

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 June, 2017

I would like to congratulate Basotho for the free, fair and peaceful elections that you had. I hope this coming government is going to do some changes here and there especially to the Disability Equity Bill. It is now time that Persons with disabilities willing to see it passed before the parliament and turned to the law that will protect rights of persons with disabilities in Lesotho.

I think we still have a stretched way to go for advocacy work, so that the Disability Equity Bill be passed before the parliament, it is only with the Law that Persons with disabilities can be protected.

I plead with the government to take these issues of persons with disabilities serious on board so as to level the ground and equalise opportunities for persons with disabilities.

I also plea to the government of Lesotho to Disability Equity Bill a priority in the parliament so that the rights of people with disabilities will be legally protected by the law. As people with disabilities has elected this government are also expecting something from it.

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

LNFOOD CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CONCRETE STEPS TO PROTECT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FROM HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND SEXUAL ABUSES

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled makes a special plea to the newly elected government of Lesotho to domesticate the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities which it has acceded to on the 2nd December 2008.

LNFOOD is expecting the government of Lesotho to enact the Disability Equity Bill which has been pending for the past five years without being given the seriousness it deserves in favour of people with disabilities.

Studies demonstrate that, persons with disabilities experience deep and serious inequalities in society because of the attitudinal and environmental barriers they face in terms of access to justice, education, job opportunities and other social services provided at the communities.

For instance, section 219 of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act of 1981 limits and restricts the participation of people with intellectual/psychosocial disabilities as equal witnesses in court proceedings thereby treating them as less human beings without their constitutional right to fair trial entrenched in the Constitution of Lesotho.

Worst of all, in the event that the accused person has some form of intellectual/psychosocial disability, section 173(3) of the Criminal Procedures empowers the Judicial officer presiding at the trial to issue an order directing the accused to be kept in custody in some prison pending the signification of the king's pleasure because the law believes that such accused person did not understand the offence he did or the omission he made.

Based on the foregoing, LNFOOD strongly recommend the government of Lesotho to align the said provisions of the Criminal Procedure and evidence Act with article 12 of the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities which recognises people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities as equal witnesses before the law who may at times require supported decision making in the legal proceedings.

The current practice of refusing to accept the evidence of witnesses with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities on the basis that the psychiatrists confirmed that those people do not have the capacity to testify in the courts of law runs parallel with article 12 of the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities which requires the court to provide necessary support which will effectively enable such person to testify in court proceedings

Intermediaries must be trained and provided to support people with intellectual disabilities to adduce evidence in court proceedings just as it is done in the children's Court.

LNFOD calls upon the government of Lesotho to implement the provision of disability grants to people with disabilities who deserve it as it is stipulated in the Social protection strategy 2014.

The current implementation of the Social Protection strategy discriminates against people with disabilities because it provides grants to the elderly and the children leaving out people with disabilities without reasonable explanation given to people with disabilities.

People with disabilities have very limited access to jobs and some people with disabilities have disabilities which require high support from their

parents of which compel their parents not to engage in income generation activities as they should be looking after their children 24 hours a day.

LNFOD urges the government of Lesotho to allocate budget for the effective implementation of the disability inclusive and related programs and plans including National Disability Mainstreaming Plan 2015 and the Inclusive Education draft Policy in the budget to be presented in 2017.

Lesotho will not achieve inclusive development envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) if the inequalities among persons with disabilities are not reduced through inclusive programming and meaningful consultations with the representative organisations of people with disabilities to find the lasting solutions to the barriers faced by people with disabilities on daily basis.

GENERAL NEWS

“I enjoy being healthy, and being independent.....”

By: Chabeli Letsane

I am Chabeli Letsane, living at Ha Makhanyane in Thaba – Mokhele F 05. A man with physical disabled, aged 42 years, I am dealing with issues of agriculture. In particular he is dealing with piggery, chickens and vegetables. Remember, “Eating is an agricultural act.” said Chabeli



He started being active in these activities after being trained by Lesotho National Federation Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) through the project of Deepening Decentralisation funded by European Union.

