



# 24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT 2012/13



## **ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2012/13**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) principal objective is to stimulate and support civil society organisations in their development efforts. In pursuit of this mission, the Council is to assist its member organisations to diagnose and satisfy their own needs as well as the needs of the society they serve. This calls for the strategic engagement with the broader governance and development agenda in Lesotho and SADC region by ensuring a systematic and substantive partnership on social transformation initiatives. Currently the Council is working on re-organising itself by engaging in the process of developing *Strategic Plan for 2014 – 2018*.

It is for this reason that LCN aims at building capacity of member NGOs and also aims at assisting member organisations to be more effective in meeting their goals and to be able to initiate and maintain self-supporting and self-sustaining development. LCN provides an epitome of higher NGO platform towards deliberate efforts to address the challenges facing Lesotho. It does this by linking issues of governance, human rights, poverty, environment and agriculture and economic justice from local level to national level. LCN sees the human development as integrated initiatives, thus, needing responsive interventions and comprehensive approaches which are combined by different approaches. LCN is also committed to raising and being true representative of grassroots voice hence the promotion of linkages of local and national issues.

It is noted that LCN and her member organisations as part of broader civil society agenda are seen at the moment as one of the legitimate forces to influence policy change processes due to their strategic positioning in the development and governance arenas. This is further strengthened by the fact that they are usually closer to the people's struggles, needs and actions. They are recognised as organisations that speak on behalf of the poor and marginalised. They are also best positioned to enhance both vertical and horizontal accountability in socio-economic-political and cultural spheres.

The role of civil society does not go without challenges, it is in this context it is noted that the fight against poverty, weak governance and political instability is a long-term war which needs government, private sector and civil society efforts. It is

accepted by most development actors in Lesotho that civil society organisations are continuing to play a significant role in poverty eradication strategies and engendering and sustaining development, democratic culture and values.

Although there are still many challenges to be overcome, the civil society in Lesotho remains a viable sector in addressing the issues of development and governance. The institutionalisation of dialogue processes in the country still posed challenge though there are some improvement on other cases such as taxi owners and Ministry of Public Works negotiations. LCN should develop recognisable niche in this area of conflict and mediation though the Coalition Government seems to want to do everything on its own. This remains a challenge for the Council and its members. LCN has demonstrated this is possible as evidenced by its involvement in the marathon long political crisis in Lesotho 2007 - 2012.

The fact is that the capacity of civil society has to be enhanced if a meaningful progress has to be registered in the areas of development and governance. A meaningful progress cannot be registered unless both human and financial resources are available for civil society's work. At the moment there is a declining donor funding in the country; it is therefore essential to explore different options from which civil society organisations can be assisted in order to continue its operations.

The Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) Annual Report for the period 2012/2013 highlights the achievements, challenges and lessons learnt. The annual report is based on both the quarterly reports whose activities are derived from the approved 2012/2013 plans and budgets. The report covers major activities undertaken in 2012/2013. This Report is structured into sections of overall core projects and programmes commitments, organizational development, networking, resource mobilisation and funding initiatives. The context in which LCN operated will form part of the report for better appreciation of LCN contribution to Lesotho's development and governance. Under each section, the Report will highlight key achievements, challenges and lessons learnt. It should be noted that in most cases the achievements are assumed since the activities impact are more on the long-term scale. The Report will further highlight the work of LCN Commissions for this period and conclusion thereafter.

## **2.0 Country Context:**

The context in which Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) programmes were responding to was mapped mainly by high prevalence of abject poverty where about 300,000 people who are vulnerable to hunger and this is the reduced number from the previous year where it was estimated at around 725,000. Perhaps the reduction can attributed to government subsidy on agriculture made by government. There high level of government pronouncements on the fight against crime, corruption and

gender-based violence but this has not yet yielded any much progress or even to improve weak governance. There is still national audit backlog and much more indiscipline public service towards service delivery agenda. The reality of economic instability is getting into us due to the global recession as evidenced by the decline in SACU resources. The HIV and AIDS epidemic though said to stabilise at the moment but the prevalence is still high at the rate of 23%, thus making the country the third in the world of those countries that are highly hit by the HIV and AIDS. This is critical to the lives of ordinary citizens particularly where unemployment rate is more than 40%. In this period, there is clear indication that the effects of climate change are beginning to impact negatively to agricultural productive. These challenges are exacerbating the food insecurity as the priorities of the government are not showing evidence that it is responding to these challenges adequately.

