DISABILITY NEWSLETTER

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Subscribers

We want to take a moment to express our gratitude to all of you for your continued support and engagement with our newsletter. Your feedback, comments, and suggestions have been instrumental in helping us shape the content and direction of our publication.

in this newsletter, the articles will focus on the importance of inclusive education. We believe that all children. regardless of their abilities or disabilities, should have access to high-quality education that meets their individual needs and helps them reach their full potential.

I'd like to emphasize that our newsletter is a space for all voices and perspectives. We welcome contributions from educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and advocates who are passionate about advancing inclusive education and creating a more equitable and inclusive world.

Thank you once again for your support, and we look forward to sharing our upcoming articles with you.

On that note, if you would like to contribute to the next issue or have received this newsletter from a third party and wish to be included on the mailing list, please contact Molula Mofosi at **molulam@Infod.org.ls** or call +266 2233 0345

Best Regards The Editor



EDITOR- MOLULA MOFOSI



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DISABILITY NEWSLETTER

LNLVIP AWARDS HEROS

MOLULA MOFOSI

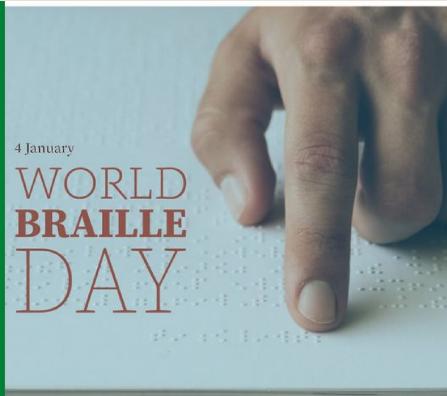
The Lesotho National League for Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) has on the 4th of January awarded several stakeholders for their exemplary service to the community of persons with disabilities. At this ceremony ceremony, the LNLVIP recognized several individuals mainly from the former government of Lesotho for their contributions to disability awareness

The LNLVIP commended these individuals and organizations for their outstanding efforts in creating a more inclusive society for persons with disabilities. The awareness includes the former prime minister Dr Moeketsi Majoro, former minister of home affairs Minister Motlalentoa Letsosa, former minister of Social Development 'Matebatso Doti, as well as Lesaoana Lehohla, the former deputy prime minister of the 2002 parliament. These persons are being recognized for their work in making Lesotho a more accessible place for visually impaired persons.

In addition, the LNLVIP was also celebrating World Braille Day nationwide. World Braille Day is celebrated annually on January 4th to commemorate the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of braille. This day is significant in the lives of visually impaired persons since braille reading and writing enhances their independence and access to education.

The celebration of World Braille Day is an important event for persons with disabilities. It highlights the significance of braille reading and writing in their daily lives. It also serves as a reminder of the important role that stakeholders play in creating a more inclusive society for all persons, regardless of their disabilities. In conclusion, the Lesotho National League for Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) has recognized the importance of disability awareness and advocacy.

Their recent awards ceremony serves as an important reminder of the hard work and dedication that is required to create a more inclusive society for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the celebration of World Braille Day is an important event for persons with disabilities, and one that should be celebrated nationwide. It serves as a reminder of the incredible contribution that Louis Braille made to society, and the incredible power that disabled persons have to change the world.



ADVOCACY



LESOTHO CELEBRATES **WORLD EDUCATION DAY**

MOLULA MOFOSI

Education is a fundamental human right that is essential for the development of individuals and societies. However, this right is often denied to children with disabilities in many countries around the world, including Lesotho. In Lesotho, children with disabilities face many barriers to accessing education, including lack of appropriate infrastructure, limited resources, and negative attitudes towards disability.

The Lesotho education system has made some progress in recent years in promoting inclusive education for children with disabilities. In 2008, the Lesotho government introduced the Inclusive Education Policy, which aims to provide equal educational opportunities to all learners, including those with disabilities. However, despite this policy, many children with disabilities still face significant challenges in accessing

One of the main ways in which the Lesotho education system can be improved to be more accommodative for children with disabilities is through the provision of appropriate infrastructure. Many schools in Lesotho lack basic facilities such as ramps, accessible toilets, and Braille materials, making it difficult for children with disabilities to participate fully in the classroom. The government needs to invest in improving the physical infrastructure of schools to ensure that they are fully accessible to all learners, including those with disabilities.

In addition to improving infrastructure, the Lesotho education system can also be made more accommodative for children with disabilities through the provision of appropriate resources. Many children with disabilities require specialized equipment or materials to enable them to learn effectively. For example, children with visual impairments may need Braille textbooks or audio materials, while those with hearing impairments may require sign language interpreters. The government should ensure that all learners with disabilities have access to the necessary resources to enable them to learn effectively.

Another important aspect of promoting inclusive education in Lesotho is the need to address negative attitudes towards disability. Many children with disabilities face discrimination and stigma in their communities, which can make it difficult for them to access education. The government needs to work with community leaders and organizations to promote awareness and understanding of disability and to encourage more positive attitudes towards children with disabilities.



GENERAL NEWS

To ensure that teachers are disability-ready and able to provide effective support to children with disabilities, there is a need for specialized training programs. Teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to support learners with disabilities in their classrooms. This includes understanding different disabilities and their implications for learning, as well as developing strategies for adapting teaching methods to meet the needs of individual learners. The government should invest in training programs for teachers to ensure that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to support inclusive education.

