

Social Protection for Children

Brief
Lesotho 2023

Globally, it is well documented that children often bear the burden of poverty and that poor children are frequently left behind when it comes to fulfilling their rights. Child poverty limits children's access to vital resources, including nutrition, healthcare, education, social services and WASH, which prevents them from achieving their full potential. The CRC entitles children to an adequate standard of living, reiterating that growing up poor violates their rights and highlights multiple dimensions of well-being related to survival, development, protection and participation.²

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 focuses on ending poverty in all forms everywhere.³ This SDG is based upon a recognition of the transient nature of monetary poverty and the multi-dimensional nature of poverty (i.e., linkages among deprivations). In other words, growing up in poverty has detrimental impacts

on the physical, emotional and social development of children, which threatens their life chances and increases their risks of inter-generational poverty.⁴

Poverty

Poverty is at the heart of a considerable amount of vulnerability, social discrimination and exclusion. Households with inadequate income are more vulnerable to changing economic, social and environmental circumstances, and reduced income-earning potential. People in poverty also tend to live in inadequate and unsanitary housing, in less desirable neighbourhoods, which are especially vulnerable to weather-related damage. The poor are also more likely to live in communities which can be unsafe environments for children. Poverty has persistently been high in Lesotho.⁵

MPI for Lesotho (based upon 2018 survey data)		
	Lesotho	Sub-Saharan Africa
MPI value	0.084	0.286
Population in multidimensional poverty		
Headcount (%)	19.6	53.4
Intensity of deprivation (%)	43.0	53.5
In severe multidimensional poverty	5.0	30.9
Vulnerable to multidimensional poverty	28.6	18.7
Population living below monetary poverty line		
National poverty line	49.7	41.1
PPP \$1.90 a day	27.2	41.1

Source United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) & Oxford Poverty & Health Development Initiative (OPHI) (2022). Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Unpacking deprivation bundles to reduce multidimensional poverty. UNDP & OPHI: New York, NY, USA.

*The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2022*⁶ uses the most recent comparable data available for 111 countries to estimate multiple overlapping deprivations suffered by individuals on three dimensions – health, education and standard of living. Based upon 2018 data, it was estimated that 19.6% of the population are multidimensionally poor and 5.0% are in severe multidimensional poverty, and 28.6% are vulnerable to multidimensional poverty.⁷ Moreover, 49.7% of the population lives below the national poverty line and 27.2% live below the poverty line of PPP \$1.90 a day. Based upon these data, Lesotho's MPI is 0.084.⁸ Lesotho's MPI value is significantly lower than the MPI value of 0.286 for Sub-Saharan Africa, where an estimated 53.4% of the population are multidimensionally poor and 31% are in severe multidimensional poverty.⁹ In Lesotho, standard of living (60%) most often contributes to overall multidimensional poverty, compared to health (22%) and education (18%).

In 2019, a new Lesotho Poverty Assessment¹⁰ found that poverty fell over a 15-year period from 56.6% in 2002 to 49.7% in 2017, but remains widespread with nearly half of the population living in poverty and 75% being

either poor or vulnerable to poverty.¹¹ Reductions in poverty were driven by a reduction in inequality as a result of expansion of the country's social protection programmes and an increase in wage incomes among the poor. Still, however, poverty, economic vulnerability and inequality remain high in Lesotho due to disparities in wage gaps and access to quality basic services.¹²

In Lesotho, poverty levels tend to be highest among people living in rural areas, female-headed households, less educated, unemployed, large families and children. While urban areas experienced a 13-percentage point reduction in poverty from 41.5% in 2002 to 28.5% in 2017, the proportion of poor remained largely unchanged in rural area (61.3% in 2002 and 60.7% in 2017). In the rural highlands, poverty actually increased by 11-percentage points from 56.9% in 2002 to 67.8% in 2017.¹³ Slow growth in agricultural incomes, a fall in remittances and weather shocks stalled progress in reducing poverty rates in rural areas.¹⁴

Despite reductions in the national poverty rate over time, many Basotho children and adolescents are still living in multidimensional poverty. Child poverty is a

problem which experts have given much attention to because it threatens the future of national economic and social development objectives. In 2021, UNICEF and the Lesotho Bureau of Statistics produced the *Lesotho 2021 Multidimensional Child Poverty Report*¹⁵ based on multidimensional overlapping deprivation analysis (MODA) using data from the 2018 MICS.¹⁶

