



From the Editor

Dear Partner,

Welcome once again to the edition of Disability Lesotho, the monthly email newsletter from Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled. The edition will cover news for the Month of October, 2015

This e-newsletter is a platform whereby partners in the disability sector share the good work they do and learn from the work of others. This includes news, concerns, events, updates, activities and all issues affecting people with disability in Lesotho. We therefore welcome contributions of any nature from all organizations and institutions working to improve the lives of people in Lesotho, including those with disability.

In Lesotho, at least 56.6% of Basotho are estimated to be living below the poverty line. Unemployment has been identified, by the government and people of Lesotho, as one of the key development challenges confronting both women and youth, thus exacerbating vulnerability and poverty. As per the study on the living conditions of Persons with Disabilities 2010, disabled women and youth are the most hit hard. These people are thus trapped in the cycle of poverty.

I think it is high time that people with disabilities are changing to the better, their lives and wealth in general..

The cycle of poverty has been defined as a phenomenon where poor families become trapped in poverty for at least three generations.

In generally, as people with disabilities can access employment, we can talk about being employed or being self-employed, that can break that vicious circle of poverty.

If you would like to contribute to the next issue or have received this newsletter from a third party and wish to be included on the mailing list please contact Pascalina Letsau on (+266) 5905 5406 or pletsau@gmail.com

If you missed the previous editions please visit www.lnfod.org.ls

We welcome any feedback that may improve the quality and content of this free service.

Best regards,



The Editor

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Launch of Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Plan

By: Sefuthi Nkhasi

On the 27 October 2015 Maseru, at Lesotho Avani Resort and Hotel, The Ministry of Social Development has successfully developed the National Disability Mainstreaming Plan in partnership with the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) and Africa Disability Alliance (ADA) held a meeting on Disability Mainstreaming Plan.

“Disability has moved from being a social welfare issue to a development issue. This simply means that, disability should be addressed through development of disability inclusive laws, policies, programs and services. Most importantly, persons with disabilities must be part of the inclusive and accessible design, planning, monitoring, implementation and evaluation of the government programs through their representative organisations. The government of Lesotho has played a measure role in terms of making sure that, people with disabilities participate in the development of this plan so that the rights and needs of people with disabilities could be incorporated into the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming plan.

The adoption and the launch of the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Plan is a game changer for disability rights advocacy and mainstreaming in Lesotho. It creates hope among

the disability rights activists and basis for our further advocacy on the monitoring and implementation of the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Plan.

It also provides the government ministries with the strategic means through which they can mainstream disability in their existing programs and services LNFOD has been involved throughout the process of making the Lesotho National Disability Mainstreaming Plan.

By so doing the government of Lesotho has fully demonstrated its commitment to working with organisations of persons with disabilities in finding the solutions of the challenges facing inclusion of people with disabilities in Lesotho. LNFOD therefore commends the government of Lesotho for undertaken the development of the mainstreaming plan during the period when the world has just adopted the sustainable development goals of which some of them make specific reference to people with disabilities. This plan is launched when the government of Lesotho is on the verge of passing disability rights legislation which will strengthen the promotion and protection of the rights of people with disabilities. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, the effective implementation of this plan requires allocation of funds, high degree of commitments, from the policymakers, and the focal persons as well as the ongoing capacity development trainings for the focal points on disability mainstreaming.

LNFOOD strongly believes that, the effective implementation of this plan can change the lives of the marginalized people with disabilities who remain invisible in the society due to environmental and attitudinal barriers facing them in the communities in which they live.

LNFOOD therefore calls upon the government of Lesotho and the development partners to support the implementation of this plan through allocation of the budget which will assist the government officials and other stakeholders to realise effective implementation of the plan.

A vote of thanks goes to the Africa Disability Alliance for forming the meaningful partnership with the government of Lesotho which led to the successful implementation of the COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE FOR DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING PROJECT.

In Lesotho LNFOOD can proudly confirm that, the project has achieved its objectives because it has enabled LNFOOD to negotiate with the government on the development of the Lesotho National Mainstreaming Plan and the adoption of Washington group question on disability for the upcoming census in 2016 to mention just a few.

Advocacy Aspect

Space for civil society

By: Hlompho Letsie

It is now difficult for civil societies to perform their tasks due to scarce resources and lack of funding, as well as the political situation in the country, which is not conducive for donors and funders to feel free and safe to work in the Lesotho, Highlighted the LCN president on her opening remarks.

Lesotho council of Non-Government Organisation (LCN) celebrated the international democracy day at Victoria Hotel on the 15 September 2015. Civil society's organisations attended in great numbers.

