

DISABILITY LESOTHO



From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome once again to the edition of Disability Lesotho. The edition will cover news for the Month of February, 2018.

During the festive season, the Lesotho government Prime Minister Dr. Thomas Motsoahae Thabane made a Christmas statement where he indicated that the disability equity bill will be passed before parliament immediately after the December session we hoped that will happen as he indicated, but it did not happen. We are still hoping that he is still stand by his words and deliver on the promise.

I also like to encourage persons with disabilities to drive themselves into business, as we can see that it is not easy for them to be employed in the public and private sectors due to their disabilities. Unless we do things on our own, there is no one to think for us. I am saying this because I am already in progress, which I can indicate that we can change the world with our intelligent.

It's been a while that persons with disabilities are left behind. I think it's high time that we bring change in our families. If we are expecting the government to do things for us, we are wasting our time and energy. We do not need that huge amount of monies to start a business, what matters is the way we are making our savings and what we want in life.

Let's take effort to start as little as we have to bring hope to our families and our communities. There are many persons with disabilities within streets of Lesotho trying to make money but the problem is how to deal with it and who support us in that, but I still think if we can be supported either by business skills, financial we can be able to do it better than anyone else. I plea to anyone interested in business to support persons with disabilities to do for themselves as they have already taking efforts and creating job opportunities by hiring others sometimes even employing those without disabilities.

If you would like to contribute to the next issue or have received this newsletter from a third party and wish to be included on the mailing list please contact Pascalina Letsau on (+266) 5905 5406 or pletsau@gmail.com

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 ADOPTION OF DISABILITY EQUITY BILL

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

The article seeks to highlight the readers about the progress made so far by all the stakeholders towards the enactment of the Disability Equity Bill into law by the parliament of Lesotho.

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) is implementing a three year program "Capacity development for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities" with the financial aid from Diakonie Austria whose back donor is Austrian development agency (ADA)

The overall objective of this program is to improve living conditions of persons with disabilities by reducing inequalities suffered by people with disabilities in the communities in which they live.

One of the specific objectives of this program is to increase protection of the rights of people with disabilities by advocating for the enactment of the Disability rights legislation in accordance with the standards set out by the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

Significant strides have been made in this regard in order to achieve this goal. The office of the Attorney General has recently approved the Disability rights legislation usually known as Disability Equity Bill. Meaning that the certificate of approval of the Bill should have been issued taking the Bill to the next step of being reviewed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

LNFOD was informed by the internal sources from the Ministry of Law that, the Bill should be presented before the Cabinet on the last week of February.

All these developments towards the achievement of the goal relating to the protection of the rights of people with disabilities come immediately, after Infod wrote a letter to the Prime Minister reminding him of his pledge to table Disability Equity Bill in parliament as soon as the parliament reopens in 2018.

The bill establishes an autonomous disability rights commission responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Disability Equity Act and provides advice to the government of Lesotho on the human rights of people with disabilities.

The Bill further contains the rights of people with disabilities protected in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

Importantly, the program will assist LNFOD to raise awareness about the rights of people with parliament adopts the Bill into Act.

From the foregoing, LNFOD appreciates the work done by the Ministry of Social Development so far and calls upon the Honorable Minister of Social Development and the Right Honourable the Prime Minister to fulfill the pledge to the entire Basotho with disabilities by tabling the Disability Equity Bill in parliament as soon as the parliament reopens.

GENERAL NEWS

MASHALENG COMMUNITY COUNCIL RAISING EDUCATION FLAG HIGH

By: Rabasotho Moeletsi

Global commitments to advance access to education through international conventions and national development frameworks to advance access to education often leave Persons with Disabilities aside during implementation phase by duty bearers. Education Act of 2010 is almost ten (10) years old now but does not apply to persons with disabilities. Children with disabilities are not able to take full opportunities which are brought by this law since it is silent on disability inclusion. Since Lesotho is a party to the CRPD, which guarantees the right to education of persons with disabilities as per article 24, the country is obliged to adapt its teaching practices to be accommodative of all learners regardless of their disability or otherwise. Recent statistics have also shown that children with disabilities are disproportionally represented among the out of schools across the country.

In addressing this, LNFOD has embarked into program which has interest in education where the aim is to increase proportion of learners with disabilities in schools at all levels of education. It is in this program which is funded by Austrian Development Agency through partner Diakonie Austria where LNFOD is pushing for adoption of Inclusive Education Policy. Mobilisation campaigns among persons with disabilities in the community councils are ongoing where the aim is to encourage individual persons with disabilities to enrol in schools as to exercise their right to education. LNFOD through disability focal persons in the community councils are working as agents of change by undertaking public gatherings to educate persons with disabilities to stand for their rights. One focal person who stood out IN Mashaleng this month is Mr. Smanga Seko who has gone beyond his role to break barriers to make sure that persons with disabilities receive education.

