

Mr. Secretary General,

it is my honor to submit the 2013 Annual Report on behalf of the Delivering as One United Nations System in the Kingdom of Lesotho (GoL).

The overall development situation in Lesotho 2013 is that of continued socio-economic challenges including unemployment, food and nutrition insecurity, and slow progress on most MDGs, especially HIV and AIDS, in the context a fragile state due to the learning curve faced by a first time coalition government.

In terms of political challenges, coalition parties (three in Lesotho) struggled to form a cohesive government and to establish their "modus operandi" for coalition governance. This negatively affected the GoL's ability to deliver reforms and services in 2013. While there have been signs of good governance, such as processing of high-profile corruption cases and initiation of a performance management system for the public sector as well as decentralisation policy formulation, major public sector and decentralization reforms are needed and yet to be realised.

In terms of economic growth, Lesotho's GDP grew by 4.3 % (0.6 percentage point increase on previous year), but it still fell short of the anticipated 5% annual target. This growth was mostly driven by increased mining and construction activities, which can be sustained for the medium term but may not generate new productive sectors in the long run. Manufacturing remained the top contributor to economic growth at 14% of GDP.

One of the major socio-economic challenges in 2013 continued to be unemployment at 25.3% among adults and youth ages 15 to 35 years being the most acutely affected at 30.5%.

Early 2013 Lesotho was hit again by a climate change-induced drought that resulted in severe food insecurity [725,000, or nearly 50% of the population in late 2012 into the first quarter of 2013 faced some degree of hunger]. The annual crop assessment estimated that another 220,000 people would be affected by food shortages during the last quarter of 2013. While an US\$38 million flash appeal was fully funded (over US\$40 million), it has become clear that the issues are systemic, and adaptation to climate change, as well as disaster risk management need a longer-term sustainable approach. Environmental degradation and related resilience continued to be a serious issue, and the impact of climate change (CC) manifested in consecutive annual droughts led to the above-mentioned food security crisis affecting nearly half of the total population.

Despite these challenges, fiscal stability improved. While the GoL was faced with low net foreign reserves and continued exposure to the volatility of the South African Custom Union (SACU) revenue, prudence in the fiscal policy application has led to a surplus, largely due to improvement in revenue performance and expenditure rationalization under the on-going fiscal consolidation program.

On human development, Lesotho increased its HDI ranking slightly (0.3% annually since 1980), but it still remains in the low human development category (158th place with 0.461 HDI in 2012). Only two of the MDGs are on track (Education and Gender Equality but both will require attention to stay on track); 57.3% of the population still lives below the poverty line (US\$1.25 per day), average life expectancy stands at 48.2 years, and despite large investment by the UN and other donors, child mortality and maternal health significantly worsened and HIV/AIDS prevalence did not improve, with Lesotho remaining 3rd highest in prevalence globally. Lesotho remains among the top end countries on education with a literacy rate of 92.8%, as well as on gender equality with a consistently higher ratio of girls to boys at all levels of education. The country's ranking by the 2013 Global Gender Gap report of World Economic Forum is 16 out of 135 countries representing a slippage of two positions compared to the 2012 report because of a decrease on the female labour force participation indicator and a small drop on the wage equality for similar work indicator.

This year was also significant for the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). After an extended period of having three (out of seven) resident agencies represented by representatives a.i, a fully established team of agency representatives will be starting joint UNCT work in 2014, with six out of seven agencies having new representatives.

## Summary on progress towards UNDAF outcomes

**Outcome 1: *By 2017, public and private institutions promote increased investments, manufacturing, trade and financial services and create decent employment in an inclusive and sustainable manner.***

The Lesotho investment climate has been improved in two ways. Through the particular efforts of the UN, a draft National Investment Policy has been developed. The policy addresses the country's capacity to compete internationally, to safeguard essential national interests and to promote its products as well as the country as an investment attraction. Secondly, a draft of the National Inclusive Finance Strategy is available with GoL. It is pending Cabinet approval given that a comprehensive Financial Sector Development Policy is being drafted.

