

EDITOR'S NOTE

the graduation season is approaching, and inclusive education is the most covered topic of this month's newsletter. despite the slow progress of the implementation of the inclusive education policy by the government, the involved stakeholders are however thoroughly involved in accommodating inclusivity in schools and how education is approached, from teachers to non-governmental organizations and further as the new government approaches, the foundations have been laid out by the stakeholders.



EDITOR- MOLULA MOFOSI

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 mofosidorcas@gmail.com or call +266 58020181

Best Regards
The Editor

"DISABILITY IS NOT INABILITY"

MOLULA MOFOSI

On October 27, 2022, the first book published by a person with speech and hearing impairment was officially launched in Maseru. Itumeleng Molise, who was born and raised in the village of Phororong in the district of Maseru, has written her first fiction book, which follows the life of a deaf girl. The book's title is "BOKOOA HA SE BOKULI," and it is divided into three parts. "The first part of the book is about advocacy; the second part is about the pain and challenges the character faces; and the last part is about triumphant moments."

Itumeleng Molise, a 24-year-old woman who took time to accept her hearing and speech impairment, stated that because she was not born with this disability and had spent most of her childhood hearing until she was 10 years old, she hoped that one day her hearing would return. Only a decade later, as she gets older and needs to participate in life actively like any adult, one challenge after another did she began accepting that she is deaf, because as she stated, she could not overcome challenges unless she accepts herself.

Molise mentions that, she had always loved performing arts (Theater drama) but due to her speech and hearing impairment, that might take her longer than, she anticipated. "That is when the idea of writing a book came about, I wanted to write a relatable story to those that with hearing and speech impairment, for them not to lose hope and be motivated."

In response to where what her next steps are, Molise shared that she working towards encouraging schools to include her book in the Sesotho Literature Curriculum, as the book is written in Sesotho. She further disclosed that she would like to write another fiction story (book) that incorporates all kinds of disability.



ADVOCACY

The book was greatly sponsored by Lesotho Cooperative Credit Union (LCCUL). Itumeleng on a regular week is a hawker, sells edibles through out town and the LCCUL office just happed to be one of the offices. As she tirelessly seeks for financial assistance to publish the book, the LCCUL office had considered her proposal. The director of LCCUL Mohau Nqosa mentions that Itumeleng's proposal was received on the month the cooperation was celebrating International Credit Union Day, where the theme of the year 2022 was "Empower Your Economic Future with Credit Union"

Mohau Nqosa says "this is our way of fulfilling the theme of the International Credit Union Day, by empowering a young woman with disability economically. The book has secured her financial future." Amongst those who passed their acknowledgements of the book are the British High Commissioner Harry McDonald as he prompts the accelerating inclusion of persons with disability, as they are equally talented. The department of African Languages National University of Lesotho as well as NADL, who were at the forefront of assisting Itumeleng Molise on publishing her book

TEACHERS RECEIVE TRAINING ON ASSISTIVE DEVICES

MOLULA MOFOSI

While many countries have signed the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities, implementing the idea of the conversions another matter. Successful implantation of inclusive education is not just a matter of more resources. Many things could potentially be done if governments would be more effective in establishing goals and measurements and enforcing policies.

Projects including assistive for education often rely on external donors and rarely receive government funding. A commonly used approach is cooperation of several Different non-governmental Organisations each with their specific expertise. In cooperation with Lesotho Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) UNICEF alongside editmicro have conducted a 4-day training of teachers on assistive devices that were donated to the inclusive schools in.... by UNICEF. Editmicro is a South African based compony that is finding alternative and cutting-edge technology for learners of all abilities to improve curriculum delivery with a high-speed connectivity, ongoing support and professional development. Most of their products are designed to improve curriculum in a class room or lecture.



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Schools that were included in the training are schools that have a number of children with disabilities. The schools were Tertiary institutes, high schools and primary schools and were divided in days according to the kind of disability they accommodate. Some schools accommodate a higher number of visual impairment and some accommodate a high number of learning disability just to give an example. Amongst the schools present were St. Benardad primary, Mabathosana high school, ST. Katherines and Lesotho college of education to mention a few. The ministry of education predominately the special education unit had participated in the training

With an emphasis from editmicro that technology does not change how things are done but advances how they are done, teachers should be familiar with techniques and tools that facilitate learning by children with disability. In developing countries, Assistive technologies in most cases are not used at all in ordinary school because education of children with disabilities is challenged in itself in most developing countries with Lesotho not being an exception. "our goal as UNICEF is not to not Only see children is schools but to see them learning effectively". Inclusive education is a holistic view of education as it requires commitment from national level, school level and network level (who cooperates with whom for implementation and maintenance of Inclusive Education.) LNFOD, UNICEF and Editmicro through such small-scale teacher training initiatives are laying a foundation of how the inclusive education policy should be adapted and implemented in Lesotho

ASSISTIVE DEVICES DONATED TO 20 SCHOOLS

MOLULA MOFOSI

Following an encounter with the ambassador from the embassy of republic of Korea, National Association of the Deaf Lesotho has received a total of 15 tablets and 2 smart boards. The encounter was at brief an enquiry of how the embassy can help persons with disability mainly the deaf. However the main need of the association is to have a learning center of persons with speech and hearing impairment.

