

Managing Director's MESSAGE

Global trends in the last three decades have dramatically changed the face of global governance. A decade preceding the 1990s (1980-1989) closed with harsh experiences on the global scale, marked by Structural Adjustment Programmes (SABs) of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Washington Consensus of 1989, which came with a set of ten free-market economic policies, also supported by the two Brettonwoods institutions. These policies were intended to constitute a 'standard reform' package promoted for crisis-wracked developing countries. However, on a positive note, the close of the decade was marked by the fall of the Berlin wall, which had separated East and West Germany. Also, 1989 marked the end of cold war.

The 1990 was a decade of hope, eventful as it was, and which also marked the end of the 20th century. It marked one of the important events on the global scale, the release of South African longest serving political prisoner and freedom fighter – Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela who left prison walls on 11 February 1990. The decade opened with the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), later known as the Society Union. The 1990s came with a thought of sustainable development, a concept coined at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992 in (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). The decade also saw the Asian Crisis and also efforts to curb global warming, caused by green gas emissions. Also on a negative note, the decade was marked by an unfortunate event of genocide in Rwanda which happened in 1994. Same year brought a glimmer of hope for South Africa, which tested democratic rule after decades of colonial and apartheid rules. The 1990s was a decade preceding a new millennium, which

was launched in the 2000, which came with the Millennium Declaration which gave birth to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The last three decades have been eventful to humanity, marked by threats to the global community and humanity. Among them are the global risks that confront the world on a daily basis, which present challenges on global governance. These risks are aptly captured in the annual global risk reports, which are produced by the World Economic Forum. These risks reveal a litany of threats to the world. The threats are of an economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal and technological nature. On average, they present a challenge to almost all countries of the world; however, with the degree of affliction differing from nation to nation and country to country.

The intensity of the global risks gives credence to the fact that the world is under threat – global governance failure, asset bubbles, cyber-attacks, data fraud and theft, biodiversity loss and weapons of mass destruction. The advent of COVID-19 that erupted in Wuhan, China by the close of 2019 has exposed fragility of global health governance. For a better part of decade ago; the debt crunch that is eating the whole world, including Europe is testimony to the failure of financial institutions. Also, biodiversity loss and climate action failure are testimony to failure of governments as a collective to reduce the impact of global warming, and by implication, climate change. This manifests itself in protracted spells of drought that have rendered agricultural production and food security a nullity. The global problem of climate change is said to be human-induced and not a natural disaster as it is sometimes referred to.

On the geopolitical side, the prevalence of and tussle for who among the superpowers or emerging powers has weapons of mass destruction has become a contested terrain. This is also given the malady of nuclear weapons, which gives credence to geopolitical governance that is slanted towards other parts of the world to the detriment of others. Prevalence and use of nuclear weapons is a test of power by super powers. Other issues on the geopolitical space include the skewed and unbalanced permanent representation of countries in the United Nations' Security Council. The African continent has lagged behind the global developments as it does not have a permanent seat on the Security Council. This imbalance has stirred debates and calls for the need to reform the United Nations so that it addresses global issues on an equal scale.

These global challenges have a domino effect on regional and local policy-making processes. Regional efforts to arrest challenges of countries sharing borders in a given geographical location are undermined by global governance shenanigans of superpowers, which tussle for superiority on the international arena. Regional blocs face collective challenges such as lack of a common vision, weak capacity to implement regional economic and social integration efforts and their regional/continental programmes. Also, regional blocs face the challenge of inability to arrest cross-border ills such as human trafficking, illicit financial flows, tax evasion, money laundering and the spell of refugees, caused by people fleeing wars and civil strives in their own countries. Another critical challenge is that of terrorism trade across common borders.

Closer home, stock theft across the border of Lesotho and South Africa are a major concern. An increase in migration across countries, especially Illegal migration also pose a great threat. A push factor for the increase in migration includes perennial civil wars, which displace people. Also prevalent are ills such as money laundering, tax evasion and capital flight by multinational companies, which has undermined internal tax collection regimes. These emanate from illegal access to tenders, whereby officials of recipient

countries give unfettered tax heavens and tax holidays to these multinational companies and acts as an incentive for evading tax and laundering money. The African continent is not a stranger to the latter economic ill and has taken formidable strides to get to the bottom of this malfeasance.

The African Continent, collectively under the banner of the African Union, has been battered by a great proportion of these global threats. To a large extent, most of these are self-inflicted. The continent is no stranger to civil wars, coup *de tats* and killer diseases such as malaria, yellow fever, Ebola and of late, cancer. The continent is also a victim to illicit financial flows, money laundering, capital flight as a result of tax evasion and human trafficking. This has pushed the continent to the margins of economic and social development. There is also poor regional economic integration, though the Continent has pronounced itself when its member states acceded to the African Continental Free Trade Area. However, there are trade bottlenecks still affecting the continent. Trade among African states is still not as easy as it has been assumed to be. This stems from a myriad factors, among them, lack of free movement of people and goods across our common borders due to stringent cross border rules. Even after accession to Asecuda, which allows for automation of the borders, there are tedious processes at the border gates.

After establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Union came up with what it felt was a panacea for African's perennial problems, which is governmental efforts to address poor governance. The AU adopted the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) – which is a voluntary arrangement amongst African states to systematically assess and review governance at Head of State peer level in order to promote political stability, accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration, economic growth and sustainable development. However, this initiative has failed to kick-start and bring about meaningful change to countries as they viewed it as exposition of their governance weaknesses.

Lesotho, which obtained political independence from the Great Britain in October, 1966, has traversed a rough political journey. The Kingdom's not-so-good political trajectory has been punctuated by many episodes comprising an embryonic democratic dispensation at independence (1966), a one-party state following a political stalemate of 1970, which resulted in the suspension of the constitution and declaration of a state of emergency. This was followed by incarceration of opposition leaders and political opponents and forced exile of some to neighbouring countries for more than two decades. Political experts argue that the 1970 episode was a sod-turning for Lesotho's endemic and perennial political problems that have since plagued the Kingdom and placed it on a pedestal of a tardy political and economic development. In 1986, Lesotho experienced a coup, which resulted in a military junta that ruled the Kingdom undemocratically for seven years until 1993 when a second wave of democracy was embraced in the country. However, political experts also argue that Lesotho only introduced democracy, but failed dismally to consolidate a firm and functional democracy. This follows decades of perennial political conflicts that undermined rule of law and peace.

Lesotho launched its second wave of democracy in 1993, this after 23 years of foundering in a political wilderness, subsequent to holding a multiparty election, which saw one party seize power by a landslide victory. After this period, there followed other episodes in the political arena, such as the palace coup of 1994, where the King overthrew his own government. There erupted conflicts in the military and police that created a security sector stalemate, with these security organs pitted against the government and refusing to submit to civilian rule. These conflicts spilled into the political domain of the country and consequently had a negative impact on social cohesion, national unity and peace. These episodes were followed by the assassination of the then Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Selometsi Baholo who was killed in cold blood at his residential area at Ha-Matala, Maseru in 1994 by the army. There then followed arrests and kidnapping of four cabinet ministers by the

army, who later fled the country to seek temporary refuge in the neighbouring South Africa. There was state of anarchy. SADC was forced to intervene to quell political tension.

As if it was not enough, in 1998, Lesotho descended into a political turmoil that nearly saw Lesotho sink into civic war, but this was quickly quelled by neighbouring countries – Botswana and South Africa that sent troops under the aegis of the SADC. Since then, Lesotho has not experienced peace and stability as from time-to-time, there have been intra and interparty conflicts that undermined peace and stability, having a chilling effect on social cohesion and national unity among Basotho. Every election has been followed by poll results protests, except for the 2002 election which was peaceful. As a result of these endemic conflicts, Lesotho has become a pariah of SADC, which is constantly bound to intervene to quell political tensions. The unfolding of these episodes has had adverse implications on the country's international image and its political sovereignty as an independent country, when its decisions are sometimes subjected to approval by SADC, even for domestic matters for which it has sovereign power. Political pundits argue that Lesotho is indirectly ruled from Pretoria, South Africa. Its sovereignty is called to question as an independent state.

Lesotho introduced its Mixed Member Proportional Representation Model (MMB) in 2002, which is a hybrid model combining the First-Past-the-Post and the proportional representation. The model has been hailed for its ability to reduce post-election instability. However, in 2012, the third time that the electoral model was implemented, Lesotho saw a new form of government, a coalition government set-up, which was prompted by the election outcome of that poll. Though Basotho had pinned their hopes on this development, the coalition arrangement has not helped pull Lesotho from its historical doldrums of incessant instability and lack of peace, caused by perennial political conflicts.

Lesotho has experienced four coalition governments in eight years (2012-2020), which is phenomenal for a country that hardly affords to sponsor a single election without seeking

financial assistance from external partners. The longest serving government since 2012 has only been able to live up to two years and a few months. However, in the last four months, the two houses of parliament have successfully passed a law that prohibits a sitting prime minister to resort to advising the King to call for elections when his/her political support in the national assembly has waned. Instead, according to the new law, the prime minister has to vacate office by resigning if his/her support has waned in the national assembly or if he/she is facing a motion of no-confidence. The last regime is as a result of the new development, which was formed without going to elections, but change of government prompted by the decline of support to the previous government. The leadership of the then ruling coalition (2017-2020), All Basotho Convention (ABC) cobbled a coalition with its former nemesis, the Democratic Congress to toppled the Thomas Thabane-led coalition government, which saw the first and effective application of the new law.

