

LEWANEWS

The newsletter of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority



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service delivery concerns
during public meetings **8**

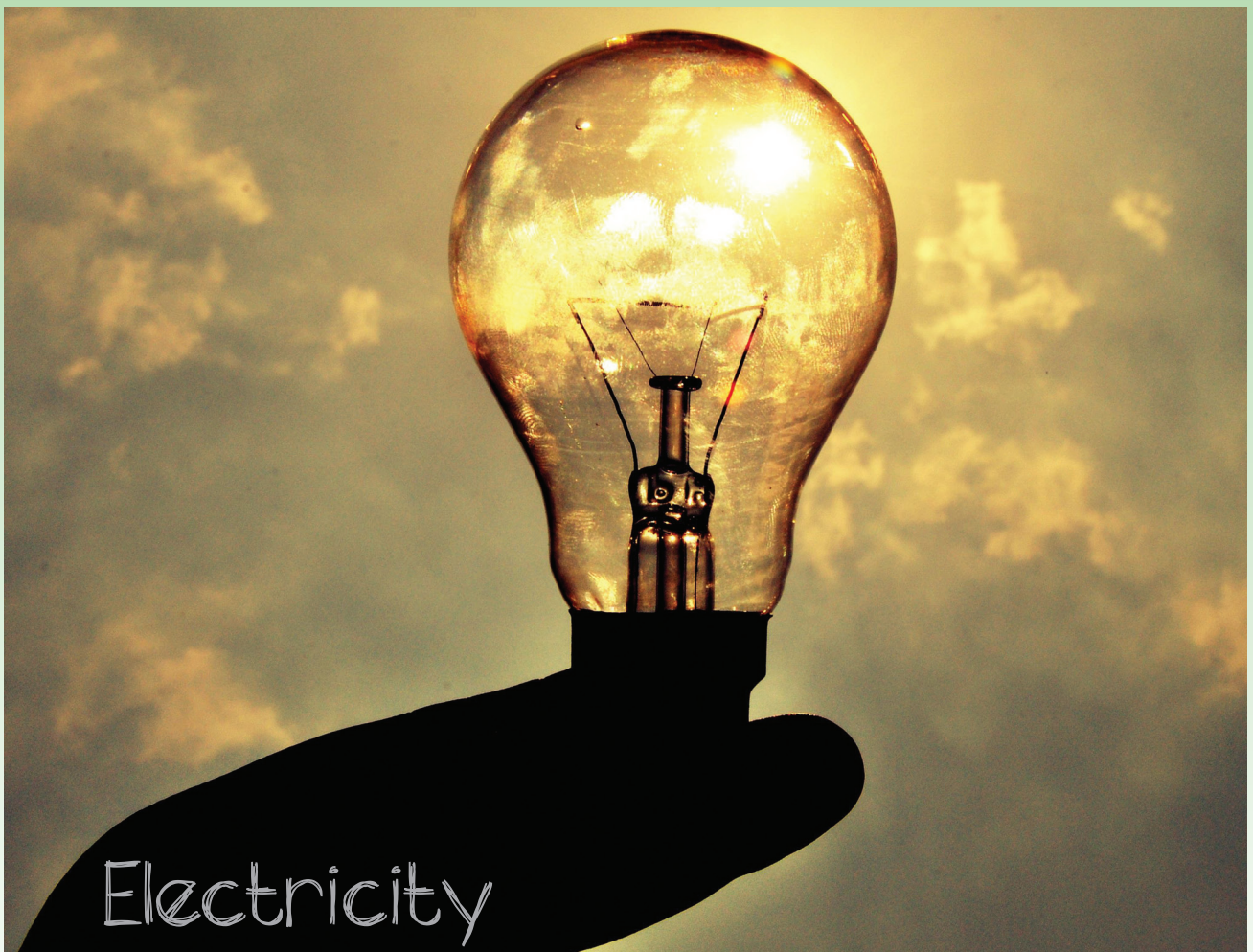
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Do you know more about Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority?