In pursuance of the UNDAF, UN has commenced the process of developing a project on youth and women employment to address the current gap in skills and opportunities for value chain development. Youth empowerment has been singled out to be one with the potential to bring about transformative change in the economy and polity of the country. Given the lack of evidence base in the country a comprehensive youth survey has been conducted, which in turn informs the development of the National Human Development Report on Youth.

**Outcome 2: *By 2017, National institutions (public and private) deliver quality services for increased agricultural growth and food security.***

Recognizing the vulnerability of the rural communities to food and nutrition insecurity, the UN system continues to implement programs that seek to improve direct access to food and production inputs to the most vulnerable segments of the population through their various emergency response programme portfolios. In the agriculture sector the UN system has facilitated access to production inputs in the form of seeds and fertilizers across the entire country. This support was accompanied by training of 530 agricultural extension officers and 600 lead farmers on the most appropriate production technologies. Key technologies advocated under this support are conservation agriculture and improved homestead vegetable production techniques. In addition, the UN system provided direct access to food for 170 000 beneficiaries through food for assets and cash for assets programs. The work entailed putting soil erosion control structures, reseeding degraded rangelands, planting trees and removing invader plants (shrubs).

In support of the NSDP endeavor to transform agriculture to a growth generator, the UN system has been instrumental in supporting the development of the Phytosanitary Policy and Legislative framework.

In addition the UN system has also been involved in facilitating access to finance 30 agri-business Farmers in four districts in intensive livestock and horticulture production. Further, through the climate smart agriculture production 40 greenhouses were given to horticulture farmers the initiative is expected to increase the national horticulture output and improve the incomes of beneficiary farmers by protecting their produce from the perils of weather and climate while also making efficient use of the limiting resources such as water and land.

**Outcome 3 & 4: *By 2017, national and local governance structures deliver quality and accessible services to all citizens respecting the protection of human rights & access to justice, and peaceful resolution of conflict. By 2017, national and lower level institutions make evidence based policy decisions.***

As part of efforts to strengthen the capacity of key national governance and democratic institutions, the UN supported development and implementation of case management system for the Office of Ombudsman. This has resulted in efficient and speedy resolution of reported cases. In addition, an investigations procedures manual has been developed and is currently being used by investigators to conduct field inspections. The report on the implementation of the manual was made available in December 2013.

The UN has provided support in the development of guidelines for translation and interpretation of parliament Standing Orders. This has resulted in increased understanding of parliamentary procedures and also enhanced the quality of parliamentary debates demonstrated by a significant shift from discussion of mundane issues to issues of national importance. An orientation manual for new members of parliament was developed.

In an attempt to ensure direct financial resource flow to local authorities, the UN supported the drafting of the development fund training manual including minimum conditions and performance indicators. These will be used to build the capacity of local authorities in financial management for effective service delivery.

The UN has also contributed towards strengthening the capacity of national institutions for promotion of gender equality and reduction of gender based violence. Support was provided for the preparation and submission of the report on the concluding remarks made by the CEDAW committee following the submission of state party report in 2010. In addition, 10 community based GBV networks have been established in four community councils with 200 network members trained on gender, HIV and AIDS and human rights issues. The UN provided technical support to the Human Rights Unit leading to the development of Human Rights Bill.

**Outcome 5: *By 2017, learners at ECCD and Primary levels have equitable access to quality and relevant education***

Under the IECCD the aim is to improve access to quality of ECD services throughout the country by the end of 2017. The UN system supported the development of the ECCD policy that will provide guidelines in the implementation of quality ECD services, and formed a platform for effective monitoring and evaluation. A total of 296 ECCD teachers were trained.

In an effort to improve access to quality of basic education, a number of milestones have been realized. (1) There has been an increase in net enrolment from 80.9% from 2009 to 81% in 2013 (2) The percentage of qualified teachers in primary schools increased from 58% in 2011 to 68% in 2012 which is higher than the 2013 target of 66%. (3) The increase in the proportion of qualified teachers leads to improved pupil-qualified teacher ratio from 100 pupils per qualified teacher to some 50 pupils / qualified teacher at all levels.

