through, amongst others, ensuring that employment contracts are concluded between Basotho women who provide household services to employers in South Africa, as well as providing joint awareness raising campaigns on human trafficking and HIV and AIDS as well as training to public officials working in borderline towns.

6.20 UNFPA is actively engaged in strengthening Capacities of Parliamentarians to advocate for and participate in the development and implementation of laws and policies on SGBV and Harmful Practices including linkages to SRHR related legislation and policies, and gender equality and non-discrimination. Through UNFPA support the first gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies baseline study in Lesotho was commissioned and a number of outreach activities done to strengthen prevention, response and coordination of GBV cases during emergencies.

Through UNFPA support the first National Standard Operating procedures were developed to address GBV in emergencies

Through UNFPA support, Ministry of health revised the health response guidelines in addressing sexual offences, and aligned it the WHO international standards, Health practitioners received capacity building on screening of GBV cases

UNFPA supported the Ministry of Education and Training in the revision of out of school curricular to include comprehensive sexuality education and GBV

With the support of UNFPA a gender expert is engaged and has contributed substantive inputs and insights to support the process and ensure integration of gender and SDG 5 into the NDSP II

**D. Children’s Rights**

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| 113.41. Continue to actively protect rights of women and children (Russian Federation);  113.58. Ensure that birth registration is effectively implemented and enforced by allocating  sufficient human and financial resources to the National Identity and Civil Registry Department  to promote the effectiveness of birth registration systems and processes (Latvia);  113.75. Take action towards more pervasive measures to prevent violations of the rights of  children through, inter alia, training professionals such as teachers, doctors and social workers  to identify potential situations of abuse and report them to the authorities (Brazil);  113.76. Provide effective institutional mechanisms that duly protect girls against sexual abuses  and effectively prevent early and forced marriage (Chile);  113.80. Increase oversight of labour recruitment agencies licensed in Lesotho, and accelerate  legal reforms to combat the worst forms of child labour (United States of America);  113.81. Strengthen measures to protect children from the worst forms of labour, and ensure  full implementation of the Children’s Protection and Welfare Act (Botswana);  113.83. Strengthen measures to implement the law on the protection and well-being of  children, particularly in rural areas, so as to prevent children having to work in the fields or in  home in order to meet their needs and those of their families (Democratic Republic of the  Congo);  113.101. Take action at all levels to address the interlinked root causes of preventable  mortality and morbidity of children under 5 and consider applying the “Technical guidance on  the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and  programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5  years of age”, A/HRC/27/31 (Ireland);  113.116. Take necessary measures aimed at combating sexual exploitation of migrant women  and children, especially young girls.  114.20. Take measures to ensure the universal registration of births, including through the  simplification of necessary requirements and the removal of costs (Mexico); |

7.1 The Ministry of Home Affairs has improved registration of births, deaths and the human resource has also been intensively increased. This has been done by increasing offices and officers responsible for civil registry in the ten districts of the country as well as through eleven Citizen Service Centres (One Stop Shop Centres) operating in eleven community councils.

7.2 The Ministry of Social Development is leading the process of amending Children’s Protection and Welfare Act (CPWA) 2011, to add sections that criminalise child marriage. Furthermore, the Ministry, in conjunction with Development partners such as United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), has run campaigns on media platforms and in communities, sensitising people against child marriage. The MOSD is leading preparations for the hosting of the African Union official launch of End Marriage campaign in October 2017.

7.3 Through the amendment Act, the Ministry of Social Development has proposed to discard a section in the CPWA that could be inferred to be condoning child labour, and thereby, criminalising any form of child labour.

7.4 Recognising the role of social protection in addressing poverty and inequality, the country has demonstrated extraordinary commitment by allocating about 9% of its GDP to social protection. In order to make the investment efficient and effective, both in development and humanitarian contexts, the Governments have been strengthening the social protection system, consolidating policies and strategies, programmes to address age-specific vulnerabilities, institutional arrangements, and coordination mechanisms. Child Grand Programme is a flagship programme the addresses the vulnerabilities and deprivation of children’s access to basic social services. Acknowledging the role of the grant, the Government has decided to increase the coverage from 26,000 households to 38,000 across 36 community councils[[1]](#footnote-1). The 2017/18 budget has proposed an upward adjustment of the Child Grant Programme by 25 percent.

