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PRESS STATEMENT

Leaving No One Behind dialogue – Putting the last first

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Several issues affecting the poor and marginalised groups were at the forefront of discussions when Africa Monitor, in partnership with African Unite, held the Leave No one Behind (LNoB) Dialogue Session in Cape Town recently.

The Leave No One Behind is a project that aims to “put the last first”, eradicating extreme poverty and addressing the root causes of poverty.

Through the LNoB dialogue sessions, stakeholders and decision makers come together to engage and discuss the issues that affect poor and marginalised communities, and find ways to address their needs.

The event was a huge success, attended by approximately 33 organisations, including representatives of marginalised groups and communities such as People Living with Disability, the LGBTQI, Sex Workers, Farm Workers, Khoisan and youth.

Honorable Ms Wilma Newhoudt-Druchen, a Member of Parliament and a representative for People Living with Disability, was the guest speaker at the event held on 27 October 2016. As someone who lives with disability, Newhoudt-Druchen spoke about the hardships of growing up as a woman from a disadvantaged community, and becoming deaf at an early age. She stated that she had to overcome many challenges and discrimination to be where she is now.

“I encourage all of you here, to stand up and raise your voices,” she said. She further said that her role in Parliament is to constantly make sure that the voices of marginalised people are taken into consideration in developing inclusive policies which need to be implemented by government.

The high level of engagement demonstrated by the marginalised groups that participated at the LNoB programme showed that citizens are desperate for their voices to be heard.

A similar dialogue in the Free State was held on Wednesday, 19 October in ThabaNchu.

The LNoB is not only represented in South Africa but is also recognised in 30 countries with civil society groups that work with and on behalf of the most marginalised and disadvantaged people, especially those living in impoverished communities and who are at high risk of violence and discrimination.

The pledge to Leave No One Behind is at the heart of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. This project aims to encourage governments and development partners to deliver and implement the Sustainable Development Goals in a way that is inclusive and transformative, respecting universality and equity.

The goal is to put the last first, by creating opportunities and services that are accessible for everyone, especially the most vulnerable. Living no one behind essentially means no goal is met unless it is for everyone.

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