

MOVEMENT FOR ECONOMIC CHANGE

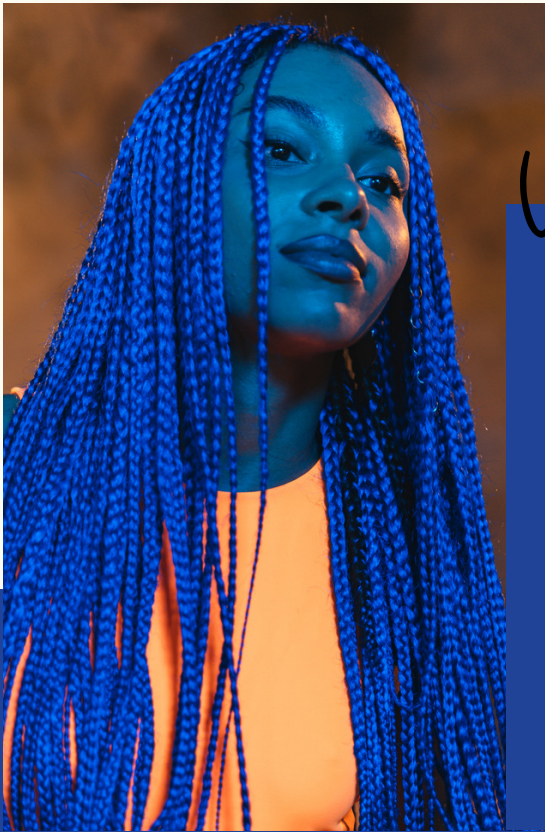
# Youth MANIFESTO



# Ke Nako

# Mocha

OA LESOTHO



## MEC Values Young Basotho

At the centre of the MEC ideology is INCLUSIVITY. We believe in non-discrimination and therefore aim to create holistic policies that achieve results across Lesotho's social spectrum.

While we strive for an inclusive approach, we are alive to the fact that Lesotho's youth comprise the largest demographic and a social group that has been marinalized within a patriarchal society. Therefore, MEC is determined to focus its priorities to strongly benefit the youth, which is itself is essential in attaining our 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

This document is a supplement to our 2022 Elections Manifesto that outlines MEC's priorities as they pertain specifically to Lesotho's youth.

**Find yourself in our priorities!**



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# Creating Opportunities

## Finding Your Passion

At the heart of the MEC programme is the creation of an enabling environment that brings about a multitude of opportunities for the youth. In a healthy society, young people should be able to carve their space in various areas: As employees, entrepreneurs, creatives, in the public sector, in corporates, academia etc.

To achieve this, MEC aims to stimulate the economy in a way that will engage the youth in the areas which they add the most value and where they desire to fit in. We are looking to grow the private sector primarily through AGRICULTURE, where the value chain created by this industry will be one of the first enablers for youth engagement. Opportunities in farm production, logistics, marketing, services and the food industry will be areas that can yield very exciting prospects for young Basotho.

Beyond AGRICULTURE, economic stimulation will be achieved through infrastructure led growth, pharmaceuticals anchored on the cannabis industry, natural resources and tourism. Within these sectors, there is a variety of opportunities that will be available for young Basotho and finding your unique niche should be easy.

While MEC's aim is to ignite the economy to create jobs, it is also determined to ensure that unique spaces are reserved for the youth, to level the playing field, to activate the contemporary thinking of young Basotho, to foster social cohesion and to retain essential skills and talent within the country.



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# Empowering the Youth

## EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & YOUTH INITIATIVES

### ECCD

MEC is intent to invest in Young Basotho even before their birth. Maternal health and nutrition through investment of the newly launched Early Childhood Care and Development programme is close to our hearts. Following an adequate programme that will ensure that Lesotho's babies are born at an acceptable weight and under the right healthcare circumstances, such children will continue to require the right interventions to ensure that they are provided with a good start to life and a chance to succeed.

Preschool/ Nursery Education will be a key priority in order to improve our education outcomes. Investment will include additional facilities at primary schools to promote cognitive and physical stimulation, social interaction and extra-curricular development.

### SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

Basotho are yet to obtain the benefits of secondary school education in line with career paths and inherent academic strengths. The lack of science and computer labs, auditoriums and libraries, sports grounds and equipment hinder academic achievement and diminishes a student's potential to discover and exploit their talents.

