

DISABILITY LESOTHO

From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome once again to the tenth edition of Disability Lesotho, the monthly email newsletter from Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled. This newsletter will cover news for October, 2017.

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.

Persons with disabilities are crying for the Disability Equity Bill to be passed before the parliament. I think it is with this government we are hoping to see change in Lesotho, am saying this because we have seen so many things that are happening lately. There is no inclusiveness in this country, I wonder how this country will meet the all the standards it accepted at the United Nations level. There are some conventions, protocols, treaties and agendas that I think they are binding all member states.

I am very disappointed to recognize that the parliament when supposed to pass laws, it is playing their delaying tactics. Persons with disabilities are expecting to see the Disability Equity Bill passed before the parliament, it is the time that politicians are not willing to do the work they are expected to do.

As long as we have this calibre of leadership, Lesotho is going nowhere. Basotho persons with disabilities are willing to see Lesotho that is inclusive, stable and peaceful to accommodate everyone.



I wonder when issues of disabilities will be taken into consideration in this country. Girls and women with disabilities faces sexual abuses, nothing is protecting them. Courts of law still do not finishing cases of those abuses. We are very in danger; there are many children that are born due to rape to girls with disabilities. There is nobody taking care of such children. I pray that god can raise His hand to the leaders of this country to think deeply about these matters

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

COUNT ME IN

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

The 2016 housing census indicates that persons with disabilities in Lesotho constitute 2.5% of the total population. This is a significant percentage of the population which requires be hearing and representing in the highest decision making bodies.

2011 Sintef Living Conditions study states that Basotho with disabilities experience a myriad of challenges in terms of access to social, economic, political justice services due to the attitudinal and environmental barriers imposed by the society on this section of the community. Lack of full and effective participation of people with disabilities in the decision making bodies such as the parliament, local community councils and other human rights institutions makes it difficult for the meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities in the national agenda of Lesotho.

The 2011 Sintef study further highlights the stigma and discrimination attached to disability by the society as one of the critical issues which must be addressed so that people with disabilities can be viewed as rights holders rather than charity cases.

Article 8 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to which Lesotho is a State Party requires disability rights awareness to be undertaken by the government and the civil society organization in order to combat stigma and discrimination on the basis of disability within the communities and promote the abilities and capacities of people with disabilities.

It is against this backdrop that persons with disabilities through their representative organisations seek to exploit the opportunity provided by the reform agenda by advocating for the full and effective participation of persons

with disabilities in the formulation of the process surrounding the reforms including participation in the independent structure to be established to coordinate the reforms.

LNFOOD seeks to be represented in the independent structures through the delegates from the disabled people's organisations including in the clusters on different sectors in which they will influence the agenda of those clusters to be disability inclusive. The delegates will be equipped sufficiently to raise the critical issues facing people with disabilities the outcome of the engagement of people with disabilities in the reforms is the removal of the institutionalized discrimination and underrepresentation of people with disabilities in the decision making bodies such as parliament and change the social perception about people with disabilities within the communities.

From the foregoing, LNFOOD calls upon the government to ensure the inclusiveness of the reform agenda by accommodating the representatives of persons with disabilities through the disabled people's organisations in all the structures to be formulated in the course of the reforms.

