

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 February, 2017.

Prime Minister, Dr. Pakalitha Mosisili lost the motion of no confidence in parliament on the 01st March 2017. "The vote of no confidence motion to urge His Majesty King Letsie III to appoint Honourable Monyane Moleleki as the next prime minister has been carried," the statement made by Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Ntlhoi Motsamai after the vote was passed.

Different scholars and experts raise different interpretations on the next steps regarding who takes the country forward following this new development. LNFOD will be keeping tabs as events unfold and would like to appeal to all to work within the confines of the law in whatever steps they take from here. Despite uncertainty which our country, Lesotho governance is sailing through, advocacy at LNFOD work continue as planned.

The beginning of implementation of the framework program has come following the management meeting

by Diakonie Austria JJA and LNFOD. It is important to start working hard to help learners with disabilities in the project area to enroll in schools. I mention education here as I plead with all local authorities to make sure that they support the process as their being in the neighbourhood of the out-of-school children with disabilities put them at the best position to ensure that proper identifications are done and these children are referred to schools.

The most enticing part about the new framework program is the livelihood component which involves establishment of small businesses by Persons with disabilities and our families. With this new development our lives should change to the better.

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 that may improve the quality and content of this free service.

Best regards,



The Editor

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

MOVING TOWARDS THE ENACTMENT OF THE DISABILITY SPECIFIC LEGISLATION

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) is advocating for the domestication of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities through the enactment of the disability specific legislation normally referred to as the Disability Equity Bill. LNFOD is strengthened to advocate for the protection of the rights of people with disabilities through domestication of the CRPD by the Diakonie Austria and the Austrian Development Agency which is the backdonor of Diakonie Austria to support LNFOD to continue the good work of advancing the promotion and protection of the disability rights in Lesotho, under the program called: Capacity development for the promotion of the rights of people with disabilities.”

Ever since the inception of this program in January 2017, LNFOD had a fruitful meeting with the Ministry of Social Development in which LNFOD was asked to provide the detailed meaning, content and structure of the body whose responsibilities will be incorporated into the Bill.



LNFOD has already drafted and submitted the instructions to the Ministry of Social Development demonstrating how article 33 of the CRPD anticipates the monitoring body of the disability rights to look like in order to provide effective monitoring of the implementation and enforcement of the rights of people with disabilities in Lesotho.

The most important aspect of this monitoring body of the disability rights in Lesotho is that, it should be independent and well-resourced to monitor the implementation of the rights of people with disabilities and advise the government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Social Development on disability rights. This process is bureaucratic and may sound like it will delay the passing of this historic

legislation for the minority group of people with disabilities living in Lesotho.

However, I strongly hope that the commitment showed to LNFOD in the past meeting will take us to the next step quickly. disabilities by an act of Law.

I therefore urge the Minister of Social Development and his good team to keep up

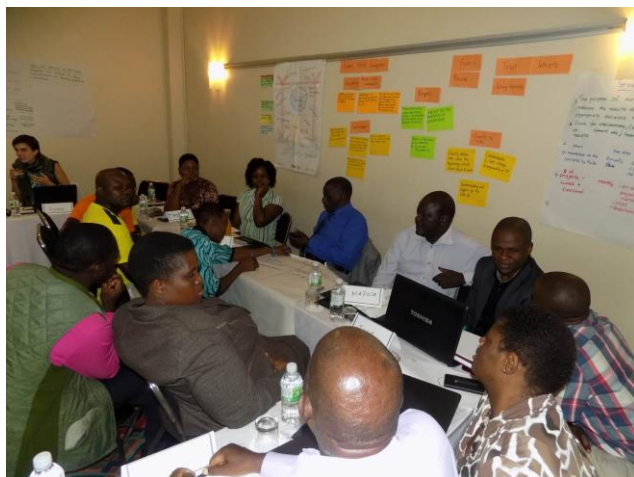
the good work and honour the obligation of promoting and protecting people with LNFOD is inspired by the commitment demonstrated by the Ministry of Social Development to

finish this process as soon as possible so that the Bill may be presented to the Attorney General for the purposes of getting the certificate of approval, and then taken to the Cabinet and lastly presented in the Parliament where it will be turned into the binding law of Lesotho.

