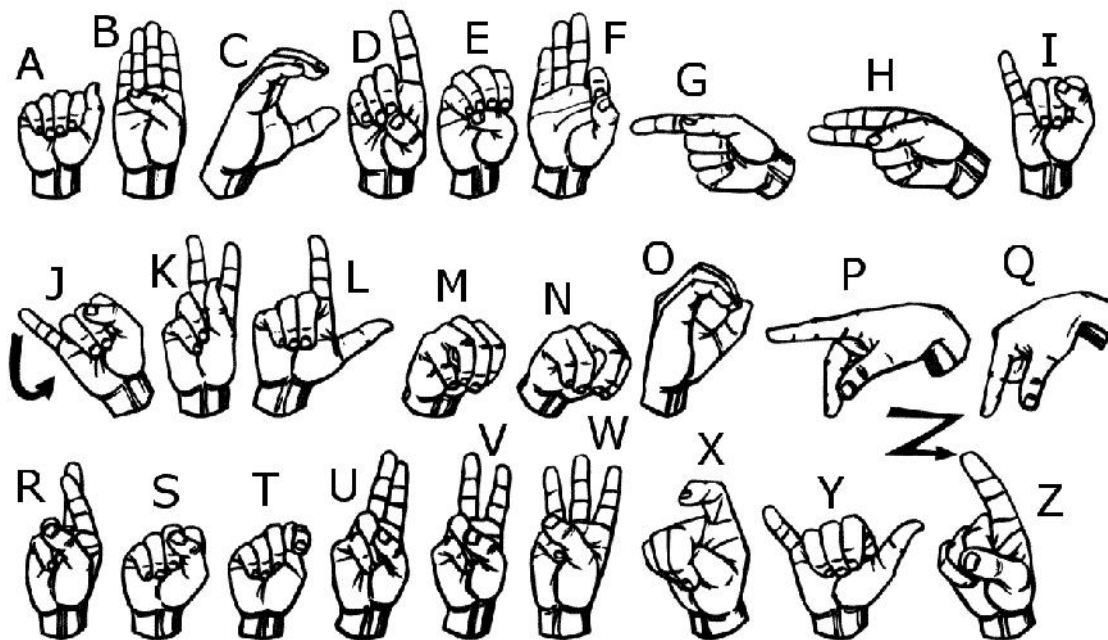


DISABILITY LESOTHO



From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome again to the sixteenth edition of Disability Lesotho, the monthly email newsletter from disability sector will cover news for September, 2013.

This e-newsletter will 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.

This Month has been busy from the side of deaf people in this country. While from the physical disabled people lost one of our beloved member.

Even if we sometimes go through hard times we foresee changes in lives of people with disabilities in this country through the hard work done by DPOs in Lesotho. I would like to thank all people who are supporting people with disabilities in any kind to overcome their challenges and by being their voices,

but this is not enough, as change can not be seen within a day.

I am pleading to all people who are contributing to this newsletter to drive forward so that can reach our goal and objectives. I real thank you once again for the wonderful job you are doing to benefit people with disabilities in Lesotho.

If you would like to contribute to the next issue or have for the received this newsletter from a third party and wish to be included on the mailing list please contact Pascalina a Letsau on 5905 5406 or pletsau@gmail.com

Your feedback is very much appreciated within the Disability Lesotho. Please help us improve the quality of the content of this publication by letting us know what you would like to read about.

Best regards,
The Editor

ADVOCACY ASPECTS

By: Adv. Nkhasi Sefuthi

Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) successfully released the open letter to the Honourable Minister of Social Development on the 10th September 2013 to all our stakeholders, development partners' people with disabilities and the public at large. For more information about the content of this letter, please refer to this website www.informativenews paper dated 10th September 2013.

The purpose for which the open letter was published is to demonstrate the lack of political will from the Social Development in ensuring that people with disabilities are protected by the disability specific legislation that will directly respond to the needs of people with disabilities. The act should derive its validity from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) to which Lesotho is a signatory.

However, The Ministry of Social Development does not seem to have the intention to provide their service to people with disabilities through the disability specific law as it is international bound to do so. It is evident from the fact that, the term of reference for the engagement of the consultant who is to develop this law has been completed in April. The consultancy funding for this law was also requested from the Ministry of Finance. However, the consultancy funding which is budgeted has not been released to Social Development on reason unknown to the Ministry till to date in September.

Worst of all, the senior government officers who are involved in this issue could not resolve this matter as the Ministry of Social Development is shifting blame on the Ministry of Finance for not releasing the funds.

