

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 May, 2017

I would like to congratulate Basotho for the successful election which was declared free, fair, transparent, peaceful and credible by local and international observers. People with disabilities have played a major role in the 2017 General Elections of Lesotho. Some have been Voter Educators across the country targeting electorates with disabilities and their families, Some were Elections Observers and others were Voting Station Managers and Voting Station Officers. For those persons with disabilities who worked in the election have increased their knowledge in the election process and the National Electoral Act 2011.

It is true that here and there discovered some challenges that hinder people with disabilities to exercise their right of voting. I think we still have a long way to go for advocacy work, so that all polling stations could be accessible in all facets.

I plead with the coming 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 plead with the upcoming government of Lesotho to give Disability Equity Bill a priority in the parliament so that the rights of people with disabilities will be legally protected by the law. The incoming government has been part of the drafting of the bill, they were excuses when they were in power, outgoing government came into power they promised they would pass the law but failed, lots of excuses were made, now the new government find the bill in its final stages ready to be past,so hope NO MORE EXCUSES this term.

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

INTERNSHIP FOR LNFOD STAFF IN ZIMBABWE

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) is implementing a program "Capacity development for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities" for a period of three years in partnership with the Jairos Jiri Association based in Zimbabwe with the financial support from the Diakonie Austria.



One of the key envisaged activity of this program is to share, learn from each other on how best disability related programs can be effectively implemented in our different contexts and to manage the knowledge generated through the implementation of this program among the three organisations including Diakonie Austria in order to strengthen their capacities.

From the foregoing, LNFOD undertook the internship on how Jairos Jiri Association implements its revolving loans for persons

with disabilities in Zimbabwe with the aim of replicating the same in Lesotho.

That is, LNFOD will domesticate and contextualise the lessons learned from Zimbabwe in Lesotho with the object of advancing the right to livelihood for persons with disabilities living in the program area.

Considering unbearable living conditions of poverty under which people with disabilities live in Lesotho, LNFOD is mandated by its strategy to promote the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities as people with disabilities remain untapped resources of Lesotho.

The internship has been so fruitful for LNFOD since it has enabled LNFOD to understand clearly the processes and stages involved in the implementation of the economic empowerment programs for persons with disabilities.

The internship has enabled LNFOD to spell out clearly the stages involved in the application process from the stage where the applicant is triggered to take an action of generating a

business idea up to the stage when she/he translates his/her idea into action.

The internship was undertaken in Bulawayo in Zimbabwe for a period of 5 Days which commenced from the 14-20 May 2017.

LNFOOD staff underwent both practical and theoretical experiences of the livelihood program for persons with disabilities in which the issues relating to guidelines, criteria and eligibility of persons with disabilities entitled to access the loans were thoroughly discussed. After which, LNFOOD staff was taken to the rural areas to meet and hear from the beneficiaries themselves.

The vast majority of the beneficiaries reported that, they are now consulted as equal members of their families since they are able to generate income for their families. Self-esteem and confidence of the beneficiaries has improved quite a lot as a result of the income they are making for their families.

LNFOOD has increased its capacity in the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities through this internship in terms of implementation of the livelihood programs for persons with disabilities.



GENERAL NEWS

Disability cannot stop anyone from pursuing the vision

By: `Malehloenya Nkhasi



Sello with the Orthopaedic Technician Mr. Mohatlane

This is Neo Sello from Mahobong, Naleli. It was in December 2013 when Neo was involved in the accident while seated at the wing of the tractor. After the accident, he was referred to Queen `Mamohato Hospital where his arms were surgically amputated. However, this tragedy did not stop him from going back to school as he was then doing Form A. He received counselling and training on how to write with a mouth from the Special Education office in Leribe.



On the 9th of July 2014, the Orthopaedic technician Mr Chabeli Mohatlane visited him at his home to do an assessment and quotations for provision of a

set of artificial limbs. Unfortunately, up to now, nothing has happened because such assistance has not been received.

The disability did not stop him from attending school. His mouth can hold a pencil and write in the same way as how we use our hands. Last year (2016), he managed to complete his Junior Certificate and obtained second class. He was then given a perseverance award during the 2017 award giving ceremony of 2017 by the Leribe Education office. The office appreciated his efforts of not giving up even after having lost both of his limbs.



Neo `s mother was present during the occasion and delivered a speech on behalf of parents of the awardees.

This year Neo is in Form D at the same school. He participates in many activities at the school like other students, and his school mates are still continuing to support him with his school work, eating, feeding him, carrying his books, washing his basin, toilet needs and many more.

We appreciate the support from the Principal, the staff and the students of `Makhethisa High school for the role they have played in assisting Neo with his studies.

GENERAL NEWS

“The difficulties, I have been going through.....”

By: Mathabang Maqoacha

Maseru in the village of Matebeleng Ha Majoro lives the family of Makojoa. Mamolately Makojoa has a daughter named Thato. Thato is now 38 years old. Thato was married to a man known as Tlali Mosuhli. As it is the culture to Basotho people to send their daughter-in-law back to her family when pregnant, nothing was different to Thato.



