

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 January, 2019

It is the beginning of the year, everyone has some expectations and goals for the year. It is advisable to everyone to draw the plan and go along it. I am specifically saying this to learners as well. Let us start today, to do what is right at the beginning of the year so that we can reap what is good at the end of the year.

I would like to congratulate everyone of us for the hard work we did. It can be at school, workplace and in our organisations, I mean everywhere. Lets us continue to do more good.

I once again plea to all decision makers to work with our organization. It will be easy to change lives of people with disabilities who seems to be marginalized or excluded in many aspects of life. We as Disability Lesotho would like to thank all Ministers in this government, who seems to be working hard to push things policies and Bills to be adopted so that lives of Basotho people with disabilities could be at the same level with their counterpart who are not disability challenged,

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

You can also Tweet us [@Infod_lesotho](https://twitter.com/Infod_lesotho)

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

HIGHLIGHTS ON LNFOD 2019 STRATEGIC ACTIONS

By: Sefuthi Nkhasi

The first article from the corner highlights the readers with the 2019 strategic action LNFOD is going to undertake to promote and protect the rights of people with disabilities living in Lesotho.

LNFOD will continue to advocate for the full and effective participation of people with disabilities in the legislation and policy development in 2019. LNFOD involvement in these crucial processes yielded desirable results in 2018 in which the Ministry of Education and Training adopted the Inclusive Education policy. The policy will facilitate the inclusion of learners with disabilities at all angles. LNFOD through its members will be promoting the implementation of the inclusive education policy in the community councils and schools. The intention is to teach the community about the rights and obligations contained by this policy so that they could hold the government accountable for the implementation of the inclusive education policy.

Importantly LNFOD has started advocacy for the budget allocation for the effective implementation of this policy by the Ministry of Education and Training and its partners so that the policy can translate into concrete actions for the benefit of the beneficiaries who remain vulnerable and marginalized because of the minimal support currently available.

LNFOD is continuing to advocate for the enactment of the Disability Equity bill in 2019 to ensure the Bill is turned into law as soon as the parliament reopens. LNFOD will continue to engage with the Ministry of Social Development and the portfolio committee to ensure that the process of enactment is done in a timely manner. After which, LNFOD will conduct disability rights awareness campaign throughout the program area to sensitise the community about the rights and obligations contained in the bill in order to empower the general public and people with disabilities to claim their rights through the use of the new Act.

LNFOD will continue to forge strategic partnership with other agencies and human rights organisations in order to promote the rights of people with disabilities through different channels.



GENERAL NEWS

Long journey of developing Inclusive Education Policy

By:Puleng Mosili



Hon. Minister of Education Prof. Ntoi Rapapa emphasising his plan to include people with disabilities in all his activities.

The long journey of developing the Inclusive Education policy that started years back had finally reached a very important stage of adoption. Late last year the Inclusive Education policy was adopted by the cabinet. This was the best news the MOET and partners could receive. As to pave a way, the implementation plan was also established and put to its final stage. A few weeks back the final signatures of the honourable Minister of education and PS basic education were the final imprint on the policy.

It will soon be printed for the promotion and then the launch will follow to officiate the document. With the availability of the Inclusive Education policy and the Inclusive Education implementation plan we hope to soon see all children with disabilities and all the marginalised groups properly accommodated in their local schools.

We hope the government of Lesotho will do right by making schools inclusive in all aspects: hiring qualified teachers, creating accessible infrastructures, providing learners with relevant materials/assistive devices and removing all the barriers. It is worth mentioning that the government of Lesotho through the ministry of Education and Training is fully into the idea of inclusive education.

This was vivid from the official announcing of the LGCSE results whereby the Honourable Minister of Education and training declared that from now on he will never again exclude people with disabilities. He clearly stated that he will make sure that in his activities such as the one stated, people with disabilities and their assistants are present: 'Included' particularly the deaf and their interpreters.

To promote the Inclusive Education Policy, LNFOD will be raising awareness and making the policy popular. We will soon be starting awareness raising gatherings and encouraging communities to educate children with disabilities in the district of Quthing three community councils. This work will be done with the help of funds from UNICEF.



OPINION PIECE

Persons with Disabilities in Polygamous Marriages

By: Rabasotho Moeletsi

According to the newly released findings of the Lesotho Census 2016, proportion of persons with disabilities who in polygamous marriage is far higher than that of non-disabled persons, at 2.0 percent compared to 1.2 percent. This is a shocking statistics considering the consequences suffered by those in polygamous marriages. This is so for Lesotho where more 90 percent of the people are Christians, and Christianity prohibits polygamy. That means if this trend allowed to continue it would undermine the efforts undertaken by LNFOD and partners in disability rights who are advocating for social inclusion.

Families in polygamous marriage tilt in a heavily masculine direction less conducive to liberal virtues like equality and independence and this is most likely to engender a spirit of mutuality in the family. A two-parent family who are most likely ensure that man and women are treated equally in dignity and respect. When a wife feels she is not respected, she is likely to have some relationship outside her marriage. This would bring multiple sexual concurrent partnership which escalate the HIV and AIDS cases in Lesotho.

Moreover, polygamous marriage is associated with higher rates of domestic violence, psychological distress, co-wife conflict, and greater control of women, according to research. This is likely to perpetuate disability of an individual the impairment worsens or new impairments may develop.

In addition, child well-being is negatively impacted in polygamous family compared to a child from a monogamous family. Children in most cases they flourish and become good citizens and workers for the fact that they would have gotten high levels of attention, affection and financial support from their fathers in a stable, two-parent family. Most research studies suggest that children from families in polygamous marriage do worse educationally and psychologically than their peers in monogamous families. This is due to the fact that Children from polygamous families are less likely to get such investments from their fathers.

In conclusion, polygamous marriages are often for the rich families. There is mounting evidence in research papers that persons with disabilities are the poorest of the poor, so they cannot constitute the wealthy who would firmly stand the forces of polygamous marriages. So polygamy would only mean to perpetuate slavery amongst persons with disabilities as to save their face as they are unlikely to be preferred for a couple in the first instance due to negative attitudes particularly by men without disabilities.

NEWS IN PICTURES



Hon. Minister of Education Prof. Ntoi Rapapa emphasizing his plan to include people with disabilities in all his activities.



Seeiso High school students playing drama making people aware about disability



LNLVIP commemorated the International Braille Day on the 24th Jan



Her Majesty Queen 'Masenate Mohato Seeiso is also encouraging inclusive Education all over the country.

ADVOCACY WORK



PARTNERS in Advocacy Work