**E. Persons with Disabilities**

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| 113.10. Incorporate the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the national  legislation, and take the necessary measures for them to attain work opportunities (Libya);  113.57. Step up the efforts to improve gender equality as well as to promote the rights of  persons with disabilities, especially with regard to access to education and employment  opportunities (Thailand);  113.114. Continue consolidating social protection programmes undertaken in favour of persons  with disabilities (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));  113.115. Develop and adopt legal and administrative measures aimed at making its education  premises accessible and, on the other hand, at training teachers, with a view to guaranteeing  full access to education to people with disabilities (Argentina); |

8. 1 There is in place a Disability Equity Bill of 2016. The Bill is yet to be enacted by the 10th Parliament. It guarantees full access to education to persons with disabilities as well as capacitating teachers with necessary skills to teach students with disabilities.

8.2 The Bill addresses the issue of access to buildings, including school premises. Further, the National University of Lesotho and the Lesotho College of Education offer special education in their curriculum.

8.3 Persons with disabilities receive public assistance from the Ministry of Social Development. The assistance is in a form of cash allowance. The Ministry also offers assistance in a form of assistive devices if need be. Moreover, the Ministry is in the process of establishing a Disability Trust Fund through the Ministry of Finance.

**F. Promotion of Human Rights and Other Human Rights Issues**

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| 113.13. Take steps to establish an independent national human rights institution in line with  the Paris Principles (Kenya);  113.14. Pursue the adoption process of the draft bill on the National Human Rights  Commission of 2014 with a view to render it fully operational (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic  of));  113.15. Expedite enactment of planned legislation to establish a Human Rights Commission  (Australia);  113.16. Conclude the project of creating an independent national human rights commission in  line with the Paris Principles (Djibouti);  113.17. Finalize efforts to create a National Human Rights Commission in line with the Paris  Principles (France);  113.18. Establish a national human rights commission (Gabon);  113.19. Take necessary measures to finalize the process of establishing the National Human  Rights Commission (Mali);  113.20. Step up efforts aimed at promptly establishing an independent national human rights  institution in line with the Paris Principles (Mexico);  113.21. The National Human Rights Institution be made fully operational and ensure that it  functions in conformity with Paris Principles (Morocco);  113.22. Continue its efforts towards the operationalization of the National Human Rights  Commission (Rwanda);  113.23. Establish a national human rights institution which is in conformity with the Paris  Principles (Sierra Leone);  113.24. Establish a National Human Rights Commission (Spain);  113.25. Establish an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris  Principles (Timor-Leste);  113.26. Continue the ongoing process to operationalize the National Human Rights  Commission (Zimbabwe);  113.27. Implement and put in place the Human Rights Commission, in line with the Paris  Principles (Chile);  113.28. Continue efforts on the operationalization of the National Human Rights Commission in  accordance with the Paris Principles (South Africa);  113.29. Speed up the process of setting up a national human rights commission, with the  support of the international community (Mozambique);  113.31. Takes all necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation of the national  human rights policy and action plan (Kenya);  113.32. Continue its efforts to develop a national policy for human rights and to finalize the  establishment of an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris  Principles (Yemen);  113.33. Continue its efforts to implement the adopted National Strategies aiming at providing  further protection and promotion for human rights in the country (Sudan);  113.34. Continue the reforms to improve the policies and special programmes to strengthen  and protect human rights (Kuwait);  113.37. Redouble efforts towards the realization of, at least, part of the remaining Millennium  Development Goals (Mozambique);  113.82. Continue strengthening its proper social policies in order to provide greater well-being  and living standard to its people, for which international support and cooperation are  fundamental (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));  113.73. Investigate all cases of domestic violence, in collaboration with the civil society  engaged in this field and to develop a comprehensive national strategy to facilitate equal  access of girls and women to all levels and fields of education (Italy);  113.117. Fully implement the National Strategic Development Plan aimed at reducing poverty  and achieving sustainable development, including through the enactment of the draft National  Policy on Social Development (South Africa); |

9.1 The Human Rights Commission was established by the 6th amendment to the Constitution in 2011. Prior to the enactment of the law, there were concerns that the Commission was not compliant with the Paris Principles pertaining to the appointment and dismissal procedures of the Commissioners. As a result, numerous consultations were undertaken by Government and relevant stakeholders. On 2 November 2015, the Human Rights Commission Bill was tabled in Parliament and the Human Rights Commission Act was promulgated in June 2016. Some NGOs stated that the law did not follow all the legislative stages prescribed by law. A case was lodged by the NGOs. The case was dismissed by the High Court and an appeal has been lodged.

9.2 Regulations spelling out the appointment of Commissioners were passed in August 2016. There will be a selection panel made up of relevant Ministries and NGOs. The Public Service Commission has approved the structure of the Commission and preparations are underway to operationalize the Commission.

