

MASERU DECLARATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

To the government of Lesotho

Organisations of people with disabilities

People with disabilities

Civil society organisations

The Basotho nation as a whole

The development partners interested in disability inclusive development.

We, representatives of five representative organisations of persons with disabilities namely, Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho , (IDAL) Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled, (LNAPD) Lesotho National League of the Visually impaired Persons (LNLVIP), National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL) and the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) gathered on the 17 November 2016 in Maseru Lesotho concerning the respect, promotion, protection and fulfilment of the rights of people with disabilities by the government of Lesotho acknowledges the development of the Disability Equity Bill to be passed into an Act of Parliament in 2016.

Government of Lesotho through the Minister of Social Development pledged before hundreds of people with disabilities during the commemoration of the 2015 international day of persons with disabilities to pass the disability specific legislation before the end of 2016. Nevertheless, the circumstances on the ground are not favourable for the Bill to be passed in 2016 since it should be reviewed by the Attorney General and Approved by the Cabinet before the Parliament can enact it into law.

We note the low pace at which the Disability Equity Bill is being developed despite the political will demonstrated by the Minister of Social Development to pass the Law in 2016.

Persons with disabilities remain marginalised and vulnerable within our society with no specific protection provided by the law.

We are calling upon the Ministry of Social Development to conduct an inclusive validation workshop on the disability equity Bill on the 28 November 2016 which provide meaningful engagement of the representatives of people with disabilities as the Bill in question should be addressing the rights of people with disabilities.

We strongly urge the government of Lesotho to pass the Disability Equity Bill into an Act of Parliament as soon as possible as a means of fulfilling the long standing promise of domesticating the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

We urge the government of Lesotho to budget for the implementation of the National Disability Mainstreaming Plan 2015 for 2017-2018 financial year to foster the meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities into the budgetary ministerial plans.

Lack of budget allocation to government document such as the National Disability Mainstreaming Plan continues to hinder the effective inclusion of people with disabilities in the government national agenda.

Persons with disabilities continue to suffer exclusive services due to lack of budget allocation to disability mainstreaming efforts by the government ministries.

We note the negative attitudes faced by people with disabilities when trying to access basic social services from the public service providers.

We are calling upon those responsible for providing ill services to people with disabilities to stop doing so as such behaviour is contrary to the spirit of the adoption of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities by the government of Lesotho.

For more information, you can contact the office of LNFOD at

22320345 admin@Infod.org.ls