

lewa.newsletter

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LESOTHO ELECTRICITY AND WATER AUTHORITY



Consumer protection issues
discussed by RERA members

LEWA Customer Complaints
Handling Procedure



CSR activities at NUL, LP



Foreword

It is the Authority's obligation to inform its stakeholders about its activities for them to gain a deeper appreciation of regulatory processes that the Organisation employs in carrying out its operations.

Dear Readers,

This edition of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) newsletter covers a range of the Authority's activities which are both educational and processes based.

As noted in the past, it is the Authority's obligation to inform its stakeholders about its activities for them to gain a deeper appreciation of regulatory processes that the organisation follows in carrying out its operations.

The Authority continued to initiate and maintain information dissemination activities with consumer groups throughout the country as part of promoting public awareness pertaining to LEWA as a multi sector regulator. This important goal was achieved through, amongst others, holding of public meetings such as those held in Teyateyaneng and Leribe in July and September respectively.

This channel of communication (public meetings) with stakeholders has proved beneficial to both the Authority and the public as it creates a platform for a dialogue between the two parties.

As you may recall, Lesotho Electricity Authority (LEA) assumed the additional responsibility of regulating urban water and sewerage services and

was transformed into Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) with effect from 01 May, 2013.

The Authority has developed several urban water and sewerage services regulatory instruments, in order to carry out its newly assumed responsibility effectively and efficiently. This publication looks at one of the regulatory instruments which specifies minimum service and quality standards for urban water and sewerage services, which the Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) must adhere to and report on, to the Authority. This particular regulatory instrument is the Urban Water Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QoSSS).

Other additional issues covered in this edition include LEWA Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) endeavours through which the Authority, in part, implements its Communication Strategy, an update on LEWA's participation in Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA) initiatives and the appointment of Mr Falla Seboko as the Manager-Technical Regulation Water ☐

Ntoi Rapapa
Chief Executive

RERA holds first consumer / stakeholder meeting

Platforms of this nature present opportunities for 'cross-breeding', so that the strengths of some of our colleagues in specific areas will benefit those who are weaker or less experienced in those areas without reinventing the wheel.

The Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA) held its first Consumer/ Stakeholder Meeting in Windhoek, Namibia on 20-21 August 2013 to explore how consumers issues can be mainstreamed into regulatory processes of its members.

The meeting was called upon a realisation that electricity supply industry in the region is confronted with challenges such as increasing energy prices/tariffs and poor quality supply and services. These challenges call for an action by the regional regulators to engage and protect consumers as part of the regulatory oversight. Therefore, the RERA Secretariat organised the meeting to start discussions on how best to mainstream consumer engagement and protection issues into the regional and international regulatory agenda.

Specifically, the meeting discussed the following issues: the activities that should form part of the RERA work programme as part of the RERA Strategic Plan 2013-17; RERA's participation in the Virtual Working Group (VWG) 3 of the International Confederation of Energy Regulators (ICER) on consumer issues; and mainstreaming consumer/stakeholders issues in RERA.

In his opening remarks Mr. Siseho C. Simasiku, the Chief Executive of Electricity Control Board (ECB) of Namibia welcomed the delegates and mentioned that the outcomes expected out of the meeting were strategies of enhancing consumer engagement and to share experiences that would boost efficiency in terms of time and resources in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regulatory bodies.



Participants at the inaugural RERA Consumer/ Stakeholder Meeting in Windhoek, Namibia on 20-21 August 2013.

3

"Platforms of this nature present opportunities for 'cross-breeding', so that the strengths of some of our colleagues in specific areas will benefit those who are weaker or less experienced in those areas without reinventing the wheel. This will introduce an element of efficiency in terms of time and resource requirements to get to the same level or at least close to that level", Mr. Simasiku said.

Representatives of regulatory bodies at the meeting including Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) made presentations on their mandate, legal framework and organisational structures. They also made presentations on consumer/stakeholder participation in regulatory processes, consumer protection including quality of supply and services, procedures for handling complaints and the role of board members/commissioners vis-à-vis consumer protection.

