

DISABILITY LESOTHO



From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome once again to the seventeen edition of Disability Lesotho, the monthly email newsletter from Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled. This newsletter will cover news for June, 2013.

This e-newsletter is a platform whereby partners in the disability sector share the good work they do and learn from the work of others. This includes news, events, updates, activities and all issues affecting people with disability in Lesotho. We therefore welcome contributions of any nature from all organizations working to improve the lives of people in Lesotho, including those with disability.

I would like to take my plea to all that we should take care of ourselves. This month has been the awareness on breast cancer, so I think it is very important for us all to listen to this kind of campaigns so that we can be able to avoid danger. I would like to encourage people with disabilities to take action against this disease, and do the testing voluntarily. Remember breast cancer is not only for women but even men can have breast cancer, so hurry up and visit health centers and places that are providing the service.

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

We welcome any feedback which may improve the quality and content of this free service.

Best regards,
The Editor

ADVOCACY ASPECT

Disability equity bill in action

By: Adv. Nkhasi Sefuthi



Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) was very glad to be invited by the Ministry of Social Development in which the Ministry of Social Development was making the drafting instructions for the development of the Disability Equity bill. This session of drawing up the drafting instructions took place on the 7-18th October 2017.

Upon completion of the making of the drafting instruction, the Ministry of Social Development will endorse the instructions and then liaise with the ministry of Law through its drafting departments who will do the actual drafting of the law.

The drafting section shall turn the drafting instructions into a bill of law, which will then go through few steps before the Minister of Social Development can present it as a bill before the Parliament for debates.

LNFOD's participation in this session has been very exemplary and also meaningful since we are taking part in the decisions making processes affecting the lives of persons with disabilities.

The act is intended to equalise the opportunities between the people with disabilities and their non disabled counterparts in terms of access to justice especially for the people with intellectual disabilities, employment opportunities, access to education, health care services, adequate standard of living to mention but a few.

We can now safely say; Lesotho has started the implementation processes of the UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES of which we are a signatory since 2008. As a result, we are cautiously looking at the pace at which the Disability equity act will be moving from the ministerial level up to the stage of royal assent.

Indeed, this act will be highly relevant not only for the promotion and protection of the rights of people with disabilities, but, it will also form a basis on which rights of people with disabilities can be legally enforced by an individual with disability whose rights have been violated.

On the other hand, we can foreseeably sense the implementation challenges and the harmonisation of this proposed act with other contradictory laws of Lesotho. For example, Section 219 of the Criminal procedure and evidence act of 1981 which states that, if it appears that a person appearing in court either as a witness or the accused is mentally incapacitated such a person will not stand trial.

Nevertheless, we are ready to support and influence the government to speed up the passing of this historic act of its kind for the benefit of Basotho citizens with disabilities.

Prime Minister Dr. Thomas Thabane complies with UN agreements



Right the middle Dr. Thomas Thabane and government secretary Mr. (Picture by P. Letsau)

The Right Honourable Prime Minister Dr. Motsoahe Thomas Thabane reaffirmed the commitment of his government to improve lives of People with disabilities. This was said in a press conference held on the 9th October, 2013 following his trip from the United Nations General Assembly, New York USA.

When he highlighted on some of the agreements made by the general assembly Dr. Thabane pointed out that in order for the nations to realize sustained development, issues of persons with disabilities have to be mainstreamed in such developmental projects and programmes.

He said the theme for this year was; "The post 2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage" this is the policy of development that will follow the Millennium Development Goals which will end by 2015

Dr. Thabane attended the high level meeting on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed Development Goals for persons with disabilities. Member states agreed that all development plans must include persons with disabilities. He also showed that according to the agreement issues of gender and protection of persons with

disabilities must be included in plans and laws of states.

Dr. Thabane concluded saying, the meeting agreed that it is important that all States and international organisations must consider the special needs of persons with disabilities.

"I am interested in issues of disabilities as in my house have a child with disabilities and I would like to see change to the lives of persons with disabilities in this country." Concluded Dr. Thabane

'National market our next stop'

By: Rabasotho Moeletsi

"When we first planned to embark on this pig farm adventure, I never thought pig farming would eventually become my passion," said Malebohang Malakane, member in the project, who also runs hair and beauty salon.

Ten individual persons with disabilities in the Thabana-Morena area decided to come together in a group forming a piggery project. They started small for family consumption where each was raising a piglet as a routine which could be cared for on his spare time. However, the initiative has since grown to be part of their living and has driven them to contribute more resources to it which has made it a profitable business.

