



## NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION REFLECTS ON ITS WORK ON MIGRATION MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Members of the National Consultative Committee on Migration (NCC) held a meeting on 3 October 2023 in Maseru to reflect on their work on migration management in 2023. The meeting focused on the successes and challenges and suggested improvements for better coordination in the coming years. The meeting also served as a platform for NCC members to develop a roadmap towards implementing key migration management interventions, particularly activities prioritized under the Africa Regional Migration Program (ARMP). This meeting was supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) under ARMP.

The NCC is an inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral body that has an advisory role to the Government of Lesotho (GoL) in all aspects of migration issues. It comprises Government Ministries and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that have a role in migration. The Ministry of Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police chairs the committee. It has been playing a critical role in policy development, policy advocacy on migration projects, and program implementation in Lesotho.



Members of the National Consultative Committee on Migration. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

## METHODOLOGY TO UNDERTAKE A COUNTRY-WIDE ASSESSMENT OF MIGRATION SITUATION VALIDATED

On 5 October 2023, the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC) met in Maseru to validate the methodology to undertake a country-wide assessment of migration and its linkages with the environment and climate change in Lesotho.



Member of the NCCC Lesotho. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

This assessment aims to provide the empirical evidence and basis for developing a national Migration, Environment, and Climate Change (MECC) strategy. The strategy will contribute to Lesotho's commitment to the National Climate Change Policy and other climate action plans and policies in the country. The meeting was attended by 20 participants from relevant ministries and NGOs. It was supported by the IOM Develop Fund (IDF).



Member of the NCCC Lesotho attending the validation meeting. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

## IOM SUPPORTS HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY TO MIGRANTS AT MAJOR BORDERS AND MIGRATION-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES



Health service provider's team at migration affected village - Ha-Mathamane. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.



Migration affected community of Ha-Mokati receiving health services. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

With a focus on HIV, TB, COVID-19, and SRHR, IOM contacted a supportive supervision visit to oversee the implementation of outreach activities conducted by the Migrant Worker Association (IOM implementing partner) from 26 to 29 October 2023.

The outreaches targeted internal migrants living along the Maputsoe border and migration-affected communities of Ha-Mothamane and Ha-Mokati in the Leribe district with health services provision. Through these outreaches, a total number of 174 internal migrants were reached with HIV, TB, SRHR, and COVID-19-related services. Speaking to one of the beneficiaries from Ha-Mothamane, Mr. Sebolai Qhobane expressed his happiness at receiving health services at his place. He said they often travel a long distance to town to get services, which makes their lives difficult due to high transport costs. He said those with no transport fares struggle to get to health facilities, sometimes resulting in loss of lives.



Migrants along Ficksburg Border receiving health services. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

## IOM ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO TAKE UP SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES THROUGH SPORTS



Maputsoe soccer teams joining the tournament. ©IOM 2023/Rethabile Ramaema

Multi-sporting activities were considered one of the best mobilization strategies to encourage people to take up Sexual Reproductive Health services. In October, IOM supported three soccer tournaments in Maputsoe, Leribe District, where 12 teams from migration-affected communities were invited.

The teams' supporters were provided with different education sessions and encouraged to access different available services supporting their teams. There were prizes for the best-performing teams in the sporting events and for the teams with more supporters accessing health and non-health services. A total of 554 people were reached with comprehensive correct information on sexuality, HIV/AIDS, STIs, pregnancy, and contraception, with a total of 235 who received health services.



## MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION ARE CAPACITATED WITH KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO TACKLE VARIOUS MIGRATION ISSUES.

From 14 to 17 November 2023, IOM held a four-day workshop for Members of the NCC in Quthing. The workshop aimed to improve their knowledge and skills to tackle various migration issues in line with the objectives of the Global Compact on Migration (GCM).

The workshop brought together technical officials from academia, Government Ministries, and NGOs to foster dialogue and collectively reflect upon enhancing migration management in Lesotho. The workshop concluded with the formulation of actionable recommendations to strengthen programmatic and policy responses toward addressing emerging migration issues.



Members of the National Consultative Committee on migration attending workshop. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.



IOM Regional Program Manager for Africa Regional Migration Program, Mr Sylvester Deane facilitating the workshop. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE LAUNCHED IN SEMONKONG



Minister of Gender, Youth, and Social Development, Honourable Pitso Lesaoana delivering his Remarks. @IOM 2023 /Tsepo Molefi.