As a result, LNFOD was compelled to share this prevailing situation with all people who are interested in disability issues. It is also crucial to state that, LNFOD waited since April till September trying to negotiate with the senior management of Social Development on how the law can be speed up.

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Social Development could not take concrete step concerning this matter, until the date when we released the open letter to the public.

The response that was given by one senior Manager of the Ministry was to the effect that, the budget for communication activities has been diverted to the development of disability specific law. This decision has been reached because the Ministry of Finance still has not yet released the funds to them.

Thanks to the Open letter, had it not been released, the situation would still be the same.

Nevertheless, LNFOD is keeping a very close eye on whether the ministry will be able to fulfil its mandate of protecting people with disabilities through the law. LNFOD is ready to take more steps to ensure that the funds will finally be released for the development of that historical unique disability legislation.

LNFOD also urges the Honourable Minister of Social Development to address this issue for, it has not yet been resolved, despite the fact that, the process of engaging the consultant is expected to start before the 15 October 2013.

GENERAL NEWS

"Our voices.....our strengths"

Disabled women in Africa hold its third capacity development workshop from the 9th – 13th September in Johannesburg. The workshop was targeting Education and Training of girls and women with disabilities. Lesotho was represented by 'Masenate Tau and Pascalina Letsau.

10 countries participated in this meeting were as follows; Lesotho, Rwanda, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Mozambique. The selection criterion of these countries within the Continent was; looking at countries that have signed or ratified the UNCRPD. The idea was to give women with disabilities in Africa a voice looking at the articles related to the women issues within the convention.

The meeting was the follow up one to help women with disabilities in Africa raise their voice and advocate for the rights of girls and women with disabilities access education right. All these countries shared experiences on issues of education and training towards girls and women with disabilities. Participants looked in the laws and policies of their countries in education department.

There is more to do as women in Africa, girls with disabilities are still outside schools due to the barriers they are facing. Every country is expected to do more on advocating for the rights of girls and women in education, health and mainstreaming. There were some plans of future activities to be implemented. The challenge is most of the countries do not have funds to carry their activities or even to reach all places. Let's take Lesotho as our example it is very difficult to reach far places like 'Malefiloane in the Mokhotlong district due to the terrain of this country. Remember there are still girls and women with disabilities that are willing to be visited or to go to school but there is still difficult.

Wishing Lesotho could help one way or the other to help organisations that are willing to help their members. "We cannot keep quiet until we recognised by the world." 'Masenate Tau commented

NUL lecture series



Students taking pictures and reading the graphic recording on disability and social work case studies in Lesotho.

On Tuesday the 24th September LNFOD Advocacy Desk teamed up with NUL Sociology and Anthropology Department to deliver a 2 hour interactive lecture on Social Work and Disability - "An introduction to DISability in Lesotho for social work practitioners". Over hundreds of students attended from 1st year through to 4th year students. Independent advocate Leratō Lepolesa and LNFOD Human Rights Officer Nkhasi Sefuthi facilitated the event which included background of DISability in Lesotho, disability models and concepts and an interactive Question and Answer session on the personal side of disability. Conversation varied from values based judgements and support, dignity and choice, sex, relationships and human rights approaches.

Filming the event were the Siyakhona Film Crew, who capture the lecture for the LNFOD website and resource library. Keep posted for the Lecture to soon be airing on LNFOD YouTube Channel.

Special thanks to NUL for working with LNFOD to build the NUL/LNFOD public lecture series... more guest lectures to come in late 2013/14.



GENERAL NEWS

A True Heroine.....May Ng



May Ng LNFOD communication officer from AVI

The past week has been marked by celebrations for LNFOD and the partners where they bidding a farewell to their heroine employee in the communication department, Mrs. May Ng. Having spent just under two years in the mountain kingdom, May has brought lots of positive changes to the lives of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and their Disability People's Organisations (DPOs). She started with the building of Communication Strategy as guide tool for LNFOD and the DPOs pursuing communications activities and a pillar to advocacy issues. Implementation of that document through this period has been attributed to the achievements that communication part of LNFOD has enjoyed during the period.

When called to give a few remarks, Mr. Rabasotho Moeletsi (counterpart in the communication department of LNFOD) had this to say. "In fact she has touched many lives both within and outside disability fraternity especially those in communications in all its forms of media in the country. She possesses all dimensions of heroism in that she always applied passion,

the pursuit of excellence, and precision in whatever task at hand for her," he remarked.

In conclusion Mr. Moeletsi said, "She also acted as a catalyst for change in many occasions for organisations such NADL, LNLVIP as well as LNAPD where in many occasions she affected those changes in these organisations without being into their four walls – they all have up and running websites now."

