

Hundreds March in Qacha's Nek



Welcome to NTSOE-LENG

Welcome to the sixth edition of *Ntsoe-Leng*, the bi-annual newsletter published by the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled.

This newsletter contains news and views from the disability sector from the past 6 months. If you are interested in learning more about LNFOOD, our partners or disability in Lesotho please visit our website at www.lnfod.org.ls or sign up to our monthly email news-letter by emailing pletsau@gmail.com.

Please feel free to offer any feed-back or suggestions by contacting our editorial desk at moeletsi@lnfod.org.ls. Alternatively, you may call us on +266 2232 0345 or visit us at the LNFOOD office in Old Europa, Maseru.

Best regards - Rabasotho Moeletsi - Editor

By Rabasotho Moeletsi

Hundreds of persons with disabilities gathered in Qacha'snek to on Wednesday, 03rd December 2014 to celebrate international day of persons with disabilities. Since 1992, this event is recognized by the United Nations with the aim to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

Around nine hundred (900) people participated in a march from District Administrator across the Qacha'snek town in support of equal opportunities for persons with various disabilities. Then followed the formal session in speeches from dignitaries who included Her Majesty Queen, Masenate Mohato Seeiso, Minister of Social Development, Hon. Matebatso Doti, Member of Parliament for Qacha'snek, Dr.

Continued on page 2

ABOUT LNFOD

A Brief History

Registered in 1991, the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) is an umbrella body of organizations dealing with disability in Lesotho.

It's mission is to protect the rights of people with disabilities in Lesotho by providing support for disabled people's organizations and empowering their members with life-skills, financial and material resources and representing their needs to the government, development partners and wider society.

Its membership consists of the Lesotho National Association of Physically Disabled Persons (LNAPD), the Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho (IDAL), Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) and National Association of the Deaf in Lesotho (NADL).

For further information, please visit www.lnfod.org.ls

Contact Us:

22 Mabile Road, Old Europa
Maseru Lesotho

P. O. Box 9988 Maseru 100
Lesotho

Phone: +266 22 32 0345
Fax: +266 22 32 6196

E-mail: nkhasi@lnfod.org.ls

www.lnfod.co.ls

A word from the Chairperson

In the past six months we have seen many positive changes in our nation which point to the fact that Lesotho is well on its way in the race towards development economically and otherwise despite the few challenges in recent months. Along with all my fellow Basotho, I applaud these changes and share in the hope for a brighter future. However, we must ensure that people with disability may also share in the benefits of development.

It is within this period when LNFOD had realised some of the important results, to name but a few, the completion of development of the National Disability Mainstreaming Plan, and development of the Disability Specific Legislation which is now in the draft form having been completed by the drafting section within the ministry of Law and Constitutional Affairs as well as the Completion of human rights and advocacy manual.

In its preamble and general principles, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability recognizes the importance of accessibility to the physical, social, economic and cultural environment; to health and education; and to information and communication to enable persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. However, Lesotho has a long way in closing the developmental gap between persons with disabilities and their non-disabled counterparts. people with disabilities experience serious inequalities in terms of access to education, healthcare services, employment opportunities and access to information and communication to mention but a few.

Translation of inclusive policy and legislation framework provisions into practical actions to improve livelihoods of persons with disabilities is far as there is currently no strategy guiding implementation. Community based rehabilitation (CBR Program), which was seen as a good strategy to implement the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD 2006), and the National Strategic development plan of (NSDP 2012-2017) is given less attention by the ministry of Social development.

We therefore urge the ministry of Social Development to allocate sufficient budget that will enable CBR to bring significant changes to the lives of people with disabilities in the country.

The government of Lesotho, in delivering its mandate through its departments, must ensure that all citizens have access to government services in accordance with the Disability Policy provisions. As a priority, the government must focus on its commitment to improve public buildings to accommodate all people and also strive to economically empower people with disability.

Makananelo Regina Lephoi, LNFOD Chairperson.

"Together as One"

From page 1

Matumelo Sekatle, Chairperson of the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled, Mrs. Makananelo Regina Lephoi, and the US Embassy Representative. Also present was Dr. Nthabiseng Makoe, who is the deputy minister of health.

The theme for this year celebration was “Sustainable development: the promise of technology”. Making reference to the theme, Mrs. Regina Lephoi, Chairperson of LNFOD said that disability movement in Lesotho welcomes this theme as it comes when technology is seen as an advancement which has increasingly raised the standard of living for people and can be used play a role in bridging the access gap between the disabled and their non-disabled counterparts. So she pleaded with the government of Lesotho to show commitment in implementation of the ICT Policy of 2005 which provides the government shall ensure universal access to ICTs by paying attention to the special needs the disabled.