"I enjoy volunteering my time in this project since it gives me privilege to serve my people

persons with disabilities. That gives me a lot of pride when I look back and see that I contributed in persons with disabilities realising their right to education," said Smanga Seko, a focal person in Mashaleng community council said.

"I was so happy, I couldn't believe myself when I was told that Itumeleng is accepted at the Mohloli oa Bophelo training center to continue with her studies. When she was called to start at the center," the visibly jubilant Seko said.

The lady didn't even have a bus-fare to Maseru but Smanga did not despair, he took effort, went to social development office to ask them to transport her. They agreed and she was dropped at the center.

"The driver who driving her called me that she arrived safely at the center. I took a phone and followed up with Mohloli oa Bophelo training center to find if they had received her," He concluded.

This is the example of the work which Mr. Seko and other focal persons are volunteering to undertake mobilisation for persons with disabilities to come out and become active participants in society. In fact ministry of education and training should be taking a leading role to go to the communities and convince children with disabilities or their parents to enrol in schools thereby affirming their commitment to make schools accessible to every learner including persons with disabilities. This call should be made through different channels which include making presentations on modifications made by the ministry on the physical environment and the whole education system. This include having teachers with required skills in schools who are able to provide education to persons with different backgrounds including those with disabilities. The expectation is for the ministry to boldly shout that there is construction of ramp access in schools, provision of accessible educational materials, diverse mode of communication in classrooms sign language and Braille to ease learning to every individuals despite the kind of disability.

GENERAL NEWS

HANDS OFF OUR GIRLS!!!

By: Malehlohonolo Molelengoane

The chief of Ha-Seshote in the district of Leribe reported an incidence of sexual assault of an intellectually disabled teenage girl in her village. The girl was said to be allegedly assaulted by the herdboys who herd her parents' animals. Upon hearing this, the chief took upon herself regardless of the girl's guardian's resistance, to take the girl to hospital to get evidence that indeed she was sexually assaulted then took the case to the police.

The case was heard sometime in November 2017 where the boy was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment with no option of a fine. The chief said she is tired of rape against women with intellectual disabilities and she is going to fight until people understand that women with intellectual disabilities deserve respect and protection.

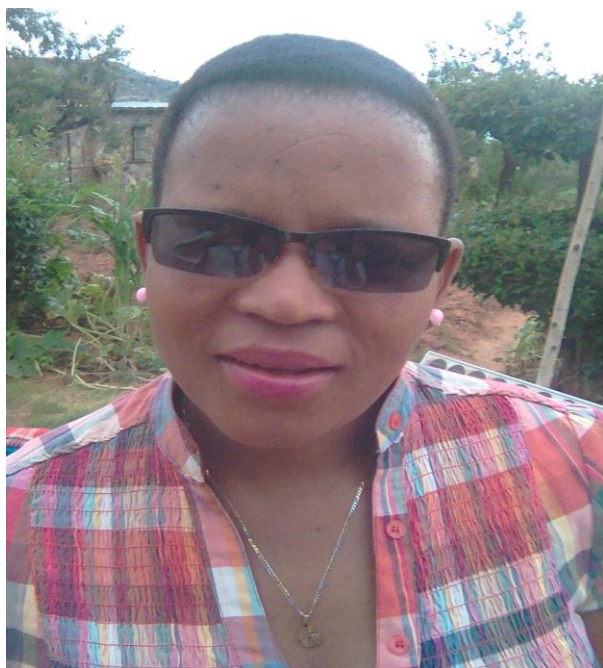


'M'e 'Maboitumelo Tau the Chief of Seshote village, who reported the case

GENERAL NEWS

ENHANCED WITH ADVOCACY SKILLS EMPOWERED ME

By: Motselisi Moreboli



I am visually impaired person. I am a woman at the age of 35 years old. A single parent for a baby boy aged 9 years old, a care-mother to the girl aged 16 years of age. I started having the disability in 2010. The same year I became a member of Lesotho National Visually Impaired Person. I was then encouraged to enrol at Mohloli – oa – Bophelo to do Braille and computer literacy. After completing that course, I then proceeds with handcraft skills.

I knew about LNFOD in 2010 after being a member of LNLVIP. DPOs are essential groups to our lives as persons with disabilities in this country. With these two organisations I learnt how to do a proper advocacy. It was only 2017 when I became a member of task team to deal with Lesotho reforms. I did this together with the advocacy work within my community.

