

VOICE AND CHOICE SUMMIT
2026

**MARANG MEDIA
LGBTIQ CATEGORY**





Voice and Choice Summit 2026

Marang Media LGBTIQ Category

**Living authentically:
Royal's journey to self-discovery**

SYNOPSIS

BRIEF OVERVIEW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT

NAME

NTSOAKI MOTAUNG

DESIGNATION

JOURNALIST

ORGANISATION

NEWSDAY MEDIA

COUNTRY

LESOTHO

CATEGORY

MARANG MEDIA LGBTIQ CATEGORY

SUMMARY

Royal's Journey: Transgender Rights in Lesotho

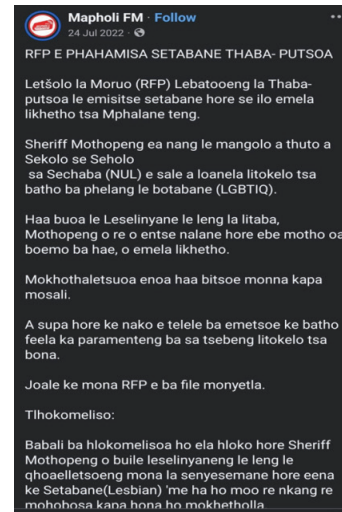
Royal, a transgender man in Lesotho navigates societal pressure and stigma to live authentically. His story highlights gaps in acceptance, legal protection, and community understanding, while showcasing emerging advocacy efforts promoting inclusion and dignity for LGBTIQ individuals.

Background (problem, actions, change, evidence)

The specific LGBTIQ-related issue microscopied by the media include but not limited to societal stigma, misconceptions, and lack of understanding about transgender identity persist.

Problems

- Lack of explicit legal protections
- Misconceptions and stigma:
- Limited access to essential services



Mapholi FM · Follow
24 Jul 2022

RFP E PHAHAMISA SETABANE THABA- PUTSOA

Letšolo la Moruo (RFP) Lebatooeng la Thaba-putsoa le emisitse setabane hore se ile emela likhetho tsa Mphalane teng.

Sheriff Mothopeng ea nang le mangolo a thuto a Sekolo se Sehlo sa Sechaba (NUL) e sale a loanela litokelo tsa batho ba phelang le botabane (LGBTIQ).

Haa buoa le Leselinyane le leng la litaba, Mothopeng o re o entse nalane hore ebe motho oa boemo ba hae, o emela likhetho.

Mokhohaletsuoa enoa haa bitsoe monna kapa mosali.

A supa hore ke nako e telele ba emetsoe ke batho feela ka paramenteng ba sa tsebeng litokelo tsa bona.

Joale ke mona RFP e ba file monyetla.

Tihokomeliso:

Babali ba hlokomelisoa ho ela hloko hore Sheriff Mothopeng o buile leselinyane le leng le qhoaelletsoeng mona la senyesemane hore eena ke Setabane(Lesbian) 'me ha ho moo re nkang re mohobosa kana hona ho mokhetholla



FEATURE
Transphobia victims remembered

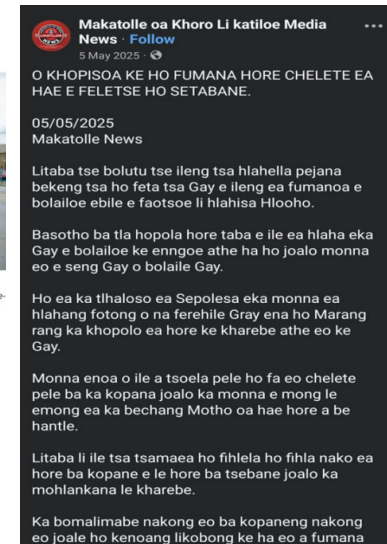
(Photo: Meri Hyöky (2024), merihyokphoto2024-1109-8380. Available at: <https://thehubatmorija.co.ls/2024/11/13/lets-make-discrimination-a-thing-of-the-past-celebrating-lesotho-lgbtqia-pride-2024/>. [Accessed 29 July 2025].

By **Ntsoaki Motaung** November 25, 2022 0 905

Listen

At least one in three transgender people in Lesotho (36 percent) had been denied access to health care, and this is in part linked to not being able to change one's gender marker in the identity.

International research, as well as analysis from Lesotho, suggests that not being able to change



Makatolle oa Khoro Li katiloe Media · Follow
News · Follow
5 May 2025

O KHOPISOA KE HO FUMANA HORE CHELETE EA HAE E FELETSE HO SETABANE.

