



## **Affirmative action employers honored at inaugural Inclusion Lesotho Awards ceremony**

**28 August 2012:** The first annual *Inclusion Awards* were presented at a gala ceremony held at Lancers Inn today. The inaugural awards were presented to Steven Walker and Lincoln 'Mokose for their efforts in providing employment for people with disability through affirmative action employment policy. The *Inclusion Awards* are a new initiative by the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) to acknowledge the efforts of individuals who have been particularly successful at fostering the inclusion of people with disability into the greater community.

"The Inclusion awards represent an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the disability movement and to shine the spotlight on the unsung heroes who work behind the scenes to improve the lives of people with disability. This year we would especially like to focus on two individuals who have played an important role in providing employment for PWDs and providing a positive example to other employers of the contribution PWDs are capable of making to the workplace and society as a whole," commented Nhkasi Sefuthi, Human Rights and Advocacy Officer, LNFOD.

Steven Walker, former General Manager of Philips Maseru, was responsible for introducing an employment quota for people with disability providing employment for dozens of individuals with disability. During his time as the Minister of Forestry and Land Reclamation, Lincoln 'Mokose successfully applied an affirmative action policy to promote the employment of people with disabilities in government forestry projects.

Mr. Walker and Mr. 'Mokose were originally due to receive their awards at a ceremony for International Day of Persons with Disability in December 2010. However, due to an unfortunate car accident they were unable to receive their awards.

Continued Nhkasi Sefuthi: "The fact that these awards are long overdue does not in any way diminish the achievements of these two inspiring men. Discrimination in employment is one of the biggest challenges faced by people with disability and these gentlemen have improved the lives of dozens of people with disability and their families by creating truly disability inclusive working environments."

The ceremony was attended by a number of representatives from disabled persons organizations and people employed by the programs introduced by the award winners.

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***The ceremony will take place at 10.00am on 28<sup>th</sup> August at Lancers Inn. All media are invited to attend.***

**For further information, images or interviews please contact:**

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### **About LNFOD**

Established in 1991, the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) is an umbrella body of organizations dealing with disability in Lesotho. Its mission is to protect the rights of people with disabilities in Lesotho by providing support for disabled people's organizations and empowering their members with life-skills, financial and material resources and representing their needs to the government, development partners and wider society. Its membership consists of the Lesotho National Association of Physically Disabled Persons (LNAPD) Lesotho Society of Mentally Handicapped Persons (LSMHP), Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) and National Association of the Deaf in Lesotho (NADL).

For further information, please visit [www.infod.org.ls](http://www.infod.org.ls)