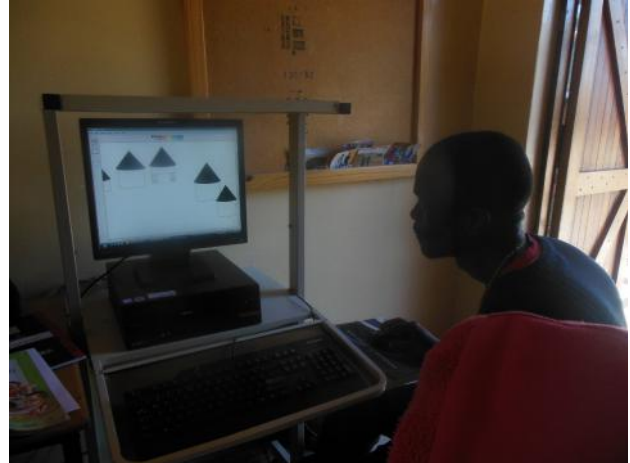


Through LNFOD's intervention, members have received proper training on pig production and business management, making them qualified project owners. "Such an experience alone makes me feel so special and important," concluded Malebohang.

The Piggery project which merely started last year (2012) is surely proving to a viable business, with potential to become a profit making and thereby create jobs for locals.

Disability and technology Lesotho

By: Pascalina Letsau



Tanki Setloboko – a deaf trainee at Itjareng computer laboratory

Tanki is a deaf person who is left with his brother at home without parents. He is doing first year at Itjareng doing metalwork. He is one of the best at the centre with his good work. It took only four months for Tanki to understand what he is supposed to do with all machines used for welding or metalwork. He is interested in everything he is doing at the centre, and will be doing everything neatly.

Let's look in the computer laboratory, he is now able to do drawing, excel, word and post cards. Itjareng as the institution for persons with disabilities is busy to give the trainees knowledge on how to deal with computers.

The world is like the small village these days, so itjareng's interested is to make persons with disabilities understand all ways of communicating to other people even in overseas using social media. PWDs should not be left behind when accessing new technologies. The effort that our trainees are taking to increase their knowledge will help achieve our goal.

Educational software where the computer provides multi-sensory experiences, interaction, positive reinforcement, individualized instruction, and repetition can be useful in skill building. Some students with learning disabilities who have difficulty processing written information can also benefit from completing writing assignments, tutorial lessons, and drill-and-practice work with the aid of computers.

Thinking aloud

By: Rev. Fr. Vincent Phoofolo

The task of sign language interpreting is most of the time taken lightly as a substitution of words with signs or vice versa. This is a belief held by some harried thinkers and other people, especially those with little or no experience at all, of this exhaustive and humbling profession.

But experience and research in the field, prove that S.L interpreting is more complicated than what it appears to be when viewed from a distance. It takes place in the midst of human communication which is difficult in itself. Sometimes people do not mean exactly what they say, and never say exactly what they mean. Apart from that, some realities expressed through language can only be understood in relation to a certain culture and context.

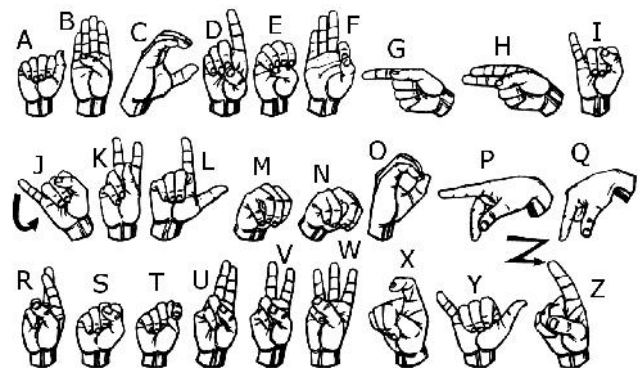
However, the above mentioned situation makes interpreting difficult rather than impossible as others would think.

In addition to that, since sign language interpreting happens at the same time at which the original speaker delivers his/her message, there is no relaxation of double-checking the interpretation as well as consultation for a more accurate interpretation. This is different from translation whereby there is time to consult and an abundant use of necessary materials such as encyclopaedias and dictionaries. For this matter Sing Language interpretation poses a huge challenge to interpreters and requires a lot of strength and intelligence, since the interpreter needs to keep in pace with a varied style of speaking and must think very fast about complicated chunks of messages, under the pressure of public spot light.