The LCN Executive Director Mr. Seabata Motsamai added the civil societies have to intervene where the government stops, as their duties are to extend the services to the people. Civil society needs space to compliment the activities of the government though the space is very limited. He added that the government need to be intolerant for the demand of the civil societies as the demand normally comes directly from the cross roots. He emphasized that both the government and the civil societies should have a common understanding, tolerance and a harmonious working relationship towards a social capital which is based on trust.

The ambassador of the European Union Mr. Theo Kaspers, was also present, he highlighted how of civil society played a critical role in changing the lives of the Europeans through their development project. Through his experience in some SADC countries, the situation is not conducive at all, so the advice is to bring the right arguments to win the government trust and approval in civil society's activities. In some countries for Private Secretaries to attend an event, they have to be paid, but in Lesotho is exceptional as he has never experiences such behaviors.

The acting Principal secretary, of development planning Teboho Mokela, posited that civil society are the oxygen of the government not the enemy of the government as they compliment the efforts of the government.

The government is currently working on policies that will give civil society chance to work freely; they are also working on the module, which will talk about the sustainability of civil society in development.

She highlighted that there is a need for the three parties, government, civil societies and Non-government, organisations to work together, to assist through their funding to combat the high level of unemployment and a high level of poverty. She promised that with the new government in place the policies that need to be in pace will be active.

GENERAL NEWS

Strides to livelihoods

By: Pascalina Letsau



Disabled people have embarked on poultry projects: Time has come that people with disabilities are doing things for themselves. Business Initiative Group of People with Disabilities through the help from Central Bank of Lesotho started various some poultry projects. The idea is to break the cycle of poverty that has been defined as a phenomenon where families of PWDs became trapped in poverty for at least three generations.

The initiative is engaging its members in the poultry and piggery farming. It is again the will of the initiative to see that these projects expand more businesses for Basotho people with disabilities in the Maseru district. BIGPD ascribes to the calls for both organized civil society, business and the government to strive for means for sustenance

Members of BIGPD are going to fight poverty among them by establishing capacity development trainings on entrepreneurs with disabilities. The organization shall establish relations with business service providers in this light for capacity building and marketing relations and also to encourage others to establish Small Medium Enterprise for themselves.

The strides from livelihoods derive from both the everyday general experiences people with disabilities face. These include hardships associated with putting food on the table, buying energy to fuel homes, to those within the broader communities.

The strides also derive from the general theoretical and practical experiences, best practices from folk lore and documented material in the cottage industry and small scale business world.

BIGPD continues in her endless endeavors to appeal for technical support and would like to appeal for general support from institutions and individuals of good will.

GENERAL NEWS

Handing-over assistive devices to Ranchobe from Harvest FM

By: Pascalina Letsau



Maseru, Ha Shelile on the 22nd October, Harvest FM under the directive of 'M'e 'Malichaba Lekhoaba handed over the assistive devices to a young man by the name of Phea Ranchobe.

Phea Ranchobe was born at Lesobeng Thaba-Tseka. In a family of 7 children, he is the last born. He is living with the father only as the mother has passed away. They moved from Lesobeng to Maseru Ha Shelile in 1991. Ranchobe managed to complete his COSC in 2001

The event was blessed by the presence of Minister of Communication Hon. Minister Khotso Letsatsi. The orthopedist Mr. Chabeli Mohatlane was also there in order to assist the patient how to use his assistive appliance. Community members were also there to thank God for what He has done for Rachobe as it took him almost 7 years stack in bed.

"This young man by the name of Phea Ranchobi requested Harvest FM to visit him when he heard from the radio that we are going to host the doctors from UK and USA. When these doctors cancelled the

trip to Lesotho due to instability we decided to visit him and see her situation. It touched my heart when I saw him and decide to raise funds to buy artificial legs for him and by the grace of god the response was awesome including the support from some of my friend from overseas. Therefore this week on Thursday we will hand over those two legs worth M60, 000.00 to him." said 'Malichaba

"I would like to thank God for giving us 'm'e 'Malichaba and ntate Chabeli with strength and passion they got to help my brother, on behalf of the family." Said 'Mateboho Ranchobe

The medical orthotics and prosthetics Mr. Mohatlane said, "I am always working with 'm'e 'Malichaba when coming to issues of disability, it is not the first time. I realized that Phea had a disease that ended amputating his legs, so even his hands are not working properly due to muscles problems. I am able to help a person after 2 years when he/she is healed.