The negative development of constant toppling of coalition governments, which started in 2012, has been owing to political wrangling and jostling for power within political parties forming a coalition, which has cut short the lifespan of governments. The jostling emanates from a scramble for access to the small coffers of the country, with everyone wanting to grab a greater share at the expense of others, this leading to conflict and the resultant splits and fall of the government. Even the now hardly four-months old coalition government led by former Minister of Finance, Dr Moeketsi Majoro, is held by a thread as it might fall anytime soon. The trend has a devastating effect on continuity of government, by implication, a negative effect on the development agenda set forth by the new regime.

As earlier mentioned, Lesotho is completely surrounded by South Africa and remains an enclave economy within its only neighbour. As a result, Lesotho largely depends on South Africa for consumable commodities. Imports from South Africa constitute more than 90 per cent of all imports.

Lesotho is predominantly a rural economy, accounting for about 70 per cent of its people living in rural areas. Poverty stands at 49 per cent (down from 56.7 per cent in 2017) for a country of 2.2 million people. Unemployment is said to be standing at a staggering 23 per cent (down from 28.3 per cent in 2017), predominantly among youth. Lesotho has fewer mineral resources – diamonds, but has water in abundance, which it sells to South Africa and fetches millions in royalties.

Following the 2008 global financial meltdown, Lesotho lost one of its major economic injectors – the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) receipts, which formed 60 per cent of its coffers. Lesotho has an underdeveloped textile sector, but has taken advantage of the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA), a United State of America's unilateral preferential treatment agreement under the World Trade Organisation (WTO). This grants underdeveloped sub-Saharan African states, (Lesotho included) unfettered access to USA markets as they export their apparel and garment products free of tariffs and quotas. However, most of the garment and clothing firms are run by Chinese and Taiwanese, while Lesotho only builds factory shells and supplies cheap labour. Of course, it cannot be ruled out that one major benefit is that of job creation, as it is the second biggest employer, creating approximately 40,000 jobs.

However, Lesotho's textile sector has exposed the weakness of the country's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy and that the sector cannot be trusted as a sustainable economic activity. The sector was done a severe blow in 2004 at the advent of the expiry of the Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA), which resulted in closure of many Chinese and Taiwanese factories. These migrated to join the USA apparel market after it opened up when the MFA under the WTO came to an end. This resulted in the loss of about 12, 000 jobs, decreasing the sector's job creation ability from 55,000 to 43,000. Furthermore, the USA uses AGOA as a weapon to bind the country to toe its own line of policies on human rights and good governance. Today, with the advent of COVID-19,

the sector has sent home about 2, 600 factory workers from the Nien Hsing Company of China, this giving credence to the theory that the textile sector is not a sustainable economic activity of Lesotho.

Lesotho lost its remittance from the migrant labour system, which has since markedly declined since 1994 when South Africa became independent. Hordes of Basotho have been retrenched from South African mines and this has had a negative effect on the socio-economic standards of Basotho families that largely depended on the wages from mineworkers. Scores of Basotho are now at home after retrenchment and are fighting to get their benefits from SA mines. They have formed the Ex-Miners Association, which intervenes to ensure that ex-miners, widows and children of the ex-miners who died in SA mines get their dues. There was also a political party formed by a stalwart former mineworker, Jeremane Ramathebane promising to take their issues to parliament for policy and legislative framework development. However, little has been done by this political party.

Lesotho suffers from structural and institutional constraints, which have had a negative bearing on the country's economic development policy, which results in a tardy growth of Lesotho's economy. As an enclave economy within South Africa, Lesotho has no option but to mimic economic policies of its neighbour. This makes it uncompetitive in the regional and global economy in comparison with its peers in the SADC region and beyond, especially among similarly embryonic economies. Lesotho has a small and underdeveloped private sector, which contributes minimally to the economy through taxation. This has brought an economic anomaly where the government is the main supplier of services and also remains the main buyer of services from private entrepreneurs. However, the latter is obfuscated by a weak procurement system that sees supplier invoices taking close to year or even two before they are paid. The country suffers from weak economic institutions that are beset by poor governance, which results in the few

reserves being siphoned and depleted to benefit a few. Its micro and macroeconomic policies are not in good shape. There is a scramble for tenders with the few construction and built companies paying bribes to civil servants or politicians promising kickbacks if their tender applications are approved. The economic legal framework is archaic and weak and fails to countervail these ill-practices, which have a chilling effect on economic governance.