The UN system is also supporting the Non-Formal Education for herd boys in order to bridge the gender imbalance in access to education in Lesotho. Boys, especially in poorer mountainous areas are employed from a young age onwards to herd cattle. In addition, the UN system also supported Ministry of Education and Technology in improving capacity of learning centers, through enhanced curriculum, training of 305 teachers (260 teachers received an upgrade of their training and 45 new teachers were trained) and the production of teaching materials for NFE. As a result of this support about 5 000 youth, mainly herd boys are accessing alternative primary education, with, for some, a link to the formal educational system.

**Outcome 6: *By 2017, Lesotho adopts environmental management practices that promote a low-carbon climate-resilient economy and society, sustainably manages natural resources and reduces vulnerability to disasters***

In 2013, UN System`s contribution and support focused on (a) Integration of climate change into policies and programs; (b) Deployment of low Green-House-Gases (GHG) technologies; (c) Capacity enhancement of Disaster Management Authority (DMA) on disaster risks reduction and (d) Capacity enhancement of Environmental protection and natural resources conservation. The

following were key results:

Thirteen (13) Community Councils in the three districts were capacitated on how to integrate climate change into their community plans. UN supported stakeholder capacity needs assessment which included capacity for knowledge management. This also led to identification of gaps in the areas of coordination and information sharing. The UN system mobilized \$12 million for implementation of Climate change interventions. As a result of above-mentioned interventions and due to advocacy, there is an increasing number of NGOs becoming active across the broad spectrum of the Multi-Lateral Environment Agreements and Conventions in Desertification, Biodiversity, and Persistent Polluting Organisms and lately in Climate Change.

Through UN support close to hundred (100) solar systems were installed in rural homesteads for use for lighting, cell phone charging, pumping of water and for small income generating projects; supported piloting of energy saving technologies to provide alternatives to overreliance on biomass in rural communities.

UN supported capacity enhancement of government to undertake and update Emergency Preparedness and Response activities in the future and this included supporting Disaster Management Authority to develop a Multi-hazard Emergency and Preparedness Response Plan (EPRP). DMA was also supported to develop an information system for dissemination of early warnings to and feedback from communities.

Nineteen (19) communities engaged in initiatives that focus on protection of environment and conservation of natural resources. 18,500 families (92,500 individuals, 5% of the country population) were assisted in the adoption of Conservation Agriculture and improved Home Gardening technologies/Nutrition.

**Outcome 7: *By 2017, vulnerable groups have access to adequate and effectively managed (HIV-AIDS, Child and Gender sensitive) social protection systems***

Through the technical assistance, capacity building and advocacy of UN system, the government is now responsible for the benefit cost of the Child Grants Programme (CGP) and is committed to building a sustainable system for social protection. The UN contribution for 2013 yielded the following results:

UN agencies provided significant technical assistance and capacity building and advocacy which resulted into increased government leadership and ownership particularly for Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour and DMA. As a result, Government has taken over the CGP worth 37 million Maluti (approx. US\$4 millions) targeting 20 000 vulnerable households and is committed to build sustainable systems.

Specifically, in 2013 the UN support was expected to expand NISSA coverage to additional 15 (total 30) satellite community councils. Currently NISSA coverage was expanded to a total of 37 community councils (+22) in all 10 districts (+5), with approximately 108 000 households and more than 500 000 people registered (which is approximately 25% of population). Through the CGP, the target for 2013 was to reach 15,000 vulnerable households with approximately 30 000 vulnerable children. A total of 50 000 OVC and 20 000 vulnerable households received cash assistance for basic needs including health, food and education. Further, a total of 51 084 pre-school children were reached in 2 026 pre-schools with food commodities.

On policy and legal environment, the UN system provided technical and financial support to improve policy environment for social protection by finalizing the National Policy for Social Development; reorganizing the Ministry of Social Development structure in line with its vision of the Strategic Plan.

