

DISABILITY LESOTHO

From the editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome to the second edition of Disability Lesotho, the monthly email newsletter from Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled. This e-newsletter will be a platform for all partners in the disability sector to share the good work they are doing and to learn from the work of others. It will include news of the key events and activities taking place within the world of disability in Lesotho and updates on the issues affecting people with disability. We welcome contributions of any nature from organizations working to improve the livelihood of people with disability or individuals who have an interest in the disability sector

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 May Ng mayng1@gmail.com or +226 639 220 40.

Thank you to all readers who provided feedback on the last edition. It is our hope to continually improve the relevance and delivery of the content to better suit your needs and interest. Although this e-newsletter is currently only available in English, we are aiming to develop a Sesotho version in future.

Best regards,
The Editor

News from LNFOD

June has been a huge month for the disability sector in Lesotho. We've seen our new coalition government brought to power through a democratic and peaceful process and celebrated the rights of children with disability during this year's Day of the African Child.

We extend our congratulations to our new Prime Minister Thomas Thabane and welcome our new government. We applaud the restructuring of the



Children from the Phelisanong Project in Pitseng pose with the giant flag before Day of the African Child 2012

Ministries and the introduction of the Ministry of Social Development.

With this new dedicated Ministry in place we look forward to an exciting and energizing period of positive change and hope to work closely with our new Minister of Social Development the Honorable 'Matebatso Doti to put issues of disability on the agenda.

We are continuing our advocacy work around the domestication of the UNCRPD with revitalized zeal, remembering the positive discussions we have had with ABC, LCD and BNP representatives regarding expediting the domestication process in the days prior to the election.

Best regards,

Rabaso Moeletsi

Rabaso Moeletsi (Mr.)
Acting Executive Director, Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



WELCOME TO LNFOD

Ithuseng prepares for trainee assessment

Ithuseng Vocational Rehabilitation Centre is preparing for assessments of prospective trainees from across Lesotho for the 2013-2014 training period. Assessments will take place between 2nd- 20th July, 2012. Social Welfare Rehabilitation Officers are able to provide referrals in all districts.

To be eligible to attend Ithuseng the trainees must be:

- Eligible for Social Welfare services
- Aged between 18-50
- Able to demonstrate some potential for independently participating in the following activities:
 - Self care (eg., grooming, dressing, feeding, bathing, toileting, laundry)
 - learning in a classroom environment
 - Interested in developing the vocational skills offered at the facility (carpentry, metalwork, leatherwork, sewing, agriculture).
 - Willing to address health issues with health care providers as appropriate

LNFOD launches new website

Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled is proud to announce the launch of its new website at www.lnfod.org.ls.

“The vision is that the website should be used as a tool for local and international visitors to find out more about disability in Lesotho. We wanted to make it as user friendly and interactive as possible to encourage stakeholders and members of the public to engage with our organisation,” comments Nkhasi Sefuthi, Human Rights and Advocacy Officer for LNFOD.

The website includes links to disability inclusive schools and other organizations working in the disability sector. If you would like to be included on the website please send a short description, contact details and weblink (if applicable) to mayng1@gmail.com.



Children from Kick4Life prepare for Day of the African Child

Ministry of Social Development signs MOU on Wheelchair Services

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and Motivation Africa have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish basic wheelchair services in three centres: Maseru (Queen Mamohato/Ithuseng), Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek.

Motivation Africa will donate Worldmade wheelchairs as well as providing training in wheelchair assembly. Assessments are carried out by qualified orthopaedic technicians, occupational therapists and physiotherapists for prescription and distribution of these. Only clients eligible for Social Welfare services will be able to be referred for wheelchairs from this project.

Members of Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD), Social Workers (SW) and District Rehabilitation Officers (DRO's) in the districts involved have been trained by Motivation Africa.

They will be able to identify people in need of wheelchairs in the community, refer to the three centres participating in the project, and train clients in the use and management of their wheelchairs.

Skillshare brings spirit of London 2012 to Lesotho

On Wednesday 20th June, Skillshare International and OYAP brought the spirit of London 2012 to Lesotho through a range of activities to show the importance of inclusion not ability in sport. 150 students from selected schools in Maseru District were invited to participate and be the face of our key message. The day mixed Olympic and Paralympic themes and involved a taste of different athletics and movement exercises, with particular favourites being Goalball - a game where all participants are blindfolded to put them at an equal footing and level of ability. Balls with bells embedded were sourced for the event to encourage sportsmen to use their other senses and understand the needs of people living with visual impairments.

