

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 December, 2015 and the next volume of our newsletter.

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, concerns, events, updates, activities and all issues affecting people with disability in Lesotho. We therefore welcome contributions of any nature from all organizations and institutions working to improve the lives of people in Lesotho, including those with disability.

This was the busy month of the year. This is the reporting time to many different organisations, festive season, 16 days of activism which entails other important days to different people; among these days there are these important days; HIV and AIDS day, Disability Day, Volunteer's day and Human Rights day.

To me, these days are very important and affect us all. I would like to talk more about the Disability day which is more relevant to the work that I am doing.

The day is likely to be interesting to PWDs and enjoyed more than ever. It is the day that PWDs are hoping to be treated well but unfortunately this time they did not enjoy like other years. The problem lies with the ministry of social development as they are separating people on the day. I think it's high time that officers change their mind set towards people with disabilities in this country and treat them as human beings especially as we are taxpayers.

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 you missed the previous editions please visit www.lnfod.org.ls

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

Best regards,



The Editor

GENERAL NEWS

More than a thousand join hands to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Lesotho

By: Rabasotho Moeletsi



Over a thousand of persons with disabilities and supporters participated in a march across the streets of Maseru in support of equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities in Lesotho. This event, established by the United Nations is celebrated each year on 3 December and it aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities campaigned carrying placards voicing their concerns directed to the minister of social development who failed keep his promise of bringing the disability equity bill to the parliament before end of 2015. The minister has not even taken the bill to the cabinet informal meeting and persons with disabilities were demanding answers from the minister.

The march was followed by a formal ceremony which involved various activities including speeches from the country's top brass involving Deputy prime minister, minister of social development, the Deputy UN Resident representative and LNFOD Chairperson among others. In between speeches, there was entertainment which featured singers with disabilities to perform to prove clearly that

disability does not mean inability. Disability Capabilities Fair for dignitaries to tour around the products produced by individual persons with disabilities displayed in exhibition.

Making a keynote address, Deputy Prime Minister, who was acting as Prime Minister, hon. Mothejoa Metsing reaffirmed government of Lesotho commitment to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

"Persons with Disabilities rights needs to be respected by the nations who are party to the UNCRPD. Persons with disabilities need to take part in the development agenda. This will make this famous slogan which says 'Nothing about us without us' a reality," Hon. Metsing said.

"Being a party to the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities as government, we have an obligation to domesticate the convention, by enacting the disability specific law which protects rights of persons with disabilities in our countries; our ministry of Social Development has developed the disability equity bill which will be passed into law very soon, he commended, "I am advised that this very Friday next week, 11 December the stakeholder consultation meeting is held so that all can appreciate the spirit of the law, then the bill will be presented before cabinet for adoption and the concerned minister will table it in parliament where it will be passed into law."

"We are aware that the need to plan, and design our programs inclusive manner and avoid to 'one size fits all' type of planning as it leaves out persons with disabilities out of development activities meant to accommodate all citizens." Deputy Prime Minister continued, "The newly adopted national disability mainstreaming plan launched on the 27 October helps implementation of national disability and rehabilitation policy of 2011. I trust all relevant ministries have planned and budgeted for disability specific activities."

"This current coalition government is intending to remove all discriminatory laws in line with the UNCRPD and to improve lives of persons with disabilities and open up employment opportunities for them in the government sector," he concluded.

On the same occasion, the Deputy Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme in Lesotho, Ms Christy Ahenkora, reinforced on the importance of living the talk of no one left behind in development.

“The day is supposed to help us underscore the importance of integrating disability issues into every aspect of social, political, economic and cultural life. commented Ms Ahenkora, I want to comment LNFOOD for leading disability advocacy action on pushing for the enactment of the disability specific law which promotes equal opportunity for every national of Lesotho irrespective of disability. In September various governments, went to the UN and pledged to support the sustainable development goals in our countries and One overarching theme of sustainable development goals is that no one should be left behind in development.”