GENERAL NEWS

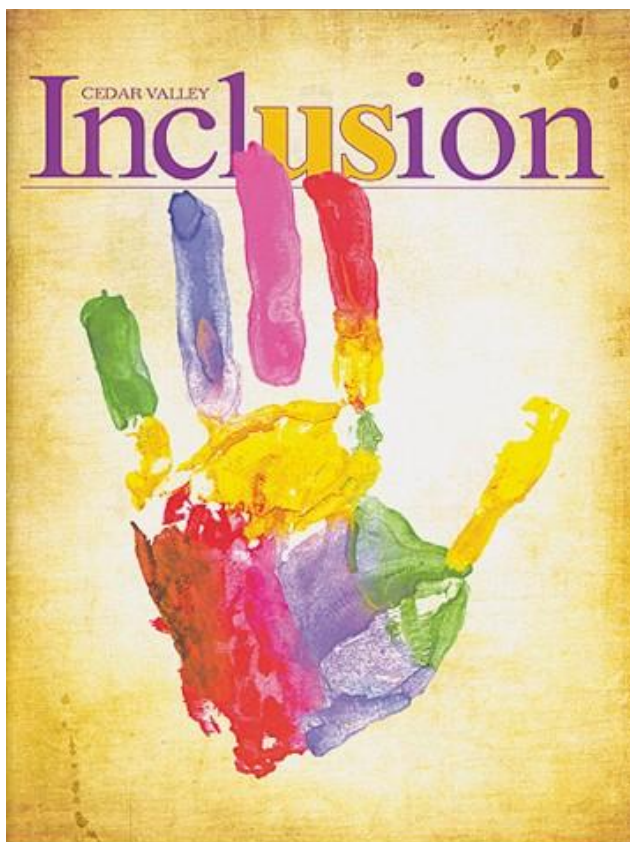
THERE IS STILL HOPE FOR INCLUSION

By: Malehlohonolo Molelengoane

Lesotho Federation of Organisations of the Disabled has been advocating for meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities. It has always been LNFOD's argument that the Constitution and other Acts of Parliament are discriminatory against persons with disabilities. LNFOD has gone as far as writing proposals for amendment but none has yielded results, however there is hope as the Reform process is underway.

LNFOD is calling upon the reform Secretariat to take note of disability issues when the constitutional and sectoral reforms take place. During a stakeholder consultation meeting with the UNFPA, LNFOD tabled the issues that the reform secretariat has to take note of during reforms. Among other things, LNFOD is advocating for disability to be a ground of non-discrimination in the Constitution, inclusion of Sign Language as an official language, self-representation of persons with disabilities in Parliament and in the coordinating structure and constitutional public interest law which will enable organisations of the persons with disabilities to litigate on behalf of their members.

The UNFPA representatives expressed a gratitude to LNFOD for such an eye opening meeting and also put onto LNFOD a task to give information on disability issues whenever need arises. The UNFPA also pointed out that the upcoming reform process is likely to be consultative as possible to allow meaningful stakeholder contributions



GENERAL NEWS

CONSULTATION ON THE NEW AU GENDER STRATEGY AND ADVOCACY TRAINING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

By: Pascalina Letsau



On the 23rd – 25th October, at Desmond Tutu Conference Center Nairobi Kenya, The consultation on the new Au Gender Strategy and Advocacy Training on human rights held. The meeting was organized by All Africa Conference Churches (AACC). All invitees were from churches, continental NGOs and International organisations and AU, Continental organisations especially doing advocacy, gender issues and youth. Ecumenical Disability Advocacy Network (EDAN) was invited, that is where women with disabilities came in through Disabled Women in Africa (DIWA) from different countries. There were 5 women with disabilities participated in this important meeting. 2 women were Kenyans, 1 Ugandan, 1 Zimbabwean and 1 Mosotho.

The consultation expanded the faith leaders' understanding on international, continental and regional instruments as well as actions to undertake as part of a continental campaign for promotion of women rights. Specific inputs to the new AU Gender policy and Gender Strategy discussed and collected to be forwarded to the African Union for inclusion in the new gender strategy and faith leaders shared on how they mainstream gender in their perspective churches.

It is in this meeting where the NCA representative trained on how to do advocacy and measure its impact. She said advocacy is not something that can be done today and see some results in a year or two, it take 5 – 10 years before could see the results of what have been advocated for. So, she

encouraged the meeting that people shouldn't lose our aim because of the delay of results.

Participants shared their experiences on how abuses are done to girls and women in their perspective countries and regions. When looking in disability sector; issues of education, accessibility, rape, killings, employment, economic were to top abuses that girls and women with disabilities are facing in Africa.

The participants worked into groups to discuss and give their inputs on the goals for Agenda 2063 to be adopted. All goals for this Agenda are 20. To us the participants we found the Agenda 2063 to be the dream Africa where Africa will be inclusive and worked hard to make it inclusive and hope those in power will adopt it as it is. We Hope that the implementation will be done properly and budgeted for.

Check;

#AUGenderStrat on Facebook and Twitter for more information



Pascalina presenting work group on Goals 4, 6 & 9 of Agenda 2063

GENERAL NEWS

Who can hear us.....?

By: 'Mareitumetse

"Difficulties those parents are face as parents of children with disabilities in this country. Most parents do not feel virtuous when other children are mocking their children due to their disability. It is the same to me as the parent who has such child. Kabelo my child do not speak and walk. He is not attending school due to those difficulties especially in terms of mobility.

I am willing to see him enroll in school where there is boarding. I would like to see him at school but the problem is where? My child need assistive device or has a special programme to teach him at home. The mother is in need of the project that will bring the money in house."

