

**A RAPID ASSESSMENT REPORT ON
MIGRATION SITUATION, COVID-19
IMPACT & THE LIVELIHOOD OF
RETURNED MIGRANTS, MOBILE
POPULATION AND VULNERABLE
POPULATIONS IN MOKHOTLONG & THABA
TSEKA DISTRICTS IN LESOTHO**



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Given the high level of uncertainty in migration (human mobility) due to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic situation, as well as the massive construction impact on migration and social impact among the local community, this assessment serves as an evidence-base of which International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other stakeholders can develop appropriate socioeconomic response and recovery plan, considering the impact of huge construction projects, mining activities, and COVID-19 socio-economic impact to the marginalized border communities in the two target districts, ThabaTseka and Mokhotlong in the northern part of Lesotho.

This assessment confirms that the impact of COVID-19, illegal mining, and huge construction projects is severe and could deteriorate further if no action to mitigate such risks is taken. The assessment calls for a policy response that prioritizes people and their rights, particularly those who are most affected and left behind (migrants). It urges the Government of Lesotho, international organization and civil society to respond to the situation in a holistic manner through humanitarian, health, and socio-economic intervention targeting the marginalized communities in the migration affected areas.

The assessment also proved that, like so many other parts of the world, migration and socio-economic issues are linked and interwoven. The five pillars of the proposed UN response are all addressed in this study: (i) health first, (ii) people protection, (iii) economic reaction and recovery, (iv) macro-economic response and (v) international collaboration. The assessment includes the migration trends, community cohesion, and community resilience of the target areas.

Finally, as a lead consultant to undertake this important assessment, I would like to thank IOM Lesotho team led by Head of Office as well as district officials in ThabaTseka and Mokhotlong, school principals at Mapholaneng and Lagertho high schools, District Disaster Management Committees, community members who participated in this assessment, and my colleagues, Mr. Chabeli Monyake and Mr. Gertrude Khotle, who were both involved and supported the data collection exercise through conducting key informant and focus group discussions that required energy, skill and enthusiasm.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the result of an extensive study conducted in the Mapholaneng – Mokhotlong district and the HaSheshote- ThabaTseka district, both in Lesotho's northern districts, which are said to be highly marginalized in terms of service delivery and impacted by the construction project, illegal mining, and irregular migration.

The goal of the study was to learn about the migration situation, challenges, and opportunities in relation to COVID-19, construction and mining projects in both ThabaTseka and Mokhotlong districts, as well as the situation of returned migrants affected by COVID-19 and livelihood challenges in those two districts.

The followings are the key social economic impact caused by construction project, mining and COVID-19 impact, which has impacted the migration pattern and affected the livelihood of the two migration affected communities, namely, Sani Pass (Mokhotlong district) and Ha Shehsote (ThabaTseka District).

1. COVID-19 impact on Migration

No	Impact on migration
1	<p>Decline in number of Tourists and Migrants .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of tourists and local migrants entering the country has decreased from an average of 60 to 13 individuals per day entering and exiting Lesotho. • Polihali – A lodge that used to get an average of 50-100 visitors (tourists and migrants) every week is now down to 50-11 or even less. As a result, the management decided to reduce the number of staff from 45 to 13, indicating a major reduction in the tourism industry in Lesotho. • The number of migrant workers returning to Lesotho from South Africa is usually higher in January, ranging between 220 and 390 per month. However, due to COVID-19 related travel restriction, the number of visitors and returnees through official border gate (Sani Pass) from South Africa to Lesotho and vice versa has dropped from 220 to 119 per month during festive periods.
2	<p>Increase in internal Migration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the research, there has been a sharp increase in rural to urban migration in search of job opportunities. In these areas, there is an increase of people moving from other districts to Mapholaneng from 2019 to date, due to the perceived job opportunities linked to the construction project. For example, a real estate broker confirmed that they receive between 30 and 45 people from different districts requesting vacant lodging and commercial spaces per month.
3	<p>Failure of migrants to visit their family and send remittances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 30% of labour migrants working in South Africa originated from Ha Seshote did not return home to visit their family / relatives during the holiday season. They also did not send any remittances to their families. This is due to the COVID-19 impact and they lost jobs. • Anecdotal evidence indicates that adolescent girls in those households started engaging in commercial sex to construction workers in exchange for money for

those families the families to feed themselves.

There are four key recommendations from this study.

Recommendation 1: *Stakeholders should take into account internal migration in development planning and sectoral and inter-sectoral policies.*

Recommendation 2: *Stakeholders should address migration addressing the pull and push factors contributing to Migration and Displacement*

Recommendation 3: *Government, International Organization, NGOs and Civil Society needs to sensitize populations on the safe migration, and risks and consequences of unsafe migration, as well as the accurate information on the situation in the place of destination*

Recommendation 4: *Government and Stakeholder, in partnership with Private Sector, should develop a long-term, balanced development policy aimed at closing the gap between the urban and rural development.*

Recommendation 5: *Government can harness migration (skills and talents from migrants) for inclusive growth and development while ensuring mutual benefit, regulated migration and harmonize regional labour migration policy in order to protect and guarantee equal rights and access to decent and productive work for migrant workers (MAP).*

Migration brings positive impact to migrants and their family members, and communities of origin, transit and destination - if it is well managed. This applies to not only international migration, but also internal migration. This assessment has provided the evidence that it is high time that stakeholders work hand in hand to prevent the negative impact of unplanned migration caused by large construction project, COVID-19 and other shocks, while maximize the developmental impact from migration through a well-coordinated intervention.

Contents

Acknowledgement	1
Executive summary.....	2
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	4
1.1 Global Migration Context	4
1.2 Lesotho context.....	7
1.3 Demographics and district trends.....	8
1.4 Objectives of the assessment	10
CHAPTER 2: Methodology	10
2.1 Tools and techniques.....	10
2.2 Sampling design	11
2.3 Source of the Information	11
2.5 Ethical Consideration	12
2.6 limitation to the study	13
CHAPTER 3: Key Findings	13
3.1 Findings of the study.....	13
3.1.1 Impact of Covid19 on Migration – Mokhotlong.....	13
3.1.2 Impact of Polihali Construction Project – Migration	15
3.1.3 Economic impact of Construction project (Mapholaneng in Mokhotlong)	17
3.1.4 Social impact of Construction project (Mapholaneng in Mokhotlong).....	18
a) Increased Gender Based Violence (GBV)	18
3.1.5 Negative impact of COVID-19 and large project-induced Migration	20
3.1.6 Impact of the COVID-19, large project and Migration per Sector (Mapholaneng –Mokhotlong District)	22
3.1.6 Migration Trends In Ha Sheshot- Thabatseka	24
3.1.7 Negative impact of COVID-19 and large project-induced Migration	26
3.1.8 Impact of the COVID-19, large project and Migration per Sector (Mapholaneng / Mokhotlong District)	28
3.1.8 Returnees & Recovery Strategy.....	32
CHAPTER 4: Lessons learned, opporutnities, Way-forwards	34

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Global Migration Context

Migration is a continuous process that is now a subject of political debate worldwide. Migration continues to exhibit an intermittent growing trend either by people that will have left their homelands voluntarily for economic or other reasons, or of those who have been forced to leave their homes (refugees, displaced persons, etc.).

The last decade has seen a dramatic increase in the global mobility of people. The number of people who live outside of their country of birth globally had reached 280 million by 2020¹. Irregular migrants from the Global South, often not captured in official data, are of particular concern from a development and humanitarian perspective: they are often amongst the most vulnerable populations. Internationally, children constitute approximately 15% of migrants. This proportion is dramatically larger in East and Southern Africa.

The pull and push factors for migration and the routes have become extremely difficult to identify and also manage especially among the developing countries with porous borders. Some of the pull factors are attributed to seeking for employment opportunities, better social services, access to better education and health services while push factors have been unemployment, climate change and natural hazards, conflicts within communities, displacement of people by government in favor of development projects and often absolute poverty within the communities.

Moreover, the impact of COVID-19 on borders and irregular migration in Southern African region has been significant. The African Migration Routes project identified vulnerable migrants as among the most affected by COVID-19 response and prevention measures, such as border closures, lockdowns and school closures, increasing economic impacts, increased travel requirements for example a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination and pressures to migrate for many. The immediate impact of border closures and securitization of borders has been both a decrease in overall movement, and an increase in the risks, especially by changes in the use of smugglers, with larger smuggling networks with closer ties to trafficking having gained in prominence. All of these changes resulted in immediate needs, including hunger, access to services and exposure to exploitation and sexual and gender-based violence. In this 21st century managing human movement poses a great challenge for both transit and destination countries globally.

Causes of Migration

A myriad of favorable, unfavorable or neutral factors cause migration. Factors that determine why a person migrates are related to the place of residence from where migration starts, also known as the origin, and the place of new settlement, or where migration ends either completely or temporarily, also known as the destination. Both the origin and destination are characterized by factors that support (enable), reject (deter) or are neutral (neither support nor oppose migration).

The favorable attributes of a location are pull factors, which attract a person. The unfavorable attributes operating at a location are the push factors, which force or compel a person to move

¹ UN DESA, International Migrant Stock Data, 2020 / Lesotho Bureau of statistics , 2018

away. Both pull and push factors can apply simultaneously at the place of origin as well as at the destination.

Typically, the causes are economic, sociopolitical and ecological. **Economic factors** – These relate to the labour market of a place, the employment situation and the overall state of the economy. Favorable economic conditions at the destination – the prospect of higher wages, better employment opportunities and prospects for wealth creation – and the desire to escape the domestic **Social and Political situation** of their home region can draw migrants to their destination. Likewise, if economic conditions are unfavorable at the place of origin, poor and unemployed individuals would be compelled to migrate to sustain their livelihood.

There are host of pull and push factors that impact on internal and external migration of the population and they include;

Table 1. Pull factors / Push factors of Migration

Pull Factors	Push Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family reunification – Independence and freedom – Integration and social cohesion – Food security – Affordable and accessible urban services (including healthcare, education, utilities and transport) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change (including extreme weather events) – Crop failure and scarcity of food
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological factors – These include environmental factors, such as climate change, favourable farming climate and the availability of natural resources that cause individuals to migrate in search of more favorable ecological conditions. Abundance of natural resources and minerals (e.g. water, oil, uranium) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment or lack of employment opportunities • Rural poverty* – Unsustainable livelihood – Job creation opportunities – Better income and prospects for wealth creation – Industrial innovation and technical know-how for a new industry – Pursuit of specialized education • Socio-Political factors – These include family conflicts and unification; the quest for independence; ethnic, religious, racial and cultural parameters; warfare, or the threat of conflict, among other factors that contribute to migration. • Political instability – Safety and security concerns (ethnic, religious, racial or cultural persecution) – Conflicts or threat of a conflict – Inadequate or limited urban services and infrastructure (including healthcare, education, utilities, transport and water) • Massive Government infrastructure development projects – forcing people to be relocated to other areas

In the longer term, the likely increase in unsafe migration in the region will require stronger collaboration and coordination between stakeholders to prevent exposure to risks of children and youth on the move. In Southern Africa, Lesotho is among the countries whose economic thrives on remittances from the migrants being a migrant sending country to South Africa.