The meeting discussed again whether RERA should establish a dedicated structure/subcommittee to tackle consumer related issues. The aim of the whole exercise was to enable the regulators to share experiences on enhancing consumer protection mechanisms.

In the end the meeting recommended that the consumer engagement and protection activities should be mainstreamed in RERA's regional and international initiatives.

A task team chaired by Electricity Regulation Board (ERB) of Zambia was formed to prepare for the formation of either a RERA Subcommittee or Portfolio Committee which would deal with consumer issues.

The regional regulatory bodies represented at the meeting were LEWA (Lesotho), ERB (Zambia), National Energy Regulator of South Africa (South Africa), Instituto Regulador do Sector Electrico - IRSE (Angola), Conselho Nacional de Electricidade - CNELEC (Mozambique) and ECB (Namibia).

RERA is an association of electricity regulators established by the SADC Ministers of Energy in Maseru on 12 July 2002. It was officially launched in Windhoek, Namibia on 26 September 2002 and it is intended to foster co-operation between regulators in the SADC region. LEWA's predecessor Lesotho Electricity Authority (LEA) was officially registered as a member of RERA on 18 March 2005

Manager Technical Regulation Water appointed

It is with great pleasure that Lesotho Electricity Authority (LEWA) announces that Mr. Falla Frank Seboko, the former Performance Analyst – Water (PA-W) in the Technical Regulation/Water Department has climbed the LEWA corporate ladder and is now Manager – Technical Regulation Water Department (M-TRW) with effect from 01 July, 2013.

Mr. Seboko joined LEWA in January 2012 and was appointed as the Performance Analyst – Water and later became the Acting Manager- Technical Regulation Water in August of the same year. He has been involved in the development of regulatory instruments for water and sewerage services regulation by LEWA.

Part of Mr. Seboko's broad role is to facilitate the implementation of the strategic goals of LEWA on

water regulation. LEWA goals include implementing the regulatory framework for water and sewerage services, implementing subsidiary legislation for water and sewerage services, reviewing water prices regularly, carrying out quality tests on water and wastewater or effluent, developing reporting formats and performance assessment tools for Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) and promoting public awareness on potable water quality and to provide inputs on regulatory issues.

Mr. Seboko is a civil engineer with vast expertise in water supply and sewerage services.

Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority management and staff would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Seboko on his appointment and wish him success in his new role

Manager Technical Regulation Water appointed



Mr. Falla Frank Seboko, Manager – Technical Regulation Water



Do you know anything about water & electricity regulation?
For full information, please contact LEWA.



Publisher: Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority, 7th Floor, Moposo House, Kingsway, Maseru, Lesotho

Tel: +266 22 312479

Fax: +266 22 315094

Email: secretary@lewa.org.ls

Website: www.lea.org.ls

Postal Address

Private Bag A135
Maseru 100 – Lesotho
Southern Africa

Design

The Age Multimedia Publishers

Cover image

LEWA pictures

Copyright: Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority 2013 No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form for commercial purposes without written consent from the publisher.

Enquiries

Tel: +266 22 312479

Email: secretary@lewa.org.ls

LEWA HIV and AIDS activities gather pace

The voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) presented employees with the opportunity to make an **informed decisions regarding their knowledge of their individual HIV status.**

As mentioned in the last edition of the newsletter, the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) has introduced an HIV and AIDS programme to mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS to all infected and affected LEWA employees.

The implementation of this programme took off on a note demonstrating not only the Authority's dedication towards the welfare of its employees but also its commitment to contributing towards the national response in intensifying measures to assuage the effects of HIV and AIDS.

Education, awareness, testing and access to treatment are the key focus areas of the LEWA HIV and AIDS Workplace Program. Having commenced with HIV and AIDS awareness and education of employees in May 2013, which aimed at encouraging them to undergo voluntary counseling and testing, in sequence, counseling and testing was voluntarily undertaken by staff members in July 2013.

The voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) presented employees with the opportunity to make an informed decisions regarding knowledge of their individual HIV status.

