



LESOTHO NATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIZATION OF THE DISABLED

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY 2020 -2024

(FINAL DRAFT)



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Executive Summary

This strategy is a five-year rolling plan meant to implement the long-term vision for the Lesotho National Federation of Organizations of the Disabled (LNFOD). The strategy starts off by building a common understanding on disability. It defines disability from the social model as the result of interaction between persons with impairments and the environment rather than a medical model that emphasizes on fixing a person rather adapting the environment. Disability is understood as a human right and development issue. The policy framework to which this strategy is aligned are highlighted, namely new National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II); Sustainable Development Goals; UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD); National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy 2011; National Disability Mainstreaming Plan 2015; National Social Protection Strategy 2015; and the newly adopted Inclusive Education Policy etc. An observation is made on the chronic lack of implementation of this policy framework, hence persons with disabilities remain poor and destitute.

The outgoing LNFOD Organizational Strategy 2015 –2019 has been rapidly assessed to establish progress and lessons. Some good progress is noted on the work towards promulgation of the Disability Equity Bill which has been subjected to 1st reading in the National Assembly; supporting persons with disabilities to engage in economic activities through enterprise incubation fund that is provided for business start-up as well as provision of 20% quota on government fleet hire to persons with disabilities and their organizations; and LNFOD achievement in resource mobilization after the departure of the long-time core donor, Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD). Some short comings have also been noted. Persons with disabilities are still missing in the important national decision-making structure such as parliament and senate; there is still serious lack of policy implementation; and more importantly, disabled people organizations are still lacking behind as far as institutional capacity, strategic programming and resource mobilization are concerned.

The rapid assessment of the outgoing strategy is followed by identification and discussion of the challenges that characterize disability sector in Lesotho. Some of the challenges center around Access to Education, healthcare and justice system; Access to sources of livelihoods; Access to positions of power; Availability of disability aggregated data; Capacity of Disability rights organizations. These challenges have informed the priority goals and the objective thereof that the strategy will be pursuing for the next five years. The strategy implementation plan is developed to indicate output and output indicator, strategies/interventions that will be utilized to realize the goals. The following development goals will be prioritized for the 5 years of the

strategy: Improve access to sources of livelihoods for persons with disabilities; Improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities through effective disability policy implementation; Improve access to key social services – education, health, justice; Improve influence of persons with disabilities in national decision-making processes; and Strengthen advocacy capacity and effectiveness of LNFOD and DPOs through enhanced organizational development, strategic programming and robust resource mobilization. Setting of these priorities was cognizant of the glaring and distinct social and economic situation of women and girls in society. Women and girls with disabilities suffer double jeopardy of gender inequality, and disability. Numerous reports have revealed that women and girls with disabilities are found at the bottom of the social strata in every society. It is for this reason that women and girls with disabilities this strategy puts women and girls with disabilities at the center of all interventions and activities. The strategy ensures and strives for promotion of empowerment of women and gender equality so that women and girls enjoy benefits of development on equal basis with the male counterparts.

1. Introduction

Strategic planning is the systematic, formally documented, process for deciding the handful of key priorities that an organization, viewed as a corporate whole, must get right in order to thrive over period of years. This process results in the production of organizational Strategy. In order to determine the direction of the organization, it is necessary to understand its current position as well as the possible avenues through which it can pursue a particular course of action. It guides an organization to stay focused in order to achieve its vision and mission and as well as enhancing resource mobilisation endeavours. It is on the basis of this understanding that LNFOD decided to engage in a strategic planning process that culminated into this strategy. The aim of this strategy is to analyse disability challenges in Lesotho and outline development goals and objectives as well as interventions that will be pursued to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in development processes and enjoy benefits that accrue from the processes on an equal basis with others.

LNFOD is as a federation is made of four (4) organizations of persons with disabilities; namely Lesotho National League of Visually-Impaired Persons (LNLVIP), National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL), Lesotho National Association of Persons of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD) and Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho (IDAL). LNFOD has the duty to coordinate and account to this member organizations.

1.1 Methodology

The two methodological approaches were used to facilitate the development of the strategy are literature review and stakeholders' consultation. In reviewing the disability related literature, the consultant spent time on three (3) types literature namely, international disability instruments and reports – particularly Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities (UNCRPD), and the UN flagship report on *Disability and Development Report 2018*; national policy framework that is aimed implementing the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II); and the LNFOD policies and programmatic reports. This review provided international and national trends, emerging issues and lessons that informed this strategy.

Stakeholders' views and aspirations of persons with disabilities solicited in a 2-day stakeholders' workshop that was attended by persons with disabilities representing their organizations, non-disability civil society organizations as well as the representatives of the development partners from UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. The stakeholders workshop participated in highly participatory process that rapidly assessed the performance of the outgoing LNFOD Organizational Strategy to identify and unpack challenges of disability in Lesotho, brainstorming on priority goals and interventions that would offset the challenges.