1.2 Lesotho context

Lesotho is a high altitude, landlocked kingdom encircled by South Africa, crisscrossed by a network of rivers and mountain ranges. According to the 2016 census, Lesotho has a total population of 2,007,201. Of the population, 34.17 percent live in urban and 65.83 percent in rural areas. The country's capital, Maseru, accounts for around half of the total urban population. The sex dis-aggregated number is 982,133 male and 1,025,068 female, or around 96 males for each 100 females (Lesotho Bureau of Statistics, 2018).

Lesotho is classified by World Bank as a low middle-income country, with nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US\$1,118. Recently, the country experiences poor economic and sluggish performance due to a major down-turn in both emerging markets, natural disasters and COVID-19 pandemic (World Bank report, 2021). The negative effects of the pandemic include; business closures, border closures, decline in exports, increased poverty especially among the urban population, reduction in remittance triggering off vulnerability and unplanned migration. In addition, the pandemic has devastated the economy leading to weak macroeconomic performance and budgetary constraints reducing the country's fiscal capacity to respond to shocks.

Moreover, Lesotho continues to be ravaged by the pandemic due to its proximity, porous borders and close economic ties with South Africa. In addition to the immediate impact of income losses, disruptions in essential health and education services continue to reverse progress made in human capital accumulation and poverty alleviation thus far. The World Bank's macro-poverty outlook projections estimate that an additional 3.2% of the population has already been pushed into extreme poverty as a result of the pandemic, with the extreme poverty rate now estimated at 30.5% (World Bank, 2021).

With over 60% of Basotho's households dependent on remittances from South Africa monthly- aggravates the risk of continued importation and COVID-19 infections and transmissions within the community.

In the mid-term, the Government of Lesotho embarked on a huge economic growth program to boost the economy through construction-related projects including the second phase of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP II), the Lesotho Lowlands Water Development Projects (LLWDP -I and-II), and roads. The water and electricity subsectors are expected to be boosted by green energy projects, while the tertiary sector is envisaged to be supported *inter alia* by government initiatives to reinforce financial inclusion. Lesotho has ten districts, however Mokhotlong and ThabaTseka are the two most marginalized Northern

districts in Lesotho with both located in a high altitude, experience severe winter which goes down up to -7°C (19°F).

Heavy snowfalls between June and July, and often block roads for weeks, affecting people's access to basic services in the mountainous area. During that time, both districts continue to be marginalized increasing food insecurity and poverty of communities in those districts.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on tourism and other negative socio-economic impact, and large-scale construction project are a potential risk for unplanned migration, human settlement, human trafficking and negative social impact typically family breakdown and social disharmony in the affected areas. The two districts - Mokhotlong and ThabaTseka - has its own distinct characteristics, although both have important variables and interventions influencing migration and settlement patterns. One of the most difficult challenges for the developing countries like Lesotho is to manage human mobility (migration). Different types of migration have challenging causes and paths, making it difficult for governments to discern between them.

1.3 Demographics and district trends

Mokhotlong District is located in the highest terrains in Maloti Mountains and the source of Senqu River. Mokhotlong borders with Kwazulu Natal province of South Africa, with its north point bordering with Free State Province. Domestically, it borders on ButhaButhe District in the northwest, Leribe district in the West, and Thaba-Tseka district in the South. The high level of unemployment is a challenge among the populations and risk factor for irregular migration mainly to South Africa². Child labour is rampant out of the poverty situation. Children aged between 6-14 years engage in informal employment to complement household income³. The majority of the populations rely on subsistence agriculture. Mokhotlong has one official border, Sani Pass, where many Basotho use to go for seasonal work or full-time work in South Africa, including Durban, Cape Town, and others. Some who do not have proper documents go through unofficial borders to avoid immigration control (irregular migration). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Sani Pass use to be a popular border among the South African and European tourists who visit resorts such as Afri-ski resorts and other touristic areas in Lesotho.

The dam construction and associated projects are implemented through Lesotho Highland Development Authority (LHDA) engaged in a multi-million Maluti water harvesting project from Lesotho to South Africa through the construction of massive mega dams in Lesotho. Polihali dam is located at Seate Community Council, near Mapholaneng town in Mokhotlong district. Given the size of the project, LHDA has engaged international construction companies to undertake these different construction assignments. The actual dam construction is expected to start in March 2022 up to March 2037. At the moment, there are four construction companies engaged in preparatory activities in Mapholaneng. These

³ Bureau of Statistics, Work Profile, 2008

construction firms have been allocated camps where the construction workers reside and they are; (a) Rumdel Cape Main camp, (b) Rumdel Cape residence, (c) SCLC Camp and (d) Lesotho Steel camp.

Many of the construction vehicles pass through a number of villages to their work area. Within this massive development project, there are four major construction projects in progress that include road construction, electricity, Polihali Village (small town) and transfer tunnel for diverting water while constructing the dam. The location of the construction workers in the camps and operating within the same communities has had its own challenges and opportunities within the community in addition to the impact of COVID-19.

While the project is expected to bring developmental impact to the local community, it has brought a negative social impact. A large number of foreigners mainly South Africans and Italians to the construction site have attracted Mosotho women and girls for marriage and commercial sex. There is a suspected human trafficking of young girls to where these foreigners stay. As a result, there is an alerting rate of family breakdown, unsafe abortion, increasing rate of HIV/AIDS and spouse murder (husbands' kills their spouse due to adultery) and human trafficking.

Thaba Tseka District borders Mokhotlong District in the Northeast, Leribe District in the North, Berea District in the Northwest, Maseru District in the West, Mohale's Hoek District in the Southwest and Qacha's Nek District in the Southern side. The district is one of the major tourist attractions in Lesotho because of the second largest arch dam in Africa. Similar to Mokhotlong district, the high level of unemployment among the populations is a challenge and risk factors for irregular migration⁴. There is no data on child labour in ThabaTseka district, however, child labour is commonly seen due to the household poverty situation. Similar to Mokhotlong district, the majority of the populations rely on subsistence agriculture. While in some part of ThabaTseka district, there are suspected human trafficking taking place to work under the closed mines in South Africa known as ZamaZama (illegal miners). They are at a high risk of being arrested by police as they operate under the closed mine which is illegal. It is believed that young boys from ThabaTseka districts are recruited to become ZamaZama. Only few of them establishes their wealth in a short-term while many others die in the mine and never come back to their home.

During the previous assessment conducted by IOM and Skillshare in July 2020, Tlhanyaku, Sani, Sanqabethu and Seate in Mokhotlong district, and Tsofikana, Sehlabathebe in ThabaTseka district, were identified as the risk communities which may be affected by irregular migration. However, little is known in terms of the number of irregular and regular migration, common occupations that labour migrants engage, remittance channel used by labour migrants, returnees (returned migrants) who lost jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic, livelihood challenges and opportunities of returnees, returnees' households (those left behind in Lesotho), host communities in migration affected area in the two districts.

It is against this background that IOM Lesotho has decided to conduct a rapid assessment to better understand the magnitude of the impact of COVID-19 and the large scale construction projects and the communities in relation to unplanned migration, human settlement, human trafficking and negative social impact and social cohesion in both districts especially in Mapholaneng (ThabaTseka district) and Ha Seshote (ThabaTsekadistrict).

1.4 Objectives of the assessment

The main objective of the assignment was to understand the migration situation, challenges and opportunities in respect to COVID-19, construction and mining projects in both ThabaTseka and Mokhotlong districts, as well as to learn the situation of returned migrants affected by COVID-19 and livelihood challenges in the same two districts.

The specific objectives of the assignment were as follows:

- Desk review of relevant information from Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Social Development, IOM, UNDP and NGOs in terms of socio-economic situation, migration situation, returned migrants in the two target districts
- To conduct in-depth interview with District Administration, Disaster Management Authority (DMA) and other district officers (Social development, education, labour, etc) and NGOs and community members, village chief and migrants
- Based on the desk review, field observation, in-depth interview, to conduct an analysis of (a) the migration situation in two districts, (b) socio-economic situation of returned migrants, returnees household and vulnerable populations in target districts; (c) challenges and obstacles identified; and; and (d) recommendation to IOM / Lesotho stakeholders.
- To draft a rapid assessment highlighting the above mentioned areas, and present the key findings and recommendations to IOM Lesotho

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Tools and techniques

The assessment was conducted in qualitative manner using the desk review, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions with the selected target population.

- **Desk review:** entailed an elaborate review of relevant information from Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Social Development, IOM, UNDP and NGOs in terms of socio-economic situation, migration situation, returned migrants in the two target districts.
- **In-depth Interview/Key informant interview:** with District Administration, Disaster Management Authority (DMA) and other district officers (Social development,

education, labour, etc) and NGOs and community members, village chief and migrants, broker or real estate agents, Returnee migrants , police (CGPU) Immigration officers and police at Sani Pass border post.

- **Focus Group Discussions:** with migrant youths including students aged 15- 29 years, both male and female

2.2 Sampling design

The study was purely qualitative using analysis of both primary and secondary data sources. The study utilized desk review as part of the data sources, literature review from the prior rapid assessments by IOM, Global migration trends, World bank, relevant information from the Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Social Development, IOM, UNDP and NGOs in terms of socio-economic situation, migration situation, returned migrants in the two target districts.

The consultant used purposive samplings because the specific target populations based on the set criteria was obvious and the consultant used his judgement and expertise in determine whom to be interviewed for the specific rapid assignment. The respondents were drawn based on their characteristics and relationship to the study and migration as well as the construction project. This was in addition to investigating the determinants of migration, individual and household characteristics, and social economic impacts among the migrants and host community. This study also took into consideration both internal and external migrants and disaggregated among the different occupations of migrants to the extent possible.

Key informant interviews were conducted targeting five categories of groups; (a) policymakers (Government, chief, technical team); (b)communities impacted by the construction workers/internal migrants from other districts(migrants and host community);(c) other service providers (CSOs);and (d) those having spill over effects as result of COVID-19 pandemic or parents migrating (children/youths) and returnees. The interviews provided the information of migration trends in two districts, socio-economic situation of returned migrants, migrant populations and vulnerable populations in target community, challenges and obstacles identified and recommendation to the stakeholders in Lesotho.

2.3 Source of the Information

The following table describes the source of information and the list of stakeholders interviewed during this assessment.