**Outcome 8: *By 2017 equitable access to and utilization of high-impact, cost effective health and nutrition interventions achieved for vulnerable populations.***

In collaboration with other development partners, the UN's support to the health sector marked moderate progress in the achievement of the outputs of the LUNDAP. The targets of four out of the six planned outputs were achieved. Significant achievements were in capacity development activities that resulted in increased access to health interventions for vulnerable population, especially women and children. The main achievements were in the areas of child health, maternal health, nutrition, disaster preparedness and promotion of healthy behavior. These were (1) A national Child Survival Strategy was developed; (2) A national Business Continuity Plan was developed; (3) 85% (148 000) children < 5 years were vaccinated against measles and those eligible also received polio, Vitamin A and albendazole; (4) Over 3000 undernourished <5 years children and undernourished PLHIVs received nutritional support; (5) Health sector nutrition strategy was developed; (6) RED strategy introduced in 40% districts; (7) National measles elimination strategy was developed; (8) Integrated management of pregnancy, child birth, post natal and newborn care; and (9) Capacity of health sector at central and district levels for planning and implementing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plans was strengthened. The capacity development exercise resulted in the development of a DRR business continuity plan for all sectors including health and establishment of a health sector DRR Technical Team to guide programme managers in planning and implementing DRR management.

In an effort to build human resources for health, the UN supported MOH to establish medical school and training medical doctors by contributing to the financing of Zimbabwe-based Basotho medical students

**Outcome 9 & 10 *By 2017, multi-stakeholders in the country contribute to the reduction of new annual HIV infections especially among youth, children and adults. By 2017, persons living with HIV have access to and benefit from the integrated service delivery that includes nutrition support, ART and care; and HIV/TB co-infection management.***

Progress towards reducing new HIV infections and keeping people alive on treatment has been steady. The following were key national results between 2012 and 2013 (1) Annual new HIV infections were estimated to have declined from 28 000 to 25 000; (2) The number of people on life saving treatment increased from 92,000 to 101,000; (3) The number of people who tested for HIV and received results remain stable around 310,000; (4) The number of medical male circumcisions increased five-fold from 10 000 to 50 000; (5) Out of 16 000, the number of HIV+ pregnant women on treatment is around 9 200; (6) Over 18 million male and female condoms were distributed.

Other notable joint UN support to the Government was the following: (1) Finalization of the National Condom Strategy and procurement and delivery of 3.6 million pieces of male and 200,000 pieces of female condoms; (2) A national Life skills curriculum

for Grade 4 and secondary schools (13-15 year olds) were revised to incorporate comprehensive sexuality education; (3) Procurement of the mother baby pack, capacity building for health workers, multi-media pack to target demand creation; (4) Pilot integration of delivery of SRH and HIV services and sample indicators and tools in three districts; (5) Revision of the ART guidelines in line with 2013 WHO recommendation; (6) Review and revision the 2011/2 -2015/16 National HIV and AIDS Strategic plan using the investment thinking; (7) Development and submission of the Global Fund US\$43 million Interim Application; (8) Development of Public Sector guidelines for HIV and AIDS Mainstreaming; (9) Review of the Environment Impact Assessment Regulations to ensure HIV/AIDS and Gender is mainstreamed into the EIA process; (10) Engagement with the Ministry of Law, Human Rights and Constitutional Affairs to carry out an assessment of the legal and regulatory framework related to HIV/AIDS; (11) Review of the Labor Code amendment Act on HIV/AIDS to ensure alignment with the ILO Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work, June 2010 (No.200). (12) Preparation of the 2012 status report on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Furthermore, with UN joint support Matrix Support Group (LGBTI organization) was supported in developing a Strategic Plan 2014-2016. In addition, advocacy capacity of LENEPHWA was strengthened in the area of GIPA principles in HIV programing and as a result issues of PLHIV have been given prominence in national strategic documents, policies and guidelines. It is for this reason also that LENEPHWA is carrying out the first ever Stigma Index and Nutrition Assessment and Vulnerability among PLHIVs. The Joint UN Team on AIDS (JUNTA) developed a five-year (2013 – 2017) Joint Programme of Support and a 2013-2014 budgeted operational plan.

## Summary on progress in UN Reform

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### *(i) Efforts to align with the national development processes;*

The Lesotho United Nations Development Assistance Plan is aligned to national development process. As a self-starter within the Delivering as One (DaO) initiative, current UNDAF (2013-2017) has been developed as a basis for the One Programme. It has been drafted on basis of comparative advantage analysis, which was, in line with the principles of aid effectiveness, produced jointly with Government as a comprehensive country analysis. The UNDAF outcomes have been aligned with priorities identified by the country in its NSDP. Current UNDAF cycle runs from 2013 to 2017, harmonizing it with the NSDP cycle. In 2013, United Nations System in Lesotho assisted the Government in its efforts to revise the NSDP.

