

motif

The Newsletter of the Motivation Charitable Trust Issue 32 February 2008



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Editorial I am delighted to introduce this edition of Motif, which highlights the Asia Pacific region and the work of the newly registered Motivation Australia Development Organisation (MADO).

I joined Motivation 15 years ago to help establish a national wheelchair service network in Cambodia. I found the clear focus of Motivation's work, and the very tangible results, incredibly inspiring. During my time with Motivation I have lived and worked in a number of developing countries. I have witnessed the challenges that disabled people face in contexts where there is limited access to appropriate mobility products, few services and little recognition of the

rights of disabled people. Yet I have seen the positive impact of our programmes and have observed the sheer commitment of our local partner organisations, which work so hard to sustain the work that we help initiate.

The establishment of MADO is an opportunity to combine Motivation's strengths with the knowledge and resources available in the Asia Pacific in order to address the needs of disabled people in this region.

I hope you enjoy reading about Motivation's work and our ambitions for the Asia Pacific.

Reaching disabled people in the Asia Pacific

Over the years Motivation has received numerous requests for support from countries in the Asia Pacific. In response to this demand Motivation recently registered in South Australia as a non-profit organisation. This development opens Motivation up to new funding opportunities and allows us to help disabled people in an area where support is lacking.

The Challenge

There is a huge unmet demand for high quality wheelchair services in this region. Tewata Roketa, secretary of the Te Toa Matoi Disabled Persons' Organisation in Kiribati, explains:

'Hundreds and hundreds of people in the outer islands are in need of wheelchairs. Most of them grow old on their hands and knees

without having a wheelchair.'

We have found many examples of wheelchairs donated from surrounding wealthier countries that are inappropriate for the environment in which they will be used. Usually these wheelchairs are orthopaedic style, designed for short-term use indoors. Unfortunately these wheelchairs often prove uncomfortable for long-term use and quickly break down in rural and island conditions where sandy or rough tracks are common. Motivation recognises the need for appropriate mobility products and has established several partnerships in order to meet the need for wheelchair services in this region. Collaborations with Voluntary Service Organisation (VSO) and the National Orthotics and Prosthetics Service

(NOPS) have enabled us to provide wheelchairs such as the Worldmade Rough Terrain wheelchair, which is extremely popular with wheelchair users in Papua New Guinea due to the very rural landscape.

Motivation seeks to rectify the assumption that

'any wheelchair is better than none' with the soon to be released, World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines on the provision of manual wheelchairs in less resourced settings. Motivation has been a major contributor to these guidelines, which aim to



Evaluation of the Papua New Guinea wheelchair service network, March 2007.

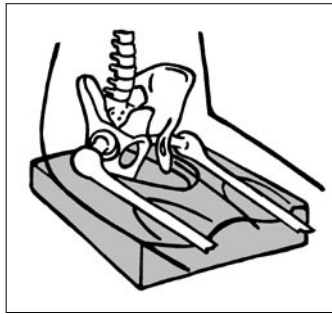
Designed to Seat - Cushions

The design of a cushion is a major concern in the overall design of an appropriate wheelchair. At Motivation we consider a cushion to be an integral part of a wheelchair, not an optional extra. Many wheelchair users use their wheelchair for up to 16 hours per day, so a cushion is very important.

Reducing the risk of pressure ulcers

A well designed cushion can help to reduce the risk of pressure ulcers by distributing pressure. Pressure ulcers are one of the most common life threatening complications that occur following a spinal cord injury, as the warning signals telling someone to move and relieve pressure no longer reach the brain due to the damage to the spinal cord. If the pressure continues the oxygen and blood supply become cut-off, thereby creating a pressure ulcer. The pressure beneath a person whilst seated is not uniformly distributed, but is highest under bony areas such as the tail bone, sitting bones and outer hips. This is where pressure ulcers most commonly develop. The infection caused by a pressure ulcer can spread to the blood stream leading to serious illness, and can be fatal. Therefore some

cushions are designed with sculpted areas which are shaped to unload pressure from high risk areas and redistribute the load to lower risk, non-bony areas across the seat surface.



Providing postural support

A cushion can provide stability and encourage a good sitting position in combination with an appropriate wheelchair. For some adults and children who find it difficult to sit up without support, a correctly designed cushion provides important additional stability. Without appropriate support they waste a lot of energy trying to sit up correctly.



This child is using a Motivation wheelchair fitted with a special seating system and seat cushion. The wheelchair fits her well and provides postural support.

Increasing comfort in the wheelchair

Motivation works with many people who do not have problems with sensation such as amputees. In this situation pressure ulcers are less of a risk. However comfort, postural support and stability are still important. So for these people, a cushion increases the length of time they can sit in comfort.

What makes a cushion appropriate?

It is important to remember that no cushion is ideal for everyone and there are

considerable differences in users' cushion requirements. Like the wheelchair, it is important that the cushion is durable, affordable and replaceable.

Often overlooked as a necessary feature of a wheelchair, the cushion helps wheelchair users in many ways. The cushion can help the wheelchair user to make efficient use of their energy, go about their daily activities with comfort and confidence and can, quite literally, save lives.

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educate organisations and individuals wishing to help meet the need for appropriate wheelchairs. The guidelines highlight the importance of sustainable solutions which meet local needs. It is MADO's long-term aim to uphold the principles of these guidelines.

The Future

In 2008 we will continue our partnership work in East Timor, and develop our existing partnerships in Papua New Guinea. Together, Motivation Australia and non-government organisation ASSERT are establishing a national wheelchair service.

