

The Conference

People with Disabilities (PWDs) have been identified as one of the most vulnerable groups in society, particularly in under developed and developing countries. This is reflected in the statistics which show that, while PWDs make up 5% of the world's population; alarmingly they constitute 20% of the world's poor. Unfortunately, most development programmes fail to identify PWDs as stakeholders in the development process. Instead a more 'traditional' approach to development prevails, where PWDs are offered separate programmes which focus on rehabilitation and welfare.

However, taking the experience and lessons learnt from mainstreaming gender into the development process, conceptualization began on how disability issues could also be integrated into mainstream development. The trend of increasing incidences of disability due to various reasons such as disasters, aging population and acute poverty has created a situation where we need to focus more attention on disability related issues. To achieve equitable and sustainable development it is important to create room and opportunities for all categories of people, including PWDs. Development practitioners, researchers and policymakers have a great responsibility to ensure disability is mainstreamed into development initiatives.

Diriya 2007 is a forum to share disability mainstreaming experiences, especially those from the South Asia region. It is co-organized by the Ministry of Social Services & Social Welfare of Sri Lanka, Disaster Relief Monitoring Unit (DRMU) of Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, Practical Action (ITDG) and Development with Disabled Network.

Development practitioners, researchers, academics, policy makers, policy specialists, disability specialists and students will participate in this conference, representing various countries around the world.

Conference Agenda

Day 1 - 6th March 2007

8.30 am – 9.30 am	Registration
9.30 am – 10.40 am	Opening ceremony
10.40 am - 11.00 am	Tea Break
11.00 am - 11.20 am	Key Note Speech Millennium Development Goals and Disability Mainstreaming by Alessandra Casazza, MGD Senior Advisor – of UNDP Sri Lanka
11.20 am - 12.40 pm	Parallel Sessions 1
12.40 pm - 1.40 pm	Lunch
1.40 pm - 2.00 pm	Keynote Speech “Improving mobility for reduction of poverty and isolation” by Ranjith de Silva, Regional Coordinator - Asia, International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD)
2.00 - 3.30	Parallel Sessions 2
3.50pm - 4.10 pm	Keynote Speech “Mainstreaming Disability into Development – Experiences, Challenges and Potentials” by Dr. Vishaka Hidellage, Director, Practical Action (ITDG) South Asia
4.10pm – 4.30pm	Summary of the first day outcomes of the conference

Day 2 - 7th March 2007

8.30 - 9.00	Registration
9.00 am - 9.20 am	Key Note Speech Disability sensitivity in management of Disasters by Mr. Peter Dias Amarasinghe - Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management & Human Rights
9.20 am - 10.50 am	Parallel Sessions 3
10.50 - 11.10	Tea Break
11.10am - 12.40 pm	Parallel Sessions 4
12.40 - 14.00	Lunch
2.00pm - 2.20 pm	Conference Declaration
2.20pm - 3.50pm	Roundtable discussion on “View of Political parties of Sri Lanka on Mainstreaming Disability into Development “
15.50 - 16.10	Tea Break
4.10pm - 5.00pm	Closing Ceremony and Media Conference

Conference Programme

11.00 am - 11.20 am

Key Note Speech – Millennium Development Goals and Disability Mainstreaming
by Alessandra Casazza, MGD Senior Advisor – of UNDP Sri Lanka

11.20 am - 12.40pm **Parallel Sessions 1**

Session 1a:

Roundtable Discussion on Mainstreaming Disability Sensitivity in achieving millennium development goals

Discussion Panelists

- Ravindra Hewavitharana – Director General, Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka
- Alessandra Casazza – Senior MDG Advisor, Sri Lanka
- Mohan Samaranayake – UNDP, Sri Lanka
- Dr. Vishaka Hidellage, Practical Action, South Asia Programme
- S.L. Hettiarachchi – Executive Director, Sri Lanka Council for the Blind
- Viji Jegarajasingham – Secretary, Ministry of Social Services and Social Welfare
- Lionel Fernando – Human Rights Commission, Sri Lanka

The roundtable discussion will be facilitated by Mr. Leo Fonseka, Executive Director of Management Resources for Good Governance, Former National Technical Advisor of UN Sustainable Cities Programme, Sri Lanka

Session 1b:

Paper Presentations in Committee Room E

1. People & development: An international perspective by Djenana Jaloviciv & Mallika Ganasinghe of Queens University, Canada

This paper deals with key issues in mainstreaming disability in development. It focuses on global challenges related to demographic changes, poverty and increasing disability worldwide, and a lack of disability planning to reflect these changes. It introduces a strategy for disability programming and shares international examples and lessons learned on disability and development in Central America, Europe and Asia.

2. Employment placement programme of Motivation Sri Lanka- by Niroshan Weerathunga, Project Officer, Motivation, Sri Lanka

3. Disability insensitivity in post tsunami development: Water Sanitation by Palitha Jayaweera, Programme Director of Community Self Improvement, Sri Lanka

The Session will be chaired by Mr. Ranjith Wirasinghe – International Advisor on Water and Sanitation

**Session 1c:
Paper Presentations in Committee Room F**

4. Knowledge as Liberation: Reflection on Australian - Sri Lanka experience by Dr. Fiona Kumari Campbell of University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

After 25 years in the disability rights movement (DRM) in Australia, the author reflects upon the current day reality in Australia, where more than ever, disability services are operated by large monopolies that not only provide well paid employment to able-bodied experts, but where a commitment to hearing the voices of disabled people is sparse. This paper is also a discussion of the necessity for all disabled people to have access to the tools of knowledge. Improving knowledge amongst stakeholders in the sector on global and Sri Lanka specific issues in disability is imperative, and the need and means of doing so are discussed in this paper.