The net results of these challenges are seen as a way that excludes poor people and limit their efforts for effective policy engagement. Further, global recession that had been experienced in the past three years has affected the aid flow in most developed and developing countries and this had been evidenced by the limited resource flow for both government and civil society organisations.

The policy frameworks such as Lesotho Vision 2020, National Strategic Development Plan and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) – National Plan of Action have not contributed much to the challenges of weak governance, HIV and AIDS, poverty and injustice experienced by the majority of Basotho. Though the blue prints offered hope for better development that would benefit the poor and excluded in Lesotho. 43% of the population lives in poverty while 40% of this represents people who are living in abject poverty and this is a challenge for new Coalition Government and civil society formations in the country. LCN programmes and operations were based on this kind of context.

### **3.0 Programmes and Projects**

The projects and programmes of Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) form part of the organisational development and governance agenda that LCN pursue with the aim of leading transformational agenda. They are basically aligned to the Strategic Plan of the Council which that ended in 2012. Based on the Strategic Plan, the following were the Six Strategic Focus of which the programmes and projects were based on:-

- ☞ Strengthening civil society,
- ☞ Environment protection and stewardship,
- ☞ Economic justice,
- ☞ Good governance and accountability,
- ☞ Responding to HIV and AIDS,
- ☞ Harnessing information technology

Following the above-mentioned Strategic Focus, the programmes and projects implemented during this reporting year included the following:-

- ☞ Capacity Building Project
- ☞ HIV and AIDS Technical Assistance Project
- ☞ Public Participation and Non state Actors

### **3.1 Capacity Building Project**

The overall goal of the Capacity Building Project is to facilitate effective participation of NGOs in national efforts to address Lesotho development challenges by enhancing their capacity to engage government policy making processes. It further aims at addressing the capacity limitations of the Council as an umbrella body, in coordination, governance and leadership. This project has been predominately funded by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). Its life span was three years with extension of another year ended April 2013. Due to challenges encountered towards the end of the project, the project accountability was extended until 30 August 2013. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Squib Foundation through Institute of Development Management (IDM) contributed to some other activities undertaken under this theme. Below are some of activities implemented during this reporting period:-

#### **3.1.1 Research and Data Management Training Workshop**

A skills building workshop was organised for the six secretariat staff and two volunteers on research and data management. The approach to the workshop was highly interactive and practical. What was learned from the workshop, particularly on research methods, was tested on real life situation. That is, participants were given an assignment to collect data from the nearby village as a way to put closer to practice what we learned. The training on data management gave results immediately after the staff returned to office because they started using SPSS they learned about during the training. Mapping and needs assessment data under the Public Participation and Non State Actors funded by European Union (EU) was analysed using SPSS.

#### **3.1.2 Conflict Management and Mediation Training Workshop**

Another skills building workshop was organised, in consultation with the United Nations Development Programme, on conflict management and mediation. The training touched on a number of live experiences from organisational level and national level conflict resolutions. A total of 35 people from civil society organisations and government institutions such as the army benefited from the training. It is assumed that the training has contributed in empowering participants with skills in dealing conflicts at all levels of society.

#### **3.1.3 Governance Training**

LCN in collaboration with IDM and IEMS offers trainings for capacitating NGO on various aspects of NGO management. The trainings are mostly facilitated by IDM as the organiser of the project. The project is supported by Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. LCN managed to send 12 representatives of different organizations for different trainings thus far. The Council is responsible for delivering NGO Governance and M&ER Trainings. In September 2013, LCN facilitated governance training workshop of 50 participants at IDM of which 42 were females while only 8 were males. The training was based on IDM standards of standards and assessments. It is hoped that this will continue in the next financial year of the Council. The Council noted that some of its members are not able to pay M150 per trainee to IDM but there was a feeling that organisations should take responsibility.

### **3.2 HIV/AIDS Technical Assistance Project**

The project is aimed at contributing to the development of an effective of civil society in the implementation of the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016. The project operates in the six (6) districts of Maseru, Berea, Leribe, Mafeteng, Thaba-tseka and Mohale's hoek. It contributes to LCN capacity programme. It is supported by the World Bank through the Ministry of Health.

This project was supposed to start last year but the procurement process took a long time. The target is to implement it in six districts (Maseru, Leribe, Thaba-Tseka, Mafeteng, Mohale's hoek, Berea) where about 15 organisations would be reached per district. The trainings have been informed by a mapping and capacity needs exercise that was conducted in 2012. The project is continuing to deliver the training as narrated below.