Delivering her keynote address, Her Majesty Queen, Masenate Mohato Seeiso, who is also the LNFOD's Patron pointed a few legislation gaps which renders individuals with disabilities vulnerable and emphasized that Lesotho need to act vastly to introspect the current laws and policies in terms of how we enable people with disabilities to participate in the development agenda of Lesotho.



Making reference to the CRPD 2006, she remarks: “Article 4 of the CRPD, calls upon the member states such as Lesotho to remove, modify and eliminate all laws and policies that discriminate against people with disabilities. However, we are not complying so well in this regard.”

She continued, “Section 57 of the constitution provides that, Deaf people are not eligible to be appointed as senators because they are not able to speak. In addition, National assembly electoral amendment act of 2011 prevents people with intellectual disabilities from participating in the general elections on the basis that, they are not able to make independent decision for themselves.”

While the Queen acknowledged government for ongoing development of National disability plan and the Disability Equity Law, she emphasized the fact that these two documents can impact the lives of disabled people

only if the government makes financial resources available for implementation of these instruments.

On behalf of the government, the minister of social development, Hon. Matebatso Doti said that as the ministry responsible for disability issues they have started some projects for persons with disabilities to enable them to be self-employed as it is not every person who could be hired at government service.

The crowd was entertained by the healthy line up the featured the likes of the renowned Gospel singer with disabilities Mr. Majara Majara, the group formed by inmates of Qacha'snek district, not forgetting the local dancers of the 'Setapo dance' which is the style only found in Qacha'snek.

“ Lesotho needs to act vastly to introspect the current laws and policies...”



Undoubtedly, the political turmoil which recently erupted in Lesotho does not only destabilises the conflicting parties, but, the whole nation including people with disabilities who are also devastated by the prevailing uncertainty of Maseru.

It is also a well-known fact that, if the nations of the world are experiencing problems such as wars and conflicts, marginalised groups such as

people with disabilities become extremely vulnerable due to the environmental barriers that face them every day.

Basotho with disabilities are no exception as they always wonder about their safety and security in the state of conflict and in which we frequently experience gun shoots between the armed forces in the public places in Maseru.

I am one of the individual with disability who stays near the places where I frequently hear the exchange of gunshots between the armed forces of Lesotho.

It is threatening as you may not know what's next. It frustrates as we know that, should we have to evacuate, marginalised groups

like people with disabilities will not be able to access evacuation services as the case may be.

Research has shown that, scarcity of resources makes it very difficult for people with disabilities to be catered for in the armed conflict. Scarcity of resources and lack of accessible and inclusive humanitarian interventions compel people with disabilities to be at the most disadvantaged state of affairs.

The current state of affairs in Maseru has hampered LNFO and its partners to achieve one of its advocacy milestone by the end of 2014, concerning the presentation of the disability bill in the Parliament.

Deaf People celebrating International Deaf Day

By: Malesaona Mohale

National Association of the Deaf Lesotho celebrated the International Deaf Week. The Theme for this year was "Strengthening Human Diversity". The two dimensions of the theme include promotion of Deaf people as part of global human diversity as well as recognition of the diversity and richness of the global Deaf community itself.

Strengthening human diversity draws upon the basic principles of human rights and respect for all people and diversity with respect to language, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies.

This theme is about recognizing differences as possibilities and assets instead of disabilities that should be changed. It is also about recognizing that each Deaf individual is unique with strengths that can make a positive effect on Deaf societies.

Society needs to be sensitized so that it can better enhance its capacity to take into account diversity and make needed changes for the Deaf.

This year, National Association of the Deaf Lesotho (NADL) took concrete steps to raise awareness among government officials, authorities, responsible persons at work place, medical professionals, and national education experts etc. On the issues of Sign Language,

challenges faced by Deaf people, as well as their achievements and how organizations can include Deaf people in their programs. Among others, advocacy was made in organizations such as Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI), Lesotho Red Cross, Lesotho Television and radios such as Catholic Radio (CRFM).

The month was very busy indeed for NADL as the association also had an Annual General Meeting which was held this year in the same week, where NADL members elected their new board members. There was also some series of field work to raise awareness in the communities about issues of Deaf people.

"It's not the disability that defines you; its how you deal with the challenges the disability presents you with. We have an obligation to the abilities we DO have, not the disability." - Jim Abbott

SloDive.com

Lesotho ratified the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities on the 2ND December 2008 and as such it is in the process of domesticating this Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities through the enactment of the disability specific legislation by the parliament. The bill was to be presented before the Parliament before the end of 2014, which created momentum among the members of the disability movement.