9.3 On 23 September 2016, the Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled was presented with the Human Rights Commission Act 2016 which has been transcribed into Braille, this being the first piece of legislation of its nature. The rationale was that persons with disabilities have the right to access to information and need to know the contents of the Act so that they will be able to access the Human Rights Commission.

9.4 In October 2016, UNDP funded the Ministry of Law to undertake a study tour to the Kenya National Human Rights Commission. The objective of the tour was to benchmark and learn from their best practices, challenges and successes in setting up and running an independent national human rights institution.

9.5 The structure of the Commission has been submitted to the Ministry of Public Service for approval. There are on-going awareness raising programmes on the dissemination of the Commission to the general public. Some of these have been sponsored by the UNDP.

9.6 There has not been any progress on the national human rights action plan due to financial constraints.

9.7 Through Programme on Reform of Governance, Rights and Empowerment for Sustained Stability, UNDP aims to support partners in the further entrenchment of democratic principles and stability. Some of the overall objective of the Programme is to deepen a culture of good governance and human rights protection through strengthening the capacity of key institutions of governance (Parliament, Independent Electoral Commission, the Human Rights Unit and the Human Rights Commission) and ensuring civil society participation. It is on this basis that the Unit is benefiting through this programme. Other institutions include the Ministry of Public Service, Christian Council of Lesotho, Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organizations and Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offenses.

9.8 The Ministry of Social Development has formulated an Older Persons Policy 2016. With effect from the present financial year 2017/18, old age pension was increased from M550 (US$ 42) to M700 (US$ 54). The Government is also in the process of ratifying the AU Protocol on the Rights of Older Persons.

9.9 The Government has embarked of a number of activities, with a view to implementing, adopting and strengthening National strategies. The NSDP was reviewed in 2016. The Review has identified six areas of development concern which have contributed to sub-optimal implementation of the NSDP strategy. These are: (1) chronic political uncertainty, bringing with it the politicization of civil service management; (2) institutional fragmentation; (3) design flaws in the NSDP related to poverty reduction and employment generation, (4) weak links between NSDP priorities and spending patterns; (5) the reduction of donor support; and (6) untimely monitoring and evaluation and weak implementation management.[[2]](#footnote-2) Policy adaptation in these six areas can go far in taking out impediments to better development results.

The Review also identified four main areas of accomplishment and promise, which will help progress development in Lesotho. These include: (1) emerging dynamism in Lesotho's private sector; (2) emerging consensus on embarking upon public sector modernization; (3) effective interfaces between development partners and line ministries; and (4) emerging progress and shortfalls at the ministry level.

It is important to note at this stage that the application of these lessons can ensure that in the 2018/19 - 2022/period NSDP 2

**G. Socio-economic Rights**:

***Right to health***

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| 113.67. Undertake further steps to prevent gender-based violence and combat preventable,  maternal mortality and morbidity (New Zealand);  113.92. Continue efforts to ensure free access to health care throughout the country (Algeria);  113.93. Ensure that the new initiatives on health centres reach all districts of the Kingdom  (Ethiopia);  113.94. Enhance capacity of health centres and health service providers, with a view to  improving access to quality health services of people, particularly in the rural areas  (Philippines);  113.95. Plan to re-establish the National AIDS Commission so as to effectively support  programmes and policies to combat HIV/AIDS (Democratic Republic of the Congo);  113.96. Develop more effective strategies to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS (Togo);  113.97. Step up awareness-raising campaigns on effective methods to combat and fight AIDS   (Angola);  113.98. Further involve civil society actors in awareness-raising campaigns with respect to  infectious diseases, in particular HIV (Senegal); 113.102. Continue to strengthen the provision  of health-care services to its people, particularly women and children (Singapore);  113.99. Suitably addresses the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls by   increasing its efforts to further reduce the number of women and girls affected by the HIV  pandemic and to increase prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and AIDS  (Namibia);  113.100. Implement foreseen measures to reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS by at least 15  per cent (Cuba);  113.103. That Lesotho seeks to increase access to affordable contraceptive methods and  antiretroviral treatment and to promote education on sexual and reproductive health (Trinidad  and Tobago);  113.104. Implement policies and plans aimed at improving maternal and child health, and  ensure equitable access to health services to effectively address maternal and infant mortality  (Botswana);  113.118. Define and deploy the necessary resources, particularly human, legislative and  financial resources, in order to effectively implement the Lesotho Government’s ambitious  policy in the field of economic and social rights, particularly with respect to health care and  education (Senegal);  114.24. Meet the target of allocating 15 per cent of Government spending to health, in  accordance with the Abuja Declaration (Slovenia); |

10.1 The National Aids Commission (NAC) has been re-established. It was inaugurated on 10 December 2015. NAC distributed 31 condoms per adult man in 2015, above the UNFPA’s regional benchmark of 30.45 percent condom use among adults aged 15-49 with more than one sexual partner. The percentage of condoms distributed is 60.9 percent in 2015.