The work that I was always doing was to encourage persons with disabilities within my area to join Disabled People's Organisations.

I managed to do that work properly, they joined. I also bring about the Community Based Organisation known as 'Falimehang Mpota-mpote Disability'. This CBO is meant to deal with issues of counselling and livelihood schemes, so that we can bring up an impact to enable PWDs grow and develop independently.

I also worked hard to encourage more persons with disabilities in my village and the villages nearby to participate in the Disability Day celebration for 2017, even non-disabled persons talked to them and agreed to my proposal. I succeeded because I also managed to convince one businessman to support with his car to transport persons with disabilities to the celebration.

In order to make our voices heard by many people I always attend public gatherings. If there is something I feel like its not good for persons with disabilities, I just rise my hand and talk about it. I remember in my village, we use to do our washen at the well where we collect water. It was difficult for me to use that route to reach the place. I talked to the Local community councillor to assist with that route. The said officer hired people to construct that route and from his pocket paid them all. What I did did not benefit me or other persons with disabilities around that area but also non – disabled persons benefitted.

I think the role played by LNLVIP and LNFOD in my life is very important and can help me change others lives. I hope more developmental organisations can support them in order to bring change in people's lives.

GENERAL NEWS

Engaged in sustainable agriculture

By: Retselisitsoe Mokati

I am a Social Worker by profession. I am a family man based at Maputsoe Ha Mathata. I am a married man with three children. I am willing to contribute positively towards the betterment of Basotho and Lesotho.

It was in 2017 after being highlighted on how to start businesses by one activist from LNFOD.



I am now engaged in sustainable agriculture project since January, 2017. I have 200 layers chickens. It is then that I realized the need to utilize their waste as a manure on my empty land. On this land, I managed to plough 1000 heads of green pepper in September, 2017

I managed to harvest 5 by 20Ltrs of green pepper in a week's time. 20 litres of green



pepper cost M80.00 as for poultry project I manage to collect 6 trays per day and the tray is costing M40.00, with this reason I can handle and feed my family.

The main reason for engaging in this agricultural project is towards creation of employment for other disabled colleagues. I think this can be achieved with the assistance from any donor, to expand my project.

As Maputsoe itself is an industrial area, for me the market is not a problem, I am able to sell vegetables and eggs easily.



GENERAL NEWS

SOLUTION TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

By: Mathabang Maqoacha

It was on February when persons with disabilities, teachers at disability institutions meaning Mohloli – 0a – Bophelo and Itjareng and suppliers were trained on AT – INFO – Map. All these trainings were held at LNAPD offices at Moshoeshoe II



AT – INFO – Map has been introduced and been lead by SAFOD, three partners are AFRINEAD, University of Washington and DAMAGI. It is the app that contains information on the availability and location of assistive device. It is already working in 5 countries namely Lesotho , South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Malawi.

To download it;

1. download CommCare from google play store on the phone
2. Download the AT INFO MAP CODE 2aahrJL, User name: at, Password: 123

For more information please contact Mrs. Mathabang Maqoacha – Mobile phone +266 59005185

Email: maqoachaa@gmail.com

Facebook

www.facebook.com/atinfomap

page:

NEWS IN PICTURES



Staff of institutions for persons with disabilities during the training of Assistive Technology (AT) Database Mapping



Pascalina is back in business, selling clothes



Males and females who use to be cared by Mrs. Coacker gathered together



This is the transport office visited for sensitization about issues of disability



Mr. Retselisitsoe Mokati's part of his agricultural activities

Announcement / upcoming events

South African AT Database



We therefore encourage everybody to use this App that will assist us access information

Send Us your Company & AT Product Details Now

To access this App please visit:
<http://assistivetechmap.org/learn-about-at/>
Downloading and Installing AT-info_Map App

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You can also call or WhatsApp 'Mathabang Maqoacha' on this number +266 59005185 or email:
maqoachaa@gmail.com

Training on manufacturing of products in 5 districts of the project

Lobbying meetings with the employers in 5 districts of the project

For more information please conduct LNFOD office +266 22320345 or email; moeletsi@lnfod.org.ls

Mrs. Coacker Family Re-union



This family is planning for re-union of all Ex – Bana ba Mrs. Coacker at Maseru Boys Shelter – Motse oa Lerato, Tholoana ea Lerato, Resource centre for the blind and Morapeli Girls' home. The date and venue will be announced later

For more information please conduct: Pascalina Letsau at +266 59055406 or WhatsApp

Or Mr. Moeketsi Kometsi on this number; +27 825145263 or WhatsApp

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