

APPSA Lesotho reviews workplan for the financial year 2021/22 and prepares an annual workplan and budget for the year 2022/23

Agricultural Productivity Programme for Southern Africa (APPSA) is a programme supported by the World Bank which seeks to promote a regional approach to agricultural technology generation and dissemination by supporting, strengthening, and scaling up of regional centers of leadership on commodities of regional importance. In 2017 the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho (GoL) through the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security under Department of Agricultural Research (DAR) submitted an expression of interest to participate in a six-year APPSA project. APPSA in Lesotho was officially launched in 2019 will phase out in January 2025. Lesotho selected horticulture-based farming systems as Regional Center of Leadership (RCoL) or commodity of excellence. The proposed RCoL in Lesotho focuses on Fruit Trees, Potatoes, and Vegetable Production. Other areas of research priorities are on Legumes (Beans) and Cereals (Sorghum). APPSA Lesotho is mid-way in its implementation.



The planning and budgeting session was held in Maseru at Victory Hall from the 06th to 09th December 2022. In his opening remarks, APPSA Lesotho Project Manager Mr. Mabusetsa Makau, emphasized the importance of planning towards achievement of project targets, goals, and coordination. He wished all participants fruitful engagement and deliberations. Later the same day, four (4) presentations were delivered by specialized functions of the APPSA project

implementation unit (PIU): Monitoring and Evaluation Officer; Finance Manager; Environment and Social Safeguards Officer; and lastly the Information Technology and Knowledge Management Officer. The presentations were aimed to set the tone by providing background and context towards achievements and setbacks experienced since project inception to date and further to inform prospects.

Subsequent days were dedicated solely to planning. The planning phase was steered by the planning template to guide individuals and groups to determine activities that align with key priority areas. The planning and budget come shortly after an intensive mid-term review of the project which provided recommendations on priorities areas to be considered for the remaining project lifetime. Themes included: (1) ensuring quality research; (2) disseminating technologies; (3) building and rehabilitating infrastructure; (4) commissioning all sub-projects by May 2023; (5) Measuring impact; (6) strengthening strategic communication; and (7) securing sustainability of investments. With these themes in mind, participants were divided into groups, presentations made which triggered discussions based on thematic areas. The plan and budget undertaking were succeeded by costing all the project activities to make sense of the financial implications therein



Present during this event were senior officers from the Department of Agricultural Research, Project Implementation Unit and APPSA-Lesotho local Implementing partners. The RCoL Coordinator Ms Monica Lephole in her closing remarks, embraced the input and work ethic displayed by the participants. She indicated that plans should be continuously visited to ensure consistency and alignment with the project targets.