Lesotho has largely depended on foreign aid, which has substantially contributed to the economy through projects and lately budget support. However, poor accounting systems, lack of transparency and corruption have discouraged and dispelled foreign partners. For example, the Irish Embassy in Lesotho closed its offices and moved to Pretoria shortly after being upgraded from a consulate to a fully-fledged embassy. It was complaining about non-accountability for funds channelled to the country to support major projects and rampant corruption. The British High Commission to Lesotho has just returned after it closed offices and moved to Pretoria in 2001. Lesotho services a huge external debt accrued to support mega projects from financial institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Lesotho is currently a beneficiary of the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) under the USA-supported Millennium Challenge Compact (MCC). However, the challenge of corruption, poor governance (transparency, accountability and observance of human rights) are threatening sustainability of the Compact as the USA has threatened to pull out if these principles of good governance are not observed. The MCC board has since withheld its vote on Lesotho to move to the next Compact agreement until issues of transparency, accountability and corruption have been addressed. Lesotho direly needs this fund to support its water, electricity, rural road network and other utility supply projects. Another injector of funding to Lesotho through aid is the European Union Delegation to Lesotho, which coughs up to £18, 000 annually. These go to support

road network development and reform programmes. The EU has also raised concerns about a bad culture of non-accountability for funds channelled to support development projects. It has complained about lack of political will to see progress in agreed projects and has since disagreed with government to continue with budget support.

On the economic front, sporadic and scattered efforts have been made to address the mentioned economic challenges, but to little avail, hence Lesotho still remains a Least Developed Country of the world. The World Bank, IMF and AfDB have constantly injected money in the form of grants, soft loans, and long-term loans to support development of internal government systems and processes with intent to promote efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. These include public finance management systems and procurement systems and processes. Reforms that have since been supported by these international institutions include a) Public Sector Improvement Reform Programme (PSIRP), whose main thrust was to improve public service management in Lesotho and the 3+1 Service Delivery Implementation Initiative with the aim of motivating and supporting public officers' discipline and professionalism within the public service. They also supported the public Finance Management Reform Programme and the Judicial Sector Reform Development Programme.

On the political front, SADC's constant political and diplomatic interventions have yielded little as they have tended to be short-term. Lesotho has remained on the agenda of SADC's Summits and other Extra-ordinary meetings to discuss the Kingdom's perennial political problems. The sending of soldiers to quell political tensions has been catastrophic as it has had social ramifications of dividing the nation or perpetuating the political conflicts among citizens. The long-term challenge of lack of peace, stability and breakdown of social cohesion and unity among Basotho still remains. Lesotho does not seem to head anywhere in the efforts of its regional counterparts to address intra- and inter-party conflicts, which spill into the domain of the larger society.

Lesotho could have long descended into civic war, given the longevity with which it has prolonged political conflicts. However, this has been countervailed by the inherent inter-marital and social ties that exist among the nation to an extent that out of 10 people one meets on the street, seven are family-related in one way or the other. That is the reason Lesotho is said to be a homogenous nation, but political leaders fail to leverage on this homogeneity to build social cohesion and long-lasting peace among the nation. Instead, they embark on a crusade to divide the nation for narrow and selfish interests.

On the governance side, there is a lingering problem of rule of law, where those in power tend to think they are exonerated from respect of the supremacy of law. Courts of law also fail to interpret the law and administer justice in a fair and equitable manner because of political infiltration, which sees judges of the high court and appeal court as well as magistrates comprising their ethics by toeing the political line set by politicians. Basotho have lost trust in the legal and judicial system of the country as it is laced with partisanship. There are several instances where the Prime Minister has tried to unilaterally remove and place chief justices and presidents of the appeal court when he felt government or his own family were threatened by cases in front of these courts. Attempts to suspension and expel chief justices and appeal court presidents has become a norm in Lesotho by those in power. This has brought fear and mistrust within the justice sector of the country.

Moreover, the independence of the courts continuously gets compromised. Added to this shortfall is the non-observance of the principle of separation of powers between the three organs of state – executive branch and courts of law. Lesotho has a judiciary that does not want to be accountable to society, but to politicians and has no eye for societal needs, as a result, gains no trust of society and this endangers its independence in the short and long-term. Lack of independence has reduced Lesotho's Judiciary into a government agency. This is lamentable in a country that

has a highly litigious society, with no consensus-building and weak conflict-resolution mechanisms. This shortfall has led to citizens resorting to seeking redress from courts of law instead of engaging in amicable solutions, even for matters that should not go to court. This results from a society that is socially-torn right in the middle by political conflicts which have spilled into the domain of the large society.