For more information, please contact us at 7th Floor, Moposo House, Kingsway, Maseru, Lesotho

Tel: +266 22 312479 • Fax: +266 22 315094 • Email: secretary@lewa.org.ls





LEWANews

LESOTHO
ELECTRICITY & WATER
AUTHORITY

7 Floor, Moposo House, Kingsway
Private Bag A315 • Maseru
Maseru • Lesotho
Tel: +266 22312479
Fax: +266 22315094
E-mail: secretary@lewa.org.ls
Website: www.lewa.org.ls

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Lebohlang K. Moleko
Email: lmoleko@lewa.org.ls

CUSTOMER AFFAIRS MANAGER
Shao Khatala
Email: skhatala@lewa.org.ls

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Sebusi Khanyela
Email: skhanyela@lewa.org.ls

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Dear readers,

As always I am delighted to present to you some of the developments that took place at the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) during the third quarter of 2018. This publication seeks to disseminate a timeless and relevant content that reflects a consumer centric approach.

As a starting point, the Authority gives the highlights of its participation in Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA) and East and Southern African Waters Regulators Association (ESAWAS).

Remarks by the Chief Executive

The newsletter focuses on safety measures and standards of building near water and electricity infrastructure.

The Authority presented awards to best performing students at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and the Lerotholi Polytechnic. Water services consumers are further advised on ways of detecting and solving water leaks at home.

In an effort to enhance customer empowerment initiatives, on electricity, water and sewage services regulation issues that were raised by the Qacha's Nek and Thaba-Tseka's stakeholders are reported on.

The national principles on water and sanitation services access and public education on the mandate of the Rural Electrification Unit (R.E.U) in accelerating electricity supply in rural areas, to mention but a few are outlined ☐

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Moleko', with a stylized circular flourish at the beginning.

Lebohang K. Moleko (Professor)
Chief Executive



WSUP, ESAWAS to strengthen service delivery to poorest urban residents

The United Kingdom based Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) has formed a partnership with Eastern and Southern African Water and Sanitation Regulators Association (ESAWAS) to help strengthen the delivery of services to the poorest urban residents.

The formal signing of the agreement was done in Nyamata, Rwanda, on 28 November, 2018 at the close of the 12th ESAWAS Annual Conference.

According to Dr. Baghi Baghirathan, WSUP's Director of Water Sanitation and Health (WASH) Finance ESAWAS and WSUP have common objectives to develop sustainable water and sanitation utilities, through the development of effective regulatory frameworks.

"WSUP's aim is to increase access to water and sanitation services in low-income urban communities, and we look forward to working with ESAWAS to further this aim", Dr Baghirathan observed

The collaboration will help to improve national regulatory frameworks, based on international standards, to assist water and sanitation utilities to deliver affordable, high-quality services to all urban residents. The role of regulators in delivering of services is important as they have the responsibility for monitoring and reporting progress towards universal access for water and sanitation, under the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 6 (UN SDG6).

UN SDG6 calls for clean water and sanitation for all people. The official wording is: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. The goal has eight targets to be achieved by at least 2030. Progress toward the targets will be measured by using several indicators.

The Chairperson of the Technical Committee of ESAWAS Eng. Peter Njaggah, of WASREB, Kenya noted



Dr. Baghi Baghirathan, WSUP's Director of WASH.

that strong and sustainable water and sanitation utilities and regulatory agencies were important to the realisation of the SDG 6 goals on availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

"The attainment of SDG6 is important and specifically for sub-Saharan Countries which lag behind. The collaboration with WSUP will help with strengthening these institutions", Eng. Peter Njaggah said.

At the Conference, LEWA presented the 2017/18 regional benchmarking report for large utilities in terms of the three key performance indicators of economic efficiency, operational sustainability and quality of service. In comparison with other water utilities, Water and Sewerage Company's (WASCO) performance was on average modest, which meant that there was still some room for improvement.