1.2 Understanding Disability

Within the disability rights movement, disability is regarded as a social phenomenon rather than a health or medical issue. It is therefore defined as the result of interaction between environment and persons with impairments which hinders them from participating in society on an equal basis with others. This model puts importance on the environment – infrastructure, attitudes, cultural practices, assistive devices, communication modes and materials etc. – rather than the impairment on persons. That is, the society should focus on correcting and adapting the environment to allow persons to participate in and enjoy benefits that accrue from development processes on an equal basis with those who do not have impairments (World Health Organization, 2002). Disability is a development issue. There is a strong bi-directional linkage between disability and poverty. Poverty predisposes individuals to disability through poor access to good nutrition, health care and sanitation, as well as exposure to dangerous living and working conditions. On the other hand, disability usually leads to poverty by making it difficult for individuals to fully participate in the economic and social activities in their countries, such as education, employment and public services, especially if support structures are not available.

Disability is also a human rights issue. It places disability in the world's largest minority group, according to Disability World^{1,2}. World Vision International believes that “disability awareness, advocacy and inclusion begin with a respect for human equality, equity and diversity”³. However, Persons with disabilities frequently experience inequalities when they are denied access to health care, education, employment or participation in political activities in their countries due to their disability. Persons with disabilities also frequently experience violations to their dignity, for example, when they are subjected to abuse, violence, rape, prejudice or disrespect because of their disability, with women and girls being more vulnerable to abuse. They are also less likely to obtain police intervention, legal protection or preventive care⁶. The human rights of they are also frequently violated when they are denied autonomy, for example, by being confined to institutions against their will or being declared legally incompetent because of their disability.

2. Policy environment and Strategic Alignment

The development of LNFOD new Organizational Strategy 2020– 2024 comes at the opportune time when the country has just adopted the new National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II) and going through a number of major reforms in the constitution, public service, military and judiciary. NSDP II is styled under the theme, “*In pursued of Economic and Institutional Transformation for Private sector-led Jobs and Inclusive Economic Growth*” The timing provides an opportunity for a harmonized alignment to that national development strategies, hence bringing about relevance and responsive development interventions. NSDP II makes very clear intentions to improve the conditions of persons with disabilities. Disability features as a priority in good number of sectors including education, health, sports and recreation, socioeconomic sector to mention a few. This has to be applauded.

The development of this strategy has also been cognizant of the global development agenda as expressed in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal which targets seventeen (17) development goals including education, healthcare, poverty, hunger, inclusive growth etc. And for the first UN has release a comprehensive global report entitled *Disability and Development Report – Realizing the SDGs by, for and with persons with disabilities, 2018*. It shows how the State Parties to UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities have performed in the disability-related SDGs. In line with the 2030 Agenda and the CRPD, this report aims to place disability squarely at the centre of the sustainable development agenda. It reviews progress

¹See http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789240685215_eng.pdf

²See <http://www.disabled-world.com/disability/statistics/>

³See <http://www.wvi.org/disability>

towards relevant internationally agreed development goals and shows that efforts need to be stepped up to ensure that the goals and targets are achieved for persons with disabilities. The report proposes recommendations that have been significantly incorporated in this strategy. The UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities remains the main pace setter in the disability programming, hence a lot of reference is made to it in this strategy. The recent adoption of the Inclusive Education Policy is a crucial milestone for enhance access to education for children with special needs, accessible teaching and learning materials, appropriate medium of instruction for children with speech and hearing impairments etc. A significant progress has been made towards the enactment of the Disability Equity Bill.

However, further review of the disability literature and interaction with Persons with disabilities reveal that disability policy environment in Lesotho is characterized by chronic lack of implementation, impeding disability service delivery and development. The country acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, but up to now a disability specific law has not been enacted to domesticate and implement the convention. According to Article 4 of the Convention, “countries that have ratified the Convention are required to engage in the development and implementation of policies, laws and administrative measures aimed at securing the rights of people with disabilities and to abolish laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination towards people with disabilities”⁴; The National Disability Mainstreaming Plan 2016 has not enjoyed budget support for implementation since its adoption; The National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy has become a total “white elephant”. The purpose of the NDRP is to “create an enabling environment for persons with disabilities living and working in Lesotho to realise their full potential”. It aims to achieve this through “removing barriers and changing the attitudes which prevent Persons with disabilities from gaining access to employment, services and public amenities; promoting equal opportunities for Persons with disabilities to participate in socio-economic activities and decision-making; and promoting good practices that encourage both the private sector and Civil Society Organizations to similar efforts.” But less progress has been made as far as implementing these good intents. Lesotho has also passed the Children’s Protection and Welfare Act 2011, which safeguards the rights of children with disabilities and prohibits any form of discrimination against these children based on their disabilities.

⁴ United Nations 2006, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Disability Grant that was envisaged in the National Social Protection Strategy 2015 for persons with disabilities was never implemented. While Disability specific legislation is the most desirable development for persons with disabilities and their organizations, the implementation of the current disability policy framework would have equally improved the living condition of persons with disabilities.

