

Championing Child Nutrition to End Hunger and Malnutrition

Remarks by: Mr. James Nkamba Chifwelu | National Director

Protocol:

His Majesty King Letsie III
Minister of Agriculture Food Security & Nutrition
The Principal Chief of Mokhotlong
Christian Council of Lesotho
District Administrator - Mokhotlong
Director Nutrition & Home Economics
Nutrition Clubs Representatives
Members of the Media
Children here present with us today

LEBITSO LA KA KE JAMES CHIFWELU, KE MOOKAMELI OA WORLD VISION INTRNATIONAL LESOTHO. KE THABILE HAHOLO HOBA KAROLO EA MOKETE OONA OA BOHLOKOA RURI.

Today, we gather under the esteemed patronage of His Majesty King Letsie III, the African Union Nutrition Champion, at a pivotal moment in our collective journey towards a nourished and prosperous Africa. I extend my deepest gratitude to His Majesty for his unwavering dedication to the cause of food security and nutrition, a cause that lies at the heart of our continent's well-being.

Agenda 2063 serves as our guiding light, illuminating the path towards a future where every African citizen enjoys access to nutritious food and the opportunity to thrive. Yet, as we take stock of our progress, we cannot ignore the sobering reality that malnutrition continues to cast a long shadow over our aspirations.

In Lesotho, this reality is starkly evident. Child stunting has increased from 33% to 35% between 2014 and 2018, while child wasting remains at a concerning 3%. Micronutrient deficiencies afflict over half of our population, with 51% of children suffering from iron deficiency anemia. The devastating impact of malnutrition is further reflected in the heartbreaking statistic that 80.2% of child mortality is attributed to nutrition-related conditions.

However, amidst these challenges, hope emerges. This week, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, World Vision is launching the ENOUGH campaign in Africa. This momentous occasion, taking place at the margins of the African Union Heads of State and Governments Summit on February 21, 2024, marks a turning point in our collective efforts to combat child hunger and malnutrition.

His Majesty King Letsie III, as the Africa Nutrition Champion, will deliver his official remarks, underscoring Lesotho's steadfast commitment to ending the scourge of malnutrition. The ENOUGH campaign embodies

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.

our shared resolve—a call to action to say "enough" to child hunger and malnutrition, and to forge a path towards a future where every child thrives

Through the ENOUGH campaign, World Vision is committed to amplifying the voices of children, ensuring they are visible and heard in hunger, nutrition, and food security policies at all levels. We are dedicated to addressing the root causes of malnutrition and providing targeted support to the most vulnerable children.

One of the cornerstones of our efforts is the establishment of nutrition clubs in communities across the Area Programmes where World Vision works in Lesotho. These clubs serve as invaluable resources for parents, caregivers, and lactating women, providing comprehensive care and education on optimal meal plans to enhance and sustain their children's health.

Moreover, our nutrition clubs serve as safe spaces that promote optimal feeding practices, including exclusive breastfeeding for infants and young children. They also foster dynamic learning and sharing forums, empowering individuals, families, and communities to embark on projects that enhance their overall well-being and longevity.

Through initiatives like our nutrition clubs, World Vision remains steadfast in our commitment to ending the scourge of hunger and malnutrition. Together with the Government of Lesotho, our partners, and stakeholders, we will continue to work tirelessly towards a future where every child has access to the nourishment they need to thrive.

Therefore, I call upon governments, policymakers, civil society, and individuals alike to join us in this vital endeavour. Let us say #ENOUGH to child hunger and malnutrition, let us act decisively, give generously, and pray earnestly for an end to this preventable tragedy.

With enough people like you, we can create a future where every child in Lesotho—and indeed, every child in Africa and the world—has the opportunity to thrive, to grow, and to realize their full potential. Together, let us make this vision a reality.

Keya Leboha

KHOTSOPULA.....NALA.....