



LESOTHO NATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANISATIONS
OF THE DISABLED (LNFOD)



Highlights on Important Results Achieved in the Period 2010-2013

The rehabilitation programme implemented by NAD in Lesotho from 2010 to present originally followed a twin-track approach that included a) support to a national Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme and b) support to the organisational development of the umbrella organisation, Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled (LNFOD), and its affiliated member DPOs.

The organisational development programme has been very successful with results exceeding the expectations established in the long term plan. The CBR programme, on the other hand, did not yield the expected results and NAD therefore decided to withdraw its financial support to the programme in 2012 – with the exception of the local wheelchair production component, which is successfully implemented by Motivation.

Community Based Rehabilitation Programme

The most significant result of the CBR programme is the reduced stigma of persons with disabilities in the districts of Mafeteng and Leribe. People in Lesotho traditionally relate disability to notions of fear, witchcraft or sin. According to a recent Sintef publication¹ some even seem to think that disability is contagious. The presence of CBR workers at community level informing the general public about disability and referring persons with disabilities to public services has brought parents to take their disabled children out of hiding and allowing them to participate in activities with their peers. Unfortunately, NAD does not have any quantitative data to support this positive development, which was reported by programme staff in 2010.

¹ Sintef 2011: Living Conditions among People with Disabilities in Lesotho

In 2011 it was reported that 68 schools in Mafeteng enrolled 1386 disabled boys and 2114 disabled girls, which is an increase of 2871 compared to the previous year. The same year 44 disabled men and women were employed in temporary development projects and 15 disabled enrolled in training activities in Leribe, while 40 teachers were trained in the organisation of disability inclusive sport activities. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education is inclusive schools for deaf and the government started providing bursaries for needy students with special education needs. Activities like these, aimed at integrating disabled in society at different levels, collectively contributed to the reduced stigma and – henceforth – improved living conditions of persons with disabilities in Lesotho.

As discussed in the next session (2.2) the CBR programme suffers significantly from the lack of commitment from government actors at central level. However, a recent evaluation of the CBR programme confirm that parts of the programme has continued to function at local level due to highly committed and reliable local volunteers (local supervisors) despite the lack of support from central level. The evaluation comments local supervisors in the communities who work tirelessly to organise public gatherings and identify people with disabilities in the local communities. Some local supervisors have been performing their roles for up to nine years without any payment and there is a very low dropout rate of volunteers. This is a clear indication of the relevance of and local commitment to CBR as a valuable tool to supporting persons with disabilities.

Motivation has been implementing activities related to wheelchair production training under the CBR health component. Before 2010 there were no wheel chair services available in Lesotho, which meant that standard wheelchairs were imported from neighbouring countries without consideration of the special needs of the person that will be using the chair. Today three wheelchair services have been established in Lesotho, a total of 207 wheelchairs to children and adults have been provided² – significantly improving the quality of life of the beneficiaries - and the government has started allocating funds for the provision of wheel chairs in the annual budgets (from 2013). Other results include:

- Other civil society actors, such as World Vision, have been sensitized through the programme and now started using specialized staff trained by NAD/Motivation when providing wheelchairs;

² Of the 207 wheelchairs 20 were issued to children, 83 to women and 104 to men

- Wheelchair users were empowered through peer group support training and home visits. Five trainings involving at least 37 people with spinal cord injuries – most of which subsequently received home visits by local peer group supports;
- A peer group training manual was translated into Sesotho to facilitate easy sharing of information. The manual was circulated through at least three hospitals, private actors and government entities;
- Motivation SA also supported the organisation development of the Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled (LNAPD) by organising a capacity workshop focusing on organisational management systems, governance, advocacy and disability rights.

Organisational Development Programme

During the reporting period LNFOD has grown into a strong and widely recognised representative of and advocate for persons with disabilities in Lesotho. The organisation has established a broad funding base, it is visible in national and local media and it is recognised as a resource and advisor on issues related to disability among civil society and government actors.

The most significant results achieved by LNFOD and its member DPOs between 2010 and 2013 relate to the legal protection of persons with disabilities in Lesotho. This was confirmed by a recent evaluation conducted by Nyameka and Associates (December 2013). The evaluation highlights and commends LNFODs clarity and consistency in lobbying and advocacy activities.

