

# DISABILITY LESOTHO



## From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome once again to the edition of Disability Lesotho. Disability Lesotho is a platform whereby persons with disabilities, Disabled People's Organisations and Individuals are sharing their views on issues of disability. This edition is covering news for the Month of April, 2019

I always ask myself whether persons with disabilities should pay tax or not. To my understanding tax is used by the nation to settle all difficulties faced by citizens, but when it comes to disabled persons this becomes a rock, which cannot be removed. I think Lesotho must do something about how the utilize funds of Basotho. I real like this country but when it comes to tax and Basotho people with disabilities, I feel like crying.

As persons with disabilities have families and children to care for, they also have other forms of an additional medical expenses. But Lesotho looks like a tortoise when coming to pushing issues of law especially for Disability, which we hope will help Basotho with disabilities.

There are no houses, no jobs, no access to justice, no accessible infrastructure, no disability grants, in general there is nothing for persons with didabilities. I think we will have to think twice and do something for our lives as Persons with disabilities.

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 Pascalina Letsau on (+266) 5905 5406 or [pletsau@gmail.com](mailto:pletsau@gmail.com)

You can also Tweet us [@Infod\\_lesotho](https://twitter.com/Infod_lesotho)

If missed any edition please visit [www.infod.org.ls](http://www.infod.org.ls)

We welcome any feedback that may improve the quality and content of this free service.

Best regards,



The Editor

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

### BUDGET FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF DISABILITY INCLUSIVE AND SPECIFIC POLICY AND LAY

By: Sefuthi Nkhasi

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) is advocating for the enactment of disability specific legislation under the three-year project, "capacity development for the promotion of the rights of people with disabilities" financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) under the auspices of Diakonie Austria (DA).

people with disabilities and access to education respectively.

The project is in its third year of implementation, the external evaluation has been engaged to determine the success of the program, relevance, efficiency, and sustainability of the project to the beneficiaries beyond the implementation period.

**Diakonie**   
*Katastrophenhilfe*

**Brot**  
**für die Welt**

The objective of the project is to reduce inequalities suffered by men and women with disabilities living in the program area in terms of social protection, economic empowerment healthcare and access to education through the adoption and implementation of inclusive education policy.

The enactment of disability equity bill into law and the adoption of inclusive education policy is expected to increase protection of the rights of



**LNFOD**

## ADVOCACY ASPECT

### RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL FOR DEAF, DEAF- BLIND AND THOSE WITH SPEECH DISABILITIES: SEC 12(1)(B)

By: Makatleho Molotsi

In Section 12(1) (b) of the Supreme law of Lesotho, a person who is charged with a criminal case must be informed of the nature of the offence as soon as practicable in the language understood by the person so charged of the nature of the offence. Despite this constitutional provision, suspects with speech disability and those that are deaf still face a huge challenge when trying to access judicial justice. The Lesotho Judiciary does not have sign language interpreters and tactile sign language interpreters.



## JUDICIARY



None of the judicial officers has these skills. As a result, there is usually a communication barrier between the judicial officers and the criminal suspect whenever, the suspect is deaf, deaf- blind or has speech disability. This extremely compromises the constitutional right of the suspect to fair trial. It also tramples over the international standards on human rights to which Lesotho has subscribed. It is high time that preparations are speedily made to avail sign language and tactile sign language in the Course of Lesotho including the Basotho Courts (Local Courts). This will enable this group of people to access the right to fair trial on equal basis with others.

## GENERAL NEWS

### BUSINESS CAN BE ANYWHERE, WITH EVERYTHING - PHONE CHARGING BUSINESS

By: Pascalina Letsau

'Matlali Masoabi, a woman with physical from Ha Lentiti but now stays at Semonkong in the Maseru district. 'Matlali has 2 children but is taking care of 5 children. 'I am making everything in my power to reduce poverty in the family.' Says 'Matlali.

It was my pleasure to meet LNFOD, as I got funding amounting to M2,700.00 I thought that the money is so little and cannot afford to do anything with it, as earlier was promised to have M4,000.00 It came to my idea that I can still do something with the money, I looked around me, realized that there are many students around, most of them have phones but no places to recharge them. I then decided to buy Charging systems for phone, different recharging pins, cable, adaptors and on top of them all electricity. I also bought eggs in many trays, airtime and beer in order to earn more income.

Since I started, I managed to make M1,500.00 only with charging phones. I am charging a phone M1.00 per phone. The money that is made out of charging, I do not using it at all. I am willing to open an account at the bank for the business.

The challenge that I am now facing is that; " we had an argument with police officers, they do not want me to sell beer at my work place. So, I told them that I am not going to let it go just like that, I am doing business here." She said.

I am now paying the Loan a got from LNFOD, so that it can help others with the money. I think by the end of March of April I would have been finished all the debt.

I would like to thank LNFOD, its management and funders about the support they made to persons with disabilities, they have done a create work. They have changed lives. People are now respecting Matlali. She managed to buy kitchen rack and the wardrobe. She is now able to buy food for the family." Said Maseabata who was there during the interview.

"Matlali was always asking for help from her neighbor but now we are the ones who are asking for help from her." Concluded



## GENERAL NEWS

### Towards a Rights-Based Approach to Disability: Reporting on Disability by Media in Lesotho

By: Ady Namanan Coulibaly

Ady Namanan Coulibaly, a holder of a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies from the Ghana Institute of Journalism and a student at the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria undertook field research in Maseru, Lesotho from 8 to 12 April 2019. This was part of requirements for the MPhil in Human Rights and Democratisation programme at the Centre for Human Rights. The study, entitled “towards a rights-based approach to disability: reporting on disability by media in Lesotho” aimed at researching the representation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) the media, focusing on newspapers and online news media in Lesotho. This study comes against the backdrop of the widely acknowledged role of the media in influencing perceptions and attitudes in the society.