5. Facilitating information accessibility for the print disabled by Ruwan Weerasinghe, Asanka Wasala & Samantha Matararachchi of the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

This paper focuses on a particularly disadvantaged community, which is to a large extent shut out from the enormous global information resource made conveniently accessible to the rest of us through the Internet and the World Wide Web: this is the Print Disabled community. The paper will describe each of the key technologies relating to web content accessibility in local languages with a focus on the Sinhala language support tools currently available through the Language Technology Research Lab (LTRL) at the University of Colombo, School of Computing (UCSC). It will also outline preliminary results and findings of testing and deploying such technology in general.

6. Networking of Disability Oriented Organisations with Development Agencies- Effective Strategy of Mainstreaming. By Ranga Pallawala, practical Action South Asia Programme

This paper discusses the effectiveness of networking as a strategy for mainstreaming disability in development. It draws on the experience of the Development with Disabled Network (DWDN) (a network consisting of 32 member from the development sector as well as disability focused organisations in Sri Lanka). The network was formed as a means of bridging the knowledge gap and orientation of development organizations on disability related issues and visa-versa. The author describes the development of this network, the challenges faced in its operation, and the results which have

started to emerge from the DWDN activities in the mainstreaming of disability in development.

The Session will be chaired by Mr. Cyril Siriwardena – Advocacy Manager of Motivation, Sri Lanka

1.40pm - 2.00pm - Keynote Speech

“Improving mobility for reduction of poverty and isolation” by Ranjith de Silva, Regional Coordinator - Asia, International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD)

14.00 - 15.30 – Parallel Sessions 2

Session 2a:

Roundtable Discussion on “Disability Sensitivity in transport and Mobility”

Discussion Panelists

- Ranjith de Silva, Asia Regional Coordinator, International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD)
- Alessandra Casazza – Senior MDG Advisor, Sri Lanka
- Upali Pannilage – Programme Team Leader, Practical Action
- Dr. D.S. Jayaweera – Former Secretary for Ministry of Transport, Sri Lanka
- Anil Jayawardene – Vice President, Central Federation for the Deaf
- Prof. Amal Kumarage – University of Moratuwa
- Joan Carey – Disability Coordinator, Handicap International
- Laurence Pochard - Deputy Director, Asian Development Bank

The roundtable discussion will be facilitated by Ms. Priyanthi Fernando, Executive Director of Centre for Poverty Analysis and Committee member of Lanka Forum for Rural Transport and Development

Session 2b:

Paper Presentations in Committee Room E

7. Inclusive transport planning - by Namiz Musafar of Practical Action, Sri Lanka
8. Accessibility: Process towards the legislation in Sri Lanka by Mr. M.D.C. Jayamanne – Assistant Secretary , Ministry of Social Services and Social Welfare of Sri Lanka
9. Accessibility: A Sri Lankan - Case study by M.C. Mendis, Professional Quantity Surveyor

The Session will be chaired by Mr. Ranga Pallawala, Practical Action, Sri Lanka

**Session 2c:
Paper Presentations in Committee Room F**

10. A study on application of ergonomics at workstations of Disabled Employees
by Roshal Rangika Wickramasinghe of University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka

This paper presents the results of a study on the working environment and challenges faced by employees with disabilities. The research was compiled at Ranaviru Institution to undertake in-depth research into one category of disabled serviceman. On site observations and questionnaires were used to collect data, which was then analysed to evaluate the working postures of workers in manufacturing processes, to study the commonly and frequently found occupational health hazards among employees in garment industry, and to suggest ergonomic applications relating to working environment of this institute to reduce occupational health problems.

11. Sri Lanka's Policy on Disability - Where in terms of Mainstreaming? - by
Yamuna Chithranganie, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Social Services &
Social Welfare

*The Session will be chaired by Prof. Sarath Amarasinghe – The Dean, Faculty
of Arts, University of Ruhuna*

3.50pm - 4.10 pm - Keynote Speech

“Mainstreaming Disability into Development – Experiences, Challenges and Potentials” by Dr. Vishaka Hidellage, Director, Practical Action (ITDG) South Asia

4.10pm – 4.30pm - Summary of the first day outcomes of the conference

Second Day of the Conference - 7th March 2007

9.00 am - 9.20 am - Key Note Speech

Disability sensitivity in management of Disasters by Mr. Peter Dias Amarasinghe, Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management & Human Rights

9.20 am - 10.50am Parallel Sessions 3

Session 3a: Roundtable Discussion on Mainstreaming Disability Sensitivity in Disaster Management

Discussion Panelists

- Peter Dias Amarasinghe - Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management & Human Rights
- Dr. Vishaka Hidellage – Director, Practical Action (ITDG) South Asia
- Lionel Fernando – Chairman, DRMU, Human Rights Commission, Sri Lanka
- Prem Thapa – UNDP, Sri Lanka
- Janaka Hemathilake – Director, Nawajeewana, Tangalle
- Mr. U.W.L. Chandradasa – Director, Disaster Management Center, Sri Lanka
- Mr. Asanka Wasala – Director, SHIA Foundation, Sri Lanka

The roundtable discussion will be facilitated by Dr. Buddhi Weerasinghe, Director Technical and Communications, Disaster Management Center, Sri Lanka

Session 3b: Paper Presentations in Committee Room E

12. Excluding disability sensitivity: a major obstacle to effective disaster management in Sri Lanka by Ramitha Wijethunga, Practical Action, Sri Lanka
13. Tsunami Recovery & Advocacy programme of Motivation Sri Lanka- Experiences - Sarah Pallak, Project Manager, Motivation Sri Lanka
14. Accessible housing - A case study on Tsunami reconstruction, Aziza Yoosuf, Programme Officer, American Red Cross, Sri Lanka

The Session will be chaired by Mr. Ranasinghe Perera, Programme Team Leader of Practical Action

**Session 3c:
Paper Presentations in Committee Room F**

15. Demystifying Disability: A key to mainstreaming development - by Catherine Liyanage of Equity Based Community Support & Training (ECSAT), Sri Lanka by

A paper focusing on the mystifying of disability at all levels of the development process, and the challenges this presents to the mainstreaming of disability within the development process. The mystification of disability is done at both subconscious and un-subconscious levels by actors in the sector. This paper delves into the various aspects of the mystification process, and possible practical solutions for demystification of disability.