### *(ii) Support to the national government in advancing the achievement of the Millennium Declaration/MDGs ;*

Lesotho's progress on the MDGs is mixed, with performance on poverty and health related MDGs continuing to be a cause for concern. Currently, Lesotho is off –track on MDGs 1,4 &5, on-track on MDGs 2&3 and making slow progress on MDGs 6,7&8.

Poverty and inequality are increasing in Lesotho, with poverty rates recording an increase from 56.6% in 2003 to the current 57.1%. Poverty in Lesotho has a distinctly rural bias and is attributable to low agricultural performance; the main source of income in rural areas. The Gini coefficient is also high, having increased from 0.52 in 2002/3 to 0.54 in 2010/11. Unemployment is hovering at 25% and is more pronounced in the age group of 20-29 years and higher in rural areas as compared to urban areas. Poverty has been perpetuated by recurring droughts that have caused food insecurity. In 2013, 38.7per cent of the population – 726,000 people –required food assistance. Malnutrition is also a major challenge, which has increased prevalence of stunting in the country particularly in the highlands and Senqu River Valley, with three out of ten districts in the country evidencing above-average rates.

The country boasts of one of the highest adult literacy rates in sub-Saharan Africa (87.4 %: males; 98.2 %: females). FPE, school feeding and OVC bursaries have increased enrolment rates above 80% since 2004 but quality of education is low given high repetition and dropout rates in the early grades. So unless this issue is managed appropriately, there is risk of reversal in MDG 2.

UN support to the Government of Lesotho on school feeding programs and OVC bursaries has greatly contributed to increasing the net enrolment rates. The Child Grants Programme piloted by the UN with assistance from EU has increased in coverage and also led to reducing the number of people without food from 87% to 83%.

Lesotho is on track to achieve MDG 3. Gender balance has been attained in primary education with female to male ratio of 105. In secondary and tertiary education there are more females than males with a female to male ratio of 133 and 146 respectively. It ranks 16 in the 2013 Global Gender Gap report. Women's participation in formal employment has increased progressively. Women's share in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector reached 56.1% in 2012, surpassing the MDG target of 50%.

A weak health care system and lack of qualified human resources has resulted in progressive worsening of health indicators in Lesotho. The country is not likely to achieve MDGs 4, 5 and 6 given high rates of infant and maternal mortality and HIV prevalence. Infant mortality rates rose from 81 in 2001 to 91 in 2009; while under-five mortality also increased from 113 to 117 in the same period. Infant and under five mortality rates are higher in rural and mountainous areas. Immunization coverage is low, around 60 percent with lower rates in the mountains and rural areas. Maternal mortality ratio increased exponentially from 419 in 2001 to 1 155 in 2009; one of the highest in the region. Recognizing this, the Government requested the UN's support in developing the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) to address the most off track MDG on maternal health. This approach was developed with the active engagement and contributions of various UN entities and development partners, and as part of a broader MDG Breakthrough Strategy.

One of the biggest challenges facing the country is the scourge of HIV/AIDS, which has is stagnating around 23 % since 2000. Estimates of new HIV infections show a slight decrease of 16%. There is a notable gender bias with the prevalence rate of 26.7 % for women and 18 % for men. Prevalence is higher in urban as compared to rural areas and also higher in the employed as

compared to the unemployed sections. MDG 6 is thus making slow progress. One of the key challenges addressed by the UN System in Lesotho was the closure of the National AIDS committee two years ago. Despite intense outreach and lobbying on the highest level, UNCT was not able to achieve advancement in this area.

Lesotho has made some progress toward achieving MDG 7. The number of households with improved sanitation is on-track while slow progress is recorded on the number of households with improved water and on increasing forestry coverage. Lack of data contributes to poor environmental governance. Inadequate capacity, lack of sectorial coordination and oversight undermines environmental protection and sustainable development. UN efforts are aimed at addressing these gaps and supporting the government in establishing a strengthened environmental governance system through enhanced coordination and oversight.

