

LAUNCH OF LESOTHO NATIONAL DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING PLAN

Date 27 October 2015

Venue: Lesotho Avani

Statement by LNFOD Executive Director, Nkhasi Sefuthi (Mr.)

“Disability has moved from being a social welfare issue to a development issue. This simply means that, disability should be addressed through development of disability inclusive laws, policies, programs and services. Most importantly, persons with disabilities must be part of the inclusive and accessible design, planning, monitoring, implementation and evaluation of the government programs through their representative organisations. The Government of Lesotho has played a major role in terms of making sure that, people with disabilities participate in the development of this plan so that the rights and needs of people with disabilities could be incorporated into the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming plan.

The adoption and the launch of the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Plan is a game changer for disability rights advocacy and mainstreaming in Lesotho. It creates hope among the disability rights activists and basis for our further advocacy on the monitoring and implementation of the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Plan. It also provides the government ministries with the strategic means through which they can mainstream disability in their existing programs and services. LNFOD has been involved throughout the process of making the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Plan. By so doing the Government of Lesotho has fully demonstrated its commitment to working with organisations of persons with disabilities in finding the solutions of the challenges facing inclusion of people with disabilities in Lesotho. LNFOD therefore commends the Government of Lesotho for undertaking the development of the mainstreaming plan during the period when the world has just adopted the sustainable development goals of which some of them make specific reference to people with disabilities. This plan is launched when the Government of Lesotho is on the verge of passing disability rights legislation which will strengthen the promotion and protection of the rights of people with disabilities. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, the effective implementation of this plan requires allocation of funds, high degree of

commitments, from the policymakers, and the focal persons as well as the ongoing capacity development trainings for the focal points on disability mainstreaming.

LNFOOD strongly believes that, the effective implementation of this plan can change the lives of the marginalised people with disabilities who remain invisible in the society due to environmental and attitudinal barriers facing them in the communities in which they live.

LNFOOD therefore calls upon the Government of Lesotho and the development partners to support the implementation of this plan through allocation of the budget which will assist the Government officials and other stakeholders to realise effective implementation of the plan. A vote of thanks goes to the Africa Disability Alliance for forming the meaningful partnership with the Government of Lesotho which led to the successful implementation of the COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE FOR DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING PROJECT.

In Lesotho LNFOOD can proudly confirm that, the project has achieved its objectives because it has enabled LNFOOD to negotiate with the government on the development of the Lesotho National Mainstreaming Plan and the adoption of Washington group question on disability for the upcoming census in 2016 to mention just a few.