The study had a three-fold objective: to identify the nature of reporting on disability by media in Lesotho; to assess media coverage of such issues and to evaluate media awareness of guidelines for reporting on disability. The study covered Public Eye and Lesotho Times, two widely circulated newspapers in Lesotho, as well as the Lesotho News Agency (LENA). Participants of the study included journalists; activists for persons with disabilities; organisations such as the Lesotho Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD), an umbrella body of Lesotho organisations of PWDs whose



mission is to advocate for and protect, promote and defend their rights; the Lesotho branch of the Media Institute of Southern (MISA) and the Journalists Union of Lesotho (JUL). The study made a number of insightful findings, mainly as concerns trends in media reportage of issues of disability, the role of organisations of PWDs in coverage of such issues and the need to provide guidelines on disability reporting.

The study revealed specific trends from the media's reportage on disability: the charity perspective, awareness-raising, disability is not inability, and the rights-based approach. In the charity perspective, articles by the media portray PWDs as victims and as persons unable to live independently, thereby requiring regular assistance. Awareness-raising articles discuss issues surrounding health and disability, with a view to enable the public make informed choices. News articles with a 'disability is not inability' perspective narrate stories of PWDs who are still

making a living or thriving despite the disabling situation they live with. The rights-based approach seeks to portray PWDs as rights holders who ought to enjoy rights such as accessibility (to transport, buildings, information), autonomy, education, health, legal rights and equality. It was observed that most reporting focused on either the charity model or the 'disability is not inability' model, rather than the rights-based model.



Second, it was observed that organisations of persons with disabilities, most notable of them being LNFOD, have played a commendable role in providing the media with information about issues concerning disability. Close collaboration was observed between the media and LNFOD, thereby providing a platform for PWDs to express themselves and for their concerns to be heard. A prime example is the role of LNFOD in advocating for the adoption by parliament of the Disability Equity Bill.

Lastly, the study revealed that much needs to be done as concerns media awareness of recommended and preferred language to be used in reporting on disability. In addition, the frequency

of media coverage of issues of disability ought to be increased and consideration must be given to the multidimensional aspects of disability (for e.g. children and women with disabilities).

The findings of the study call for specific actions to be taken to ensure that PWDs are adequately portrayed and for the expansion of coverage to include diverse issues which have an influence on how such persons live in society. Journalists who report on social issues ought to be aware of the use appropriate terminology and consider preferences of specific groups when reporting on disability. A paradigm-shift towards a rights-based approach to reporting on disability is needed, since this would ensure the promotion, protection and enjoyment of rights by PWDs.

A significant outcome of this study is the decision by LNFOD to come up with a language style guide on reporting on disability for media in Lesotho, in consultation with relevant stakeholders. This guideline, the researcher believes, will go a long way to shape media reporting in favour of the rights-based approach.

The willingness of the media and other key stakeholders to participate in this study, which is the first of its kind in Lesotho, is highly appreciated.

## SPOTLIGHT



**Ms. Thato Mohale aged 24**  
**Student - Limkokwing University of Creative Technology**

She is a student who studies Public Relations in her final year. She came to Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled for internship: to learn basics in communication office for the period of 4 Months. She has been in the office for about 6 weeks when writing the article.

According to her, she seems to be learning one or more things almost every day. Her presence in this organization taught her how to be flexible. She is a young woman who is always willing to learn new things. "I have never imagined myself working with disabled people ever, how ever life happened." She said.

She has learned so far; communication skills from her team and also team work. She has not experienced any difficulties since regarding office work but this will basically prove that she is in good hands. She is a very flexible person one would want to work with. She learns quickly, not leaving behind the fact that she is respectful

and easily adapting. "The working environment is satisfying and so far I really cannot complain." She said.

From the field of communication that she acquired from when she was a volunteer at OlympAfrica Youth Ambassador and Skillshare International in the past, she is able to fulfil tasks in the organization and is able to give out a hand in hand where needed. That is also helping her.

Flexibility requires an open mind and a welcoming of new alternatives. With regard to working with Persons with disability is more challenging, especially in issues of communication. One other challenge is of persons with disabilities who did not go to school because they denied to. What happened to every person's right to education? One other imagination that I have always had was that persons with disabilities do not have good life. This was not true because they can have children, they have a right to education, they even have partners whom they love most and they can even be top achievers. Who would have thought?" said Thato

"I find myself in an awkward moment when I had to deal with persons with disabilities because I was not used to." She said. In as much as all these are challenging, she is adapting the lifestyle. She appreciates the little time she will be spending in LNFOD because she feels part of the team and this will better her well-being and train her to be a better person for the coming generation. With the experience that she is getting or will get, she will know that being disabled does not mean one is not part of the community.

There is no life without challenges. It's up to every individual to find solutions. Challenges are what made us who we are now. They shape us and make us better people in life.

## UPCOMING EVENTS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

For Lesotho Education Quality for Equality Project we will be conducting schools visit monitoring the progress of the project.

On 2nd May Makintane LECSA primary school.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT LNFOD OFFICE ON THIS NUMBER +26622320345 OR EMAIL; [pmosili@infod.org.ls](mailto:pmosili@infod.org.ls)

## Framework Programme – Evaluation

Starting from 23rd April – 06th May, 2019

For more information contact LNFOD office on this number +26622320345 or email; [moeletsi@infod.org.ls](mailto:moeletsi@infod.org.ls)



# ADVOCACY WORK



## LNFOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



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