

Home

- Welcome to Jan Knight, who has recently joined the Fundraising Team. Jan has worked as a programme director in Malawi and Uganda, and will be supporting our fundraising efforts for Africa this year.

- Winscombe Orchestra is performing a programme of music by Schubert, Elgar, Fauré and Grieg at the Friends' Meeting House, Sidcot on Friday 18th March in aid of Motivation. Entry is £5 (£4 concs). Please call Elly on 01275 464301 to book a seat.

- Congratulations to our Finance Manager Al-Hassan Bangura and his wife Kumba whose third child, Elijah, was born on 11th January 2005.

- We are pleased to welcome Thanuja Nawaratne to the Access For All programme in Sri Lanka, and also congratulate three DSP team members, Shiv, Vimal, & Suresh on their respective marriages!

- Motivation's annual accounts are now available from our website. Please visit www.motivation.org.uk and follow the link on the home page.

Up Close & Personal

Motivation initiated a Special Seating clinic for children with cerebral palsy in Bangladesh in 1998. Rehabilitation Engineer **Firoj Salauddin Chowdhury** is based at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP). Here, he explains his role:

Special Seating is essential for children with cerebral palsy if they are to have a chance to develop and achieve even a basic level of independence. Many children who attend CRP's Paediatric Unit are referred to the Special Seating service, and here we provide Special Seats to children with disabilities who are unable to sit without support.

I am 28 years old, and spent my early life in different parts of the country because my father's bank job meant that we moved around. I obtained my diploma in Mechanical Engineering from Rongpur Polytechnic Institute.

After working for two other organisations, I joined CRP in 1999. I was trained in Special Seating Engineering on the course set up by Motivation and the Bangladesh Health Professions Institute. Students of the year-long course are trained to provide the assessment, prescription and therapeutic services essential for a child's development, and at CRP, our team includes a qualified occupational therapist.

As an engineer, my role is as the central person with overall responsibility for producing seats



Rehabilitation Engineer, Firoj Salauddin Chowdhury

and assistive devices. At present, the department's capacity is nine Special Seats per month. However, we aim to extend this capacity as demand is increasing day by day. We have also experimented in making Special Seats with other more cost effective materials. We are working on a type of effective seat made from paper, using a method called Appropriate Paper Technology.

My job is rewarding because a Special Seat can give a child the opportunity to fulfil his or her potential for mental and physical development.

Continued from page 1.

The Spinal Injuries Association (SIA), another of our partner organisations, has been greatly involved in assisting disabled people affected by the tsunami. The group is made up of people who have themselves sustained spinal injuries, and their services cover the whole of Sri Lanka. Immediately after the tsunami hit, the group embarked on trips along the entire coastal belt. They have gone into communities to follow up on past members and to identify new cases of injury. Reports are starting to come back that suggest a large number of disabled people died in the

tsunami (a greater percentage than able bodied). Although the number that survived does not seem to be very great, the need identified is very high; those who have lost have lost everything: homes, possession, family members, livelihood and mobility.

Motivation is planning to address these needs on two levels. Firstly, in conjunction with the SIA, individual mobility equipment will be replaced and individuals will be able to access peer to peer counselling to help them come to terms with what has happened. Secondly, on a broader level, Motivation is starting a high profile advocacy and awareness programme, Access Sri Lanka, which has

been formulated to highlight the needs of all disabled people in the wake of the tsunami. A consortium has been formed with a national umbrella group of disability organisations and international non-government organisations to promote the Access Sri Lanka campaign.

Despite the unquestionable tragedy of the tsunami, Sri Lanka is now presented with a fantastic opportunity. The amount of reconstruction taking place along the coastal belt - reconstruction of public transport facilities, health-care clinics and schools, places of employment and public buildings - provides a great opportunity to rebuild with everybody's needs in mind.



Susannah Pritchard

Editorial I am delighted to be the guest editor of this Motif, albeit a remote editor. I am currently working in Sri Lanka, supporting our local partners as they begin 2005, along with the rest of the region, finding ways to recover from the Asian tsunami disaster.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to all our donors for your generous support of our recent tsunami appeal. Your quick response meant that we have been able to ensure additional support to disabled individuals and partner organisations affected by the tsunami. Your donations are also

supporting our advocacy initiative to campaign for an accessible Sri Lanka for all disabled people. As our main article explains, there is now a great opportunity to mainstream disabled people's rights within the reconstruction programme.

Several of Motivation's past project partners have written this edition. We feature the continually evolving collaborative design process in Africa, the long-term plans of organisations in Eastern Europe, and look at a project aimed at widening access of the built environment in Central America. I hope you enjoy this Motif!