The Minister of communication Mr. Letsatsi said, "I am happy see a radio station supporting needy people. This is a massive thing as it is educating, helping and entertaining not talking about politics that are dividing us as Basotho. I wish all radio stations could do the same in order to give back to the community. It is not Ranchobe alone who is in necessitate of this assistive devices, they are many and need support. I would like to thank 'm'e ;Malichaba and ntate Chabeli as Basotho for the great job they have done to change lives."



GENERAL NEWS

“Success doesn’t follow a time clock” – physically disabled finally manufacturing for themselves

By: Pascalina Letsau



People with physical disabilities in the Mafeteng district have established Incorporation. It is the interest of people with disabilities to be involved business activities that may help to reduce poverty among their families. The company is the registered under the company’s Act of 2011 as a private company serving the interest of potential and business people with disabilities. The registration number is 52339. This incorporation has registered with Ministry of Trade and goes in line with Lesotho laws that are taking care of businesses. The incorporation is known as Itsepeng (PTY) LTD. The company is situated at Hospital area next to Indian church at Maphathe’s duplets at Mafeteng.

Itsepeng (PTY) LTD is specializing by assembling parts of churches to finished ones. Activities of the company are:

1. Manufacture of irradiation, electro medical and electrotherapeutic equipment
2. Manufacture of medical and dental instruments and supplies Repair of medical equipment
3. Retail sale of medical equipment

4. Manufacture of structural metal products
5. Manufacture of other fabricated metal products

The idea is to supply the country with these important assistive devices to people with physical disabilities. Crutches are now made in Lesotho by people with disabilities themselves. The company will also repair all medical appliances like wheelchairs and others. “We hope to work hard so that at the end we supply everything that will be needed or all assistive devices that are used by people with disabilities in this country. We want to be a well known company that will specialize by disability needs.” Concluded Mamarama

The company has about 10 Shareholders. All these people have been trained on how to do the job; again they have been trained on how to run a business and keeping books by the Ministry of Trade, while Ministry of Social Development was supporting to see that everything is going well.

At the moment the company have managed to finish 67 churches and sold them to the Ministry of Social Development in the district. All in all the company have finished about 151 crutches. It is the agreement that the Ministry will buy from Itsepeng (PTY) LTD and supply people with disabilities that will call for them from the Ministry. “It is our hope that if we can be supported by our government we can go far as people with disabilities. What we do not want is when people see us as beggars. We are capable of doing many and more things on our own to change our lives if given opportunity”. Said Fusi Sefuthi

“The company is pleading to all Basotho who may need our service to support by buying from us. This will help more Basotho people to understand the ability, capability and strength that people with disabilities have. We need to show the world how capable people with disabilities are. It is true that we want to go far but the problem that we are facing is lack of equipment, we still have hoped that we will manage to go through.” Concluded Puleng Fako

Opinion Piece

HIV and AIDS continue to restrict lives in Lesotho – By: Pascalina Letsau

The statistic shows that Lesotho is now number 2 when rated to HIV and AIDS compared to other countries. The pandemic is affecting all of us including people with disabilities. Some years back Lesotho had a commission which was dealing with the pandemic, when times goes. The commission was closed and that to me was not a good move. I can see and understand that the commission will be opened again. How does this going to help Basotho that are affected and infected by it? Is it going to function like before? Will the NGOs be part and parcel of the commission?

According to me AIDS and poverty are equally reinforcing. I am saying this because if the government is not ready to create new jobs, the problem will continue. The pandemic is more affecting us as people with disabilities, we hardly get employment and PWDs are not getting proper information related to issues of health. There are so many barriers or inaccessible facilities to assist them. Conditions of poverty facilitate HIV transmission and increase vulnerability to infection both biologically (such as malnutrition or other conditions that weaken the immune system) and socially (low education, food insecurity, poor access to prevention methods).

The government and all the existing NGOs should work hard to empower women and girls, addressing gender norms and ensuring gender-sensitive HIV response critical to progress. They have to work hard again to reduce stigma and discrimination experienced by people with disabilities and those living with HIV and AIDS and key explosion in health sector, in accessing justice and services. All the punitive and discriminatory laws as major obstacles must be abolished or reviewed by the parliament.

The state should also empower young people in response to the pandemic. Issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights should be educated in schools and institutions. Young people with disabilities need better access to HIV and sexual health information and education.

They also need support for new, youth-led social media platforms that provide information, social support and mobilizing and advocacy strategies. People with disability is the population that is left behind and face the greatest barriers to participation are empowered to access relevant services, demand their human rights, and enact change.

