**PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LNFOD CALLS ON COUNCILORS TO CREATE EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

**Maseru, 7 May 2012:** Last Monday (30th April)LNFOD held a meeting for councilors of the Quthing district to encourage them to consider people with disabilities for community development jobs. The meeting was held at the Orange River Hotel in Quthing.

The meeting was attended by Mr Relebohile Koloi, Mrs Lebohang Katane and Mrs Matiisetso Mothae, all councilors of the Quthing district, as well as Mr Sefuthi Nkhasi, Human Rights Advocacy Officer Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD), Mr Likano Molelekoa, Communications Officer LNFOD, Mrs Bongiwe Busi President of National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL), Ms Kananelo Lephoi, sign language interpreter (NADL) and Mr Lehlohonolo Molisana, Community Based Rehabilitation Officer of Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD).

The purpose of the meeting was to highlight the challenges which people with disabilities face in obtaining employment and hence to highlight the obligation of local council to include them when job opportunities arise.

“There is extremely high unemployment amongst people with disability. Most of the time we are excluded from consideration for private and government sector jobs regardless of our experience or education. Local Councils must avoid discriminating against people with disability in their employment policies,” stated Mr. Sefuthi.

“As the main advocacy body for people with disability in Lesotho, it is LNFOD’s responsibility to fight for the rights of the disabled in this country. This meeting is in line with our efforts to ensure that the disabled get the services they deserve within the communities they live in.” concluded Mr. Sefuthi.

Upon being asked how she would represent people with disabilities, Mrs Mothae responded: “I will encourage able bodied persons to consider the people with disability because they are human beings like them. I will also convince them that disabled people are just as capable as able bodied persons.”

Mr Koloi Relebohile pledged to immediately call a public gathering to create awareness that people with disability should be treated as human beings and that the discrimination against them must come to the end. He also committed to using venues with easy access to people with disability for public gatherings to facilitate greater participation in community life.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr Sefuthi encouraged councilors to keep lists of disabled job seekers in their community so that they could be easily identified when job opportunities arise.

**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 on LNFOD, please visit [www.lnfod.org.ls](http://www.lnfod.org.ls)