Staff turn-up for VCT was not as high as originally anticipated (less than 23%) which prompted the Authority to undertake additional measures to further encourage staff to voluntarily get counseled and tested for HIV. This was achieved by holding a seminar each for two randomly divided staff groups on HIV testing role playing to allay fears and uncertainties of the actual process and possible outcomes of counseling and testing.

Having undergone the initial one hour HIV testing role play session in September 2013, each group was to undergo a remainder of three more sessions. After this, a second voluntary counseling and testing opportunity would be presented to staff members. The envisaged outcome would be a significant increase in the number of staff members who would be open to voluntarily get counseled and tested for HIV.

HIV test results are highly confidential and employees may disclose their HIV status at own discretion. The Authority is committed to offering a steadfast support system to all employees accordingly by, for example, facilitating access to treatment and support to those who may be affected or affected ☐



An employee of the Authority Mr. Lebohlang Rantsele undergoes a blood sugar test in the presence of a counsellor during one of the wellness activities.



LEWA Customer Affairs Officer, Mrs. 'Machabalala Koatsa (centre) with the recipients of the LEWA Best Student Award Mr. Masieane Moremi - Diploma in Electrical and Electronic Engineering (left), and Mr. Moeketsi Monyali - Diploma in Water and Environmental Engineering (right).

LP best performers get LEWA Awards

Lesotho Polytechnic (LP) held its 15th graduation ceremony on 14 September 2013, at the Institute's grounds where Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) presented the Lesotho Electricity Authority's Best Performing Student Award to two deserving students.

This was the second year that LEWA had presented the awards to best performing student in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, and in Water and Environmental Engineering as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, which also encompasses providing text books to LP annually. The recipients of the 2013 awards were Masieane Moremi – Diploma in Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Moeketsi Monyali – Diploma in Water and Environmental Engineering. Each student received a certificate of appreciation and a cheque to the tune of M8,000 and a certificate of appreciation from LEWA. Both students expressed appreciation to LEWA for its support saying that the LEWA award had inspired students to perform to the best of their abilities.

Opening the ceremony LP Rector Mr. Tsietsi Lebakae mentioned amongst others the importance of the partnerships that LP has forged with the industry and other institutions such as LEWA in order to keep its curriculum relevant to the needs of the industry and maintaining requisite standards with institutions.

"Partnership with the industry is important as it

helps our students to have the practical experience required in the world of work, so that when they eventually join or take up their places in the industry, they hit the road running", he said.

He thanked the industry for allowing LP students to partake in internship programs and attachments and also for the apparent willingness to participate in the review programs of LP.

The Institute's Governing Council Chairman Mr. Tihalefo Moloi congratulated the graduates and wished them all the best in their future endeavours and studies.

He pointed out that strides had been taken towards the improvement of LP, the main one being the envisaged transformation of the institution into the University of Technology by 2015 in a bid to realise the National Vision 2020 goal pertaining to sustainable human resource development.

"It is only through well refined skills development and a sound knowledge base that the economy of this country can be driven towards a better future and national wealth and prosperity", Mr. Moloi stated.

LEWA looks forward to honouring its commitment towards supporting best performing students in the designated areas of study and would like to take this opportunity to wish all the LP graduates the best for future endeavours ☐

NUL best performing students receive LEWA awards

LEWA presented the awards for the second year running as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility in the area of education to encourage NUL students to venture into studying subjects related to the Authority's core business.

Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) presented three best performing students with the LEWA Awards in the fields of Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Physics, Master of Science in Economics and Bachelor of Science in Biology and Chemistry at the 38th National University of Lesotho Annual Graduation Ceremony held on Saturday 28th September 2013.

Moruti Kao was the best performing student in Bachelor of Science – Mathematics and Physics, Leseke Makhetha in Master of Science- Economics and Nteboheleng Ntlhabi in Bachelor of Science – Biology and Chemistry.

King Letsie III, who is the Chancellor of the University, opened the ceremony at which 3,053 students received certificates, diplomas and degrees.

LEWA presented these awards for the second year running as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility

(CSR) in the area of education with the objective of encouraging NUL students to venture into studying subjects that are related to its core business.