Chabeli is also a very active member in politics Lesotho. He is willing to stand or contest for local government elections to be held this coming 30th September. “I am working hard to see myself as one of the local community councillor so that I can plan for the needs of persons with disabilities.



I real want to see change in lives of persons with disabilities. I feel good for me to see persons with disabilities participating in all aspect of life, which I always see them not participating well.”He concluded

GENERAL NEWS

Capacitating people with disabilities is core at LNFOD: Nothing about us without us

By: 'Masekara Sekoankoetla

LNFOOD held a two day capacity building workshop for 100 representatives of people with disabilities in 14 community councils in the districts of Leribe, Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek. The workshop was held at Mohloli oa Bophelo at Ha Tsosane and Itjareng at Masianokeng.



Advocating for change on their behalf. This stems from the foundational principle of the disability movement "Nothing about Us, Without Us" which is also underlying LNFOD's Advocacy work.

These disabled people's representatives were nominated by disabled people in their community councils.

Sharing with the media, Mrs Makhele said that the disabled people's representatives were equipped with advocacy skills and tactics to use at the local level. She further shared that these disabled people representatives will after the workshop, empower their constituencies with advocacy skills so that they advocates for the respect, protection and fulfilment of their rights in their community councils and districts.

Mrs Fanana added that this workshop was very important as LNFOOD and its member Organizations believes that people with disabilities have to actively take part in

GENERAL NEWS

New day, new hopes

By: Malehlohonolo Molelengoane

On the 3rd day of June 2017, Lesotho held snap general assembly elections. This type of election has become a norm for Lesotho since 2012. It is also in that year that the Disability Equity Bill was first drafted.



This bill was intended to nationalise the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which Lesotho ratified in 2008. The enactment of this bill will counter a myriad of challenges and inequalities that persons with disabilities come across in this country. Some of these challenges are; lack of access to justice, work opportunities, health services to name a few.

LNFOOD is therefore urging the incoming government to speed the process of enacting this bill so as persons with disabilities in Lesotho will enjoy their fundamental rights on an equal basis with non-disabled persons. The government of Lesotho should also enact this bill to fulfil its obligation under the UNCRPD.

In 2016, the Ministry of Education and Training with support from various development partners and LNFOOD, developed an Inclusive Education Policy. This policy is aimed at improving and ensuring inclusive education for every learner; with or without disability as per Article 24 of the UNCRPD. We wish to call on to the new government to adopt this policy as it is crucial to inclusivity in the Lesotho education system.



GENERAL NEWS

“.....embarrasses me a lot.”

By: Molefi Motsoloane

Mohales'hoek, Siloe in the Sekhabele village is where I am staying. I am a man who is physically challenged. My disability is caused by the rolling stone from the mountain. I was looking after someone's cattle as part of employment.

“In 2013 I was at the veld as a shepard. The stone hit me with a speed that cannot be run off and passed. So, I managed to call the owner as I had a phone with me to inform them about the accident.”said Molefi



“Immediately they arrived and took me to the nearest hospital, which is Queen 11 and I was referred to Bloemfontein Pelonomi Hospital. It took me almost 2 weeks at Bloemfontein. I was ambutated the leg, as it was not in a good position to be sustained.”

“While at Pelonomi, I was promised an advisial leg but at the end they demanded so many things that I did not manage to have them. I still do not have a leg even now and I am appealing to anyone who has power to assist me with a leg. I feel embarrassed when going around people who doesn't know me. I plea to the government to assist persons with disabilities in all ways as to run short of assistive devices hinder us from doing our daily work and help us to access finances.”concluded Molefi

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENT

Baseline Survey on access to financial services for persons learners with disabilities in schools in Leribe, Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohale'sHoek

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

Newly Disability Support Group has been established at Mohales'hoek known as Emmanuel Support Group

For more information, please contact Rethabile Kabi on 59181957

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ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



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