Another critical defect is that of the army, which has repeatedly refused to submit to civilian authority. A great proportion of the instability that Lesotho has experienced could be attributed to involvement of the armed forces in the political space. There have also been coup attempts. There was an attempt following the 1998 political upheavals to develop a professional and apolitical army. The Indian, Botswana and South African armies were engaged to help train a recalcitrant defence force of Lesotho. Also, army specialists from USA and Britain have also been roped in to help train Lesotho Defence Force to remain professional and desist from introducing into the political terrain. However, that challenge has not been addressed as the advent of two internally-organised assassinations of army commanders in a space of two years bears testimony to the deep-seated challenge of security forces in Lesotho. These are Lieutenant-General Maaparankoe Mahao who was assassinated in June 2015 and Lieutenant-General Khoantle Motšo-Motšo, who died in cold blood in September 2017 in the hands of the army. These unfortunate episodes have been followed by protracted stalemates in the armed forces, spilling into the political and social domain of the larger society.

There is a general decline in the political and democratic governance as well as corporate governance and this affects economic governance and socioeconomic development. Institutions that are supposed to be the bone-marrow of democratic rule are selfishly placed under siege by the executive branch of government. In most cases, this is done to serve narrow and partisan interests of the political elite. The National Assembly, which is supposed to represent the electorate, enact laws and exercise oversight over the

policies and actions of the executive through parliamentary portfolio committees and a Public Accounts Committee (PAC), has its supremacy undermined. The Office of the Ombudsman, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), the Public Service Commission (PSC), the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) and the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) are supposed to be watchdogs that ensure administrative fairness, the rule of law and public accountability. They have a fiduciary responsibility to hold the executive branch of government accountable, this adding value to democratic and political governance the country so much yearns for. However, they are subjected to become subservient to political elites who act like their masters. Consequently, their functional autonomy, operational and financial independence are clipped so that are at the mercy of the executive for budgetary and infrastructural support. They are left to be weak, with inadequate investigators. The Public Service Commission (PSC) has lost its innate autonomy, as politicians unilaterally fill the civil service with political followers from their constituencies who are not appointed on merit. They have turned the civil service into a dumping place for unprofessional and under-qualified people. As a result, Lesotho has one of the highest wage bills among its counterparts, owing to its overblown civil service. It has reached a stage where it is a bubble that has exploded due to the incapacity of the civil service to further absorb qualified people in the civil service. Civil society attempts to raise flag on these issues has been downplayed as it has been labelled by the ruling coalitions as a ploy to destabilise a democratically-elected government by dancing to the tune of the donor community and advancing oppositional sentiments.

SADC has changed heart on sending troops to quell political tensions and has thought of a lasting solution in the form of multi-sector reforms. These are projected to see the problematic sectors being transformed. After being exposed to a more than 50-year old political system that undermines the development of the country, Basotho are pinning their hopes on the comprehensive and watershed multi-sector

reforms, which seek to create a just, peaceful and stable country. This comes as earlier mentioned, after the Kingdom traversed a nasty political trajectory since independence.

The SADC's Observer Mission to Lesotho (SOMILES) in 2014, that was sent to assess the political situation and recommend remedial action went beyond mere conflict and proposed a four-sector reform exercise. This, the SADC structure had seen as a lasting remedial action to end the perennial challenge of intra, interparty as well as cross-sector conflicts in the Kingdom of Lesotho. Four sectors that had to undergo reform were identified - the security sector, judicial sector, media sector, as well as the constitution.

The four sectors were viewed as posing a threat to the country's stability and the peace-building initiative as well as the general democratic consolidation. These sectors are expected to lead to political, social and then economic development of the Kingdom.

Therefore, as a result of the aforementioned challenges, the Governance Institute for Sustainable Development is keen to address five of the many challenges facing Lesotho. These are poor governance, weak leadership, poor research, dearth of dialogue and debate on national issues as well as neglected youth. Programmes developed by the Institute seek to address these challenges head-on.



Our Profile

Introduction

This paper presents a corporate profile of the Governance Institute for Sustainable Development (GISD). The paper provides a background to the organisation – as regards what informed its formation. It provides different contexts that affect the operation of the GISD and which shape and influence its consultancy, research, assessment tools for governance as well as initiatives for dialogue and debate on national issues.

The paper presents work that the GISD has done so far since its inception in 2019. It provides an outline of work completed (consultancies, researches, surveys, assessments etc). It also outlines work that is in the offing – consultancy work in progress, on-going researches and surveys as well as governance assessments. The paper further outlines prospective consultancy work, researches and surveys as well as envisaged governance assessments.

Background

Formation of the Governance Institute for Sustainable Development was informed by five major challenges facing Lesotho, which are the stumbling blocks for its political, economic, social and technological development. These stumbling blocks are:

- **Poor Leadership**

Poor leadership refers to lack of ability by those who are supposed to lead a nation to provide direction to the nation, as regards its vision and where it is headed. Lesotho does not have a vision that spans 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45 to 50 years. The country might even not be aware of where it wants to be in the next five years in real terms. The problem of leadership in Lesotho stems from its short-termism, which sees leaders who are short-sighted and only think of today and are immersed with what happened yesterday. There is no thought about tomorrow. It is a nation with leaders who do not know expectations for the citizens.