Speaking on this year’s theme, she touched on the need of making the city more accessible as many people of the world are leaving the homes to the cities and Maseru city should be prepared. She raised the concern on the same national stadium on which the event was hosted as it does not accommodate some section of people being persons with disabilities on crutches and those on wheelchairs. The stadium is not user friendly and has not catered for the persons with disabilities, no ramps no access areas or lifts, persons on wheelchairs could climb up the stairs to shade themselves from the sun which was intense on the day; they were left helplessly in the sun. She recommended that those responsible to make necessary adaptations so that next time persons with disabilities would enjoy the benefits of having beautiful stadium on their soil.

She continued, “It is so important that today it is celebrated at the back of the September endorsement the SDGs, because thus we in Lesotho pledge that we will do our development without leaving anybody behind irrespective of disability of that person.”

She further highlighted on the need to intensively reflect on whether there is reflection of disability issues in the strategic documents guiding development such as the Sustainable Development

Goals, national development strategic plan, and LESOTHO’S Vision 2020 as she warned that it is only when the country address the needs of persons with disabilities that can claim that it grows in the sustainable manner

“I wish on behalf of UN family in Lesotho to commit to working the ministry and with LNFOOD and its all members of that umbrella organisation; that we will work with you to ensure that disability issues are taken care of in every aspect of our social development. On this note I want thank organizers to be part of this process and to say that together we can work with persons with disabilities so that we move forward in sustainable path without leaving anyone behind,” She concluded.

Even though this was a very eventful, momentous and successful occasion where important commitments were made by Deputy prime minister on behalf of government and partners in UNDP deputy resident representative, individuals with disabilities came forward to register their dissatisfaction on the issue which could be classified as discrimination where persons with disabilities were offered low quality T-shirts while officers from ministry of social development got expensive golf shirts.

Next year’s celebration will be hosted in the Mafeteng district on Saturday, 03rd December 2016.



LNFOOD President Mrs. Regina Lephoi doing the speech regarding the day

GENERAL NEWS



By: Pascalina Letsau

Butha-Buthe, in the village of St. Helena, it has been a long time that a girl aged twenty-five (25) years by the name of Semakaleng Phatsoane. She has intellectually disabled and has been sexually abused some months ago. She has been abused by a man called Marutlane Siki, this man can be between the age of 25 to 30 years.

This incident has been reported to the chief, and then referred to the nearest police station, which is 'Muela. Semakaleng's family was then given the medical form to be filled by the doctor in order to prove the incident. The form was left at the police station; police officers said they will try to do their findings deeply about it.

People with disabilities that are working in this area did not want to let that case down. They did it just because they have been trained how to tackle issues of disabilities especially intellectual disabilities in relation to sexuality.

The communities do not understand issues of disabilities clearly. They pointed that Semakaleng is always doing sex with many people, so that cannot be reported to the police station. The perpetrator Marutlane when noting that people with disabilities are serious about the issue, he indicated that they agreed to have the event.

After reporting the incident to the police station, which we thought things can go very fast to find the perpetrator, they delayed to take action until the perpetrator ran away to our neighbor country which is South Africa. He wanted to run away from his mistakes, just because he did not want to go to jail.

The follow-up was done with the police; people with disabilities together with Semakaleng's parent 'Makamoho, indicated that according to police officers, that was not rape as they investigated.

"What is surprising is that, the police had done their investigations but did not even ask Semakaleng as the abused. The question is; how did this done, as they did not ask her how she feels? Asked 'Makamohelo

When people with disabilities are following this to the police station, they did not find anything as they showed that even people who worked the issue are no longer working at that station.

"I have learnt that Semakaleng's case, cannot be worked until it reaches the court of law because people have negative attitude towards disability issues especially intellectual disability. We are still waiting to see what is going to happen when the perpetrator could come to the country. We want to see how the case will be handled."

We parents of children with disabilities, we are hoping or putting our trust to our organisations to this issue. We hope to take this further to approach legal institutions to handle it." Said 'Malikeleli

"We are very sorry that this happened to Semakaleng. It's not right, and it's not fair, and it's certainly not her fault. Semakaleng is not able to talk to anyone about the incident. It could really help if she could just talk about it. So, it's important to find healthier ways to cope."said Thabiso Ntlamelle the 'Nqoe Animator

Following up the case by LNFOD volunteer to the 'Muela Police station found that the case is there and reported within the station. The volunteer tried to find out the Police case number and got it. Semakaleng's case number is 126/11/14. Talking to the office in charge Mr. Majodina is that we cannot precede with the case as the perpetrator has run away to South Africa and still waiting for his availability in this country. We are expecting to hear from the villagers to report when the perpetrator is in the country.