It is important therefore, to critically examine the provision of secondary education towards provision of facilities, curricula and other resources. This includes the balance of fees, subsidies and even corporate social responsibility. MEC is determined to enhance the education system to enable our youth to learn, discover themselves and flourish!





# Empowering the Youth

## HIGHER EDUCATION & VOCATIONAL TRAINING

All countries require people with a variety of skills sets to meet its development agenda. Artisans are just as important to the economy, and at times in very short supply depending on needs. Secondary education should provide a student with exit points to be able to pursue Technical and Vocational Training, which is also provided under conditions that enable internationally recognized certifications. Qualifications obtained from TVET Colleges should also permit a graduate to seek University Level education with the attainment of the necessary credits.

In HIGHER EDUCATION, MEC is committed to support student fees through an enhanced NMDS that is also funded through a Sovereign Wealth Fund. Needs assessments need to be continually made by the country to shore up skills and levels of qualifications to meet the country's deficits and requirements based on development programmes. National Programs such as NSDP II, 2030 SDGs and Agenda 2063 should also inform the skills development agenda in order to meet these objectives.



## EMPLOYMENT & YOUTH INITIATIVES

To build experience and credentials, young Basotho need to be provided with a foot in the door.

MEC will explore methods of keeping Young Basotho engaged during school vacations and upon graduation by creating an employment ecosystem that links the public, private sector and corporate social responsibility.

Internships, Summer Camps, Youth Competitions, Community Service and Volunteerism should be areas where the Youth can find opportunities to contribute while earning valuable experience to provide them with a good base for their careers.



# Empowering the Youth

## EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Not all young people aspire to be entrepreneurs and business owners. Some in fact, flourish quite well as operatives within businesses in customer service, administration, accounting and other support roles. Such youth should readily find employment within an economic environment that has been adequately stimulated and developed under an MEC government.

For those bold youth who seek self employment, MEC will endeavour through a reformed BEDCO, to create conducive environments that incubate start up companies. LNDC owns land in strategically located sites within Lesotho's urban centres. Development of such land for commercial use (especially as office space) should aim to provide for incubator spaces for start up companies. Such spaces can be shared with generous rent holidays and subsidized services.

BEDCO services will be reviewed to also create business partnerships with professionals who can assist young Basotho to develop bankable business plans.

while access to funding through local banks will be actively pursued, risk mitigation through carefully structured business plans and mentorship will unlock such funds for the determined young entrepreneur.

The MEC government will actively pursue added assistance for entrepreneurs who are within sectors that have high return potential in job creation and revenue generation. Innovation in textiles and apparel, agri-processing, mass production or patent-level innovations will be supported. Innovation expos and competitions will be devised to encourage development of ideas into products for local and international markets.



# Sectoral Vision

## **AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**

Research and development, Vineyards and wine production, Potato farming and Vodka production, Apple farming and Food processing, Sunflower and cooking oil production. Farming is not only lucrative, but it can be exciting, offering several opportunities for innovation.

The MEC government will invest in mechanisms to grow and support local food production to exploit international market access initiatives and the African Free Trade Area.

## **COMMUNICATIONS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Digital Migration is the catalyst for MEC to ignite the youth economy. There is existing talent in the creative space, and with digital migration comes the opportunity for new TV stations and the creation of content through a variety of informative, educational and entertainment programmes. For MEC, the large portion of the entertainment industry needs to be youth driven. From talent through to production, set design, costumes, make up, graphics and special effects, marketing and logistics should be areas occupied exclusively by the youth.

In the sciences, there is great capacity through academia as illustrated by the NUL innovation hub. University driven science parks are important to stimulate innovation, and MEC will invest in ensuring that business incubation linked to Universities, such as the NUL innovation hub are improved. Incentives will be provided to influence research and development in key areas that plug into growing Lesotho's economy. Technological innovation, food processing, energy production and pharmaceuticals will be important areas of investment.





