

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 Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD). The edition will cover news for the Month of June, 2020

Life is becoming difficult day in day out for Persons with Disabilities in this country. Effects of Covid – 19 outbreak have hit hard on less privileged persons including persons with disabilities. This outbreak has exposed the underlying discriminatory practices such as failure to provide assistive devices by the government institution, the National Orthopaedic. Some persons with disabilities are grounded, and they can not access their rights, meaning life is more stressful and more miserable during this trying times.

Disability Lesotho is working hard to make things happen in order to make life easier to people with disabilities in this country and will always do.

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

GENERAL NEWS

Leseli la Bophelo self-help group for disability



This is a group of people with different disabilities at Senekane Community Council. The group started in 2016 under the influence of LNFOD programmes. The group has a number of 43 people with different disabilities.

"I was part of people who were trained to go out in villages to train other people with disabilities to accept their disabilities and live with it. We were also advised to form groups of self-help groups among ourselves. So, immediately after that trainings, I started to group up people and build an idea of what we can do in order to reduce poverty amongst ourselves."

"We approached the chief and told him that we have a group of people with disabilities from 5 villages, so we need a place to gather together. So, we were luck that the chief together with the councilor gave us a place to use, the place is known as a place where people with disabilities

are making their gatherings, we can also use it to build our own structure as an office."

"Again one member of our group mme Mamakoanyane gave us a veld to use. The idea was to have nursery for trees, to be sold. We tried to plough those trees but did not complete, so failed to sell. Even now did not plough anything due to drought and Corona now. We still continuing to prepare the soil to be good for plantation, we will be happy to see us doing a big project with the area provided to us".

What we are doing at the moment is to contribute M20.00 per person. We are giving the money to our members during need times like when one need to see the doctor but have no money for transport. When returning the money, it comes with an interest of 20%

The way we do it noticed that it helps us a lot, our people are not being harassed by people who seems to have a lot of money or who are not disabled. This means our difficulties or problems remain in our group. We need to do something better next time, but the problem is the issue of Covid-19 which is not allowing us to move around to make life. At this time we remain vulnerable as do not do all chores we use to do for the living, it is hard for us to get what we eat and even the contributions we are doing is not done properly like before. We would like to plea to be remembered in terms of food packages.

GENERAL NEWS

Mr. Mokherane Tsasanyane – MP for Stadium Area Constituency gives food packages to members of LNAPD



By: Napo Ntli

On the 3rd June, 2020 people with physically disabilities welcomed Hon. MP. Mokherane Tsasanyane for Stadium Area Constituency at Moshoeshe II where the office of LNAPD is constructed to receive food packages during the hard time of COVID-19 lockdown.

People with disabilities especially women suffered a lot and had no income and means of livelihood during this hard time of COVID-19, as many of them are street vendors.

So, Mr. Mokherane played a very huge role to change or support people with disabilities both males and females. There were some applause immediately when Mr. Mokherane arrives at the place. People with physically also clapped their hands during the speech made by the President of LNAPD.

The president indicated that: "You will all recall that it is not for the first time that Mr. Tsasanyane has helped the association, last year during International Disability Day whereby provided his bus to LNAPD to transport its members to the

celebration. So this is for the second time that he support us. We also know that this is not the last time, remembering what we have agreed on with our office. We really thank you nate on behalf of our organization." Concluded Pascalina

When making speech nate Nkhasi – LNFO Director said; "On behalf of all people with disabilities in this country, I would like to appreciate the effort that has been taken by you nate Mokherane, you real mad a very big changes to lives of our people who are always suffering triple times than their counter-parts. We real thank you nate." concluded Mr. Nkhasi

"I am happy that welcomed in my family, to me this place is like my family. I just wanted to highlight that it is not easy to do things like these as us politicians. I was elected as Stadium Area constituency MP, I was paid as Member of parliament, after that I was nominated to be a minister, so my salary increased. I planned to save money in order that can be able to help people especially in the Stadium Area constituency. I knew that my brothers and sisters with disabilities are among those people who are suffering during this hard time of Lockdown cause by COVID-19, that is why you see me here to give a hand." Said Mokherane

When continuing; "It is not for the last time that you realize me here, like we talked last time. This coming month early, will be here again as I will be providing 2 detergents machines to this organization, so that endure with the project we have talked about. We as Stadium Area constituency will not have a say on that project but the organization itself will run the project to reduce poverty among its members and the organization to benefit from those gifts from my office." Concluded Tsasanyane

There were some applause from People with Physically Disabled as all were unhappy on how they are going to survive without having jobs.