Each of the three students received a certificate of appreciation and a cheque to the tune of M8,000 from LEWA. In addition to the awards, the Authority also donated text books to the University which have been identified by the institutions' library.

LEWA is committed to the socio-economic development of the country through its CSR program and has pledged to support NUL as an institute of higher learning in so as to contribute positively towards encouraging students to perform to their absolute best which will in turn present them with a multitude of opportunities of either further study or employment.

LEWA congratulates all NUL 2013 graduates, in particular Moruti Kao, Leseke Makhetha and Nteboheleng Ntlhabi for their achievement ☐



One of the recipients of the LEWA Performing Student Award, Moruti Kao, highest achieving student in Bachelor of Science – Mathematics and Physics.

LEWA Customer Complaints Handling Procedure

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.

Every customer may lodge a complaint with LEWA. However, of paramount importance is that a customer must first afford the Licensees an opportunity to resolve the complaint within the latter's complaints handling procedures specified time frames.

Although the Licensees is afforded an opportunity to first resolve a complaint it must use all reasonable endeavours to resolve the customer's complaints within a reasonable period, subject to the provisions of the Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QoSSS) and other regulatory instruments.

Where in a customer's opinion, the complaint raised had not been resolved satisfactorily or had not been resolved at all by the Licensed entity, the Complainant may resort to the Authority for intervention.

The complaint escalated to the Authority must, among others include the following particulars:

- Name of the customer;
- Contact address;
- Contact numbers;
- Details of the complaint and the relief sought;
- Copies of all correspondence between customers and licensees.
- Any other information deemed necessary for resolution of the complaint.

If the complaint is within the regulatory powers of the Authority, initial investigations are undertaken.

One of the LEWA officials carrying out a site inspection (investigation) at a Complainant's premises.



Urban Water and Sewerage Standards

The Authority has developed urban water and sewerage services regulatory instruments. Of these instruments, the Urban Water Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QoSSS) which sets out minimum service and quality standards for the Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) are overviewed. WASCO has undertaken to implement QoSSS provisions with effect from October 2013. This article will focus mainly on urban water services.

Pursuant to the consultative meetings held between Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) and the Authority on the development of the regulatory instruments minimum service and quality standards to be observed by WASCO have been agreed upon. The standards include those issuance of quotations, provision of urban water and sewerage services, disconnections or reconnections and

network disruptions. In the subsequent sections these are briefly narrated.

Quotations and Connections for Urban Water Services:

- The time taken to provide a customer with a quotation should not exceed 6 working days where there is existing infrastructure and within 10 working days if the new network pipes are required. The distance between network pipe and the premises should be within 150 metres where there is existing network.
- The time taken to make water connection for supply should not exceed 10 working days where there is existing WASCO infrastructure and the distance from network pipe and the premises should not exceed 150 metres and

within 30 working days for distances greater than 150m but less than 1000 metres.

Disconnections:

Disconnections can be effected due to non-payment, tampering, non-adherence to standards and illegal connections. If disconnection is to be done due to non-payment of the account, customers should be provided with a grace period of 10 days after the due date, and shall be given at least 2 working days written notice.

Disconnections shall not be effected after business hours, on weekends or public holidays. Nevertheless, disconnections shall be effected immediately without prior notice if they are due to tampering, non-adherence to standards and illegal connections.

Reconnections:

Reconnections shall be effected within 2 working days after applicable fees have been settled and the necessary rectification of installation has been done. In cases where a disconnection was done, subject to tampering, non-adherence to standards and illegal connections. Furthermore, reconnection shall

be effected as promptly as possible and not later than the first working day after the reconnection fee has been paid, where disconnection was pursuant to non-payment.

Network Disruptions:

Where forced interruption had occurred due to network pipe bursts, leakages on house connections and when caused by plant outage at the water production, the Licensee shall restore the interrupted supply of urban water within 24 hours from the time of interruption.

Where the Licensee planned to interrupt supply, at least 48 hours notice should be given to customers, and in cases of large commercial or industrial customers, where possible, the customer and the Licensee must mutually agree on the length of time for the outage. Of importance is that the duration of planned interruptions should, where possible, not exceed 8 hours.