Unfortunately, the long awaited disability legislation processes have been overshadowed by the conflict among the coalition government partners that among others led to the suspension of the parliament in May 2014.

As we speak, the disability specific legislation will never be born in the eighth parliament of Lesotho as the SADC intervention dictates that, Lesotho should go for the general elections before the end of February 2015. As a result, the parliament of Lesotho will reopen on the 17 October with limited

powers to discharge its ordinary functions before it is dissolved in December 2014. In this period, the parliament shall only work on the approval of the election budget and constitutional reforms that will facilitate the hosting of the general elections in early 2015.

Meaning that disability legislation falls within the ordinary parliamentary proceedings which cannot be dealt with by now. It is therefore goes without saying that, the efforts of putting the disability act in place might be seriously delayed by the political

developments in Lesotho. General elections will produce the new government of the date of which the disability movement will have to introduce to the concept of disability as a social issue to be addressed by policy and legislation.



VERONICA BALOI

“A wheel chair user and motivational Speaker”



I am Veronica Baloyi based in Gauteng Pretoria in a suburb called Soshanguve in South Africa.

I am now a wheelchair – user. In 1996, I had a terrible accident. I was pushed from the sixth floor in a flat as six men kidnapped me. I was rushed to the hospital and diagnosed permanent paraplegia. I was rehabilitated for eight Months as I undergone 10 surgeries. I also told that I will not conceive but today I am having two daughters Letlhogonolo and Lindokuhle Baloyi.

With my disability, I managed to go back to school, completed my Matric, and awarded a bursary to further my studies. I am now working for Transnet Rail Engineering as a Logistic Manager.

My exposure to the media was a true blessing as I am now an Ambassador for Ottoblock South Africa.

As I realized that, my disability was a blessing in disguise I decided to become a Motivational Speaker, as I like to mentor and empower my fellow brothers and sisters with disabilities.

Media exposure:

1. Scanto lovelife program
2. Felicia show,
3. Spirit Suldae,
4. Several magazines
 - Drum magazine
 - Ngove magazine
 - City Press newspaper
 - Daily sun
 - Rolling Inspiration

“I realized that my disability was a blessing in disguise”

In September this year, awarded an award for South African Disability Woman Tribute Award because was elected as the lead the Transnet Employment Equity inside and outside.

“I would like to encourage all my fellow brothers and sister in Lesotho that are challenged physical and emotional that we must have faith in ourselves. Let us do more on everything that we are doing. Remember that; ‘disability is not inability.’

I am happy because from today in Lesotho can see huge change that is going to benefit us all. The leaders of this country always remember our slogan that says; ‘Nothing is about us without us’, this means people with disabilities should participate fully in matters that affects them.” concluded Veronica

DISABILITY FOCAL PERSONS IN LESOTHO

By: Nkhasi Sefuthi

The government of Lesotho in close collaboration with the LNFOD, DPOS have worked together to put in place one of the strategies recommended by the article 33 of the UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

This has been achieved after several advocacy meetings between the government and LNFOD in which LNFOD lobbied ministry of Social development to lobby other ministries to appoint disability focal persons that will facilitate the disability mainstreaming in their various ministries.

In June 2014, the ministry of Social development successfully lobbied other government to appoint senior government officials in each ministry to become the disability focal points. To date, ten out of twenty two ministries have already appointed focal points in their ministries.



After which, LNFOD in conjunction with the disability focal ministry, organised workshop on the introduction of disability mainstreaming so as to build the capacity of the appointed focal persons.

In addition, it was anticipated that, the training will ensure that, the focal persons acquire knowledge on disability mainstreaming so that they will contribute meaningfully in the development of the National Disability Mainstreaming Plan which its development commenced in August 2014.

The National Disability Mainstreaming Plan seeks to identify the roles and responsibilities of each ministry in the disability mainstreaming process under the guidance of the local consultancy.

In addition, the consultants are supported to understand the point of departure. That Federation, DPOs and the government are now working together to find ways in which disability could be effectively mainstreamed. So it should be clear from the plan what different ministries are going to do to ensure mainstreaming.

LNFOD understands that, this is a process which requires a lot of commitment from the government to support the capacity building of the focal points so that they will be in the position to become disability rights partners and deliver effectively.

LNFOD also recognises the financial support offered to LNFOD by the development partners who are really making the voice of people with disabilities to be heard.



....Lives of People should be transformed to the Better.