GENERAL NEWS

Physically Disabilities' parliament

By: **Pascalina Letsau**

Maseru, Itjareng Vocational Training Centre on the 16 December, people with physical disabilities gathered there in order to carry out its authorization of the organisation. I can call that the parliament for people with physical disabilities.

It is in this meeting where all members were supposed to have all reports meaning; Progress, financial, projects, branches and the way forward of the association. The meeting would also have to amend the constitution as well.

The progress and financial reports were read respectively and the statement from the chairperson. Some branches reported but the thing is; at LNAPD delegation is not stated within the constitution on how is done especially when attending the congress. This means every member is able to attend without any limitation.

Finishing reading those reports, members had to ask some question for clarifications. The problem that organisations have is to have leadership which is defensive and not willing to answers questions from members or to inline some issues with the constitution. There were small mistakes that if the leadership can't take them into consideration could damage or wipe out its membership. I think it's good for the organisation to make sure that they learn or train its members on how to run the association making the mandate and the constitution the main concern to develop it. The concern was the issue of a huge number of membership which was stated before the congress which was about 30 000. That number was a mistake but the leadership did not want to admit the mistake and members were exasperated with that. The statement itself showed that everyone who is physically disabled is a member, so members showed that there is no need to subscribe to the organisation, which is wrong.

When coming to the amendments of the constitutions; members submitted them earlier on before the congress. Some of the amendments were not in favor of the rights of members like not allowing members to join as many associations as they can. When looking at the national constitution which we

engrave some articles from it talks of freedom of association. So, if one joined an association of human rights cannot join any organisation that deals with reducing poverty or livelihood organization. Nobody approved the article.

The elections procedure continued by electing the people who will see that the elections goes accordingly. Only the executive committee was elected while other structures were left behind. There were two sides to elect from and won one side.

The committee is as follow for the next 3 years to run LNAPD;

Chairperson – Mr. Lehlohonolo Molisana
 Vice Chair – Mr. Mokheseng Ncheke
 Secretary General – Ms. Tsobotsi Motale
 Vice Secretary – Ms. Nyakallo Teane
 Treasurer – Mr. Johannes Khomojoo
 Publicity Secretary – Mr. Makotoko Matsolo
 Vice Publicity – Mr. Malefetsane Nthoele
 Members – Ms. Lipolelo Makhele
 Mr. Fusi Sefuthi

The chairperson made a statement that everyone should make sure that they work together with the committee in order to develop the organisation. Everyone wished the committee a good luck for its work to fulfill the mandate and the success of the organisation.



Members of new elected committee of LNAPD

GENERAL NEWS

Women with disabilities within 16 days of activism

By: Pascalina Letsau



Maseru at Ha Teko, celebrating 16 days of activism organisations that are dealing with women issues gathered to raise awareness on violence to the communities of the mentioned place. The activity started with the procession about 12 Km

The leading organisation was She Hive supported by Action AID. Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sport and Recreation attended and made a presentation and the **theme for 2015 which reads as;**

The Matrix which is the organisation of lesbians and gays participated. LNFOD women also participated in the discussions by sending its delegation and the communities that are disabled attended. Each organisation stated its mandate to the communities so that when talking about violence and discrimination one could understand. On behalf of LNFOD women's, Pascalina stated all the concerns of women and girls with disabilities. Women with disabilities presented their issues after the Maseru District Administrator who talked about Right to clean water to everyone that is where created a touchable example to talk about on how girls and women with disabilities abused by that right. The problem here lies with the government as it is not making sure that every person is having that right, so this affects more girls and women with disabilities as

they have to travel a long distance and then criminals take advantage of them. Going further; talked about lack of education and training to girls and women with disabilities. We all know that education is the key to a better life, so it is difficult for them to reach better life. With this reason, women and girls with disabilities become victims of human trafficking.