Table 2. Summary of Sources and Stakeholders for the study

No	Activities	Source
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1	<p>Desk review of related literature from</p> <p>Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Social Development, IOM, UNDP and NGOs in terms of socio-economic situation, migration situation, returned migrants in the two target districts</p>	<p><i>IOM, CSO & Government reports</i></p>
2	<p>In-depth Interview - key stakeholders to collect information on the migration situation (i.e. migration route, regular/irregular, type of occupation, gender, individual or family, frequency of return, remittance etc) the livelihood situation of returned migrants and returnees household (i.e. socio-economic situation, COVID-19 impact, challenges and opportunities) in target districts / community.</p> <p>Observation methods was used to verify the claims made by in-depth interviews</p> <p>4 FGDs conducted with youths neighbouring those dam / road construction projects</p> <p>4 individual interviews conducted with returnees from South Africa or any other country.</p> <p>3 International organisations(WV, UNDP and IOM) interviewed on their plans or interventions</p>	<p><i>2 District Disaster Management Teams, 2 CSOs in the area, 4 local chiefs, families of returned migrants, 4 Youths once engaged in jobs around the dam construction areas, 4 FGDs (1 male, 1 female), Youths within the neighboring communities, 10 returnees households from South Africa (5 male, 5 female), Immigration officers and Police, Disaster Management Authority (DMA) and other district officers (Social development, education, labour, etc) and NGOs and community members, village chief and migrants</i></p>

2.5 Ethical Consideration

During the entire process of data collection and engagement with community, the consulting team shall always have masks and sanitizer with them in addition to providing a checklist of COVID19 precaution measures during field work.

- **Free & informed consent:** All members, participants to be interviewed shall be expected to have consent in form verbal or written obtained before the interview. With the planned physical meetings, a written consent will be obtained. If the Participants choose not to participate or pull-out at any time, their decision will be respected.
- **Privacy, Confidentiality and anonymity:** the consultant and the assistant took into consideration importance of confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were briefed of how confidential their information would be in addition to being used for the purpose of the study only and that their names would not be mentioned in the report.
- **Adhering to culturally acceptable norms:** the Consultant adhered to a dress code

and language that is culturally and religiously acceptable.

- **Working with local enumerators:** The consultant and worked with an assistant who was conversant of Mokhotlong knew the local language and had been involved in similar migration assignments and had good working relationship with the district authorities so it was easy making appointments .
- **Do No Harm** – During the course of the study the consultant did not cause any further harm by either raising respondents expectation or make any promises that may not be fulfilled. The consultant clarified intention of the study and its importance to the district and government stakeholders
- **Permission and clearance** from respective district authorities was sought from the district administrators (DAs) and later various villages notified of the exercise in advance for better preparation.

2.6 limitation to the study

The followings are the limitations to this assessment.

- The rapid assessment had very short time frame and with limited budget attempts some respondents could not be physically met especially returnee migrants who stay in very remote villages. Virtual meeting using Whatsapp calls were at times used but due to weak connectivity in the area, interviews could take longer than expected.
- The consultant faced financial constraints in reaching returnees that would have provided more information but because they are living in a very remote area of Mokhotlong and ThabaTseka districts.
- Very limited or no constructive engagement with some key informant interviews as there was no formal letters from IOM introducing the consultant to those respective institutions.
- Some of the key informants were not immediately available. Also, the meetings were restricted to only 30 minutes due to their tight schedule. This provided less time for constructive and in-depth discussion.

CHAPTER 3: KEY FINDINGS

3.1 Findings of the study

This rapid assessment was undertaken in within two districts that tin Mokhotlong district in areas affected by construction work at Seate community council, LHDA temporary village. For ThabaTseka district, Ha Seshote and neighboring villages were targeted for the study.

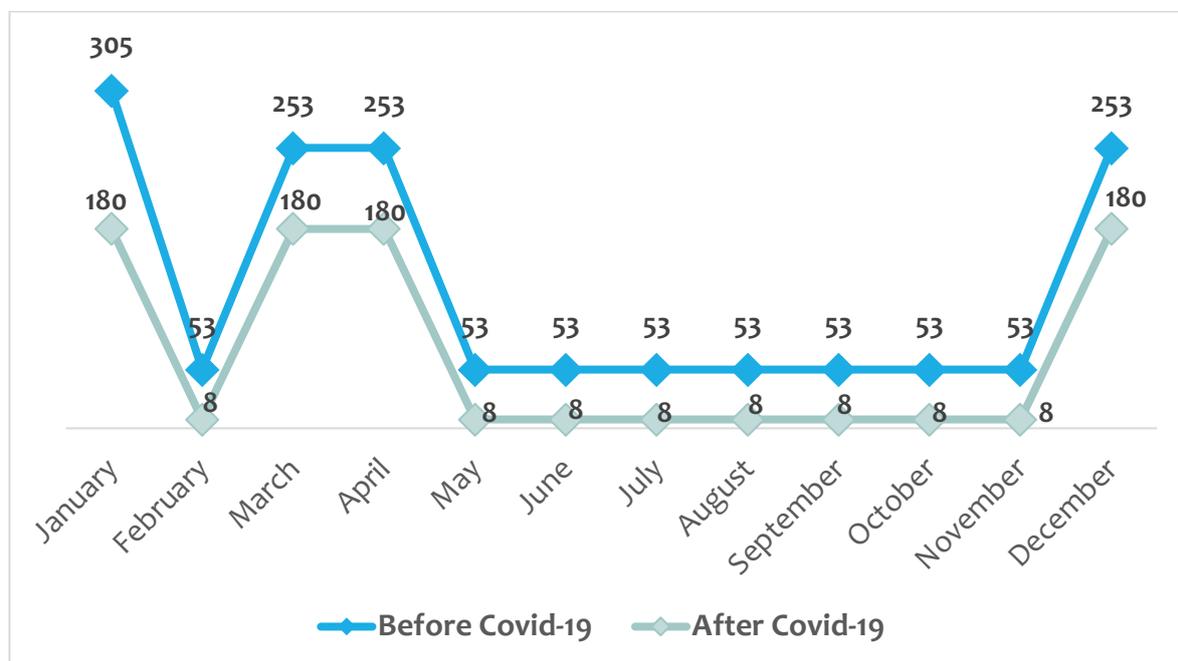
This section provides an overview of the impact of COVID-19 and construction sites and mines to migration and social economic outcomes in both districts.

3.1.1 Impact of Covid19 on Migration – Mokhotlong

The key informant interviews with the chief, DA, District Disaster Management Committee, immigration, and police officers at the Sani Pass border post revealed that before COVID-19 pandemic, an average of 45-60 people (tourists and local migrants) would come through the border gate from South Africa to Lesotho in a normal day for tourism, business and other purposes. The guest house at the border post, Polihali Lodge, used to have 45 employees before COVID-19 pandemic and could accommodate 50 to 100 guests in a week. With the COVID-19 outbreak, the number of tourists staying at the guest house plummeted from 50 to only 11 in a week, and thus, the number of employees decreased from 45 to only 13. This confirms the significant drop in the hotel business as well as a decline in tourism activities and income. In January, the number of migrant workers departing Lesotho for South Africa is often greater, ranging from 220 to 390 in any given day because of the two reasons: (a) the month of January coincides with fruit harvesting season, thus agricultural farms in South Africa will require more manpower to pick crops/fruits; and (b) When some migrants return for the holidays, they are generally joined by other relatives who have also left villages in search of jobs, accompanied by their families and children. Because of COVID-19 and the travel restrictions, the number of tourists and returnees using the official border gate (Sani pass) from South Africa to Lesotho in 2020 fell from 11 to 5 on a normal day and from 220 to 119 during festive periods.

The table below shows the number of passengers crossing through Sani Pass prior to and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 1. Average number of people passing Sani Pass border before and after COVID-19 pandemic



During the initial wave of COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown in March 2020, a large number of Basotho migrants working as domestic workers, farm workers and mineworkers lost jobs and returned to Lesotho. However, there is no information on whether they have used official borders or unofficial borders. The table shows that dew Basotho returned home

using official border for the festive reason in December 2020. It is not confirmed many others who came back home used unofficial borders due to the COVID-19 certificate and lack of document. While there was many Basotho who came back during the last Christmas, some indicated that there were some Basotho migrant workers could not come back to home for Christmas as they have lost jobs since COVID-19 and they did not have transport costs.

The key informant and focus group interviews also revealed that it is difficult for authorities to stop irregular migration because it occurs at night, using five unauthorized common routes i.e. the right and left side of Sani pass through the mountain and through places like Sanqabethu, Khubelu, Tlhanyaku and Moremoholo among the places around the mountain that are difficult to access, despite the fact that the police are aware of the illicit routes and are unable to determine the number of people who use them. In addition, the in-depth interviews revealed that irregular migration is widespread among males aged 19 to 35, and that it involves livestock theft, livestock dealers, and Matekoane (dagga) dealers smuggling their products without paying taxes, as well as automobile thieves. They use porous unofficial channels that are incredibly difficult for police to control since they are inaccessible and extremely dangerous. High level of poverty, unemployment, lengthy and difficult requirements to acquire work permits in South Africa, delays in the government of Lesotho processing passports and national identity cards, and hefty prices required for COVID-19 testing are all major factors leading to irregular migration. Poor and jobless youth wishing to relocate from Lesotho to South Africa in search for work find it difficult to go through formal processes. This is because the expense of utilizing official ways is prohibitively expensive and time consuming, whereas they could go through unofficial borders and pay less while still having enough money to start a new life in South Africa.

Figure 2. Office Border Post with few people and cars (Sani Pass, as per 6th August 2021)



3.1.2 Impact of Polihali Construction Project – Migration

The assessment confirmed that because of the construction project, there are many people coming from foreign countries as well as from other districts of Lesotho, and therefore, there is a growing number of restaurants and settlements (Malaene).

The price of food, such as mutton, chicken, and vegetable have increased in Mapholaneng as a result of increased demands for food. Mapholaneng has attracted a number of social

services and businesses, including banks, insurance, guest homes, and major grocery stores, attracting individuals from rural areas who come to buy food and other household items on a weekly and monthly basis. Young people from rural areas are coming to Mapholaneng in search for work and hostel accommodations as they finish their studies. They prefer to stay in the area since it is a fast growing area with better access to social services, and better economic prospects.

Many young people are attracted to Mapholaneng as a place to find jobs easily. However, the reality is that they end up becoming destitute and start commercial sex especially among young female, and joining criminal gangs for young male. It is also noted that livestock and automobile robbers, as well as matekoane dealers looking to avoid paying taxes, use informal crossings. The movement takes place during the night to avoid police patrols.

This is the common saying that attracts young people to Mapholaneng from rural areas.

“Go to Mapholaneng if you want to buy Honda Fit in two weeks.” “If you want to see how the star lights up and meets the sun, go to Mapholaneng.”

According to key informants (local estate agents), they receive requests for unoccupied and commercial premises in Mapholaneng from 30-45 people each month from various districts of Lesotho. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of requests for the registration for accommodation and premises has decreased since then.

On the school enrollment, between 2017 and 2020, the enrolment rate at Mapholaneng High School increased by 25%, while retention rate has dropped by 13% (from 498 to 334) due to the COVID-19 outbreak, lockdowns, and travel restriction. Other major contributors to the high dropout rate following the COVID-19 include; (a) poverty, as many parents were unable to pay school fees, 1300 Maloti per quarter as a result of the pandemic; and (b) high number of teenage pregnancy and child (teenager) marriages linked to construction workers and migrant workers from other districts. Unfortunately, there is no information in terms of the number of external and internal migrants employed by the construction companies and residents within the camps since it requires a formal letter of request to LHDA.