IOM joined the GoL, United Nations (UN) Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, and the Semonkong Community to launch the 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Semonkong on 24 November 2023. Due to the Maletsunyane Braai Festival in Semonkong, which attracted sufficient local and regional audience, the place became a unique platform to raise awareness, advocate for change, and promote critical issues that affect Basotho, including GBV, human rights, nutrition, and climate change in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event was honoured by the Minister of Gender, Youth, and Social Development, Honourable Pitso Lesaoana.



VIP guests during the launch of 16 days of activism against GBV. @IOM 2023 / Tsepo Molefi.



GIRL 4ce group playing drama on GBV. @IOM 2023 /Tsepo Molefi.

## DISTRICT HEALTH MANAGEMENT TEAMS ENGAGE WITH HEALTH PARTNERS TO STRENGTHEN MIGRANT-FRIENDLY HEALTH RESPONSE.



Butha-Buthe DHMT, health Partners and stakeholders. @IOM 2023 /Tsepo Molefi.

As part of strengthening migrant-friendly service delivery to improve retention in care by addressing the specific needs of migrants and mobile populations, IOM held dialogues with District Health Management Teams (DHMT), district health service providers, and other stakeholders in Quthing and Mohale's-hoek from 06- 08 November 2023. The objective of the district dialogues was to reflect on migrant-friendly services provided during outreaches to migration-affected communities in both districts. Dialogues also provided platforms for partners working in close collaboration with health facilities recording high default rates of patients on anti-retroviral treatment (ART) to share challenges and solutions linked to migration.

More importantly, as the festive season was approaching, when a large number of Basotho labour migrants and others were expected to come back to Lesotho for the December holidays, it was deemed essential to reflect on what health services were available at the borders, along border communities as well as other strategic places where health response could reach migrants and the mobile population. Sensitization and health education on the importance of continuity of care, linkages, referral to the relevant services, and provision of health services at strategic areas were some of the pillars found key for strengthening health response targeting migrants during the December influx.

# IOM IN LESOTHO COMMEMORATES INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY

To recognize the valuable contributions of migrants and uphold their rights, IOM Lesotho, in collaboration with UN Agencies, GoL, and the International Community, observed International Migrants Day (IMD) in Maseru, Lesotho, on 18th December 2023. The commemoration harnessed the momentum of the International Dialogue on Migration and COP28 to highlight the potential of migration as a solution to global challenges under the theme “Act Today” with a focus on the future.

This commemoration was attended by migrants from other countries living in Lesotho and Basotho migrants living in other countries. They shared their contributions to the communities they live in in the areas of health, education, and entrepreneurship. The event was honoured by the presence of The Minister of Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police, Honourable Lebona Lephema and the UN Lesotho Resident Coordinator (RC), Ms. Amanda Mukwashi.

Encouraging the migrants at the event, RC said, “You must be the best that you can be in the host nation in whatever space you are, whatever you do, and however little is. You should give yourselves fully, holy, and completely for your success.” For the host nation, she said, “When you create a conducive environment for migrants to flourish, to be the best that they can be, you will benefit from the skills they bring, their contribution to the economic development and other cultures.”



United Nations Lesotho Resident Coordinator Ms. Amanda Mukwashi delivering her words of encouragement. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.



International Community attending the commemoration of IMD ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.



The Minister of Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police, Honourable Lebona Lephema delivering his remarks. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

Delivering his remarks, Honourable Lephema said IMD also provided an opportunity to highlight some of the important issues affecting migrant communities. He said as a host country receiving migrants, they remain committed to ensuring that migrants get adequate protection. “We continue to improve our immigration policy and legal frameworks to be more accommodating for immigrants,” he said.

In conclusion of his remarks, he expressed his sincere gratitude to IOM for the immense support it rendered to GoL to ensure that they aligned themselves with international conventions and principles that recognized the rights and well-being of immigrants in the country. He also thanked the United States (US) Government, IDF, UN Sustainable Development Goals Fund, and other donors for supporting the GoL to minimize the negative and maximize the positive impacts of migration.



One of Basotho International Migrants, Prof. Lehana Thabane sharing his contribution in the community he lives in in Canada. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.



## LESOTHO HOSTS A HISTORIC 2023 BASOTHO DIASPORA HOMECOMING EVENT.

From 20 to 21 December 2023, GoL hosted the first Lesotho's Diaspora Homecoming event to recognize the contribution of the Basotho Diaspora to the economic development of Lesotho. This historic event was held at Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village in the District of Maseru. The event set a platform where the Basotho Diaspora was engaged in Lesotho's Development Agenda and their possible collaboration with the Government and other key national stakeholders. The space for dialogues was provided during the event to determine the appetite for the Diaspora to engage in socio-economic activities in the country. This initiative was supported by IOM in Lesotho and the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

The event was honoured by the presence of The Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), who is also the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Justice Nthomeng Majara. Delivering Her opening remarks, The DPM said the event marked a new chapter in their engagement with the Basotho Diaspora and will go down the annals of history as an event through which GoL and Basotho living and working abroad re-defined their

engagement, embraced each other, deeply connected, and celebrated a new dawn.

