

Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled press statement on the passing of the Persons with Disabilities Equity Bill by Senate

Date 24th November 2020

The Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) notes with great appreciation the passing of the Persons with Disability Equity Bill on the 18 November 2020 by the Senate. The Bill was first tabled in the Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho on the 31 August 2018 by Honourable Minister of Social Development, Honourable ‘Matebatso Doti and was passed by the lower house of Parliament on the 27 November 2019 under the leadership of Minister of Social Development Honourable Motlohi Malihe.

The passing of Persons with Disability Equity Bill by Senate marks a turning point for the Lesotho disability movement in which LNFOD and its allies will focus on developing the strategies and mechanisms of ensuring effective enforcements and implementation of this much awaited Act. The passing of this long awaited Bill by Senate represents a significant milestone achieved by both the government and persons with disabilities. If well implemented, the Persons with Disability Equity Act can be a game changer for persons with disabilities and can facilitate effective mainstreaming of persons with disabilities in all aspects of development.

This achievement comes after a long struggle of persons with disabilities demanding the domestication of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities through an Act of Parliament since Lesotho is a dualistic state which needs to transform the international conventions and treaties to be transformed into domestic law before they can be enforceable in Lesotho.

The drafting of this historical Bill started in 2014 in which many ups and downs experienced made it very difficult for the Bill to be passed in time just like any other piece of legislation.

LNFOD extends its deepest gratitude to its partners, Diakonie Act Austria, Bread for the World Germany and the Lesotho development partners including all UN agencies for providing financial and technical support to make LNFOD stronger in advocating for this Act ever since its inception.

Some of the key provisions of this Bill includes establishment of the independent Disability Advisory Council which will monitor effective implementation of this Act and an array of disability rights including social protection, employment and access to justice for persons with disabilities.

LNFOOD notes the commitment and determination of the sitting Minister of Social Development by fulfilling her promise of enacting this Bill into law and LNFOOD is looking forward to monitoring the effective implementation of this Act as soon as it is enforceable in Lesotho.

Please do not hesitate to contact LNFOOD at 22320345; or email at admin@lnfod.org.ls should you need more information about this press statement.