In 2018, Lesotho's National MODA (N-MODA) revealed that 45.5% of children aged 0-17 were multidimensionally poor (down from 65.3% in 2014). Infants 0-23 months (68.8%) were nearly twice as likely to be affected by poverty than children aged 5-12 years (38.2%); only 5.4% of children aged 0-17 suffered no deprivations.¹⁷

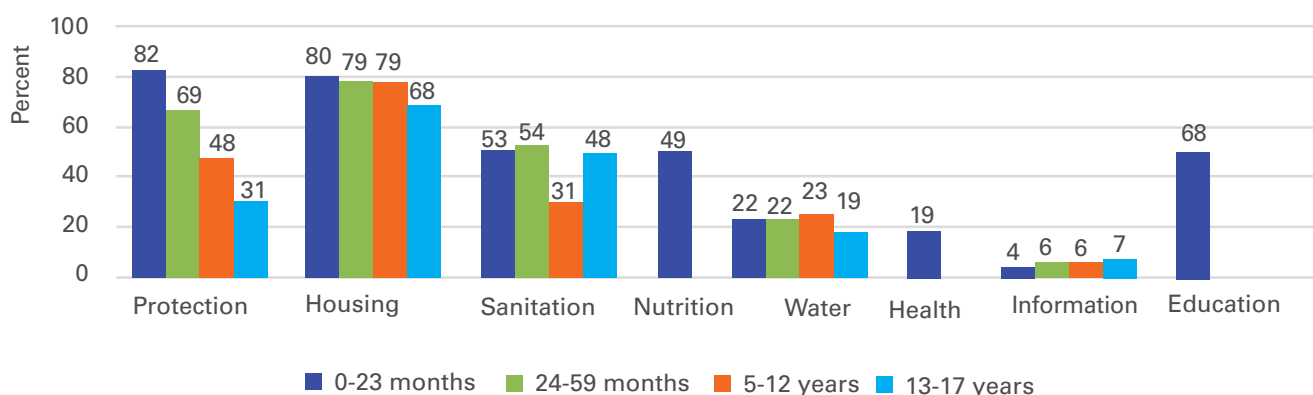
Multidimensional child poverty is higher in rural areas (31.1%) than urban areas (52.5%), and higher in Senqu River Valley (63.3%) and the mountains (59.0%), than in the foothills (48.8%) and lowlands (36.8%).¹⁸ These findings are likely grounded in the fact that rural areas are often characterized as mountainous and lacking basic services, with populations that hold deeply engrained patriarchal and cultural beliefs.¹⁹ The highest rates of multidimensional child poverty were found in Thaba Tseka (65.4%) and Mokhotlong (63.8%), followed by Qacha's Nek (54.2%) and Quthing (51%), and lowest in Botha-Bothe (37.8%) and Leribe (37.8%).²⁰

In Lesotho, child poverty is closely associated with the socio-economic characteristics of households. Multidimensional child poverty is higher in households where the head of household is male with either no education or only a primary education, and households with seven or more members and five or more children. As education levels of household heads increase, multidimensional child poverty decreases.²¹

Multidimensional child poverty rates, 2018	
	Percent
National	45.5
Area	
Urban	31.1
Rural	52.5
Ecological zone	
Lowlands	36.8
Foothills	48.8
Mountains	59.0
Senqu River Valley	63.3
District	
Botha-Bothe	37.8
Leribe	37.8
Berea	41.4
Maseru	44.9
Mafeteng	45.6
Mohale's Hoek	49.4
Quthing	51.0
Qacha's Nek	54.2
Mokhotlong	63.8
Thaba-Tseka	65.4

Source: UNICEF & Lesotho BOS (2021). Lesotho 2021 Multidimensional Child Poverty: Report Highlights. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho, p. 4..