UN in partnership with the Government initiated for the first time a joint programme to draft a status report on MDGs in 2013. As part of this country wide consultations were launched to gather the people's voices and aspirations for a Post 2015 Development Agenda. This exercise led to greater ownership of the Government in monitoring national development trends, created awareness amongst the common people and led to development of productive partnerships with the civil society.

The Basotho have expressed their backing for the MDGs and in addition called for better decentralization of services and a greater say in decision making at the local/community level. Issues of persons with disability also were given high priority. This in a way sets the future work for the UN.

Intensive outreach and awareness-raising on the MDGs was one of the key activities of the UN in 2013. MDGs have been the main subject of outreach activities and even one of the key topics of the UN Week. Outreach activities included radio shows with discussion on MDGs, various speeches by the RC and Heads of Agencies, as well as outreach activities in schools.

The UN also supported the GoL to launch the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process, a vehicle for achieving MDG-1.

*(iii) Support of national partners in capacity development and aid effectiveness;*

The aid effectiveness agenda continues to be addressed mainly within the Development Partners Consultative Forum (DPCF) which is chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and co-chaired by the Irish and US Ambassadors, with participation of UN agencies. DPCF in 2013 through monthly and ad hoc meetings consistently provided a good platform for dialogue among Development Partners (DPs) for information sharing and consultations. The forum has had discussions with the government on various issues such as on Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Development Planning, decentralization and housing policies as well as on MDG Accelerated Framework (MAF). Different missions from IMF, China development Bank/Chinese Embassy and African Development Bank also received audience of the forum to discuss various issues such as programme reviews and Aid trends in Lesotho.

The approval of the Lesotho Partnership Policy, which spells out the relationship between the government and DPs is one of the key achievements for enhancing Development Cooperation effectiveness. The partnership policy, which, was approved by cabinet on the 5 November, 2013, is yet to be officially launched and implemented. DPs contributed to the development of the policy since 2011 and strongly advocated for its finalization.

One of the key achievements in 2013 is the facilitation of development of the Development Assistance Database (DAD), following the decision of the Ministry of Development Planning in 2012 to set up Development Assistance Database (DAD) as the Government's central, web-based tool for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on development assistance flows and projects in Lesotho. Reasonable progress has been made as the system design has been completed and the initial training for both the Ministry of development Planning and DPs DAD focal points have been done. The initial training covered twenty (20) government officials from the MoDP and development partners (US government, World Bank, UNDP, WFP, GIZ, WHO and DPCF Secretariat).

It is also noted positively that, Lesotho's participation in the Global Partnership monitoring exercise which examines progress in implementing Busan Commitments is a sign of commitment by the Government to drive development cooperation agenda forward. DPCF through the secretariat provided crucial support to facilitate successful submission of Lesotho country data to the global joint support team leading the process.

In the area of harmonization, one of the key achievements has been the development of a 'joint Statistics and M&E project' focusing on capacity development of the Ministry of Development Planning (M&E unit and Bureau of statistics) to strengthen Government's system in statistics, and develop monitoring and evaluation. Although the project design was not concluded within 2013, it is a model of harmonized development assistance that will be pursued.

The DPCF chairs met on several occasions with the incoming new Hon. Minister of Development Planning (Dr Majoro) to highlight main issues that needed his attention. Issues highlighted were (a) finalization of Partnership Policy, (b) finalization of NSDP M&E framework and activation of Clusters/sector coordination, (c) Public service Performance Management and (d) approval of DAD needs assessment report. In follow up to the above issues, good progress was made in 2013 because, the partnership policy was finally approved by the Cabinet and the DAD project reached all milestones planned for year one.

In the reporting period, DPCF worked closely with the Department of Aid Coordination to ensure Lesotho's participation in Global events on monitoring Busan Commitments. The first forum where a lot of experience and knowledge sharing took place was the Global Partnership Monitoring workshop held on the 12-14 June 2013 in Copenhagen and a second meeting held on Seoul Korea in November focused on Implementation strategies for effective development co-operation at the country-level as well as developing messages for Mexico High level Meeting in 2014. Both meetings were attended by Department of Aid Coordination personnel together with DPCF secretariat.

