

motif

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Editorial Welcome to the autumn edition of Motif which focuses on Motivation's capacity building work. Capacity building means working with local disabled people's organisations to develop their skills, systems, resources and leadership to ensure that they are efficient and sustainable.

As Motivation's Financial Sustainability Officer for the Africa Region, I work to strengthen local organisations' capacity to provide affordable and appropriate wheelchairs through the establishment of a network of local wheelchair workshops. The workshops need to have carefully planned financing mechanisms in place because the majority of disabled people are very poor and cannot afford to buy a wheelchair that has been professionally produced and fitted.

Through the establishment of wheelchair financing committees, disabled people's

organisations are learning how to mobilise the necessary funds to develop a network of wheelchair workshops that provide disabled people with high quality affordable wheelchairs regardless of their ability to pay. The organisations are being trained in how to carry out their own fundraising, how to advocate for wheelchair funding from governments and how to encourage individuals to seek sponsorship for their own wheelchairs.

Access to appropriate wheelchairs enables disabled people to take their rightful role in society so that they can contribute to the development of their countries and of the region as a whole.

This is just one example of Motivation's capacity building activities; I hope you enjoy reading about other aspects of our capacity work in this Motif.

Motivation's capacity building work in Afghanistan

The key to successful development programmes is their ability to be sustainable. It is crucial that Motivation's partner organisations have the capacity to run their projects independently in the long term. For this reason, capacity building of local organisations is one of the four key areas that Motivation's work addresses.

This year David Constantine, Motivation's Co-Founder and Executive Officer, travelled to

Afghanistan to assess and upgrade a wheelchair design that Motivation developed with our partner organisation, Sandy Gall's Afghanistan Appeal, in 1996. David also went to train local organisations on the clinical and technical aspects of fitting a wheelchair with the help of two graduates from our Wheelchair Technologists' Training Course in Tanzania, Aron Dilu and Abdullah Munish. The trip was an

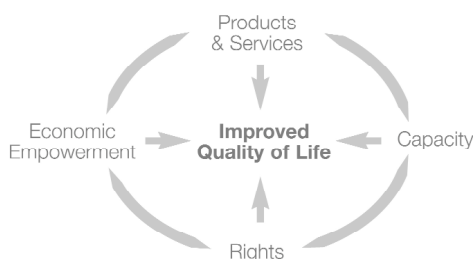
excellent way for Motivation to use our partner's skills from one continent to help build the capacity of our partners in another.

'Since Motivation was first in Afghanistan ten years ago, Sandy Gall's Afghanistan Appeal has continued to produce the wheelchair

designed for them by Motivation', David explains. 'It is wonderful to see that they are successfully making around 30 wheelchairs per month despite the extreme difficulties that the country has experienced over the last decade.'

Motivation continually

The four key issues that Motivation's work addresses to improve the quality of life of people with mobility disabilities



The trainers and trainees with their upgraded wheelchairs

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Designed to Seat

Following the success of the first product in Motivation's Worldmade range, the Rough Terrain wheelchair, Motivation has developed the prototype for a Worldmade Active Folding wheelchair.

The Worldmade Active Folding wheelchairs will be distributed in the same way as the Rough Terrain wheelchairs. They will be mass produced in China and shipped to our partner organisations in developing



A prototype of the Worldmade Active Folding wheelchair

countries where they will be assembled to fit each user.

Although the new Worldmade wheelchair may look similar to a standard wheelchair, this lightweight, four-wheel wheelchair has been designed to provide maximum mobility in the semi-urban environments of developing countries, while providing excellent postural support to users.

In order to ensure that Motivation's products have the capacity to withstand the environments in which they are designed to be used, they undergo a series of trials. The Worldmade Active Folding wheelchair is currently being trialled in

Romania, South Africa and Sri Lanka. By trialling it in three continents, Motivation gains valuable feedback from users in different environments and cultures.

Motivation's designers primarily collaborate with wheelchair users on design development; however, the therapists who work with wheelchair users and the technicians who build wheelchairs also provide essential design input.

In Romania, experienced wheelchair users are evaluating the wheelchair's suitability in the home, at work and on public and private transport. Early feedback has been positive.

Fanica is a wheelchair technician who trialled the Worldmade Active Folding wheelchair: 'It's an accessible wheelchair that positions the user well and one that doesn't need

excessive care. I particularly liked the wheelchair on bumpy roads and in large open areas like parks. In smaller areas, like the home, it may be a little bit more difficult to manage because of its large size. It's important for wheelchair users like me to participate in these trials because we can really feel the difference from one wheelchair to another and we can give useful feedback about how manageable the wheelchair is and if it is going to last in bumpy conditions.'