ESAWAS focuses on strengthening regulators and fostering regional co-operation including monitoring and benchmarking utility performance. The current membership comprises eight regulators from Kenya (WASREB), Zambia (NWASCO), Mozambique (CRA), Tanzania (EWURA), Rwanda (RURA), Lesotho (LEWA), Zanzibar (ZURA) and Burundi (AREEN) ■

ESAWAS Annual General Conference held

The 12th ESAWAS Annual General Conference and Meeting which was held under the theme **‘The Regulatory environment for accelerating access to WSS services with focus on sanitation and climate resilient systems: *leaving no one behind*’** from 27-29th November, 2018 in Nyamata, Rwanda.

The meeting was hosted by the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA).

The Conference was opened by the ESAWAS Chairperson, Mr Emilio Muchanga and the RURA Director General, Lt Col. Patrick Nyirishema. The keynote presentation on the theme was delivered by Dr Dennis Mwanza, Chief of Party-E-Wash, Nigeria. The three speakers underscored the need to take a pragmatic approach to the sanitation challenge in view of climate change which is here and happening now.

The two-day deliberations focused on service delivery efforts being made by service providers from infrastructure and financing options (both onsite and offsite) to solid-waste management. The regulatory frameworks for inclusive sanitation service

provision that incorporate non-sewered sanitation and mainstream climate change were also deliberated on. Participants agreed that the focus on sanitation ought to be holistic with service delivery options taking cognisance of the impact of climate change particularly during flooding for onsite sanitation options. Ultimately, stakeholders must focus on climate resilient water supply and sanitation services. The AGM resolved that AREEN Burundi would host the 2019 Annual Conference and AGM. LEWA is to be on standby should AREEN not be able to host.

Over 80 participants representing water supply and sanitation (WSS) regulators of Zambia, Tanzania, Lesotho, Zanzibar and Mozambique. The Ministry or departments responsible for water and sanitation services regulation in Uganda and Botswana; the Water Services Association of Malawi; the Water and Sanitation for Urban Poor (WSUP) - UK; Sanergy-Kenya; Climate Resilience Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDF) - South Africa; various water Utilities from the region (Lusaka WSC-Zambia, AdeM-Mozambique, DAWASA-Tanzania, Moshi-Tanzania and ZAWA-Zanzibar) also attended □



RERA holds 15th Annual Conference, AGM

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) took part in the 15th Annual Conference of the Regional Electricity Association of Southern Africa (RERA) themed *'Regulating to enhance energy diversification for increased access and security of supply, 'Building and Regulating a Sustainable Energy Future: A case for the SADC Region'* was hosted by Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority (MERA) from 11-16 November, 2018.

The objective of the Conference was to provide a forum for regulators, industry leaders, development partners, policy makers, power utilities, investors, financiers and other stakeholders in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and other parts of the world to network and exchange information on pertinent electricity supply industry (ESI) issues.

Officiating at the occasion the Malawi Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining Mr. Aggrey Masi called for reinforced collaboration and intensified efforts to improve the energy sector.

"Our common goal is to increase access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, efficient, and modern energy. There is no better way to achieving this than through enhanced collaboration amongst various players, building the requisite infrastructures, and developing appropriate regulations and policies," he said.

LEWA has been a member of RERA since 2005.

At the conclusion of RERA events, MERA was elected as the new chairperson of RERA, succeeding Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority. MERA will be deputised by Zambia's Energy Regulation Board (ERB) □

Electricity is
deadly when
used
carelessly!



We rely on electricity to get on with our daily lives. From the moment we wake up right through the day and down to sleeping time, electricity plays a big part in our day-to-day living. Hence, it is no surprise that when something becomes so familiar, we tend to forget how powerful and **dangerous** it can potentially be.



Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority
has mandate to ensure safety of the public in relation to electricity supply and usage.

Guidance on building near water and electricity infrastructure

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) aims to protect and inform its consumers on ways through which safety measures and standards can be adhered to. These are the Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QOSSS) issued in terms of Sections 22(1) (c) and 22(1) (e) of electricity and Section 22(1) (q) of water, LEA Act as amended.


The Authority has realised that there is a potentially dangerous and increasing trend of members of the public building near water, sewerage and electricity infrastructure across the country. This practice poses danger to the lives of the community and animals.