Students from the Resource Centre for the Blind were eager to demonstrate their football skills and reinforce the message that limited sight does not mean limited ability. The pupils were both keen and able to showcase their skills acquired over the last six months of collaborating with Skillshare International volunteers, first moving from passing techniques to penalty shootouts and finishing with a friendly match.

The biggest pleasure of the event was seeing brothers Tefo and Oetsi, residents of the SOS Children's Village, attend and partake in the activities available. The afternoon enabled the youths living with disabilities to show that being wheelchair bound was no barrier to participation in sport, it simply meant they had to be more flexible and adaptable than their able bodied team mates. They still drew from the event essential skills and messages, particularly the importance of a strong partnership or team and the need to make physical activity inclusive for all. Furthermore, both sportsmen successfully completed some of the events which had the Skillshare volunteers falling at the first hurdle, particularly balancing a spoon and marble in your mouth! Their presence really represented the spirit and purpose of our event; participation not ability.

The event marked the end of volunteers participating on the International Citizen Service programme in Lesotho, where the UK Government's Department for International Development (DfID) bring youths to developing countries in order to share skills and manpower. The drive and passion of the volunteers and all those involved culminated in a successful sport's day and proved that people living with disabilities have something of great value to offer their community.



Contestants take a well deserved break between heats

LSMHP continues with OVC identification in Berea

In May/June most of LSMHP activities focussed on the OVC assessment visits were made to two councils in Berea District including Mapoteng Council and Berea Urban Council. In Mafeteng District, LSMHP visited Ramoetsane, Mamantso and Makoabating.

They also continued with the introduction of the project in some of the councils in Berea - Phuthiatsana Council and Tebe-Tebe Council, In Thaba-Tseka District, the team visited Bokong, Tenesolo and Bobete. These activities are part of the initial stages of the OVC project supported by PACT-Lesotho. The project covers 5 districts of Mokhotlong, Butha-Buthe, Berea, Mafeteng and Thaba-Tseka

As part of the same program, LSMHP held a Psychosocial Support (PSS) workshop where 40 caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children were trained on matters of protection, care and support empowering them to provide PSS services to OVC with disabilities and their siblings without disability.

Lesotho Demographic Survey 2011

The new Lesotho Demographic Survey is now available and contains information on disability in Lesotho. However categories like autism, down-syndrome and multiple disabilities are not included making it difficult to gauge the number of children affected and to develop specialized interventions.

LSMHP increases HIV awareness amongst OVC

LSMHP also held a training session for OVC in life-skills to increase awareness of the risk of HIV infection, sexual and physical abuse including exploitation through sporting activities. This training is part of the OVC protection project funded by Management Sciences for Health (MSH).

Intellectually Disabled but HIV & AIDS Competent

LCN, Kick4Life, LNFOD and LSMHP collaborated to host a youth training session on HIV & AIDS, sexual abuse, modes of transmission, prevention measures, sexuality and life-skills, using sporting activities to empower young people on HIV & AIDS, protection, impact and mitigation. The event was held in the Thaba-Tseka district and attracted many youths with intellectual disability.

On the first day participants used soccer balls and flags to depict the message: "Intellectually Disabled but HIV & AIDS Competent". On the second day the group was taught about transmission, prevention of HIV and lifeskills.

The success of the activity showed the power of organizational collaboration as LNFOD, Kick4Life, LSMHP and LCN successfully worked in cooperation with key community leaders such as officers from: Office of the District Administrator – Thaba-Tseka, Social Welfare, Local Government, Ministry of Gender, Police, Katse High School, Katse Health Centre and the Chieftainship.

This has helped raise awareness among government officials, private entities and ordinary citizens on inclusion of people with mental disability, their level of ability in understanding HIV & AIDS issues as they are not an exception to the rest of the community affected and infected by HIV.

Study on Inclusive Education for Children with Mental Disability

A 3-day Study was held in Berea, Mafeteng and Butha-Buthe Districts to obtain views of children with mental disability in schools and parents of children with disabilities on challenges children encounter in trying to access education.

Several schools were visited where children with mental disability were found. Visits were also made to families of children with disabilities to interview parents.

DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD 2012

Hundreds flock to celebrate the rights of children with disability

Lesotho celebrates biggest Day of the African Child yet

On Saturday 16 June hundreds of people gathered at Pioneer Shopping Centre to commemorate the Day of the African Child in a celebration organized by the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD), Lesotho Society of Mentally Handicapped Persons (LSMHP) and Autism Lesotho.