3. Outgoing Organizational Strategy

This strategy (2020 – 2024) is built up to the outgoing LNFOOD Organizational Strategy 2015 – 2019. Implementation of the outgoing strategy has resulted into an uneven performance of encouraging progress and disappointing development results and provided lessons that have formed the bedrock on which the new strategy is based. Outstanding progress was made towards enactment of the disability-specific legislation. At the point of development of this strategy the Disability Equity Bill was subjected to first reading in Parliament and was being discussed by the relevant Parliamentary portfolio committee. The Bill represents milestone for domesticating provisions of UNCRPD. When enacted, it will ensure an array of legal rights for Persons with disabilities including rights of physical access, access to services including health, provision of education and the creation of the Commission on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Efforts should be intensified to ensure not only the enactment but also awareness and enforcement into the new strategy. LNFOOD advocacy efforts have also led to adoption of Inclusive Education Policy. The Policy is a fundamental milestone intended to guide all stakeholders in terms of making general education system of Lesotho inclusive for learners with disabilities. LNFOOD facilitated capacity building on entrepreneurship skills and provided enterprise incubation fund (EIF) for Persons with disabilities to start up their businesses. This was intended to create employment and enhance access to livelihoods for Persons with disabilities. The Government of Lesotho reserved 20% of the Government fleet hiring for persons with disabilities to enhance their participation in economic activities. The new strategy is designed to build upon these milestones.

However, some areas did not experience much progress: The outgoing strategy had prioritized participation and representation of persons with disabilities in political decision-making structures and Parliament. This was not only aimed at enhancing employment opportunities, but more importantly to ensure that laws and policies have disability flavor brought by Persons with disabilities themselves. Persons with disabilities are still clearly absent in those positions of power, save in community council. While Persons with disabilities feature in executive committees of about

seven (7) political parties⁵, this has not translated in parliamentary seats or ministerial positions where decisions on laws, policies, allocation and management of the state resources are made. Another area in which not much progress was realized is capacity of DPOs to influence policy and development in the disability sector.⁶ The new strategy therefore prioritizes turn-around strategies to strengthen capacity in advocacy and programming, organizational development, and resource mobilization – funding and qualified competent personnel.

4. Disability Challenges in Lesotho

People with disabilities are faced with attitudinal and institutional barriers that impede them from participating and enjoying benefits that accrue from development processes on an equal basis with their non-disabled counterparts. Attitudinal barriers are those imposed by the non-disabled which are often characterized by beliefs and sentiments. The institutional barriers include physical barriers such as those caused by infrastructure, policies, practices and procedures adopted by various entities that constitute the society.⁷ The disability sector in Lesotho is characterized by myriad of development challenges but most outstanding ones are in following paragraphs below:

4.1 Access to Education, healthcare and justice system

Persons with disabilities' rights to education are inhibited by limited number of teachers who cannot handle children with special education needs; lack of sign language skills; inaccessible teaching and learning materials and inaccessible education facilities among others. The Inclusive Education Policy is yet to be allocated budgetary resources for implementation. Similar barriers are experienced in the health sector and the justice system. The service providers do not have the requisite skills for dealing with clients with disabilities. Communication materials are not presented in accessible format and the buildings do not conform to universal design to accommodate all forms of disabilities. The barriers are caused by a number of factors including lack of political will to prioritize disability in the development agenda; lack of disability policy implementation, to mention a few.

4.2 Access to sources of livelihoods

Persons with disabilities are among the poorest of the poor in the society. They have limited access to sources of livelihoods such as employment, social assistance (disability grant), entrepreneurship, and other live-enhancing and economic

⁵ LNFOD 2017, Annual Final Progress Report 2017

⁶ Final Report 2017, NAD Evaluation of OD Programmes in LNFOD 2013 – 2016

⁷ SINTEF 2011, Living Conditions among People with Disabilities in Lesotho

activities. The study on the living conditions of persons with disabilities in Lesotho reveals that the socio-economic status and employment rates among economically active individuals are three times lower among persons with disabilities compared to their non-disabled counterparts. Among other reasons, persons with disabilities cannot meaningfully participate in economic activities because of their low level of education because of lack of disability friendly schools, failure on the part of the government to implement to provide universal provision disability grant to Persons with disabilities, lack of access to sources of finance/credit to start up enterprises as well as lack markets for products and services of a few who made entrance in the entrepreneurship arena. The situation has subjected persons with disabilities to perpetual vulnerability and dependence on charity, factors that compromise their esteem and dignity. The situation of women and girls with disabilities is even worse. Women with disabilities are often subjected to double discrimination due to their gender and disability status and continue to be at a disadvantage in most spheres of society and development. Compared with men with disabilities, women with disabilities are more likely to have unmet health-care needs; more likely to be unemployed or inactive in the labour market⁸.

