

DISABILITY LESOTHO



From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome once again to the edition of Disability Lesotho. The edition will cover news for the Month of September, 2018

It's been some years that this publication is consecutively going around. I would like to thank everybody contributed to this important publication.

Life is very complex, there are lots of things going on in our area and in our lives at all times, and in order to hold onto our experience, we need to make meaning out of it. The way we do that is by structuring our lives into stories.

We use not to write our life stories from birth. The ability of creating our life history takes a little while to come out, that development process gives priority in many things like changing life style, talking and handling other people.

I would like to continue with my inspiration to young people to write their life. There are many things that young people can tell their stories on, things like;

sports, challenges, education and many more.

It can sometimes be hard to share a story when it amounts to terrible things, but I am trying to say here is that young people should learn how to write, of which I hope it will be something that can help them in future.

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

You can also Tweet us [@Infod_lesotho](https://twitter.com/Infod_lesotho)

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

SECURING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN LESOTHO

By: Sefuthi Nkhasi

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled extends its gratitude's to the former and current partners of LNFOD which did not get tired in funding LNFOD to continue its programs aimed at domesticating the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities through the Disability Equity Bill. Currently, LNFOD is funded by Diakonie Austria with the financial support from the Austrian development agency to advocate for the domestication of the CRPD through the enactment of Disability Equity bill. The Equity bill successfully moved three stages within a period of 5 months to the parliament due to the advocacy program that is supported by our partner Diakonie Austria.

Through the support from the Diakonie Austria, LNFOD has been able to lobby many influential departments and engage with the ministry of Social Development and the office of the parliamentary council with the sole aim of facilitating the enactment of the Disability Equity bill.

The parliamentary portfolio committee on social cluster has been one of the key players which LNFOD influenced to take up the presentation of the Disability Equity Bill in Parliament.

The Honourable Minister of Social Development has been in the forefront in fulfilling her long standing promise of advancing protection of disability rights through an enabling legislation translating the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities into action.

The bill is now with the portfolio committee on social cluster whereby the inputs are being given by the interested stakeholders. After which, the committee will prepare a report to be presented in the parliament and the Bill will be read for the second time in due course.

LNFOD is closely monitoring the pace at which the committee is working on the Disability Equity Bill and will as such meet the committee from time to time to determine the time spent and inputs provided by other stakeholders to ensure they are indeed in line with the UN standards set out by the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

LNFOD is hopeful that the Bill should be turned into law by the end of 2018 in which the government will be expected to work on its implementation from 2019.

Implementation of the Disability Equity Act will be very crucial in increasing protection of the rights of people with disabilities and finding the solutions of the violations of disability rights through enforcement and popularization of the law in our community.

GENERAL NEWS

THE INTERNATIONAL DEAF WEEK

By: Likopo Matsepo Mokhoromeng

The National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL) joined the rest of the World by commemorating the International Deaf week on the 13th September 2018 at 'Manthabiseng convention centre.

The International Deaf Week is annually celebrated on the 23th September 2018 by organisations of Deaf people promoting equal rights for the Deaf people throughout the World.

As a result, NADL is an organisation promoting equal rights of the Deaf people through the use of sign language in Lesotho.

Objectives of the International Deaf Week

- Reach out to and influence government of Lesotho to legally fulfil their obligations.
- Promotes deaf people as unique in having both perspectives of disability and linguistic minority and that sign language and deaf culture strengthens Multilingualism and are means of promoting, protecting, and preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally.
- Reflects the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in its recognition of sign languages as equal to spoken languages.

Sign languages are fully-fledged natural languages, structurally distinct from spoken languages, alongside which they coexist.

- Emphasizes sign language as a critical prerequisite to the full realization of human rights for deaf people. Early access to sign language and services in sign language, including quality education available in sign language, is vital to the growth and development of the deaf individual and critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.
- Stresses that when working with deaf communities, the principle of "nothing about us without us" must be considered and integrated.

2018 Commemoration is celebrated under the theme: **"With Sign Language everyone is included"** In the context of Lesotho the theme calls upon the government of Lesotho to officialise sign language as one of the languages of Lesotho through the upcoming constitutional reforms. It also appeals to the Basotho nation to accept Deaf people in all aspects of development in an equal basis with others and stop any discrimination constituted against deaf people on account of disability.