This was the culmination of a two week long awareness campaign entitled "Joining Hands for Children with Disability" which saw a giant flag paraded to various disability inclusive and mainstream schools around the country where students and teachers placed coloured handprints on the flag to pledge their commitment to uphold the rights of children with disability.

The schools included in the flag tour included St Angela's Home, Phelisanong, SOS Children's Village, Leseli school, RCB at St Bernadette's, Phaphama, Montimposo and Phomolong.

The celebration kicked off with a brief ceremony involving speeches from stakeholders in the disability sector including the Principle Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and representatives from UNICEF, LSMHP, Autism Lesotho and Makhabo Seme, a sixth grade student from Kananelo School for the Deaf which was delivered in sign language and conveyed to the audience through a sign language interpreter.

The speeches were followed by an interpretive dance performance from a troupe of students from Kananelo School for the Deaf before representatives from organizations involved in the protection of child and disability rights such as the Lesotho Mounted Police placed a symbolic handprint on the giant flag depicting a map of Lesotho.

Students from Leseli School, SOS Children's Village and Kananelo School then opened the event to the public, leading the queue of people waiting to "lend a hand" to the disability movement.

The campaign was supported by a number of other partners and donors including PicknPay, UNICEF, the Ministry of Social Development, MSH and PC FM.

Day of the African Child is celebrated on the 16 June every year throughout the African Union. The theme for this year's Day of the African Child is 'the rights of children with disability: The duty to protect, respect, promote and fulfill.'



Principle Secretary of Social Welfare places a hand on the flag



Students from Kananelo School for the Deaf dance in front of the flag

Photos courtesy of Hlompho Letsielo

"This is just the beginning of a long process of elevating and improving our focus on the rights of children with disability in Lesotho" Bongwi Bongwie, President of LNFOD"

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

MEET KANELO LEPHOI, SIGNLANGUAGE INTERPRETOR

Tell us about yourself

I am 19 years old and live in Lithoteng with my mother, cousin and younger sister. I recently completed my schooling at Lesotho High School and have since been working as a free-lance sign language interpreter. I've applied to the Lesotho College of Education and am crossing my fingers and praying that I'll get in because my dream is to become a teacher.

Why do you want to become a teacher?

There are very few teachers, particularly at a secondary school level, who are fluent in sign-language. I am absolutely passionate about helping deaf children play a more participatory role in society and one of the key aspects is to ensure that they are included in the educational system.

If I couldn't be a teacher I would also like to be a sign language translator on Lesotho TV or to work in a hospital helping deaf patients communicate with medical workers.

Where did you develop your interest in sign language?

I was basically raised tri-lingual (English, Sesotho and sign-language) because my mother is hearing impaired. She is also a sign-language instructor. I have many hearing impaired friends and see the barriers which face them on a day to day basis. Communication is one of the most important elements of being human and it really affects me that there are so many hearing impaired people who are essentially cut off from society because they cannot communicate with other people. I know that I have the skills to help them be engaged in society if only I had the right opportunity.

When did you start sign-language interpretation?

My first job as a sign-language interpreter was



Kanelo translates at Day of the African Child

When I was 15 years old. My mother was a Commissioner at the Lesotho Sports and Recreation Commission and I was called in to be her interpreter at a meeting. It was hard for me because I didn't know all the signs so I think I made a lot of mistakes. I have since taken my certification as a qualified sign-language translator.

What was your favourite sign-language interpretation job?

I once volunteered my services for a class at Mount Royal High School. It was not a paid role and I had to use my own money to get there but it was all worth it to see the deaf children participating in the class like their hearing counterparts.

What do you do in your spare time?

When I'm not interpreting I love just hanging out with my family and friends at home. I also love to dance and act, although I'm quite shy. I would love to be an actress.

What is your vision for people with disability?

I want to see a world where people with disability have equal rights. Deaf kids are especially vulnerable to abuse in schools because it's hard for them to communicate. I wish there were sign-language interpreters in all schools where there are deaf students, on TV and in all hospitals.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Disability Film Festival

To further promote the message that disability is not inability, LNFOD in cooperation with Sesotho Media will be arranging a social inclusion themed travelling film festival late July/August which will reach various communities in Lesotho.

Keep your eyes on the LNFOD website for further information and for dates and locations of screenings. One of the Films Featured will be Emmanuel's Gift. See below for the Emmanuel's Gift review in the "Focal Point" section!

Autism Lesotho monthly meeting

The Autism Lesotho Association meets every month end. The next meeting is **1 July, 3pm at Leseli Community Centre in Khubetsoana**. A growing number of parents are joining the movement which shows us that the problem is growing.