4.3 Access to positions of power

Persons with disabilities are not part of the political, governance, accountability and leadership positions that make important national decisions on budgetary allocations, policy adoption and implementation. The fact that Persons with disabilities are only found in the demand side of the development processes has made it difficult to achieve much for the general disability community. As one writer said, *“you are stronger and effective when you inside than when you are outside,”* emphasizing the strategic importance of being on the supply of the development agenda. The absence of Persons with disabilities in important decision-making processes and structures is reflected with the chronic lack of implementation of disability policy implementation. Those who are vested with the power to allocate and manage state resources do not represent the interest of the disability community.

4.4 Availability of disability aggregated data

There is serious disability aggregated data in Lesotho. Major national surveys either do not include disability or feature it so minimally. For example, the Lesotho Demographic Health Survey 2014, arguably the 2nd biggest to Housing and Population Census, does not mention disability once. The survey brings up important development indicators such as stunting, early childhood development, access to

⁸ United Nations 2018, Disability and Development Report – Realizing the SDGs by, for and with persons with disabilities, 2018.

clean water and sanitation, electricity etc. but disability is not placed within any of those development indicators. This compromises the ability of the country and disabled people's organizations to engage in informed disability programming.

5.5 Capacity of Disability rights organizations

Since disability has not been much of a priority in passed government in Lesotho, adoption and enactment of disabilities policies and laws depend on the quality of advocacy campaigns the disability rights organizations put up. Much of the disability frameworks and implementation has been demand-driven. That is, government rarely on its own, without pressure from the disabled people organization, decide to design and implementation disability initiatives. However, DPOs capacity to pursue this responsibility has been in serious doubt. They are limited by their weak institutional capacity to run strategic programmes. They do not have adequate staff qualified to run the office and the programmes. Some do not have adequate and functional administrative policies to guide their operations, hence experiencing management and governance challenges. They are experiencing resource mobilization challenges despite several attempts by LNFOD to build their capacity in that regard. Until DPOs got their organizational development, disability programming and resource mobilization right, their credibility in advocating and representing the interests of their members remain in question.

4.6 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and Threats

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strong advocacy programmes	Limited funding to support DPOs
Legitimacy of LNFOD in representing Persons with disabilities in Lesotho	No district offices
Qualified and committed employees	Inadequate staff
Ability to attract funds	Lack of continuity from one board to another
Ability to make alliances	No land rights
LNFOD is Internationally and locally recognised	Lack of communication e.g. poor reporting and documentation
Organisational policies	Ineffective/no performance appraisal
Financial reports	No capacity to deal with deaf- blind (under-represented groups)
Opportunities	Threats
Disability is becoming one of the priorities in post 2015 agenda	Lack of representation in parliament
Supportive advocacy partners	Political instability and frequent changes of government in Lesotho
Improving relationship with government	High unemployment and poverty rates among Persons with disabilities
Use of social media	Technological devices that are limited and expensive to buy
Participation in international forums	High prevalence rate of HIV and AIDS

	Lack of disability specific law in Lesotho
	Intensified competition for donors among organisations that represent human rights in Lesotho
	Lack of political will to support disability
	Lack of understanding, and negative attitudes towards disability in the wider community
	No disability grant in Lesotho
	Sign language is yet to be recognised as an official language by the constitution of Lesotho

5. Our Vision

A Basotho society that is accessible and inclusive of all people that live in it, and that enables and empowers people with disabilities to enjoy their social, economic, political and human rights on equal basis with others, and to reach their full potential in all aspects of development.

5.1 Our Mission

To advocate for, promote, and defend the rights of people with disabilities and their families through provision of training, material and emotional support, and by representing their needs to government, development partners, private sector and the wider community.

5.2 Our Core Values

Equal opportunity to all, Respect for human dignity/rights, Diversity, Inclusivity, Empowerment, Ethical conduct, and Accountability.

5.3 Our Slogan

Together as one

6. Priority Development Goal

Multiple challenges characterizing disability in Lesotho were identified during the review of literature and interaction with stakeholders. However, since strategic planning is an exercise of prioritization and selection of goals and interventions, not all the challenges will be addressed within the life time of this strategy. It is not a panacea for the disability problems in Lesotho. Five (5) major priority development goals have been selected for the next 5 years. Gender equality will be mainstream all areas of implementation of this strategy. The priorities to:

- Improve access to sources of livelihoods for persons with disabilities

- Improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities through effective disability policy implementation
- Improve access to key social services – education, health, justice
- Improve influence of persons with disabilities in national decision-making processes
- Strengthen advocacy capacity and effectiveness of LNFOD and DPOs through enhanced organizational development, strategic programming and robust resource mobilization.

Specific objective and strategic interventions under every goal are geared towards achievement of each goal. Given the findings of the UN Disability and Development report regarding the situation of women and girls with disabilities on disability-related SDGs, red with the LNFOD Gender Policy, gender equality and empowerment of women and girls is mainstreamed in all interventions as a cross-cutting issue.