05/05/2025
Makatolle News

Litaba tse bolutu tse ileng tsa hlahella pejana bekeng tsa ho feta tsa Gay e ileng ea fumanoa e bolailoe ebile e faotsoe li hlahisa Hlooho.

Basotho ba tla hopola hore taba e ile ea hlaha eka Gay e bolailoe ke enngoe athe ha ho joalo monna eo e seng Gay o bolaille Gay.

Ho ea ka tlhaloso ea Sepolesa eka monna ea hlahang fotong o na ferehile Gray ena ho Marang rang ka khopolo ea hore ke kharebe athe eo ke Gay.

Monna enoa o ile a tsoela pele ho fa eo chelete pele ba ka kopana joalo ka monna e mong le emong ea ka bechang Motho oa hae hore a be hantle.

Litaba li ile tsa tsamaea ho fihlela ho fihla nako ea hore ba kopane e le hore ba tsebane joalo ka mohankana le kharebe.

Ka bomalimabe nakong eo ba kopaneng nakong eo joale ho kenoang likobong ke ha eo a fumana

1. The angle taken frames LGBTIQ identity as a flaw, risks encouraging discrimination, disrespect and my cause misinformation about LGBTIQ community.
2. One of the stories that LGBTIQ members get killed because of their Identity.
3. LGBTIQ member got killed because the perpetrator claims he gave money to them and after finding they LGBTIQ member they killed them

BACKGROUND (PROBLEM, ACTIONS, CHANGE, EVIDENCE)

Actions

Advocating for LGBTIQ rights through journalism by sharing personal stories to raise awareness & spark dialogue. Highlighting challenges humanizes their struggles & underscores the need for inclusivity & legal protection.

Change

Though it's hard to pinpoint direct causality, my work and that of others has contributed to:-

Parliamentary discussions: Motions proposed by MPs have pushed for debates on LGBTIQ+ rights, including amending the Children's Bill to be more inclusive.

Increased visibility: Stories like Royal's help shift public perceptions and encourage empathy

Community empowerment: By amplifying LGBTIQ voices, we're fostering a sense of solidarity and support.

EVIDENCE

NEWS
LGBTIQ community advocates for stronger legal protections



By **Newsday** May 21, 2024 0 569

▶ Listen

Ntsoaki Motaung

To mark the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia observed annually on May 17, Giselle Ratalane, Project Coordinator at the People's Matrix Association, is advocating for stronger legislation to safeguard the LGBTIQ communities.

Ratalane emphasised the necessity of enhanced legal protections for sexual and gender minorities

LEAD STORY NEWS
ICJ calls on Lesotho to decriminalise sodomy



By **Ntsoaki Motaung** December 23, 2024 0 1305

▶ Listen

- **Advocates for adults to change their assigned sex at birth to align with their self-determined gender.**
- **Recommends inclusive gender marker options beyond the binary of male and female in identity documents.**

Ntsoaki Motaung

The Parliament should amend the Sexual Offences Act to explicitly repeal the common law offence of sodomy and remove the provision in Schedule I,

SYNOPSIS

THE MEDIA CONTRIBUTION (LGBTIQ FOCUS)

The story I produced was an online feature article whose central message is clear: and acceptance, understanding, and love are essential for creating a more inclusive society.

For LGBTIQ individuals in Lesotho, it means:-

Embracing identity: Living authentically without fear of rejection or harm.-

Access to rights: Equal access to healthcare, education, and opportunities.-

Safety and protection: Freedom from harassment, violence, and discrimination.

The story showcases Royal's resilience and courage, inspiring others to do the same. By sharing his journey, Royal sparks conversations and fosters understanding, paving the way for a brighter future for LGBTIQ individuals in Lesotho.

<https://newsdayonline.co.ls/living-authentically-royals-journey-to-self-discovery/>

Living authentically: Royal's journey to self-discovery



By *Ntsoaki Motaung* November 12, 2025 0 506

▶ Listen

— Melchabeng Matšenele, who prefers to be called

SYNOPSIS

THE MEDIA CONTRIBUTION (LGBTIQ FOCUS)

The primary audience was the general public in Lesotho, including policymakers, media professionals, and community members, especially those engaged with LGBTIQ+ issues and human rights discussions.

The coverage prioritized ethical journalism by obtaining informed consent from interviewees although Royal said he wants his names in the story but he was made aware of his rights, and ensuring safety considerations for interviewees was a priority. The approach focused on humanizing LGBTIQ+ experiences, to promote dignity and inclusivity in reporting.

CHANGE

01

Raising Awareness

Raising awareness: Sharing Royal's story and other LGBTIQ+ experiences highlighted the challenges they face, sparking public conversations.