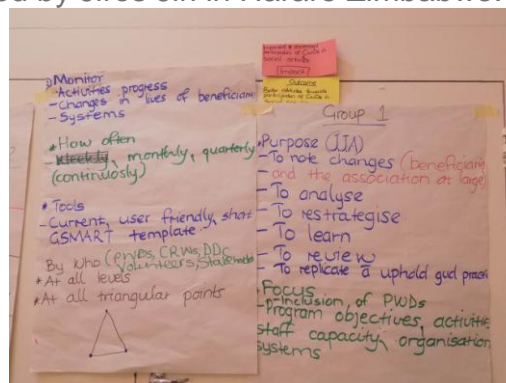
GENERAL NEWS

Three partners say they cannot do away with 'knowledge sharing'

By: Masekara Sekoankoetla



partners held their first knowledge workshop from 22 to 24 February and were hosted by Jiros Jiri in Harare Zimbabwe.



Continuing its task on disability rights advocacy and supporting people with disability and their families, Lesotho National Federation (LNFOD) has entered in to partnership with with Diakonie Austria (in Austria) and Jiros Jiri in Zimbabwe to implement a three year program which specifically benefits people with disability. In Lesotho, Males and females with disabilities living in the fourteen community councils in the Districts of Leribe, Berea, Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek shall directly benefit under this program.

Continuous sharing of Knowledge among partners is regarded as an essential of the partnership. It is agreed by the three partners that **sharing of knowledge throughout the program** shall maximise the success of their project as well as ensuring that all partners have the capacity to successfully implement other interventions alongside the current program and beyond the life of this project. Pursuant to this understanding the three

In this workshop, the partners revised their program for the three years. They also shared and built each other's capacity on Monitoring evaluation. The partners also engaged a consultant who equipped with the knowledge on how to use different methods of monitoring evaluation plans as well as the pros and cons of each plan. Utilizing the knowledge they gained from the workshop selected and developed the common monitoring plan for their program.

In this workshop partners also developed the agenda for the next knowledge sharing workshop to be hosted by LNFOD in Maseru in October.



GENERAL NEWS

Changing attitudes with education

By: 'Malehlohonolo Molelengoane

The month of February was the most important this year as LNFOD saw a change in negative attitudes against learners with disabilities through its campaigns on inclusive education. The LNFOD advocacy team visited five districts across the country to train, sensitize and build the capacities of Education officers, Teachers, Parents of Children with disabilities, councillors and persons with disabilities on inclusive education. These districts are Butha-Buthe, Leribe, Berea, Mafeteng and Mohale's hoek.



LNFOD is currently implementing a project on access to justice for persons with disabilities and right to education for persons with disabilities. One of the mandates LNFOD has under this programme is to capacitate teachers, parents of children with disabilities and persons with disabilities on inclusive education. Right to inclusive education is enshrined in Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities (UNCRPD) to which Lesotho is a signatory. This means that Lesotho is bound by the provisions of the UNCRPD thus; it has to implement its undertakings under the UNCRPD.

At the inception of the campaigns, the participants had different views on inclusive education. Parents of children with disabilities did not believe that inclusive education is possible, they thought it was a theory out of this world and they even said only children with disabilities from rich families can get good quality education because their parents can afford hefty fees. In the same vein, the teachers were of the view that special education and segregation are the best practices since children with disabilities are a lot of work and need a lot of expertise. However, at completion of campaigns everybody was of the view that inclusive education is the best mode. Teachers even vowed to start accommodating learners with disabilities in their schools even if it means sourcing money from their pockets. Sometimes it takes a positive attitude to change for the better.