The 2018 International Deaf Week is commemorated through inclusive competition in which learners from identified schools will compete with the aim of promoting inclusive education through Sign Language in Lesotho.

Firstly, the identified High Schools in the district of Berea, Leribe, Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohale's hoek compete on singing the National Anthem with sign language.

Secondly, two Primary Schools from the above mentioned districts compete on a poem that is promoting Sign Language, Inclusive Education by way of questions and answers.



NADL has produced a sign language DVD, Sign Language dictionary and petroleum jelly produced by the members of the organisation advertised for sale on the commemoration day.

NADL wishes to extend its sincere thanks to the Vodacom Lesotho for being one of the major sponsor, Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture supported with Manthabiseng Convention Centre, Mounted police service to confirm with issue of transport, Catholic Relief Services with prizes of the competition, World Health Organisation also took part towards the success of this promotion by providing transport for the participants and Econo Foods contributed with money for DVD production. NADL notes with appreciation any potential sponsor who may be willing to contribute towards the meaningful celebration of the international deaf week in future.

NADL's important guests were the Honourable Minister of Social Development, The Right Honourable the Prime Minister, parliamentarians and members of the diplomatic core to grace this event.

Media published the event through radio, television and newspaper spreading the message of inclusion through Sign Language which will enable deaf people to communicate effectively with the community.

NADL encouraged the media to publish the articles which promote the abilities of the Deaf people as a means of combating discrimination and promoting equality among the society.

Vodacom Lesotho through its foundation office has partnered with NADL in order to make sure that the International Deaf week commemoration becomes a success. "--It is our commitment to partner with minority groups in the country as a way of fulfilling our commitment to accelerate diversity and inclusiveness for betterment of their lives. We will continue working with NADL to help see that sign language is appreciated and recognised in the country. We have committed M110, 000.00 that will go towards catering for the participants on the day of the conference.



GENERAL NEWS

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN ACTION

By: Mathabiso Pitso

Women and girls with disabilities face multiple barriers ranging from attitudinal, social, physical political and economic exclusion which often perpetuates their marginalization in society.

The (2011 world disability report) offered by the World Bank and W.H.O indicates that women with disabilities are discriminated against on the basis of disability and they are discriminated against on the fact that they are women.

There is an urgent need to address the barriers faced by women and girls with disabilities living in Lesotho and ensure their full and effective participation in campaigns aimed at combating discrimination on the basis of gender, age and disability.

Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) held a commemoration of the women's month on the 30th August 2018 in the district of Maseru.

The purpose of this commemoration was to join the rest of the world in demonstrating and appreciating the abilities of women with disabilities and tackling the challenges they face in terms of access to social and economic services in Lesotho. The training focused on economic empowerment of women with disabilities in which the Standard Lesotho bank, Boliba Savings and Credit Services, and the Ministry of Small Business Development, marketing and cooperatives were invited to share the means through which women with disabilities can access finances to grow up their

businesses. Most importantly, the Standard Lesotho bank sponsored the commemoration by investing their money into the growth of women with disabilities in business.

Through this commemoration, many financial institutions recognized the financial barriers faced by women with disabilities in terms of access to the loans which may assist and empower them to engage in business easily. Pledges were therefore made to consider financial inclusion of women with disabilities by designing the products which may suit the circumstances of women with disabilities.

The Chairperson of LNFOD women's wing, Mrs. 'Mathabiso Pitso conveyed sincere thanks on behalf of the organisations to the sponsors and financial institutions which pledged to support the business initiatives by women with disabilities beyond the commemoration.



GENERAL NEWS

What I would do if I were the Minister of Education to ensure Inclusive Education

By: Tebello Ts'oene

School: Morifi High School

Inclusive education is a kind of service where all children can learn under conducive learning circumstances and need unwavering, ongoing support. There ought to be methodologies that enable support in the education system. Not all learners are the same, in fact learners are different and their differences must be acknowledged and respected.

It is my role as a minister to promote absolute participation and equality as it enables disabled children from restrictive family backgrounds as chance to interact with others and participate in their community lives. This Inclusive Education actually is a transformation tool, a human right and a democratic way of understating values. I will ensure that the traditionally excluded are included, for instance, learners with sensory, learning and physically disabled.