Firstly, there was HIV/AIDS competence training which exposed participants on new developments on HIV Testing & Counselling; prevention of mother to child transfusion; treatment and adherence; and psychosocial support. These were particularly delivered in Leribe, Berea and Mafeteng and a total of 105 participants from both Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and national organisations had benefited from the trainings.

Secondly, there was training on organisational development and management. The training exposed participants to processes involved in constitution development, registration and administration; book keeping; fund raising and reporting. So far the training has only been in Mafeteng. Twenty four (24) participants from twelve (12) community-based organisations benefited from the training where female participants were 22 and 2 male participants.

The trainings were conducted by a private consultancy firm and the Council took responsibility of monitoring. As an attempt to measure the improvement of knowledge and skills, pre and post knowledge and skills assessments were

conducted by training facilitators, however, reports of the assessments were not yet submitted at the time of writing this report.

Nonetheless, inferences have been done during group discussions and presentations that participants generally comprehended the subject matter imparted to them. Each workshop was targeting 30 participant based on mapping made. What comes out quite prominently in the few training conducted so far is that females are much more involved than males in HIV/AIDS issues. The project will end in February 2014.

In addition to this support there was a public dialogue the state of service delivery in the health facilities in Lesotho supported by ACBF. A total of 46 people participated in the dialogue with 19 Males and 27 Females. The participants were drawn from different stakeholders; development partners, civil society organizations, parliament represented by social cluster portfolio, health professionals associations, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Development Planning, and Ministry. The purpose was to identify challenges and contribute in addressing the challenges as well as improving engagement of civil society organisations. The dialogue created a lot of awareness and the commission was subsequently invited to provide the updates of dialogue on Lesotho Television. The National Assembly MDG Committee, on the other hand, expressed interest in the discussion that was made. They indicated that they would like to have consultative meetings with LCN to engage further in identifying how stakeholders can complement each other.

### **3.3 Public Participation and Non State Actors Project**

The Project intends to create a platform for NGOs and Non-State Actors to influence policy implementation and enactment where none exist. The Project areas are Maseru, Mokhotlong, and Qacha's nek, Thaba-tseka, Mafeteng, Mohale'shoek and Quthing. . The project also offers trainings on NGO capacity areas. The Project further aims at conducting social campaigns on various issues of policy advocacy, human rights, pro-poor national budget allocations etc. In particular, the following activities have been undertaken;

First, mapping and needs assessment was conducted in all the six districts of the Project. The report of the needs assessment is the base used to inform the training plan. The exercise covered 93 organisations in all. The assessment assessed the general capacity of the NGOs.

Further the project conducted Human Rights Trainings for People with Disability in the Mafeteng district. There were 30 representatives of the PWDs trained on Human Rights for the disabled carte. They were also mobilized on the importance of participating in the development agenda as it unfolds in their own community councils.

### **3.3.1 Pro-poor Budget Allocation**

The community parliament was co-organised with Development for Peace Education (DPE) for community members from Lehlakaneng E04, Ramoetsana E03, in Mafeteng; Khoelenya F03, Senqunyane F07 in Mphahlele; Telle G04, Mphaki G05 in Quthing; Qanya H01, Ntsupe H02 Qacha'snek; Seate J01 in Mokhotlong; Khutlo-se-Metsi K02 in Thaba-tseka; and Lilala A07 in Maseru were ferried to Maseru to present their development priorities Ministers and other policy makers.

The Community Councils were joined by members of civil society organisations based in Maseru and various media houses. Approximately 200 people participated in the national community parliament. The government ministries were presented with questions and issues from the communities prior to the national community parliaments for their preparations. The issues that topped the discussions were pertaining to access roads, water and electricity. The ministries that were represented were the Ministry of Water, Energy and Meteorology; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defence, Police and National Defence; Ministry of Education and Training; Ministry of Development Planning; and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Ministry of Local Government, Chieftainship and Parliamentary Affairs. The general commitment from the ministries was that the issues are pertinent and worth consideration for the development of the country. Although the expectation was that Ministers were to answer questions from the communities by themselves, a few did whereas many sent Principal Secretaries and or senior officials from the ministries.