- **Poor Governance**

Bad governance is the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed as a consequence of decision-making. Bad governance collectively encompasses governance in government and corporate settings. Bad governance encompasses a variety of situations from corruption, abuse of power, deceit and to formulation of ineffective policies. Poor governance also relates to how governing bodies (boards) for private companies, public organisations, state-owned agencies and civil society organisations are elected or appointed. A great deal of the problem does not only end with the appointment, but how they discharge their fiduciary responsibilities. Poor governance in Lesotho is also a function of weak oversight institutions, which fail to countervail a recalcitrant executive branch. Accountability levels are

weak and low for most organisations or those which are conferred with mandates to lead organisations.

- **Weak Research**

Research and development (R&D) includes activities that companies undertake to innovate and introduce new products and services. Low-income countries like Lesotho invest very little in R&D. This fact poses a profound development mystery, and at the surface, suggests huge missed opportunities. Research is low in Lesotho across the board as even the institutions of higher learning do not conduct research sufficiently. The research that takes place in institutions of higher learning is only limited to academic research. Research for product and service innovation and development is non-existence as the nation is a consumer society not a productive society. There is huge dependency on imports from other countries, predominantly from South Africa. In the micro, small and medium entrepreneur, a large proportion of them are those that mimic others as regards what is already in the market. This is a direct result of weak research.

- **Dearth of dialogue on national issues**

Dialogue is one of the best methods for resolution of national problems. It is the best way for facilitating decision-making that is based on consensus. Dialogue is a primary means of avoiding, or resolving conflict. It broadens debate about a country's trajectory beyond the usual elite decision-makers. Dialogue on national issues allows members of society to participate in the national development agenda of their country. Lesotho has a history of perennial conflict due to a weak dialogue system.

However, there is dearth of debate across the board

on national issues. Dearth of debate and dialogue creates social confusion about the direction that the state is taking as it depends on rumour-mongering. In the absence of dialogue and debate, national political, economic, social and technological issues are not unpacked and unravelled for the benefit of society.

- **Neglected youth**

In terms of demographic distribution, youth in Lesotho constitute more than 50 percent of the country's population. However, they remain the most marginalised groups when it comes to distribution of the national economy. The participation of youth in the national economy and in the political development of the country is minimal, in comparison with men. Benefits that accrue from economic development such as employment opportunities have not been in the favour of youth.

Senior positions have been a preserve for men while youth have had to wait four to five years before they are absorbed into the formal job market. Youth are negatively affected by stringent requirements for five – ten years employment experience before they can be absorbed into the job market. Where do they get this experience if they are not granted opportunities that help them acquire these experiences? Upon completion of their tertiary education, they are often left in a lurch, with no entry points created for them to ply their trade with the professional academic package that they bring from tertiary education institutions, which will in turn prepare them for the more advanced career that requires long years of experience.

The Governance Institute for Sustainable Development is intent to develop strategic initiatives, which empower

people to decisively act towards bringing about change in their lives.

- Promoting dialogue and debates on national issues
- Conducting research on a variety of topics
- Promoting exemplary and inspiring leadership
- Promoting good governance practice within organisations
- Developing youth for change

Who
are we
what do
we do?

Our theory of change

The Governance Institute for Sustainable Development's interventions are framed around the following theory of change or change paradigm:

- ❖ Through **dialogue and debates**, empower citizens to obtain information from those in power to inform their citizen participation in the discourse of development,
- ❖ Through **research and development**, obtain information from various sources, which helps government to make informed development policy decisions for the benefit of the citizens,
- ❖ Through **capacity-building**, create a responsive, ethical, inspirational and exemplary leadership that is a true servant of the people,
- ❖ Through **assessment of good governance savviness of organisations**, promote effective private sector, public sector and civil sector organisations that make and implement effective decisions in line with universally-accepted principles of good governance,
- ❖ Through **capacity-building and empowerment of youth**, create a positive future for the current generation, that plays its role within the development agenda of their country, but with caution not to compromise future generations to meet their own needs and aspirations,

Research & Development

Research helps dig information from various sources, analyse and process it for human consumption, especially by decision-makers, with intent to inform their policy-making decisions so that those are informed by empirical evidence, not by conjecture,

- ❖ *Surveys conducted on a variety of national issues helps bring to the fore, critical information on the actual state of affairs,*
- ❖ *Researches on topical issues help dig and bring to the fore, critical data that policy-makers will use to develop effective and relevant policies for the citizens,*
- ❖ *Publishing of books on a variety of topics goes a long way in promoting the culture of reading within society and in helping shape understanding of certain phenomena,*

Good Governance

Good governance refers to a practice of how decisions are made and how these decisions are implemented to impact positively on those on the receiving end of the services of those in power. A number of societal ills is attributed to a deficiency in the good governance practice.

