

Phase two of Lesotho Highlands Water Project set to start this November

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) has awarded the first construction contract in phase two of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project to Sinohydro SA/Nthane Brothers Joint Venture. The contract, valued at approximately M/R235m, is for the Polihali north-east access road, with the contractor expected to be on site by the beginning of November.



The Sinohydro SA/Nthane Brothers JV comprises South African-registered Sinohydro and Lesotho-registered, Maseru-based Nthane Brothers. The JV will establish offices on site for the implementation of the project.

“Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project comprises the construction of the Polihali Dam and Transfer Tunnel, hydropower generation, social and environmental programmes. In line with the tendering strategy to achieve the policy objectives of the Phase II Agreement, construction works for advance infrastructure, including access roads, is restricted to contractors registered in Lesotho or South Africa. To foster capacity building and economic growth, the governments have also made provisions in the policy for sharing of the value of all infrastructure works on an equal monetary basis between consultants and contractors registered in Lesotho and in South Africa.

Phase II offers contractors work continuity for a number of years and the opportunity to gain valuable experience on a large infrastructure project. The combination of local, regional and international expertise at the consulting and contracting level will also contribute to skills transfer and capacity building within the construction and engineering sector,” comments Lesotho Minister of Water Samonyane Ntsekele.

Upgrade to a Class A surfaced road

The Polihali north-east access road project entails the upgrading of the existing approximately 16km-long, gravel road to a Class A surfaced road. The road, which runs from the town of Mapholaneng in north-eastern Lesotho and the Polihali dam site, will provide access to the dam site for construction vehicles and improve ease of movement for communities in the surrounding areas.

Construction is expected to take 20 months.

The Polihali north-east access road is one of the critical advance infrastructure components of Phase II, the majority of which must be completed prior to the construction of the main Phase II works: the Polihali dam and transfer tunnel.

“It’s taken years of planning and preparation to get to this point. This is what we have been waiting for,” added Tente Tente, divisional manager: Phase II at the LHDA.

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