

DISABILITY LESOTHO



From the Editor

Welcome again to the twenty seventh edition of Disability Lesotho, the monthly email newsletter from Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled which will be covering the Month of August, 2014.

The Disability Lesotho e-newsletter is a platform whereby partners in the disability sector share the 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 organisations working to improve the lives of people in Lesotho, including those with disability.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all women over the World with the major roles that they are playing. Women are working hard to change the world. They are caring for the needy, orphans, elderly as well as their husbands. Women are strong leaders in every country, they are the ones that are establishing organizations, support groups and others. Women with disabilities are not exception in all these matters.

Even though women with disabilities are facing discrimination in three ways meaning; discrimination because of poverty, disability and being a woman need to be honoured as they are working hard to care for their families. It is very difficult to handle a family without any income but they are doing everything on their power to have something on the table for their families. Women with disabilities are also working hard to advocate

There are challenges that women with disabilities and girls are facing. They face different abuses like emotional, economic, physical and sexual. It is very sad as in Lesotho there are laws that are meant to protect women and girls against all these abuses. It is my will to see girls and women with disabilities in this country being protected by the law as Lesotho is the country which is statute by law. It is also my plea to see decision makers reviewing all the laws so that they could be inclusive. Some of the laws are difficult to understand like Sexual Offenses Act; 2003 section 45 which we all think should be reviewed is somehow against the interest of other people with disabilities especially women and girls. Children, girls and women with disabilities should also be protected under law and be supported.

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.lnfod.org.ls

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

Best regards,

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

The award signing ceremony between LNFOD and Maseru US Embassy

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

On the 27 August, 2014 The award signing ceremony was held at the US Ambassador's house at Maseru west in which Mrs. Regina Lephoi Chairperson of LNFOD signed on behalf of LNFOD for the implementation of this one year project.



Mrs. Lephoi signing on behalf of LNFOD for the implementation of the project

The title of the project is promotion of the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sector of Lesotho.

The main objective of this project is to promote recruitment and employment of persons with disabilities through provision of reasonable accommodation by the employers at the workplaces.

The project will raise awareness among the employers about the importance of providing reasonable accommodation in terms of recruiting and working with persons with disabilities in the workplaces.

In this initiative, LNFOD will hold several sessions with both the government and the private sector in which the principle of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities at workplaces will be introduced and encouraged to be applied in terms of recruiting people with disabilities. In addition the project will facilitate advocacy around incorporation of the reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities at the workplaces into the national employment act and labour law.

One of the key envisaged activities of this project is the development of the manual on the concept of reasonable accommodation for workers with disabilities that will assist the employers to recruit and employ persons with disabilities with dignity. We are anticipating this project to raise awareness among the employers about the provision of reasonable accommodation for workers with disabilities through inclusive human resource policies.

Increased number of people with disabilities employed by the private sector.



Mr. Nkhasi thanking US Embassy Maseru on behalf of LNFOD

ADVOCACY ASPECT

Lesotho appoints disability focal persons

By: Maja Matsoha

LNFOOD has advocated for the appointment of disability focal points within government ministries as a strategy for the roll out of disability mainstreaming advocacy. This model is being practiced in public administration in several countries. Disability Focal Points are appointed government or public officers in Ministries, departments, agencies or parastatals. They are assigned disability mainstreaming and advocacy roles as part of their performance contracts. For effectiveness, focal points are persons with decision making powers such as directors, head of departments or equivalent to ensure decisions are easily implemented.

LNFOOD and the Ministry of Social Development with support from African Disability Alliance held a capacity building workshop on the 11th August 2014 for the ten appointed disability focal persons. The focal persons came from the Ministries of: Communication, Gender, Health, Defence, Tourism, Education, Justice, Energy, Public works and Trade



The appointed people as focal persons from line ministries during the training

It is important also to note that a policy decision on disability mainstreaming has been taken by the government of Lesotho in the National Disability Policy. This is now followed by the current development of the National Disability Mainstreaming Plan. The Ministry of Social Development initiated the appointment of such persons by issuing a request for the appointment of such persons, ten ministries within government have appointed focal persons and continuous

efforts are being made to encourage the remaining ministries to appoint focal persons.