As already noted, the QOSSS document was developed by the Authority in consultation with WASCO. The document is available at the Authority's offices and the website [□](#)



LEWA Chief Executive Assoc. Prof. Ntoi Rapapa (standing) addresses the participants during one of consultative meeting with Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) on Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QOSSS).

LEWA Customer Complaints Handling Procedure

The Licensee with whom the complaint is lodged against is notified of the complaint and requested to respond to the same. If it is found from the Licensee's response that the complaint has been adequately resolved, then the Authority closes the matter.

On the other hand, if it appears that the complaint has not been resolved, then both parties may be called for a mediation meeting. This is where the Authority assists the parties to reach an amicable solution through assisted negotiations. The complaint may be closed when both parties reach an amicable solution. but if no amicable solution is reached, then the matter is referred to the LEWA Board for final determination.

The decision of the Board is final but may be taken for judicial review by the courts of law.



The Authority emphasises that the service providers (Licensees) should be the first stop for assistance to their customers. An exception would be when there are emergency cases, whereby the Authority may be approached at first instance [□](#)

LEWA visits stakeholders in Berea and Leribe

The rarely planned interruptions of electricity and water cuts were allegedly never communicated to customers through the media. In terms of the Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QoSSS), a Licensee should notify customers of planned interruptions two days prior to the actual interruption taking place.

In pursuit of enhancing public awareness on the assumption of regulation of urban water and sewerage services, the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) held public gatherings with Berea and Leribe Districts based stakeholders in July and September 2013.

The LEWA delegation comprising of Manager Customer Affairs - Mr. Shao Khatala and Customer Affairs Officer - Mrs. 'Machabalala Koatsa visited stakeholders in Berea on 29 July, 2013 and Leribe on 17 September, 2013 respectively. The objective of these visits was to raise public awareness in those two districts about LEWA's new mandate which entails the regulation of urban water and sewerage services. Attendants at both meetings included local chiefs, the media, civil servants, business people, local and district council representatives, business forums and customers.

In Berea the Authority was welcomed by the Mr. Ramabanta Majoro on behalf of the District Administrator (DA) Mrs. 'Mamoabi Leballo, while Mr. Afelile Sekhamane opened the meeting on behalf of the Leribe DA, Mr. Mokhabelane Morahanye, in Hlotse. Both DA representatives expressed a desire that LEWA should ensure that the regulated utilities improved their service delivery to the customers in their respective districts.

Introducing the message brought by the Authority, Manager Customer Affairs Mr. Shao Khatala indicated that with effect from 01 May 2013, LEWA had assumed additional regulatory powers on urban water and sewerage services (UWS).

In addition to the Electricity Supply Industry (ESI). He noted that the Authority had become aware that stakeholders needed an ongoing awareness

on regulation of electricity and urban water and sewerage services in the country. In this vein, he added that, it was important to meet with them and to understand their perspectives and comments on a range of issues pertaining to service delivery by Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) and Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) both of which are regulated entities.

For her part Mrs. Koatsa explained that protection of customers, improvement in service provision and ensuring that regulated utilities provided services on a sustainable basis were some of the basic reasons for regulation. Consequently, she outlined the LEWA themes for the discussions which were the resolution of customer complaints against the regulated utilities (LEC) and (WASCO), the importance or significance of public participation in regulatory processes and service standards for new connection for electricity and water and sewerage services.

"WASCO seems to be more transparent than LEC in its dealings with customers because a customer knows beforehand the standard charge for connection based on distance."

The public also expressed their views and the major challenge that they raised was poor access to electricity, water and sewerage services, intermittent power and water cuts. To this concern, LEWA responded that the Authority's own inspections had highlighted the problems in the electricity sector and the same would be followed up with LEC for resolution. In future inspections of WASCO's infrastructure would also be undertaken.

The other concern was that planned interruptions of electricity and water cuts were rarely communicated to customers through the media. The Authority replied that in terms of the Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QoSSS), a Licensee should notify customers of planned interruptions two days prior to the actual interruption taking place.