Those gifts came at the right time when people with physically disabled were in danger and miserable about the situation, so this community are expecting to see those machines immediately when borders are open as will be bought from abroad.

GENERAL NEWS

Viewing Disability in a different light, thanks to LNFOD

By: Sebatatso Ranko.

Disability is an evolving concept that results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Before becoming an intern at Lesotho National Federation of the Organizations of Disability (LNFOD), I had narrow and limited information about disability. It was only after working here that my perspective changed, my knowledge broadened, and my eyes opened to the vastness of what disability entails. I learnt and saw it first-hand that disability is not inability, and one's disability does not define them.

LNFOD is an umbrella body of the organizations of disability in Lesotho. It is made up of four organizations of disability namely the Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP), Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD), Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho (IDAL) and lastly National Association of the Deaf in Lesotho (NADL). It is the only body in the whole of Lesotho that advocates for, promotes and protects the rights of persons with disability together with their families.

When dealing with disability, terminology is of great importance. This is to avoid objectifying people or even offending them. I learnt while at LNFOD that we do not say people are blind but we say they are persons with visual disabilities; that we do not say mute or deaf people but persons with deafness disabilities; that we do not say crazy/stupid/dumb people, but we refer to them as persons with intellectual disabilities. It is no secret that for a very long time, persons with disability

have been marginalized, discriminated against, made fun of, excluded in almost all sectors and aspects of life, and have limited access to resources and services. There is no reason why even to-date we still have infrastructure which is not disability friendly, a curriculum which is not inclusive of the learners with disabilities, and gender based violence against persons with disabilities.

These amongst other issues are what LNFOD is working tirelessly on to eradicate in this country, and to be honest they are doing an incredible job. LNFOD has projects and other initiatives to promote independence and to empower persons with disabilities, while on the other hand is doing advocacy work. By far the biggest achievements of LNFOD are the drawing up of the Disability Equity Bill, which awaits being passed in the upper house of parliament having passed the National Assembly, and the Inclusive Education Policy of 2018 amongst other achievements.

In a nutshell, I can safely say that LNFOD has really been an eye opener to me. It has taught me that all lives matter, whether a person is disabled or not, that we all deserve to be respected and treated with integrity, and that disability is not inability. I have personally dealt and worked with persons with disability, and on every waking day they have proved to me that they are more capable of doing things than one may anticipate. Most importantly, I have learned that persons with disability deserve empathy and not sympathy. They deserve to be given equal chances as the non-disabled to show their talents.

GENERAL NEWS

FOOD PARCELS DONATION BY HONOURABLE MRS `MAMMUSA MASEKOALANE MAJORO IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MR OMAR SHEHATA (EMIRATES AMBASSADOR) TO THE DEAF COMMUNITY.

By: 'Matsepiso Mokhoromeng

On the 5th June 2020, the Deaf community of Maseru had assembled at LANFE grounds to receive food parcels donations from the Honorable, First Lady Mrs `Mammusa Majoro. The First Lady was giving the food parcel donation to the Deaf community of Maseru because of lack timely messages about food parcels in communities where Deaf people live, which resulted in the Deaf members not receiving food parcels like everyone during the covid-19 relief. So the First Lady wanted to fill the gap and ensure that Deaf community members enjoy the same benefits with the Hearing community, in attendance to witness this graceful event was DA for Maseru district Mr Nthunya, PS in the Prime Minister office Mr Manyokole, LNFOD director Mr S. Nkhasi, NADL chairperson Mrs Bongiwe Buzi.



