

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 January, 2017

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

This is a new year. A new beginning. And things will change. We all have to work and plan hard for success. As schools are reopening for the new school calendar, let's make it the responsibility of every adult that them being disabled. we make sure that children with disabilities in our neighbourhood go to school and that schools do not reject them on the basis of I am very happy that Disability Lesotho is working hard to help the government to

develop and adopt the Inclusive Education Policy.

Its been a while that learners with disabilities are denied to education in many ways but with the policy, it will help teachers and other officers to see the importance of including issues of disability in the curriculum of Lesotho education.

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

If missed any edition please visit www.infod.org.ls
We welcome any feedback that may improve the quality and content of this free service.

Best regards,



The Editor

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

DECLARATION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ON CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS OF LESOTHO

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

We representatives of 5 organisations of persons with disabilities namely, Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho (IDAL) Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD) Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) and National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL) gathered on the 10 in Maseru have made the following proposals to the newly established secretariat of the reforms to be undertaken by the Basotho nation in due course:

Self representation in the coordinating structure

Ensure the self-representation of persons with disabilities in the coordinating authority to avoid exclusive decisions which may lead to marginalisation of people with disabilities.

The historical imbalances and inequalities among persons with disabilities has been caused by interalia the exclusive legislations and policies made without meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities from the inception of the making of the laws and policies. The perpetual exclusion of people with disabilities from the decision making bodies results into poverty, discrimination and inequalities among people with disabilities and within our society at large.

Self representation of persons with disabilities in parliament

Parliament of Lesotho has never had the specific seat for the representation of people with disabilities since 1966. As a result people with disabilities suffer the prejudice of having to adjust to exclusive and discriminatory laws passed by the Parliament due to absence of the specific seat of the self-representation of people with disabilities in the Parliament. For instance, National Assembly Electoral Amendment Act 2011, Constitution of Lesotho 1993, and the

Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act limits the participation of certain groups of people with disabilities in the enjoyment of their human rights on the basis of their disabilities.

The Parliament is the very important public institution dealing with public issues directly affecting the lives of people with disabilities. It is therefore imperative to make provision for the disability specific representation in the parliament.

This could be achieved by creating at least 4 specific seats of people with disabilities in the Senate whose role will be to advise the Parliament on making of disability inclusive legislations.

These representative should be appointed on the basis of merits and in the transparent manner.

Constitutional discrimination clause

The proposal is to ensure the discrimination clause of the new Constitution provides for disability as a prohibited ground of discrimination in explicit terms. The explicit mention of disability as a prohibited ground of discrimination in the constitutional discrimination clause will promote and protect the rights of people with disabilities in terms of access to service delivery in all aspects and reduce stigma and discrimination attached to disability. Additionally, it will assist the country to make laws that are sensitive to disability and renders all the laws discriminating on the basis of disability invalid.

In this way, there will be no way in which the Parliament can pass a law with discriminatory elements because all stakeholders will speak in one voice against the institutionalised discrimination against people with disabilities.

Constitutional provision on public interest law

LNFOOD and its affiliates strongly propose the making of the constitutional provision on public interest law to enable other interested parties to litigate on behalf of those who may not have the power but their rights being violated to litigate on their behalf in the name of promoting and protecting the rights of the marginalised and vulnerable.

In the context of disability, it will assist the representative organisations of people with disabilities to enforce the rights of people with disabilities effectively because most of people with disabilities whose rights are violated do not stand in court.

There shall be no constitutional provision which will cite disability as a reason for denying a person with disability to be appointed in any public office on the basis of disability. Persons with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodation to perform their functions equally, must be provided with the necessary support to enable such a person to perform his/her duties effectively without denying such a person the enjoyment of his/her human rights on an equal basis with others.

The insensitive words referring to people with intellectual disabilities in particular in the current Constitution are as follow;

Unsound mind, mental incapacity, blindness or someone acting under imbecility of mind. These words are no longer appropriate in the context of human rights discourse because Lesotho is a state party to the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Recognition of Sign Language as the third official language of Lesotho

A proposal is made to the effect that, sign language should be declared in the new Constitution as the third official language of Lesotho.

This is because Lesotho has a population of Deaf people speaking sign language as their first language or their mother tongue. Sign language is neither English nor Sesotho. It is an independent language by the Deaf Basotho in need of public service provided by the public institutions.