10.2 The Ministry of Health has come up with strategies such as the Lesotho National Health Strategy for Adolescents and Young People 2015-2020. According to the Strategy, adolescents and young people have a right to access information, skills and services concerning their health. The Strategy also addresses issues of prevention; contraception and education programmes for young people. There is also a Revised Action Plan for Women and Girls and HIV and AIDS 2012-2016. The Plan addresses issues of access to health care services, particularly in the area of HIV/AIDS and ARVs. The Government has also developed a Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategic Plan 2015-2020 which covers sexual and reproductive rights of women and girls. There is also in place a National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP)2012/13-2016/17. The plan seeks to deploy skilled health/birth attendants to all Government health centres, provide maternal health education to communities and develop skills specific to youth, scale up reproductive health education, including promotion of family planning and improvement of health services as well as scaling up essential nutrition package for pregnant and lactating mothers.

UNFPA has also supported the development of RMNCHA&N strategy which will guide the delivery of integrated RMNCHA&N through the continuum of care. The strategy focuses on early ANC attendance which will increase the uptake of timely maternal health services and contact opportunities between health care workers and pregnant women.

UNFPA supported MOH in implementation of helping babies training which developed the capacity of 13 master trainers and 53 health workers to identify risks signs of new born asphyxia and to perform new born resuscitation

UNFPA supported MOH to review family planning guidelines to accommodate latest WHO released medical eligibility criteria which ensures that no one is left behind in particular patients with on ART

Through the support of UNFPA, MOH through its routine data indicates 122 female and 22 males were reached with permanent methods, injections 134,366, pills 61802, long term methods 20591

Through UNFPA integrated SRHR/HIV/SGB outreach services, a total of 17184 people were reached during the outreach. Within this number 9261 people were provided with family planning services, 1283 reached with HIV and Testing Services. MOH received support through training health care providers in 10 District on integrated SRHR/HIV/SGBV

Through UNFPA, MOH has conducted Service Delivery Point survey on availability and accessibility of maternal lifesaving commodities/ Family Planning commodities and services in all 179 health centres.

10.3 The Government is committed to ensuring a healthy nation through immunization campaigns, health education, the fight against both communicable and non-communicable diseases. Since the review in 2015, the Government, through the Ministry of Health, has embarked on a number of awareness raising campaigns, with a view to combating and fighting against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The initiatives include celebrations held on World AIDS Day on 01 December 2015 and 2016 respectively. Further, the Government hosts educational programmes including consistent and correct use of condoms on the national television and in various radio stations across the country.

10.4 The Government has undertaken HIV prevention programmes, which include prevention of mother to child transmission programmes, condom distribution and voluntary medical male circumcision.

10.5 The Government works in partnership with a number of CSOs to raise awareness about the HIV/AIDS pandemic. A congruent example is the free issuance of condoms by the Government, with the support of partners such as UNFPA. Other partners include PSI, which has also been undertaking social marketing of condoms in collaboration with UNFPA. The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric Aids Foundation (EGPAF) has been instrumental in collaborating with the Ministry of Health by continuing to scale up access to HIV services. EGPAF currently supports more than 205 sites in eight districts to implement a comprehensive HIV package of services. Kick 4 life campaign uses football to bring HIV prevention messages to young people. From the beginning of 2016, the campaign has reached over 250,000 of 15-24 year olds.[[3]](#footnote-3)

10.6 During the financial year 2015/2016, the Ministry of Health launched a retention programme for nurses and midwives working in remote areas of the country. The Government has also continued to train more medical doctors, with a third cohort of students having been sent to Zimbabwe beginning of 2015 and approximately 39 nurses sent for advanced midwifery training to address maternal mortality.

10.7 In June 2016, Lesotho became the first African country to implement a ‘Test and Treat’ strategy. The Strategy was launched on 19 April 2016. It provides that every person who tests HIV positive will be offered ART regardless of their CD4 count. This Strategy is in line with WHO guidelines released in September 2015[[4]](#footnote-4) which seeks to remove all limitations on eligibility for antiretroviral therapy (ART) and recommend that anyone infected with HIV should begin ART as soon after diagnosis as possible. The Ministry of Health is also implementing nationwide, the Lesotho Population Based HIV Impact Assessment to generate data on HIV and AIDS on the entire population. The survey will enable better understanding of the impact of HIV in the Country[[5]](#footnote-5).