### **3.3.2 2012/13 Budget Speech Analysis**

Third, budget analysis was organised at two levels; first as pre-budget forum in which CSOs, on the basis of current socio-economic context of Lesotho, anticipate areas that the budget 2013/14 should be focused on. Then upon the presentation of the budget before the parliament, a post budget analysis forum was convened. The budget was analysed and gaps were presented to the Deputy Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Development Planning in February 2013.

In addition to the forum held, both electronic and print media were engaged and this gave Basotho an opportunity to appreciate more the work of civil society organisations. Although this is a good initiative, there is a public outcry about the monitoring of the implementation of the budget allocated to the ministries and also the backlog of the public accounts audits. This compromises the good initiative of enhancing government accountability electorate.

## **4.0 Resource Mobilisation and Funding Initiatives**

LCN depends heavily on resources given by different donors both in Lesotho and outside. These funds are based on the proposals submitted and LCN has to comply



with the contents of the contracts signed and implementation plan. This year marked the end of project funding from African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) which funded most of capacity building activities. The project had been funded for a period of four years. However, significant funding has been mobilised from the European Union for Deepening Decentralisation Programme in Lesotho. The Project will be implemented in partnership with Send a Cow Lesotho, Campaign for Education Forum, Transformation Resource Centre, together with PAVA, CESA and Lesotho National Women Council as associates. Along that there has been resource from Ministry of Development Planning and UNDP for consultations on Post 2015 Development Agenda.

As the time nearing 2015, the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UN called to countries to state preparation for the development of post 2015 development agenda that is informed by the disadvantaged and marginalised groups who do not normally participate in mainstream development. LCN was requested to do the consultation on behalf of the Ministry of Development Planning and (UNDP) on consultancy basis. NGOs, and CBOs including women associations, HIV/AIDS support groups, youth, people with disabilities, farmers associations, chiefs and community councillors in the ten districts were consulted on what believed should be Lesotho priorities beyond 2015. The report of these consultations formed part of the Prime Minister presentation to United Nations' General Assembly as the contribution of Lesotho into post 2015 development agenda. Below is a table that reflects on the donors that supported LCN work during this reporting period:-

Table 1

<b>Project</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Grant Total of the Support</b>
Capacity Building	ACBF	2007 – 2013	USD1,420,525.18
HIV/AIDS Technical Assistance Project	World Bank	2011 – 2014	USD290,494.30
Public Participation & Capacity Building for NSAs	European Union	2012 – 2015	E178,000.00
Post 2015 development agenda	UNDP	2013	M217,000.00
Deepening Decentralisation Programme	European Union	2013 – 2016	E1,350, 000.00

## **5.0 Networking**

## **5.1 NGO Week and AGM**

LCN host NGO week- cum Annual General Meeting (AGM) in December 2012. The NGO week is platform for dialogue and interaction of stakeholders in the development work on issues of national importance. The NGO week attracted about 300 participants from civil society organisations, government officials, government parastatals, and development partners including EU, Irish aid, PACT, GIZ and the UNDP. The NGO Week used two main approaches to deal with development and policy issues namely; plannery and parallel sessions. The issues discussed ranged from Aid Effectiveness, Governance, Government Partnership with Civil Society Organisations, Economic Partnerships Agreements (EPAs), just to mention a few. These dialogues have created and increased awareness on a number of policy issues among civil society organisations, development partners and the government of Lesotho.

The NGO week was followed by an AGM which of course was only attended by members of LCN. The AGM review narrative and financial reports and subsequently made AGM resolutions. The summit of the AGM was the election of Board of Directors.

## **5.2 Civil Society Forum**

The purpose of civil society forum is to create platform for experience and information sharing on various areas of organisational development. In this reporting period, the forum decided on *NGO good governance* as the subject of discussion for 2013. CSOs shared their governance experiences. Lessons were learnt from best practices and worst practices. Three (3) forums have been held in 2013 benefiting sixty (60) people from fifty (50) civil society organisations. The project is supported jointly by both PACT and LCN. Participants have been more exposed to sources of governance problems and ways to do with them.

## **5.3 Government and Regional Networking**

LCN remains as one of national and regional player where it has been invited to various meetings. These meetings include those of Lesotho Country Coordinating Mechanism (LCCM) on HIV/ADS, TB and Malaria, SADC Council of NGOs (SADC CNGOs), SADC Electoral Support Network (SADC ESN), SADC Secretariat and other regional institutions. In most cases it is the government of Lesotho that extends invitation to the Council. Sometimes member organisations are asked to represent the Council in such meetings.