By law, every individual must, before building or extending at a site, apply for a building permit at the Maseru City Council (MCC) or the District Administrators' Offices. Failure to have a building permit leads to delays in service provision or

complications such as pipe bursts and or electrocution.

Lodging an application to these authorities enables them to provide feedback to the applicant in order to determine if public sewers, main water pipes and electricity lines are not near or to be built on the proposed site for development.

Consumers should also bear in mind that being given a building permit does not equate to a right to build close to service infrastructures. A provision of 3 metres should be observed from the centre line of any distribution main for water, and 8 metres from a powerline of 11-22 kV for electricity.

In a case where a consumer request a relocation of either WASCO's or LEC's infrastructure, such a consumer would be required to pay for a full amount of relocation service 



A building structure under LEC powerlines.

LEWA awards the NUL and Lerotholi Polytechnic best performing students

The 23rd Lerotholi Polytechnic's (Fokothi) and the 43rd National University of Lesotho (NUL)'s graduation ceremonies held on the 13th, 22nd and 29th October 2018, respectively would never fade from memories of the graduating students of the two organisations of the 2017/18 academic year.

In fulfilment of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) signed between the two institutions of higher learning and the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA), the Authority attended two convocation ceremonies to bestow awards to best performing students.

At NUL the Authority gave three (3) awards to Mr. Sello Sejake, as the best student in Bachelor of Science in Physics/Electronics, Ms. Nthabiseng Zolase, as the best student in Bachelor of Biology and Chemistry and Mr. Lehlohonolo Mantsi, as the best student in Economics, respectively.

The Chancellor of NUL, His Majesty King Letsie III delivered the keynote address at the university's 43rd graduation ceremony for the award and conferment of certificates at NUL, Roma.

"As we honour and celebrate your successes, we need to remind you that our country is in desperate

need of quality leadership that is honest, caring and courageous and that exudes moral and ethical values", His Majesty observed.

The Lerotholi Polytechnic's ceremony was attended by, amongst other dignitaries, the Minister of Education and Training, Assoc. Professor Ntoi Rapapa who officiated therein. At the Lerotholi Polytechnic, the Authority awarded Ms. Nthabiseng Mokhethe as the top achiever in the field of Water and Electrical Engineering. The students walked away with cheques amounting to M5000.00 each.

The Authority has sponsored these awards in order to motivate and promote academic excellence in the fields pertinent to the regulation of the Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) and, Urban Water and Sewage Services subsector (UWSS) in Lesotho. Ceremonies were also celebrated in the presence of parents, other institutions of higher learning's Chancellors as well as representatives from Embassies and High Commissions in Lesotho.

At Lerotholi Polytechnic's graduation ceremony, LEWA was represented by the Consumer Affairs Officer (CAO), Mrs. 'Machabalala Koatsa while at NUL graduations, the Authority was represented by the Public Relations Officer (PRO), Mr. Sebusi Khanyela



NUL's best performing students with LEWA's PRO, Mr. Sebusi Khanyela (second from right).

Stakeholders express service delivery concerns during public meetings

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) strives to live up to its mission of being a world class utilities regulator that facilitates delivery of affordable, sustainable and quality services through amongst other things, obtaining stakeholders views on regulated services.

In this regard, the Authority takes into consideration and values feedback from stakeholders because it is able to obtain both factual and subjective information that reflects on the performance of the regulated utilities.

On the other hand, the interaction affords the Authority an opportunity to know and understand consumers' requirements in terms of Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QoSSS). Thereafter, the authority develops the strategies for addressing those issues may be refined. Public meetings and radio programs are continuously used to obtain consumers' needs and information requirements.

During these meeting convened by LEWA, the stakeholders are given an opportunity to interact with both the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) and, Water and Sewage Company (WASCO) on any service related questions and reflect on their performance.

During outreach activities in the districts of Qacha's Nek and Thaba-Tseka, the Authority, in general, found the following concerns (in bold font) which were answered in the presence of all stakeholders by the regulated utilities and LEWA (in normal font).