National child deprivation headcount ratio by dimensions and age groupings (%), 2018



Source: UNICEF & Lesotho BOS (2021). Lesotho 2021 Multidimensional Child Poverty: Report Highlights. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho, pp. 4-6

In terms of the eight dimensions that contribute to multidimensional poverty for children, protection and housing contributes the most to multidimensional poverty for young children 0-59 months and primary school-aged children aged 5-12 years; whereas housing, education and sanitation contribute the most to multidimensional poverty for adolescents aged 13-17 years. More specifically, among children 0-23 months, deprivation in the dimension of protection from violence stemmed from a lack of birth registration (73% of children had no birth registration), and 41% lived in a households where domestic violence was accepted/condoned.²² As it relates to the housing dimension, 60%

of children 0-23 months lived in households that lacked access to electricity, 47% in overcrowded households (three or more members per bedroom), and 25% in households that used unimproved cooking fuel.²³ As it relates to the nutrition dimension, 40% of children 0-23 months were deprived of meals and 8% lacked of exclusive breastfeeding for children younger than six months.²⁴

Lesotho's N-MODA findings led to a set of policy recommendations related to each of the eight dimensions.

Policies that can reduce child multidimensional poverty

Based upon MODA findings related to child multidimensional poverty, policy recommendations offered included:

- **Housing** – Key to improving children's nutrition, health and learning outcomes is to accelerate access to grid and off-grid electricity, especially in the highlands and foothills.
- **Nutrition** – The GoL should increase investment in the implementation of the Lesotho Food and Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan which includes 22 nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, and 18 interventions related to creating an enabling environment.
- **Water** – Accelerating efforts to improve access to safe water is essential to ensure that children have clean drinking water in or close to their households.
- **Sanitation** – Ending open defecation in rural areas should be a top priority as it has a substantial impact on several other outcomes, including nutrition, health and human dignity, and a move toward safely managed sanitation, especially in rural areas, is crucial.
- **Protection** – Further the expansion of automatic birth registration in hospitals and health centres and raise awareness that parents should register their children at birth.
- **Education** – Focus on strengthening the pre-school system, promoting parental engagement in early childhood education (ECE), providing learning materials beyond textbooks and rolling out teacher professional development.
- **Expand the Child Grant Programme** – Maintain and expand the Child Grant Programme that focuses on young children and their specific needs in the first 1,000 days of life.

Source: UNICEF & Lesotho BOS (2021). Lesotho 2021 Multidimensional Child Poverty: Report Highlights. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho, p. 6.

Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic had a considerable impact on employment and unemployment at the national level, as public health and containment measures aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19 resulted in closures of most businesses and suspension of domestic and

international transport services. During the pandemic, many households experienced a rapid income decline, which increased their vulnerabilities to poverty. Poverty was projected to increase by an estimated 1.2 to 1.9 percentage points, or 2.9% in a worst-case scenario.²⁵ The most significant increase in poverty was expected in the Senqu River Valley and the mountainous areas where poverty was projected to rise by 3 percentage

points respectively. The impact was also predicted to be higher on already vulnerable groups, and to disproportionately affect women.²⁶

The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), through funding support from the 11th European Development Fund, designed a six-month emergency response initiative called the European Union (EU) COVID-19 Response Emergency Cash Transfer Project, which was designed to run from December 2020 to May 2021, and provided unconditional cash transfers to affected households. The project planned to support 56,944 beneficiary households, of which 50,000 were under vertical expansion in 10 districts and 6,944 were newly enrolled beneficiary households under horizontal expansion in Mafeteng, Mophale's Hoek and Qutha's Nek.²⁷

An assessment of the COVID-19 Emergency Cash Transfer Response Project found that the COVID-19 emergency cash transfer top-up had a significant impact on livelihoods of beneficiaries and food security, as there was improved purchasing power and improved access to food (number of meals per day and consumption of nutrient-rich food items). After beneficiaries received cash transfer top-ups their level of affordability increased and they stopped engaging in negative coping mechanisms, as they stopped begging for food and borrowing from neighbours.²⁸

One of the lessons learned during the pandemic is that timing is crucial in emergency programmes. Any significant delays in programme commencement and implementation can jeopardize the accomplishment of all time-sensitive indicators. This requires all relevant stakeholders to work together for more rapid decision-making and emergency response planning. Another lesson learned was that more beneficiaries could be reached with emergency cash top-ups, proper community mobilization and clear messaging, especially at the district level. Proper community mobilization and clear messaging about cash transfer top-ups and enrolment can also boost the attendance of beneficiaries at payment points.²⁹ Other lessons learned were that: digital payments remain the greatest way to guarantee contactless payments, transparent user-friendly and timely delivery of cash transfers to beneficiaries, even in the most remote areas; food consumption takes up a larger share of vulnerable households' income in both urban and rural areas; and the most effective way to protect vulnerable households against unexpected shock is through cash transfers.³⁰