In summary, the assessment identified as the following as “Pull factors” of migration from other areas to Mapholaneng.

- The majority of residents are attracted to Mapholaneng because of its perceived job opportunity in the construction projects and entrepreneurship opportunities as the local economy seems to be booming due to the construction projects. The anecdotal evidence confirmed that return on investment is high as there are few tax laws.
- The slogan promoting Mapholaneng as a place of fortune, a high standard of living, excellent educational prospects, and a desire to escape the social conditions of rural

areas, such as household obligations, high poverty, and limited economic opportunities, attracts youths, particularly female students.

- Migrants from other districts, on the other hand, will find plenty of work in Mapholaneng, particularly in the culinary business (restaurants), guest lodging, and construction services. This is especially true for unemployed and poor youth who relocate to Mapholaneng from rural areas in Mokhotlong district.

3.1.3 Economic impact of Construction project (Mapholaneng in Mokhotlong)

Mapholaneng town is rapidly expanding and developing into a vibrant commercial center, providing employment and business possibilities for Mokhotlong residents as well as migrants from surrounding districts. The most popular business activities in Mapholaneng are house construction, restaurants, and street vendors (food) and livestock sales (sheep for mutton) and the use of Mpesa and Eco cash mobile money.

There are positive economic impacts which were brought to Maphplaneng and local community members. These are as follows;

- The construction of the Polihali dam has resulted in an increase in the population of Mapholaneng, which has boosted the housing industry. Rental houses for accommodation and business have allowed local Basotho to provide a variety of services to the growing population, such as restaurants, grocery stores, and guest houses for tourists and visitors.
- Apart from job opportunities and business prospects, LHDA launched a community-based environmental conservation project, in which some households joined after being taught proper environmental conservation methods. In exchange for a monetary award of 2,400 Maloti per household, the project enlists a set number of households to engage in environmentally friendly farming. This serves as a source of both inspiration and revenue. It is unknown how many households benefit from LHDA environmental conservation project as official request has to be made to LHDA to access such data.
- Furthermore, in order to ensure that Mapholaneng local populations are given priority for any work opportunities, the government and the construction industry (LHDA) partnered to develop a strategy for generating job opportunities for the district's youth. The LHDA, district administrations, and village chiefs worked together to build a centralized database of all unemployed teenagers, both skilled and unskilled. When a position becomes open, the chiefs and relevant youths are notified and hired

Key informants mentioned that an estimated 205 youth from Mokhotlong district had acquired employment opportunities even though official records are with LHDA.

Figure 3. People waiting to receive remittances from RSA (postal office Mokhotlong, 5 August 2021)



On the other hand, there is negative economic impact.

- The cost of groceries and other household necessities has increased as the population has grown. The cost for sheep and chicken, for example, have constantly increased as demand grows rapidly. The price of chicken went up from 70 Maloti to 150 Maloti, while sheep prices have gone up from 400 Maloti to 800 Maloti. Poultry and sheep producers benefit from greater pricing for their products.
- Service delivery does not meet with the growing populations in the area. For instance, there is a long queue at the Post Office to collect remittances or receiving money from South Africa on any given day, not just towards the end of the month. Despite the growing needs, service delivery remains same as there is no additional human resource to meet with the growing number of clients.

3.1.4 Social impact of Construction project (Mapholaneng in Mokhotlong)

Despite a number of positive economic impact on Mokhotlong district and Mapholaneng local community, there is an increasing number of concerns when it comes to the social impact.

a) Increased Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, residents and households in Mapholaneng became increasingly vulnerable; particularly those whose household heads lost their jobs and businesses. Families were unable to procure food, and women in these households resorted to extramarital affairs with construction workers and migrants from neighboring districts in order to earn income and support their families. This has resulted in family tensions, strained relationships between local communities (husbands) and migrant workers. According to the police, the majority of GBV incidents are not recorded; instead, they are verbally resolved peacefully between the disputing parties, and such cases have increased from an average of 2 to 5 cases per week. Due to the under-reporting of such incidents, it is assumed that higher number of GBV cases is happening in the community. Despite the fact that the police have not recorded any cases of sex work in the district, FGDs with youths and members of the community show that conflicts between migrant men and host community men over extramarital affairs with their wives are usually resolved through dialogue between the two

parties and rarely end up in prosecution or police records. Female students (Youths) in the Mapholaneng area are frequently observed hanging out with migrant men in the late hours of the night and are frequently dropped off at school in large cars in the early mornings.

b) Children Left Behind in rural area

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is highly likely that those who migrate in search for jobs – either in Lesotho or in South Africa - are unable to find work despite their expectation. There is an increasing number of cases of children being left with old, helpless grandparents, particularly among the single mothers and women who relocate from the rural villages to peri urban towns (Mapholaneng) in search of work or business opportunities in Mokhotlong. The already poverty stricken elderly are left with the responsibilities to raise children while waiting for the remittance to be sent by their daughter. The remittance does not come for long time, and as a result, increasing the household poverty and food insecurity and malnutrition among the children left behind.

c) High School Absenteeism & Permissiveness – Education

Mapholaneng is growing into a commercial and social center within Mokhotlong district, attracting students from the rural areas to migrate to schools within Mapholaneng a Peri-urban center. As a result of increase in population, the demand for hostel facilities has increased. There is only limited number of hostel facilities in the area, and the standard of the hostel service, access to basic services such as food, WASH facilities and others, is not regulated by the Government. There is no inspection to such facilities by neither the government (Ministry of Education) nor the school. Some of these hostels are rather rental houses where four girls rent a room, and there is no food provision.

With the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and higher cost of living within Mapholaneng, students in the hostels especially female students that would run short of food supply or toiletries, hostel fees and other costs resorted to engage in commercial sex to migrants and

“These girls in the hostels compete amongst themselves on who leads a better lifestyle and every evening they go and hang out at the new Circle being built waiting for contractors to pick them up, And Sometimes these girls are dropped at school early morning in a luxury cars and when asked, they say they were given lift by their uncle” from **concerned teacher**.

construction workers.

During lockdowns and holidays, numerous girls decided to stay in hostels rather than return to their rural families. The anecdotal evidence states that the majority of their parents are not concerned with their daughters' life at school or in hostels, or they are ignorant of what may be taking place in their life. That has also contributed to the girls aged between 15 and 18 years old become exposed to the high risk of teenage pregnancy, unsafe abortion and early marriage causing high school dropout and absenteeism in school

d) Increased in Criminal activities by Youth

The consequent increase in population at Mapholaneng, has contributed to the increase in the number of restaurants in order to feed the migratory population, this has also led in a rise in stock theft. Due to their lack of capital, most restaurants prefer to buy stolen sheep because they are cheaper than official mutton and beef sold in butcher shops. Young migrants (internal) and unemployed youth in the community are said to be involved in stock theft. In addition, car theft, battery theft, and spare tire theft are also on the rise.

In Mapholaneng, tattooing is becoming popular among students (girls and boys) who have unique symbols to identify the gangs to which they belong, such as the stealing gang, killing gang, raping gang, and burglary gang. The key informant (government officials and school administrators) revealed that this behavior began after the prolonged COVID-19 lock down was lifted in 2020. The genesis of the conduct is yet unknown, but schools and law enforcement are aware of it and are examining it. This occurred following the death of a girl by strangulation by a member of one of the tattoo gangs. Despite reports that certain teachers are engaged, there is no concrete evidence at this time. Mapholaneng juveniles have been confirmed to travel to outlying communities and schools to instruct and enroll other children in this gang behavior. A pattern of clothing regulations is being used to identify the gangs.

3.1.5 Negative impact of COVID-19 and large project-induced Migration

The following is the summary of negative socio-economic impact caused by the COVID-19, construction project which has impacted migration (incoming migration to Mapholaneng) to the specific group.

Table3. Summary of negative social impact to different population group in Mapholaneng, Mokhotlong

Population Group	Negative impact
Adult men	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elderly people left alone with their grand-children, as their daughters migrate to pre-urban areas to look for work, leaving them alone in the villages with children.• Married men often found their wives engaged in extra marital affairs with construction workers cause family separation between married men and their spouses. This is mainly affecting families whose bread winners lost jobs and cannot feed their families. This has caused increased conflict, domestic violence and killings of host community men and migrant workers.• The vast majority of adults, notably returnees, who were laid off from the mines and had to rely entirely on their funds to keep their families afloat during the lockdowns. After their wives engaged in adultery with labour migrants who have money to lure women, some men had to make decision to divorce their wives. Children are also the victims of such divorce cases.
Adult women	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women are expected to feed their children despite the fact that their husbands lost jobs. Married women are increasingly having

	<p>extramarital affairs with construction workers for an exchange of food or money.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male infidelity with well-off women migrating from Maseru to the area is also on the rise, contributing to an increase in GBV among married couples. Men in Mapholaneng are routinely seduced by such women from city (Maseru), and they frequently abandon their wives in favor of these women.
<p>Adolescent boys (18-25 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petty theft by the poor, marginalized and unemployed youth in communities who steal livestock (sheep) from rural areas and sell it to restaurant owners for a lower price (restaurants buy for 300 Maloti compared to a normal price of 700–1000 Maloti) is increasing. The root cause of this is the high level of poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity. This negative coping strategy is becoming increasingly popular among young people. • There is also an emerging trend that unemployed, desperate adolescents in Mapholaneng are forming crime groups and recruiting rural kids into these gangs, which rape women, both elderly and young, steal property, including animals, and kill and train juveniles to join gangs. This is becoming a more important source of work.
<p>Children under 18 years old</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescents and teenagers, particularly those in schools and whose parents fail to pay bills on time, continue to be affected by intensified poverty level and food insecurity. Female students tend to engage in commercial sex to construction workers who demand unprotected sex in exchange for money. The increasing teenage pregnancies, child marriages and school dropouts are attributed to the presence of migrants including construction workers. • Many female students who relocate to Mapholaneng become bored in their studies as a result of the community's permissiveness. They are frequently seen hanging out with men in the evenings and being dropped off at school by men in luxury cars, and their absenteeism is extremely high. • Many migrants' flamboyant lifestyles appeal to the teenagers who are wishing for flaunting their wealth. While anecdotal evidence confirms the high absenteeism at school and female students' engagement with construction workers, it is difficult to confirm the magnitude of the issue. There are no school records (daily attendance) and police does not have any evidentiary records.

The findings of this rapid assessment study about high teen pregnancy and marriages are not new in Lesotho; the Lesotho Ministry of Health demographic health survey (2014), ranked Lesotho among SADC countries with teenage pregnancy at 19 percent, indicating early and unprotected intercourse, exacerbating HIV transmission. Rural adolescent pregnancies were higher than urban adolescent pregnancies, according to the data. Other factors contributing to youths' high HIV&AIDs prevalence include: age-discriminatory and cross-generational sex, which inhibits young women's ability to negotiate safe sex—8% of young girls aged 15 to 24 engage in intercourse with a person ten years their senior(Lesotho Ministry of Health, 2014).