Examples of the results of persistent LNFOD advocacy and information campaigns between 2010 and 2013 include:

- 2010: LNFOD supported the Ministry of Education on developing an Education Act, which includes the promotion and protection of the education rights of children with disabilities;
- 2011: A disability inclusive Children's Protection and Welfare Act 2011 was developed with LNFOD support. The act includes a discrimination clause that states that children with disabilities shall not be discriminated against because of their disabilities. It further stipulates that a child with disability have a right to dignity,

special care, medical treatment, rehabilitation, family and personal integrity, sports and recreation;

- 2011: A National Disability and Rehabilitation policy was adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers and coordinated by the Ministry of Social Development. The policy will guide all the government ministries in designing disability inclusive and disability specific programs;
- 2011: Lesotho amended the National Assembly Electoral Amendment act of 2011 states that people with disabilities should be taken into consideration in the political platforms;
- 2011: A national policy on HIV for persons with disability was adapted;
- 2012: The national Strategic Development Plan for 2012/2013 to 2016/2017 was made disability inclusive. This means that all programmes implemented by the government of Lesotho has to document that they are disability inclusive;
- 2013: A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by LNFOD and the Ministry of Social Development formalising government subvention of LNFOD and its member DPOs.

LNFOD is monitoring the implementation of relevant policies and legal frameworks to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities provided here are actively enforced.

Other important results achieved by the programme during the reporting period relate to inclusive development (informed by persons with disabilities) and the prevention of HIV and AIDS among persons with disabilities³. The most important achievements are summarized below:

Inclusive development

- LNFOD was consulted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on several occasions, for instance in discussions of the establishment of a human rights commission and on peace architecture. In consequence, persons with disabilities are actively engaged in forming some of the major development initiatives in Lesotho;
- LNFOD signed a MoU with World Vision that formalises partnership between the two organisations. This has, among other things, ensured that persons with disabilities

³ Objective 4 & five in the Long Term Plan: 4) Disabled men and women take an active role in forming their own future through DPOs and effective coordination, advocacy and lobbying strategies for inclusion; 5) Disabled women and men and their families are better able to prevent and manage HIV and AIDS.

who are victims of sexual and gender based violence are directly targeted in World Vision interventions.

- During the reporting period LNFOD's member DPOs formed a total of 42 new branches and mobilized a total of 194 new members (68 men and 126 women);
- In line with the developments within LNFOD, the organisation's member DPOs are also beginning to widen their funding base⁴. In the reporting period LNAPD's vocational training facilities received grants from the Lesotho Revenue Authority, the Central Bank of Lesotho and the Church of the Latter Day Saints; NADL received support from OSISA to publish the first ever Lesotho Sign Language Dictionary; IDAL received support from Management Sciences for Social Health and PACT for multiple year projects, and the organisation successfully implemented a fundraising event mobilising M 14 000 to support the organisations activities; Finally, LNLVIP has been supported by a local mining company (Letšeng diamonds) with an in-kind donation and by the Norwegian Association of the Blind. The widened funding base of LNFOD and its members is a clear indication of increased sustainability.

Response to HIV and AIDS

- During the reporting period a total of 21 persons with disabilities openly disclosed their HIV status. Seven of these have become HIV activists. This is a significant achievement due to the double stigma of disability and HIV in Lesotho;
- Twenty (20) persons with disabilities have been educated as HIV and AIDS Counsellors/Communicators during the reporting period. Twelve people from the group have been providing testing and counselling at the Mafeteng health centers;
- Close to 200 male and female persons with disabilities received training on HIV prevention and AIDS Education;
- Persons with disabilities are increasingly represented in community and district HIV and AIDS committees. By the end of the reporting period persons with disabilities are represented in 100 community HIV and AIDS committees and ten district HIV and AIDS committees;

Hindrances to the Programme - *Internal and/ or external factors*

The predefined objectives of the organisational development project were all reached. LNFOD had challenges along the way, including a relatively high staff turn-over in the

⁴ More information about LNFOD funding under 2.6

beginning of the reporting period and a new Executive Committee taking office in 2013. LNFOD has alerted NAD to the challenge of introducing new people to the organisation and funds have been reallocated to ensure the necessary training of the Executive Committee and the secretariat. This has mitigated the impact of such changes on the overall performance of the programme. External factors, including extensive flooding in 2011 also threatened to affect the programme since this was a critical time for voter education activities (General Elections took place in Lesotho in May 2012). LNFOD managed to postpone or relocate many of the activities. This often involved an extra cost, which was covered by NAD to ensure as much continuity as possible.