Thato and Tlali were both blessed with a baby boy and was named Kamohelo. "Kamohelo unlike other children at birth did not cry. He was like holding something in his hands, which lead them to take some days in hospital as the doctors tried to help him. Both his hands were bandaged. We were discharged after a week at hospital." The mother said.

The husband was working in the Republic of South Africa. He once visited to see his child. By that time the child was only 3 - 4 months. He promised to come again maybe after some time. He did not show up. "I tried to find him and the family but failed, by that time Kamohelo shows signs of abnormality. I was frustrated, not knowing where to find help." Says Thato

"I decided again with the help of my mother to take Kamohelo to hospital to find out what is happening, as Kamohelo was not sitting, his head was moving around. The doctor told us that the child cannot walk. He was regularly taken to check-ups. The time then arrived that Kamohelo becomes heavy.

"Kamohelo was accepted as a client to Social welfare, he was given a client number. He was also enrolled in the list of people who will be given social grant. The social grant that comes once after three months. Due to his disability, Kamohelo's wheelchair has to be adapted. The head needed the protector so that his head should not move around when the wheelchair moves. As he is growing, the wheelchair becomes small. Now life to me becomes miserable, nobody was working in the family. I was to take care of my child on daily basis." Says Thato

"I remember it was in 2007 when I failed to get any support from the Social Welfare department. I was told that; "I am too young, I should go and look for a job. The government cannot afford to help such a young lady like me." I then asked the officer, "How can I do that? Who is going to look after my child as he needs me daily and every time? The officer did not answer.

"I am now struggling to have life with my mother and my child. I don't know what to do to give my child a decent life that includes food, clothing and medication. Kamohelo is now in need of going to see the doctor but I don't know what I can do as he doesn't have a wheelchair, no transport fee. His teeth is always bleeding, I don't know what is happening to my child. I need help from anyone who has power to do so." Says the mother



This is the chair Kamohelo needed

GENERAL NEWS

Ground breaking speech on disability by the newly elected speaker of the 10th Parliament of Lesotho

By: Sefuthi Nkhasi



The first sitting of the 10th Parliament of Lesotho took place on the 12 June 2017 post the 2017 June snap General Election.

In his opening remarks, the newly elected speaker of the 10th Parliament Mr. Sephiri Motanyane raised the hopes of people with disabilities by highlighting the dire need to make the parliament of Lesotho inclusive of the self-representation of people with disabilities.

He uttered that, people with disabilities have been left behind in the parliamentary affairs due to absence of their self-representation of which continues to perpetuate social inequalities among the Basotho nation as a whole.

“Another worrying fact to me is the low representation of youth, women and people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in the National Assembly. It is my expectation that the legislative reforms that will be embarked upon will adequately address factors that militate against effective representation of these groups particularly people with disabilities.”

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled highly appreciates the specific mention of people with disabilities as a group of people which requires self-representation in the parliament by the Honourable Speaker Mr Sephiri in which he stressed the need to legislate the self-representation of people with disabilities in the upcoming parliamentary and constitutional reforms.

In fact, LNFOD as an umbrella representative organization of people with disabilities takes the view that the disability specific legislation which has been in the draft form for the past five years is long overdue and could have changed the situation of people with disabilities in various means if it was passed in time.

People with disabilities really require self-representation in the decision making authorities such as the Parliament in order to promote the inclusion and protection of the rights of people with disabilities.

We have been engaging with the executive and the Parliament of Lesotho since 2008 when the government ratified the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities till to date our voice is not yet heard by the policymakers of Lesotho.

From the foregoing, LNFOD is pleading to the newly elected government of Lesotho to consider people with disabilities by passing the long standing disability rights legislation before the end of 2017 as a means of reducing serious inequalities facing people with disabilities in the social development.

LNFOD will monitor the implementation of the words of the Mr. Speaker of the Parliament of Lesotho by following up with him to ensure the translation of his words into action which may contribute towards the improvement of the representation of people with disabilities in Parliament.



NEWS IN PICTURES



LNFOD staff undertook the internship with Jairo Jir Association



Bambiva school kids at Maputsoe, the school is founded by a man with physical disabled



Neo and the mother during the awarding occasion



This is the house that Kamohelo and the family lives in



Mr. Paul Pasane is one of the people who need a new wheelchair



Itjareng Vocational Training Centre is receiving gifts from Ackermans

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENT

LNFOD General Assembly 12-13 August

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

Lobbying meeting with Attorney General on Disability Equity Bill in July

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

LNFOD write up universal periodic review mid term assessment 21-23 June 2017.

For more information, please conduct LNFOD office on 22320345 or email: malehlohonolo@lnfod.org.

LNFOD Disability Rights Coalition Advocacy meeting on the 5 July

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

Publication of the printed newsletter (Ntsoe Leng) by the end of June 2017

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

Disability Rights Advocacy Training for Disability focal persons from the community councils 26 – 29th June

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

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ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



Diakonie 
Katastrophenhilfe

Brot
für die Welt



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