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**Editorial** Aiyobuwan and Vanakam! Greetings from Sri Lanka! Welcome to this edition of Motif, which focuses on the Worldmade programme. Motivation's Worldmade programme is truly global: partner organisations spread across India, Nepal, South Africa, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka are supported by a team of managers and designers in the UK, a services and training team in Sri Lanka and a mass production facility in China.

As Asia Services Coordinator, part of my role is to help partners in setting up their wheelchair services. This role enables me to see first hand how Worldmade wheelchairs impact on the lives of wheelchair users in developing countries. It also gives me a

chance to work alongside trained therapy assistants and technicians who have undergone the *Fit for Life* training course in their own centres. During the latest support visit, they too have witnessed a transformation in the wheelchair users they have assessed and prescribed with Worldmade wheelchairs. The users' happiness in discovering independent mobility once they have been given the right wheelchair affects the whole team. To be a part of that discovery is rewarding.

That is the beauty of the Worldmade programme: as well as being a professional service for wheelchair users of global reach, it becomes a personal experience. I hope you enjoy reading more about it in this Motif.

## Worldmade Launches at the House of Commons



After five years of development the Worldmade programme was officially launched at the House of Commons on the 19th July. The event followed the very successful first delivery of Worldmade wheelchairs and the associated *Fit for Life* training course in Sri Lanka earlier that month. B&Q generously organised the launch for the programme at a reception and lunch event. Hosted by Rt. Hon Roger Berry MP, the event was attended by members of the B&Q Sustainability Team, MP's, various NGO's and other funders of the programme such as Four Acre Trust and The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

The event went very well and featured a short film about the Worldmade concept shot for Motivation by B&Q. Great interest was shown in the Worldmade chairs, examples of which were on display. Our thanks go especially to Roger Berry for inviting us to the prestigious venue and to B&Q for hosting the event on Motivation's behalf.

The Worldmade team celebrate the programme's official launch at the House of Commons

# Designed to Seat

*Motivation often talks about how a wheelchair needs to “fit” a person. The Worldmade wheelchair’s unique design allows every wheelchair to be identically manufactured, but crucially “assembled to fit.”*

Although Worldmade wheelchairs can be assembled to fit almost any size, they leave the production line flat-packed in identical boxes. This process keeps the unit cost to a minimum and avoids the complicated logistics of ordering different sized wheelchairs. Once the wheelchairs arrive in their destination country, they are distributed to our trained Worldmade technicians who individually, according to the user’s prescription, assemble each one.

In June this year, Motivation ran its first *Fit for Life* rural wheelchair assembly course in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The eight technicians who took part in the two week programme were from Motivation’s partner organisations in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Most had no previous experience of assembling wheelchairs and their practical ability ranged considerably.

*Fit for Life* equips technicians with the skills they need to assemble the Worldmade wheelchair competently as well as training them in other issues surrounding disability. Although it will always be the role of therapists to prescribe wheelchairs, the technicians gain an awareness of different types of disabilities and the individual needs of wheelchair users. More importantly, they learn how to work as a team with therapists to provide wheelchairs that precisely fit

each individual wheelchair user.

An important part of the formation of the *Fit for Life* course was the development of wheelchair assembly instructions. These had to be designed in a way that could be understood by technicians of varying backgrounds, languages and levels of literacy, many of whom will have never seen or used traditional pictorial instructions before. As part of his Masters Degree, Peter Schumacher, Program Director of Industrial Design at University of South Australia, developed a style of instructions appropriate for local technicians, which have now become an essential tool



*Andrew training Rahulan on Worldmade wheelchair assembly*

for all Worldmade technicians. This aspect of the project was also supported by the Piper Group, Bristol.

It was inspiring to see how keen the technicians were to learn new skills; they took great ownership of the wheelchairs they were building, assembling each with tremendous care and pride.

Since it was pioneered in

Sri Lanka, the *Fit for Life* training course has been successfully repeated in Papua New Guinea and there are plans to run it in India as well. As Worldmade grows, we hope that some of the recently qualified Worldmade technicians will go on to become Worldmade trainers, passing their skills on to others in their local area.

*Rahulan, putting his new skills into practice, assembles a Worldmade wheelchair*



## Fit For Life

Meet Laksmi, she is married with two teenage daughters and works as an administration assistant. She is also one of the characters that Motivation is using to train rehabilitation assistants and therapists on the *Fit for Life* Prescription Course in Asia.

The *Fit for Life* Prescription Course targets organisations working in developing countries where knowledge of wheelchairs, wheelchair user needs, and wheelchair assessment and prescription processes may be limited. In addition to this, qualified therapists may be few and far between. The course is aimed to train rehabilitation assistants or therapists on the skills required to successfully assess and prescribe a wheelchair, and provide wheelchair users with basic instruction in using their wheelchair.

Laksmi, along with other 'wheelchair user' characters, has become a familiar face for the twenty six rehabilitation assistants who have successfully completed the *Fit for Life* course. This includes representatives from organisations across Sri Lanka, India and Nepal. As the participants work through the course they interact with these characters' lifestyles and disability issues through case studies, role plays and questionnaires. This is proving to be a powerful tool in educating and creating awareness about the individual needs and rights of wheelchair users.

There is a strong practical element to the training.



*Laksmi, one of the characters used in the Fit for Life training course in Sri Lanka*

Participants learn the importance of different wheelchair designs and features; how to handle wheelchairs as well as wheelchair mobility skills. They also work alongside wheelchair users to develop their assessment, prescription, fitting and wheelchair mobility skills.