We are also introducing peer group training; a participatory programme in which wheelchair users have the opportunity to learn and share ideas about matters such as mobility, health and rights. Through the year we will expand the capacity of the wheelchair service to meet the needs of children

and adults requiring complex postural support. We plan to initiate further work in the region through a feasibility study to the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Kiribati, where we have had specific requests for Motivation to share its experience in appropriate wheelchair provision.

Change Lives in the Asia Pacific



Economically empowered: Anita is now self-employed.

Anita Hamabi lives on the northern coast of Papua New Guinea. She has polio which has severely limited her mobility. In 2006 Anita visited the Callan Community Based Rehabilitation wheelchair service and was prescribed a Worldmade Rough Terrain wheelchair.

This wheelchair, the first Anita has ever owned, has enabled her to tend her

own garden and get to the local markets independently, where she can sell her goods. She says, “My life is now enjoyable because I can move around and visit relatives and friends. I am proud that I am now self-employed and can support my child.”

Anita is involved in supporting other disabled women in her area, and is

encouraging others to attend the Callan wheelchair service where she received her wheelchair.

Anita is also an impressive sportswoman and has won medals in events such as wheelchair racing and power lifting: “It’s hard to compare my life now to the past, with my Worldmade wheelchair there is nothing stopping me!”



Frederico supports other tricycle users in East Timor.

Frederico lives in Dili in East Timor. Frederico has polio and uses a tricycle produced by a local workshop run by Maryknoll. He is currently studying to complete his high school education, and works part time for local non-government organisation ASSERT providing peer training to new tricycle users in how to use their tricycle safely.

Frederico has recently received a Worldmade Rough Terrain wheelchair. Before having this wheelchair, Frederico was only able to move around indoors on the floor. ASSERT and Frederico are now working together to adapt his tricycle to enable him to tow his wheelchair from one location to another.

Frederico is involved with

the newly formed wheelchair services working group, coordinated by ASSERT. In January he attended the first peer group training camp to be held in East Timor.



Theresa gains independence following a peer group training camp.

Theresa lives in Dili in East Timor. Supported by Motivation’s local partner ASSERT, Theresa has worked hard to regain her health and strength after sustaining a spinal cord injury.

She is one of the first recipients of a Worldmade Rough Terrain wheelchair through ASSERT’s wheelchair service. This wheelchair replaced an

orthopaedic wheelchair which Theresa found difficult to propel and lacking in postural support. Theresa is an active member of the newly formed wheelchair services working group, coordinated by ASSERT.

In January Theresa attended the first peer group training camp to be held in East Timor. She says, “I am very happy with the training given in East Timor. I have

learned a lot about my health and my body. When I return home from the training camp I am confident I will be able to move around much better by myself. I have enjoyed the experience very much.”

Home

The Helen Hamlyn Trust has made a generous grant to support Motivation design and launch a range of four-wheel wheelchairs. The wheelchairs will be launched during 2008.

We would like to thank the Vodafone Group Legal Department for offering to fundraise for Motivation by running a Three Peaks Challenge in June, in memory of their colleague Ian Gardener.

In December the Joint International Development Programme (The Baring Foundation and the John Ellerman Foundation) elected to support Motivation's programme to support the inclusion of disabled people in sub-saharan Africa.

In March Motivation will sadly say goodbye to Stephanie Betschart. Stephanie has worked with Motivation for over seven years, more recently as the Finance Manager. We are currently recruiting a replacement Finance Manager, for details please contact Nichola Coates at the office or email coates@motivation.org.uk.

Up Close & Personal

Paulo Amaral is known to Motivation through his work with ASSERT. He is the Wheelchair Coordinator for the Hadulas programme in East Timor. This programme is a collaboration between Motivation and ASSERT that seeks to empower wheelchair users. Paulo is a passionate advocate of the rights of disabled people and, as he tells us here, there is still a long way to go...



Paulo Amaral, Wheelchair Coordinator for the Hadulas programme in East Timor.

Living and working in Timor, Paulo Amaral observed that personal and professional opportunities were limited if you had a mobility disability. Determined to bring about change, he applied for a job with local non-government organisation ASSERT and he has never looked back. ASSERT is working with disabled people in East Timor to help them access their rights. Paulo tells us:

'A lot of people in Timor do not understand that people with a mobility disability have equal rights to accessing the community and life in general, and it is often accepted that they will spend the majority of their life on the floor of their house.'

The negative social view of disabled people is reflected in East Timor's many inaccessible buildings,

roads and communal areas which simply do not cater for disabled people. However, Paulo feels there is cause for hope as some companies are beginning to alter their buildings to make them accessible for wheelchair users, and the government is installing new paths around Dili which, he hopes, will allow wheelchair users to participate more fully in society. As the Wheelchair Coordinator of the Hadulas programme, Paulo is now playing his own part in initiating a change in attitudes towards disabled people. He says, 'with this programme we are able not only to deliver wheelchairs that are more appropriate for the terrain, but also to deliver a service that positively educates people and teaches clients how to use the Worldmade

wheelchair to participate in the community.'

Paulo recently attended a Worldmade wheelchair assembly training course in Bangalore and had the opportunity to develop his skills and knowledge. He also met people from all around the world who are experiencing similar issues in the field of disabilities. He says that this experience was important in enabling him to understand the challenges that he faced and how he could strive to overcome them:

'My dream is to continue to develop the capacity of disabled people and provide sustainable services in the future. Hopefully one day East Timor will be able to offer lots of the excellent services that I learnt about while I was in Bangalore.'

Shorts ★ Look out for the Motivation Romania Foundation in the "Lonely Planet Guide to Romania and Moldova." If you are ever visiting Romania do go and see their fantastic work. ★ Following the celebration of Motivation's tenth year in Africa, we are delighted to announce that the Motivation Charitable Trust Africa has now been registered in South Africa.