6.1 Goal 1: Improve access to sources of livelihoods for persons of disabilities in Lesotho.

The study on the living conditions of persons with disabilities in Lesotho reveals that the socio-economic status and employment rates among economically active individuals are three times lower among persons with disabilities compared to their non-disabled counterparts. United Nations declares that States should actively support the integration of persons with disabilities into open employment. This active support could occur through a variety of measures, such as vocational training, incentive-oriented quota schemes, reserved or designated employment, loans or grants for small business, exclusive contracts or priority production rights, tax concessions, contract compliance or other technical or financial assistance to enterprises employing workers with disabilities. States should also encourage employers to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate persons with disabilities.

This priority goal is well aligned with the underlying theme of the NSDP II which emphasizes economic and institutional transformation for private-led jobs and inclusive economic growth. And the use of the phrase *inclusive economic growth* is understood as government's commitment to advancing economic situation of all people including persons with disabilities. The government fleet hiring policy that gives quota for persons with disabilities and their organizations is a positive gesture in including persons with disabilities in economic activities. It is noted however that Persons with disabilities could not fully utilized this affirmative opportunity because of their financial and entrepreneurial limitations, and NSDP II is cognizant of this limitation:

some segments of society might not be able to participate in economic activities or take advantage of available economic opportunities due to their incapacities and other vulnerabilities and/or in some case because of their special circumstances. These include people with disabilities.... Therefore, to realize inclusive economic growth and “leaving no one behind”, the country will continue to strengthen social protection programmes targeted at such groups.

To ensure that persons with disabilities make use of economic opportunities presented before them, LNFOD shall double the efforts already in place to mobilize more support to improve financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills and access to sources of finance and markets for persons with disabilities. These capacities are needed for meaningful participation in economic activities. As the United Nations Disability and Development report reveals, women and girls as well as persons with intellectual disabilities and deafblind are even in direr situation than their male counterparts. Economic empowerment interventions should have a deliberate focus on women and girls with disabilities to bridge the inequality gap not only between them and women and girls without disabilities but also between them and men and boys with disabilities. Women and girls with disabilities should among others be supported to form self-help groups to generate the necessary finance for enterprise development. Concerted efforts should be mounted to cause for implementation of disability grant as envisage by the National Social Protection Strategy 2015, and as emphasized by the NSDP II. The combination of increased access to sources of finance and markets, enhanced financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills and access to sound social protection amenities will contribute to improved persons with disabilities incomes, own life-enhancing assets hence boost their esteem, independence and dignity in society. The following objectives will be pursued to contribute to the achievement of the goal.

Objectives

- To advocate for the implementation of the disability grant as envisaged in the National Social Protection Strategy 2015
- To increase job opportunities for persons with disabilities through provision of enterprise development amenities and formal employment
- To enhance participation of women and girls with disabilities in economic activities through formation of self-help groups

6.2 Goal 2: Improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities through effective disability policy implementation

The country has expressed its intentions to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities in a number of policy documents. However, majority of persons with disabilities remain poor, uneducated, with no sources of livelihoods, limited access to positions of power etc. This is largely because of the chronic lack of disability implementation in Lesotho. Some of the disability policy frameworks whose implementation would have improved the living conditions of persons with disabilities include the National Disability and rehabilitation Policy 2011; The National Disability Mainstreaming Plan 2016; The National Social Protection Strategy 2015 and more importantly, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities acceded to in 2008. Advocacy strategies will be employed to push for effective implementation of these frameworks over the life of this strategy. LNFOD will commission regular disability policy implementation audit to monitor the rate and quality of implementation. The audit will attempt to disaggregate data on policy implementation in terms of how men and women with disabilities are differently impacted. The results of the audits will be made available to all stakeholders and members of public to ignite debate and encourage improvements. LNFOD and its allies at the same time demand regular reporting on the part of the government. The reports should culminate in State report to UN Commission on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The reports should disaggregate data in terms of sex, age and disability. While the policy environment, save implementation, is not necessarily a challenge, there is need to improve the legislative framework. LNFOD will continue to work with the Ministry of Social Development, Parliament and its allies to push for the enactment of the Disability Equity Bill that was subjected to first reading in the National Assembly at the time of the development of this strategy. The objectives below will contribute to the enhance implementation of the disability policy framework:

- To increase awareness on the existence and content of the disability policy instruments in Lesotho
- To advocate for increased budget support for implementation of policies and strategies aimed at developing persons with disabilities in Lesotho

