



MEDIA STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO NATIONAL BUDGET

LNFOD applauds government's efforts to protect people with disability

22 February 2013, Maseru: the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) applauds the government's inclusion of disability issues in the National Budget. This is the first time a national budget has addressed the needs of people with disability.

In its 2013/2014 budget, the government has allocated about M187.1 million to address disability specific issues. Included in this allocation is development of guidelines for the National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy (2011) and the development of a Disability Equity Act, meant to domesticate the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) ratified by the Lesotho government in 2008.

Since 2008, the disability movement has been lobbying for the domestication of the UNCRPD and the introduction of disability specific legislation to protect the rights of people with disability.

"This is a day of celebration for people with disabilities. Finally, our prayers have been heard and we look forward to working closely with the government to develop the Disability Equity Act," commented Marorisang Mafethe, Executive Director, LNFOD.

"This is the first step to achieving our vision of a country in which people with disability may enjoy their fundamental human rights and have equal opportunities without prejudice of discrimination. We whole-heartedly applaud the government's efforts in promoting the participation and inclusion of people with disability in society."

The budget also accounts for measures to empower people with disabilities through creation of self-employment opportunities which will help them graduate from welfare recipients to full participants in the national economy.

This long awaited announcement comes a few days after LNFOD presented a petition from 5000 people with disability and their supporters calling for movement on the domestication of the UNCRPD.

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