While the influence of the construction and the Covid19 hastened the frequency and level of adolescent pregnancy and marriage, Lesotho as a country still has a high HIV/AIDS prevalence among youths, this remains an issue for further research.

3.1.6 Impact of the COVID-19, large project and Migration per Sector (Mapholaneng–Mokhotlong District)

1. Education Sector

- Over 70% of the district's schools opened late due to a lack of resources, and approximately 20% of students had dropped out, primarily in schools near Mapholaneng area. Some causes are COVID-19 impact, child (teenage) marriage and teenage pregnancy.
- High school dropout and absenteeism, particularly among female pupils is high showing disinterest in study or school in favor of part-time jobs and sex work. Female students have been known to leave class early to see their sugar daddies. Furthermore, the school's lack of a fence makes it highly vulnerable to loss of school property, such as furniture and other critical garden equipment, due to rampant theft, as well as promiscuous and pernicious behavior among students and the surrounding community. The lack of a school fence has been noted as a drawback at Mapholaneng High School. This has an impact on the school administration's capacity to prohibit students from leaving and other community members from entering/trespassing in the premises.
- Unfortunately, there is a developing hazardous behavior among students that is in the form of tattooing gangs, and these gangs are recruited to perform criminal activities, such as animal snatching, gang rape, and murder, to name a few instances. These gangs have both boys and girls, and promiscuity among schoolgirls in the hostels is on the rise.
- With the COVID19 impact, schools were forced to undertake short-term evaluations and compile all progressive assessments in order to determine student promotion, and remedial courses to allow schools to finish the school syllabus. The vast majority of parents were unable to provide their children with the resources they required.

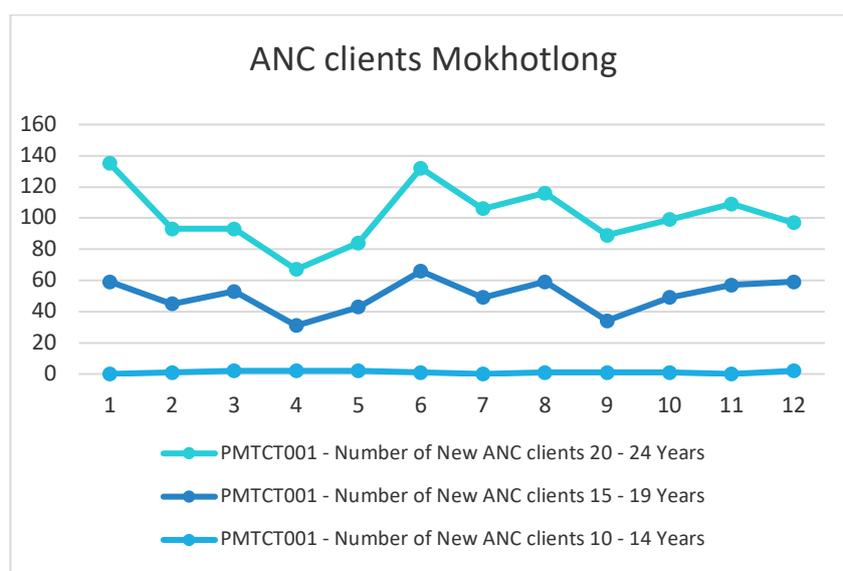
Health

- Despite the efforts by Mokhotlong district's health partners, HIV and teenage pregnancy rates continue to rise. In the construction catchment, Mapholaneng Health Facility is the sole nearby referral clinic. The clinic has solid partnerships with the community, school, and construction companies when it comes to patient referrals and outreach services at construction sites. The health facility continues to provide awareness on potential health challenges regarding teenage pregnancies and the need for protection against HIV/Aids infection.
- After the lifting of the first COVID-19 lockdown in Lesotho, trends on the antenatal care (ANC) in Mapholaneng Health Facility show a high level of teenagers aged between 15 and 24 years old, receiving ANC. This coincides a sharp rise in school dropout and an increase in pregnancy-related instances. (Reference: Annex 3)

Table 4. Number of ANC services received per age group (Mokhotlong district)

Month	PMTCT001 - Number of New ANC clients	PMTCT001 - Number of New ANC clients	PMTCT001 - Number of New ANC clients
	10 - 14 Years	15 - 19 Years	20 - 24 Years
August 2020	0	59	76
September 2020	1	44	48
October 2020	2	51	40
November 2020	2	29	36
December 2020	2	41	41
January 2021	1	65	66
February 2021	0	49	57
March 2021	1	58	57
April 2021	1	33	55
May 2021	1	48	50
June 2021	0	57	52
July 2021	2	57	38

Figure 3. Trends of ANC services accessed per age group (2020-2021, Mokhotlong district)



Livelihood

- Food expenditures have increased in Mokhotlong as a result of the inflow of people in Mapholaneng and the influence of COvid19 on the community, and food insecurity has increased as a result of a limited quantity of food provided by farmers, as well as rising unemployment and family instability.

WASH

- With the expansion of communities, there are fewer toilets built to accommodate the rising population, resulting in feces in plastic and condoms being found on a regular basis. This poses a significant health danger in Mapholaneng. Furthermore, water supplies are

under greater strain, and people are spending more time waiting for water. Because, rather than WASCO, the hamlet is still served by a rural water supply. Mapholaneng is still part of the rural water program, which provides locals with spring water. Women who go water collection claim that it takes them an average of 2–3 hours. Women who go to the gathering must queue for a long time.

Agriculture

- The community and stakeholders are concerned that the dam development projects will encroach on the only available farmland. As a result, people who have not yet been evacuated face food insecurity because they can no longer cultivate crops on those fields. Amnesty International emphasized this as well, stating that dam development requires adequate consultation and dialogue with residents in afflicted land and communities before they are evicted from their homes to make way for the dam's access road, resulting in the loss of personal and communal property. The dam construction could be disastrous for the nearly 8000 people who live in the area on a social and economic level (Amnesty International, 2020)

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/02/lesotho-polihali-dam-construction-puts-nearly-8000-people-at-risk-of-displacement/>

Gender Based Violence

- The rise in GBV cases has been linked to married Basotho women having extramarital encounters with overseas migrants in order to supplement their income and meet their basic needs at home.
- Commercial sex is on the rise and seen as alternative livelihoods in Mapholaneng. It is even spread to neighboring high schools, where teachers witnessed their female students sneaking out late at night to meet possible customers. Mature girls who live in school compounds (boarding hostels) are said to interact with migrants at bars and lodges. As a result, the schools have reported high absenteeism and dropout rates among female students.
- **Extramarital sex between married women and construction** workers is a widespread occurrence that is straining relationships and raising tensions between the community and the construction workers. This affects a large number of male migrants, mostly internal migrants from Maseru and Berea, with a few foreign migrants. While no incidents have been reported to the police, anecdotal evidence confirmed that such incidents happen, and most parties prefer to settle their differences outside of the courtroom.

3.1.6 Migration Trends In Ha Sheshot- Thabatseka

According to the survey's findings, irregular migration across unofficial borders is a common practice in Ha-sheshote village, with over 60% residents leaving their children with elderly relatives, neighbors, and friends as they migrate to South Africa as couples or individuals to work in mines, farms, and as domestic workers. Seasonal migration is very common. This

was also mentioned in the Lesotho country document analysis (2017)⁵, which found that the bulk of farm workers are engaged as seasonal laborers on commercial farms, especially in the Orange Free State.

In Ha Seshote, seasonal migration is common among the age group of between 15 and 36 years old and is driven by seasonal peaks in labor demand for farmers to work, primarily in South African agriculture fields (fruit and vegetable farms). Young and adults aged between 15 and 55 years old, and also both men and women, often use irregular way to migrate to South Africa. Some are helped by middlemen who may who are based in South Africa, while others are taken by relatives who already live and work in South Africa. Domestic work, in fruit farms and young boys working in illegal mines known as Zama Zama are all popular jobs for the unskilled Basotho.

In an interview with the chief, it was discovered that the construction project within Ha Seshote in ThabaTseka district has a fair recruitment process, despite the fact that there are few job prospects for women. As a result, Basotho women continue to migrate to South Africa in search of work. In Rustenburg, Basotho female migrant workers are more likely to work as domestic workers, although they also work as sex workers to supplement their income. They usually engage sex work confidentially. Adolescent girls and female adults rent near the miners' camps in Rustenburg and make a living through sex work with the miners.

Push Factors – Migration

Key informants stated that irregular migration is rampant among Ha Sheshot community with an estimate of 80% of those who work in South Africa lack the necessary permits to officially work in South Africa. An additional requirement of COVID-19 negative certificate made them further accustomed to irregular migration as a less expensive and hassle-free option. It is clear that the high level of poverty among the community is a push factor for irregular migration.

The border closure and strict immigration procedures, massive job losses, and reduced remittances sent by Basotho migrants to their families hit the communities during the COVID-19 pandemic period. Some indicates the number of Basotho who returned home from South Africa during the Christmas in 2020 was significantly smaller than usual festive season due to the direct impact of COVID-19. The majority of the migrants who came back and never returned to South Africa were those who had been laid off from the mines due to old age. Interviewed community members stated that people who lost their jobs stayed in South Africa and are looking for a new work usually does not contact their family members. Those children left with aging grandparents and child-headed families became so vulnerable that females in those homes were forced to engage in survival sex with an exchange of money to construction workers to make ends meet. Ha Seshoteoneis one of the most marginalized villages in ThabaTseka District, with little/no access to central government social services

⁵<https://www.cfr.org/blog/illegal-mining-and-role-zama-zamas-south-africa>

and very inadequate and inaccessible roads. This has led to the international migration of its residents to South Africa.

The high level of out-going migration is evidenced by the following quote by an opinion leader from the village;

"Now that we do not have roads around the village, we have to carry the deceased with hands from the tar road to the villages. A small number of men is required to be there while the deceased is heavy"

Yet in this village we have very few and old men because most youths are in South Africa." during grave(s) digging we struggle because the neighbors do not come like they used to do before COVID-19 pandemic. "

Permanent workers in farms and mines usually have legal papers for work permits since they can afford the costs of all legal processes. Irregular migration is frequent among both men and women with the majority being bread winners for their families. Lesotho citizens are usually given one month entry in SA to process their entire documentation and discharge their passport at the border every month. However, COVID-19 restrictions made this very difficult and thus those who used to pass official borders also started using informal crossings. This is on top of the fact that, as a result of COVID-19 related socio-economic impact (unemployment and food insecurity), poverty has intensified among the already poor households. Unlike Mokhotlong district, some migrants in ThabaTseka district use middlemen who broker individual trips to South Africa for a charge, though the majority of migrants travel on their own. Key informants indicated that over 70% of residents in Ha Sheshot work in South Africa, with the majority being irregular workers.