Stakeholders in Leribe stated that LEC should have standard connection charges in a similar manner to WASCOs' connection charges for connect customers to water supply.

"LEC on the contrary does not have a standard charge beyond 50 metres. Sometimes the material reflected in the quotation paid for by customers, is returned into LEC's custody without a corresponding deduction in connection fee being made to customers."

"WASCO seems to be more transparent than LEC in its dealings with customers because a customer knows beforehand the standard charge for connection based on distance. LEC on the contrary does not have a standard charge beyond 50 metres. Sometimes the material reflected in the quotation paid for by customers, is returned into LEC's custody without a corresponding deduction in connection fee being made to customers", remarked Mr. Malefetsane Nthimo, one of the participants.

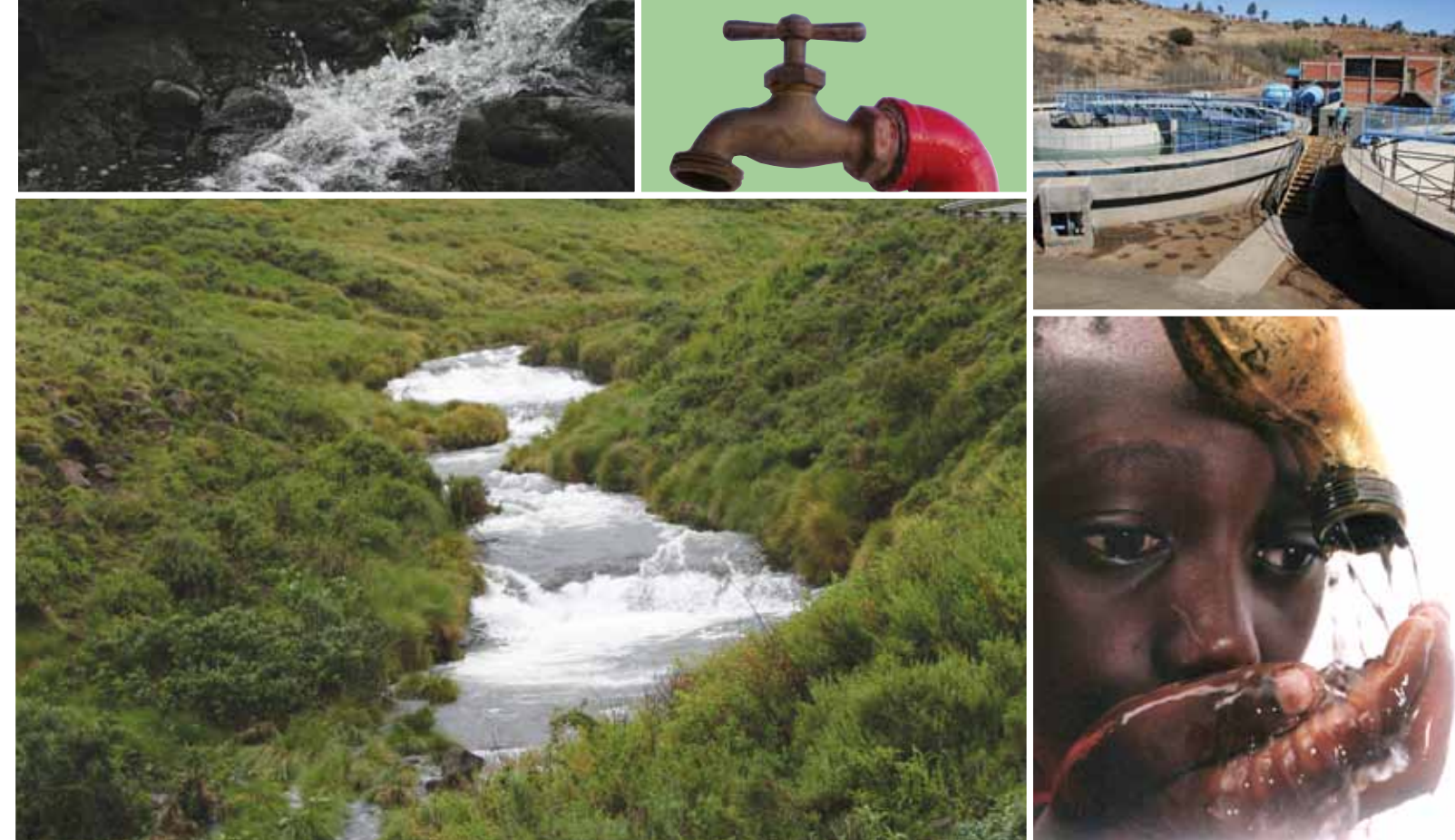
The Authority's response was that it had requested LEC to provide customers with detailed quotations to minimise complaints in this regard. Moreover, the Authority had developed electricity connection guidelines to ensure that electricity licensees, clearly and transparently calculate connection charges in a fair manner.