Speaking at her farewell celebration held at the LNFOD head quarters days before she left, May described the time she spend in Lesotho around persons with disabilities as both long and short period she experienced in her life. She highlighted that the appreciation, love and the humidity which she was given made her stay very short as she would have asked for more and more... while on the other hand she reflects back to the achievements she achieved together with LNFOD and the DPOs proved work of many, many years.

She further said she is happy to leave LNFOD and DPOs knowing that they have people who are now skilled and dedicated to take the good work that they did during time even to the new heights.

"May will always be remembered and have a role to play in our lives as PWDs, thanks to the online communication she will be part of us until the end of time." Pascalina Letsau commended (also of communication department, LNFOD).

GENERAL NEWS

Social cluster preparatory meeting:

On the 20th September LNFOD Advocacy Desk along with DPO representatives worked with Transformation Resource Centre to prepare Social Cluster meeting for late October.

LNFOD and TRC will be working together to meet with the Parliamentary Committee on the Social Cluster, to raise issues of disability policy and legislative deficits in Lesotho. Primary agenda items include the formation of The Disability Equity Bill and prompt adoption of the Bill as an act, the need for National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy Guidelines for Implementation, the meaningful incorporation of disability and disability targets and indicators in the Lesotho National Strategic Plan.

The meeting date has been reprioritised by the Social Cluster Committee and is now predicted to take place late October or early November. LNFOD will keep readers informed of any updates as they come to hand.

Advocacy task team training

In an effort to streamline and improve the advocacy efforts of the LNFOD and DPO Advocacy Task Team, LNFOD Advocacy Desk facilitated a two day Advocacy Fundamentals and Planning Training from the 21st and 22nd September at Lesotho Sun.

Participants were LNFOD's 4 partner organisations plus representatives from the Youth and Women's Wing. Participants reviewed the 2013/14 advocacy strategy and planned current reactive advocacy responses. Look out for our Advocacy Task Team members on the radio and in print over the next few months as we step up our awareness campaign around Disability Day in Maseru 2013 to break down the Barriers facing people with disabilities in Lesotho.

'Masaule Mokitimi – Maboitumelo Mafofo is no more.....



Mrs. Mafofo has been working in disability movements advocating for the rights of PWDs for some quite of time. She also worked as Secretary/bookkeeper at Itjareng Vocational Training Centre. Her funeral will be on the 5th October, at her home Borokhoaneng Maseru. "May her soul rest in peace"

Building Capacity of parents and caregivers of children with disabilities

Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho (IDAL) on the 3rd to 5th September 2013 provided food packages to the selected sibling headed and granny headed households in districts of Butha-Buthe and Berea, The selected households were those with children with disabilities severely marginalized and lack capacity for self-help projects pending their elderly age and young age and mostly compromised by the level of disability.

Needs assessment for children with disabilities also facilitated by IDAL on the 4th – 13th September, IDAL continued with in Lithipeng and Khoelenya Community Councils and as way of informing interventions needed to address needs of an individual child within the catchments area.

GENERAL NEWS

Disaster Management Authority of Lesotho recognises people with disabilities in disaster preparedness and recovery



LNFOAD Advocacy Desk has been collaborating with the Disaster Management Authority of Lesotho over the past 2 months to prepare for the International campaign for the 2013 disaster preparedness and recovery theme of People with Disabilities. This year the focus of the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR) (13 October) is on some one billion people around the world who live with some form of disability.

Representing one-fifth of the world's population, persons with disabilities have unique contributions, often overlooked, to help reduce the risk of disasters and build resilient societies and communities.

IDDR 2013 intends to switch on and amplify this critical issue of including the needs of persons with disabilities now and for the post – 2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

- A disaster resilient planet means everyone must be part of the solution.
- Decisions and policies to reduce disaster risks must reflect the needs of persons living with disabilities

- Investment in disaster risk reduction must provide for the needs of persons living with disabilities

LNFOAD has been participating with Lesotho's local authority to produce awareness raising radio segments and accessible materials in the lead up to the gala event to take place on the 13th October. LNFOAD will continue to work with the Disaster Management Authority to ensure PWD's are incorporated into planning, preparedness and recovery of all disaster reduction projects. Further updates to come as the day approaches!

LNFOAD collaborates with ECOL on Inclusive Education Assessment

LNFOAD Advocacy Desk and Selected partners took place in the Examinations Council of Lesotho preliminary discussion on inclusive assessment in examinations for primary and secondary schooling in Lesotho.