"Nothing about us without us."

For more information about this declaration, please contact LNFOOD office at 22320345.

Email address: admin@lnfod.org.ls

GENERAL NEWS

Thanks giving to DIAKONIE Austria, Bread for the World and Austrian Development Agency

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

Diakonie Austria gem. GmbH and the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) as local partner organisation have signed a cooperation agreement for implementing the programme "Capacity development for the promotion of rights of people with disabilities".

The programme is carried out in Lesotho by LNFOD and will be implemented from 01.01.2017 to 31.12.2019.

The programme is supported with funding from Austrian Development Agency and Bread for the World.

The programme contributes to the domestication of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, advocating for inclusive education, health care and employment services and empowering people with disabilities to demand their rights. The main two strategies consist in disability mainstreaming on national as well as local level and community based rehabilitation

measures such as trainings for teachers and health care service workers.

The project will target 14 community councils based in the district of Mphahle's hoek, Mafeteng, Maseru rural, Berea and Leribe.

LNFOD highly appreciates the financial support provided for people of Lesotho living in the project area by the mentioned partners.

LNFOD therefore calls upon the government of Lesotho local government authorities, organisations of persons with disabilities to support the implementation of this project in order to achieve accessible and inclusive Basotho society for all.

LNFOD strongly believes that, the effective implementation of this project will improve the living conditions of people with disabilities living in the project area and contributes towards the realisation of the rights enshrined by the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities in Lesotho.

GENERAL NEWS

Quality and Inclusive Education for Learners with disabilities

By: Masekara Sekoankoetla

On the 17th – 21st January, LNFOD and its member affiliates held series of meetings with parents and Disability Focal persons in the community councils of the following districts; Butha-Buthe, Leribe, Mafeteng and Mophale'shoek with the aim of educating the parents about the right to education for children with disabilities and means through which they can exercise such right.

The Disability Focal persons are expected thereafter to hold public gatherings on inclusive education. These public gatherings will be conducted in the local communities sensitizing the community leaders about the right to education for children with disabilities.

The project is implemented by The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD). It is aimed to support the Ministry of Education and Training to develop the Inclusive Education Policy and its implementation. The policy will guide all the stakeholders in terms of making the general education system of Lesotho inclusive of learners with disabilities.

LNFOD acknowledges the intention of the Ministry of Education and Training to develop and adopt the inclusive education policy as a means of creating enabling environment for all learners with disabilities from the pre-primary education, primary, secondary, high and higher education.

The adoption of the Inclusive Education policy will assist Lesotho to practice inclusive education as per article 24 of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and reduce inequalities faced by learners with disabilities in the current

education system at all levels. This Convention calls upon Lesotho as a state party to make its general education system accessible and inclusive of learners with disabilities including those who require high support needs such as the deaf-blind learners in the education system.

LNFOD called upon the Minister of Education and Training to speed up the development of inclusive education and allocate sufficient budget for its effective implementation.

The Living conditions study among persons with disabilities indicate that learners with disabilities experience serious inequalities in terms of access to quality, inclusive education, due to limited funding for the implementation of inclusive education strategies, lack of accessible infrastructure in terms of physical environment and inaccessible toilets which lead to the drop out of learners with disabilities at schools.



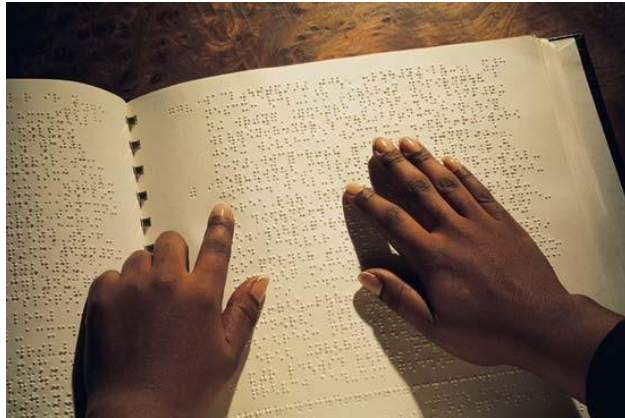
Learners with disabilities report that, they go through inaccessible curriculum and assessment from time to time due to lack of disability sensitive planning taking place in all the departments of the Ministry of Education and Training.