16. The Media: mainstreaming disability in development - by Mark Anthony of PDF, Mannar, Sri Lanka

The paper discusses the importance of mass media in helping to mainstream disability in development. Media's role in helping to facilitate good ethics and governance, as well as in empowerment and better practices through increased knowledge, are some of the aspects highlighted. Discussed are the various roles that media can play, as well how mass media can help meet the challenges faced in mainstreaming disability in development.

17. The Role of the Disability movement in Mainstreaming disability into Development by Thanuja Nawaratne, Save the Children, Sri Lanka

At present the Disability Movement in Sri Lanka is failing to meet its responsibilities of empowering PWDs, integrating PWDs in all aspects of development, and mainstreaming disability in development. The author identifies the challenges faced by the movement and examines possible 'routes' to overcoming these obstacles.

The Session will be chaired by Dr. Susil Liyanarachchi – Director – Development programmes, Care - Sri Lanka

11.10am - 12.40pm Parallel Sessions 4

Session 4a: Paper Presentations in Committee Room E

18. Training Disabled People in Rural Sri Lanka for sustainable Livelihoods - by D.S.P. Kuruppuarachchi and Naleen Munasinghe of FAO, Sri Lanka

The paper explores the process and impacts of the agriculture-based training module for disabled persons developed by FAO in response to a request made by the Ministry of Social Welfare. The training programme was implemented in four stages with the aim of generating the following key outputs; a comprehensive training module, innovative training methodologies and a national action plan. The paper discusses the process of developing the training programme, the impact on trainees and potential for possible replication

19. Management of Social Issues in Institutionalizing livelihood programmes in moving disability into development by M.R.M. Farook of GTZ/UNICEF CBCQE Project, Sri Lanka

The main objective of this paper is to first identify the socio-cultural factors which act as barriers in the intervention processes of livelihood programmes to move disability into development. The sub-objective is to design rectification mechanisms to overcome such barriers through awareness creation, education, societal commitment and political will. The data collected from relevant literature as well as via discussion with people with disabilities and employers with disabled employees, has been qualitatively analysed by the author to present a framework which facilitates the involvement of the disabled in development.

20. Identification and addressing the problems of physically disabled in the clothing industry - by Maj. Ajith Jayathissa of Ranaviru Apperals, Sri Lanka

This paper presents a practical view on including persons with disability in the industry of clothing. The paper provides information and guidelines on how to employ people with disabilities in the most effective and efficient manner in the clothing industry. Taking the case of Ranaviru Apparels the author explains the process, different aspects, and impacts which apparel organizations should take into consideration when employing persons with disability. Also discussed are the challenges faced by people with disabilities in employment and ways to employ them effectively in the apparel industry.

The Session will be chaired by Dr. Ranaweera Banda, Head of Department of Sociology, University of Ruhuna

**Session 4b:
Paper Presentations in Committee Room F**

21. Model Parliament concept for disability and development by Lionel Gulawita of Diriya Foundation, Sri Lanka

This paper discusses the strong link between poverty and social irresponsiveness. It highlights the need for personal development strategies targeting the marginalized, and sites the Model Parliamentary concept as such a successful strategy. The paper describes the concept behind the Model Parliamentary sessions, the process, and its impacts.

22. Importance of Capacity Building on Disability Issues for Development Organisations by Jeewan Kodithuwakku and Samantha Wakista of Leonard Cheshire, Sri Lanka

The paper focuses on a training programme developed on disability issues aimed at increasing expertise and knowledge of organisations working with communities. The programmes were developed to train AAI-SL partners, and were conducted by LC Disability Resource Centers in Sri Lanka (LCDRC). The programme enables participants to work with communities and persons with disabilities using developmental/right based approaches. Discussed within the paper are the methodology used, and impact of their programme on the work of the participants.

23. Community Based Rehabilitation: Role of Development Organizations - by Janaka Hemathilake of Nawajeevana, Sri Lanka

This paper discussed the approach of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) in the inclusion of People with Disabilities (PWDs), and analyzes the success of CBR programmes with, and without, the involvement of development oriented organizations. The paper draws on the experience of Nawajeevana, a local NGO which coordinates the CBR programme in the Southern province. Highlighted, is the importance of integration and interaction of development agencies, as well as the need for support and sensitization on disability issues amongst development workers for the CBR approach to reach its full potential.