Communities, schools, churches and other social gatherings are welcome to invite members of the association to make presentations on autism and how to deal with it. We make efforts to attend gatherings anywhere in the country to which we're invited.

Awareness Raising Workshops for Magistrates

LNFOD is hosting a workshop for magistrates on disability rights on 11 July (date tentative). The workshop will be held in Maseru and see 15-20 magistrates trained on supporting disability rights in the judicial system.

LNFOD Advocacy Newsletter

The Bi-annual LNFOD Advocacy Newsletter 'Ntsoe Leng' will be available in English and Sesotho from the beginning of July. Please contact lexi.stergakis@gmail.com to obtain a copy

World Disability Day: 2012

LNFOD is pleased to announce that World Disability Day 2012 will be celebrated on 3rd December in Mokhotlong. Observance of the day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to focus on issues related to the inclusion of persons with disabilities with relation to the millennium development goals.

Closer to the date further information on preparations and events to commemorate this occasion will be made available.

Volunteers Available for Disability Work

This month we have received two submissions from volunteers interested in working with organizations in the disability sector:

Lineo – Works as a part-time Kick4Life coach and has had experience working with children with disability, particularly in the arena of healthcare education. She is passionate about disability and looking to volunteer her spare time to organizations in the disability sector. She comes with the highest recommendations from Kick4Life and LNFOD. If interested, please call Lineo on 5987 9499.

Anna – is a professional social worker/family therapist from Holland who has widespread experience working with people with disability. She was a VSO volunteer in Ghana working as a counselor/Social Worker for DPOs. The main goal of her placement was empowerment, starting peer and parent self-help groups, and income generation activities. Her work in Holland concentrated on multi-problem families including those with autism. She is based in Maseru and interested in volunteering with an organisation in the disability sector for 2-3 days per week. If interested, please contact Anna directly at: annahuisman@gmail.com

FOCAL POINT

Emanuel's Gift

If you are born disabled in Ghana, West Africa you are likely to be poisoned, or left to die by your family; and if you are not poisoned or left for dead, you're likely to be hidden away in a room; and if you're not hidden, you are destined to spend your lifetime begging on the streets.

Of the twenty million people in Ghana, two million are disabled. This is the story of one disabled man whose mission-and purpose- is to change all that forever.

In Emmanuel's Gift, filmmakers Lisa Lax and Nancy Stern have uncovered a story as compelling as it is important.

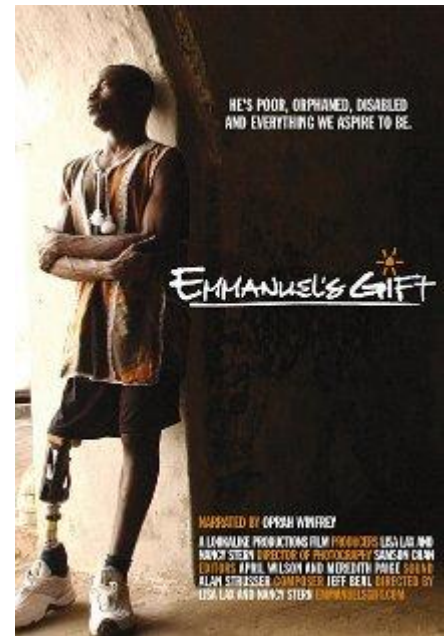
Narrated by Oprah Winfrey, the film chronicles the life of Emmanuel Ofori Yeboah, a young Ghanaian man born with a severely deformed right leg, who today, against incalculable odds, is opening minds, hearts and doors-and effecting social and political change throughout his country.

While Emmanuel's message is vital: people with disabilities are valuable contributors to any society, his method is inspirational. Emmanuel begins his quest with a bicycle ride, over 600 kilometers, across Ghana with one leg-and continues to spread his vision with grit and resolve.

Lisa Lax and Nancy Stern have been documenting Emmanuel's plight for over a year, having shot over 100 hours of powerful imagery. The film includes original footage shot in Ghana, California, Oregon and New York, as well as photographs and other acquired film/video of Emmanuel's early years.

Through it all, they have created an intimate insight into the mind and heart of a visionary whose unforgettable journey transcends continents and cultures and becomes each of ours to share

[Review from IMDB](#)



Details

Directors:

[Lisa Lax](#), [Nancy Stern](#)

Stars:

[Robin Williams](#) and [Oprah Winfrey](#)

Official Sites:

www.emmanuelsgift.com

Country:

[USA](#)

Language:

[English](#)

Release Date:

30 June 2007

Filming Locations:

[Ghana](#)