LNFOAD contributed to the discussion on basic tools and amendments which could be made for students with disabilities so that they may fairly participate in school examinations for graduation. LNFOAD and ECOL are pursuing an ongoing relationship to continue to develop more formalised policy and guidelines for inclusive and continuous assessment for all students including those with disabilities in the Lesotho education system.

Current amendments to examinations practice agreed upon for the assessment year of 2013 include the provision of adequate interpreting services of Deaf Students, allowances in marking grammar for Deaf students and the recognition in Grammar understanding for Deaf Students, appropriate brailled examinations, extra time for braille readers and sign language users to process the examination paper, reader/ or writers to be provided for students where appropriate and available.

GENERAL NEWS

COPDAM Mainstreaming Training



Deaf people looking at sign language interpreter during the training

LNFOOD and the Secretariat of the Africa Decade of Persons with Disabilities (SADPD) through the Communities of Practice on Disability and Mainstreaming (COPDAM) Project co-facilitated training for the Disabled Persons Organisations in Lesotho on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results Based Planning. This training was the second in two part training on Disability Mainstreaming, which is Phase 1 of the COPDAM project.

Attending and facilitating the meeting was SADPD CEO Mr. Ak Dube, accompanied by COPDAM Project Manager Ms. Palesa Mphohle. Mr Dube reiterated the importance of clarity in developing indicators and results in the project planning and advocacy planning process. Training was then guided by Nkhasi Sefuthi and Palesa Mphohle to cover the finer points of understanding and utilising logical frameworks and results based planning in project and activity development.

The follow on of this training will be the 2nd Phase of the COPDAM project in which participants will apply their training to review and develop results and results indicators (at impact, outcome, output levels) for 2014/15 LNFOOD Advocacy strategy.

Time for change.....



Working hours at LNAPD workshop

Many organisations in this country have been working hard for advocating for the rights of their members, nothing for changing lives of people. Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD) decided to change for the better.

LNAPD held four days training of jewellery making for its 10 members from four councils in Mafeteng. This training was meant to improve their standard of living. These people are expected to continue their work while home and sell. This is an easy activity because one can do it at her own time and at home, there is no need to use transport to and from work. Three people report to the office that they have already started doing it after the training.

There are more members engaged in a Crab Tree project whereby members assembling parts of electric plugs for the company. This is another way of capacitating them and it is done as a way of income generation, self acceptance and rehabilitation. The project came through the company of Crabtree which is supplying electric parts. There are 14 people with physical disabilities, 3 males and 11 females. Their ages range between 25- 50.

The wage that these people are earning is not enough to cater for their needs, but just because people with disabilities have some needs and families had to take the job. "If other companies can realize that people with disabilities have right to employment and give them the opportunity, Lesotho could be counted amongst those countries which does not have DISability at all" says Nteboheleng Lefuma

GENERAL NEWS

Deaf awareness week



Sign language interpreters at LTV Thahameso show

22nd – 28th September, has been elected as the Deaf Awareness Week, with this reason National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL) had a show at LTV Thahameso show to raise awareness for that week. This has been done in collaboration with Thahameso presenters especially Mr. Retselisitsoe Nkhahle.

The awareness real made a change because Basotho were happy seeing sign language interpreters on LTV. The arrangement was only done for that week.

On Wednesday, the minister of Social Development did not see the interpreters on LTV and she was very sad and asked what was wrong, she was hoping that now everything is happening as she has been asking unfortunately it was not the right time.

Maseru Toyota through Mr. Lelimo is willing to help by transporting sign language interpreters to and from the Television. It will not be easy for him doing this alone but he is seeking more help from other companies to make this successful.

Besides this the NADL trained media houses on how to communicate with deaf people, they were given only basics of sign language. It was about 20 participants from radio stations and newspapers.

In Leribe district in order to mark this week, the Ministry of agriculture in collaboration with NADL trained deaf people how to plough potatoes and vegetables. This was done in order to help them start income generating projects within their communities. In this training eight people were females and three were males. After the training, the group started joining hands and working together ploughing vegetables and potatoes.



Deaf youth boys chatting at the street of Maseru



Likopo Lesoetsa in Thahameso show at LTV

Opinion piece

Tourism on disability nature

By: Pascalina Letsau



Tourism is one of the wealthiest aspects in economy. If so, how does it help or affect people with disabilities (PWDs) in Lesotho? Do PWDs access facilities within tourism? Answers will be determined by looking at the universal access in the country.

I think first of all we have to understand the meaning of universal access. Someone can say universal access is to provide ramps and protective rails so that people with disabilities can access buildings. This can be a component of universal access but the reality is that; by universal access we mean; access to everywhere for everyone. This can be access to information, buildings and applicable to public transport also, in transport that is where Basotho are facing challenges disabled and non – disabled.