## **6.0 Supporting Programme**

These are programmes supporting the key LCN programmes and include human resources, information and communication and information technology.

## **6.1 Human Resource**

Currently LCN has the following staff complement to do its work;

Executive Director;  
Programs Director;  
Health & Social Development Coordinator;  
Economic Justice Coordinator;  
Accountant;  
Driver;  
Office Keeper and  
Four Volunteers

During this period LCN has been challenged by high staff turnover. In this reporting period alone LCN lost the two Commission Coordinators and Finance Manager. The main factor has been the coming to an end of the ACBF support. However, more financial resources have been mobilised to recruit three more commission's coordinators and the Finance and Administration Manager.

## **6.2 Information and Communication**

The main objective of the unit is to ensure that there is sharing of information within and beyond the civil society sector as well as communicating effectively with the public through different communications channels within and beyond Lesotho. One issue of the NGO WEB was produced for this reporting period. The articles covered various issues of development and governance. 150 copies of the issue were printed and disseminated amongst civil society organisations, government departments, development partners, political parties and media houses. The unit keeps regular and continuous updates on the LCN website with news, upcoming events, press release etc.

All the library books have been indexed, catalogued and put on shelves. The library can now be used as source of reading materials and information centre by researchers and all members of public.

## **7.0 The life of Commissions**

LCN is organized into sectoral commissions for effective coordination and management of members' programmes. The main objective of establishing the commissions is to group NGOs with similar programmes or objectives together in order to facilitate the work of coordination by LCN secretariat and networking among member organisations. However, due to scarcity of resources some commissions such women and children, Disaster Management and Humanitarian

Relief did not implement any activities in this period. Below are LCN commissions and activities they have been involved with.

1. Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources
2. Disaster Management and Humanitarian Relief
3. Democracy and Human Rights
4. Economic Justice
5. Health and Social Development
6. Women and Children

### **7.1 Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Commission**

There have been two (2) meetings under this commission which addressed different issues including the contribution of civil society in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The Commission held a consultation meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security to make its input in the CAADP. Members of the Commission displayed their material during the launching and signing of the compact in Lesotho, of which LCN president is the signatory.

LCN had radio slot with Thakhube FM to host climate change debate. In this period six (6) live broadcasts have been hosted. Some of the institutions presented included: Lesotho Environmental Justice and Advocacy Centre (LEJAC), Disaster Management Authority (DMA) Earth Hour, Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) and Transformation Resource Centre (TRC). The programme had generated a lot of listenership in the climate change programme. The programme however stopped with the departure of the then Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources who used to host the programme.

The commission held for its members a session on the 18<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP 18). The purpose of this session was to share information on the proceedings and the outcome of the COPs and map out the way forward including forging working relationships between and among different actors in climate change issues. The discussion dwelled on such issues as financing and COP 18 outcomes. The session did not only help participants to understand better concept in climate change, but also exposed them to various sources of fund for climate change interventions. Some of these sources are Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF), Adaptation Fund and Special climate Change Fund (SCCF).

The Commission further held a dialogue on Ensuring Environmental Sustainability as MDG 7 on UNDP report shows that Lesotho is making slow progress towards 2015. The dialogue was organized in a panel discussion and the panel was made up experts from CSOs, department of environment, the parliamentary portfolio

committee on Natural Resources. The dialogue exposed participants to various causes, mitigation and adaptation strategies as well as current climate change debate at the global level.

Lesotho was struck by armyworm in January/February 2013. Mostly, the pest attacked the northern part of the country and other central districts such as Maseru. It mostly attacked maize. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security embarked on the spraying campaign in the affected districts namely; Leribe, Maseru and Berea. As result of this infestation, Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LCN) contributed to fighting the outbreak by embarking on the campaign in the Leribe district. Ha Rampai and Tale were selected in consultation with Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, both at the Headquarters and district level. Participants were drawn from LCN's member commission.

Although this was organized by the Disaster Management and Humanitarian and Agriculture and Environment and Natural Resources Commissions, other commissions took part in the activity. About 62 people took part in the activity from LCN's membership. Some people from the villages in the neighbourhood had attended being backed up by Agricultural Field staff from Leribe district. Ministry of Agriculture provided sprayers, respirators and insecticide and water. However, LCN through her member organizations such as Rural Self-Help Development Organisations (RSDA) provided technical supervision and equipment such as sprayers and protective clothing. One bus was hired for transporting the participants to Leribe. The activity was also attended by some of the advanced farmers in the district and the local authority such as the councilor. The area sprayed is estimated at six hectares, both at Tale and Rampai.