6.3 GOAL 3: Improve access to key social services – education, health, justice

A number of factors impede persons with disabilities from accessing social services such as education, healthcare as well as equitable justice. Inaccessible infrastructure, exclusive medium of instruction, inaccessible curriculum and means of communication are some of the major barriers impeding Persons with disabilities

from enjoying benefits that accrue from social development. With regard to education, teachers are ill-prepared to handle children with disabilities. Sign language is not used for teaching and learning because either teachers do not have sign language skills or there is no provision for sign language interpreting. The teaching and learning materials are not presented in accessible formats. The recent adoption of the Inclusive Education Policy is hoped help address these impediments. However, LNFOD should step up efforts to press for effective implementation of the policy. The efforts made so far to make education more accessible need to be streamlined and strengthened to focus more on disability interventions, including intensifying capacity building in sign language, providing incentives to teachers with special education skills, designing learning and teaching aids accessible to learners with disabilities, design and use appropriate assessment methods for determining transition of learners with disabilities from one grade to the next, just to mention a few.⁹

The justice system of Lesotho comprises courts of law who interpret the law and administer justice, police who investigate cases for prosecution and enforce the law, prisons and the entire justice personnel. For the system to be inclusive and accessible to all, including to persons with disabilities, the justice premises should provide universal access for physical accessibility, institutional capacity should be built for sign language skills, interpreting, braille, and adopting policies for concessionary legal fees for persons with disabilities. Persons with intellectual disability should also be accommodated through provision of mentors, justice intermediaries and legal representation in court proceedings. This is in concurrence with UNCRPD where is that States Parties shall ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. The current situation is such that the Lesotho justice is not well equipped and competent to handle legal cases involving persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are subjected to unconscious discrimination. Capacity building, awareness raising, social mobilization, litigation, lobbying and advocacy will be employed to remove the barriers.

Health care is allocated the second biggest share of national budget; however, the health sector is characterized by one of the highest inefficiencies manifested in low absorptive capacity, compromising the country's ability to improve health indicators for maternal, under-5 and infants¹⁰. Lesotho failed to meet all health-related MDGs namely; to reduce child mortality; to improve maternal health; and to combat HIV and

⁹ Ministry of Social Development 2016, Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Strategy 2016

¹⁰ UNICEF 2018, Lesotho Health Sector Budget Brief

AIDS, malaria, and other diseases¹¹. There is evidence that if non-disabled persons have limited access to health services, the situation could be 3 times worse for persons with disabilities¹². It is for this reason that UNCRPD provides that States Parties should recognize that persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure access for persons with disabilities to health services that are gender-sensitive, including health-related rehabilitation¹³. In particular in mainstreaming disability into public health, the plan is to promote physical accessibility in all health centres, appropriate means of communication in providing health services to persons with disabilities as well as providing capacity to health practitioners. The following objectives are pursued:

- Increase access to inclusive education for children and youth with disabilities
- To improve accessibility to justice system by persons with disabilities
- To strengthen public health system to include persons with disabilities and their families

6.4 GOAL 4: Improve influence of persons with disabilities in national decision-making processes

Disability mainstreaming is arguably the most important and holistic way to address the myriad challenges that characterize persons with disabilities in Lesotho. More importantly, the most effective way to mainstream disability is by making sure that Persons with disabilities themselves feature in all national decision-making structures and processes. Their participation would inform and educate processes on how to include disability in policies, laws, development practice and the national reforms. The new National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II) is generally applauded as a product of a processes that meaningfully featured participation of Persons with disabilities. Efforts will be made in this strategy to promote and lobby for representation of Persons with disabilities in governance structures such as political parties' national executive committees (NEC), National Assembly, Senate and other statutory institutions. Effort are geared towards having more Persons with disabilities on the supply side of the decision-making and development processes. The following objectives will be pursued to achieve mainstreaming of disability in national decision-making processes:

¹¹ UNDP and Ministry of Development Planning, 2014, Lesotho MDGs Status Report of 2013

¹² Living conditions among persons with disabilities in Lesotho, 2010

¹³ United Nation 2008, UN Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities

- To increase representation of Persons with disabilities in in political party and national leadership and governance structures

6.5 GOAL 5: Strengthen advocacy capacity and effectiveness of LNFOD and DPOs through enhanced organizational development, strategic programming and robust resource mobilization.

The final evaluation of the Organizational Development Programme (ODP) supported by NAD reveals that LNFOD seems to be a credible, efficient, able to advocate for persons with disabilities and influence policy. It has mobilized reasonable level of funding base sourced from various development partners over time. There are well-qualified and fairly experienced and competent personnel. However, the same cannot be said about its member DPOs. Their limitations start from either absence of administrative policies or operations are not guided by the policies they adopted. It is important LNFOD and DPOs work together to improve adherence to administrative policies and generally acceptable practices. For example, DPOs should not receive resources from LNFOD just by virtue of being members, but they should be worthy because their functional policies and systems that promote transparency and accountability. And there should be consequences for those who fail to account for LNFOD sourced support.