The Session will be chaired by Dr. W.A.D.P. Wanigasundera, Senior Lecturer, University of Peradeniya

2.00pm - 2.20 pm - Conference Declaration

2.20pm - 3.50pm - Roundtable discussion on “View of Political parties of Sri Lanka on Mainstreaming Disability into Development “

Discussion Panelists

- Hon. (Prof.)Tissa Witharana – Minister of Science and Technology
- Hon. Dinesh Gunawardene – Minister of Urban Development and Sacred Cities
- Hon. Athauda Senavirathne – Minister of Labour Relations and Manpower
- Hon. (Mrs)Ferial Ashraff - Minister of Housing and Common Amenities
- Hon. Sunil Handuneththi – Member of Parliament , JVP
- Hon. Ravindra Samaraweera – Member of Parliament, UNP
- Ven. Athuraliye Rathana – Member of Parliament, JHU
- Hon. Samantha Widyaratne – Member of parliament, JVP

The roundtable discussion will be facilitated by Mr. Lionel Fernando, Chairman of Disaster Relief Monitoring Unit, Human Rights Commission, Sri Lanka

4.10pm - 5.00pm – Closing Ceremony and Media Conference

Abstract no: 01

Disabled People and Development: an International Experience

Authours : Djenana Jalovic, Lorna Jean Edmonds, Malcolm Peat, Mallika Ganasinghe, Beth Richan, Queen’s University, Kingston, Canada

This paper deals with key issues in mainstreaming disability in development. It focuses on global challenges related to demographic changes, poverty and increasing disability worldwide, and a lack of disability planning to reflect these changes. It introduces a strategy for disability programming and shares international examples and lessons learned on disability and development in Central America, Europe and Asia.

Disability is affecting the lives of over 600 million people, the majority of whom live in developing countries. The World Bank estimates that two-thirds of the people with disabilities in the world lives in poverty, suffering from a lack of water, food, education, medical care, job opportunities and access to information. There is a recognition that disabled people must be included into development in order to reduce poverty and improve welfare of the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Major development agencies are demonstrating efforts to raise the profile and importance of addressing the needs of people with disabilities in development planning and programming. A review of major agencies commitment to disability will be presented. This will include the partnership approaches between multilateral international organizations and Disabled People’s Organisations in advancing disability policy and programming.

Mainstreaming Disability

The paper reviews the importance of reducing social discrimination and bringing excluded people, such as disabled women and children, into the mainstream of society. It is not only rights that are wanted, nor is it simply access to “social and medical” services. People with disabilities and their families want and deserve what other members of their community have—their rightful place as citizens.

Disability Programming

Do current programs and activities reach out to and not exclude disabled persons? The Millennium Development Goals which represent key policy directions for targeting income, poverty reduction, health, environment, and other sectors, make no reference to the needs of people with disabilities. An examination of the recently adopted UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability will be presented including the needs for disability programming within international cooperation and development assistance and for the participation of communities and users in program development and implementation.

Strategy for Disability Programming: Citizenship Model and KIPA Framework

The citizenship model together with the methodology of its implementation, the KIPA framework, will be presented (Edmonds for ADB, 2005). This model aims to conceptualize a development framework that focuses on building an inclusive civil and rights based society and ensure that knowledge, inclusion, participation and access are part of development programming cycle.

Examples from Disability and Development

Examples of disability and development will be presented using the authors' experience in four unique regions: Guatemala - Rural Development for Indigenous Populations; BiH - National CBR system; Outreach from Health Science Centres (Mumbai India) - Education; Bangladesh - Disability and Poverty Reduction.

Abstract no: 04

Knowledge as Liberation: Reflections on the Australian – Sri Lankan Experience

Author : Dr. Fiona Kumari CAMPBELL PhD; BLS (Hons); JP (Qual)* Convenor Disability Studies Program, School of Human Services, Director of the Social Justice Program, Griffith University, Brisbane Australia, Currently Visiting Senior Lecturer, Disability Studies Unit, University of Kelaniya

People with disability throughout the world have been excluded from planning, policy implementation and political processes for many reasons, the principle one being a lack of power in tandem with the reality that significant (able-bodied) stakeholders in disability development have had greater power and recognised expertise. After 25 years in the disability rights movement (DRM) in Australia, the author reflects upon the current day reality in Australia, where more than ever, disability services are operated by large monopolies that not only provide well paid employment to able-bodied experts, but where a commitment to hearing the voices of disabled people is sparse. This reflection extends to a discussion of where the DRM has made mistakes. It is fundamental for disabled people to see different ways of living the disabled life well. The author argues for the necessity of ongoing leadership training and mentoring for and by disabled people to replenish DPO's for the task of activism and development participation. Without this "passing on of the baton" to other generations of disabled people the danger is that power can get consolidated in the hands of a few individuals (anti-democratic in its own way), who, not having infinite lives pass on, leaving a power vacuum in participatory governance due to deskilling and low self esteem.

This paper is also a discussion of the necessity for all disabled people to have access to the tools of knowledge through grassroots education and where appropriate increased access to higher education. The discussion will extend to the need to have training for legal mobilization (knowledge of Sri Lankan laws and social policy), short courses in contemporary disability studies issues globally and the urgent need for Sri Lankan cultural disability research. The author asserts that much of the disability systems knowledge/coding/definitions coming into Sri Lanka from abroad are for many complex reasons absorbed uncritically. Postcolonial writers have argued that one of the chief mechanisms of colonization is through control of knowledge and cultural production. Sri Lankan disability activists are called to critically assess overseas development models and conceptualizations of disablement, whilst at the same time to work with Sri Lankan educational authorities to further research and document unique Sri Lankan approaches and responses to understanding disability in order to dialogue around universal disability development modeling including the necessity for local deviations in planning/conceptual responses.

Abstract no: 05

Facilitating Information Accessibility for the Print Disabled

**Author : Ruvan Weerasinghe, Asanka Wasala and Samantha Mathara Arachchi,
University of Colombo School of Computing**

Information accessibility is becoming key to personal, professional and national development in this increasingly connected world. While cost of access is still an issue in developing countries such as Sri Lanka, global trends indicate that this barrier will be removed sooner rather than later. Another significant impediment, the language barrier, is currently being addressed in the region through various localization initiatives.

In this paper however, we focus on a particularly disadvantaged community, which is to a large extent shut out from the enormous global information resource made conveniently accessible to the rest of us through the Internet and the World Wide Web: this is the Print Disabled community. With a global percentage of 0.57% and a Sri Lankan estimate of 0.36%, this community forms a significant minority, who are in many other ways well equipped to benefit most from information technology. While the language literacy rate of this community is usually very high in countries like Sri Lanka, their access to information is greatly hampered owing to their relatively low IT literacy. One of the key reasons for this is the mismatch between their physical faculties and the most prevalent user interface in the computer – its screen.