GENERAL NEWS

Pascalina wins Continental Glory for Basotho

By: Rabasotho Moeletsi

Maseru - Lesotho's Pascalina Letsau scooped top continental award as the winner of the logo competition organised by the African Disability Forum (ADF). This award comes after ADF announced the 'Logo Design Competition' for persons with disabilities from all over Africa Continent. The announcement was done in all the member organisation whereby individuals with different disabilities were given equal chance for competition for the prize. Membership of the ADF consist of the eight (8) Continental DPOs, four (4) Sub-Regional DPO Federations and thirty four (34) National DPO Federations. This competition was open to these bodies. Pascalina took her chance under the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) as a member of the ADF.

The winner of the competition was announced on the ADF bulletin which came out in February 2017 on the summary of the major events.

"ADF announced a Logo Competition for the design of an ADF logo for official use and the winning logo was approved by Executive Council. The winner is Pascalina Letsau from Lesotho," read the statement from the continental body. The winner of the award, Pascalina Letsau also received an e-mail from ADF confirming that she is the overall winner of the competition.

When she got the news that she is the winner, Ms. Letsau could not contain herself, she burst up with excitement, jumped up screaming 'yes, yes,, finally, I got it'. She was so happy, it was a big moment for her. When her colleagues were trying to find out what was going on with her, she broke the news and sent praises to God. She was then emotional, tears of joy coming down her cheeks. Her colleagues at LNFOD congratulated her, and were proud of her.

"I'm proud to have won the competition and receive the award ahead of so many competent individual persons with disabilities across the continent," said Pascalina.



"This award in particular I want to dedicate to both my son, Renang and his sister Teboho who have been pushing to put extra effort on everything I do, even when they know it eats on the already few resources we have at home. They always have this to say to me: 'Mama we know you can make it, go for it.' This award is for them, the whole Letsau family and the Basotho nation at large."

The award which Ms. Letsau has won goes along with a prize which include the fully funded return trip to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to attend the ADF COUNCIL meeting later in 2017.

Winning has vastly become a trademark for Pascalina in the recent days. It was last year, 2016 when she wrote an article on 'Effects of Climate Change on persons with disabilities in Lesotho'. The article won an award in the competition organised by the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology. Still in 2016, Pascalina wrote an article which competed at an international platform and got a space in the newspaper developed by LNFOD development partners, NAD from Norway.

Pascalina is a single parent, unemployed woman who used her skill and mostly her passion to push her to the limits to achieve all the accolades she got in life. She did not wait for people to pity her. She defied the notion that disability is inability, that persons with disabilities are passive recipients of the developmental yields. She stood firm and played an active role in shaping up the developmental agenda through her writing skills. She is volunteering as editor of the Disability Lesotho, e-newsletter which has become household name in the disability news not only in Lesotho but around the globe. 'We are lucky as LNFOD to have this genius as part of our team'.

SPOTLIGHT



‘Malehlohonolo Joyce Molelengoane aged 25

Position: Assistant Advocacy Officer

Qualifications: LLB

1. When did you get involved with the disability sector?

- September 2016

2. If you were given three wishes what would they be?

- To be a superhero
- To be a billionaire so that I would help people in need
- To be me!

3. What is the best piece of advice you’ve ever been given? Did you follow it?

- “Never pay attention to what other people say about you; they not talking to you.” I did and I’m still following this advice; it brings out the best in me even when circumstances do not allow!

4. Do you have any advice for young people with disability?

- Same advice that I was given. Youth with disabilities should follow their hearts, if you feel like you can do it, then give it your all.

5. How would you spend your last day on Earth?

- I would want to be around the people I love dearly, eat a lot of ice cream and cake... who knows how long I’ll be travelling without food?!

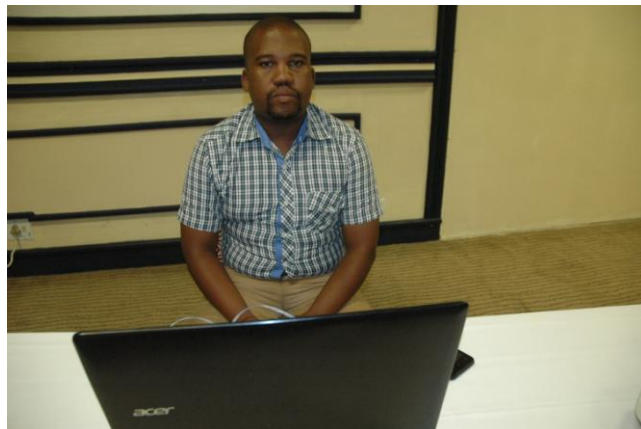
6. If you had a trained dog what would you do with it?

