



**NATIONAL AIDS COMMISSION**

**Powered to Conquer HIV and AIDS**

**REMARKS FOR CE OF NAC MR KEKETSO  
SEFEANE ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL  
OPENING OF SAfAIDS LESOTHO PARTNERS  
MEETING AND M&E REFRESHER TRAINING SESSION  
HELD AT LAKESIDE HOTEL ON WEDNESDAY  
FEBRUARY 25, 2009.**

---

**HIS MAJESTY, KING LETSIE III**

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER**

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SAfAIDS, SARA PAGE**

**SAfAIDS IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS IN LESOTHO**

**SENIOR PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR OFFICIALS  
HERE PRESENT**

**DISTINGUISHED PARTICIPANTS**

**MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!!**

It gives me great pleasure to have been invited to officiate at the SAfAIDS Partners meeting and a refresher training session on Monitoring and Evaluation. The meeting is of great importance since it will facilitate open discussions on progress that SAfAIDS Partners in Lesotho have realized thus far as well as sharing of experiences and challenges encountered and how best to tackle them for improved service delivery to the people.

I am aware that SAfAIDS supports five community based organizations in promoting and supporting community preparedness for Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) and prevention efforts in Lesotho. I have also been informed that SAfAIDS also strives to promote the meaningful engagement of People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA), government and civil society stakeholders - through Community ART Policy Dialogue (APD) Platforms, and National ART Policy Dialogues.

## **DISTINGUISHED PARTICIPANTS**

It is important for partners to convene and re-collect on activities undertaken thereby mitigating on their impact in as far as the fight

of HIV and AIDS is concerned. I am impressed to realize that SAfAIDS and its partners have started to focus on prevention of new infections along with treatment, care and support. This is the right move because even as we treat those who are already infected, we strive to reduce the number of new infections, which are currently estimated at 62 number of infections per day.

Our country has the third highest prevalence in the world at 23.2%. The latest statistics indicate that there are about 50 deaths due to AIDS every day. There are also an estimated 270,273 people living with HIV in Lesotho as of end of 2007. We should not be proud of these statistics. In fact, this is quite a challenge that we have to overcome. The situation requires our concerted efforts. It is only when we know and understand our role in the fight against HIV and AIDS that we can endeavour to engage on action plans/programming and mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS that are meaningful and have an impact to the people out there.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

It has come to my attention that you will also undergo M&E Refresher training session during this time. I wish to commend SFAIDS for always striving to empower its partners because the usefulness of monitoring and evaluation of HIV and AIDS programmes cannot be overemphasized. With the skills you will acquire from this training, you will be equipped to monitor and evaluate your HIV and AIDS in your workplaces and constituencies for a more coordinated response to HIV and AIDS.

#### **DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES**

Allow me to wish you fruitful deliberations during this important partners meeting and refresher training on M&E. It is therefore my singular honour and privilege on behalf of the Government of Lesotho, the National AIDS Commission and on my own behalf to declare the meeting officially opened.

I thank for your attention.

**KHOTSO!!!**

**PULA!!!**

**NALA!!!**