In conclusion, the right to education for children with disabilities is a fundamental human right that must be promoted and protected. In Lesotho, the government has made some progress in promoting inclusive education, but more needs to be done to ensure that all children, including those with disabilities, have equal access to education. This requires investment in infrastructure and resources, as well as efforts to address negative attitudes towards disability and provide specialized training for teachers. By working together, we can create a more inclusive education system in Lesotho that enables all learners to reach their full potential.

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WOMEN WITH MENTAL DISABILITY AT HIGH RISK OF GBV

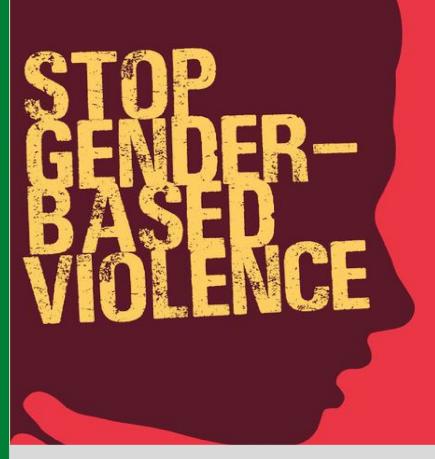
MOLULA MOFOSI

A 28-year-old lady from Mafeteng with mental disability has allegedly been raped by her neighbor. As much as Mats'iliso Mohlomo has a mental disability that has not been clearly defined medically, she projected a good sense of memory as she had clearly explained what happened the night she was raped.

This 28-year-old lady who was first raped at the age of 17 has once identified her molester when all men from the village were called by chief for her to point out her molester. In those day, the molester was not jailed or there was no case open as the molester negotiated to pay off the mistake monetarily. This is the second time Ts'ili as she is usually refereed to is molested. The tip off was made by her neighbor when she met Ts'ili holding a pack of medication. Ts'idy then explained that the medication is for vaginal discharge she is having due to the rape incident she experienced at December 2022.

Tshili's neighbor explains her as very organized person who has a clear routine. She lives alone and knows how to take care of her self as well as her environment. As LNFOD visited her, Ts'ili explained in an interview "Ntate entered around at night whole I was sleeping and he asked who am I with. He then undressed me then raped me. After he id that he told me that I should not tell anyone including his wife. After that he then gave me M100"

Her neighbor 'Mathabo Tlou worked hand in hand with the local journalist to open a case at the local police station however when LNFOD investigated whether the case was open or not, the local station commander refused to disclose the progression of the report. It was explained by her neighbor that Ts'idy is a double orphan and she was put on an undisclosed contraception where she cannot be pregnant anymore. In conversation with the local headman man, she mentioned that she has not taken any step thus far in assisting the survivor in getting the justice she deserves.



GENERAL NEWS

According to a recent study conducted by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), women with mental disabilities are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing rape and sexual assault compared to women without disabilities.

The study found that women with mental disabilities are three times more likely to experience rape or sexual assault than women without disabilities. Additionally, the study found that women with mental disabilities are often targeted by perpetrators who know they are vulnerable and may have difficulty reporting the crime.

The NSVRC is calling for increased awareness and resources to protect women with mental disabilities from sexual violence, as well as improved training for law enforcement and healthcare professionals to better identify and respond to cases of sexual assault.

Advocates for women with disabilities are urging policymakers to prioritize the issue of sexual violence against women with disabilities, and to develop comprehensive strategies to prevent and address this pervasive issue.



PEOPLE YOU **MAY KNOW**

Meet - Dr Malvika Iyer, on 26 May 2002, at age 13, she accidentally picked up a diffused grenade bomb at her home in Bikaner, Rajasthan that exploded in her hands, blew off both her hands and severely damaged her legs.

There was little hope for her survival when she was taken to the hospital. She was conscious but in terrible pain. Subsequent to surviving that night, she had to undergo surgeries across 2 years and was bedridden for 18 months.

Against all odds, at age 28, she obtained a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Social Work from the University of Madras. She also holds a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) in Social Work from the University of Madras, a Master of Social Work (M.S.W) in Social Work from Delhi University and a Bachelor of Arts (B.A) in Economics from St. Stephen's College.

Dr Malvika Iyer's story is one of courage and determination. She has come a long way from surviving a gruesome bomb blast at the age of 13 that blew off both her hands and severely damaged her legs, to winning the highest civilian honor from the President of India.

Today, she is an award-winning Disability Rights Activist and International Motivational Speaker - inspiring millions of people to forget their limitations and take on the world with confidence and hope.

"When the bomb blew up my hands, the doctors were under a lot of pressure to save my life so they made some surgical errors while stitching back my right hand, the stump has a bone protruding out which is not covered by any flesh. But that very mistake has proven so incredible that the bone acts like my only finger. That's how I type," said Dr Malvika Iyer.

Dr. Malvika Iyer - Quotes'

"The only disability in life is a bad attitude."

"I have come to realize that I could be the President of India and people would still pity me. It's in their nature. Now I concentrate on my own abilities and not people's reactions towards me. That's all it took to change my life"

"The next time you see someone differently-abled, think about it - We are all people and we have to remember that at all times, those people didn't choose to be born or have that disability, that is just how things go from time to time. Do not stand and stare, rather be empathetic, respectful and inclusive."

SOURCE: WOMEN POWER AFRICA



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