"The situation that we ; I am living in real kills me emotionally. I do not want to see myself be part of parents who did not give their children support, education and everything he needs. I think it high time that we can be supported by our governments as well. We are suffering to the extent that we sometimes do not want to live."



"I too want to be a doctor....."

By: 'Makatleho Koena



"I wonder how comes that a child reach the age of 16 out of school in this country. I think there is something that should be done in this country. The ministry of education is not able to think for this vulnerable children. UNCRPD article 24 talks about Education to learners with disabilities, it does not specify. CRC also talks also about education to every child but what about these children who are not able to walk?"

"I think its high time that the government should take a study tour to other countries relating to this type of disability from other countries. We see ministries touring for study from many aspects of life except for disability. I am very worried about the situation persons with disabilities are living in. The following ministries of Education, Social Development, the Prime Minister's office and the Federation of the Disabled should take a huge step towards refining their lives."

"I am always sking myself whether these people are not paying tax or are they exceptioned from tax? If they are taxpayers, I think there is someone to be put before courts of law here, it can be the government or who ever. I am a worried mosotho woman who cares for these people, I am always meeting these people and ask myself so many questions on whose responsible is this?"

SPOTLIGHT



Hon. Minister Temeki Phoenix Tsolo – Minister in the Prime Minister's Office

Question 1: When did you start interacting with 3 disabilities? Or do you have any friend with disability?

Answer: I have a friend by the name of Lebohang who is visually impaired, I still trying to find her. I met her at QwaQwa at the University doing Masters. She was a brilliant woman, one could not believe she has impairment. I learnt about disability from this lady and believed to them. They are people who are talented indeed.

Question 2: In your life as a person, are there some individuals with disabilities that you supported for the betterment of their lives?

Answer: Many persons with different types of disabilities that I came across who need help. I cannot mention but there is one woman at Mafeteng whose child is attending school at Pitseng, I always helping to Pitseng from Mafeteng, even when schools closes, they reminds me to pick the child from school. Some are just pitching my office unannounced and seek help, I still continue to help.

Question 3: In your office now, what is it that is available that can assist or endorse lives of PWDs?

Answer: The current Prime Minister Dr. Thomas Thabane in his house there is a child who has autism. He is a person who understands PWDs as human beings, so he is able to do anything for them. I would be exception if I could do something different from him. We have to help them not only to eat but even to

start their own companies or improve them. I think it's our role as the office; it can happen that I am not aware of who came before me if they had policy or what. I think it is not difficult for us as the office to develop the policy after the ministry of Social Development had tabled the Disability Equity Bill before the parliament, as we will work that policy in line with the Disability Act.

Question 4: The heart interest of disability Lesotho is to see Lesotho parliament pass the Disability Equity Bill to the law, what is your view to this?

Answer: I will 100% supports the Disability Bill in the parliament because it is with this Law that persons with disabilities can be recognised fully in this country.

Question 5: Is there any programme that can cater for the needs of PWDs in this office?

Answer: We have National HIV/AIDS Commission; this is where disability comes in. Other forms of disability are caused by this epidemic disease. There is also Food and Security Authority and Disaster Management Unit, we cannot work with these departments yet we do not know how disability fit in, some people are being imputed because of disasters, so even in these programmes disability is catered for. I am just concerned about the inaccessible of this office like you said; I wish we can have something like ramp as we don't have lifts so that everyone could access the office easily.

Question 6: How many PWDs employed in this office so far?

Answer: So far the answer is zero, it is true that I am not dealing with issues of human resources but I think if one qualifies there is no need to discriminate such a person, I can only know if can ask the human resource department.

Question 7: If you were to marry a person with disability, which type of disability would you choose?

Answer: It's just that I met Lebohang who is visually impaired already married but there was no reason that I couldn't marry her due to her intelligence

Question 8: What is your favourite animal?

Answer: I like goat considerable, from it can have meat and wool to generate money. Besides, I like a dog as it will bark when there are dangerous people coming after you during the night.

NEWS IN PICTURES



Visually impaired persons celebrating the white cane day at Thaba - Tseka



Youth and women with disabilities are pl



Consultation on the new Au Gender Strategy and Advocacy Training on human rights – Nairobi Kenya



Public gatherings during the Voter Education



Mohau who is staying with the sister only



This child found during the house – house Voter Education

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ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



Diakonie 
Katastrophenhilfe

Brot
für die Welt



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