# Sectoral Vision

## TOURISM, SPORTS AND RECREATION

This is a significant area where the youth should flourish. MEC will explore Corporate Social Responsibility and participation of the Financial Sector for investment in major sporting codes. Lesotho has had historical success in Taekwondo, Boxing and Marathon running, and these codes need to receive adequate resources. Beyond these, soccer, rugby, tennis, athletics, netball and others require focused investment including participation in international events to improve performance. Strong efforts will be put into restoring facilities and creating new ones across the country to broadly discover and grow sporting talent in an equitable fashion.

Tourism and Recreation are also areas that should be dominated by the youth. Hospitality, Museums and Galleries, Theme Parks and Historic Sites, Tour Guides as well as Extreme and Adventure Sports jobs should all be occupied by the youth, as they are the world over. MEC will monitor and evaluate this sector, ensuring that if necessary, policies are put in place to encourage youth employment and business development.

## NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY

While it is important that direct and indirect employment opportunities are created for the youth within this sector, the benefits however, should ensure that the youth gain a significant share of such benefits through appropriate re-investment. For MEC, proceeds of Lesotho's finite natural resources will be placed into a

### Sovereign Wealth Fund

that will be used for key investment programs that will benefit the youth. Grand Infrastructure Projects, and Investment in Tertiary Education will be the key focus of this fund thus benefiting the youth most significantly.



# Sectoral Vision

MEC will actively explore the enhancement of the use of Lesotho's water resources for recreation and farming activities. Aquaculture holds great economic prospects for Lesotho and so do water sports. These sectors will be major employment creators for the youth.

In energy, the move towards renewable energy offers a plentitude of youth opportunities. Conversion of combustion engines to electric, provision of vehicle charging stations, development of solar and wind minigrids etc, are all areas that hold youth employment and scientific opportunities. In collaboration with multilateral institutions, MEC will explore methods of an energy transformation for Lesotho to be self-sufficient. While this will be a medium to long-term priority, the planning will involve active youth engagement as this demographic will need to lead the process towards attainment of Agenda 2063.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DECENTRALIZATION

This is an exciting area in MEC's plans where Urban and Regional Planning will play the driving role for the creation of complete and inclusive communities throughout the country. This involves the planning of major and minor roads, town centres and residential areas that

are organized to capitalize on local economic activities such as farms, factories, mines, tourist establishments, business districts etc. Through a structured mechanism of developing the country, services will be better accessed, economic opportunities supported and the quality of life of all Basotho improved. With this lies many youth opportunities not only in the planning and development of these communities, but in the availability of economic opportunities that are made possible through self-sustaining urban and rural habitats. With time, there will no longer be the need for Lesotho's youth to scramble to Maseru and compete for limited resources.



# Sectoral Vision



## Environmental Management

While climate change is an unfortunate reality, it offers young Basotho the opportunity to innovate towards its mitigation. MEC will incentivize academia-linked science parks to support innovation for climate smart technologies. These include (amongst others) building methods, irrigation and water management, road construction and drought-resistant crop production.

There are further opportunities that are already available in recycling, refuse management, cleaning and beautification. MEC, in conjunction with municipalities will ensure that measures to address such challenges focus on youth employment and business development. The efficiency and sustainability of activities within this sector require youth ingenuity and energy.

Wetland Management, Range Management, Tree planting and a timber industry should be major youth employers and areas that offer a variety of research and development opportunities. It is important for these development areas to receive necessary resources and investment as they are necessary activities in tourism, water cycle, agriculture development, construction and support of basic living conditions.



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# Our Innovative Approach

## Achieving Transformative Change

The **#Bachashutdown** movement was a strong reminder for Lesotho that the country is in desperate need for transformative change. MEC is alive to the plight of the YOUTH, and has ensured that its priorities are responsive to the needs of our society at large, but with significant benefits to young Basotho.

### MEC GOVERNING ATTITUDE

To stimulate transformation, MEC will go into government with a clear vision of sweeping reform. This not only involves commitment to implement the NRA Agenda, but also an attitude that inspires and stimulates change.

Our priorities will include (amongst others):

- Deep AUTHERITY, including small cabinet and reduced benefits packages
- Sweeping forensic audits as well as investigation and prosecution of incidences of corruption

- Deepening of e-government which has direct youth employment benefits
- Re-evaluation of Government Human Resources to eradicate obsolete positions and reduce the wage bill through outsourcing
- Elimination of wasteful expenditure, including use of paper, vehicles, unnecessary travel and per diem allowances.