Functions of focal persons

- Conduct an analysis on all legislation, policies, programmes and services of government institutions to ensure effective mainstreaming of disability considerations;
- Facilitate capacity development to ensure that government institutions are able to account for disability responsive planning and budgeting;
- Guide and support government institutions to ensure that they are able to provide accurate and timeous information for purposes of international treaty reporting;
- Facilitate that performance agreements of senior managers reflects the departmental obligations for disability mainstreaming;
- Providing guidance and support to units within government institutions, the private sector and civil society to achieve the above;
- Compile quarterly and annual reports on progress with implementation of the departmental/municipal programme of action for the equalisation of opportunities for people with disabilities. Some of the roles and functions of disability focal persons include:
- ensuring that there is continuous visible support from the top
- monitor and evaluate progress on disability mainstreaming activities

The focal points are important allies the disability sector must collaborate with to ensure disability mainstreaming is achieved in the implementation of the MTEF and NDP. Most of these focal points, especially in the line ministry have the interest and basic knowledge on disability; however they will continue to be supported through continuous capacity building on disability mainstreaming.

GENERAL NEWS

Women's Month Celebration by women with disabilities



Women with disabilities celebrating Women's Month at Maseru Sun

On the 22nd August, in Maseru at Maseru Sun Hotel women with disabilities came together to celebrate the women's month. The idea was to celebrate and honour other women who have been dedicated in their work of advocating for the rights of girls and women with disabilities from their DPOs.

LNFOF Women's forum did look at the theme for the year and decided to choose among themselves women who could be honoured and then given the certificates of appreciation. There were some women who have been trained on the laws that women with disabilities could refer to when advocating. All these women were expected to say a little bit to other women so that they could share with their peers at their communities.

The laws that touched during this celebration were as follows;

- **Legal Capacity of Married Person's Act: 2006**, which has been presented by Mrs. 'Masello Mohlomi. She highlighted women about two types of marriage. She said we have to encourage the legal capacity marriage than Sesotho marriage as it is the marriage that is easily protecting married couples.
- **Sexual Offences Act; 2003** facilitated by Mrs. 'Malebohang Malakane. She said there are many abuses made to women and girls with disabilities. She talked about sexual offence and emotional abuse as an example. She indicated that many women with disabilities are facing emotional abuse and it is rare that these people could be realised abused unless could talk to

psychologist. It is important to all of us to report these abuses even to our friends so that could be helped.

- **Child Protection and Welfare Act: 2010** by 'Masenate Tau. She said most of the people in families run away when realising that they have a child with impairment. She said all children should be protected regardless of the disability. If a child with disability has to inherit anything from the family it should be like that, which is not happening in most of the families. Every child should be protected from child labour. Children with disabilities deserve to be loved and cared for, so as a group of women should work hard to protect children with disabilities and their families.
- **Human Trafficking in Persons Act 2011** by Likopo Lesoetsa. She continued by saying the topic that I am going to present here is a very challenging one to people with disabilities in general but to women and girls with disabilities is worse. She said most people are doing business about people. The money is not for the people who are doing a certain job but the owner of the group. Because girls and women are poor, people are taking advantage about them and promise them to give them jobs. I can assure you that there is a case that the police are after whereby deaf ladies have been taken to Johannesburg. It has been stated that where they are they are not doing what they were promised to do when reaching the destination. Let us open our eyes and be careful about people who are approaching us about jobs. We have to do some researches about the places that we are promised to go to before we could migrate.

- **UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities** by Pascalina Letsau. The focus is going to be only on two article, article 6 that is all about women with disabilities and article 7 that is focusing on children with disabilities. The intention of talking about these articles is only to make other women understand what to talk about when advocating for their rights. It is true that all articles are also affecting us but as women's forum is focusing on issues of children and women, they had to know what to talk about. Pascalina highlighted women that we have to work hard and push for domestication of UNCRPD as women. As Lesotho has ratified the convention it is clear that they did read all the articles and understand them. We have to work hard as women to protect other women and children with disabilities who cannot stand up and fight for their rights.

After all these presentations the NGOs that supported women with disabilities that day, stated how they are working with people with disabilities. 'M'e Tlaleng Kaaba from LCN women and children's commission said, we will have to work in collaboration with women with disabilities as I can see we are doing the same duty. It is true that I am new in the office but have learnt more in this celebration. As people we use to say we know about people with disabilities but that is not true until we are part of them. She also highlighted women and girls with disabilities about the community parliament to be held on the 15th Sept, 2014 where we think women with disabilities will participate.

Then Ms. Melida from DPE said there are laws but there are some gaps here and there. She continued by saying; DPE is always working at the community levels, where most people with disabilities are found. We have realised that the emotional

abuses is very high out there. DPE is worked hard for the development of Domestic Violence Bill which is on process. Let us fight as women to see that the Act is finalized. DPE is will to see women with disabilities participating in this process. There was a wayforward jotted down by the forum.