A. Qacha's Nek stakeholder's concerns:

1. **A constant over-flow of sewage in the streets.** WASCO responded that it was working to solve the sewage leakage problem with a contractor who had been awarded the tender.
2. **Slow increase of access to water services in urban**

villages. WASCO remarked that water supply is soon to be accelerated through the Five-Town's Project, which is intended to be rolled out to Qacha's Nek town in the future.

3. **Dysfunctional street lights.** LEC stated that it is the responsibility of the Urban Council to maintain light streets.
4. **Lack of electricity supply services in the Liqalabeng rural village.** LEC mentioned that as with projects relating to rural electrification selection, it an implementing agency and all decisions on electrification projects were made by the Government of Lesotho (GoL). LEWA revealed that the Authority is a custodian of the fund for rural electrification projects. The GoL identifies villages to benefit from the electrification project.
5. **Frequent load shedding in the district.** LEC stated that frequent outages were caused by vandalism of Eskom's infrastructure supplying the district by the Matatiele residents. LEC affirmed that it was working tirelessly to counter that problem together with the GoL, in that a transmission project from Maseru to Semonkong was in the pipeline. Again, the GoL was working to resuscitate the mothballed Tsoelike power generating station and will soon kick off.

B. Thaba-Tseka's stakeholder's concerns:

1. **Bad smell coming from WASCO's wastewater treatment dams:** WASCO responded that for some time it had faced shortages of funds to treat the sewage. Following the acquirement of funds, wastewater dams were treated and the smell had disappeared.
2. **Load shedding every Thursday of the week and which leads to a shortage of water:** LEC responded that such power cuts were due to planned



Mr. Selongoana Selongoana during WASCO and LEC public meeting, Thaba-Tseka.

maintenance works aimed at improving electricity supply in the district. The works were expected to be finalised in April 2019. On the issue of shortage of water as a result of electricity outages, WASCO responded in that, since it used electricity to pump water using electricity, outages negatively affect water production and supply levels. WASCO also noted that it did not have big tanks that could sustain water supply for a day without pumping.

3. **Mushrooming of buildings under high voltage lines:** LEC explained that there was an increasing problem in the district as the community was building under high power lines. In addition, the community does not seek building permits from the relevant authorities. Members of the community become hostile towards LEC when being warned on the dangers of building in those areas.

The same problem was discussed in relation to WASCO service. Both utilities advised consumers that even before they could build on a site that has water and electricity infrastructure, they should first apply for a building permit at District Administrator's Offices. Having a building permit ensures that safety and sustainable service provision issues are taken into consideration.

4. **Water bills not distributed. Stakeholders expressed that they no longer get printed bills but SMSes:** Stakeholders expressed that SMSes were suitable for the young generation. WASCO responded that it had discovered a countrywide dissatisfaction brought by SMS bills notification and it, therefore, encouraged consumers to individually seek for printouts at its offices. WASCO told consumers

that the old system of printing bills was costly hence the introduction of SMS notifications.

5. **Factors that LEWA takes into consideration during tariff determination:** The Authority responded that, amongst other things it took into consideration economic and social factors, financial statements of the utilities, reasonableness of the Application and public comments.
6. **Sewer leaks in the premises of the Lesotho College of Education (LCE), Thaba-Tseka:** WASCO explained that it has since engaged with LCE's management on measures to stop sewer leaks in the premises and would follow up with them to find out how far were they on implementing measures agreed upon.
7. **Consumer complaints handling procedures for stakeholders in Thaba-Tseka:** LEWA reminded the Thaba-Tseka based consumers were told that they could lodge their complaints through the office of the District Administrator who would send a complaint to the Authority. They were further advised to liaise with LEWA district committee of Thaba-Tseka.
8. **Measures taken by LEWA to ensure effective monitoring of water and electricity QoSSS:** The Authority told consumers that it ensures efficient monitoring of QoSSS through inspections and monthly reporting forms.