For instance, school supply unit does not supply schools with accessible textbooks and teachers from various schools require capacity on how to include children with disabilities in the classroom situation.

GENERAL NEWS

World Braille Day in Maseru

By: Relebohile Koloti



On the 9th January, Maseru Braille contributes towards the literacy of visually impaired persons.

Lesotho National League of the Visually impaired persons LNLVIP's president Mrs. 'Mabataung Khetsi said there is need to train teachers on Braille countrywide to promote education among visually impaired persons.

She said it is for this reason that the League will commemorate World Braille Day in Maseru on January 25th, saying the event will bring together among others, teachers and legislators, to create awareness and sensitise them about the importance of Braille and assistance of students in learning it.

Mrs. Khetsi said issues that will be discussed during the event include the ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty, adding that most schools do not teach Braille, which promotes congestion at schools that enrol visually impaired persons.

She emphasized the need for the Ministry of Education and Training to train teachers on Braille for the benefit of visually impaired

children but take them to schools so they can access education like other children.

World Braille Day is commemorated annually on January fourth in honour of Louise Braille who was born on that day in 1809

Braille Alphabet

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
u	v	w	x	y	z				
?	!	'	,	-	.	capital	#		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

GENERAL NEWS

"My Story, My Right....."

By: Lesole Moshongoane

I was born at Kaonyane - Motete in the Butha-Buthe district in 1978. I got the disability in 1985. I was told that I was sleeping when I woke up, my eyes were reddish and not able to see clearly. My parents took an effort to take me to some hospitals like Maluti Adventist hospital in Mapoteng and the Baragwanath hospital in South Africa to seek for a help but there was no use. I am now visually impaired.

By that time I got the disability, I was taking care of my family's flock. I attended school at Moeling Primary School only for year. I stopped going to school when I my mother dead, as there was nobody supporting me, the support that I am talking about is financial support as those time every child had to pay for his/her studies unlike now when education is free for every child. My father did not care about my future at all, only my grandfather cared.

I returned back to look for my father's flock, remember I was now totally blind. One can ask how I managed to look after sheeps? The answer is easy and simple. I learned on how they move and graze. There is a huge difference when they eat grass and the crops in the field. So, immediately when they enter into the field I noticed fast. It was easy for me not to be in quarrels with owners of fields.

The stage now changed, I now became a boy who is date girls or propose love to them. I use to go with my friends who knows me very well. It was not that difficult to talk to girls. They loved me despite my disability. the only challenge is the approach towards them from their friends, they teased them, saying why falling inlove with a blind guy? The following day, you find my girlfriend not in a happy mood, so I learnt that there are some serious issues between her and the friends. I managed to marry one girl who is not disabled. We now have 4 children but among them, one has passed away.

Because I did not have support in my family, I even take decision and go to pay lobola for myself.



I managed to pay 10 cattles, those I got as my wage for looking after cattles. It is not happening to Basotho people to do that, but I did it. My wife's family were also shocked to realize that I am visually Impaired but there was nothing they can do as my wife loved me. We are still in good love even today

Regardless of my disability, I am now a chairperson of the community police committee in my village. I also assisting the chief in the village with advices. I am overconfident of what I am. It has been hard for me to enroll in school but worked firm to interact with people to learn things. I am an active person in politics in Lesotho now. I have been following the ideology of congress. I have joined the newly formed party called Allience of Democrats (AD). I like to follow a political leader who listens people and Mr. Moleleki is one of them. I have never be close to the leader of any political party except Mr. Thabane of All Basotho Convention (ABC) and Mr. Moleleki of AD. I respect these leaders even though I don't follow Mr. Thabane. Other leaders are always busy, they do no want to welcome us as PWDs to listen our views.

I am not just following politics for entertaining leaders but I am doing this because its my desire to be elected to represent issues of disabilities in Lesotho parliament. I think my task will be on changing all discriminatory laws in this country, as participation of PWDs is prohibitedin almost areas of life.inclusive environment is what we want.

GENERAL NEWS

Call myself a veteran in civil service

By: Nthethe Ralitapole

"I am a Mosotho man born in 1933. I was born at Teyeteyaneng. I lived just like other children in my village. I attended school at St. Agnes."

