

DISABILITY LESOTHO



From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome once again to the edition of Disability Lesotho, the monthly email newsletter from Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled. The edition will cover news for the Month of August, 2016

This e-newsletter is a platform whereby partners in the disability sector share the good work they do and learn from the work of others. This includes news, events, updates, activities and all issues affecting people with disability in Lesotho. We therefore welcome contributions of any nature from all organizations working to improve the lives of people in Lesotho, including those with disability.

August is known as African Women's month, it is in this month where women are being celebrating their successes and also looking forward to deal with the challenges that are still facing them.

Lesotho is no exception to the rule. It is on this month where women with disabilities attended various activities meant to encourage them to continue with the hard work they are doing. I am honoured to announce that among women with disabilities this year, I am among other women who were given an award of appreciation on issues of Climate Change and Energy by the ministry of Energy and Meteorology Minister, Minister Mochoboroane.

I would like to recognize the hard work women with disabilities are doing in this country. Through women advocacy and raising awareness about their issues, the office of First Lady will collaborate with WWDs in order to empower them or facilitate the Financial Inclusion to all.

I would like to encourage all women especially with disabilities to work harder wherever they are, they can also volunteer as working hard always pay.

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

If missed any edition please visit 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

Woman with disability in Climate Change and Energy

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

I am extremely happy to learn the way Africa recognises African women by designating August to be the remarkable month in which we can highlight the role of women in our society.



It is notable to observe how women including women with disabilities have been undertaking activities geared towards the promotion of women in Lesotho.

I want to take this opportunity on behalf of LNFOD to convey our sincere thanks to the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology for recognising the efforts of Pascalina Letsau in climate education for people with disabilities through the Disability –E-newsletter.

However little is done to ensure meaningful Climate change is affecting all members of the society including people with disabilities inclusion of people with disabilities by the government, development partners and the community at large. The exclusion of people with disabilities including women with disabilities will continue to marginalise people with disabilities in the communities in which they live.

Women are historically disadvantaged due to our social and cultural beliefs which are full of stereotypes. In addition, women with disabilities are worse than the others because they have disability, often poor with no access to livelihoods programs.



This is how Basotho women are going through daily when preparing meals for their families

GENERAL NEWS

Women with disabilities end African women's month with the highest note

By: Masekara Sekoankoetla

On 26th July 2016, the women's committee of the Lesotho National Federation of the Organizations of the Disabled gathered together in celebration of the African Woman's month at Avani Maseru. Women with disability were specifically celebrating the contributions and achievements of women with disability in education, economy and education. In addition, focus was much on the predicaments these women face in contributing and participating evenly with other women without disabilities and the male counterparts in this sector. Lastly women put it on agenda the strategies to minimize these challenges to their equal participation and contribution in economy, health and education.

In her opening statement, the chairperson of the committee Mrs Ntali Griffiths –Tau mentioned that August is the month on which the merits and the contributions of an African women are commemorated, recognised and celebrated. She further mentioned that African women with disability although a minority group are equally important and contributing to the society. Mrs. Tau however mentioned the merits of these women in the society are under the heavy patina of negative attitudes towards disability. As a result, she stated that this group of women face disproportionate challenges in comparison with women without disabilities and men while trying to participate and contributing in these sectors.

Corroborating Mrs Tau's statement, Mrs 'Mafutho who is the Director of the department of Gender at the Ministry of Gender Sports and recreation pointed out that due to the negative attitudes towards disability efforts aimed towards achieving gender parity in education, economy and health to the larger extend exclude women with disabilities. She mentioned that it is high time that women with disabilities are empowered in order to ensure that gender parity efforts take cognizance of women with disabilities. Mrs. Tau further sensitised participants of what her Ministry did, does and planned to so in future to ensure that women with disabilities are empowered in order to ensure their

equal and meaningful participation and or contribution in Health, education and economy.

Among others according to Mrs. Futho, mentioned that involvement of women with disabilities in decision making at both the family and political level will highly eliminate the challenges they are currently facing and bring them to equality with women without disability and men. She therefore encouraged women with disability to contest for local and general elections.

In addition, Mr. Lehlohonolo from the Ministry of Small Businesses, Development Corporative and marketing mentioned that economic power helps levelling the ground for equality. He therefore shared the future plans of this Ministry to economically empower women with disability as a means of bringing them to equality with women without disability and their male counterparts. Mr. Lehlohnolo also appealed to women to engage in small business in order to improve their livelihoods. Speaking on behalf of Women and Law in Southern Africa, Advocate Lebohlang Leeu shared that gender base violence generally hinders parity between and women in Lesotho. She further indicated that women with disability are disproportionately affected. As a result, Advocate Leeu shared with women what WILSA does and plans to do to bring parity men and women. Among others Advocate Leeu shared that her organization offers legal assistance and representation at the subsidised cost in civil cases and appealed to women with disabilities to take opportunity.