Social Protection

Social protection is a right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and recognized in Article 26 of the CRC, where it states that every child has a right to social security. Social protection is concerned with preventing, managing and overcoming situations that adversely affect people's well-being. Social protection consists of policies and programmes designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labour markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks and enhancing their capacities to manage economic and social risks (e.g., unemployment, exclusion, disability). Social protection includes social assistance (cash transfers), social insurance (health insurance), and employment and educational support that can reduce child poverty and improve families' and children's access to nutritious and sufficient food, healthcare and education, and improve the overall physical, emotional and social development of a child.³¹ Well-designed social protection and assistance systems contribute to the principles of 'leave no one behind' and 'reach the furthest behind'.³²

The historical context of social assistance in Lesotho traces its development from a social welfare approach to a more integrated and comprehensive social protection strategy. In 2012, Lesotho's National Strategic Development Plan I (NSDP I) 2012/13 – 2016/17 introduced the need for a more comprehensive social protection policy to achieve National Vision 2020 goals to reduce poverty and achieve.³³ In 2015, Lesotho launched the first National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS), in an effort to strengthen implementation of the National Policy on Social Development (NPSD). The NPSD provided a broad framework for development and implementation of a harmonized and coordinated social protection agenda to ensure that programmes implemented by both governmental and non-governmental agencies were complementary to each other for sustainable development of vulnerable populations.³⁴

More recently, the GoL launched National Social Protection Strategy II (NSPS II), 2021-2031, which envisions a decent and dignified life for all Basotho, free from poverty and hunger, that allows them to share in the benefits of national economic growth, with the objectives to: expand core social protection programmes that provide relief from deprivation for poor and vulnerable households; strengthen the preventative, promotive, transformative and shock-responsive capabilities of social protection by creating

synergies between programmes through strong cross-sector coordination; and Innovate and harmonise implementation systems for efficient, effective and accountable delivery of social protection programme.³⁵ The NSPS II presents an implementation plan structure around the lifecycle approach, subdivided into five life cycle stages (pregnancy and early childhood, school-age children, youth, working-age population, old age population) and two risk and vulnerability factors that can impact citizens at any life cycle stage (disability and shock).³⁶

Social Assistance

Lesotho has six core social assistance programmes, of which five are sensitive or responsive to the needs of children, adolescents and/or youth, to some extent.

Public Assistance Programme (PAP) – The PAP aims to provide relief during shocks, but many recipients in the PAP will go on to participate in the cash transfer programme which aims to address year-round vulnerability and poverty. In 2020, the PAP covered an estimated 12,710 persons. Eligibility for the PAP are loosely defined, which has led to inefficiencies in the application process. Although the PAP is not necessarily efficient, it is still an important social assistance programme for poor and vulnerable children in urban areas where the CGP has not yet been expanded.

Child Grant Programme (CGP) – The CGP was launched in 2005-2006, as a joint initiative of the EU, UNICEF and the GoL, in response to the devastating impacts of HIV/AIDS on children and families, and to respond to the growing number of orphaned and vulnerable children, which had reached about 180,000 due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In general, the CGP aimed to combat poverty, food insecurity and the escalating HIV epidemic. More specifically, the CGP aimed to provide resources to support orphaned and vulnerable children to cope with the loss of their parent(s) and access essential services, as well as to acquire skills and achieve food security.

Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Bursary – The Bursary offers funding to economic disadvantage families to support their children's secondary education; in particular, it aims to cover school tuition, books and boarding fees. Challenges exist with the application process and loose eligibility criteria have resulted in inclusion errors (i.e., children who should not have benefited from the Bursary have benefits from the Bursary).

Disability Grant - In 2020, the GoL piloted the Disability Grant in Butha Buthe, which was supporting 222 persons with disabilities (i.e., persons with disabilities received LSL 400 on a quarterly basis from the grant). The pilot was set to expand to other provinces with the aim of providing support to persons with disabilities who are unable to work. In 2021, the GoL enacted the Disability Equity Act in response to a growing focus on the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. The Act established a Persons with Disability Advisory Council and emphasized the establishment of a Disability Public Fund to support programmes and services for persons with disabilities, including grants for persons with severe disabilities.