## **7.2 Disaster Management and Humanitarian Relief Commission**

The only activity that the commission coordinated was the campaign against the armyworm already described under Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources. This was because scarcity of finance resources to support disaster and humanitarian activities. The Commissioner for this Commission has been attending some of the Disaster Management Authority training which is very useful in informing our planning in the coming year.

## **7.3 Democracy and Human Rights**

Under this Commission there have been two meetings held. The meetings addressed issues related to the Civil Registration processes, invitation of the Democratic Congress in which they requested LCN support in stopping the Prime Minister from interfering with the Judiciary. Other issues discussed included Community Parliament and role of CSO in the establishment of the Human Rights Commission. Since we

have indicated that there is no adequate staff at the moment, this Commission suffered like others. However, the Commission was able to deploy elections observers in Zimbabwe. LCN was invited by SADC through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ESNP and SADC-Council of NGOs. LCN deployed a total of 9 observers.

#### **7.4 Health and Social Development Commission**

The Commission held 3 Commission meetings. The meetings among others discussed the Social Development Draft Policy and decentralization of health services as envisaged by Ministry of Health.

ADAAL and Blue Cross led the Commission and joined hands to form the network which has drawn participation of some members of the commission to focus on advocacy for the approval and implementation of the Alcohol Policy. The network is named Alcohol Policy Alliance of Lesotho. In their effort to establish the network LCN supported ADAAL in the development of the proposal which has been submitted to the donor (Blue Cross Norway) and preparation of the advocacy training to be conducted this month, the training will include participation of commission members and other relevant bodies.

It should be noted that HATP project activities were implemented this commission as they are actually health issues.

#### **7.5 Economic Justice Commission**

The Commission held two meetings which discussed among others issues related to increase in bus fares and their negative impact to the general public, challenges faced by the majority of the poor who lose their land property through 'selling' it in an attempt to meet their basic needs, an advocacy on enactment of Public Participation Act

In its programme of monitoring the Budget Circle, the commission undertook a budget tracking exercise to assess the performance of the Ministry of Education and Training's free primary education programme. The choice of the ministry is in light of the fact education takes the biggest proportion of the national budget of which the biggest percentage goes to free primary education programme. The report of the budget tracking is however yet to be finalised.

The commission also held training on its members on Budget Tracking and Budget Making processes of the Government of Lesotho. There were 28 participants in the training comprised of 14 females and 14 males. The training was an eye opener especially for those members who are involved in budget tracking activities as it highlighted a tentative time table for government budget cycle.

Most of economic justice issues have been discussed under the Public Participation and Non State Actors Capacity Building for Development project.

## **7.6 Women and Children Commission**

The commission held one meeting which discussed the LCN Annual Plan for 2012/13. Other issues discussed included the lack of funding of which LCN was faced with regarding the work on women and children. The commission members shared their activities and finally they resolved that the secretariat should seek financial support for 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. The commission is part of the initiative geared towards child protection system review, an initiative of the Ministry of Social Development funded by UNICEF.

## **8.0 Policy and Leadership Support**

The Board of Directors held its own meeting where they approved the work plans and budget for Secretariat. There was also consultation on the Strategic Plan by the Consultant. The Executive Committee has been appraised on the Secretariat performance in its meetings.

LCN Board has the wish to orientate itself but also to develop Board Charter for the Council but this did not materialise due to lack of adequate funding. It should be noted that ACBF funding was targeted for this activity but since there was no financial transfer until September 2013, this affected this noble idea.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

For the reporting period staff LCN has experienced a high staff turnover due to limited resources to retain staff. The council has benefitted on the recruitment of volunteer staff to compliment the loss.

The Council also faced a serious resource depletion challenge where it seems that the donor world is not positive at moment; however, resource mobilisation responsibility has been included in every coordinator terms of reference, whereas in the past it has been a prerogative of the Programmes Director and the Executive Director. To that effect a number of proposals have been written some of which, its benefits were reaped beyond the reporting period.

The secretariat continues to be part of strategic partnerships and continues to serve in the relevant ministerial committees.

Member organisations also have more expectation to the Council to support them. This is more so when the Council no longer has a pool funding beyond the project based funding which cannot even support some of the Commission activities.