The CBR programme did not generate the expected results in the first two years, with the exception of activities implemented by Motivation SA. NAD therefore sponsored a high level conference in Lesotho in December 2011 with support from the Secretariat of the African Decade for Persons with Disabilities (SADPD) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The objective of the conference was to identify the challenges and barriers to progress in the CBR programme in Lesotho. Participants included representatives from The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and other relevant ministries, as well as representatives from international and civil society organisations.

The conference concluded that the Government of Lesotho had to decide whether it would prioritize CBR as a primary tool to implementing the CRPD and responding to the needs of persons with disabilities in Lesotho. Commitment should be proven by sufficient allocation of human and financial resources to relevant sectors and by making sure that national legislation and sector policies become disability inclusive.

NAD considered this to be a domestic issue and responsibility and therefore decided to take a "time out" with only limited support in terms of training and capacity building offered in 2012. In 2012 the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare led to the division of the Ministry into two separate Ministries: The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development. The responsibility of CBR fell under the newly established Ministry of Social Development. This could have led to an increased focus on CBR but the new ministry failed to honour its commitments and by the end of 2012 none of the funds made available from NAD to CBR activities had been utilized. NAD therefore decided to discontinue all financial support to the government run CBR programme by the end of 2012. NAD staff continued to meet with representatives from the Ministry of Social Development throughout the reporting period to follow up and discuss new development in the CBR programme. Until now it is not considered relevant to revitalise NAD's support to the CBR programme.

Programme Results Overview: *Positive or Negative Unanticipated Consequences*

The Government of Lesotho has included a line for wheelchair provision in its annual budgets (starting 2013). This is a very positive but unanticipated result of the project and a clear indication of government commitment to sustaining the results if the intervention.

During the reporting period, LNFOD has become increasingly recognized as a model organisation for successful lobbying and advocacy by civil society in Lesotho. The organisation has conducted several trainings of other civil society organisations organised by the Lesotho Council for NGOs. This has of course strengthened civil society as such but it has also facilitated a wider appreciation among civil society actors of the rights of persons with disabilities and the challenges that Lesotho faces in terms of providing these rights.

Finally, LNFOD's advocacy campaigns had led local media to pay more attention to disability issues. In fact the Lesotho radio recently launched a weekly programme discussing issues affecting or relevant to persons with disabilities. This is a significant achievement compared to 2010 when only paid radio slots would highlight disability issues. LNFOD has also changed its strategy from only complaining about challenges to highlighting and promoting positive stories in media and elsewhere with great success. The umbrella partly attributes increased media attention to this change in strategy.

Trends and Tendencies affecting the Programme during 2010-2013

The international awareness and discussion of the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has inspired LNFOD to do a systematic review of each goal with relevant duty bearers in Lesotho. The organisation invited relevant government ministries and NGOs working on specific MDG themes to present their achievements towards a specific goal. This led to increased awareness about the progress and gaps towards full achievement of the MDGs. In some cases these discussions even led to policy change. For example, the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation changed its policy so that persons with disabilities are now allowed to work on projects implemented by the Ministry. Up until the meeting hosted by LNFOD persons with disabilities were able to register to work but family

members would always work on their behalf as it was perceived that persons with disabilities were unable to work.

The CRPD, ratified by Lesotho in December 2012, remains a key advocacy tool for disability mainstreaming in Lesotho. According to LNFOD's own advocacy reports most, if not all, advocacy efforts have been guided by the CRPD since there is still not domestic legal framework domesticating the convention. As an example LNFOD used the CRPD is a reference when meeting employers and lobby for the employment of persons with disabilities.

Value added by the LNFOD/NAD Partnership

LNFOD reports that more donors have expressed confidence in LNFOD and its member DPOs as credible partners due to the longstanding relationship with NAD. This has a positive effect on the sustainability and self-confidence of the organisation.

During the reporting period, NAD supported LNFOD in developing a number of policies and guidelines standardizing the umbrella's operations, including a Human Resource and Procedures Manual, Finance Policy Manual, Gender Policy, Strategic plan, Transport Policy and more. Such guidelines are often appreciated by international partners and thereby further improved LNFOD's chances of engaging with other donors and partners.

LNFOD also highlights that it feels well versed and capable to follow international development trends thanks to regular interaction with NAD about developments in the development and disability sectors – internationally and in neighbouring countries.