MERITOCRACY, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY will be the mainstay of the Civil Service. MEC will ensure that performance management is implemented from the highest offices, focusing on professionalism, efficiency, customer service, delivery timelines and required service levels. This will ensure that services are delivered adequately to the public, which has direct implication on youth activities in employment and business development.



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Lesotho, Mosotho PELE!

# Our Innovative Approach

## Building Financial Capacity

### REVENUE COLLECTION

Financial resources will remain Lesotho's stumbling block in achieving our development goals. MEC however will adopt an innovative approach to increasing its capital expenditure budget.

Through the LRA, the MEC government will collect all non-tax revenue that is generated by Ministries. These include funds collected through vehicle licensing and registration, passport fees, traders licenses etc. which we have discovered leak directly into the hands of corrupt public servants. Collection of non-tax revenue by LRA will boost government revenue enough to realize tangible benefits to Basotho.

### INTERNATIONAL MARKET ACCESS

The MEC government will actively exploit other international market access initiatives similar to AGOA for Lesotho to grow its exports. Canada and the European Union have existing Market Access Initiatives for Least Developed Countries and Lesotho has NOT been proactive in penetrating these markets. The MEC government will explore these avenues for revenue generation and employment with direct benefits through an improved tax base. Further opportunities will be explored directly with the United Kingdom that are possible from its exit from the European Union.



# Our Innovative Approach

## The Basotho Fund

SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUND

The jewel in the crown in our suite of programmes is the SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUND.

This is a vehicle that will see young Basotho benefiting directly and exclusively from Lesotho's natural resources.

incubated through the Central Bank, the MEC government will dedicate a large proportion of the proceeds of the sale of Lesotho's diamonds and water into an investment fund. The purpose of this fund is to grow capital through international investment in stocks, bonds and other asset classes. This fund will benefit Basotho for generations, being used to invest in universal education (including higher education) and grand infrastructure projects.

The BASOTHO Fund will also be used to address other social challenges such as:

- Old age pensions for low income workers
- Disaster relief
- Economic Stimulus to fight hyper inflation that could be caused by geo-political circumstances such as the 2022 Russia/ Ukraine war.

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The principal beneficiaries of the BASOTHO FUND are young Basotho through generations!



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# A Happy Nation

## Safety and Security

Our vision of social justice cannot be realized without creating living conditions that are characterized by Safety and Security.

Security Sector and Judicial Reforms are vital to economic prosperity. As a result, the MEC government is committed to addressing (amongst others) Violent Crime, Law & Order, POLICE BRUTALITY, Judicial Effectiveness & Independence, Border Security, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE, Human Trafficking and Stock Theft.

We are committed to the NRA Agenda in this regard, taking interventions a step further to adequately capacitating the LMPS in particular. This includes recruitment, training, resources and strong

monitoring, evaluation and accountability system. This that will ensure Lesotho's security apparatus performs optimally, legally and professionally and that Basotho's basic human rights and civic liberties are protected.

Lesotho is trending downwards globally with regard to incidences of violent crime and corruption. MEC understands that turning Lesotho's fortunes around requires a BOLD approach to addressing safety and security challenges stemming from a broken system.

Lesotho's youth will be directly involved inSecurity Sector reforms through recruitment, training and capacitation efforts. Research and Development, Forensic science, electronic surveillance, advanced record keeping and archiving will be some of the areas that will engage young Basotho.



# Lesotho, Mosotho PELE!



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## OURS IS A YOUTH CENTERED PROGRAM

Young Basotho are significant shareholders throughout the Development Spectrum. Our INCLUSIVE approach to policies guarantees their participation

### FACT

It is impossible for Lesotho to achieve its Development agenda when its Youth are not at the table. They bring valuable skills, energy, creativity, and contemporary thinking that will ensure Lesotho is globally competitive and relevant.

**Mocha! U Bohlokoa kholong ea Naha!**



**Mocha oa Lesotho, 2022 ke monyetla oa hau oa ho khetha ka nepo 'bakeng sa bokamoso ba hau. Khetha BOPHETHAHATSI! Khetha MEC e u sebelletse ka boikhukhubetso hore u itšematlele!**



**VOTE MEC**



*Ke Nako*