The celebration was ended by issuing certificates of appreciation to women who were honoured. Mrs. Likopo Lesoetsa Mokhoromeng was certified from the LNFOD Women's Forum. Mrs. 'Malebohang Malakane from LNAPD. Mrs. Mateboho Ntai from NADL. Mrs. 'Mamabina Mahlelebe from LNLVIP and Ms.....From IDAL



Mrs. Regina LNFOD president issuing certificate to Mamabina Mahlelebe

GENERAL NEWS

Committed Mother and Role Model to girls with disabilities



Mrs. Regina Lephoi teaching in her class of Sign Language – Maseru

In Lesotho Deaf people are willing to see Sign Language as a third official language to the country. It is their role to see the progress of teaching Sign Language, as anticipating that if the language could be all over the country would ease the accessible of information to them.

Mrs. Lephoi is one of the Deaf people who is working hard to teach children at Mount Royal primary school as she is a teacher by profession. She is also teaching service providers around Leribe Sign Language after working hours. On weekends she is also teaching interested people Sign Language at Lesotho High School.

Women with disabilities deserve to have equal opportunity to work just like everyone. Regina when teaching people Sign language has created the opportunity to work so that she gain a living by work of her own choice. Economic right to women with disabilities should be taken into consideration as helps them to acquire every need like a land or a house.

Regina has exposed her power to other Deaf people in this country. This is the sign of a woman who has power and dedicated

to her work. Many people in the country who has been graduated after completing their course of Sign Language. Most graduates have been taught by Mrs. Regina whom she is honoured by many people.

Mrs. Lephoi has not fear anything to stand to be elected as a President of LNFOD. As a mother Regina is working hard to feed her family. She inspired many people disabled and non – disabled as she is doing many duties at the same time. This type of a character should be the examples of women with disabilities that are showing that disability is not inability.

Can anyone say is it right to segregate women and girls with disabilities in participating in activities? I think the answer is no! Women with disabilities has no time to wait only focusing on what she is doing. Regina is a hard working someone. She is passionate about her job. She is always busy on working days and weekends bringing change to the people.

Regina is doing a huge work to teach people who are providing services to the people. It is very hard for Deaf people to access services because of communication obstacles facing them. If most people could learn and understand clearly about Sign Language and interpreting would help young people who are Deaf, Deaf learners and others who may need services from any sector.

Regina should be honoured and congratulated for the beautiful job that she is doing. The disability sector is very proud of Regina and wish will have more young people with disabilities who will learn from her.

GENERAL NEWS

'I tried to fight my fear but failed'



Ms. Lebohang Ntsekhe holding her last born baby boy

"My name is Lebohang Ntsekhe. I am a woman who was born in 1975. I am hard of hearing person, a divorced woman. I did not go to school at all. I am staying at Ha Sekete at Ratau A 02 community council. I am a parent of four children. The two of them are at school while the two are still young to go to school." said Ms. Lebohang

"I decided to divorce with my husband as he was a thief. We did not have peace in the family as cops were always looking for him. If they could find him not there, they were arresting me. When finding him not and then say where I think he supposed to be, he would come and hit me until hurt. I got into divorce in 1999. His family wants me to go back to him, but that is what I am not going to do. They still giving me support, like now my elder boy child is being paid by his grandfather at school while the other are attending free education schools." Ms. Ntsekhe added

"In order to earn the living I am use to look for piece jobs around the village, as my husband is not doing anything as part of support or maintance of his children. I am doing washen but it is very difficult as the money that I am getting there is not enough to cover all the needs of the family. I sometimes go back to my husband seeking for help but hoping that he will apologies for what he has done to me and then get back in our marriage like before. It is then that he took advantage of me and then have sex with me and then became pregnant, that is why I have this number of children." Said Lebohang with a sad face

"I am afraid to take him to the police that are dealing with Children, Gender and Protection Unit claiming support for my children. I think that his family will say I am abusive to him. I think what I am going to do is to live my life together with my children nor matter what difficulties I am facing, maybe there will be solution at the end." concluded Lebohang

'I Can't loose hope for my carrier'....

"Mamojaki Masoeunyane is my name. I am now 42 years old. I leave at Kholokoe Ha Tumo in the Mohale'shoek district. I am a single parent of three children. I did not go to school at all but I learnt how to read and write at home.

In my family we are nine children, among all these children I am the only one who did not go to school. I did not ask my parents why they did not send me to school. sometimes when we talk as a family they sometimes say why they did not send me to school not aware that they have said. I think the reason of not going to school is that; my parents did not have interest of sending me to school due to my disability. I use to hear them saying; "if even we would have send her to school there was nothing that she will do in return to the family, it would be the waist of time and money."