By Qalang Jobo

Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho (IDAL) invested in the parents of children with disabilities through Basic Business Management and assisted them start Village Savings and Loans groups with which the parents contribute monthly subscriptions and borrow from the collections, returning such with 10% interest. Beneficiaries of the initiative mostly reside in Khoelenya and Lithipeng Community Council in the Molepolole district.

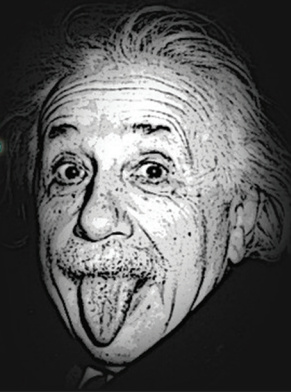
During September 2014 the groups were afforded an opportunity to provide meals with a charge so they raise funds and be able to support their families. Currently most of the trained parents have started their own small businesses which in many ways changed their lives as they now afford to cater for a number of basic needs at household level.

As the association have recognized that it is very difficult for family members who are caring for the intellectual disabled people and children to go out and look for jobs, as they have to be close to them. With the efforts that the organization has taken hope there will be more people who can assist these projects to grow up. IDAL is real eager to raise more self – help groups among parents and family members that are caring for children with intellectual disability. Children and youth with intellectual disabilities are able to do things on their own if can be supervised well at the beginning. It is the will of the organization to see them involved in these projects started at these communities. The family members as they have been instructed how to deal with their children we are looking forward to see their support to youth, children and even the adults with intellectual disabilities.

Everyone **is**
a genius.

" But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree,
it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid "

- Albert Einstein -



Senekane Community Councilors vows to support people with disabilities Councilors in Senekane from different Electoral Division in a meeting with Disability District Coordinator through the project of deepening decentralisation, members of DPOs visited Senekane Community Council. The councilors above were from different Electoral Divisions in the same community council.

The District Disability Coordinator, Mr. Nqosa had a brief meeting with them. The objective of the meeting was only to find from them how are they willing to work with people with disabilities in the council. He clearly stated that there are some funds that have been given to community councils in order to deepen services to the communities.

The meeting was the eye-opener to all these councilors as they were not aware that they have to

plan together with people with disabilities not to plan for them. They also mentioned that they are planning to have big projects that will be meant to help people with disabilities. They have seen that people with disabilities always are not included in any activities, they did not even know that they are many as like they were gathered the same day.

"We are very delighted to know and see how people with disabilities are clever, some of these people are even clever than us, we were not aware. It is our pleasure from today to support people with disabilities in anyway." concluded one of them.

SADC GENDER PROTOCOL 2013

BAROMETER

LESOTHO

Lesotho held a meeting on 50/50 post 2015 whereby women and girls with disabilities participated. The meeting was to review the Barometer 2014 and do the planning more for 2015 thematic areas.

The delegation from LNFOOD women's forum were; Pascalina Letsau, Ntali Tau, Likopo Lesoetsa and Nanaki Mafoso. Lesotho has performed relatively well in the governance sector as measured, the question is; is it realistic measures as realized that people with disabilities women in particular are always forgotten. Lesotho has almost reached gender equality at local government level.

The citizen's score of 76% is largely based on their perceptions of the results of the 2012 elections. How many women with disabilities did stand for elections? Does Electoral Act of Lesotho give women with disabilities opportunity like the allocation that has been made for women? There is a hope that the coming elections will raise the number of women in parliament.

The barometer showed that women's participation in economic decision-making the proportion has risen from 18% to 26%. When talking about decision making here, the focus was on ministers, principal secretaries and central bank governor. There is more to be done in order to achieve gender equality in this sector by 2015.

Greater leadership and political will is required. When doing the assessments all sectors of women should be approached such that even the minority groups are assessed. We, as women and girls with disabilities can be leaders or decision-makers in Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs).

The disability slogan says; 'Nothing about Us without Us' this only shows that there is no way can someone plan and budget for you without the concern of such person. Ms. Nanaki talking to her sign language interpreter during break, The protocol says; 'state parties shall by 2015 adopt policies and enact laws which ensure equal access, benefits and opportunities