Fanica (right) trialling the Worldmade Active Folding wheelchair with basketball coach and wheelchair user, Dan (left)

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upgrades its wheelchair designs based on feedback from its projects around the world. 'We now have a very simple three-wheel design for local production. We wanted to introduce this modified wheelchair to disabled people's organisations in Afghanistan.'

Motivation invited staff from the International Committee of the Red Cross in Kabul, Handicap International in Kandahar and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan in Mazar-i-Sharif and Ghazni to attend the training course. 'All the groups learnt to build excellent quality examples of our new improved design', David explains.

As well as overseeing the training, David carried out

home visits to people who had been using the original Motivation wheelchair for a number of years. 'Home visits enable us to meet disabled people who would otherwise be very isolated. By visiting someone in their home, you can assess their environment and make recommendations about how it can be made more accessible. The stories of the people who I met were ones of incredible strength and determination, carrying on their lives as wheelchair users under unstable regimes in some of the harshest environments I have ever seen.'

Zahida is the mother of six children under the age of fourteen. She received a



Zahida and her six children

Motivation wheelchair some years ago following a spinal cord injury. She lives in Jalalabad with her brother Falabad, a double amputee, in a compound made up of United Nations refugee agency tents and a mud lean-to. Their lives are very basic and her three-wheel wheelchair is ideal for the steep and rutted area where she lives.

Faridoon lost both his legs in a landmine explosion. He uses a Motivation wheelchair and tricycle. He earns a living working on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, a notoriously contested and congested crossing. He carries goods across the border for those on foot unable to carry their own luggage, his tricycle being the perfect tool for this kind of work.



Faridoon trialling the upgraded three-wheel design

Capacity Building in Africa



Bigboy Madzivanzira

Zimbabwe

Motivation has been supporting local wheelchair workshops in Zimbabwe for the past six years. However, Zimbabwe's growing economic instability means that it is becoming increasingly expensive for wheelchairs to be produced locally. Motivation's Worldmade wheelchairs, which are mass produced in China and shipped to local wheelchair centres in developing countries, are therefore ideal for Zimbabwe

because they can be prescribed and fitted by existing wheelchair workshops at low cost.

However, Worldmade wheelchairs cannot be given out without being prescribed and fitted by trained staff. Motivation therefore arranged for seven wheelchair technicians from three partner organisations in Zimbabwe to attend a training course organised by another partner, Mobility India, in Bangalore. The course aimed to equip the trainees with the skills needed to assemble and fit Worldmade wheelchairs.

One of the trainees, Bigboy Madzivanzira, passed the technical course with merit. Bigboy tells us how Motivation's training has significantly improved his ability to provide the right wheelchair to transform disabled people's lives. 'I had been a practising rehabilitation technician for 15 years which

means I could make prescriptions and modifications to wheelchairs, but I had less knowledge of the technical aspects of wheelchair design and its importance for the person using the wheelchair. I work in the community where many people have wheelchairs that are unsuitable for them and are actually worsening their disabilities.

The training course was a really good opportunity to meet people from other low-income countries and discuss problems with wheelchair provision. The course was also very practical. We learnt about the advantages and disadvantages of different wheelchair designs and were taught how to communicate this information to wheelchair users. For example, if you tell the mother of a child with cerebral palsy that the wheelchair is too big she will not understand. If however,

you tell her that the wheelchair's design will affect the child's posture, worsening their physical impairments and causing breathing difficulties, she will understand. Now I am educating parents and using local resources to make the wheelchairs more therapeutic, more than just a gadget.

I now have the capacity to run workshops and pass on my new skills to other rehabilitation professionals in Zimbabwe. I have also been invited to talk at the World Health Organisation's Wheelchair Consensus Conference in Bangalore in November about the issues facing wheelchair providers in developing countries.

With this sort of learning and awareness about the importance of appropriate wheelchairs happening around the world, one day we will achieve our goal to ensure that wheelchair users have a good quality of life.'



Dr Henry Nyamubi

Tanzania

A crucial part of the capacity building of local organisations is to help them develop the means to secure sustainable funding for their activities and to network with potential donors.

Motivation has been working with Dr Henry Nyamubi, Director of the Kilimanjaro Association of the

Spinally Injured (KASI) in Tanzania, to develop generic fundraising proposals and tools that will help KASI fundraise locally for wheelchairs on behalf of their members who desperately require an appropriate wheelchair but cannot afford one. The proposals introduce a variety of potential funders to the problems of wheelchair provision in developing countries and request financial support to provide wheelchairs that are suitable for people in the Kilimanjaro region. All the wheelchairs are provided with a vital pressure-relieving cushion and are adjusted to be a perfect fit for the user. People are also taught basic mobility skills

such as how to do 'wheelies' so that their mobility is truly enhanced by their wheelchair and they can become more independent.