They are promised jobs outside the country especially deaf people but only to realize that are to be sex workers who are not paid but the owner of that club. Still in this, the government is to blame as they are not providing quality, safe and accessible education to all. There are no qualified teachers to assist learners with disabilities in schools. There are no sign language interpreters to assist teachers to pass good teachings to learners that are deaf. The infrastructure is not good at all, inaccessible toilets and classrooms to physical disabilities; these lead them to quit school at the early stage.

It is our will to see everybody who has attended this event to help others to change their mind set and understand that every human has rights regardless of their disability and should be treated well. We are aware that we are now going to be advocates of issues of disability wherever we are as people of Ha Teko. The best thing of attending events like this is that; we are learning without paying even a cent. In future we are going to help others on issues of disabilities because we have been lessoning careful, I realize. Concluded by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.



GENERAL NEWS

“Having passion and interest can reach far.....”

By: Seabata Mokebisa

“Passion and interest help a person to reach huge things in life. Seabata Mokebisa is a visually impaired man who is willing to help other people. It took me a time before I could understand why I should join Disabled People’s organisations, but I met Mr. Nqosa Morienyane who tried to convince me that it is important to be with people who are sharing the same idea and situation.

I admitted to join the group and learnt more from Morienyane. We discussed so many things about how are we supposed to work as Berea people, I thought it will not be easy for me to perform those duties. I was looking on how I am going to move around as I would always need a personal assistant but my thoughts were not true, I managed.”

“As a man with visually impaired person, I was nominated just because I had that passion to work issues of disabilities, I found myself being part and parcel of all those issues that are affecting my peers. I was not expecting that I can be able to perform the duty properly, so with that reason I had to come near my coordinator now and then to seek information and clarification where necessary” Said Mr. Seabata Mokebisa. With that passion I managed to do the following:

- At Lovely Rock – DO8 managed to seek a wheelchair, for a youth who have been a long time not having it.
- Managed again to enroll one male youth at Maseru Itjareng Vocational Training Centre

- Berea, one deaf man who has been hit by the car and got physical disability is now getting social grant through the help of animators
- Maqhaka Moreneng, a woman who was amputate her hands in 1984, she did not get any help, she also earning social grant through the help of animators and the coordinator at Berea
- Thuathe – sehlabeng, we are still trying to help a male child who is intellectual disability from social development and hoping to have something for him.
- Marabeng, one child approached us as we are now well know by people with disabilities to find him school and we are still I the process of helping him, we are still talking to management from different schools that enroll learners with disabilities.

“We don’t have to wait for other people to tell us what we have to do, as long as we know our rights and responsibilities. I am very new in this type of job but I can see where to go, I am also expecting other people who have been in a long run to help us understand more about ways of approaching service providers.”
Concluded Mokebisa



GENERAL NEWS

LNFOOD held training on how to stop being dishonesty

By: Pascalina Letsau

Maseru, Cyeera guest house LNFOOD held a 2 day training on anti-corruption from the 4th – 5th December. The invitees were members of LNFOOD member affiliates, staff members from all these organisations, the total number of 20 participants.

The objective of the training was to capacitate its members on how to stop issues of corruption wherever they are working. We are all humans and with that people with disabilities are not exception, it can happen that they are involved in issues of corruption. It is the role of the federation to stop things like that before they could happen.

Corruption is Monopoly power plus Discretion minus Accountability.

According to the facilitator the definition of corruption is when a person mis-uses his or her powers badly to benefit him alone. If we can take one example of someone who is campaigning for elections, a person can badly do its marketing either by elections so that people can elect him or her due to fear. Another example would be when a Human resource manager can finalize the employment of someone interested at without having other decisions from the stakeholders or panel.

Topics touched in that training;

1. Bribe – this is where people are giving out something so that can have a service.
2. Theft – there are some theft that is influenced by things that are coming in unexpected.
3. Nepotism – that is where a person who has power can hire a person who doesn't qualify due to the interest of the employer.
4. Conflict of interest – that is where a person is related to hiring someone or to give someone a tender yet that person is a family member, if found that you have to be one of the panel to those, such person should withdraw his or her name to that issue.
5. Fraud – if there is no one to reconcile some books, one can say; shy should I be honest, it is where then the fraud starts.

