

House No. 544
Hoohlo Extension
Maseru



Private Bag A445
Maseru 100, Lesotho
Southern Africa
Telephone (+266) 22317205
22325798
Fax (+266) 22310412
E-mail: admin@lcn.org.ls
Website: www.lcn.org.ls

Lesotho Council of NGOs to hold a women's forum on International Women's day

As the world pauses to observe the International women's day (08/03/16), we as civil society organisations in Lesotho would also want to take this time to reflect on the progress of women aligning ourselves with the global theme "Planet 50-50 by 2030, step it up for gender equity". We have organized a women's forum to be held at AME Hall Maseru from 9:00 am.

Lesotho Council of NGOs through the support of European Union conducted a study on the status of women in Lesotho. The study findings were based on the International Covenants that prescribe equal participation of men and women in the civil and political rights, and on the existing Legislation, policies and institutional arrangements that affect the status of women in Lesotho, and the gaps that exist in the Legislation, policies and institutional arrangements that affect the status of women in the rural areas.

The constitution of Lesotho prohibits discrimination but has reservations on the applicability of this rule where such is contradictory with customary law. This is also seen in the reservations that Lesotho has made with regards to the applicability of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. The government has enacted a number of progressive laws that are meant to address gender inequalities with startling results

- Legal capacity of Married Person Act of 2006- has abolished the marital power that was traditionally endowed in a man but still leaves out the status of unmarried and other groups of women.
- Land Act of 2010 – it empowers women to register land in their own right emancipating many women and improving both their social and economic values.
- Decentralization policy of 2014 – it provides frame work for Deeping and widening the economic and social benefits of democracy to all citizens including women.

While these are positive steps, there is a lot that remains to be done to ensure that women are on an equal footing with men in Lesotho. Women in politics and leadership have slightly decreased despite women remaining higher on the literacy and employment ratings. To this effect, we feel there is need for us as a country to take bolder steps in addressing gender parity by employing equitable measures that will ensure a more balanced and progressive Lesotho.

We thus encourage Lesotho to take the pledge to step up their efforts in ensuring that we reach not only goal five of the Sustainable Development goals but also to improve the lives of women and girls in Lesotho. As civil society organisations under the stewardship of LCN through our programming shall in turn seek to:

- Ensure through our programming the creation of an environment where both the boy and girl have a better chance at life
- To ensure equal access to education for both girls and boys
- Advocate for the adoption of flexible cultural practices that will not widen the gap but instead encourage a more progressive and inclusive Lesotho
- Take the pledge to ensure that we breach the gender parity in Lesotho by taking daily steps to ensure a more equal and equitable Lesotho

For More Information

Thandiwe Matumelo Ntelo (Ms)
Information and Communications Officer
Lesotho Council of NGOs
Tel: +266 22317205
Mobile: +266 62110788/59022116
matumelo.ntelo@lcn.org.ls