



PRESS RELEASE

LNFOOD and UNICEF collaborate to launch the 2013 State of the World's Children report

Maseru, 27 May 2013: The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOOD) and UNICEF will host the launch of this year's State of the World's Children report which takes on the theme of Children with Disability. The launch event will take place at the Lehakoe Club on 30th May.

The report focuses on the issues faced by children with disability and the barriers preventing them from accessing their human rights on an equal basis with other children. Through the launch event, LNFOOD and UNICEF wish to give a voice to children to encourage their position as agents of change and to engage them in dialogue leading towards equal treatment of all children regardless of disability. The objective of the launch is to rally partners and government to implement policies for the realization of a fully inclusive society.

The launch will be attended by representatives from the Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education and Training and various other organisations involved in the disability movement. Festivities will include speeches and presentations from stakeholders and young people with disability, performances by the students from St Bernadettes Resource Centre for the Blind and the symbolic signing of a mural created by children from St Angela's Cheshire Home for Physically Disabled Children.

The launch will also see the introduction of a public awareness campaign to promote the rights of children with disability. Advertisements from the campaign will be broadcast on Lesotho TV, Radio Lesotho and Ultimate Radio.

"Despite the fact that Lesotho signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability in 2008, people with disability are amongst the poorest and most marginalized groups in Lesotho. The cycle of poverty and disadvantage starts early in life as children with disability are denied access to services such as education, healthcare and public transport," comments Nkhasi Sefuthi, Human Rights and Advocacy Officer, LNFOOD.

"Studies show that children with disability aged 5-10 are only half as likely to be enrolled in school as other children. Families of children with disability have lower than average incomes and a higher dependency ratio because there is no disability specific social protection. There are no services for early childhood interventions or identification of disability. It is our responsibility as a nation to ensure that ALL children can access their basic human rights." Concluded Mr. Sefuthi.

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About UNICEF

UNICEF works in more than 190 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments. For more information about UNICEF and its work visit: <<http://www.unicef.org>>.

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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.lnfod.org.ls