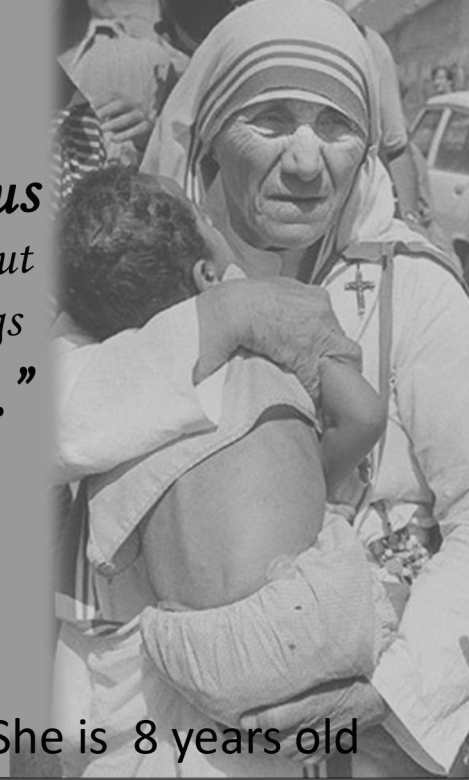
for women and men in trade and entrepreneurship taking into account the contribution of women in the formal and informal sectors'. This is where women and girls with disabilities can enjoy the most as most of them are falling within the informal sector.

The government of Lesotho is establishing so many institutions to train people but after being trained what is happening? Where do people go to seek funding? The official launch was made by Mrs. Futho Letsatsi on behalf of the Minister of Gender, Youth, Sport and Recreation after reading the speech from the minister. The participants divided in groups according to the thematic areas and discussed them. We did realize that in every meeting in this country unless there is someone with disabilities there is no way can issues of disabilities could be taken into considerations.

"Nothing about Us, without Us"



*“ Not all of us
can do great things. But
we can do small things
with great love.”*



Lerato who has a growing eye from birth now She is 8 years old

1. Where do you live?

The name of my village is Ha
Ralejoe at Nazareth

**2. With whom are you staying
with? Is anybody working in
your family?**

*I am stays with my mum who is
not working. We survive on
through piece jobs. I am not
attending school because my
mother said I do not have to.”
said Lerato.*

3. Are you attending school?

*I am not attending school
because my mother told me
that my peers might make fun
of me because I have a big eye.*

**4. Are you satisfied that you
are not going to school?**

I am not happy at all because it
is boring at home as I am
playing alone or with my
younger sister.

**5. When did you last go to
the doctor?**

I was taken to Roma at St.
Joseph’s Hospital in 2013,
where my mother was told
that the eye needs to be taken
out. My mother has to take me
to Queen Memorial Hospital,
she also told that she must
have at least M1,200.00 but
she don’t have it that is why I
still have this eye.”

**6. What did you mother do
in order to help you?**

My mother asked many
people to assist her with
funds for transport but failed.
She also need to go to social
development but she cannot
get any money.

**7. What can you say?
Anything?**

I need help so that I can be
able to interact with other
children maybe next year at
school.

**8. What do you want to be
when you grow up?**

I want to be a Prime Minister
of Lesotho

**9. What do you like to play
most?**

I like to play ‘Mantloane
(temporary housing play by
Basotho kids)





LNFOD holds a guest Lecture for students of LESOTHO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

By: Maja Matsoha

The realization of inclusive education for learners with disabilities in Lesotho is still facing many challenges, amongst them the lack of and National Inclusive Education Policy that would ensure uniformity of approached towards inclusive education. One of the many challenges is the lack of sensitization on the rights of persons with disabilities and the continuing discrimination faced by persons with disabilities. The lack of assistive services, devices and technology needed for learning by learners with disabilities is also another major challenge.

In order to sensitize teachers in training on disability rights LNFOD held a guest Lecture Series at the Lesotho College of education coordinated by the Department of Special Education on 12 September 2014. Over 500 students of the college together with lecturers attended the Lecture from various departments within the college and the Dean of Social Sciences.

Representatives from LNFOD and Disabled Persons Organizations namely, IDAL, LNLVIP, NADL, LNAPD were also present to address questions raised by students on disability rights and challenges faced by persons with disabilities in accessing education.

The main presentation delivered by Executive Board Member LNFOD Mr. Sam Letima covered the background of disability in Lesotho, which highlighted the attitudinal and structural barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The presentation then covered the concept of inclusive education as well as the models of approaches towards disability and challenges faced by learners with disabilities in Lesotho. **Some of the questions raised by students were:**

1. Referrals: where should I refer a learner with disabilities who I suspect is being sexually abused?
2. Assistive devices: what do I do when a learner with disability is unable to reach their full learning potential due to the lack of assistive devices which government is not providing?
3. Protective laws: are there any protective laws nationally to protect persons with disability from the various forms of discrimination faced.
4. Some schools infrastructure is inaccessible for learners with disability how can they access education inclusively unless such infrastructure is changed?



LNFOOD



equal rights and
full participation



Africa Disability Alliance



European Union



Designed & Produced by:



Tel: (+266) 22314246
email: info@print-corp.co.ls