Work undertaken at the Language Technology Research Lab (LTRL) at the University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC) has focused on some of the key assistive technologies for enabling the active participation of this community in the emerging knowledge society. Several of these initiatives, such as the development of non-proprietary fonts and input methods, have a broader relevance in facilitating local language support for all. Others are more specifically supportive of the print disabled community, such as Text to Speech, Optical Character Recognition and Talking Book technology. Still others, such as web accessibility support, are fast becoming global best practices to assist various differently-abled communities.

This paper will describe each of the key technologies relating to web content accessibility in local languages with a focus on the Sinhala language support tools currently available through the LTRL. It will also outline preliminary results and findings of testing and deploying such technology in general.

Acknowledgements

Much of this work was supported through the Pan Asia Network Localization initiative funded by IDRC involving 6 Asian countries. While thanking the donors, we would also like to thank our main stakeholder partner, the DAISY Lanka Foundation of Sri Lanka.

Abstract no: 06

Networking: Is it an effective Strategy in Mainstreaming Disability in Development? – Case study from Sri Lanka

Author : P.M.D. Ranga Nadeera Pallawala, Projects Manager, Practical Action – South Asia Programme

Development organisations have a large role to play in mainstreaming disability into development. However, the traditional model of development has provided very little space for development organisations involvement in the mainstreaming process. This is largely due to the knowledge gap of development organizations on disability related issues. On the other hand, disability focussed organisations also have very little orientation towards development aspects, creating less room for mutual interactions of these two sectors. Bridging this gap is necessary to move towards mainstreaming disability in development process.

Under these circumstances, Practical Action (ITDG) facilitated the process of networking these two categories of organisations in Sri Lanka in order to bridge this gap. The network was initiated in 2003 with a series of informal discussions to share experiences, with representatives from the development and disability sectors. It took one year for these organisations to develop a strategy to work as a common group towards mainstreaming and another three years to bring their focus into practical applications in development approaches as an independent organisation, “Development with Disabled Network (DWDN)”. Currently DWDN has 32 member organisations, 50% of which are from the development sector.

The process of networking created many positive changes in development oriented organisations. One of the most significant indicators for positive change is “*counting disability*” in their development initiatives. Examples of “*counting disability*” are obtaining statistics on disability at data collection stages, promoting participation of disabled people in planning, designing, implementing and monitoring of development programmes, taking deliberate steps to facilitate participation of people with disabilities,

etc. The changes started with acceptance of people with disabilities as a beneficiary and a stakeholder of the development process. Higher level indicators such as having disability friendly constitutions (at least by opening membership for disabled people), creating awareness among other development initiatives, promoting local networking, etc. have also been observed. The perceived sustainability of the mainstreaming process through networking is high with the experience of “Development with Disabled Network (DWDN)”.

The process of networking was challenging. Meeting those challenges is important in mainstreaming disability. The general negatives in networking such as higher resource intensity, time factor, achieving consensus, etc. are applicable for DWDN as well. Keeping the development organisations actively in the process of early stages of the networking is challenging. After its inception, bringing the new members in was also challenging, as was working with established power structures and culture. Obtaining active engagement of government institutions and private sector in DWDN, which is predominantly a NGO network, is also a challenge. While bringing the disability into mainstream development, the special needs of PWDs should also be taken into the account, and it is very important to identify how and to what extent the development perspective should be brought into disability focussed organisations. The two important issues that need to be tactfully tackled by the network in the long run is the financial sustainability and expansion of the network. The former is common to any kind of network. The latter is a multi-dimensional issue, as it encompasses the geographic area, the number of members, technical sectors and the distinguished roles of the members.

In conclusion, the networking has taken a positive stance in mainstreaming disability into development amidst the many challenging facets of the process. The same trend is emerging across the world, which brings about the need of networking of networks. The best results of networking depend on the degree to which the knowledge generated within these networks are applied in practice, and the degree to which the networks have democracy while respecting diversity.

Abstract no: 10

A Study On Applications of Ergonomics at Workstations of Disabled Employees

Author : R. R. Wickramasinghe, BSc. Design (Hons), University of Moratuwa

0.1 Observation

In any country, generally, when furniture is designed and manufactured only a very few manufacturers consider the need of the disabled persons and cater to them. Even people who are not disabled experience thousands of problems when using furniture, specially in the Sri Lankan context. When a person becomes disabled he enters a completely different world because he was not born as a disabled person. His world & his aspirations are completely changed. The person is affected not only physically but also spiritually. Almost all the disabled people once they get in to this situation become frustrated, disappointed, and think that life is not worth living. It is this mind set of the disabled person which has to be combated. Society, with the help of the state, should make every endeavour to create an atmosphere in which the disabled realize that they are not second class citizens.

This research is an in-depth study of the above mentioned problem. This is a study which had been undertaken along with the affected people. Their problems in the working environment, feelings and requests have been recorded in a questionnaire given at the study. Based on this information and via observation made by the research the following aspects have been enumerated.

- To evaluate the working postures of workers in manufacturing processes
- To study the commonly and frequently found occupational health hazards among employees in garment industry.
- To suggest Ergonomic application relating to working environment of this institute to reduce occupational health problems.

0.2 Scope of the study

It is obvious that disabled people fall in to various categories as mentioned earlier. It will be a daunting task to do a research on all categories of disabled people. To highlight and enumerate one category this research is compiled at Ranaviru Institution to bring out one category of disabled serviceman. This is an institution established by the Sri Lankan Army for the disabled soldiers who have fought at the front.