Those who returned after losing their jobs did not reveal to their families, while others preferred to stay in SA and look for new job. Domestic workers usually return twice a year, while others only return once a year. However, individuals working in illicit mines (Zama-Zama/litotomeng SA) have erratic schedules and little is known about their nature of work and how they are paid and recruited. The community continues to be poor despite the fact that there are many Basotho (internal migrants) from other districts come to their community to work in the construction project. The grocery stores are busy, and stock turnover is high due to the influx of people. Vegetable gardening, chicken keeping, and sales of water are common businesses in the area.

3.1.7 Negative impact of COVID-19 and large project-induced Migration

The following is the summary of negative socio-economic impact caused by the COVID-19, construction project which has impacted migration (incoming migration to Mapholaneng) to the specific group.

Table 5. Summary of negative social impact to different population group in Ha Seshote, ThabaTseka

Population Group	Negative impact caused by the construction Project and Covid19
Adult men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers (migrant men) get engaged in affairs with village women resulting into fight and family separation. • Migrant men interact with adolescent girls and impregnate them hence high rate of teenage pregnancy and early marriages. • Many host community women and girls see migrant men and construction workers as a source of livelihood and income, and they hang out at construction sites and their homes to tempt them into sexual affairs. • The majority of the adults, particularly returnees, who were laid off from the mines and spent all of their funds to keep their families afloat during the lockdowns, are now unemployed and struggling with no viable source of income.
Adult women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 related restrictions increased vulnerability for female returnees who are breadwinners. They are unable to feed their families increasing their increased vulnerability to food insecurity risk hunger and hardship. • Family abandonment - most adults who went to work SA left their families behind in the village with relatives and elderly grandparents. They never returned, even after losing their employment, and left their wife and children to suffer and make vulnerable. Married women increasingly becoming unfaithful and having extra marital sex with construction workers
Adolescent girls (18-25 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common drivers of early or teenage pregnancy in this community are Poverty: teenagers who are in dire need sleep with construction workers in exchange of money, and Teenagers that stay with elderly grandparents are uncontrollable and they interact with older men and construction workers that can maintain their lifestyles on a regular basis • There is a high rate of unwanted pregnancy and marriages, as well as an increase in GBV cases and family separation due to extramarital affairs with migrant and construction workers
Adolescent boys (18-25 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a high level of unwanted pregnancy and marriages, as well as youth migrate to South Africa through irregular manner, and attracted for illegal mine and other jobs out of their desperation
Children under 18 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child abandonment - Most adults are SA and abandoned their families in the villages. Leaving many of them with no parental guidance and support. That is partly the reason for increased vulnerability of girls from such families. • To provide resources for themselves and their siblings, teenage female house hold headsengage in sex work with construction workers (mainly child headed families)

3.1.8 Impact of the COVID-19, large project and Migration per Sector (Mapholaneng / Mokhotlong District)

Education Sector

- COVID-19 had a huge impact on education. Institutions such as Laghetho and Katse High School have a high level of dropout among female students due to pregnancies and early marriages. Aside from the major construction projects, seasonal mining work with a large number of single migrant workers affect the lives of both boys and girls in the area, particularly girls who are often impregnated by construction workers and have their futures ruined.

“We are worried because most of the constructions workers are not married therefore lure female students into sex taking advantage of their vulnerability. Many of our students rarely finish school they either get pregnant or get married off or at times left single with their babies. Really, we are facing a huge challenge of children headed families as well because parents have gone to work and do not come back regularly due to COVID-19 travel restriction.” - Principal Laghetho High school

- Laghetho High School administrator indicated that school enrollment and retention has dropped from 416 to 308 students after the first COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020, with over 65 of the girls returning pregnant and 108 girls and boys failing to report back due to the lockdown.
- Male youths recruited through illegal mining jobs (Zama-Zama) frequently vanish from communities and schools and return to South Africa undetected. This group of young people rarely interacts with others. Anecdotal evidence states that they also recruit others in the community before returning to SA.
- The school suffers considerable challenges relating to abandoned children by some parents who relocated to South Africa in search of job, according to the FGDs with 15- to 19-year-olds and school administration. Hunger-stricken families that cannot afford food, school uniforms, and basic fees are becoming increasingly common.
- Hostel students rely on food sent by their parents, and when that supply runs out, they have no alternative but to engage survival sex with construction workers to supplement their income.
- Lastly, if the school does not interfere, some of the female students who date with mineworkers often drop out of school.

“Our Culture in itself, without COVID-19, promotes teenage marriage; COVID-19 has escalated vulnerability of these young ladies”- Chief of HaSeshote

- HaSeshote village is well-known for being a marginalized community with limited government services, a high rate of poverty, and limited agricultural and employment opportunities, all of which contribute to a high rate of youth migration from villages to

South Africa, as well as a high rate of pregnancy and child marriages in the area. Currently, parents who are unable to support their family push their daughters to marry so that they will be cared for rather than starving and without basic requirements, which is why most girls have fallen prey to construction workers and older men in exchange for money.

Health

- According to the health facility, the community has a high prevalence of pregnancy and STIs, and girls who become pregnant but are unable to sustain their children frequently abort their babies, and the fetus is occasionally thrown in the bushy areas or near any pit latrine. Because of its marginalization and inaccessibility, the village misses out on social services provided by the central government, such as COVID-19 masks and sanitizers, which are in short supply. As a result, most community members and family members share a mask between two to three family members, potentially spreading the Covid19 infection.

Livelihood

- A couple of the village's women and girls from Ha Seshote work on this construction project. In addition to limited economic activity in the hamlet, COVID-19 brought an influx of returnees who lost jobs in South Africa. Some is unable to collect their remaining payments from mining companies in South Africa due to the continuous travel restriction. Community perceive that even if the projects are located in their village, the majority of workers are coming from other districts and therefore their local community is not benefiting positively from the large scale project.

WASH

- HaSeshote village water sources are quite far away from the village requiring 1-2 hours of walk to have access to water. This community has a severe scarcity of water. Girls and women are sometimes raped by herd's boys as they return from the water sources in the evenings. In addition, there is no suitable garbage disposal or sanitary facilities in town. The majority of Ha Seshote village homes do not have toilets and defecate in dongas and behind bushes. Defecating in the open space was a common sight for youngsters from the village pre-school. Participants attributed the outbreak of diarrhea in the area to poor water and sanitation situation. During FGDs, participants expressed their concern that their villages had been overlooked during Phase I, when LHDA gave VIP latrines to other nearby communities (LHDA, 2017)
- Furthermore, burning and burying rubbish were the most common methods of waste disposal. Nearly all of the villages visited during this investigation had ash heaps. The council had placed garbage disposal containers around the business area in Ha Seshote, but it was stated that people barely used them and continued to litter around the hamlet, particularly near the market area. There is no formal rubbish disposal or waste site in close vicinity to it (LHDA, 2017)

Gender Based Violence (GBV)

- Extramarital affairs among construction workers and married couples are prevalent, resulting in disagreements, fight and GBV including domestic violence among the community in HaSeshote. The chief receives a large number of cases, particularly rape cases, in which the victims have died while the accused is still at home. Even when victims are raped and killed, the culprits are never captured, leading some communities to believe that certain offenders have the financial means to bribe their way through the criminal justice system.
- The most typical disputes are between local men and migrant workers who are vying for females. Construction workers may carry their customers to their homes at night; however there is minimal evidence of sex employment.

Table 6: Child rights abuses and GBV cases (pre and after COVID)

	DETAILS	BEFORE	AFTER /NOW
1	Gender based violence *Sexual abuse/Battering/assault	3 cases monthly	5-8 cases a day reported at the chiefs place
2	Child marriages	7 quarterly	29 quarterly
3	Child abuse cases	3-5 cases quarterly	13-19 cases every quarter
4	Family separation	2 cases quarterly	7-9 quarterly as a result from extra marital relationships with construction workers
5	Unsafe abortion due to unwanted pregnancy / foetus found thrown within the nearby garbage or bush	3 cases quarterly	5 cases quarterly

The table below shows the frequency of instances before and after COVID-19. Cases previously varied from 5-7 each quarter, but now average 29 per quarter, indicating a significant increase in child abuse related incidents.

Figure 4. Average number of reported cases reported cases of child marriages quarterly

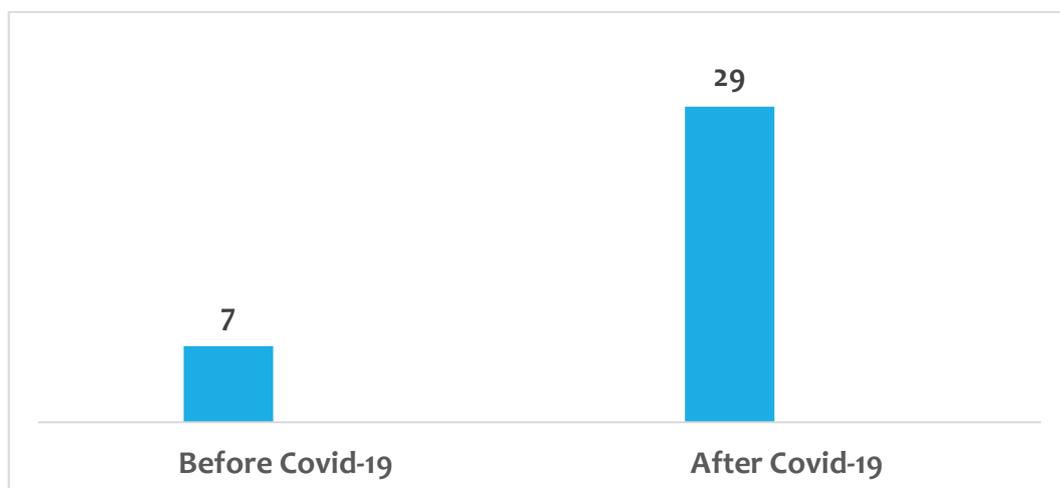
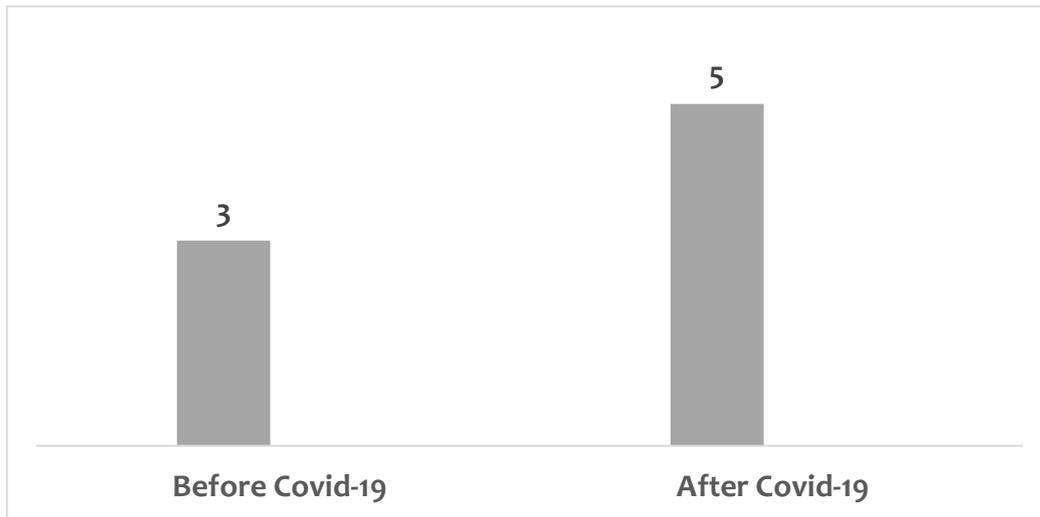


Figure 5. Average number of reported cases of unsafe abortion due to unwanted pregnancy / foetus found thrown within the nearby garbage or bush



Child Abuse –(Abandonment)

- Most couples who relocate to South Africa leave their children with their elderly parents or grandchildren. When these children reach adolescence, their elderly grandparents are unable to control their behavior, and migrant and construction workers routinely sexually molested them. Pregnancies and child marriages are widespread in this area, and patriarchal culture has normalized them.
- This is also prevalent among youth who have been left in charge of a household, as well as those who have been left with relatives, neighbors, and acquaintances. These young people go out late at night to meet construction workers, who eventually pregnant them, and make it difficult for them to live with their parents. Similarly, the girls from child-headed family tend to engage in survival sex with migrant workers who can help them achieve their fundamental needs in exchange for money.