Public Works Initiative – The Integrated Watershed Management Programme see to address poverty and land degradation through environmental conservation works in exchange for a cash transfer. Despite its application of 0.5% of the GDP in 2020, it was deemed inefficient and ineffective, with limited sustainable positive impact.

The National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) was established to effectively identify and categorize eligible households for targeted assistance. In later phases of the CGP, particularly Phase III, 2015-2022, the programme shifted focus towards creating an integrated and child-sensitive social protection system. Despite progress made, challenge persisted, emphasizing the need for sustained partnerships and investments. Past and present evaluations have demonstrated the effectiveness of the grant as a safety net for food security. Still, however, there is a need to enhance the transfer value and expand coverage to reach more children, especially in urban areas where the CGP could expand for lack of liquidity.³⁷

School Feeding Programme

In 2022, Lesotho's School Feeding Programme (SFP), aimed at providing decent meals to vulnerable children in Lesotho's primary schools, was on the verge of collapse after the government failed to pay suppliers. The SFP was introduced in 2016, with support from the World Food Programme (WFP). Since its inception, the SFP had become an integral part of the school system in Lesotho and has helped to keep vulnerable children in primary schools while fighting hunger. The SFP provides many children in primary schools with their only source of a decent meal and an incentive to attend classes consistently, and has helped to reduce the financial burden on parents who are already struggling to feed

their families. Over the past two decades, the SFP has helped to keep students in the education system.

With the SFP at risk of collapsing, it was evident that the gains achieved in the education sector over the past two decades would be lost, that students would drop out of school, and the impact of poverty on children would be further exasperated. In November 2022, the WFP, with USD 1.7 million in funding from the Government of Japan, supported the provision of two nutritious meals each school day to some 50,000 pre-primary school learners in early child care and development (ECCD) centres and 12-months of training for 300 smallholder farmers in the Mafeteng's Hoek and Quthing regions on food preservation, processing, packaging, pricing and marketing techniques. This funding allowed for the

continuation of a Japan-backed project, initiated in 2019, where the WFP helps to strengthen the capacities of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) to facilitate the provision of nutritious foods in ECCDs.³⁸ The WFP reported in the 1st quarter of 2023, deliveries of meals were made to 2,400 ECCD Centres across the country's 10 districts. Depending upon availability of resources, learners received two meals a day – a breakfast meal of high nutritious super cereal plus and a lunch time meal of maize meal pap, canned fish and pulses or vegetables from school gardens.³⁹ Data reveals, however, that not all primary schools are able to provide primary school-age children with a breakfast and lunch time meal due to a lack of resources and insufficient supply chains for the SFP.

Voices of young peoples (10-24 years) –SFPs in secondary schools^a

In Mafeteng and Mokhotlong, young people spoke about the need for SFPs in secondary schools because by grade 8, students no longer benefit from SFP. Given the high poverty rate, many households are food insecure, which means they lack reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable and nutritious foods. In Lesotho, the SFP which has helped to improve children's attendance at school and their access to nutrient-rich foods that support their growth and development has been limited to ECCD Centres and primary school students. The lack of SFPs in secondary schools means that adolescents attend school hungry; this severely impacts students' abilities to concentrate and learn, which in turn has negative consequences on their learning outcomes. Secondary students are also less inclined to show up for school if there are no food services. Given that adolescents need nutritious foods to reach their full potential, young people wanted to see the SFP in secondary schools.

^a Information presented were gathered during consultations with 166 young people in four districts.