10.8 In the financial year 2015/2016, the budget that was allocated to the Ministry of Health was 13 percent of the entire national budget. In 2016, the Government met the target of allocating 15 percent of the national budget to the Ministry of Health as enshrined in the Abuja Declaration.

10.9 The Government has subsidised most health care services. On the other hand, antiretroviral treatment continues to be provided free of charge in all Government health care centres.

10.10 With effect from October 2014 to September 2015, the Ministry of Health in conjunction with World Vision developed a Citizen Voice and Action Programme, with the aim of increasing the capacity of the community to engage and advocate for improved quality health and education system. The Programme targeted young men and women. As a result of the Programme, in February 2016, the proportion of infants whose births were attended to by skilled birth attendants improved from 70% to 85%. Further, mother's waiting rooms were constructed by the Government in health care centres in the Berea and Mohale's Hoek districts. New health centres were introduced in Sefikaneng, Makhunoane and Lenkoane village

10.11 Further, the Ministry of Health in conjunction with World Vision, developed a campaign program called Child Health Now Campaign which ran from November 2014 to October 2016. The outcomes of the programme include; increase in access to essential health services in communities, improved community utilization and demand for health services as well as increase in human resource capacity at Government health centres.

***Right to Education***

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| 113.105. Take necessary measures to guarantee all children the right to education (Algeria);  113.106. Deploy further efforts to prevent child labour and to avoid the drop out from school  of minors, with particular reference to the herd boys, ensuring a full implementation of the  Education Act of 2010 (Italy);  113.107. Put in place awareness campaigns to sensitize local communities on the importance  of education for both boys and girls alike (Latvia);  113.108. Include human rights education in the school curriculum and the necessary assistance  and capacity-building be provided to Lesotho in this regard (Mauritius);  113.109. Ensure access to education of all children, including those in hard-to-reach areas, by  increasing investments in education infrastructure and training of educators and pursuing all  possible avenues for international cooperation (Philippines);  113.110. Take the appropriate measures to address the disadvantage situation of girls  concerning access to education, as well as reports on sexual violence and abuses committed in  schools (Portugal);  113.111. Allocate more resources to improve educational infrastructure as well as to take the  necessary steps to ensure that members of the local communities, especially those living in the  rural areas, realize the importance of education for both boys and girls (Thailand);  113.112. Ensure an inclusive education system, in order to allow all children to attend classes,  in particular pregnant girls (Timor-Leste); |

11.1 The Ministry of Education and Training utilizes various forms of media such as radio, television and newspapers to disseminate information about the importance of educating a girl child and boy child as they are disadvantaged especially in the remote mountain areas. Public gatherings or “pitsos” as are commonly known are also used as the most convenient platforms where community members are actively engaged through direct dialogue and sensitized on the importance of affording both a girl child and a boy child similar educational opportunities under the theme ‘Education for All”. This method is particularly employed in remote rural areas where other medium of communication such as radio, television and newspapers are scarce.

11.2 The Ministry of Education and Training, has also set aside a budget for renovation of the existing science laboratories and construction of new ones every fiscal year. New schools are built each year particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas. Further, the Ministry continues to accord teachers or educators various forms of training. These include workshops sponsored by the Ministry and other learning opportunities such as enrolling for both short and long term training.

11.3 Moreover, the Ministry has established a School Improvement Plan system. Under the system, the school principal and school board are required to work in close collaboration with community members to identify the improvements to be effected in a school and the school is ultimately allocated a grant geared towards effecting such identified improvements by the Ministry.

11.4 The Ministry of Education and Training addresses the issue of sexual violence and abuses committed in schools by training teachers to be lay counsellors in order to give psycho-social support to children who have been subjected to any form of abuse. They also identify children and refer them to the relevant institutions including the police and health centres, for due assistance depending on the needs of each individual child. Over and above this initiative by the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Social Development intends to place social workers at schools so that they can identify situations of abuse when they occur. There is also an HIV/AIDS coordination Unit within the Ministry of Education and Training whose mandate includes amongst others, encouraging children to report cases of sexual abuse. To complete these initiatives, the Ministry introduced Child Friendly Schools Standards for creating a healthy, non-abusive, child-centred environment where teaching and learning can happen in a child-friendly manner.