0.3 Methodology

Research was conducted to identify problems of employees in the workstation through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was analysed along with observations made at the site and actually observing the performance of the job by the disabled personnel.

Abstract no: 15

Excluding disability sensitivity: a major obstacle to effective disaster management in Sri Lanka

Author : Ramitha Wijethunga, Project Manager – Disaster Risk Management, Practical Action – South Asia Programme

Sri Lanka being a middle income earning country with relatively high Human Development Index faces specific set of development issues evolved with its characteristic socio political and economical background. In this context it is important to take a holistic view on the socio economic development process of the country with out being compartmentalized into sectoral development policies.

To make holistic development a reality under severe resource constraints as experienced by Sri Lanka, heterogeneity of communities has to be taken into account in formulating, analyzing and evaluating socio economic development policies. Unfortunately such diversity is not being taken into account in policy formulation currently and lack of it has led the society to a chaotic situation. Some of the key cross cutting ‘considerations’ such as disaster and conflict sensitivity, gender equality, inclusion of disabled people into mainstream etc have neglected entirely or in significant proportion from the sectoral policies formulated and policy decisions taken recently by the government.

Considering these gaps in overall development policies, it is not surprising that disabled people tend also to be neglected in disaster management related policies, ‘road maps’ and disaster response plans. Past experiences on managing disasters suggests that nobody has taken disabilities of persons into account in response and recovery programs while categorized them as helpless victims in rebuilding processes. Future disaster management activities also have been planned with technical partiality without taking an anthropocentric view.

With respect to the various stages of disaster management cycle nominal attempt has been made by government and non government sectors to incorporate the needs of disabled people into the relief and response phase. It is extremely difficult to find any

other significant effort made to include disability sensitivity into any other phases of the disaster management cycle. Lack of statistics on the affected disabled people, lack of awareness on the developmental issues faced by them, lack of understanding on alternative methodologies of integrating ‘people friendliness’ into disaster management initiatives, lack of political lobbying power for disabled people and tendency of policy makers to operate within their comfort zone in policy formulation and lack of coordination between experts on disable sensitive disaster management and other stakeholders in disaster management can be cited as possible reasons for this vacuum.

Development can be seen as a process that ensure the freedom of people to select what they aspire as the best for their own lives. In that sense no development process can be completed without taking the needs of disabled communities into account in socio economic development process.

If as a nation Sri Lanka is serious about achieving development objectives established for our own society, it is time to incorporate disability sensitivity as a cross cutting theme and introduce tools for analyzing policies related to disaster management with special emphasis to sustainable socio economic development to ensure that disabled people have not made vulnerable again by policies supposed to make people less vulnerable as a whole.

Abstract no: 15

Demystifying Disability: A Key to Mainstreaming Development

Author : Catherine Liyanage, Director, ECSAT (Equality-based Community Support And Training)

Without a doubt, there is a clear need to mainstream disability in development if we are to reach the Millennium Development Goals. Although this is the refrain from many INGOs and think tanks, there is relatively little mainstreaming at field level. One of the major reasons for this, according to the experiences of ECSAT in Galle Sri Lanka, is the mystification of disability at all levels of the development process.

As mainstreaming becomes a focus issue in the field of disability and development, the two-pronged approach of inclusive development in the community complemented by specialised support and capacity building by other bodies is currently the favoured strategy. In this strategy, it is estimated that 80% of the needs of disabled people can be met in the community, while the remaining 20% needs to be specialised.

Within this context, ECSAT is a community development organisation that has been working for the past year to mainstream disability in community development. While this constitutes the majority of their work, there are some activities focused only on people with disabilities, which can be seen as the specialised ‘prong’ of their activities. Staff are trained to be able to identify needs and provide support where possible through social, educational and vocational interventions, and to refer to government bodies or NGOs when specialised support is needed. These efforts have been broadly successful - especially considering the short time they have been working – but what they continue to struggle with is the mystification of disability that goes hand in hand with the medical model of support, still popular in Sri Lanka.

Different groups involved in development work with people with disabilities have different reasons to mystify disability – whether it is done consciously or sub-consciously. These reasons range from the honest belief that medical intervention is the only effective option, to the more cynical reason of wanting to appear to be an ‘expert’ and therefore in demand with employers or funders. For whatever reason though, such mystification is widespread and is a major reason why the mainstreaming of disability in development continues to face major hurdles at all levels.

If this is true, then the major task of any organisation must be to demystify disability at all levels. This means through working with communities, service staff, government and non governmental organisations, people with disabilities and their carers. Attitudes and fears must be challenged, and knowledge spread to provide an alternative to the dominance of the medical model.

Finally, the pitfalls of such an approach must also be taken into account since there is the danger that through focusing on less formal aspects of support the workforce may become less skilled. In addition, training that aims to change basic values of people is notoriously difficult and time consuming. There is also a difficulty in marrying government services with this very social and holistic model, which could be a serious issue in relation to the sustainability of any such efforts.

Abstract no: 16

Role of Media on mainstreaming disability into development

Author : P.A.Antony Mark, Chairman, Peace Development Foundation, Mannar, Sri Lanka

People with disability are marginalized in the society. Their needs are often neglected and consequently they remain among the poorest of the poor and are frequently excluded from social activities, education, employment, and benefits of many development Programmes.

1. Media
2. Disability
3. Government Policy.

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, this right includes freedom to hold opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of all frontiers.

Media

Print Media : Government and Private.

Television : Government and Private.

