



Basotho Innovation & Youth Enterprise

**Futures
Thinking**

Learning through
international links in 40
and 200 years time

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The case studies in this teaching resource pack highlight the inspiring journeys of Basotho individuals who have overcome challenges to achieve success in different fields. Their stories show how resilience, creativity, and determination can shape both personal futures and the wider history of Lesotho.

Scan the QR code to view the Basotho Innovation Padlet - add your pupils work & join our global community of learners



Acknowledgements

Developed in partnership by Taith and Dolen Cymru Lesotho, this resource is informed by the voices and lived experiences of communities, educators, and young people in Wales and Lesotho. Funded by the Welsh Government 2025-6.

Teacher Packs Year 4 - 11

KS2



KS3



KS4



Acknowledgements

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Case Study: Limpho Thoahlane, Pheha Plastic

Inspiration: Limpho was inspired by her personal experiences growing up in Lesotho and witnessing how unmanaged plastic waste was damaging the environment. Her vision is to create a greener Lesotho by turning waste into opportunity, educating the next generation, and ensuring that Basotho communities actively contribute to climate solutions.



Name
Limpho Thoahlane

Place of birth
Maseru, Lesotho

Education
Social enterprise development and climate change communication.
Professional experience in social impact and environmental awareness

Profession
Founder and Managing Director of Pheha Plastic

Industry
Waste management and recycling



Recycled jewellery-Pheha Plastics

Social media

Instagram:
<https://www.instagram.com/phehaplastic>
Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/phehaplastic>

Challenges: Lesotho faces a growing plastic waste crisis with limited formal recycling infrastructure. Communities, schools, and businesses often rely on dumping or burning plastic waste, which contributes to environmental degradation, pollution, and health risks. When starting out, Pheha Plastic also faced challenges with limited funding, lack of recycling machinery, and the need to change mindsets in communities where recycling was not widely understood or practiced.

Solutions: Pheha Plastic was established as a social enterprise in Morija to address these challenges by:

1. Collecting and recycling plastic waste into useful products such as rulers and other items.
2. Conducting awareness campaigns, workshops, and outreach programs in schools and communities to teach about waste management and climate change.
3. Developing creative educational tools such as the children's book *Limpho and Her Magical Bin* to instil environmental values in young learners.

The company has been shortlisted for the UNIDO/GCIP incubation program and is developing its first recycled plastic product—a 15 cm ruler—while also preparing to scale into larger product lines

Notable Achievements: Sensitised more than 3,000 students across different schools on proper waste management and environmental protection.

- Hosted international university students and volunteers, including from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Partnered with organizations such as Rotary Club of Maseru, The Hub Morija, Renoka, and the EU Delegation to Lesotho for the Source to Mouth beach clean-up campaign.
- Soft-launched a children's book on waste management and climate change (to be officially launched in 2025)

Impact: Pheha Plastic is contributing to environmental sustainability by diverting plastic waste from landfills and open burning. The enterprise provides educational resources for schools, creates awareness in communities, and is laying the groundwork for green jobs in Lesotho's circular economy. The long-term impact is not only cleaner communities but also empowered young people who see waste as a resource rather than a problem

Case Study: Lesotho National League of the visually impaired persons (LNLVIP)



Name: LNLVIP

Place of birth: Lesotho

Industry: Advocacy organisation

Social media



“The organization’s ability to overcome these hurdles stemmed from its members’ strategic thinking and relentless advocacy”.

Impact:

Today, the impact of LNLVIP is deeply felt across Lesotho.

The organization has played a transformative role in ensuring that people with visual impairments enjoy

equitable access to education,

employment, and social inclusion.

Its advocacy has led to policy changes, institutional accommodations, and widespread public recognition of the rights of visually impaired persons. The

Mohloli oa Bophelo Centre continues to serve as a vital resource, while LNLVIP remains at the forefront of the struggle for dignity, access, and opportunity for all visually impaired people in Lesotho. Its legacy is not just one of survival, but of persistent growth, inclusion, and transformation.