I am not happy at all about the decision that my family took or thought about me. I have seen so many people with disabilities educated in this country, some of them are even worse in terms of disability than me.

I am self – employed at Mohales' hoek market in order to care for my family meaning me and my children. I am selling apples, sweets, beans, cigarettes and again I am knitting wool hats with crotch. I have my own shatter not rented. There is a business but in a low market. I am also getting social grant amounting to M250.00 per Month but it misses out a Month then got it the following Month. This social grant is so little to earn the living with and pay rent with, that is why I decided to go to the market.

It is my wish to have a better money. I am also a singer and I want to see myself recorded my album and sell it while sitting at the market. The problem that I am facing I do not have enough money to go to the studio. I tried to find someone to help and approached one radio station seeking help. I have been told that I will need M3,000.00 in regulating advertisement of my music.

It is my aspiration to see the government of Lesotho helping people with disabilities to show their talents and be supported where there is a talent. People with disabilities have ability and hard workers, it just that they are abused economically." concluded 'Mamojaki



Ms. 'Mamojaki Masoeunyane

GENERAL NEWS

Butha-Buthe District Council Welcomes Disability Inclusion

By: Rabasotho Moeletsi



Butha-Buthe District Council welcomed disability inclusion as their top priority in whatever development projects they are involved in. This was said after a one day training which was conducted by LNFOD. The training was themed around steps followed to ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities in development. During this training, district council members were given four different phases of the project management cycle and how they should include persons with disabilities in each of them. They were also given some checklists which they could use at every level to determine in time if persons with disabilities are left out of the project.

“As the district council, we make this commitment to include persons with disabilities in every project which we’ll be running from now on. This training comes at the right time where we have got funds under the deepening decentralisation program to implement development projects and we are starting here to include them,” said deputy chairperson of the district council.

Local Government and Chieftainship to run projects in their own districts. The projects that were approved for Butha-Buthe are the construction of maternity Rondavels for women at the clinics within the district; they are also going to procure beds for the clinics.

Before projects implementation phase could start, the Butha-Buthe district council concluded that design of the advertisement calling contractors for construction of the Maternity Rondavels should include specifications of universal design making sure that accommodation of disabled pregnant women using universal design specifications. Again, the procurement of beds should include Aesthetic Beds which would be accessible for pregnant women with physical disabilities.

“We are doing this because we know that it is a good thing to do, and on top of that it is a motivation as disability inclusion is one of the conditions that make us to score more points in this program – hence we are going to perform very well during evaluation of the programme,” he concluded.

LNFOD also took advantage of the platform to give an update on the progress that the project Deepening Decentralisation Program in all four community councils in the district. District council were very pleased with the progress and also declared their support.

OPINION PIECE

Factors that harm children and women with disabilities

By: Moliehi Sejane

Growing with disability is putting children and youth with disabilities in the isolated area. The isolation of children and youth with disabilities are living in due to the disability status, they spent a lot of the time alone in their families while their parents are at work and their siblings are at school. In general children and youth with disabilities are facing social exclusion as they do not participate in any of the community activities.

All these let by *economic environment* as they are not able to get assistive devices to move around like everyone. Parents have to stay at home and look after their children. They do not have time to go and look for the job. Lets take an example of a child who has deep disability or multiple disability. A parent cannot be away from such a child more than an hour. This is a huge challenge that a mother is facing.

The universal design to this country seem to be difficult. It is still difficult for children with disabilities to access transport to schools and clinics. Children and women with disabilities are hardly get clean water and sanitation, this leads to be victims of rape as they travel long distance to get water. If economic environment was good everybody would have to live the better life that will not harm anyone.

Political environment is another challenge to children and women with disabilities. They lack indigenous knowledge so political leaders are taking advantage of their vulnerability and make use of their success. By the times of campaigns they use to provide wheelchairs to these vulnerable group even before assessments. They end

up giving even someone who is not in need of the wheelchair. This could be harmful to a person who is going to use it.

Cultural environment is also affecting lives of children with disabilities. This is the factor that has some forms of discrimination caused by beliefs and culture. It is in this factor where people are still believing that it is a curse to have a child with disability in a family. The family remain stigmatized and it is difficult to interact with other communities or friends. Family members are still not free or not letting their children to play with those non – disabled children.