Subsequent to the declaration of not being able to provide that, the Korean Embassy expressed that, with the agreement had with Samsung to give donate electrical devices, the possibility would be the distribution of the devices through schools. With the help of NADL, there were close to 20 schools that were chosen to be given the devices, where by the quantity of the devices was determined by the capacity of the student. The schools were primary schools, high schools and skills centers. Schools with a larger number received 10 tablets and 1 smart board while schools with a smaller number received 5 tablets and 1 smart board, the chairman of NADL Let'sekha Ntlale expressed that the tablets are just as the Korean ambassador envisioned an implementation of inclusive education and further noted that Lesotho needs to advance technologically so that learning for children with disabilities can be easier.



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“A great number of young adults staying at home after completing high school is increasing, and the idea now is to use this smart boards and tablets to assist them in any kind of education they may require for their self-development or professional development such as computer literacy or advocacy education.” The chairmen expressed.

The embassy has cooperated well with the ministry of education and the devices were distributed without any challenge. With a continuous advocacy work, the relevance of assistive technology does not only serve students with disabilities but also serves greatly to students with non-disabilities. The school that has recorded the high number of students with speech and hearing impairment is Mount ROYAL High school with almost 200 students, the tablets and smart boards are a great start to encourage enrollment of children with disabilities in schools at any level with the ultimate goal of including learners with disabilities in the mainstream educational systems.

MAPUTSOE SAVINGS ON A GREAT START

MOULA MOFOSI

As LNFOD is committed to empowering women economically, different ways in which women can empower themselves have been implemented. From farming to credit schemes. One which executes to be very successful is Maputsoe Savings. A credit scheme where women loan money from the credit union for whatever personal purposes. As the credit union closes its books on the 1st of November, and the women share the profits among themselves, they expressed the optimism they have for the credit union as there have not been any challenges as far as members not paying on time and security of the treasure.

Maputsoe savings consist of 18 women with all kinds of disability which the dominating is physical disability. The women through out time pay a monthly subscription ranging from M100 to M500 depending on what one is able to put on the table that month, in other words, the monthly subscription varies. When speaking to one of the members who had earned the most profits, 'Mamatebele Lit'seho, she mentioned that being the breadwinner at home with no spouse, the credit union has made a greater difference in her life as she is now able to buy furniture and pay school fees for her child and nieces. She further expressed that most women in the credit union are street vendors and depend on informal channels of income. "The credit union has become my second family; the ladies are warm and I feel like I belong as there is no form of marginalization of any kind. We are all equal" 'Mamatebele continued.



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"The credit union has clearly upgraded the standard of living for these women and they are able to fiancé other projects such as livestock farming, the chairperson of the union mot'selisi Moreboli, affirmed the growth of the credit union as the ladies seem greatly involved in the coordination of the union. "The union only welcomes women with disability that are permanent inhabitants of Maputsoe, as much as it would be a great pleasure to have more members, but that is the standard we are holding for risk management. This is a generational initiative and security amongst all things is our priority."

"We are further grateful to LNFOD for making us come together and form this credit union, and further grateful for the workshops the aspiring members by then have gone through, including myself" the chairman expressed.

PEOPLE YOU
MAY KNOW

Meet - Mercia Viriato Lica, Mozambique's youngest elected Member of Parliament (MP), Lawyer and Disability Advocate. On 13 January 2020, at age 23, she became the youngest MP ever in the Republic of Mozambique's history, when she took the oath of office among other 249 parliamentarians.

Because of a birth defect, she has no upper limbs. Typing on a phone, writing on paper, drinking water, using a computer — all this and a number of other activities that require hands and arms, she does with her feet. Hon. Lica obtained a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) in Law from Maputo's Pedagogical University in 2019. In an interview, held on her inauguration day as a parliamentarian, Mercia discussed how she intends to inspire young Mozambicans:

"I hope to contribute to the development of the country in schooling and education. To encourage young people to never stop studying because education is the right path in life. I believe that by being here in the great chamber, I will encourage and inspire many people by the things I will do during my mandate. I believe that when people look at me and see that I am capable, they will also manage to take action," said Hon. Mercia Viriato Lica.



PARTNERS IN ADVOCACY

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