One of the most significant impacts of the course has been the shifts in attitude that seem to occur within the participants towards wheelchairs and wheelchair users. They finish the course empowered and

motivated about what they can achieve in their own organisations.

Following the success of *Fit for Life* in Sri Lanka, another training course was run in Papua New Guinea in September 2005 in partnership with Voluntary Service Overseas and the National Orthotic and Prosthetic Services. We are delighted to report that eight students graduated from the technical course and another eight from the prescription course.

## Access for All after the tsunami

Motivation and the consortium of organisations it works with on the Access for All programme in Sri Lanka have successfully lobbied the government to issue a directive making it compulsory for all public buildings in the post tsunami reconstruction to be accessible for persons with disabilities. Prior to this, there had been no consultation with the disabled community in Sri Lanka about the post tsunami reconstruction, even though disabled people make up an estimated 10% of the

population. The Access for All team also offers ongoing support and services in the design and implementation stages of reconstruction. A truly inclusive nation, which enables people with disabilities to contribute to society and the economy, is only possible if disabled people are encouraged to participate in plans to rebuild livelihoods and rebuild lives.



### ★ Seven more Wheelchair Technologists in Africa

We are delighted to announce that another seven students have graduated from the Wheelchair Technologist Training Course in Tanzania. There are now two more professional Wheelchair Technologists in Uganda, one in Zimbabwe, one in Kenya, and three in Tanzania. Congratulations to you all!

### ★ International Day of Disabled Persons

December 3rd is the UN's International Day of Disabled Persons. This aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilise support for the dignity, rights and well-being of people with disabilities. If you would like to recognise the day by supporting Motivation, please contact Francesca on 01275 461946 or at [Garton@motivation.org.uk](mailto:Garton@motivation.org.uk) for fundraising resources.

★ **Online news** Both Motivation Sri Lanka and the Worldmade programme now have their own websites. Check out [www.motivationsrilanka.org](http://www.motivationsrilanka.org) and [www.worldmade.info](http://www.worldmade.info) and let us know what you think!

### ★ Employment Training in Sri Lanka

A week long workshop was held in June to train our local partners in Sri Lanka on the Employment Placement Programme so that it can be replicated in further regions. Participants learnt how to conduct job seeking skills workshops, run job fairs and maintain databases of employers and employees. Crucially, they were also taught how to promote and sustain the programme.

## Home

- Many congratulations to our Design Products Manager, Chris Rushman and his wife Kyla, whose beautiful daughter Isobel Holly Rushman was born on 2nd August 2005. Isobel is thriving and Chris and Kyla have forgotten what a good night's sleep feels like!

- Motivation is sorry to bid farewell to four important players from the Sri Lanka team. George and Jen have moved to Australia and Shamini and Stefan have resettled in Canada. We are delighted that they will still be involved with Motivation, albeit more distantly. Thank you for all your hard work on the Disability Support Programme, and good luck in your new homes.

- The Freemasons of Eastgate Lodge have donated £2,000 to Motivation. It is not widely known that you do not have to be a Freemason to benefit from their support, and we are very grateful for this generous gift.

- We are sorry to say that Rachel Smith, who joined Motivation as Donor Support Officer earlier this year, is currently unable to work for health reasons. Francesca Garton is providing temporary cover until Rachel is well enough to return. Enquiries about Christmas cards, donations and fundraising resources should be directed to Francesca on 01275 461946 or Garton@motivation.org.uk. We hope you get better soon, Rachel!

Up Close &

# Personal

**Rejoice Timire** - wife, teacher and mother of five - felt that all hope was lost when she sustained C6/C7 spinal cord injuries in a car accident. That was until she joined the Disabled Women Support Organisation (DWSO) and proved to Zimbabwe, and the rest of the world, that disabled women can take a leading role in business.

Rejoice explains that life was extremely tough for her and her family before she joined DWSO: "My husband's income as a policeman was too little to send our kids to school or care for me with my expensive urinary equipment". Determined to assist her husband in supporting the family, Rejoice began to buy and sell groundnuts. "I had no idea how to run a business, though I was operating one", Rejoice explains.

Joining DWSO in April last year gave Rejoice the

opportunity to augment her business skills by enrolling on an International Business Entrepreneur Training Course: Empretec Zimbabwe. This was the first such training course that a disabled person had ever taken part in in Zimbabwe. Despite the fact that the majority of the trainees were university educated men from influential companies, it was Rejoice who was awarded 'Empretec of the Week' for being the most talented trainee.

With her new found skills



Rejoice, proudly awarded 'Empretec of the Week'

Rejoice felt able to expand her business into a more profitable venture. She is now a full time business woman and her peanut butter is sold commercially in supermarkets, schools, hospitals and other such institutions. Rejoice explains that "It's really been a struggle to achieve all this; all we are calling for is empowerment so that we can prove ourselves. Such opportunities were unheard of in the history of this country. We hope to continue from here".

## Christmas shopping with a difference

This Christmas, instead of spending large amounts on presents for friends and family, why not send a contribution to Motivation's Africa Wheelchair Fund for a more meaningful gift? Alternatively, you could ask them to donate in lieu of gifts for you.

£120 is all it takes to buy a wheelchair for a disabled person in Africa, but any

amount helps. We can record how much your fund has raised and let you know exactly how many disabled people will enjoy independent mobility as a result of your support. We will acknowledge every gift with a letter explaining how the donation will be used and we can also customise information to celebrate a wedding, birthday



or graduation – just call Elly on **01275 464031** to discuss your gift of mobility.

Now, that's better than a novelty tie isn't it?