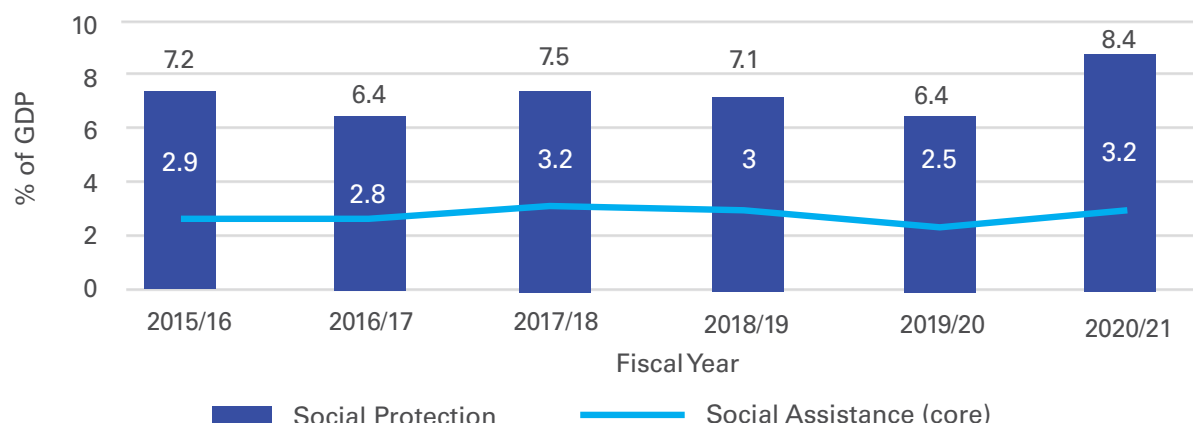
Tertiary Bursary Scheme

The Tertiary Bursary Scheme is among one of the largest cash transfer programmes in Lesotho. The Tertiary Bursary Scheme covers education costs for tertiary students. This scheme has often been criticized for benefiting youth from households whose economic situations are better-off than not (i.e., lacking financial sustainability).⁴⁰

Social Protection Public Expenditures

In Lesotho, social protection spending increased from 7.2% of the GDP in fiscal year (FY) 2015/16 to 8.4% of the GDP in FY 2020/21; whereas social assistance spending increased from 2.9% of the GDP in FY 2015/16 to 3.2% of the GDP in FY 2020/21. More specific, the budget allocated to social protection increased to Maluti (M) 2.84 billion in FY 2020/21; an increase of 27.3% from M 2.15 billion in FY 2019/20. This increase reflects the GoL's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the overall purchasing power of the social protection budget was expected to be maintained, purchase power for cash transfers declined due to rising prices of essential goods due to the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation.⁴¹

Social protection public expenditures (% of GDP) in Lesotho, 2015/16 – 2020/21



Source: UNICEF (2021). Social Protection Budget Brief 2020/2021. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho

Conclusions

The government and development partners would benefit from a much deeper dive into understanding **how to build better partnerships for smart planning, problem-solving and innovation** to accelerate results for children, adolescent and youth in the areas of social protection and assistance, and poverty reduction. This requires a focus on multidimensional child poverty⁴²

and effective policies and programmes that alleviate children's deprivations and achieve sustainable poverty eradication via cash transfers, CGP, SFPs and other social safety net programmes. There are also notable data gaps, including lack of timely data on child poverty, particularly the situation of child poverty following the COVID-19 pandemic, including contributions of deprivations to overall multidimensional poverty in Lesotho.

For more data and information see: UNICEF (2024). Situation Analysis on Children, Adolescents and Youth in the Kingdom of Lesotho. UNICEF: Maseru: Lesotho.



Endnotes

¹ This research brief was written by Dr. Robin Haarr, PhD, UNICEF Senior Consultant, and is based upon UNICEF's 2023 Situation Analysis of Children, Adolescents and Youth in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

² Retrieved on 11 January 2023 from: [Child poverty | UNICEF](#)

³ Retrieved on 11 January 2023 from: [Goal 1: No Poverty - The Global Goals](#)

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Retrieved on 5 March 2023 from: [Lesotho Poverty Assessment: Poverty and Inequality Remain Widespread Despite Decline \(worldbank.org\)](#)

⁶ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) & Oxford Poverty & Health Development Initiative (OPHI) (2022). *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Unpacking deprivation bundles to reduce multidimensional poverty*. UNDP & OPHI: New York, NY, USA. Retrieved from 7 January 2023 from: [2022 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index \(MPI\) | Human Development Reports \(undp.org\)](#)

⁷ Ibid, 2022, p. 32.

⁸ The MPI is the share of the population that is multidimensionally poor, adjusted by the intensity of the deprivation.

⁹ UNDP & OPHI (2022). *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Unpacking deprivation bundles to reduce multidimensional poverty*. UNDP & OPHI: New York, NY, USA.