GENERAL NEWS

Remarkable achievements reported in Butha-buthe

By: Rabasotho Moeletsi



A total of 20 community councils reported tremendous progress on the project area where the Deepening Decentralisation Project which is implemented in four (4) districts of Mphahle'shoek, Maseru, Berea and Butha-buthe. This transpired at the three-day Experience sharing workshop held at the Motlejoa Guest house, Butha-buthe which started on the 11 August 2016. The workshop focused on the sharing of best practices by 20 community councils' animators from the project area under guidance of four (4) districts coordinators.

The reported progress focused mainly on five (5) thematic areas of Access to Education, Health, Participation in the community development projects, Access to justice by victims of abuse, Access to social services. Level of advocacy for each of the 5 thematic areas has increased. Uptake of services by persons with disabilities has been on the rise proving that community mobilisation practices done by the animators in the communities worked out well.

Reporting progress on this project which is in its final year of implementation has always been interesting as one gets to hear some impressive efforts which are taking place deep in the rural of the disadvantaged locations.

"I have been part of these meetings since beginning of the project, it has always been nice to listen to stories of how the project has changed lives of ordinary individuals with disabilities,

bringing hope of life where there was none. Most of these disabled kids which being reported to have enrolled in schools had lost hope that they would access education, some thought their disabilities rendered them uneducable, but they are now in classrooms with their peers and that means a lot to them," commended Pascalina Letsau, LNFOD communication desk.

Speaking on behalf of the participants, Mr. Hlalefang Konka, who is the coordinator for the Butha-buthe district talked load of the project.

"Before the start of this project, persons with disabilities were not taking part in the poverty alleviation projects under ministry of forestry and land reclamation in the whole district of Butha-buthe after a directive from the head of ministry's district office. However, today in every hiring done under the ministry in the communities of Butha-buthe, persons with disabilities top the lists," Konka recalled.

He further praised the treatment his animators enjoy from community councilors during council meetings saying they are treated as if they were councilors as they attend each of the monthly meetings to represent issues of disabilities in each council.

In many councils, there were no auxiliary social workers before the project, even where they were there, they did not report at councils where their rightful workplace is, they enjoyed remaining at the district offices in towns. Today, in all 20 community councils auxiliary social workers are performing their duties, opening files for persons with disabilities, some have already getting public assistance grant from the ministry of social development.

What makes this workshop unique is the fact that the project has been able to make amends on the shortfalls which were picked earlier in the implementation.

"I'm extremely delighted each of you have worked hard to address the areas which were pointed out as weak in the past mid-team external evaluation," commended LNFOD Projects coordinator as he praised the animators.

The animators reported that they improved on their local advocacy by mobilising community to write letters to the members of parliament in their constituencies making calls for disability inclusive local government laws under development in the ministry of local government and chieftainship. Their reporting has also improved, particularly on the gender disaggregation.

"It is important to underscore the fact that the figures reported have improved in terms of gender sensitivity especially in the district of Butha-butha and Mphahle'shoek. They presented reports with clear numbers of males and females benefited from the project in this reporting period and off-course disaggregated by disability type which makes improves quality their reports greatly," Projects coordinator continued

"Most of the reports here demonstrated lots of improvement in the area of partnerships with other organisations and institutions working in the project area," he concluded.

The animators reported that they are now working with other organisations and institutions with the common goals, these include World Vision Lesotho, SolidarMed, and Kao mine, Lesotho council of NGOs, Send-a-Cow Lesotho, and Dorcas Aid among other actors in the communities. This is a great success as it gives not only credibility but also sustainability on the initiative since the project draw nearer to the end.

However, there were some reported cases of chickens dying due to adverse weather conditions even though mortality rate was not bad. These chickens were given to beneficiaries to raise them and appear as individuals with dignity in the communities in which they live in.

The participants were also highlighted to stand for upcoming local government elections that will be held in the country next year scheduled to be held early next year. This would mean a great achievement People with disabilities are also expected to stand to be elected as community councilors.



The National Coordinator and 4 District Coordinators from Mphahle'shoek, Berea, Maseru and Butha-Buthe

GENERAL NEWS

“Woman Entrepreneur.....

By: Mathabang Maqocha

“I am a mosotho woman who owns her own small business. I am now a street vendor still holding my diploma in business management. I am now persuading BA in Entrepreneurship. I go inline with the saying; "Disability is not inability." I do manufacture beats jewellery, Seshoeshoe beats, 10 litres, 20 litres and 25 litres boilers, leather shoes, leather bealts. I also buy and sell long & half coats, kid & adult jackets.”



There are some problems that we face as businessmen and women in this country. PEST Analysis is there to deal with (P) - political instability, which lead to low tourism and high inflation. (E) – as women we earn less, what we earn does not cover all of the needs we have. (S) - society does not give problem due to the disability. T- I am using simple technology and available resources around me.

There are some challenges that I am facing as a woman to grow my business. There is lack of capital, when trying to improve my business.