Radio : Government and Private

Internet

Web Site

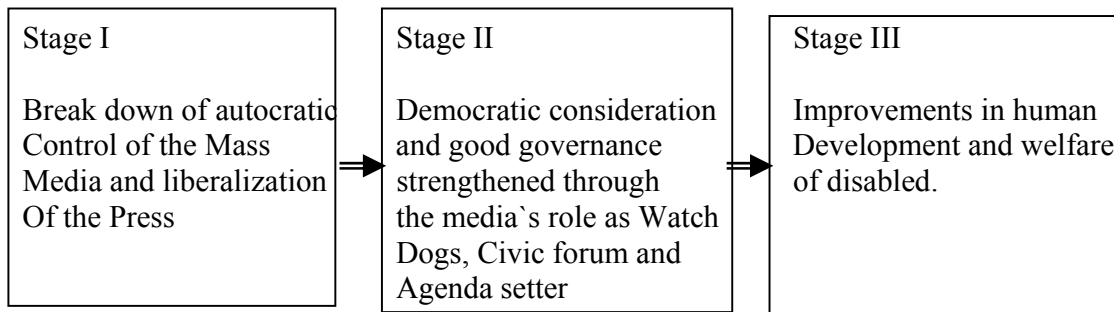
It is the duty of all to utilize the disabled as a useful resource and explore a policy framework for the benefit and development of them. They should not be a burden to others. Both State and Private they do not take more care about disabled people and disseminate information regarding how many disabled people live and how many employed and get earnings in Sri Lanka.

A Project has to be implemented towards the promotion of social inclusion and sensitising policy makers to prepare development plan which promote disabled persons and reduce their vulnerability. The vulnerable groups are women, children, older people, disabled people and people living with aids, etc. The free media should be recognized as a key dimension of efforts to eradicate poverty and disability for two main reasons.

First: Free media serves as a vehicle for sharing information in order to facilitate ethics and good governance to generate opportunities to gain access for essential services. Information is equal to development and is the right of the people.

Second: Free media are associated with a range of “goods” or benefits that are highly relevant to the challenges of Poverty Eradication including the recognition and strengthening of basic human rights, a stronger civil society, institutional change, political transparency, support to education, public health awareness and substantial livelihood. Of course for the media to be effective in alleviating poverty, they must be allowed to operate freely and safely.

The model Press freedom-An Analytical frame work:



Source: Professor Pippa Norris- Harvard University.

The free press enhances the voice of poor and disabled people and generates more informed choices about economic needs. Press is at the absolute core of equitable development, because, if you cannot enfranchise poor people, if you do not have a right to expression, if there is no search light on corruption and inequitable practices, you cannot build the public consensus needed to bring about change. The Press as a watch dog, should have the greatest impact upon stamping out corruption, social problems, injustice, improving democracy and good governance, and will ultimately contribute towards the eradication of poverty particularly by making the government more accountable and responsive to the needs of vulnerable people, especially disabled persons.

After reviewing all concerns, it is apparent that all issues related to disability should be considered one of not only development but also Humanitarian work as well.

However poverty and malnourishment is directly linked with disability.

The number of disabled people is increasing day by day because of war, floods, landslides, Tsunami, landmines, etc. in Sri Lanka. We have to extend adequate counseling and psychological trauma programmes to disabled people.

(E.g.) National Education Institute of Maharagama provides a special programme in psychological trauma to blind deaf etc.

- Photo screening of media of flood, Tsunami, Landslides, war etc., is also important
- Closure of A9 road is also important.
- “Burning Minute” in Soorian FM Tamil Radio broadcast.

Women widowed by war

Jaffna	3820
Battacaloo	3250
Vavuniya	2166
Trincomalee	8847
Mannar	2280
Mullaitive	5856
Kilinochchi	3246
Amparai	2758
Families of Forces	4814
Families of Village Guard	143
Total	37180

War dead cases

Civilian	70000
LTTE	23000
Soldiers	10000
Total	103000
Tsunami affected families	232674
Tsunami displaced Families	109779
Completely damaged houses	64178
Partially damaged houses	48600

Tsunami Disaster

	Deaths	Injured	Missing
1. Northern	6200	4907	1093
2. Eastern	15354	8740	2165
3. Southern	10060	7326	2130
4. Western	341	467	172
5. N/Western	66	01	03
Total	30959	21441	5563

Source: Centre for National Operation, Disaster Management Division.

Millennium Development Goals and importance of overview of Disability Issues:

Sri Lanka is one of the 191 Signatories to Millennium Declaration which emerged from Summit. The declared Millennium Development Goals are Poverty Eradication, Primary Education, Gender Equality, Child Mortality, Mental Health, Combat diseases, Environmental Protection and Development. The main cause of disability in Sri Lanka is firstly malnourishment which highly affects infants and children generally. Further, even though legislations stipulate a reservation of 3% people with disabilities in the Public sector, in reality it constitutes less than 0.3% of the Public workforce. There are about 60 million disabled people living in the world. 20 million disabled people live in India. In Sri Lanka 1% of the population is disabled. These hazards arise from society, Terrorism, civil strife, conflict, accident, floods, landslides, Tsunami, threat to public health, unplanned sexual activities abortion and sexual abuses.

In India, the disabled are provided with 03% jobs in the Public services, free dry rations, full pension, free housing and free transport services. In the régime of President R.Premadasa, more disabled people were recruited to the Government sector by granting additional 25 extra marks in the interviews. Under Mahinda Chinthanaya, it was decided to grant Rs. 3000/- as pension per month. But so far it is not provided in Northern Province. It is the duty of the Government to provide these disabled people with housing, latrines, employment, income generating projects, loan facilities, vocational training, education, counseling. These rights are guaranteed in the U.N convention.

The key Challenges of the intervention to address the disability issues are:

- lack of knowledge, interest and sensitivity towards the disability issues ;
- Poor Resource allocations;
- Lack of capacity and confidence to represent and lobbying of people with disabilities on their rights and needs.
- Lack of strong legislations and practical policies.
- Lack of accessibility for decision making:
- Mainstreaming disabilities programme within the State structure, culture and religious boundaries.