11.5 Within the Ministry of Education and Training, there is a Special Education Unit whose primary focus is on children with special educational needs such as children with disabilities. Through the initiative of the unit, the Government has established special schools designed to enrol and accommodate children with specific and often severe disabilities. Moreover, infrastructural improvements are continually being made in ordinary schools to accommodate children with special educational needs. Educational aids and facilities that are user friendly for these children are gradually being made available in schools. These include books transcribed in Braille.

11.6 The Ministry of Labour and Employment’s Child Labour Department developed a plan of action to eliminate child labour (APEC) 2013-2017 and Guidelines for Agriculture Sector with Special Attention on Herd boys.

11.7 Currently, human rights education is part of the school curriculum. The content of the curriculum includes topics such as HIV/AIDS prevention, gender equality, human rights, life skills, alcohol and substance abuse and sexual and reproductive health. The curriculum is offered from upper primary from grade 4 to grade 10. Further, human rights education is also offered as course at intuitions or higher leaning particularly the National University of Lesotho for law students.

11.8 Sensitisation campaigns aimed at encouraging both teachers and parents to allow pregnant girls to remain in class for as long as the condition of their pregnancy permits. The effort is often stifled by the fact that such girls drop out as a result of stigma and do not subsequently re-enrol due to parenting responsibilities.

11.9 Socio-economic factors contribute significantly to the phenomenon of school drop-out, especially in relation to herd boys. The Ministry has adopted a system of informal education in an effort to address this challenge. Through programmes such as literacy and distance teaching programmes, education is made accessible to people who cannot enrol in formal schools such as herd boys.

2.3 Through UNFPA Adolescents and Young People were empowered with knowledge and skills to improve their Sexual and Reproductive Health status through a range of activities whereThe Comprehensive Sexuality Education Manual for young people out of school was validated,33 Master trainers were capacitated on the delivery of Comprehensive Sexuality Education for out of school young people **,**160 Health Providers were trained on Adolescents and Youth Friendly Health Services , 247 teachers were trained on the delivery of CSE in schools, Butha-Buthe, Thaba-Tseka, Leribe and Mokhotlong**,** 7500 adolescents and young people out of school were reached with Comprehensive Sexuality Education**,** 6800 adolescents and young people were reached with SRH Services and A youth mobisite “tune me” providing information on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights was launched and has been viewed more than 6000 times.

***Environment***

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| 113.85. Formulate a national disaster risk reduction programme to respond to crises relating to  food security (Egypt);  113.86. Continue efforts to develop access to water and sanitation and to combat disparities  between urban and rural areas (Togo);  113.119. Seek financial assistance for mitigation and adaption activities to address the impact  of climate change (Sierra Leone);  113.120. That a long-term sustainable policy approach be adopted to respond to crises such as  climate change and food security (Trinidad and Tobago);  113.121. Continue undertaking measures to reduce environmental degradation as an essential  requirement to reduce the impact of poverty (Cuba); |

13.1 There is in place, a National Policy aimed at reducing disaster risks and food insecurity. The Government, with the support of the United Nations is currently developing a National Resilience Framework to reduce chronically acute food insecurity

13.2 Ploughing on steep slopes and marginal lands, overgrazing of rangelands, increased use of biomass as the main source of energy, and increased frequency of droughts and floods have been the main causes of environmental degradation[[6]](#footnote-6). Lesotho is therefore currently developing a climate change policy that also addresses the impact of climate change on food security.

**H. JUSTICE SYSTEM**

***Conditions of detention***

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| 113.77. Take necessary measures for the improvement of the conditions of prisons and places  of detention (Egypt);  113.78. Adopt measures to guarantee the respect of judicial guarantees and human rights in  detention and police custody (Spain);  113.79. Put in place measures that guarantee the integrity and protection of prisoners and  detainees, particularly vis-à-vis other prisoners, in the light of cases of rapes that have led to an  increase of HIV positive prison population prevalence (Spain); |

14.1 Lesotho has made significant strides towards the improvement of conditions of prisons and places of detention. There is a significant number of correctional facilities which have recently undergone massive renovations with the aim of bringing their conditions up to the standard set by the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. Such facilities include, Maseru Central, Leribe, Thaba-Tseka, Mohale’s Hoek and Mafeteng correctional institutions. There are also professional medical officers who play a significant role in addressing issues relating to health and sanitation within the facilities. The Government enacted the Lesotho Correctional Service Act 2016. The Act has incorporated most provisions of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners which prescribes, among others, acceptable conditions of prisons.

14.2 The Ministry of Police has constructed new Police Stations. However, all the new Police Stations do not have holding cells for children, as such not meeting international standards requiring child- friendly temporary holding cells.