DPOs projects are not informed by visionary strategic frameworks and little effort has been made to prioritized recruitment of qualified and competent personnel to lead implementation of policies and programmes and mobilize resources for the organizations. It is for this reason that the DPOs are perpetually depended on funding sourced by LNFOD. Turn around strategies should be designed and implemented so that DPOs, on their own right become robust, credible and reputable organizations positioned to attract sustainable resource base, motivated and productive human resources, designs policies and programmes geared towards improving the living conditions of its beneficiaries. A single and disjoint support on funding proposal writing may not be a panacea for all the DPOs challenges. There is a need for a more comprehensive turn-around strategy to inculcate the culture of strategic planning and implementation; sound organizational development – adoption and compliance with sound administrative policies that promote clear corporate governance, segregation of duties and responsibility – and comprehensive resource mobilization strategies and tactics that are more than just providing skills on proposal writing. The right personnel, either volunteers and retirees, should be mobilized to lead strategic planning, organizational development and resource mobilization. A long-term consultant with strong track record on successful turn-around strategies and

organizational development should be recruited to mentor and lead the re-branding of the DPOs.

Notwithstanding, LNFOD should continue to put in place interventions that strengthen and maintain capacity in advocacy, internal governance, result-based management (RBM), resource mobilization, partnership building, coordination etc. While doing its business LNFOD Gender Policy 2015 – formulated as a framework to guide the organization and affiliate members in efforts to incorporate and promote gender equality within the organizational culture, practices and programmatic operations – will be a point of reference in ensuring equal treatment of men and women with disability among its membership in Lesotho. This will be achieved through creating an environment in which its human resources management is gender sensitive, and also by ensuring that the organization affords its members equality with regards to participation of men and women in the running of the organization.¹⁴

The following will contribute to the achievement of the goal:

- To strengthen institutional capacity of DPOs for effective disability rights advocacy
- To strengthen capacity of DPOs on disability programming and effective programme implementation

¹⁴ LNFOD 2015, LNFOD Gender Policy 2015

7. Strategy Implementation Plan

GOAL 1: Improve access to sources of livelihoods for persons of disabilities in Lesotho.					
Objective 1.1: To increase access to social assistance and social security nets for persons with disabilities of the disability grant as envisaged in the National Social Protection Strategy 2015					
Output	Output Indicator	Strategy	Timeframe	Means of verification	Responsibility
Budget allocated for implementation of disability grant	Amount of funding allocated for the grant Number of Persons with disabilities receiving disability grant	Advocate for implementation of disability grant policy as envisaged in the National Social Protection Strategy 2015	2020 – 2023	Approved budget estimates of Ministry of Social Development	LNFOOD, DPOs, Allies
Objective 1.2: To increase job opportunities for Persons with disabilities through provision of enterprise development amenities and formal employment					
PWD receive wages from self-and/or formal employment	Number of Persons with disabilities running enterprise and earning wages	Building capacity of Persons with disabilities in entrepreneurship skills and financial literacy	2020 –2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD
	Number of Persons with disabilities earning wages in the formal sector	Mobilize a revolving enterprise incubation fund (EIF) for Persons with disabilities'	2020 – 2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD

		business start-up and support them find markets for the products and services			
		Support women and girls with disabilities to self-help groups (SHG) for enterprise development	2020 – 2024	Annual Reports	LNFOOD
		Establish employment mobilization team for employment of Persons with disabilities in the formal sector	2020 – 2024	Annual Reports	LNFOOD & DPOs
Objective 1.3: To enhance participation of women and girls with disabilities in economic activities through formation of self-help groups					
Women and girls with disabilities have access to credit for enterprise development	Number of Self-help groups that are functional	Mobilize women and girls with disabilities to form self-help groups	2020 –2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOS & Partners
	Number of self-help groups graduate into entrepreneurship	Train members of self-help groups on financial management and group dynamics	2020 –2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOS & Partners
		Support self-helps groups to graduate	2021 –2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOS & Partners

		into entrepreneurship entities			
Output	Output Indicator	Strategy	Timeframe	Means of verification	Responsibility
GOAL 2: Improve the living conditions of PWDs through effective disability policy implementation					
Objective 2.1 To increase awareness on the existence and content of the disability policy instruments in Lesotho					
Policy makers understand content of policy instruments	Number of policy makers who support implementation of the disability instruments	Awareness and sensitization workshops to service providers	2020 – 2024	Annual Reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies
		Training of focal persons within line ministries on disability mainstreaming,	2020 – 2024		LNFOOD & DPOs
		Compile policy briefs and advocate for implementation	2020 – 2024		LNFOOD & Resource person
Objective 2.2 To advocate for increased budget support for implementation of policies and strategies aimed at developing persons with disabilities in Lesotho					
Budget allocation for implementation of various disability framework	Existence of disability entries in national budget estimates	Undertake Disability Budget Briefs and present results to parliament and other stakeholders	2021 – 2024	Approved national budgets	LNFOOD & Resource person

