



Urbanization and Informal Settlements in Lesotho: Implications for Social Welfare in African Cities

Motlhaodi Mohohlo¹, Lephako Leboa², Siphokhele Mokhele¹, Mpho Hlatshwa¹

¹ National University of Lesotho

² Department of Advanced Studies, National University of Lesotho

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Correspondence: mmohohlo@yahoo.com

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Author notes

*Motlhaodi Mohohlo is affiliated with National University of Lesotho and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.
Lephako Leboa is affiliated with Department of Advanced Studies, National University of Lesotho and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

*Siphokhele Mokhele is affiliated with National University of Lesotho and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.
Mpho Hlatshwa is affiliated with National University of Lesotho and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

Abstract

Urbanization in Lesotho has led to significant growth in informal settlements, posing challenges for social welfare provision. A qualitative study employing semi-structured interviews with community leaders and residents to understand perceptions and needs related to social welfare access in these areas. Informal settlements in Lesotho account for over 70% of the urban population, facing challenges such as inadequate healthcare services and educational facilities, despite substantial growth. The study underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions addressing the specific needs of informal settlement residents to improve social welfare access. Policy recommendations include prioritising infrastructure development in informal settlements alongside broader urban planning strategies to enhance accessibility and quality of services.

Keywords: *Lesotho, Urbanization, Informal Settlements, Welfare Provision, Ethnography, Community Studies, Social Theory*

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