During the closure of the meetings Mr. Khatala, on behalf of the Authority commended the offices of the DA and the public for the warm welcome extended to LEWA during its visits to the districts. The Authority stated that the concerns raised by the stakeholders in the two districts would be relayed to the regulated utilities so that they could be addressed.

Interactions of this nature are to continue. The public and other stakeholders are therefore urged to come to the meetings or workshops to learn more about the Authority so they can be better informed about pertinent regulatory issues □



Some of the Berea chiefs listen to Mrs. Machabalala Koatsa (left) as she explains regulatory issues during a meeting held in Teyateyaneng in July 2013.



Are you interested
to know more
about the
**Lesotho Water
& Electricity
Authority?**

Visit our website:
www.lewa.org.ls

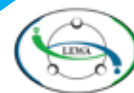
For more information, please call us contact us at:

Tel: +266 22 312479 Fax: +266 22 315094

Email: secretary@lewa.org.ls



And read our newsletters!



Concerned about urban **Water** **Quality?**

- Connection quotations • Connections
- Disconnections • Reconnections • Network disruptions

The Authority has developed urban water and sewerage services regulatory instruments. Of these instruments, the Urban Water Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QoSSS). This sets out minimum service and quality standards for the Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO). WASCO has undertaken to implement QoSSS provisions with effect from October 2013.

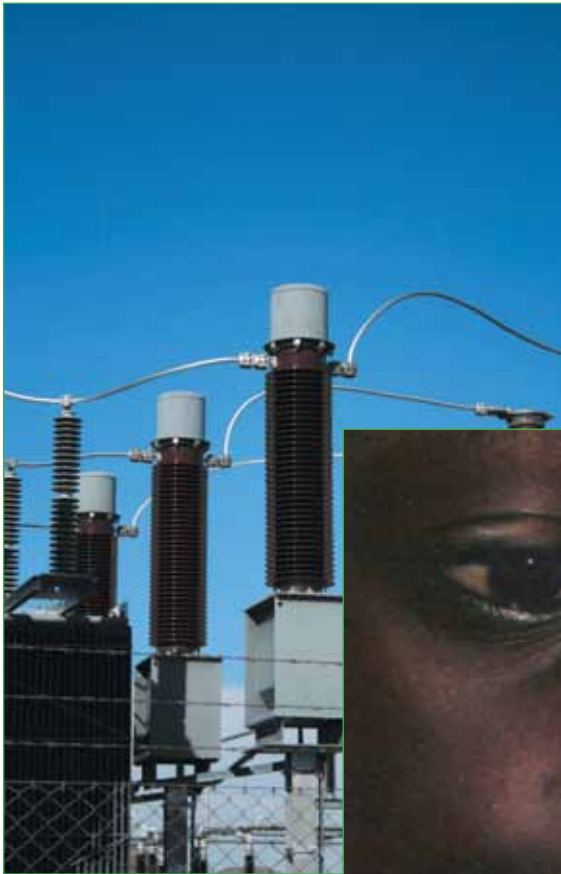
*In pursuit of quality service delivery
of urban water and sewerage.*

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



What's Your story?



*Customers of **WASCO** & **LEC** may
lodge complaints 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

Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority, 7th Floor, Moposo House, Kingsway, Maseru, Lesotho

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