Inspiration:

- The establishment of the Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) was driven by the realization that the rights and needs of visually impaired persons were overlooked in national policy and public life.
- This led to visionary advocates like Violet Ngwenya and Miss Coolson to suggest the establishment of an organization specifically designed to promote the rights of visually impaired persons in Lesotho.
- Their vision continued when Theresa Mofomobe attended a disability conference in Zambia in 1983. Inspired by the organized disability movements she encountered there, she returned with a determination that Lesotho needed its own body to represent and empower its visually impaired citizens.
- In 1986, a group of visually impaired individuals met at the Resource Centre for the Blind, together with teachers and parents of visually impaired children, and they formed a steering committee, the first step in what would become a nationwide movement.
- In 1989, the organization held its first Annual General Meeting and officially elected the late Mr Moses Masemene as its first president.

Notable Achievements:

- Over the decades, LNLVIP has achieved significant milestones that have reshaped the landscape for visually impaired people in Lesotho.
- In the early 1990s, the organization successfully lobbied the government and secured M500,000 through the Safety Net funding program.
- This accomplishment led to the purchase of land in Ha Ts’osane and the eventual construction of the Mohloli oa Bophelo Training and Rehabilitation Centre (MBTC), for skills development and empowerment of the visually impaired community.
- The Centre opened in 2000 and has remained operational ever since. LNLVIP’s advocacy also helped many visually impaired individuals gain access to higher education at institutions such as the National University of Lesotho and the Lesotho College of Education, where reasonable accommodations made learning possible for visually impaired persons.
- The organization’s efforts also created employment opportunities, especially in switchboard positions within both government and private sectors for about 20 visually impaired persons and enabled the integration of visually impaired teachers into mainstream schools.

Challenges:

- However, these victories were not without serious challenges. In its early years, LNLVIP operated within a difficult political climate, Lesotho was under military rule in 1986, making access to government officials and policymaking circles particularly difficult.
- Security concerns posed another challenge after the construction of the Ha Ts’osane centre; due to the lack of a security guard, several valuable items, including voice recorders, were stolen.
- Financial constraints were also a constant concern, especially after the Swedish Association of the Visually Impaired (SRF), which had supported the Centre between 1988 and 1991, phased out their involvement.
- Each of these setbacks could have easily undermined the organization’s growth, yet LNLVIP proved remarkably resilient

Case Study: Matseviso Likopo Mokhoromeng



Name
Matseviso Likopo Mokhoromeng

Place of birth
Maseru, Lesotho

Profession
Founder of Deaf Blind
Association of Lesotho

Industry
Charity

Article
[The Stigma of Disability: Lesotho Grapples with Unlawful Meddling in the Reproduction Rights of Disabled Girls and Women – Uncensored news](#)

“I want to see deaf and blind persons of Lesotho becoming strong advocates for their own human rights, and I will be happy to see them in action”.

Inspiration:

Born hard of hearing and later becoming blind in 2015, Matseviso’s journey reflects resilience, strength, and deep commitment to communication and rights advocacy. Despite vision loss, she continued to use sign language, tactile signing, spoken Sesotho, and spoken English to communicate. Inspired by a friend in Japan, they founded the Deaf-Blind Association of Lesotho (DBAL), a pioneering step in representing Deaf-Blind individuals nationally

Notable Achievements:

- Former agricultural instructor by profession
- Serves as Program Officer at NADL
- Founder of Deaf-Blind Association of Lesotho (DBAL)
- Pioneered advocacy for sign language as a human right
- Played a major role in promoting sign language use in schools and public platforms
- Developed personal tactile signing method for communication

Challenges:

- Lack of tactile and sign language interpreting services
- Inability to further studies due to communication barriers
- Discrimination and decreased dignity from some family and community members
- Limited resources and recognition for DBAL
- Difficulty in securing long-term sustainable funding

Solutions:

- Matseviso founded DBAL to support and advocate for the Deaf-Blind community
- Developed and promoted tactile sign communication
- Participated in sign language campaigns to build public awareness
- Secured initial funding for Deaf-Blind awareness campaigns
- Continues to lead national advocacy despite personal and systemic barriers

Impact:

- Matseviso helped open national dialogue about Deaf-Blindness in Lesotho
- Strengthened the visibility of Deaf-Blind individuals in advocacy spaces
- Improved understanding of inclusive communication methods
- Pushed for policy changes that include tactile and sign language services

Case Study: Regina Lephoi, NADL



Name
Regina Lephoi

Place of birth
Lesotho

Profession
Primary teacher and sign language instructor

Industry
Inclusive education

Article
‘Agreement will create awareness of disability issues’ | Lesotho Times

Notable Achievements:

- Founder of the National Association of Deaf Lesotho (NADL) – the first national Deaf-led organization in Lesotho, created with support from Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) and The World Federation for the Deaf (WFD).
- First female Deaf activist and teacher to lead national-level advocacy for sign language rights in Lesotho.
- Played a key role in the development of NADL's constitution from 1992 to 1994.
- Trained by the World Federation of the Deaf to become a certified Sign Language Instructor.
- Instrumental in the shift from oralism to Sign Language use in Deaf education.
- Helped train the first group of 9 Deaf Sign Language Instructors in Lesotho (1997–2000), with support from WFD Zimbabwe.
- Led significant teacher workshops in 2005, helping educators understand Deaf learners' needs and accept Sign Language.

Challenges:

- Teachers rejected Sign Language, continuing to force deaf students to speak using oral methods.
- Special Education Unit ignored Deaf advocates, denying their requests for inclusive language policy.
- She was kicked out of schools for raising awareness about Sign Language.
- Some assumed she was “not deaf enough” because she could lip-read and speak.
- Parents and professionals misunderstood her role, thinking she was trying to stop deaf children from learning to speak

Solutions:

- Mobilised Deaf communities to raise awareness about linguistic rights.
- With WFD’s help, trained new Deaf leaders and instructors.
- Pushed the government and LNFOD to recognize NADL and the importance of Sign Language in education.
- Engaged in policy advocacy, contributing to the integration of Sign Language into education and national dialogue.
- Inspired a new generation of Deaf leaders, many of whom are now instructors, interpreters, and community workers.

Impact:

- NADL has grown into a strong and respected voice, advocating for rights, access, and equality.
- There are now many Sign Language instructors and interpreters across the country.
- Deaf learners in schools are no longer punished for signing — they are encouraged to learn in their natural language.
- Sign Language is being discussed in the Senate of Lesotho, with growing support to make it an official language.
- Communication access has improved dramatically in both urban and rural Deaf communities.

Case Study: Tebello Tjapela

Inspiration: The principle of ‘matsema’, practised by the founding father, King Moshoeshe I, which means group collaboration to achieve large scale tasks.



Name
Tebello Tjapela

Place of birth
Leribe, Lesotho

Education
BA in Economics and
an MSc in Economics
from NUL

Profession
Founder and CEO of
Phuthalichaba Savings
& Credit Cooperative
Society (PSCCS) Ltd

Industry
Finance

Social media
<https://www.instagram.com/phuthalichaba>



Notable Achievements:

In an era where economic disparity continues to challenge many communities, Phuthalichaba Savings & Credit Cooperative Society Ltd emerged as a source of hope in Lesotho. Founded by Mr. Tebello Tjapela, the organization was inspired by a pivotal moment during a lecture at the National University of Lesotho (NUL), where the question “Why do some countries progress economically while others do not?” ignited a passion for economic development within the minds of its founders.

Challenges:

The primary challenge identified was the financial obstacles faced by many within their target demographic. Individuals who sought to improve their economic status through entrepreneurship often lacked access to traditional banking services, therefore had limited options for obtaining credit and saving, due to stringent bank policies and a lack of tailor-made financial products.