The Authority was represented by the Public Relations Officer (Mr. Sebusi Khanyela), Consumer Affairs Officer (Mrs. Machabalala Koatsa) and Performance Analyst-Water (Mrs. 'Mamathe Makhaola) □

LEWA customer complaints handling procedure

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) has been established to protect the interests of all classes of customers by amongst other things, resolving complaints/disputes between licensed operators (Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) and Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) and their customers.

Customer complaints can only be escalated to the Authority if they cannot be resolved by the complaints procedures of the licensed operators stated above. The spirit behind this provision is that complaints should be resolved by the service providers as expeditious as possible without referral to LEWA.

In order to realise LEWA's goal of expeditiously resolving customer complaints, Sections 34 and 36 of the Authority's enabling Act and has developed other regulatory instruments such as Quality of Service and Supply Standards; The Lesotho Electricity Authority (Resolution of Disputes) Rules, 2010 and Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (Resolution of Complaints for Water and Sewerage Services) Rules, 2013 in resolving complaints and disputes.

Customer complaints must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible with LEWA. The subject matter of the complaint should be related to regulated activities. Customer complaints lodged with the Authority may differ on the subject matter, merits and complexities and as such require different approaches for resolution.

Any customer may lodge a complaint, but it is important that such a complainant must have exhausted all remedies available at the Licensee. The Authority through its procedures provides the licensees with the first opportunity to resolve customers' complaints before the matter could be referred to LEWA. In fact, LEWA has approved LEC's code of Practice for Handling Customer Complaints while WASCO is in the process of developing its own codes.

The licensees shall use all reasonable endeavours to resolve customer complaints to the customer's

satisfaction subject to the provisions of its license and other regulatory tools. Where in a customer's opinion, a complaint raised had not been resolved satisfactorily or had not been resolved at all, the Authority could be approached therein.


Upon receiving complaints, the following particulars are necessary to ascertain whether the complaint falls within the services provided by the regulated utilities:

- Name of the customer;
- Contact address;
- Contact numbers;
- Details of the complaint and the relief sought; and
- Copies of all correspondences between customers and licensees

If the matter falls within the powers of the Authority, investigations would be undertaken where necessary. The licensee with whom the complaint is lodged against would be notified of the complaint and representation would be sought. If, thereafter, there are clear indications that the complaint had been resolved, then the Authority would close the matter.

If the two parties do not change their positions regarding their disagreement, a mediation meeting between them is held to reach an amicable solution. It may happen that the parties agree on an amicable solution, wherein the matter would be closed.

In cases where the parties can not reach an agreement during the mediation, the matter is referred to the LEWA Board for a final decision. The Board's determination could only be reviewed by the Courts of Law. This procedure allows the licensees to address complaints at first hand hence a complaint cannot be lodged with the Authority at first instance unless under emergency circumstances.

Consumers should also remember that the Authority has not been given powers to address issues on compensation and land disputes but rather on service related matters 

Water Sector issues – National Policy on Water and Sanitation Services

In terms of Section 7 of the Lesotho Electricity Authority Amendment Act of 2011, one of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority's (LEWA) functions is to establish, maintain, review, monitor and enforce technical standards and service quality applicable to water supply and sewerage services.

The Authority is also required to encourage facilitation of efforts towards an expansion of water and sewerage services.

In order to achieve and execute the above mandate, the Authority has to align itself with the existing national laws such as Lesotho Water and Sanitation Policy of 2007 (LWSP) and other Government commitments.

According to the LWSP, the Government emphasises its commitment to ensuring that water resources are used in a sustainable manner to the benefit of all users and to ensure the security of access to water services and improved sanitation and or sewerage services.

The purpose of the LWSP is to ensure sustainable water resources management and development approach to satisfy the needs of the present and those of the future generations.

In a nutshell, the LWSP's statements encompass water resources management, water supply and sanitation services, water and environment, stakeholder involvement and institutional arrangements and legislative framework. It was based on these principles and other national laws that the urban water and sewerage services' regulatory tools were developed.