Children and women with disabilities are facing huge discrimination, abuses like physical, emotional, rape, sexual, economic and trafficking in persons. The other thing is the child labour that children and youth with disabilities that are facing. They are working hard for other people but not getting paid, they will not go to school but work for *mahala* (nothing)

The only way to help children and women with disabilities is for Lesotho to review laws that are already existing so that they could be inclusive. It is to Basotho to read the constitution of this country, it could help us understand what are the sections that are protecting different people. It is to Lesotho to pass the Disability Act in the parliament of Lesotho. The Disability Act could help Basotho that have disabilities be protected by the law.

I think we have to help these groups of people by teaching other people about the rights of people with disabilities and report abuses that are done to children, girls and women with disabilities.

SPOTLIGHT



Mrs. 'Matebello Phalali
A metalwork instructor – Itjareng

1. What exactly is your responsibility at Itjareng?

- I am working with metal, what I am doing is to instruct the trainees how to use metal and the importance of it.

2. When did you start working with people with disabilities?

- I started interacting with them since August, 2006

3. So far, what challenges did you come across working with this group of people?

- The first challenge that I came across was that it was very difficult to pass messages to them as I was not aware with the language they are using which is sign language especially deaf persons. The other challenge is that we sometimes came across with a person with multiple disabilities like physical and intellectual, and then realise the problem when time goes on. These people are not doing the good job at all.

4. What do you think can be done in order to help those with multiple disabilities?

- I think what we can do is to introduce light courses for them not thinking that they can use machinery yet they cannot. They also need to do something at the time. Even parents should be highlighted about the difficulties that his/her child is facing.

5. What abuses discovered to girls with disabilities when reaching the centre?

- It happens that when talking to the trainees there are some abuses that have been done to them while at home. They talk of discrimination between them and their siblings by their parents

6. What have learnt about people with disabilities?

- I knew nothing about them, but now I am able to see their potential and share experiences with them and help each other. The more we accept them the more you learn different things. I have learnt that we have to respect their personality and accept them so that they could feel their dignity and have self esteem

7. How would you like to spend your time with if it could be your last day on Earth?

I would like to spend my last day with my family as I have been not staying with them for a long time due work issues.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DISABILITY DAY CELEBRATION – 3RD DECEMBER

This year's celebration to be held at Qacha's nek

For more information please contact: LNFO office
Tel: +266 22320345 or Mr. Rabasotho Moeletsi Cell: +266 58700925

Email: moeletsi@lnfod.org.ls
moeletsi911@gmail.com

AfriNEAD 4th SYMPOSIUM

Venue: Sun 'n' Sand Holiday Resort ,
MANGOCHI, MALAWI

3rd - 5th November 2014

THEME: "Intensifying disability research and practice to achieve the MDGs in Africa: our experience and aspirations for the future"

For more information please contact:

Tel: (265) 1 524 800 Fax: (265) 1 524 578

Email: afrinead-conf@cc.ac.mw

Or

Register online at: www.sun.ac.za/afrinead

COPDAM ROUNDTABLE ZIMBABWE 23rd SEPTEMBER 2014

For more information contact LNFO office Tel; +266 22320345 or Mrs. Maja Matsoha Cell+266 56431350

Email: maja@lnfod.org.ls

LOBBYING MEETINGS WITH THE DISTRICT COUNCILS

For more information please contact LNFO office Tel: +266 22320345 or Mr. Rabasotho Moeletsi Cell: +266 58700925

Email: moeletsi@lnfod.org.ls

DISTRICT COORDINATORS HOLDING MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH ESTABLISHED STRUCTURES IN COMMUNITY COUNCILS

For more information please contact LNFO office Tel: +266 22320345 or Mr. Rabasotho Moeletsi Cell: +266 58700925

Email: moeletsi@lnfod.org.ls

DPO TRAINING ON DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING 8th SEPTEMBER 2014

For more information contact LNFO office Tel; +266 22320345 or Mrs. Maja Matsoha Cell; +266 56431350

Email: maja@lnfod.org.ls

LCE/NHTC LECTURE SERIES 11th AND 12th SEPTEMBER 2014

For more information contact LNFO office Tel; +266 22320345 or Mrs. Maja Matsoha Cell; +266 56431350

Email: maja@lnfod.org.ls

NEWS IN PICTURES



This group of women have been awarded certification of appreciations by LNFOD



Basotho girls and women with disabilities in their beautiful blankets



LNFOD President and Executive Director posing with US Embassy Representative



Members of Butha-Buthe District Council discussing how to include disability in their programmes



Public gathering at Qiloane Community Council under Deepening Decentralisation project



A girl child with intellectual disability attending school with non – disabled children

ADVOCACY WORK



LNFO

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work