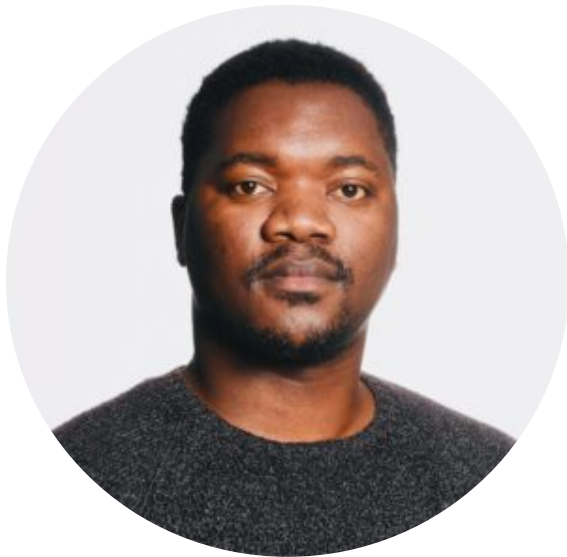
Solutions:

Recognising these challenges, Phuthalichaba changed its approach from establishing a conventional bank to launching a Savings and Credit Cooperative Society (SACCOS). This turnabout allowed Phuthalichaba to start with a more attainable model that still aimed at fulfilling its foundational mission: to stimulate Basotho economic development. Beginning with an initial capital M1, 200: M1, 000 to open a bank account Phuthalichaba grew to Over M6 million in member savings since operations and 1,300 members across all districts of Lesotho and beyond.

Impact:

Phuthalichaba serves as a platform for its members to save and access affordable credit. The cooperative structure promotes a sense of community and shared responsibility, allowing members to support one another financially. Additionally, Phuthalichaba provides financial literacy training and workshops to empower members with knowledge and skills essential for sustainable economic growth. Since its establishment, Phuthalichaba has made significant strides in transforming the financial landscape for its members. By offering tailored financial products and fostering a supportive community, Phuthalichaba has enabled countless individuals to start their own businesses and improve their livelihoods.

Case Study: Hlokomelang David Rakojoana



Name
Hlokomelang
David Rakojoana

Place of birth
Mafeteng, Lesotho

Education
Brunel
University of London;
Michigan State
University

Profession
Data Scientist

Industry
Consultancy

Social media
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/davidrakojoana/>

“Technology and film are the modern campfires around which we tell our stories. Taking Sesotho to a global app and documenting our equestrian culture is about ensuring the world sees the true vibrancy of the Mountain Kingdom.”

Inspiration:

My inspiration comes from the desire to bridge the gap between Lesotho’s rich traditions and the modern digital world. I am driven by the potential to export our culture—whether it’s our language or our unique horsemanship—to a global audience that is eager to learn about us

Notable Achievements:

- **uTalk Sesotho Course:** Collaborated with UK-based company uTalk to record and launch a comprehensive digital language course. This project successfully digitized the Sesotho language, making it accessible to millions of learners worldwide and preserving it for future generations. <https://www.dolencymru.org/working-with-utalk-on-their-sesotho-app-march-2025/>
- **Polo Africa Film (Translation & Transcription):** served as the primary transcriber for this documentary shot across the Free State and the landscapes of Lesotho. My core responsibility was accurately transcribing Sesotho dialogue into English subtitles. This ensured that the narratives of the Basotho riders—their growth in the sport and the unique challenges they face—were translated faithfully for an international audience.

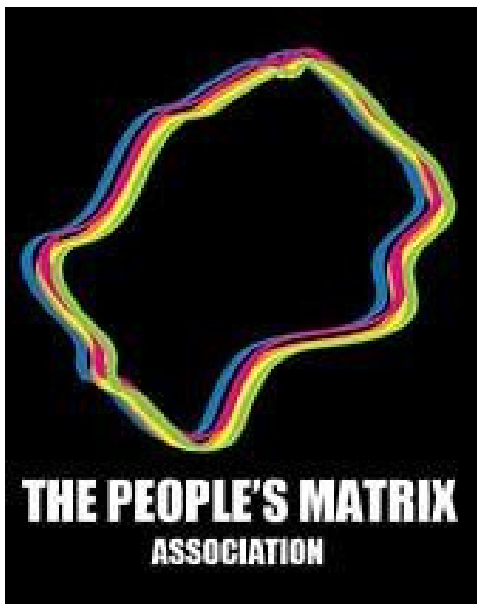
Challenges:

- **Linguistic Accuracy vs. Translation:** In the Polo Africa film, the challenge was not just translating words, but capturing the spirit of what the Basotho riders were saying. It was critical to transcribe accurately so that their true emotions and the reality of their struggles were not lost in English subtitles.
- **Digital Preservation:** With the uTalk project, the challenge lay in standardizing the language for a modern interface while maintaining the authentic warmth of spoken Sesotho

Impact:

- **Amplifying Local Voices:** Through accurate subtitling, the Polo Africa film can now reach a global audience, shedding light on the often-overlooked community of Basotho polo players and the growth of the sport in Africa.
- **Global Education:** The uTalk app has made Sesotho accessible to millions of potential learners. It serves as a bridge for tourists, aid workers, and language enthusiasts to connect with Lesotho before they even arrive.

Case Study: Tampose Mothopeng



Name: Tampose Mothopeng

Education: Lerotholi Polytechnic

Profession: Executive Director

Industry: Human rights

“Building Safe Spaces and Strengthening Voices for Inclusion in Lesotho”.

Inspiration:

The People's Matrix Association began in 2008 as the Matrix Support Group, initiated by several queer individuals in Maseru interested in solidarity, safety, and recognition in a society where discrimination and social exclusion were rife. Members would hold meetings informally for mutual support, to address social issues, and to advocate against human rights violations experienced by sexual and gender minorities in Lesotho.

Notable Achievements:

The organisation gained legal recognition in 2010, a milestone in history as one of the first registered organisations for LGBTQ+ individuals in Lesotho. The LCN was instrumental in hosting the group and providing financial management support, while the UNDP provided the first funding to the organization, which helped build its advocacy and community-building work. Recognizing that notions of gender and sexuality have increasingly evolved, the organization re-registered itself in 2015 as "The People's Matrix Association" to change its constitution to one that is fully inclusive and representative of diversity regarding SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics).

Challenges:

Finding a safe space- early meetings were held in at Anglican church hall, a rare safe space for members experiencing fear and intimidation both from the public and law-enforcement authorities. Gaining legal recognition- The group grew to form an interim committee responsible for drafting a constitution and making preparations for formal registration, thus laying the groundwork for an organized movement for equality and dignity.

Impact:

Today, The People’s Matrix Association is a nationally respected human-rights organisation that continues to champion equality, inclusion, and social justice. What started as a small support group has turned into a movement that characterizes the spirit of resilience, innovation, and community-driven change in Lesotho.

Links

[Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons](#)

[Pheha Plastic](#)

[DeafBlind-Association-of-Lesotho](#)

[Lesotho National Federation of Organisations for the Disabled](#)

[National-Association-of-the-Deaf-Lesotho](#)

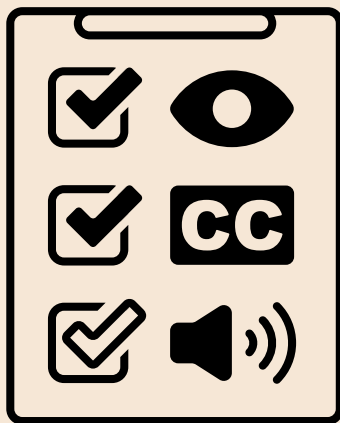
<https://thematrix.org.ls/>

<https://lestimes.com/agreement-will-create-awareness-of-disability-issues/>

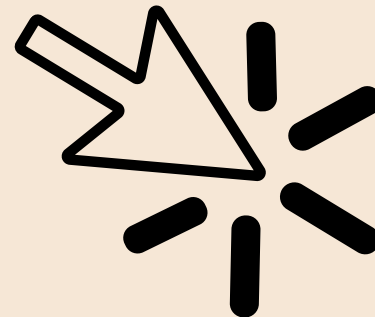
<https://www.phuthalichaba.co.ls/>

<https://www.chevening.org/scholarship/lesotho/>

<https://www.dolencymru.org/working-with-utalk-on-their-sesotho-app-march-2025/>



Podcasts



Click on the
images to access



Pheha Plastic



LNVIP



Regina Lephoi



Tampose Mothopeng



Matsepiso



Tebello Tjapela



David Rakojoana

Learning Together, Improving Together

This resource grows
through shared
experience. Scan to help
shape the next edition.



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