		Undertake Policy implementation Audit and held public debate	2020 – 2021	Audit and debate reports	LNFOOD & Resource person
		Compile budget briefs for government expenditure on disability	2020 – 2024	Budget briefs	LNFOOD & Resource person
		Advocacy for State Report on UNCRPD and produce shadow report	2020 –2024	State report & Shadow report	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies
		Advocate for collection, analysis of data on women and girls with disabilities and disaggregate and disseminate data by sex, age and disability	2020 –2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies
Output	Output Indicator	Strategy	Timeframe	Means of verification	Responsibility
GOAL 3: Improve access to key social services – education, health, justice					
Objective 3.1: Increase access to inclusive education for children and youth with disabilities					
Inclusive Education Policy strategy is allocated support for implementation	Budget Percentage allocated inclusive education implementation	Advocate for disability responsive budgeting for implementation of inclusive education policy	2020 – 2024	Approved budget estimates	LNFOOD, DPOs & allies

		Raise awareness about the implementation of inclusive education policy	2020 – 2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & allies
		Train teachers on inclusive education	2020 – 2024	Training reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & allies
Objective 3.2: To improve accessibility to justice system by persons with disabilities					
PWDs access justice on equal basis with others	Number of justice premises adapted for physical accessibility	Provide sign language skills to court room translators and legal aid lawyers to eliminate language barrier	2020 –2024	Training reports	LNFOOD & DPOs
	Number of sign language skills training workshops/sessions	Advocate for training of justice personnel to use embroiders and other brailing equipment for the accessibility of persons with visual impairments.	2020 –2024	Training reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & aliies
Objective 3.3: To strengthen public healthcare system to include persons with disabilities and their families					
PWDs and their families access public health on an equal basis with others	Number of sign language skills training workshops/sessions	Provide sign language skills to health service providers including	2020 –2024	Training reports	LNFOOD & DPOs

	for health care providers	nurses, doctors, counsellors etc.			
	Numbers of health centres accessible through ramps, audio escalators and fortified edges by Visually impaired and physically disabled persons	Advocate for adaptation and provide physical accessibility facilities on all health centres through erection of ramps, fortified edges, audio escalators for visually impaired and persons with physical disabilities.	2020 –2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies
		Advocate for development and dissemination of health including HIV/AIDS information, education and communication (IEC) materials in accessible formats for persons with visual impairments.	2020 – 2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies

		Campaign for Include disability section in all demographic health surveys (DHS) and annual joint reviews (AJR)	2024 – 2024	DHS & AJR	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies
		Lobby and advocate for provision of disability inclusive SRHR services and programs	2024 – 2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies
GOAL 4: Improve mainstreaming of disability in national decision-making processes					
4.1: To increase representation of PWDs in political party and national leadership and governance structures					
PWDs feature in political party and national leadership and governance structures	Number of PWDs featuring in leadership and governance structures	Lobby political parties to amend their constitutions reverse seats in executive committees for PWDs	2020 – 2024	Annual reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies
		Lobby Prime Minister and His Majesty to reserve a seat for a PWD in the Senate and/or a ministerial position.	2020 – 2024	Minutes of meetings	LNFOOD, DPOs & Allies

		Train PWDs in public speaking and political campaigning	2020 – 2024	Training reports	LNFOOD & DPOs
Output	Output Indicator	Strategy	Timeframe	Means of verification	Responsibility
GOAL 5: Strengthen advocacy capacity and effectiveness of LNFOOD and DPOs through enhanced organizational development, strategic programming and robust resource mobilization.					
Objective 5.1: To strengthen institutional capacity of DPOs for effective disability rights advocacy					
DPOs compile with administrative policies in the operations	Number of DPOs that develop and compile with administrative policies	development and/or review of functional administrative policies	2020–2022	Copies policy documents	LNFOOD, DPOs & resource persons
		training of LNFOOD and DPOs staff and their governance structures on corporate governance	2020 – 2024	Training reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & resource persons
DPOs mobilize more funding to undertake their mandate	Number of DPOs that mobilize more funding	develop resource mobilization strategies	2020 – 2021	Copies of strategy documents	LNFOOD, DPOs & resource persons
		Build resource mobilization skills	2020 – 2024	Training reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & resource persons
		undertake funding environmental mapping & undertake	2020 – 2024	Mapping & resource mobilization reports	LNFOOD, DPOs & resource persons

		resource mobilization initiatives			
Objective 5.2: To strengthen capacity of LNFOD and DPOs in disability programming and effective programme implementation					
Strategic plans developed and implemented by DPOs	Number of DPOs operating from their strategic plans	support strategic planning of DPOs;	2020 – 2021	Copies Strategic plans	LNFOD, DPOs & resource persons
		Train DPOs on Result-based management and reporting;	2021 – 2024	Training reports	LNFOD, DPOs & resource persons
		recruit qualified volunteers to support effective planning and implementation	2020	Recruitment reports	LNFOD & DPOs
		Mobilize long-term support for turn-around strategies and mentoring of DPOs on Institutional capacity, strategic programming and resource mobilization	2020 – 2021	Recruitment report	LNFOD & DPOs