We have to make sure that everybody is accountable to somewhere.

Normally, corruption is not done by poor people but those who have known money for a long time. Once a person has been involved in corruption, a person will always be in. It is something which is unfortunate as the next generation will not be able to have services without being in a fraud. This is very bad indeed when looking those people who are bribing and bribed. We all have to deny being bribed so that we can build a good nation.

Bribe is illegal and must be reported to police stations or to the office of DCEO. People cannot bribe or receive it openly where people are looking; those who are doing it must in a secret or hide themselves.

There comes times of questions; “what can be done if a member has to apply for a tender within the organisation in order to avoid conflict of interests? The answer was; the organisation or anyone in charge must check the policy, if the policy is silent, we have to consider the law and the policy of the country.

Ways of reporting the crime

1. Go to the office of DCEO
2. Write a letter / fax to the office
3. Just phone the office and cannot mention your name, the office will just follow that issue until it can reach the courts of law if necessary.

Let us all avoid issues of corruption and report it immediately. Remember; “Change begins with you.”

GENERAL NEWS

Experience and knowledge sharing

By: Pascalina Letsau

Mohaleshoek, Castle Rock from the 10th – 12th December, the project of deepening decentralization held a training workshop on sharing experiences and knowledge sharing. If we can remember the project is working in the four districts; meaning Maseru, Berea, Butha-Buthe and Mohaleshoek. In every one of these districts there are councils selected. In these councils there are Electoral Divisions (EDs)

Each district had to report on the work they have been doing. The work of volunteerism is very difficult, so other people must have been not doing the job as expected. In this case the coordinators have to change animators within their areas of work. This happened more in the Berea district. The whole meeting was very impressed with the work completed by those two new animators from Berea.

At Berea Mr. Lefa Sheshe as a new animator managed to help 4 people with disabilities who were not able to meet people outside due to stigma, they are now able to go out and talking to communities. Furthermore helped 2 male people with disabilities school at Itjareng for vocational skills and 3 girls at Ithuseng Rehabilitation, they will be completing their course this year.

Again we learnt how to do welding at the Senekane council, due to our advocacy using the electricity. We helped a young man aged 18 and a girl to get social grant from the ministry.

Even though managed to do some work, there are still problems among people with disabilities within committees when looking the project of deepening decentralization as most are still don't understand their role



especially in the committees of the council.

To this problem the meeting agreed that, they all know that there are politics within organisations. We have to avoid conflicts that will lead to damage the good things that should be done by people who have been nominated to develop or advocate for people with disabilities within the councils that are meant to benefit them.

The top district that has worked perfectly was Mohale's hoek district among the four. Phamong at Lithipeng council, the animator was a deaf person but unfortunately passed away, so the position has to be filled by the same disability. With that reason, the person nominated was Mrs. 'Malilemo Mosolo. The problem is that there is a huge gap when coming to communicate with her; this is going to hinder the progress of the project.

The meeting made a resolution that the Mohales'shoek coordinator should go back and nominate someone else but should be a female. This resolution was made realizing that females within the team are very scarce.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENT

Livelihood packages given to People with disabilities in Maseru district

For more information please contact
LNFOD office; +266 22320345
Email; moeletsi@infod.org.ls

Mobility International USA (MIUSA) invites women with disabilities to apply for the 8TH WILD

From July 30 – August 21, 2016

Deadline to apply: February 1st 2016

For more information visit:

<http://www.miusa.org/nnews/2016/WILDcallforapplications>

NEWS IN PICTURE



Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Mothetjoa Metsing and Director of Disability Services Ms. Mahlapane Makakole – Boliba on the 3rd December



District Coordinators and Animators under the project of Deepening Decentralization at Castle Rock Molehshoek



Women and girls with disabilities held a public gathering at St. Michaels



LNFO staff and volunteers after the celebration of International Disability Day



UNDP Representative in Lesotho, Ms Christy Ahenkora, addressing Basotho on the day.



Braai when LNFO closing for December 2015. Hipi Hureee!!!

ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



Africa Disability Alliance