"I completed my COSC at St. Agnes but failed to continue with my studies because my father was old to teach my siblings, so I had to take that task to help my younger brother who was attending school at Peka High school. At that time got the sponsorship to learn futher so that I become a dentist.

In my life I liked to give, I always give out people in my area clothes, if they no longer fit me. I got employed at K – Nolan. I worked ther as a clerk from 1955. Then the K –Nolan moved from the country, I worked in many companies as the manager. I worked at government garage called PVPS as manager. I also worked as the manager at Frasers.

I had to leave Frasers and then applied for the job at Labour department Maseru in 1979. While working there, I had to attend a training under International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1981 as I was to be the personnel in the labour department. When coming back I excelled in my daily work in the department.

I resigned from the government in 1982 to work with the mining company called De beers and also worked as personnel. After a period of time, the mine had to close due to conflicts between the mine and the government.

Because I worked nicely with the commissioner of Labour. He just called me, saying if there is nothing that you are doing right now, I would like you to return to the job you qualify for. I then started working in the Leribe until 1984, I was transferred to Labour office in Mohale'shoek district until 1993. That was the retirement period for me from the government.

I worked again with Kingsway contruction as the

the manager because I was perfect with that. Immediately when quitting the job, there comes one person to give me job. I then worked at BB Alert Security as personnel. I retired in 2007

All these jobs I have been doing, i was non-disabled person. I remember, I was from town one day in 1988 where I was attacked by other men. They beat me at head from the back side. I did not know what happened. I found myself in hospital. I think it was when I got the disability as I am now lost sight and the hearing.

The job that I am always doing as my daily responsibility is to plough and plant crops. But I think I am a lucky man because I am still with my wife on my side to support me,

I think the training that we are getting today about inclusive education to learners with disabilities is very important as most people have experiences or significant stories of successful people who got education and those bad stories where a child did not given an opportunity to enroll in schools, especially those with disabilities. we will work hard to help those responsible person understands its importance."



NEWS IN PICTURES



Focal persons during the inclusive education at Motjejoa Guest House - Butha-Buthe



Mokete Matsau, a deaf youth teaching about inclusive education



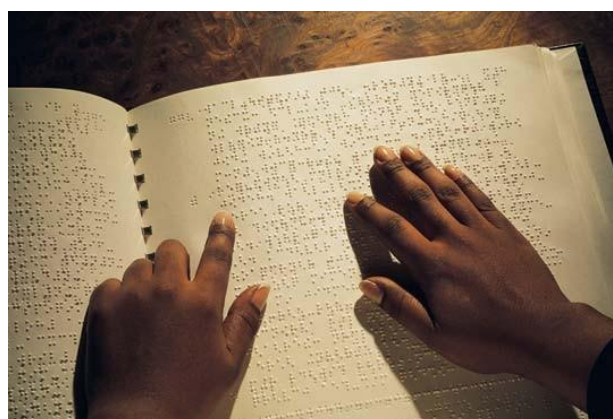
Mr. Mashongoane, an active AD polical member from Qalo #4 Constituency



Focal persons during the inclusive education at Leribe-Mountain View Hotel



Servise providers at Aloes Guest house receiving training on including ECCD in their programmes



Braille to be recognized national and be used countrywide in schools

UPCOMING EVENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

The African Disability Rights Yearbook 2017 (ADRY) Call for papers

The ADRY can be assessed at:

<http://www.adry.up.ac.za>

Dateline for submission of manuscripts is 30th March, 2017

The manuscripts should be sent in electronic format to:

charles.ngwena@up.ac.za

World Cancer day 4th Feb

For more information on world cancer day and the 2017 campaigns, please send an email at:

info@worldcancerday.org

Knowledge sharing workshop in Harare – Zimbabwe

The knowledge will be between LNFOD and Jairos Jiri Association (JJA) funded by Diakonie Austria

For more information please conduct:

moeletsi@lnfod.org.ls



6 FEBRUARY

International Day of
**ZERO
TOLERANCE**
for
**FEMALE
GENITAL
MUTILATION**

#EndFGM

Theme: Building a solid and interactive bridge between Africa and the World to accelerate ending FGM by 2030

For more information, please visit
www.un.org/en/events/female

JAN, 2017

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ADVOCACY WORK



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