14.3 Efforts are also being made to address the challenge of overcrowding which has proved to be one of the main contributing factors of the poor conditions in correctional institutions. To address this issue, the Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services have put in place early release measures such as amnesty and parole for convicted inmates.

14.4 Through the support of EU and UNICEF, Village Justice Committees have been established with the aim to administer Restorative Justice to Children who have committed petty offences. This is meant to reduce backlog in the Maseru-based Children’s Court.

14.5 There are also treatment centres within the institutions, staffed with medical officers. Post exposure prophylaxis treatment is usually afforded to the victims of rape. Condoms are also made easily accessible to inmates.

14.4 The Lesotho Correctional Service through its legal and paralegal offices have taken great measures to safe guard the rights of pre-trial detainees, more particularly the right to a fair trial. These offices make follow-ups on the progress of cases of pre-trial detainees and those awaiting sentences, especially cases that seem to be dragging for a long period of time, with the purpose of ensuring that such cases are disposed within a reasonable time. Furthermore, the legal office also liaises with the relevant bodies such as the Law Society to try and mediate or resolve the differences between lawyers and their clientele in detention. On a regular basis, the legal officers also often tour correctional institutions across the country to sensitize both staff and inmates about human rights issues in general.

***Anti-Corruption***

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| 113.36. Continue to strengthen good governance at all levels to enhance service delivery  (Singapore);  113.38. Redouble its efforts to combat practices of corruption in Lesotho (Indonesia);  113.39. Continue support for agencies such as the Directorate on Corruption and Economic  Offences, and for the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan  (New Zealand);  113.40. Combat more effectively corruption and adopt necessary legal measures (Russian  Federation);  113.60. Continue efforts to combat cases of torture by adopting specific legislation to  criminalize torture, by developing training programs for the security forces and by ensuring  that perpetrators of these crimes are prosecuted (France); |

15.1 In order to continue to strengthen good governance and service delivery, the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) established:

1. Systems Integrity Committee that operates within Government ministries to put in place measures to avoid breeding ground for corruption.
2. Business Action Against Corruption; operates within businesses to ensure that businesses are aware of practices that may amount to corruption.
3. School’s Integrity Association; operates in the schools. It educates students on the ills of corruption from an early age.

15.2 Efforts undertaken to combat corruption in Lesotho include the drafting of the Prevention of Corruption and Economic Offences Bill 2017 that will ensure the autonomy and effectiveness of the Directorate as a whole.

15.3 The Directorate’s budget was significantly increased in the 2017/2018 fiscal year; this shows great political will on behalf of the Government.

15.4 Government found it befitting to strengthen the capacity of the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences. Worthy of note in this regard is the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan 2014/15 – 2018/19. This strategy is a multi-sectoral initiative involving the collective effort of the public sector, private sector and civil society through which each sector has a clearly defined role to play in fighting corruption over the next 5 years. There is also in place, the Prevention of Corruption Bill 2014. The Bill seeks to strengthen the legislative and institutional framework of DCEO to the effect that DCEO is elevated to the level of a Commission. It also focuses on the mandate of DCEO on corruption without burdening it with economic offences that could be effectively addressed by other institutions such as the Police. The Bill is awaiting presentation to Cabinet for approval.

15.5 In 2016, the Directorate implemented key priority areas of the National Anti-Corruption and Strategy and Action Plan (NACSAP) with the assistance of UNDP. This was done through a series of sectoral meetings before a multi-stakeholder meeting on corruption took place where concerted efforts and strategies to combat the endemic problem were agreed upon. This was an innovative and unprecedented coherent, forward-looking and integrated local framework to address challenges in fighting corruption in Lesotho. The sectorial meetings were aimed at paving the way for the launching of the NACSAP which is expected to contribute to harnessing political will to fight Corruption at all levels of leadership in various sectors.

15.6 The Directorate also received financial and technical support to hold an Anti-Corruption Symposium on Corruption in Procurement from UNDP in 2016. The Symposium was attended by over two hundred stakeholders from various sectors of society. In this event, a local drama group did theatrical performance on the dangers of corruption and how to report and combat it.

15.7 In the past two years, Government invested in strengthening the capacity of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) in forensic investigation and information technology infrastructure as well as refurbishing the DCEO Offices. The Directorate stepped up its effort in the fight against corruption by engaging a multi-sectoral approach though the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan.