After the Tsunami: From Devastation to Opportunity

Susannah Pritchard travelled to Sri Lanka to assess the impact of the tsunami. Here she reports on what she found and explains Motivation's response.

At the end of the first week of January, three members of Motivation staff went to Sri Lanka to support our local team in the wake of the tsunami. Two of Motivation's six local partner organisations are based on the southern coast, so we were trying to gauge the impact of the tsunami on their facilities, staff, services and existing clients. We also wanted to establish whether there had been a great increase in new cases of disability as a result of the disaster.

The first clues to the impact of the tsunami were felt at the airport. At the height of what should have been the tourist season, there was none of the usual holiday spirit, nor for that matter were there any tourists - only a few anxious Sri Lankans. The plane had 129 empty seats. In Colombo there was little visible evidence of the tsunami, but the first signs started just south of the

city, in the shantytowns. The damage seemed indiscriminate and improbable at first, with whole chunks taken from one building while its neighbour remained untouched. As the road took us south, the damage became more widespread, and there were occasions when we would drive for miles without seeing a single standing structure. The next three hours seemed to merge into one as we rushed past devastation upon devastation: once solid stone houses wiped clean to their

foundations, railway tracks twisted like putty, and fishing trawlers tossed inland.

One of our partner organisations, the Southern Centre for Disabled, is based in Galle. They are a prosthetics service providing limbs and therapy to people in the surrounding area. The centre is located on the premises of the hospital, on the seafront. The wave went right through the hospital, destroying parts of the building and all facilities, and the hospital is now out of use and will

be knocked down. The centre itself was fortunately unharmed, as it stands on slightly higher ground at the back of the hospital. However, since it is hospital owned, it too will be destroyed.

When we arrived at the Galle centre, it was open to clients. A few people had come in for replacement limbs: theirs had been swept away. This number increased daily. A number of crush injuries have resulted in amputations. Fortunately, numbers of amputations due to infected wounds are not being reported; this had been a great fear of ours, since we had heard frightening statistics of 3,000 amputations a day in Indonesia.

Moving further along the coast, we discovered that the wheelchair service attached to Navajeevana, our partner in Tangalle, had lost all of its equipment but the building was intact. Despite the destruction, we are also relieved to report that all of our staff and all of our partner organisation staff miraculously survived the



Wheelchairs destroyed by the waves in Galle, Sri Lanka.

Designed to Seat

Motivation recently worked in collaboration with Disacare Wheelchair Centre in Zambia and Whirlwind Wheelchair International to design a hand-powered tricycle for Africa to increase mobility for disabled people.

Addressing a need that was identified through research in Tanzania and with the financial support of DFID through the Knowledge and Research (KaR) programme, Motivation began work with the Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya (APDK) to design a tricycle that better met the needs and requirements of users. We wanted to ensure that the product has several adjustable features so that the tricycle could be properly fitted to each individual.

Disacare Wheelchair Centre in Zambia and Whirlwind Wheelchair International were also keen to collaborate to create a new tricycle for Africa. Design development and evaluation of the re-worked prototypes took

place in Zambia and Tanzania. All three organisations collaborated to produce a final design for an affordable product without compromising on the adjustability.

The field trials in Zambia showed that users, including people with spinal cord injuries, polio or amputations, could effectively use the tricycle. It can also be built out of a range of different materials without losing any function. This allows workshops to cope with the fluctuating supplies and costs of materials in their local markets. By simplifying the production and fabrication, the final design is simple to construct and needs minimal technology to build. Delivering training to local workshops will also be more



Willie Sinyanga can now participate in activities around the village

effective because of the simplicity of the design. The field trials showed that the tricycles were strong enough to be used to transport large bags of maize and water from the village wells, sometimes up to 60kg at a time.

With help from the British Council towards the cost, Disacare have now built the first batch. Motivation's designer, Chris Rushman has also worked on a set of production tooling which should improve the quality and efficiency of their production. Motivation also helped draft the first steps of developing a tricycle production training course with Disacare.

But the most important part of the whole process is how the tricycle improves mobility for the user. Willie Sinyanga, who lives in a village in Zambia has poliomyelitis affecting both legs and this tricycle is his first mobility product. Now he can be involved in household chores for the first time, freeing up his family to plant and tend crops on the family land. With his tricycle he can now look after his goats and pigs, and collect and transport food for them, he can also for the first time (said with a huge grin...) oversee his wife and children in the fields and make sure they are working properly!