Figure 7. Average number of reported cases of child abuse before and after COVID-19

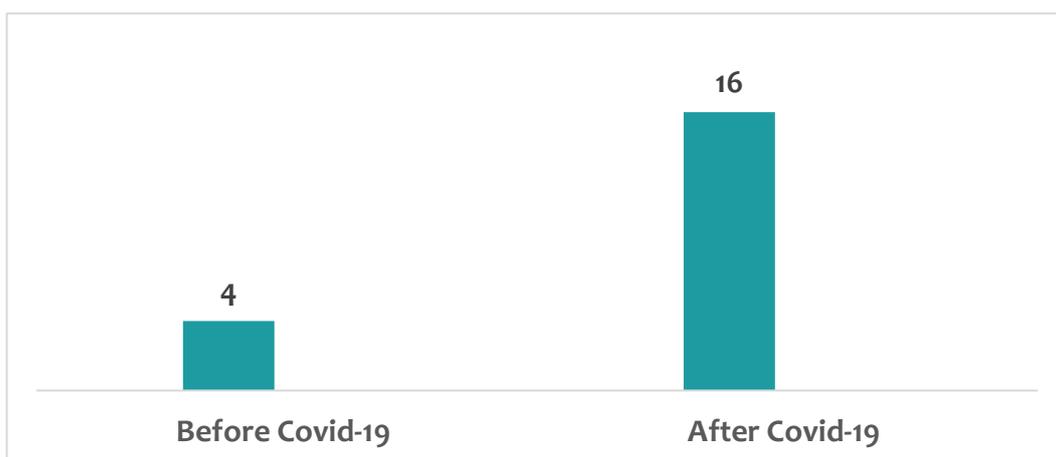
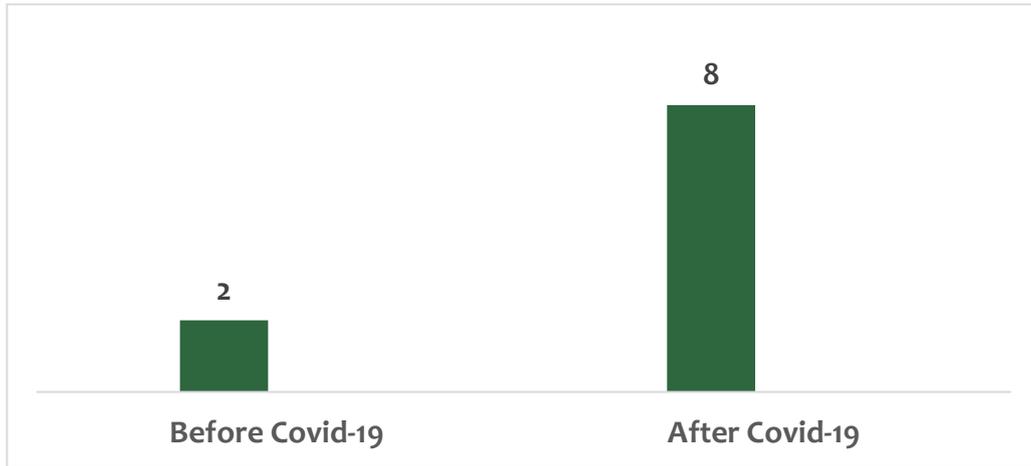


Figure 8. Average number of reported cases of family separation before and after COVID-19



The table below shows the cases of family separation caused by the negative impact of COVID-19 and construction work, with the frequency initially being 2–3 cases per quarter before COVID-19, but now fluctuating between 7-8 cases per quarter owing to COVID-19 and construction. Considering the village's small population of less than 1,250 people, this rate is extremely high.

3.1.8 Returnees & Recovery Strategy

The majority of returnees in both Mokhotlong and ThabaTseka districts were miners who had been retrenched due to their old age. Even after losing jobs, young migrants tend to stay in South Africa. Some who came during the Christmas holiday had returned to South Africa in search of new work. In the villages that the consultant visited, there were simply no young returnees. Among the female returnees were those previously engaged as domestic servants and who return to the village because they could not find work in South Africa. Others did not return and stay in South Africa, unable to send money to their family back home.

As a strategy to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic shock, most of the returnee migrants who were visited were engaged in farming, cultivating cabbages, and breeding local fowl and sheep. Some women were fetching water and selling it to women who were pregnant and unable to travel long distances for water. A few would do piece jobs like plough for other village members at a fee using their ox plough.

Figure 8. Female returnees fetching and selling water to residents (LHDA temporary camp)



There were an estimated 350 households residing in the LHDA temporary village community in Lets'eng, with 70 percent of the residents being women aged 18 to 49 years old. The majority of them stated that they had left their children with relatives, neighbors and friends in the rural areas to look for work near the mines. Only around ten percent of the homes in that camp were married couples.

Before COVID-19, women in local area get employment for short-term unskilled labour such as laundry, cleaning and each would get part time job three days in a week. Due to water problem, women fetch water are permanently employed to sell it to others who cannot afford to queue for long hours. Internal migration, as well as the characteristics and dynamics of migration around temporary settlements, may have impacted their livelihood. It is said that Lets'eng diamonds employees normally purchase all of their household necessities from ButhaButhe. However, the mines can only employ about 30 people for a short period of time on average so the demand is quite low for purchasing household items by these men. Anecdotal evidence revealed that women allege they make a living by selling water, firewood, and washing clothes for other migrant workers could be actually engaging with commercial sex with them.

3.1.9 Major stakeholders in Migration programme at district level

No	Organization	Role	District
1	District Administrators office (DA)	Awareness among the construction company workers and management to refrain from acts of abuse and extra marital affairs that is harmful. Dialogue between host community and construction companies for peaceful co – existence. Preparedness plans on how to protect migrants and restoration of peace within the community.	Mokhotlong/ThabaTseka
2	Disaster Management Committee	Create awareness about the development of such construction and likely impact to the community. Monitor project impact to the population and provide information to the central government	

	NGOs/CBOs		
3	GROW	Generally provide livelihood opportunities for the entire community and women and male groups within the group without discrimination	
4	Skillshare Lesotho	Targets the migrants with skills in entrepreneurship, awareness of human trafficking along the at-risk border towns	Mokhotlong and ThabaTseka
5	Migrants workers Association	Mainly focuses on rights of migrant workers and creates awareness about their rights	Mokhotlong and ThabaTseka
6	World Vision	Through the ECHO project does community awareness on early warning systems on disaster response and resilience.	Mokhotlong
7	Butterfly Sanctuary	Creates awareness about girls rights, dangers of harmful practices like teenage Pregnancy and marriage , rights of migrants and conducts preparedness trainings for youth migrants before migrating inform having proper documentation and safer migration	HaSheshot – started by Youth who is resident

CHAPTER 4: LESSONS LEARNED, OPPORUTNITIES, WAY-FORWARDS

4.1 Lessons Learned and Challenges

- Migration patterns are characterised by various push and pull facotrs. Whenever the stakedholders plan to have a project, it is imporant to assess migration pattern, trends and prediction to inform the policy intervention in particular project site.** For instance, the migration pattenrs at the two target locations were quite different. In Thaba Tseka district, HaSeshote has been facing a challenge of ‘out-going migration to South Africa’ due to the various push factors (i.e. limited economic and employment opportunities, lack of or insufficinet access to government services etc.). On the other hand, in Mokhotlong district, Mapholaneng is facing ‘incoming migration’ due to the pull factors (i.e. perceived economic and job opportunities, entrepreneurship opportunities etc).
- Local government lacks the expertise and capacity to predict migration (incoming or outgoing) and develop a plan taking into consideration of migration pattern.**As a result, lack of / insufficient access to basic servies (water and sanitation, accomodation, shelter, etc.) is common in a place where there is increased populations caused by incoming migration.Lack of proper housing / accommodation is one of the concerns by migrant workers, and temporary settlement such as at Lietseng diamonds increases in the area. On the other hand, the village continues to lose young and econoimcally productive population due to the marginalization and lack of access to basic services. A coordinated platform among the stakeholders to discuss the socio-economic impact from the construction project, city planning based on the prediction of population movement is critical. Currently, it looks like the stakehoders are only dealing with the symptoms of the problem instead of adressing the root causes of the issue in relation to the migration.

- **Local Government, village chief does not have information on new residents (migrants) in their respective area, making it difficult to consider migration in their planning.** It was found that migrant households do not register in their new residence, and this was found in Mapholaneng, Ha Sheshote, and temporary settlement at LHDA. Most chiefs did not have a list of names of their residents. Taking stock of migration trends is critical to regulate labor mobility in the areas that may be over-crowded.
- **Despite the fact that there are many Basotho internal migrants and local women who involve in extra-marital affairs, local population perceive as ‘foreign migrant workers (construction or mining)’ are the one who is dominantly causing this extra-marital affairs, thus, there is a mistrust, tension between foreign migrant workers and local community.** The majority of external migrants have fled their native country due to various circumstances such as poverty, limited employment opportunities, and persecution (refugees). Wherever there is a large scale project which attract labour migrants (both international and domestic), the local government should play an important role to promote peaceful co-existence, and the stakeholders (company, project management agents) should consider the skills transfer programme from the migrant workers to local community members, which will ensure the benefits to the local community as well we to build trust between them.
- **Stakeholders need to understand the root causes of extra-marital affairs, commercial sex among the adolescent girls with migrant workers, and develop a plan to mitigate / reduce such vulnerability among the at-risk group.**For instance, teenagers accused of offering unsolicited sex to the construction workers in exchange for money come from vulnerable abandoned household abandoned by parents in the village with either relatives or left alone on their own as children. Parents who left children in search of their jobs often do not contact them for a long time, which impact them psychosocially and left them alone for their daily survival to feed them and their siblings. The poverty in the village where the large construction project happens have to be addressed in order to reduce such incidents. The vulnerable teenage girls have fallen victims to construction workers seduction into unprotected sex in exchange for money ending up pregnant unless the stakeholders provide alternative livelihood opportunity for at-risk group.
- **Lack of evidence or record at Police station on the issue of commercial sex and potential human trafficking is a challenge.** Despite the concern among the communities in Mapholaneng, police station did not have hard evidence of record on the issues in relation to the commercial sex by the school-girls and others. For instance, local people were aware that new Mapholaneg circle is a hot spot where schoolgirls and other female minors congregate between 7:00 pm and 8:00 pm waiting for construction workers to pick them up. However, police seems to have no information. Lack of documented proof through investigation by police makes it difficult to inform appropriate actions to mitigate / reduce such incidents.