- ❖ *Constant assessment of private sector, public sector and civil society sector bodies on their compliance with good governance principles will help understand the state of governance in the country,*

- ❖ *Assessment of corporate social investment of the private sector is intended to understand the extent to which private bodies ensure their business proceeds trickle down to benefit society*
- ❖ *Assessment of political parties' internal good governance and democracy, is a pathway towards finding out how those bodies that are entrusted to lead various facets of society fare in terms of building political and democratic governance in their own ranks,*
- ❖ *Undertaking national basket of basic needs, helps underscore the change in the price index of basic needs such as food which is critical for all citizens, especially those who can hardly afford,*

Dialogue & debates on national issues

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- ❖ *Through research and development, obtain information from various sources, which helps government to make informed development policy decisions for the benefit of the citizens,*
- ❖ *Through capacity-building, create a responsive, ethical, inspirational and exemplary leadership that is*

a true servant of the people,

- ❖ *Through **assessment of good governance savviness of organisations**, promote effective private sector, public sector and civil sector organisations that make and implement effective decisions in line with universally-accepted principles of good governance,*
- ❖ *Through **capacity-building and empowerment of youth**, create a positive future for the current generation, that plays its role within the development agenda of their country, but with caution not to compromise future generations to meet their own needs and aspirations,*

Exemplary & inspirational leadership

Responsive, exemplary and inspirational leadership is a catalyst for development of society, especially for succeeding generations, whose survival relies heavily on the actions of the current generation as regards usage and consumption of natural resources. Therefore, there is a missing link in the current leadership, which does not inspire youth and is not exemplary in its actions.

- ❖ *Through **capacity-building of the leadership of the country**, it is hoped that it will acquire leadership skills which can help become a better leadership,*
- ❖ *Through **constant engagement with leadership from various spheres (public, private and civil society as well as religious society)**, there will be*

empowerment of various leaders.

- ❖ *The **future leaders programme** seeks to create a crop of young up-and-coming leaders, who are empowered with training and skills for effective future decision-making,*
- ❖ *The **Agenda 2030 and Leadership programme**, which holds leaders accountable for achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** at a local level,*

Youth development

Youth are normally said to be a future generation, but they are living now, and are also said to be future leaders, but they are not equipped with that leadership fervor which they will unleash in the future.

- ❖ ***Youth for Change Programme:** Selected youth who participate in the programme submit their credentials and are selected on a meritorious basis,*
- ❖ ***Young Turks Development Programme,** is a capacity-building that builds the capacity of youth on a number of selected focus areas, which are viewed as deficient ,*
- ❖ ***The Capacity-building programme,** is intended to develop short courses for that are intended to sharpen skills of young people,*
- ❖ ***The Youth Incubation Programme,** is a six-month programme which incubates youth, developing them on selected skills, mentorship and training programmes,*

Context

- *Sustainable development*

A buzzword that has gained worldwide currency today is attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2030, a long-term project named Agenda 2030. The 15-year journey (2016 – 2030) was a sequel to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is a global agenda intended to address global concerns affecting humanity. Lessons learned from the previous agenda of 2000 – 2015 are that humanity is headed for trouble if drastic but conscious and well-calculated measures are not taken. The world woke up to the realization that the opportunity of future generations to meet their own needs and aspirations is being compromised and threatened by the actions of the current generation. This is with regard to access to immediate needs and also sustainability of planet Earth, which is obviously on the brink. Therefore, countries of the world crafted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to further navigate a solution to the mentioned sustainability challenge.

- *Upholding democratic norms*

On the other hand, democracy has been identified by nations as a way in which countries are ruled and how power is dispensed by those elected to run public affairs on behalf of majority. Democracy is undergirded by a number of selected principles agreed as cardinal tenets of what is democratically-upright. Lesotho, like other nations, has adopted democracy as a way of running its public affairs. Like other countries that purport to be democratic, civil liberties are placed at the coalface of democracy. One of these is the freedom to participate in the democratic discourse by all citizens.

Though the right of the citizens to participate in the democratic discourse of their country is enshrined in the Constitution of the country, there is however dearth of debate on national issues. The two old adages that ‘ignorance is public enemy number one’ of any society and that ‘an informed society is bedrock of a functional democracy ring true for Lesotho.’ After 50 years of political independence, Basotho are still held ransom by lack of enlightenment and the resultant knowledge and information about political, economic, social and socio-economic developments.