¹⁰ World Bank & Lesotho BOS (2019). *Lesotho Poverty Assessment: Progress and challenges in reducing poverty*. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank: Washington, DC, USA.

¹¹ Lesotho Reduces Poverty, but Nearly Half of the Population Remains Poor. The World Bank, 18 December 2019. Retrieved on 7 January 2023 from: [Lesotho Reduces Poverty, but Nearly Half of the Population Remains Poor \(worldbank.org\)](#); see also, World Bank & Lesotho BOS (2019). *Lesotho Poverty Assessment: Progress and challenges in reducing poverty*. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank: Washington, DC, USA.

¹² Ibid, 2019; Ibid, 2019..

¹³ Ibid; Ibid, 2019.

¹⁴ Lesotho Poverty Assessment: Poverty and Inequality Remain Widespread Despite Decline. The World Bank, 18 December 2019. Retrieved on 7 January 2023 from: [Lesotho Poverty Assessment: Poverty and Inequality Remain Widespread Despite Decline \(worldbank.org\)](#)

¹⁵ UNICEF & Lesotho BOS (2021). *Lesotho 2021 Multidimensional Child Poverty*. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho,

¹⁶ The multidimensional overlapping deprivation analysis (MODA) in Lesotho focused on eight dimensions, with some dimensions measured at the household level and some at the child level. Four of the eight adopted dimensions (e.g., water, sanitation, housing and access to information) are measured at the household level, meaning that they affect all household members equally, regardless of age. The other four dimensions are measured at

the child level, according to age specific indicators. A child is considered multidimensionally poor if they are simultaneously deprived in three or more dimensions. In the calculation of multidimensional poverty status, all dimensions have equal weight, as there is no trade-off between the rights of a child. See UNICEF & Lesotho BOS (2021). *Lesotho 2021 Multidimensional Child Poverty: Report Highlights*. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho, p. 2.

¹⁷ Ibid, 2021, p. 2.

¹⁸ Ibid, 2021, pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ Ibid, 2021, pp. 3-4.

²⁰ Ibid, 2021, pp. 3-4.

²¹ Ibid, 2021, pp. 4.

²² UNICEF & Lesotho BOS (2021). *Lesotho 2021 Multidimensional Child Poverty: Report Highlights*. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho, pp. 23-24

²³ Ibid, 2021, pp. 23-24.

²⁴ Ibid, 2021, pp. 23-24.

²⁵ World Bank Group & UN Lesotho (2020). *Assessment of the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Kingdom of Lesotho*. UNDP: Maseru, Lesotho, pp. 13-14.

²⁶ Ibid, 2020, pp. 13-14.

²⁷ Ministry of Social Development (2021). *COVID-19 Emergency Cash Transfer Response Project Lesotho – December 2020 – October 2021*. Ministry of Social Development: Maseru, Lesotho/

²⁸ Ibid, 2021.

²⁹ Ibid, 2021.

³⁰ Ibid, 2021.

³¹ Retrieved on 11 January 2023 from: [Social protection | UNICEF](#)

³² Retrieved on 11 January 2023 from: [Social protection | UNICEF](#)

³³ UNICEF (2020). *Social Protection Sector Review*. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho

³⁴ Retrieved on 29 September 2023 from: [Lesotho's National Social Protection Strategy | socialprotection.org](#)

³⁵ Ibid, p. 13.

³⁶ Retrieved on 29 September 2023 from: [National Social Protection Strategy II.pdf \(socialdevelopment.gov.ls\)](#)

³⁷ Ibid, 2020

³⁸ M30 million for Lesotho's school feeding support. Africa, 25 November 2022 from: [M30 million for Lesotho's school feeding support - Lesotho \(africa-press.net\)](#)

³⁹ WFP Lesotho Country Brief, January 2023. Retrieved on 2 May 2023 from: [WFP Lesotho Country Brief, January 2023 - Lesotho | ReliefWeb](#)

⁴⁰ UNICEF (2020). *Social Protection in Lesotho Sector Review*. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho

⁴¹ UNICEF (2021). *UNICEF Social Protection Budget Brief 2020/2021*. UNICEF: Maseru, Lesotho.

⁴² Multidimensional child poverty defines children who experience a state of poverty that is more complex than that defined by a unidimensional measure of poverty, but encompasses child material needs

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