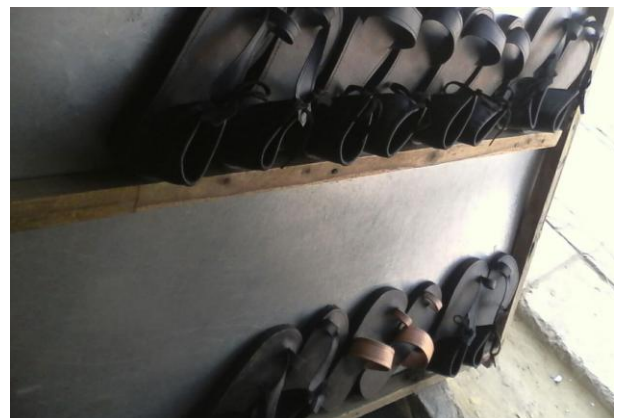
As I am also buying, the inflation is killing me as I am not able to manage the little money that I earn from the business.



The competition is too high as most people are now opening their businesses. What I am doing good in the business is the Market, creativity and flexibility of opportunities.

Climate change is taking our time of business as sometimes it's getting too cold in winter and very hot in summer as I have to meet with customers outside the shop.

I would like to see my business growing until I could see myself employing other people.



GENERAL NEWS

A victim of financial abuse

By: Hlalefang Konka

Butha-Buthe, Sekubu Makanyaneng – a woman with intellectual disability named 'Mantutu Mothabi lives with her daughter Nthabiseng who also has an intellectual disability.

The LNFOD District coordinator, Mr. Konka Hlalefang who dealing with issues of disabilities suspected or identified financial abuse.

When stating the case, Mr. Hlalefang Konka said; "Mantutu registered to be employed in the community development activities (*fato-fato*) in her council. Just because she has intellectual disability, the supervisors of the programme wanted to hear whether she will be working on her own or be represented by a family member of her own choice, a sibling or any other person of her own choice. 'Mantutu clearly stated that she will do the work herself.



"Mantutu worked harder than anyone else. It is then we realised that people with disabilities can do more than what we can do. When I was told this by one villager, I invited crime prevention committee in the village" Said the community councillor Mr. Madona Chitja.

"On the payment day, I prepared myself and went to the centre where we were told to go and collect our wages. Immediately when I came out of the office, I found my sister-in-law 'Manchau who took the money from me and told me that we have to go to town immediately. All in all the money was 1,800 maloti. She almost used 900 maloti to buy me a sleeping blanket, mattresses, 12.5kg bread flour and maize meal. I did not want to buy those things myself especially the blanket and the mattresses, what I wanted were only food as we are suffering," said 'Mantutu with a sad face.

Talking to the chief, Mr. Madona Mabusane. He said he did not know all these things until he was told by the crime prevention committees within the village.

'Mantutu was once again forced to take responsibility to 'Manch'au's son who was getting married. She was left with nothing yet her son is working as a newly police officer. The house, as appears below does not have food, furnisher, toiletry, candle for light, only water in this house. The incident seemed to be around the family members, hence chief did not want to be involved in the issue.

The villagers and the area chief expected to see 'Manch'au to return the balance remaining amounting to 500.00 maloti by the end of August, 2016. The case was to be taken further as the son of 'Manch'au promised to take the District Coordinator, Community Councillor and the family to court as he alleges they embarrassed his family by putting his '*cheating*' mother in the spot-light!

'Maneo, who is very close to this family said; "Most of our neighbours around here normally ask Nthabiseng favour to do some piece-jobs for them but they do not pay her and that is hurting when I see Nthabiseng and family suffering knowing that many people take advantage of her."

The decision made here was to refer 'Mantutu and the daughter Nthabiseng to the Ministry of Home Affairs to register for Birth Certificate and National Identity. All these things will help them to be referred to Ministry of Social Development for public assistance grant in due course.



Outside 'Mantutu's house, LNFOD District Coordinator and the family

NEWS IN PICTURES



Women are happy at the celebration at Lesotho Avani Hotel



‘Mankoseng – partially sighted Teacher at Maseru Day High School



These are the shoes manufactured by a woman, Mathabang Maqoacha



In the house of ‘Mantutu, Nthabiseng with Pascalina



Likenkeng Molibeli a visually impaired Teacher



Ms. Likopo, a deafblind lady during the assessment of PWD's Rights

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENT



LNFOD is introducing its new Assistant Advocacy Officer, Adv. Molelengoane

Sensitisation meeting on children with disabilities in Pitseng Leribe

District Resource Team meeting in Hlotse Leribe

Natioanl Steering Committee meeting in Maseru

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Follow-up meeting with Ministry of Law, Human rights and Constitutional Affairs and with the relavent parliamentary committees

Date: 28th September

For more information please conduct:
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Establishment of the Inclusive Education Task Team

For more information please conduct:
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Training for nurses and healthcare workers on access to healthcare services by PWDs

Dates:

12th September – Leribe

14th September – Mafeteng

15th September – Mohale's hoek

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ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



NAD - The Norwegian
Association of Disabled



OSISA

Open Society Initiative
for Southern Africa



European Union