As a result, inclusive education does not explicitly include learners facing barriers such as poverty and low economic status. For all schools to be inclusive, I have to organize workshops for students and teachers. This is because they need to consider whether all these students who have never been part of the mainstream have been accepted, or welcomed. Again, the environment should be truly welcoming, irrespective of education, children experiencing barriers to learning realize genuine

chances for information sharing developed self-representation skills.

In addition, a more detailed understanding must include learners in particularly precious life circumstances and adverse socio-economic conditions so that all learners feel welcomed. That I will take care of. This should be irrespective of their ethnic groups, languages, religious, social classes, gender, sexuality of disabilities. Thus, questions on power dynamics diversity and differences are attended to where there is contentment among learners.

Like I said, I will organize workshops for teachers and principals. Teachers must make sure that the philosophical orientation to inclusive education and its practice reaches every learner. To highly achieved efficiency, confidence, teachers and need going training. The perspective of these involved in the inclusive education initiative have to be transformed before they could become advocate of the agenda for inclusivity.

Furthermore, a change in perspective, through transformative learning, compromises processes an individual should undergo psychologically. The learners must undergo shifts in understanding themselves as a result of new information. As a result, learners must change their behaviour to

adopt a matching life style.

My advice to parents, the process of placing children with special learning needs in school of choice is clearly outline in sequential steps for parents to follow. Most children with special learning needs are educated in mainstream schools. So, parents have the responsibility to follow the guide lines provided in making a choice of an appropriate school. Bearing in mind the culture that they want their children to experience as a well as the capacity of the schools to accommodate the learners with unique learning needs.

Moreover, I am humbly asking to direct people to the proper resources. Many people do not mean to be hurtful of offensive and are simply un aware of how to interact with disable people. If someone seems confused or uncertain, direct them to relevant website and organisations tha can help them learn how to interact with disabled people. Education is a powerful food for fostering social change abnd creating a more hospitable, tolerant World.

Inclusive education values diversity and the unique contributions each student brings to the classroom. I want to assure people that, in a truly inclusive setting, I will make sure that every child feels safe and has a sense of belonging. Students and parents must participate in seeing goals and take part in decision tha affect them. My other role is to ensure that school staff has the training, support, flexibility and resources to nature and respond to the needs of all sudents.

Apart from that, as a /minister, I must make sure that people use social media to their advantage. By so saying, people can post links to articles about various disabilities, educating people on a range of physical of cognitive disabilities. They should not just share factual information, rather provide links to articles on how to talk to people with disabilities and how best to help a volunteer. If ever a person hears people making derogatory comments, intentional of not, about people with disabilities, one should speak up.

In addition, often times, a person will unintentionally use the wrong word of phrase. If that is the case, one can politely correct. For instance, if one hears someone sa "Down syndrome girl!" ond would say, "Actually", the perfect term is "a girl with down syndrome". Again, if one sees discrimination of

disabled people happening in a school environment, report the discrimination to the proper authorities. If ensure of who to speak to contact an organisation that advocates for disabled people and ask them for advice.

Mainstream schools absorb the majority of students with disabilities. People with disabilities actually need high quality assistance. This is a humble request. Such assistances could be of volunteering to help people with disabilities. Before they can be placed with the owner, this assistance is best catered for those who lack eye sight.

Inclusive education is very essential. Inclusive systems provide better quality education for all children and are instrumental in changing discriminatory attitudes. Schools provide the context for a child's first relationship with the world's outside their families, enabling the development of social development of social relationships and interaction. Respect and understand growth when students of diverse abilities and backgrounds play, socialise and learn altogether. All these would be my responsibility as the Minister in process of ensuring inclusive education.



NEWS IN PICTURES



Her Majesty Queen 'Masenate Mohato Bereng Seeiso is giving her speech during International Deaf Day



Women with disabilities commemorating African Women's Day



NADL's important guests with students after receiving medals



Tebello Tsoene from Morifi High School, she is the one won the competition



Her Majesty Queen 'Masenate Mohato Bereng Seeiso and Mrs. Likopo Lesoetsa 'Matseviso Mokhoromeng



The smallest boy who made a poem about disability during International Deaf Day

ADVOCACY WORK



PARTNERS in Advocacy Work