Embarrassment and frustrations are common experiences of many practising interpreters and professionals in the field. However S.L interpreting is one of the important professions in the world, since it breaks the wall of silence that exists between Deaf people and the hearing community. It saves the Deaf from isolation and uncertainty.

The doors to inclusion and fuller participation in the society are wide open through interpreting.

Therefore it is rewarding at the end since it is not just a profession, but it is a call because it is not for everyone. Many have tried and did not make it because they tried it in isolation with the Deaf community. This



GENERAL NEWS

A welcome sign language development from the minister - deaf persons



Lesotho parliament

This breakthrough for the deaf community was confirmed recently in Parliament when the Minister of Communications Science and Technology Honourable, Tseliso Mokhosi was responding to the question posed by the fellow Member of Parliament for Likhoele Constituency Honourable Khotso Letsatsi.

Hon Letsatsi asked the minister if he is has noticed that there are no sign language interpreters over the (government run) Lesotho Television especially during news casting, and that leaves Deaf community in the cold. He went further to ask if the minister is aware of it, then how fast could he start correcting that situation so Deaf Persons could enjoy the same information as their hearing counterparts.

In his response the minister pointed out that organisation of the persons with deafness disability (NADL) have already offered three 3 sign language interpreters who are now undergoing training at the television in order to familiarise themselves with the equipment at the television. They will start interpreting during news broadcasting and other programs on LTV. They will start work on the 01st December 2013.

Asked for comment NADL President, Mr. Lehlohonolo Makhebesela had this to say, "Deaf community is thrilled with this new development and we hope our government stands by its commitment to make it a reality."

"We'll be watching until the 01st December waiting for this ground breaking news to happen. In the meantime we hope the Minister sees to it that this initiative becomes an ongoing programme and not once off event like it has been in the past," concluded Mr. Makhebesela.

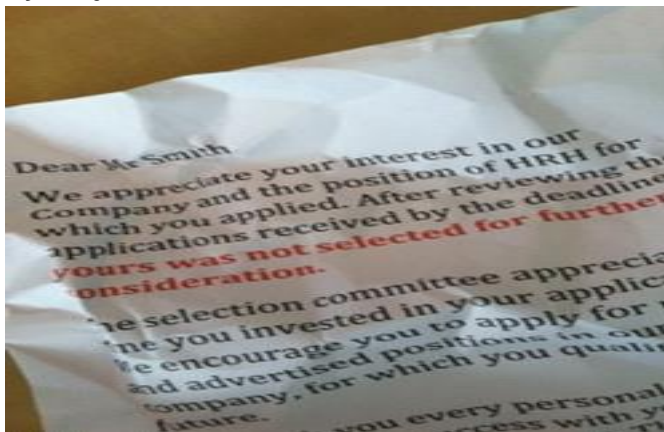
Deaf Persons notes this is a remarkable step in the right direction which would mean their ultimate goal to see Sign Language recognised as third language turned into a reality.

Opinion piece

**What can I ask for at my workplace?
How should I communicate my
disability? How can I stand in for my
rights at my workplace?**

People with disabilities need to be very convincing when applying for a job. With knowledge, sympathy and positivism.

By: Mojalefa Mabula



Convince with positive aggression and turn off the pity bonus.

After his business education, Thabiso Moahloli decided to take up training for a social worker. The 27-year-old man has cerebral palsy and is a wheelchair user. He has completed his training four years ago. Since then, Moahloli is on job hunt. "More or less intense," as he says himself.

Moahloli has already completed two internships in assisted living facilities. "But that never turned into a permanent position," the young man says a bit desperate.

Careful job selection - a prerequisite for success

Moahloli has lived in an assisted living facility, before he got married and moved with his wife in their own rented apartment three years ago. "I know the system, the needs of people with disabilities," says Moahloli and wonders why he does not find a job as a social worker in an assisted living facility despite

his expert knowledge.

Tsepo Tsiu, a trainer for the professional integration of people with disabilities with a local consultancy company UR WAY ENDOZED, has an answer: "You should only apply where the limitation is not too relevant."

Moahloli does have great theoretical and surely also practical knowledge about supervised living facilities for people with disabilities. However, because of his own handicap, he cannot fully support his colleagues in everyday work.

To successfully apply for a job, Moahloli needs to put his focus on positions where his handicap has no relevance and he still can use his special knowledge. As he would have it he has to show his future employer that he is exactly that missing puzzle piece the company needs.