Lesotho lack adequate transport which is the biggest challenge faced by people with disabilities that are preventing PWDs from being participating social and economy aspects.

Tourism is not successful without hotels, guest's houses, lodges and Bed & Breakfast. This means there has to be buildings that are universal access and designed but unfortunately they are not.

People with disabilities are keen to travel and have fun with friends but are denied by the inaccessible infrastructure. Here I include roads, pavements, and toilets. If it is difficult for us PWDs in the country to move around how can tourists with disabilities from abroad can make it?

Let's look at the Morija Arts and Cultural Festival which will run for a two weeks and the popular festival in Lesotho but if someone can ask a person about it cannot say anything related to the festival as it is not easy to attend due to funds, accessible transport and roads as well. People will show their arts and sell to generate income for their families but what about people with disabilities? They will remain at home looking for their families while others have gone to the festival. 'I don't think it is fair not to make sure as the government that everything is universally designed.'

Can we say "Is it okay for people with disabilities from abroad to go around Maseru while visiting this country? Even Maseru is difficult for PWDs go freely around it." I think Lesotho has a Vision 2020 strategy, where it says by that year every body will not be oppressed of anything in this country. I do not think that Lesotho is ready to be evaluated for MDGs as it is far away to reach most of the goals within this document

I think it is high time that Lesotho government should work harder and act faster to domesticate the CRPD into Lesotho laws. Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) should take a lead to help other ministries to mainstream issues of disability in their policies, because if not disability will remain a problem or entity of MoSD.

We, people with disabilities believe that to shape a better Lesotho, sustainable transport, infrastructure and information should be universally accessed by everyone to build a better future for this country within TOURISM

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Nteboheleng Camilla Lefuma, a 25 female with physical disabled

Qualifications: Diploma in Office Administration and Management, Certificate in Project Management and Certificate on online communication

What makes you feel happy about your disability and what is the type of your disability?

Disability to me does not mean inability and for the fact that I am still having achievements that a person with no disability does. Happier comes when I realize that I still achieve more than people who does not have disability.

What is inspiring you doing activities that are meant to help PWDs?

When I realize that the skills, knowledge and abilities I have are of beneficial to my colleagues who does not possess those skills. Therefore it inspires more when I offer what I have to them.

What is your aim or future plan to improve your life?

I am a second year student of Lesotho Institute of Public Administration and Management; therefore I still wish to further my studies so that I can be able to help other people with disability that did not have any chance of schooling. I am also in learning sign language so as to enable me to deal with different disabilities.

What would you do if you have a trained monkey?

I won't be impressed at all because I like doing things on my own. Therefore I guess it won't be of any benefit to me as I will not give it a chance to perform any tasks and for me the monkey will remain the monkey in regardless of how trained it is.

What do you think about accessing Tourism facilities as a person with disability?

If I were to mark them, I would definitely give them 10% because the facilities are not accessible at all. Most of them are in remote areas and are not designed in a way that even PWDs can access.

Whom would you like to marry if to marry someone who is athletics?

I don't even have such a dream because all my heart is reserved for my current boyfriend. So I am sorry for the athletes.

What so you do for fun during weekends?

To chill with my boyfriend, watching movies and sometimes going out.

How would you like to spend your days if you are left with 7 days on Earth?

Spending more time with my family, going to church and the last two days with my boyfriend because he is embodied more of my happiness in life and I so wish we can die two as to avoid leaving the other partner in misery and sorrows.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Disability Policy Validation

The National Disability Policy & Rehabilitation Policy that came into effect in 2011 has now been translated into Sesotho version. It is awaiting validation by major stakeholders, which is scheduled for October, 2013. The policy was translated with support from our partner, Human Resources Alliance for Africa (HRAA)

COPDAM project Southern Africa Round Table

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.

Training of Rehabilitation Officers

LNFOD will be presenting at the Social Development Rehabilitation Officer training. The training will run for one week in Thaba - Bosiu and will focus on understanding and identifying disability, referral process, networking and services available.

The training will start Early/Mid October hosted by the Ministry of Social Development.

International Disability Day

Disability celebration day for the year 2013 will be celebrated in Maseru.

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

We invite everybody to celebrate with us this year.

For more information please conduct:

LNFOD office
+266 22320345 / +266 58700925

Workshopping the drafting Instructions of the Disability Equity Bill

The event will take place on 7th – 14th October at Lancers Inn. Social Development is hosting this workshop. The will establish the instructions for Legal Office Team to conduct the consultations for the drafting of the Disability Equity Bill.

For more information please conduct
LNFOD office at +266 2230345