*(iv) Experiences of common programming, including HACT;*

For common programming in 2013, the UNCT agreed on continued support to existing programs, especially in the area of HIV Prevention (through JUPSA), Maternal Child and Neonatal care (anchored in MAF). The decision was based on the concrete results that have been accomplished in strengthened institutional capacity, programme integration, complementarily and improved welfare of mothers and those in their care.

New Joint Programs have been developed through joint interagency efforts in the area of Gender Based Violence, focusing on improved service delivery and data collection/research and in the area of support to persons with disabilities. Both efforts are currently in the pipeline.

To improve harmonized cash transfers for all agencies, particularly ExCom agencies, steps were taken to advance in HACT implementation. In this respect, the micro analysis of Joint Implementing Partners were in the process of elaboration and based on the findings the appropriate implementation modality will be selected.

## Key aspects of the proposed 2014 workplan

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Recognizing the needs of the Government to intensify work towards the achievement of its development goals, anchored in the NSDP and MDGs, this year will be significant in terms of increased commitment, efficiency and efficacy. Given recent trends in the achievement of some MDGs, enhanced support of the UN System in the area of poverty, infant and maternal health, HIV/AIDS will be required in efforts towards advancement in these areas. Identification of root causes and addressing them through joint efforts will be one of the key challenges in 2014.

Enhanced collaboration in the area of communication is foreseen through the implementation of the Joint Communication Strategy, which should lead towards communicating as one. In this regard, several communication products leading to joint advocacy on selected issues (maternal health, HIV/AIDS, resilience, youth employment, among others) should also contribute to the implementation of the Joint Resource Mobilization strategy, developed in 2013. Joint advocacy events in Lesotho, as well as South Africa are foreseen, in order to bridge the financial gap of the current UNDAF.

In the area of gender, UNCT has identified gender based violence one of its priorities, also in light of its prevalence in the country. If funded, the implementation of a Joint Programme, elaborated by 6 UN Agencies, should focus on the issue of data collection/research and provision of basic services to survivors of gender based violence.

In the area of human rights, work will be geared towards the Second Round of the Universal Periodic Review, focusing on the support to the Government of Lesotho in training new Government officials on the UPR process, the elaboration of the stakeholder reports. Internally, focus will be on HRBA, ensuring key staff is trained in main principles of HRBA and their enhanced commitment to human rights issues. In addition, if funded, a Joint Programme focusing on recommendations of the Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons, developed in collaboration of four agencies, will be implemented.

In the area of disaster risk reduction and preparedness, the UN Country team has identified resilience to recurrent shocks as one of its priorities. It is expected that the Resilience Framework will be elaborated, laying grounds for future resilience-building initiatives.

In collaboration with DPs, as the chair of the Development Partners Forum, the UN will support the Government of Lesotho in the implementation of policies in important but difficult issues (HIV/AIDS governance, enhanced service delivery through decentralization, data, and climate change policy among others).

Internally, the UN will work towards enhanced efficiency and efficacy, reflected in its Business Operations Strategy, as one of the pilot countries. Achievement of the commitments established in this strategy will lead to increased efficiency and efficacy, cost and time savings. Main focus is on the implementation of new LTAs, harmonization of processes and enhanced collaboration in common services.

## Recommendations

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Small countries like Lesotho collaborate very closely with large number of Non-Resident Agencies, representing a significant coordination challenge. An updated guidance note on Non Resident Agencies, their involvement in the work of UNCTs and operational principles would further enhance the collaboration, establishing clear rules, avoiding possible misunderstandings and difference in practices.

Significant efforts on country level are dedicated to monitoring of achievements in outcomes defined in UNDAFs, often representing significant coordination challenge. Online monitoring tools have proven to provide real time information, lower the necessary efforts for reporting and serve as an excellent knowledge management tool. Small countries like Lesotho, financial resources are very scarce in order to purchase costly soft-wares as done in other countries of the region. A corporate tool developed for these purposes would further enhance the efficiency, accessibility and reliability of UNDAF monitoring, lowering end costs and time required for design of localized tools.

In general terms, in countries as Lesotho, UN assistance has to go beyond its current focus on policy development to include plans for support in policy implementation. This is due to the unique problem of capacity deficiency.