Finally, LNFOD reports that extensive training in result based management planning, monitoring and reporting provided by NAD has enabled the organisation better interact with the rest of the development community in Lesotho and abroad.

The degree at which LNFOD carryout the programme in cooperation with other donors

As highlighted throughout this report one of the most significant results of the organisational development programme is the extent to which LNFOD has managed to widen its funding and partnership base. Examples of donors that contributed to the programme include:

- European Union (EU): LNFOD in 2013 signed a three year contract with the EU to implement the programme “Empowering Rural Persons with Disabilities for Seeking their Entitlements”. The project is implemented in four districts, complementing the NAD funded programme in Berea and Mohale’s hoek;
- Funksjonshemmedes Fellesorganisasjon (FFO) in 2010 funded a comprehensive study of the living conditions of persons with disabilities in Lesotho, which was implemented by SINTEF with support from LNFOD. The study provided valuable evidence to LNFOD’s advocacy campaigns implemented under the NAD funded programme;
- FFO also supported LNFOD advocacy efforts targeting local media between 2010 – 2011;
- Open Society Initiative in Southern Africa (OSISA) supported an Education Project implemented by LNFOD in 2010 and 2011 focussing on access to education of visually impaired;
- The Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (SADPD) committed funds to a three year disability mainstreaming projects implemented by LNFOD and its members between 2013 and 2015;
- Catholic Relief Service (CRF) has engaged LNFOD in a research project to capture data on children and youth with disabilities in Lesotho;
- UNICEF and LNFOD collaborated around the celebrations related to African Child in 2012 and the launch event for the World Report on Children focusing on children with disabilities in 2013;
- The Lesotho Council of NGOs supported LNFOD in the implementation of activities related to HIV and AIDS through funding from the Global Fund Round 8 on HIV and AIDS;
- Finally, a number of private companies in Lesotho supported specific activities implemented by LNFOD such as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Programme Contribution to Strengthening Civil Society

In recognition of the results achieved by LNFOD through well-organised and target advocacy campaigns, the organisation was invited to train other civil society organisations on “good practices” in lobbying and advocacy by the Lesotho Council of NGOs on several occasions. Many civil society organisations in Lesotho have therefore become familiar with LNFOD’s work and – indirectly – the situation and rights of persons with disabilities in Lesotho. LNFOD

reports that stronger ties between LNFOD and other civil society organisations have given civil society as such a much stronger voice in Lesotho than before 2010.

LNFOD has also implemented trainings directly targeting civil society organisations on disability inclusive programming. As a result of these interventions, LNFOD reports that civil society in Lesotho has become more inclusive in planning and implementation of activities which are now directly targeting persons with disabilities. LNFOD recorded that persons with disabilities have been included in civic education activities and training on human trafficking and gender equality to mention but a few.

Important Lessons Learnt from the Programme

The most important lesson learned from the Rehabilitation Project in Lesotho is the fact that a government's financial commitment to a CBR partnership alone does not guarantee successful implementation of a CBR programme. Throughout the reporting period the Government of Lesotho contributed half of the annual CBR budget and NAD the other half. However, due to lack of capacity in the CBR Programme to absorb the funds made available from NAD, budgets were reduced significantly during the course of the year in 2010 and 2011. In 2012 none of the funds made available from NAD were utilized. The main reason being that the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) failed to recruit staff to implement the CBR programme. The Public Service Commission approved CBR positions for the ministry but the MoHSW failed to fill them with staff to implement the CBR programme.

NAD also learned that programmes implemented in cooperation with the Government of Lesotho are fragile to changing political contexts due to a highly politicized civil service. In 2012 the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare was divided into two ministries: The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development. The responsibility for the CBR programme fell under the latter. To Motivation SA this meant that they had to re-orient the project and local coordination to relate to two different ministries. Overall the CBR programme stalled due to the time consuming and slow transition pertaining to the division into two ministries. As a consequence, key positions at national, district and ward level, remained vacant throughout most of the year 2012 and 2013.

On a positive note, there is evidence that in spite of poor follow up from national level, the CBR programme somehow continues in the districts without technical and financial support

from national level. As confirmed by a recent evaluation of the CBR programme, local supervisors (volunteers) in the communities work tirelessly to organise public gatherings and identify people with disabilities in the local communities. Some local supervisors have been performing their roles for up to nine years without any payment and there is a very low dropout rate of volunteers.