15.8 Asset forfeiture has been introduced as a strategy towards ensuring that crime does not pay. Arrangements are at an advanced stage for the declaration of assets by public officials. Another achievement through UNDP support was kick-starting the process of asset declaration. UNDP supported the study tour to the Ugandan Anti-Corruption Commission and also procured a server for the DCEO to use to store vital information for the Asset Declaration initiative once the Cabinet gives it the ‘green light’. The visit to Uganda provided the DCEO officers with international exposure and best practices.

**J. CHALLENGES**

16.1 Women and children experience gender based violence and human trafficking despite measures taken by the Government to eliminate GBV.

16.2 Corruption continues to be a serious challenge to development not only in Lesotho, but globally as well. Despite notable steps undertaken by Government, to improve and capacitated the work of the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences, corruption remains high.

16.3 Cultural practices and gender stereotypes hinder equal opportunities between men, women, boys and girls.

16.4 Lesotho continues to be beset by challenges and constraints including a decline in agricultural production as a result of deteriorating rangeland conditions, soil erosion and periodic droughts. As a result, the country is experiencing worsening food deficit as a net food importing developing country thus contributing to widening poverty and food insecurity. Government is already undertaking measures to address these.

16.5 Public sector employment rose and employment in the private sector was reduced, contrary to the prediction that private sector employment would rise by 10, 000 jobs per year and public sector employment would come down. This resulted in high unemployment of youth reaching beyond 30 percent.[[7]](#footnote-7)

16.6 The HIV pandemic is one of the major public health and development challenges in Lesotho. It has left most children as orphans and they have increasingly become caregivers to sick parents, younger siblings and other relatives. Although Government has undertaken steps to curb the pandemic the challenge of reversing HIV and AIDS trends and patterns to get zero HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero deaths remains.[[8]](#footnote-8)

16.7 Lesotho remains a patriarchal society to date. Cultural stereotypes, societal attitudes stigma and discrimination remain a challenge in women and girls who access to health care services, especially contraceptive services among young girls and women living with disabilities and those living with HIV/AIDS. There is a limited number of health care providers in the rural areas, as a result, women and girls cannot acquire basic health care services such as obstetric care, pre/ante-natal care, and general primary health care services.

16.8 Notwithstanding the notable infrastructural improvements in a number of correctional institutions, overcrowding remains a challenge.

16.9 The Government last submitted its periodic CRC report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 1999. The default means that the UN community has not been provided an update on the status of the implementation of the rights of the children in Lesotho, a situation which should not allowed to happen again.

K. **KEY NATIONAL PRIORITIES, INITIATIVES AND COMMITMENTS**

The Government remains committed to the establishment of the Human Rights Commission which will complement the primary role of Government as a responsible agency for the promotion, protection and monitoring of human rights.

The accomplishment of National Strategies such as NSDP, Vision 2020 and SDGs that address, amongst others, poverty, job creation, unemployment in order to improve the lives of the citizens remains Government’s priority.

Continue to improve its health facilities to address the scourge of HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis, infant mortality, maternal mortality to mention but a few.

Continue to declare zero tolerance to corruption so that Lesotho’s economy thrives.

Continue to promote peace and democratic governance in order to maintain a stable and prosperous nation.

As a result of changing climatic conditions, poor land usage and urbanization, the Government will continue to implement strategies and methods such as crop production, soil evaluation and improvement, wool harvesting as well as subsidizing all agricultural and mechanical, rehabilitate irrigation schemes, undertake feasibility studies for commercial beef production in order to address food insecurity and improve agriculture.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The Government will continue to support the construction of water supply and sanitation facilities to ensure safe water and sanitation services to all.

L. **CONCLUSION**

Lesotho is desirous of moving expeditiously towards best practice in the field of human rights. The pace in this journey is determined by the availability of requisite resources, capacity and receptiveness of the society upon whom the adopted human rights are being applied. Lesotho appreciates the technical and financial support as well as good cooperation that she is receiving from several UN Agencies and individual countries, which has enhanced her strides in the promotion and protection of human rights of her citizens.

1. Lesotho Budget Speech 2017-18 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Report on the Review of NSDP and scoping of NSDP 2 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ministry of Health 2015 ‘Global Aids Response Progress Report 2015: Follow-up to the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS Intensifying Efforts to Eliminate HIV/AIDS’ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 2015 World Health Organisation Guidelines [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Lesotho Budget Speech 2017-18 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. African Development Bank Group, Country Strategy Paper 2013 - 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Report on the Review of NSDP and scoping of NSDP 2 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Report on Assessment of the legal environment for HIV and AIDS in Lesotho, UNDP Lesotho 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Report on the Review of NSDP and scoping of NSDP 2 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)