

## **Strengthening and consolidating national and community capacities for effective disaster preparedness and response in Lesotho**

*Remarks by: Mr. James Nkamba Chifwelu | National Director*

### **Protocol**

**The Honorable Minister in the Prime Minister's Office,  
Honorable Members of the Senate and National Assembly,  
The United Nations Country Representative,  
The European Union Representative present,  
Directors and Representatives of Humanitarian Agencies and the Private Sector,  
Media here present, Ladies and gentlemen**

Allow me to begin by sharing a brief overview of World Vision's mission and our longstanding presence in Lesotho. Founded in the 1950s by Bob Pierce, World Vision's mission has always been to ensure that children **realize and live life in all its fullness**. Since 1987, we have been operating in Lesotho within 14 Area Programs (APs) spread across 8 districts of Lesotho. Our work is centered around key focus areas intended to bring extreme poverty to an end by reaching children who continue to struggle in the hardest to reach places through Livelihoods & Resilience, Health, HIV and Nutrition, Advocacy, Child Protection & Participation, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, and Humanitarian Emergency Affairs.

World Vision is a Christian organization, but we operate with respect for all religions, and our focus is always on the well-being of children and communities. We receive two primary types of funding: Sponsorship, which supports APs for up to 15 years, and Grants, which fund specific projects.

Today, we come together under the auspices of an essential initiative, the European Union-funded disaster risk reduction **'Strengthening and consolidating national and community capacities for effective disaster preparedness and response in Lesotho.'** This project represents a continuation and potential consolidation of past European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) projects that have been dedicated to enhancing, supporting, and promoting disaster risk management. Let's briefly revisit the history of these previous projects: the journey began in 2018 and was extended in both 2020 and 2021, constituting the first three phases of the ECHO project. Across these phases, we reached over 41 265 individuals and 12 265 children. We empowered Village Disaster Management Teams (VDMTs), provided emergency lifesaving packages, and most recently, distributed 1 million Euros to over 3600 of the most food-insecure households. The project targeted the rural areas of Mokhotlong, Thaba-Tseka and Leribe.

In December 2022, we applied for and were successful in securing the 4th Phase of this project. This achievement solidifies our longstanding cooperation and harmonious relations with the European Union.

---

World Vision is a global Christian, relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with the most vulnerable children, families and communities to overcome poverty and experience the fullness of life. We help children of all backgrounds, even in the most dangerous places, inspired by our Christian faith.

Today, we proudly introduce CSDRR, a 2-year project designed to be implemented in the hard-to-reach areas of Maseru, Mokhotlong, Leribe, and Thaba-Tseka. This project is built upon five key results:

1. **Strengthening a functional Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) / Early Action (EA)** to reduce the impacts of shocks and disasters.
2. **Strengthening logistics preparedness capacities** of local institutions through strategic emergency stockpiling and management training.
3. **Enhancing coordination among local and national institutions for disaster preparedness**, including mainstreaming disaster preparedness policies and guidelines across all sectors.
4. **Enhancing the Education in Emergencies (EiE) policy environment** and disaster preparedness and response capacities of schools.
5. **With a crisis modifier**, we aim to assist households in responding to rapid-onset shocks and emergencies.

In the next two years, our collective aspiration is to achieve these results through collaborative efforts and joint activities. We aim to support all disaster risk management institutions and activities in the regions we serve.

World Vision's "Our Promise 2020-2030" strategy seeks to enhance collaboration with the government and relevant stakeholders to ensure that Lesotho reaches and fulfills its targets outlined in the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2030. This plan aligns with the Sendai Framework 2015-2030, which focuses on four priorities:

1. Understanding disaster risk.
2. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.
3. Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.
4. Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and "Building Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

In this context, our project also contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 13, which calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, particularly in preparedness and risk reduction. Reducing disaster risks and preparing for potential disasters is a responsibility we all share. Let us unite to protect our children from the harsh realities of climate change.

Thank you for your attention, and let us move forward with determination and commitment to make this project a success for the benefit of all the communities we serve.

**Ke ea Leboha  
Khotso.Pula.Nala**