Amongst other things, the guiding principles of the LWSP stated as follows:

- All Basotho are entitled to have access to a

sustainable supply of potable water and to the provision of basic sanitation services at an affordable cost, this should be in line with national development goals;

- Since water sustains life, in order to be effective, its management should be holistic linking social and economic development with the protection of the environment;
- Water management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners, private sectors and policy-makers. A participatory approach involves raising awareness on the importance of water among policy-makers and the general public.

A participatory management approach also requires that decisions be taken at the lowest appropriate level of governance, with full public consultation and the involvement of users in the planning and implementation of water and sanitation programmes and projects;

- Promotion of increased investment in water infrastructure development should be observed with high importance. This is to meet the water demand in the country
- It should be ensured by the regulator that tariffs charged by water and sanitation service providers cover the actual costs, including the capital costs as well as the cost of providing water and sanitation services; and
- There should be a continuous improvement on the institutional and legal framework for implementation of the Water and Sanitation Policy ▢

Electricity sector issues – rural electrification

In terms of the Lesotho Electricity Application for licences Rules, 2012, an applicant may be issued a licence to generate, transmit, distribute, supply or import and export electricity.

The Department of Energy (DoE) has held a licence exemption for running three Electricity Access Pilot Projects (EAPP) since October 2007. The exemption was further extended until September 30, 2018.

REU's objective, as an implementing arm of DoE, is to undertake rural electrification programme throughout the country and to develop short/medium long term rural electrification plans. Since REU is one of the regulated entities, the Authority oversees its activities and ensures that they are aligned to the regulatory regime in a light handed manner.

REU has four commercial customers to date and these are (i) (2) Econet telecommunication towers at Qholaqhoe and Ha Sekake, (ii) Tebellong Hospital and (iii) Dilli-Dilli/Sixondo clinic.

The networks in the Qholaqhoe and Ha Sekake EAPPs are supplied from the Lesotho Electricity Company

(LEC) grid at 33 kV, while the network in the Dilli-Dilli/Sixondo EAPP is supplied from the ESKOM (Republic of South Africa) grid at 22 kV.

The mandate of REU is to foster the economic development in rural areas through the efficient use of electricity; to build and maintain electricity infrastructure for grid electrification of rural areas; to identify and organise communities into schemes for electrification; to provide safe and stable electricity supply facilities to rural areas in the country.

The rural areas are defined as all areas outside gazetted urban centre and areas outside the service territory of Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) as defined by the service territory study; to increase electrification cover in the country to 50% by 2020, and establish and manage rural electrification fund.

The Ministry of Energy and Meteorology (MEM) identifies areas that are due for electrification and which would be subsidised by the Government of Lesotho. LEWA as an administrator of the Universal Access Fund (UAF) would be required to release funds that would subsidise rural electrification projects □



R.E.U beneficiaries' customer satisfaction survey, Quthing-Sixondo.

LEWA Christmas party festivities

It was all fun and dance as the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) staff celebrated Christmas holidays in style at 'Melesi Lodge. Staff members jammed into electrifying music and had drinks of some sort.

The celebration was held on the 13th December 2018 on a day that preceded the last day of closing.

While speaking at the event, the Chief Executive of

the Authority, Professor Lebohang Moleko, expressed thanks on the dedication that members of staff showed throughout the 2018 period in executing their duties.

He extended best wishes for happy holiday's season and a prosperous 2019. Thereafter, he declared the party started, and festivities rolled and with great joy as staff members showcased their latest dance moves, such as *fosho*.



LEWA's staff Christmas party celebration, Mmelesi Lodge.



Concerned about urban water services?

First, present your complaint to WASCO to have the...

**Problem
Solved**

*If **WASCO** does not address your complaint,
you may lodge it with **LEWA**.*

*One of the general functions of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA)
is to resolve customer complaints between the regulated entities
(Water and Sewerage Company - WASCO or Lesotho Electricity Company-LEC) and their customers.*

For more information, please contact us at 7th Floor, Moposo House, Kingsway, Maseru, Lesotho

Tel: +266 22 312479 • Fax: +266 22 315094 • Email: secretary@lewa.org.ls