- *Public participation through debate and dialogue*

Vibrancy of any democracy is hinged on the ability of a state to grant its citizens the opportunity to participate in the development process of their country. Participation of citizens in the development discourse of their country is a cardinal tenant of good governance and a precondition for a thriving and successful democracy. An inclusive development process is recipe for a fruitful democratic process. Inclusivity through participation of citizens in the development process of the citizens of a country can be achieved by opening platforms for dialogue and debate on political, economic, social, socio-economic, environmental, legal and technological matters that affect them.

Conversely, closed democracies are tyrannical in character and are those which use coercion to compel their citizens to follow through the process of development. But democratic societies are open to internal self-criticism and self-correct, they are open to outside criticism by the ruled and the appreciation of their input and contribution into the development process. The traditional platforms for dialogue and debate on national issues – which are media, are not doing a good job as they have their own partisan interests, which they pursue at the expense of the large society. Media platforms are skewed towards certain political ends and are offset by capacity challenges.

Therefore, there is no robust dialogue and debate on national issues. This is caused mainly by absence of organized forums with a clear purpose of diffusion of information from some sources such as government, the private sector and to a large extent, the civil society sector. The latter has a few platforms, but which are limited by scarce financial resources. As a consequence of the aforementioned, forums which organisations, the government and independent and private agencies create to afford citizens an opportunity to

express their views on national political, economic, social, socio-economic, environmental, legal and technological matters that affect them are a pre-condition for a thriving democracy. In most countries, the right to freedom of expression of opinion is enshrined in the constitutions of such countries. The freedom of expression of opinion is enjoyed by all citizens and in most countries, it emanates from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

Work we have done

CONSULTANCY WORK	ORGNISATION/COMPANY/AGENCY	YEAR
Consolidation of public inputs into reforms for the National Leadership Forum and the Second National Multi-Stakeholder Plenaries	National Dialogue Planning Committee (NDPC)	2019
Development and presentation of a position paper on the multi-sector reforms from the media sector's point of view	MISA-Lesotho	2019
Development and presentation of a lobby Paper for engagement of various stakeholders on the multi-sector reforms	MISA-Lesotho	2019
Sensitisation of Lesotho media reforms through engagement of various stakeholders on the proposed multi-sector reforms	MISA-Lesotho/Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa	2020
Development of a Resource Mobilisation Strategy	MISA-Lesotho	2020
Development and presentation of a Position Paper on the Lesotho Communication Authority Internet Broadcasting Rules	MISA-Lesotho	2020
Facilitation and development of a Strategic Plan 2021-2023 and three-year Operational Plan	MISA-Lesotho	2020

Researches and surveys

RESEARCH	TYPE OF RESEARCH	STATUS OF RESEARCH
Survey on the impact of COVID-19 on households , especially during the lockdowns regarding family livelihoods, family incomes and alternative family livelihoods	A qualitative study of the change made by the Good Samaritans' helping hand to families with food hand-outs	2020
A study on the impact of COVID-19 on business during lockdowns, focusing on micro, small and medium enterprises which were forced to close shop as a result of lockdowns or those that remained in business because they dealt in essential services.	A rough sketch of the positive impact of COVID-19 on the businesses that innovatively identified business opportunities during the lockdowns and afterwards	2020
Tracing Lesotho's political trajectory since independence	A qualitative analysis of Lesotho political landscape since independence	2020

Presentations

PRESENTATION	ORGNISATION/COMPANY/AGENCY	YEAR
Development and presentation of a position paper on the multi-sector reforms from the media sector's point of view	MISA-Lesotho	2020

Development and presentation of a lobby Paper for engagement of various stakeholders on the multi-sector reforms	MISA-Lesotho	2020
Sensitisation of Lesotho media reforms through engagement of various stakeholders on the proposed multi-sector reforms	MISA-Lesotho/Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa	2020
Development of a Resource Mobilisation Strategy	MISA-Lesotho	2020

Work in progress

PROJECT	ORGANISATION/COMPANY/AGENCY	YEAR
Assessment of Corporate Social Investment portfolios of companies	15 companies are participating in this assessment. Report to be released in November 2020	2020
Assessment of good governance score-cards of public, private and civil society organisations in Lesotho	20 public, private and civil society organisations are participating in this assessment. Report to be released in November 2020	2020
Assessment of corporate government in public, private and civil society organisations in Lesotho	20 public, private and civil society organisations are participating in this assessment. Report to be released in December 2020	2020
Research on the social impact of COVID-19 on Basotho since lockdowns were introduced	2, 400 respondents are participating in this research	2020
Book to be published: Tracing Lesotho's political trajectory since independence	40 respondents are participating in this research	2020
Designing and developing a Civil Society Information Service, which is a repository of advocacy and lobbying activities of civil society organisations in Lesotho and their impact on changing the lives of the downtrodden, the poor, marginalised and the voiceless	2, 400 respondents are participating in this research	2020