02

Empowering the community

Amplifying voices fostered solidarity and encouraged advocacy for inclusivity and protection.

MY MEDIA WORK PLAYED A ROLE IN:

01

Shining a spotlight

Bringing LGBTIQ+ issues into the public and political discourse in Lesotho.

02

Humanizing experiences

Making the struggles and resilience of individuals like Royal visible to a broader audience.

03

Driving dialogue

Encouraging stakeholders, including lawmakers, to address gaps in rights and protections.

CHANGE

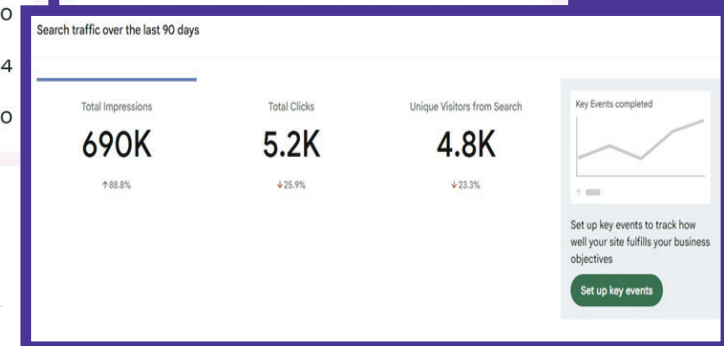
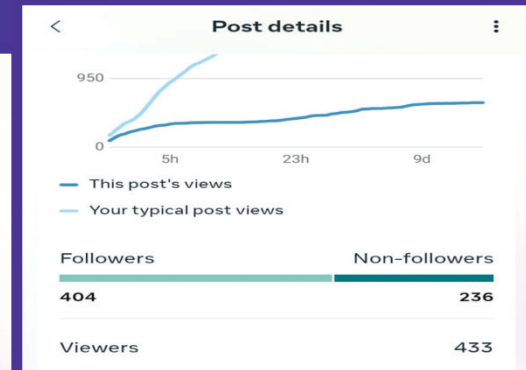
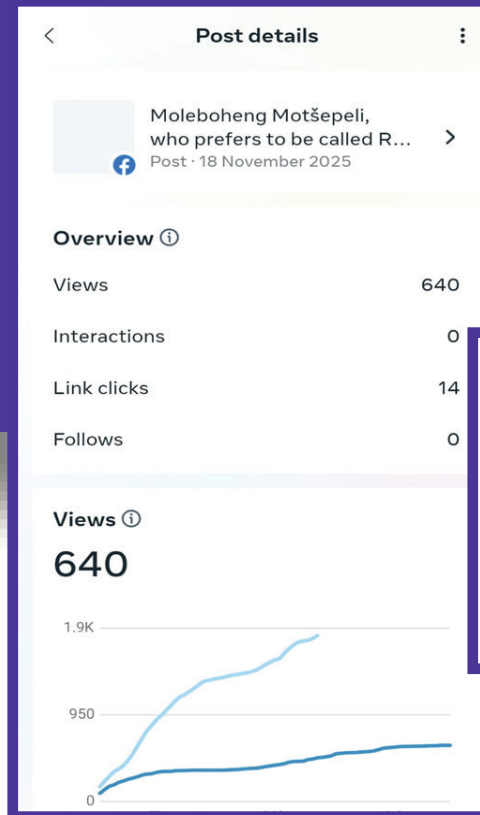
Not talking specifically on this story, In the context of LGBTIQ and human rights, actions that typically drive awareness or change include investigative reporting that exposes discrimination, awareness campaigns that share personal stories, interviews with affected communities, and feature pieces that highlight policy gaps. These actions generate public dialogue and push institutions to review or reform practices.

And influence can be measured through evidence such as media analytics (e.g., reach and engagement of the coverage) as shown of previous slide. I learnt I did not do much to see impact but in future, I plan to do public opinion polls, policy changes or legislative reviews triggered by the coverage, and look for feedback from stakeholders and document the impact visually and provide tangible proof of the change.

THE CHANGE/ IMPACT

In media, the immediate impact is usually not noticed, the effect becomes evident mainly when certain interested individuals start taking action. Besides this, many people avoid discussing LGBTIQ issues openly or on public platforms because of stigma. Nevertheless, the story ultimately reaches a large audience, as shown by the statistics.

The beneficiaries of the coverage included:
LGBTIQ+ individuals and communities
Advocacy organizations.
Policymakers and legislators
The general public



HOW DO YOU SCORE YOURSELF? 1-10

The story explicitly centres LGBTIQ communities, rights, lived realities, or meaningfully mainstreams sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (LGBTIQSC).