"While the movement of people into the diaspora used to be viewed with trepidation and was associated with loss and exile, it is now understood to have several benefits, including influencing national economies through remittances to family members in their home countries, foreign direct investment, trade facilitation and transfer of knowledge and skills," she said. "It is against this background that we have decided to forge a new partnership trajectory with our diaspora. I am confident that the benefits of this new course will be realized soon."



Participants during Basotho diaspora homecoming event at Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

She thanked the relevant Government Ministries and Officials who have been driving this initiative from the beginning and the local sponsors who found it befitting to support this noble event, which will make a significant impact in transforming the livelihoods of the citizens. "To our reliable Development Partners, namely IOM and UNDP, we are eternally grateful for your invaluable continued support in this journey," she said.



DPM Hon. Justice Nthomeng Majara delivering her opening remarks ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.



President of Basotho Diaspora, Ms. Halio Lelosa delivering her remarks. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.

Speaking on behalf of the Basotho Diaspora, Ms. Halio Lelosa emphasized that, indeed, it is the first time in the history of the Basotho nation that the sons and daughters of Lesotho came together at the feet of the important mountain of Thaba-Busiu. In this place, the Founder of the Basotho Nation, King Moshoeshoe 1 formed this wonderful nation. “We are honoured as Basotho Diaspora that our government, assisted by the International Organisations, Parastatals and the Private Sector saw fit to acknowledge us as an important factor in the country’s development,” she said.

She thanked the government for the Lesotho National Diaspora Policy and the Diaspora Directorate, which became a hub for the Basotho Diaspora in many faces. However, she said even though good strides are evident, some areas still require work. “One of the recent successes is the Remittances Policy. This still needs to be implemented and explained to the larger diaspora,” she said.

On this occasion, the Government Ministries and Agencies were invited to communicate existing support for diaspora investment and mechanisms in place to address challenges faced by the diaspora. Private businesses were also given an opportunity to showcase their work, and small Basotho businesses exhibited their products as an initiative to improve Lesotho’s economy.



Small Basotho businesses exhibiting their products. ©IOM 2023/Tsepo Molefi.



# JOINT MONITORING AND SUPPORT VISIT TO 6 POINTS OF ENTRY -STRENGTHENING HEALTH RESPONSE FOR MIGRANTS

From the 19 to 22 December 2023 Ministry of Health, through the Port Health program and IOM team, conducted a joint monitoring visit at six Points of Entry (PoEs), including Qacha's-Nek gate, Tele Bridge, Van Rooyen's gate, Maseru border, Maputsoe Ficksburg bridge, and Butha-Buthe Caledonspoort, to observe and support health service response targeted at labour migrant during December 2023 and beginning of January 2024 influx. As the festive season had arrived when a large number of Basotho labour migrants and others were already coming back to Lesotho, it was essential to strengthen available health services at the borders, strategic places such as congregation spots including taxi ranks, and other areas at migrants communities of origin, and explore how to enhance the HIV/AIDS, TB, and COVID-19 related service delivery.

Upon their arrival at different POEs, Basotho migrants were screened for TB, COVID-19, HIV, and other diseases of potential public health threat. Those who presented with symptoms during screening were referred to the health services provided at the Port Health Clinic and nearby health facilities for further management.

Having a brief discussion with some of the migrant beneficiaries on health services provision at borders, they said the initiative had helped them since the Christmas holidays are busy, they might not have enough time to go to health facilities for services as they are also far from their homes.



*Influx of Basotho migrants coming back home through Qacha's Nek Border for Christmas holidays. ©IOM 2023/Makarabo Monaheng*



*Basotho migrants receiving health services at arrival through Tele Border. ©IOM 2023/Makarabo Monaheng*



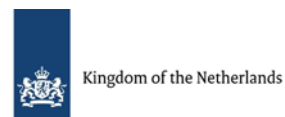
*Basotho migrants receiving health services at arrival through Ficksburg border. ©IOM 2023/Makarabo Monaheng*

## “MIGRATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL”

- **Advocating for evidence-based policy to enhance migration management**
- **Promoting migration and development including engaging diaspora for economic growth**
- **Strengthening border security and immigration management to combat trafficking in Persons (TIP)**
  - **Promoting access to health services for migrants**
- **Enhancing Migration Data Collection and Analysis for Evidence Based Policy Making**



IOM thanks the following donors and partners:



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