In order to honor social distancing the directive was to give 100 Deaf Community members of Maseru food parcels but there were 150+ members and the food parcels were shared among the members, in her welcoming speech NADL chairperson Mrs Buzi narrated the dilemma of Deaf not receiving timely food parcels which resulted in negative impact to this Deaf members, she thanked the First Lady for showing social responsibility and her kindness in giving food parcels. LNFOD director as Mr S.Nkhasi also thanked the First Lady for the support. He explained the challenge faced by Deaf people not receiving information in time, he request the First



Lady to influence the Prime Minister to influence national disability bill which will be in the benefits of all people with disability in Lesotho to become law , so that persons with disability in Lesotho enjoy the same rights as citizens of Lesotho as deployed in the bill because the bill includes among others the officiating of sign language to become the official language of Lesotho, So that there should be no communication barrier as result the PS in the Prime Minister's office Mr L. Manyokole thanked the First Lady for this motive because Deaf community are very close to him. He request for full support for the Deaf community because they have many challenge, in her speech the First Lady showed heartfelt emotions to the Deaf community, she even reported to her Majesty Queen `Masenate Bereng Seeiso and Mrs M.Doti that she is going to give food parcels to the Deaf community in which both gave her the green light. After delivering the speech Deaf community were given food parcels and ululated with joy when receiving food parcels. Her First Lady also provided lunch for Deaf community members because the event was supposed to be before lunch but Deaf members waited for her First Lady to arrive in the afternoon.

Many thanks to the First Lady for both food parcels and lunch which was provided.

GENERAL NEWS

Day of the African Child

By: Jeremane Teele

The adolescent and youth with disabilities are as well celebrating the youth month. On June 16, the theme was, access to a child, friendly justice system in Africa". This theme was adopted by Union of Africa Executive Council, at its 34th ordinary. In 1970 Soweto, more than 2000 youth in South Africa were marching across the streets claiming their right to education as they wanted to be taught in their own languages. Here in Lesotho, the children and youth with disabilities are mostly facing unfriendly justice system in education. Sign Language is not an official language and this hinders the learners with deafness and deaf blind to learn using their own language. They are obliged to use Sesotho and English and this hinders them to fully study independently and satisfactorily. This year 2020 because of covid-19 and lockdown, learners with disabilities faced so many challenges as all schools had to be closed. At this time learners had to be taught using the radio and television. Learners with visual impairment and the deaf did not access such learning because on television there was no Sign Language interpreter during lesson during the 3 month of the begin of the television teaching. For the visually impaired, the learning was extremely difficult for them because their leaning equipment is too expensive and bulky for each learner to go home with them and therefore all learning material are for schools and

have to remain at schools while learners had to go home.

Even to date, the National Inclusive Education policy is not yet implemented after it had been adopted and launched in 2018 and therefore, this denies the learners with disabilities the right to study as there no schools across 10 districts of Lesotho. At few schools which are accommodating learners with disabilities, there are limited or no learning equipment and learning experts. Many teachers across Lesotho do not know either Braille and Sign Language nor how to teach learners with learning disabilities and those with mental and intellectual disabilities. The infrastructure at many schools is not conducive or inaccessible for learners with disabilities. Learners with physical disabilities, visual impairment and the deaf do not have a full access to mobility.



16 JUNE International Day
of the African Child

GENERAL NEWS

LNAPD constitutional structures elected

By: Litsitso Khotlele

On the 27th June, 2020 the Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD) elected two committees for youth and women. Those committees are structures that we supposed to be elected earlier this year but due to the Global pandemic Covid-19 failed and had to be postponed to June, 2020

The elections were in line with the constitution and also the elections committee was elected accordingly.



LNAPD Women's wing is as follows;

Chairperson – Mosele Mabitle

Vice-Chairperson	Malerato	Sefuthi
Secretay	– Inahaneng	Sekoai
Vice	– Pulane	Rakhomo
Publicity	– Motselisi	Kolobe

Members
1. Selloane Mosae
2. Kholu Kolane



Youth League Committee;

Chairperson – Napo Ntili

Vice- Cahirperson – Mzwandile Falani

Secretary – Lydia Pitso

Vice – Secretary LearongoaHae

Publicity- Johannes Noosi

2 Members

1.Litsitso Khotlele

2. Letsatsi Mabesa

Both chairpersons on behalf of their committees made som speeches to show their commitment of helping the association to grow. Thereafter the Executive Committee members gave directive to those 2 committees on how they are expected to work hand in hand with them. Both three committees are elected voluntarily and hope will help other persons with disabilities at villages understand the whole organization.

JUNE, 2020

ISSUE 7 VOL 7

ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work

Brot für die Welt

With funding from

 Austrian
Development
Cooperation


CHIESA VALDESE
UNIONE DELLE CHIESE METODISTE E VALDESI

 OSISA
Open Society Initiative
for Southern Africa