- There is an allegation that most communities that are displaced due to massive construction projects become worse off economically in the new location than before. This was not part of the scope of this assessment. Separate research is needed to evaluate the impact of the relocation method and compensation for impacted families in Polihalidam, as well as to ascertain whether the unexpected migration resulted in partial settlement or whether communities have remained migrants and squatters in other districts.

4.2 Good practices, Opportunities

- **Stakeholders should predict migration pattern and its impact, and mitigate the risks and vulnerability among the local communities while ensure improve service delivery in the projected area with incoming migration in the future similar projects.** Internal migration is on the rise, and the closure of some garment factories in Maseru and the opening of new ones in Butha Buthe indicates potential migration flow towards Butha Buthe. Based on the lessons learned from Mokhotlong and other construction project, the stakeholders could develop programs to mitigate the risks based on the predication of migration patterns.
- **The stakeholders should make an intentional efforts to provide job opportunities for the local populations.** In Mapholaneng, such efforts were confirmed that youth from the district were priviledged to have job opportunities in the construction project. This should be considered as good practies. On the other hand, Ha Seshote local community did not have job opportunities. Most companies hired employees from other Lesotho districts, with few foreigners. The community believes that they have not yet benefited from the building work, with an exception of grocery stores, and that the construction activity has had a negative influence due to the increasing extramarital affairs in the community.
- **Collaboration with existing Community Based Organization to improve livelihood among the target communities:** There are few players in Ha Seshote which provide supports in promoting child rights, livelihoods, pre-departure awareness training, and policy advocacy for the government to improve service delivery to the marginalized community. There is an emerging community based started by one of the females within the area called Butterfly Sanctuary with a good intention. They raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration, advocate for child protection, alerts young girls on teenage pregnancy, and suport youth livelihood and skill training, offer opportunities to strengthen community response at the grassroot level. This young group is dedicated to protectiong women's and girls' rights. Stakeholders could use this organization to develop efforts to solve the aforementioned social ills by empowering adolescents and home headed families economically.

4.3. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, large-scale construction projects which has influenced migration trends in the locality of ThabaTseka and Mokhotlong, and draw lessons learned and identify opportunities for the appropriate intervention to mitigate risks of negative social impact on the local community while ensure migration are well planned, and increasingly contributing to the local economy development.

Based on the assessment, there are four key recommendations for the policy consideration.

Recommendation 1: Stakeholders should take into account internal migration in development planning and sectoral and inter-sectoral policies.

The majority of the population that migrates are economically active, educated, and young working-age individuals. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen labour market policies in areas of origin and destination (could be districts within Lesotho) that will increase and diversify the type of activities that support employment and businesses within the country. For instance, programmes that provide information and skills training at origin for the type of jobs in demand at destination or another district would help improve matching between potential migrant workers with actual positions.

Government and stakeholder should predict an impact on community settlements, communities (children, teenagers, and adults). Furthermore, the stigmatization of migration (by locals) can be changed by presenting balanced opinions and evidence-based studies instead of incorrect impressions that originate from cognitive bias on the subject. Districts must invest in research to gather evidence and facts that can aid town/host community leaders in refuting migration myths.

Furthermore, migrants should not be seen as transitory residents, but rather as permanent residents, necessitating adjustments to budgeting and planning, as well as a focus on decreasing the demand on social services at the district/local level. Support the creation of policies that include social protection policies and programs for the external migrant community. Despite the fact that migrant households generally have better economic possibilities and social services than in their home countries, their housing, land ownership, and work opportunities are limited, in part due to their lack of registration and hence marginalization at their destination.

Subsequently, migrant households should be provided with an opportunity to access public and social services, as well as receive welfare services through the social security policy during a certain period after migration, for example, up until they are able to resolve their residence issues, when they receive land and secure housing.

Recommendation 2: Stakeholders should address migration addressing the pull and push factors contributing to Migration and Displacement

Given the ramifications for both origin and destination locations, policymakers should analyze the general and more specific trends in migration and displacement to maximize the advantages and minimize the costs of relocation and unexpected internal migration and settlement. This would necessitate direct engagement with communities and the creation of

realistic and acceptable compensation packages in the form of dwelling structures created for individuals in the amount that the individual may have lost as a result of the relocation and building of such massive projects. Property valuations by land valuers should be done by an external, unbiased consultant in agreement with both the government and community representatives. This reduces displaced groups' vulnerability and helps them to build well-planned settlements, lowering the likelihood of relocation.

Recommendation 3: Government, International Organization, NGOs and Civil Society needs to sensitize populations on the safe migration, and risks and consequences of unsafe migration, as well as the accurate information on the situation in the place of destination

Most migrant households migrate without any knowledge about the area they choose to move and settle in. While others depend on friends and myths and this has been a challenge for especially migrants that leave the village to settle in Mapholaneng based on myths. The females have ended up dropping out of school and being involved in sex trade. Stakeholders should assist districts in compiling a directory of available job openings, enterprises, and skills gaps within the district. The district should provide a directory of services that can be disseminated to rural youths on available employment opportunities and skills set before they embark on rural-to-urban migration.

Stakeholder should partner with media / journalists to communicate evidence backed up by relevant statistics on migration and its impact. Integration procedures must be established because migration has an impact on the variety of receiving /host communities and migrants. A successful integration measure necessitates proper planning and policies that consider the entire population and diversity including marginalized native and migrant communities.

Stakeholders should map out the existing CSOs and community groups working in specific thematic areas and link them to projects, such as child labor, education, rights, livelihoods, labor, and migration, and develop a district level data base in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development to: Build their capacity on migration issues, including mainstreaming migration and migrant related interventions like raising awareness about the dangers of irregular migration and providing skills and income-generating projects for youths and communities near the Lesotho-South African border.

Recommendation 4: Government and Stakeholder, in partnership with Private Sector, should develop a long-term, balanced development policy aimed at closing the gap between the urban and rural development.

Rural and regional development policies are required to improve the rural population's livelihood and living conditions. Developing partnership with private sector to offer tailored skills and boosting businesses by youths in the rural areas is important. For instance, **Vodacom Lesotho** (Supports initiatives and talents of young entrepreneurs and artists through grants making as starter up capital); **ECONET** (Supports and offers skills training to young people on mobile money business and business initiation); **Maloti Brewery** (Supports youths with innovative business ideas with grants or cash to boost their business); and **Bacha**

Entrepreneurial Project (BEDCO, LRA, AND Standard Lesotho): (Supports youth employment through provision of business grants to young graduates aged 21 to 35 years with no formal employment). These kinds of grants would reduce migration – in particularly irregular and unsafe migration ‘‘out of desperation’’ - but also increase job creation opportunities at the grassroots levels.

Improve living conditions in locations of origin will also encourage return migration which will bring development opportunities. Return migration policies could be incorporated into rural development strategies, which should focus on improving living circumstances and work opportunities for returning migrants and potential migrants. Similarly, while remittances were not addressed in this study, efforts may be made to aid migrants' ability to save and send money back to their home countries in the hopes of returning in the future. This could apply to all Basotho diaspora members abroad.

Government and in particularly the Ministry of Forestry and Agriculture could consider partnering with LHDA on an environmental conservation initiative project in which migrants within their communities can be engaged in promoting better environmental conservation services in exchange for a stipend of LSL 2,500 on monthly basis. This would not only improve sustainability, but it would also attract youths back to the villages once they have completed their education necessities. This would also reduce external and internal migration will promoting environmental conservation in order to reduce on the impact of climate change that is another factor contributing to seasonal migration in Lesotho.

Migration brings positive impact to migrants and their family members, and communities of origin, transit and destination - if it is well managed. This applies not only international migration, but also internal migration. This assessment has provided the evidence that it is high time that stakeholders work hand in hand to prevent the negative impact of unplanned migration caused by large construction project, COVID-19 and other shocks, while maximize the developmental impact from migration through a well-coordinated intervention.

Recommendation 5: Government can harness migration (Skills and talents from migrants) for inclusive growth and development while ensuring mutual benefit, regulated migration and Harmonize regional labour migration policy and commitments within the existing government policies in order to protect and guarantee equal rights and access to decent and productive work for migrant workers (MAP).

To boost its economy, the government can assess the role played by migrants in both the formal and informal sectors by fostering skills transfer and engagement in viable sectors that are underserved by the host community, not only to boost the economy but also to benefit the host community (United Arab Emirates model). Migrants may be enrolled and attracted in sectors like Agriculture, manufacturing, and processing (agribusiness products) are examples of such industries that can help Lesotho become more self-sufficient in food while also benefiting the host community. This can also be assisted by the government having a consistent communication strategy for engaging migrants while regulating rules and

mechanisms for effective skill transfer, as well as the government broadening the revenue base from migration-related services for the benefit of locals.

END

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Appendices

No	Respondents	Type of Interview	District
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1	District Administrators office (DA)	Key informant interview	Mokhotlong
2	Village Chief of Lessing	Key informant Interview	temporary village Lets'engMokhotlong
3	Women and female Youths	2 FGDs	Lets'eng temporary village Mokhotlong
4	Ramonakalali village Chief	Key informant Interview	Mokhotlong
	CGPU Officer at	Key informant interviews	Tlokoeng Police Station-Mokhotlong
5	Disaster Management Authority	Key informant interviews	Mokhotlong
6	Border post police officer	Key informant interviews	Sani Pass- Mokhotlong
7	Immigration officer	Key informant interviews	Sani Pass- Mokhotlong
8	Senior Education Manager – Ministry of Education and Training	Key informant interviews	Mokhotlong
9	Returned Migrant at Moeketsane village	Key informant interview	Mokhotlong
10	Teacher - Mapholaneng High school	Key informant interview	Mokhotlong
11	Host men in Ha- sheshote	FGD	ThabaTseka
12	Host women Ha- sheshote	FGD	ThabaTseka
13	Migrant women	FGD	ThabaTseka
14	High schoo Principal - Laghetho High	KII	ThabaTseka
15	Village chief	KII	ThabaTseka
16	Primary School Teacher	KII	ThabaTseka
16	DA-	KII	ThabaTseka
17	Returnee Migrant	KII	ThabaTseka
18	Migrant Female	KII	ThabaTseka
19	Adolecsent youth –Female	KII	ThabaTseka