Dr Nyamubi said, 'As we approach the final phase of the capacity building project, the fundraising training provided by Motivation has enhanced the capacity of KASI and has helped us to function more professionally as an organisation. It has also given us the opportunity to introduce KASI to a variety of potential funders and to convince them of the validity and importance of our work. While funders were impressed by KASI's capacity in many areas, such as bookkeeping and reporting, they were also reassured by Motivation's involvement in

the development of KASI as an organisation. We have made key contacts and secured several potential commitments for support. We now feel more confident about the future.'

By training KASI to effectively identify and present their needs to potential funders, Motivation has developed their fundraising skills - skills that are essential to ensure the sustainability of any charitable organisation. KASI can also share their experiences with other disabled people's organisations in Zimbabwe and Uganda. The challenge now is to ensure that every disabled person in Africa has access to an appropriate, affordable wheelchair.

Home

- We are pleased to announce the opening of our Africa Regional Office at the Western Cape Rehabilitation Centre in Cape Town, South Africa. Motivation already has strong links in South Africa: we currently work with our partner organisations Shonaquip and the Western Cape Rehabilitation Centre through our Worldmade programme, and with the Empowerment Through Partnerships Trust through our peer group training work. Our Africa Programme Director, Christine Cornick, moved to South Africa in August to set up the office.

- Motivation would like to thank Ben Coren, Helene Jewell, Jen Howitt, Orsi Korsos and Matt Rees, five volunteers who dedicated significant amounts of their summer holidays to help out in Motivation's UK office. Ben, Helene and Jen worked on our Africa programme, while Orsi and Matt spent the majority of their time supporting the fundraising team. Thank you for your hard work and we wish you all good luck with your on-going university studies.

- Congratulations to David Constantine, Motivation's Co-Founder/Executive Officer, who has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate (Hon DU) from Oxford Brookes University. It was while studying for his first degree at Oxford Brookes (formerly Oxford Polytechnic) that David met Richard Frost. David and Richard, together with a friend, Simon Gue, went on to co-found Motivation five years later.

Up Close & Personal

Janaki Samantha is thirty three years old; she lives near Colombo in Sri Lanka. Despite passing her 'O' levels and being a conscientious worker, Janaki found it very hard to find a job after leaving school. She believes that this was because employers doubted her capacity to work effectively when they discovered she had congenital disabilities.

After searching for a job for a number of months, Janaki eventually came across an advertisement for an art course at a nearby college. Being accepted on to the course made Janaki feel that for the first time in her life she was being judged on her artistic ability, rather than by her physical disabilities.

The art course opened many new doors for Janaki. With the support of the Director at the college, she was invited to attend the World Summit for the Disabled in Bangkok organised by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Janaki's experiences at the summit, coupled with the skills that she learnt on her art course, made her realise that she had the capacity to do whatever she wanted with her life, despite the discrimination that she had

experienced in the past.

After completing her course, Janaki found work at the college where she had been studying. 'I worked there for the next seven years, contributing regularly to the college's publications. The job was ideal because I developed my artistic skills and knowledge through my work and my disabilities were never considered a hindrance.

While working for the art college I was invited to attend a six month English language course for disabled people organised by Motivation. It was while I was on that course that Motivation asked me to illustrate some of their publications.

Motivation was so impressed with my designs that when the position of Graphic Artist became available at Motivation I immediately applied. My application was



Janaki is now Motivation Sri Lanka's Graphic Artist

successful and I now work for Motivation full time.

I will never see my disabilities as a hindrance again. I am incredibly grateful to Motivation for giving disabled people like me the opportunity to work in an exciting and dynamic environment. I extend my fullest support to Motivation and look forward to working for an organisation with integrity, honesty and commitment for as long as I can.'

Janaki has designed Motivation's 'Madonna and Child' Christmas card, pictured here.

To order our Christmas cards, please return a completed Christmas card leaflet or call Francesca on 01275 464012.



Shorts

★ **Motivation** is collaborating with the Centre for International Rehabilitation, Whirlwind Wheelchair International and other international partners to draft International Guidelines on Manual Wheelchairs in less resourced settings. The work, which is being commissioned by the World Health Organisation, is also supported

by the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics and the United States Agency for International Development. The guidelines aim to professionalise global wheelchair provision by providing recommendations in three areas – wheelchair design and production, wheelchair services and wheelchair training.