- I would train it to communicate then I’ll have found a best friend!!!

OPINION PIECE

How Justice can be accessible to Intellectually Disabled Persons

By: Potso Mokhachane



Access to justice is a basic principle of the rule of law. In the absence of access to justice, people are unable to have their voice heard, exercise their rights, challenge discrimination or hold decision-makers accountable. The UN's Declaration of the High-level Meeting on the Rule of Law at the International and National Levels emphasizes the right of equal access to justice for all, including members of vulnerable groups such as those with the mental disability. It further reaffirmed the commitment of Member States to taking all necessary steps to provide fair, transparent, effective, non-discriminatory and accountable services that promote access to justice for all

[paras. 14 and 15]. United Nations activities in support of Member States' efforts to ensure access to justice are a core component of the

work in the area of rule of law. This notion is also delineated by section 4 of Lesotho's Constitution 1993 which is alluding to the fundamental human rights, among which section 4(1)(o) specifically provides for the right to equality before the law and the equal protection of the law. The delicate nature of the mentally disabled persons even calls for more attention in our courts of law or any other place where their access to justice is to be secured. However, the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them as provided for in our laws is regrettably acutely short of what ought to be happening. Our justice systems are not up to the required standards to be in the position to ensure adequate accessibility of justice for the mentally disabled persons.

Our courts of law and the way court proceedings are conducted and often not friendly and convenient for people with mental disabilities. The way our courts of law look, the furniture, set up, strange people, strange regalia, academic mode of communication and the tense environment to mention the few tend to be unpleasant and straining to these people.

The way proceedings are conducted is too formalized and strictly within the rules of court, making them lengthy and intolerable for them, making them prone to losing patience

and thus forgetful or completely hostile and end up not testifying at all in the court. The other challenge is the lack of skilled court officers that are able to effectively share information with the mentally disabled persons.

One would suggest that in cases involving persons with mental disabilities our court proceedings be the same as those provided for in Lesotho's Children Protection and Welfare Act of 2011. This will ensure more friendly court proceedings that may include play therapy, informal mode of communication,

expedite hearings, and above all, engagement of trained court personell as well as other stakeholdera that would play their individual roles diligently in the court of law without being mean to this fragile part of our mankind.

Therefore, in the event we all take responsibility and become humane and observant all people including those with mental disability will not face any challenges when they have to access justice in our country.

NEWS IN PICTURES



Minister of Justice and correctional service Mr. Vincent Malebo state words of commitment to PWDs



Ms. Milahoi Everlyn Koyieo sharing the experience from Kenya



Mr. Nkhasi stating the situation of PWDs in relation to justice



Braille to be recognized national and be used countrywide in schools



Minister Justice Malebo and Marriam Homayoun from European Union



Participants shared and built each other's capacity on Monitoring evaluation at Zimbabwe

UPCOMING EVENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Capacity Building Workshop to develop the capacity of the Investigators, Prosecutors and Magistrates

For more information, please conduct
LNFOD office on 22320345 or email:
malehlohonolo@lnfod.org.ls

Introduction of the Framework Program in Leribe, Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohale'shoek districts

For more information, please conduct
LNFOD office on 22320345 or email:
moeletsi@lnfod.org.ls

International Women's Day – 8th March

International Day of Happiness – 20th March

For more information, please visit
www.un.org

World Autism Awareness Day – 2nd April, 2017

For more information please visit:
www.autismspeaks.org/LIUB

Or conduct:
stephanie@bljworldwide.com

FEB, 2017

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ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



Diakonie 
Katastrophenhilfe

Brot
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