9

The story meaningfully includes and fairly represents diverse LGBTIQ voices and lived experiences, giving appropriate weight to those most affected by the issue.

8

The story reflects perspectives from both decision-makers and LGBTIQ people directly affected, clearly illustrating power dynamics and differential impact.

9

All sources and subjects in the story are represented with dignity, respect, and agency, avoiding sensationalism, misrepresentation, or harm.

9

The story challenges harmful stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination related to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, and affirms diversity.

8

HOW DO YOU SCORE YOURSELF? 1-10

The story contributes to informed public dialogue on LGBTIQ issues, rights, and social justice through education, advocacy, or critical reflection.

8

Where data or statistics are used, they are accurate, contextualised, and appropriately disaggregated, or the limitations and gaps in available data are clearly acknowledged.

7

The story takes a clear human right-based approach grounded in equality, non-discrimination, bodily autonomy, and dignity.

9

The story demonstrates strong attention to privacy, safety, and security, including risk mitigation for participants and communities in restrictive or hostile environments.

6

The story offers fresh, original, or under-represented perspectives on LGBTIQ issues and demonstrates editorial courage without exposing individuals or communities to undue risks.

9

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNT

Challenges & mitigation

- . Ethical balancing of visibility & safety
- . Navigating cultural & religious sensitivities
- . Ensuring accurate representation
- . Managing limited data & context
- . Gaining trust from the subject

Mitigation

- . Informed consent & privacy protocols
- . Sensitive storytelling approach
- . Fact-checking & contextualization and Editorial courage with risk assessment

What lessons have you learnt?

- Prioritise subject safety
- Blend local culture with universal rights
- Transparency about data limitations
- Ethical storytelling enhances impact

SUSTAINABILITY

Yes. I intend to produce follow-up stories that track Royal's journey and the broader transgender community's experiences. - Plans include partnering with local NGOs (e.g., People's Matrix) and faith leaders to continue bringing to light challenges and experiences as well as achievements and nice stories.

Coverage will be scaled by also using multimedia formats (articles, podcasts, short documentaries) to reach wider audiences.

INSPIRATION

○ The reporting highlights personal dignity and human-rights frameworks, inspiring local activists to advocate for explicit gender-identity protections in Lesotho's legal system.

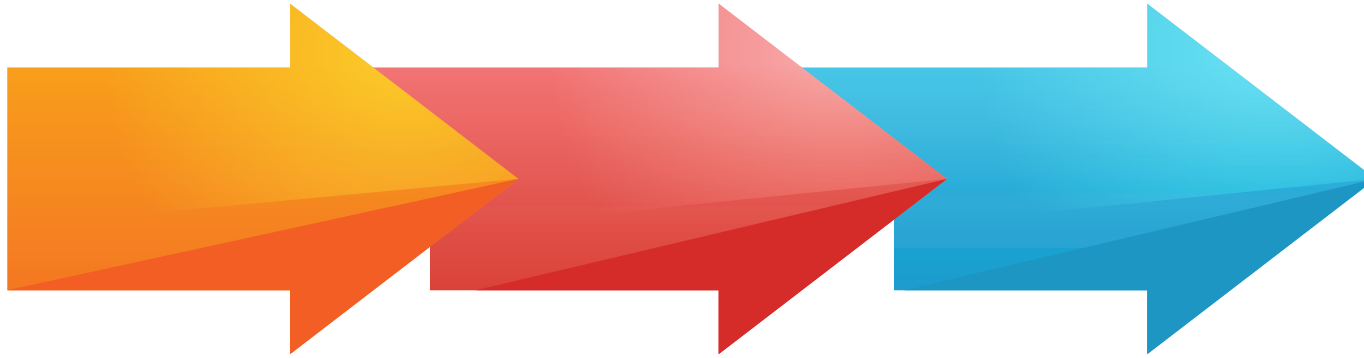
● May encourage community-based initiatives that link LGBTIQ inclusion with cultural values, fostering acceptance among families and religious groups.

● The work can spur policy discussions and educational programs aimed at reducing discrimination, thereby driving concrete steps toward gender equality in both local communities and national legislation.



NEXT STEPS

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?



I plan to intensify my efforts in promoting visibility and understanding of LGBTIQ rights within the broader human rights framework.



Advocate for legislation or institutional policies that protect LGBTIQ individuals from discrimination.



Provide coverage for programs aimed to reduce stigma and build capacity among stakeholders (e.g., workshops, seminars).