Motivation Romania – Looking Ahead

Motivation worked in Romania in 1993, and returned in 1996 to run an Active Rehab course. The Motivation Romania Foundation (MRF) grew out of the partnership and celebrated 10 years of activity on February 15th 2005. Here, Anca Filip evaluates their progress and future plans.

To the present day, over 1,600 wheelchairs - active, sports style and special seating for children with cerebral palsy - have been produced and donated to beneficiaries from Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova. MRF has also implemented a wide range of activities, including active rehabilitation (peer group) training and vocational training courses. Currently, MRF activities are taking place at several locations throughout the country and last year we initiated a series of projects, some independently, others with long-time partners and

friends such as Motivation UK, and the Mosaic Foundation, USA. This international alliance, IMPACT, aims to develop a more secure financial base for our projects. Our sustainability plan is based on three "pillars:" wheelchair production development, income generation, and regional sustainability. The wheelchair production development efforts will be made possible through a grant awarded by USAID in October 2004 for the creation of a wheelchair factory with a production capacity of 750 wheelchairs per year, and the initiation of local wheelchair

prescription, assembly and distribution centres in two countries in Eastern Europe. We have also initiated a series of income-generation projects, including a wheelchair-accessible mountain summer camp, which will be used to organise camps for children and adults with motor disabilities, as well as to provide the same opportunity to other NGOs from Romania.

The Romanian Government has also recently approved a project in which MRF will initiate, in partnership with a local enterprise, a garment-production training workshop. The workshop will serve as an instruction facility for wheelchair users who wish to enhance their skills and obtain mainstream employment in the industry. Our financial sustainability efforts include projects aimed at



Workshop stores at Motivation Romania Foundation.

developing the capacity of MRF and other organisations in Eastern Europe to develop and sustain service provision and program development. We will continue to work together with Disabled People's Organisations from the region to identify and initiate sustainable projects that will ensure continued provision of wheelchair user support services, and increase access to affordable, quality wheelchairs and opportunities for wheelchair-user independence.

Breaking Barriers, Tackling Poverty

CADISCA (Capactación a Discapacitados de Centro América) formed in August 1999, following Motivation's work in Nicaragua. The CADISCA team were trained by Motivation and implement various projects that improve the quality of life of disabled people.

One such project, completed in 2004, improved access for wheelchair users by removing architectural barriers in Managua, the capital of Nicaragua. Disabled people actively built and painted ramps at key parts of the city, visibly challenging perceptions of disabled people as 'invalids' or as unemployable.

Project Coordinator Carlos Rivas said of the Architectural Barriers programme, "For CADISCA this has been a new experience and it has had an impact at national level... The idea for this proposal arose from actions instead of speeches, actions by the organisations working with the disability sector and not in politics."



Wheelchair users actively taking part in the Architectural Barriers project

CADISCA have also recognised that disabled women are marginalised in society. The team wanted to improve access to employment and to generate a source of income for single mothers with disabilities. Training women in dressmaking and in business skills such as stock control, record keeping and mathematics improves quality of life for both the women and their families. Being able to earn their own money and support their families empowers women and

Disabled mothers proudly display their dressmaking skills.



allows them to control their own lives and be independent.

"The greatest challenge facing disabled people in Central America today," says CADISCA's Yaosca Romero. "is to force governments, through the organisations to which they belong, to take disabled people into account in their plans and social policies like subjects, not like objects." Through their work, CADISCA are effectively challenging negative perceptions of people with disabilities.

Finishing touches: adding the CADISCA logo.



Shorts

★ **ISPO Accreditation** The International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO) have recently evaluated and accredited the Wheelchair Technologists Training Course, which was set up through a partnership of Motivation and the Tanzania Training Centre for Orthopaedic Technologists (TATCOT). The course is the first of its kind in the world, and its accreditation marks a landmark for the development of this important profession.

★ **Access Petition** Motivation supporter Dinah Lloyd has set up an online petition to ensure disabled access is included in the reconstruction of Tsunami affected countries. The petition will be sent to agencies such as the UN and the Disasters Emergency Committee. Log on to www.petitiononline.com/BA5258/petition if you would like to sign the petition.

★ **Man Group donation** We are grateful to Man Group plc whose generous donation of £26 500 will significantly contribute to our Access For All programme in Sri Lanka.

★ **Worldmade Workshop** Motivation hosted a successful two-week workshop in February. The workshop marked the beginning of the worldmade services and training programme which is responsible for supporting our local partners in setting up wheelchair services.