The commission that is going to re-open should expand of treatment has transformed how the epidemic manifests, is perceived and is responded to in this country. All services related to Disability and HIV and AIDS are decentralized, until each person is covered by the programme including the one who cannot go out from the bed.

Women and girls with disabilities are at high risk of HIV is shaped by deep-rooted and pervasive gender inequalities including violence against them. They are at high risk because in many places around this country they are emotional and physically and sexual abused. Social norms permit men to have multiple sexual partners and to dominate sexual decision-making, while women's ability to negotiate condom use or their engagement in sex is often shaped by their economic dependence on men. All these norms should not be allowed and should stop as they do not groom the young ones as leaders of tomorrow.

SPOTLIGHT



**'Malichaba Lekhoaba – Harvest FM
Managing Director**

1. Do you have a close friend or a family member who has a disability?

- Yes, I have close friends who has a disability

2. When did you start interacting with people with disabilities?

- I grew up in a family where people who were mentally disabled liked to visit often.

3. What let you to have that curiosity of being close them?

- I am a very compassionate person especially to people who have a disability.

4. Can you say how many people with disabilities got help from you so far?

- I think more than 20 because I also work with groups of them.

5. You have recently managed to give hope to a

young man with disability from Qoaling area, what gotten into you until you did such gesture? Did the man asked for a help or you just volunteered?

- This young man by the name of Phea Ranchobi requested Harvest FM to visit him when he heard from the radio that we are going to host the doctors from UK and USA. When these doctors cancelled the trip to Lesotho due to instability we decided to visit him and see her situation. It touched my heart when I saw him and decide to raise funds to buy artificial legs for him and by the grace of god the response was awesome including the support from some of my friend from overseas. Therefore this week on Thursday we will hand over those two legs worth M60, 000.00 to him.

6. You scared many of your friends when showed them how much the orthotics cost; what does that tell you about the level of our awareness amongst the members of our community on issues of disability assistive devices?

- The issues of disability needs a person who is compassionate and love god. It also needs someone who is a giver.

7. Do you think Lesotho government through Ministry of Social Development is doing enough in financing disability specific issues, or are they doing business as usual?

- I think the government through ministry of social development is not doing enough. It is a ministry that needs to have a good budget because there are so many things to be done to improve the lives of people with disability.

8. In your view, what needs to be done in this country to reduce vulnerability within the disability?

- The government needs to put aside the budget for special unit for ministry of social development for people with disability straight from the LRA through the government so that people who pay taxes know that at least their taxes help vulnerable people and people with disability. The government also needs to go outside the country to find donations for that unit to meet all the needs of the disability. The list is endless when I talk about how people with disability can be helped. I am so passionate about that.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENT

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Join the struggle of millions of people infected and affected by Breast cancer, it affects all both males and females consult your physicist at the local health centre – free of charge. Wear pink ribbon to join the campaign, spread the love.

#breastcancerawareness
www.who.org/breastcancer

International Disability Day 3rd December

For more information please conduct LNFOD office; +266 22320345
 Email; nkhasi@Infod.org.ls

LNAPD Congress

For more information please conduct LNAPD office (+266) 22320366

Email;
lesothophysicaldisability@gamil.com

Public gatherings

For more information please conduct LNFOD office or Rabasotho Moeletsi (+266) 22320345
 Email; moeletsi@Infod.org.ls

Another new organisation registered – Khanya Development Centre for Children with Disabilities (KHADEC)

Mixing business with pleasure – hip, flare, style and fashion. Also the rural and the cosmopolitan, KHADEC aims to reach children and youth with disabilities in their livelihood and developmental challenges throughout the country

For more information please conduct (+266) 58060672

Email; khadec@gmail.com
khanya@gmail.com

Itsepeng (PTY) LTD – Mafeteng

A company to make Alluminium Elbow crutches to sell for Basotho. Please support this cooperation for Basotho people with physical disability.

For more information please conduct (+266) 58906477 or 56756457

Business Initiative Group of people with disabilities (BIGPD)

Will be selling chickens this month, let us support this initiative

For more information please conduct (+266) 58998332 / 63647924

NEWS IN PICTURE



Happy Ranchobe after receiving his assistive devices



Matsasane – visually impaired woman is leading a public gathering at Manonyane



Shareholders of Itsepeng (PTY) LTD are trained on how to run a business by Ministry of Trade-Mafeteng



LNFOF Public gathering at Thaba-Mokhele Community Council Mhaleshoek



DPO Executive committees are trained on finance management



Chickens to be sold very soon by Business Initiative Group of PWDs

ADVOCACY WORK



LNFOD

PARTNERS in Advocacy Work



Africa Disability Alliance