Crucial question: mentioning disability - yes or no?

Since Moahloli wants to apply for a job as a Social Worker however, he is uncertain whether she should mention her disability in the application or during the interview, or better leave it out.

"This question cannot be answered generally," says Tsepo Tsiu. "The more obvious a handicap is, the more the candidate should include it in the written application," advises Tsepo Tsiu. Leaving a handicap in the application letter, has a direct bearing at the in job interview. "It is best to face the disability subject in a quiet phase of the interview. It is important that the handicap is not just mentioned without explanation. It is wise to.

It is wise to present it in a way that the employer can see what to do with it, "says Tsiu.

Tsepo Tsiu does not recommend concealing the disability – even if it is not relevant to the current job. "You never know what you are going to meet in your work life. A job profile can be changed over the years. There may be relocations," says Tsiu. Thus the general advice, to prevent rejection letters: turn your "disadvantages" into advantages.

Goodbye pity bonus and hello abilities!

Matseliso Nkoane has applied for a job in the public service. The job description states that people with severe disabilities are given priority among equally qualified. The 21-year-old, who is a wheelchair user since a car accident in her childhood, has just completed her training as a secretary. The young woman was sure to get the job. She assumed that not many people in her small hometown would apply for this very position. In her application, she stated her disability several times and eventually, she was invited for an interview.

At the interview, Matseliso explained her disability in detail. She stated clearly what she cannot do, where she needs conservation, what accommodations are required and which financial benefit she would bring as a person with a disability. In the end, Matseliso did not get the job. What went wrong?

Quite a lot went wrong. "People with disabilities are not hired for their financial benefits," states Tsiu: "People with disabilities are first of all - from the perspective of the employers - a disadvantage. If an applicant can convince the employer of his/her qualities and put the seeming disadvantages into special abilities, then there is a good chance to get the job. "Positive aggression is in demand! An employer only hires someone who gives him the best possible performance", says Tsiu.

Win with skills and positivism

"The most important decision needs to happen in the mind of the candidate," says Tsepo Tsiu. "Convince with knowledge, sympathy and toughness. An applicant needs to be a positive person."

And what if the problem is already the application letter? If every one of them is answered with a no? "Then the self-marketing plan does not work!" says Tsiu. He advises to have reviewed the application by a competent person. Also individual counseling can often work wonders.

Increase your market value! Improve your marketing plan and become positive! You apply in competition with others. They might be fitter or younger but you have your advantages! Make sure your future employer learns about them. Tsiu concludes by adding that his company plans to roll out a series of trainings on mainstreaming employment of people with disabilities in the coming months.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



'M'e Tiisetso Sebota

The Switchboard operator at Maluti Mountain Brewery Company – Visually impaired person

What inspires you being a parent with disability?

There are no challenges as a parent with disability; I am just a parent like other parents

What is your favorite food?

As a Mosotho woman I like papa and moroho especially the green one.

How did you get the job?

The company did send a message to my organization asking for someone with visually impaired person to work there, and three people we did apply and I qualified for the job after the interviews.

What can you say about the future of girls with disabilities in this country?

I think their future is not yet clear, but I hope if we can push harder there will be a change as they double the barriers to education

Do you have any plans for next year?

I like to see visually impaired women being successful to starting up their self help group projects.

What do you do for fun?

I always go for meetings for my organisation, if there is no meeting I do family chores.

Do you have friends?

Yes, I do have friends but not many

If you were to choose an animal to help, which one would, you go for?

I would like to have a dog as it can be able to guide me complete my all moves.

Whose minister would you choose who inspire you?

I like the Minister of home affairs Morena Joang Molapo, he is able to say about his ministry very well.

Why is international disability day important to you as a person with disability?

I like to live in Botswana; it is working hard to protect its resources to benefit all citizens.

Upcoming events / Announcements

Disability day

The disability day celebration will be held at Maseru.

The theme for this year is; "Break barriers, open doors: for an inclusive society for all".

We invite everybody to come and celebrate with us this year

For more information please conduct these numbers:

(+266) 22320345 or (+266) 58700925

"Disability round table meeting"

On the 1st – 5th December, a week long the Round Table featuring specialists and practitioners in disability from across Southern Africa, to be hosted by SADPD and LNFOD in Lesotho.

Gender mainstreaming workshop

On the 13th November, LNFOD women's Forum will be holding a workshop for disability and gender mainstreaming. The event will be held at Lehakoe Recreational club in Maseru.



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