Modern disabilities management is very much an ongoing national requirement, important to Government and people alike. It has special significance today, because of increasing amount of disabled people in Sri Lanka.

To be effective, free and post disability Management Programme should be implemented as a comprehensive and continuous activity. Not only as a periodic reaction to individual disability circumstances. Consequently, the Government of Sri Lanka and NGOs who are responsible for management of disabilities have to deal with a wide range of policy Planning, organizational operations and other matters.

Several partners will share responsibility for the implementation of the policy on disability. They include the following:-

- Government through particular Ministries and decentralized administration;
- Organization of people who have disability formed into groups and also parents formed into groups.
- Civil society, in particular communities, CBOO, NGOO, Private sector, Professional groups, Religious groups, Political organizations and Media.

Mass Media

Information related to disability will be disseminated by the mass media to educate, mobilize and activate civil society and so promote the social inclusion of people who have disability. Attitudinal, emotional, and physical barriers will be reduced and the participation of the people who have disability in the civil, political and cultural life of society will be increased. To this end,

- All forms of Mass Media will participate, print, television, and radio both State and Private.
- The Mass Media will increase the knowledge of civil society regarding the rights and responsibilities of people who have disability.
- The Mass Media will take measures to reduce stereotyping and negative socio-cultural and customary beliefs and practices relating to women who have disability.
- The Mass Media will conduct campaigns to inform civil society about policy and its implication and about measures that are being taken to implement it.
- Media has an important function informing and influencing CBOO and public in both areas.

Abstract no: 17

The Role of Local Disability Movements in Mainstreaming Disability in Development

Author : Thanuja Navaratne, Attorney-at-Law, Advocacy Specialist of Save the Children in Sri Lanka

In each country, local disability movements should take the lead role in mainstreaming “Disability in Development”. Especially in the South Asian region, with existing cultural norms “Disability” is heavily linked to social stigma, discrimination, loss of self worth and bad luck all which aggravate the social exclusion and negative treatment of persons with disabilities.

Therefore, the burden of empowering PWDs to stand up to these challenges, and the challenge of taking up the responsibility of working towards integrating PWDs in all aspects of development, lies heavier on the disability movements in South Asian region. But in most of these countries the disability movements are not taking up this responsibility or taking any initiatives or making any positive movements towards this goal.

With my in-depth personal experience and exposure to the disability sector in Sri Lanka, I will be examining critically reasons for this failure by the movement & suggest recommendations to overcome these weaknesses.

In Sri Lanka the disability movement is led mostly by ‘urban’ ‘men’ who have acquired their disabilities at a very late stage after completing a huge part of their lives. They therefore very much lack the understanding as well as the need to focus attention on issues that specifically have to be faced by children with disabilities and their families, by PWDs living in rural areas and by women with disabilities who are at a double disadvantage.

For most activists of the Sri Lankan disability movement this has become their sole income generating and survival machinery. Therefore, it has become a ‘job’ which they

have to protect at the cost of even their responsibilities towards other fellow PWDs. Specially when dealing with some international organizations which provide funding for activities of local disability movement, the sector abides by all the suggestions and actions of these international agencies, even at junctures where these interventions are not beneficial in anyway to the disabled persons, allowing some international agencies to completely manipulate the local movement.

In addition, the Sri Lankan disability movement leaders are very reluctant to accommodate ideas of women, young persons and children with disabilities in their movement. This has created a huge lack of innovative and creative ideas. Their actions represent issues of different categories of persons with disabilities and existing inequity. The process of action is depressingly slow, lethargic and passive.

There is hardly any unity within the Sri Lankan disability sector. As a result, some older persons are completely manipulated and handled by some international agencies for their own narrow purposes, trying to forcibly 'control' the sector using even mafia tactics when necessary.

The Sri Lankan disability movement has hardly built any concrete connections with key development actors such as the government, NGOs and private sector and neither have they built any strong links with other agencies which work on human rights.

The Sri Lankan disability movement has contributed very little to project a "positive image" of PWDs, which is extremely important to "market" PWDs into the development arena.

I will be examining the possible 'routes' out of these obstacles faced by the disability movement in meeting up to their responsibility to play the major role in mainstreaming "Disability in Development"

Abstract no: 18

Training Disabled Persons in Rural Sri Lanka for Sustainable livelihoods

Authors : D.S.P. Kurupparachchi, Assistant FAOR (Programme) & Nalin Munasinghe (Programme Associate), Food and Agriculture Organisation

Sri Lanka has a significant percentage of disabled persons and due to civil strife the number is increasing. In an attempt to rehabilitate these persons, the Ministry of Social Welfare operates eight vocational training centres for the physically and mentally disabled in districts of Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Ratnapura and Hambantota. The government also provides some financial support to NGOs that assist the disabled. However, of all the rehabilitation and vocational opportunities for disabled persons in Sri Lanka, there was no well organized programme to train them in agricultural and rural based enterprise development. As a majority of the disabled persons live in rural areas where agriculture provides the main livelihood opportunities, the need for systematic training in agriculture and rural based enterprise development was an urgent requirement. Thus, the Ministry of Social Welfare requested Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) assistance in developing an agriculture-based training module for disabled persons. FAO responded in year 2003, by donating US\$ 310,000 through its Technical Corporation Programme to launch a project at the Vocational Training Centre (VTC) Angunakolapelessa in the Hambantota district with the objective to design and test a model of innovative agricultural training programme, enabling rural disabled persons to acquire knowledge, skills and experiences to be productive citizens enhancing family wellbeing and food security.

The project activities were implemented in four phases to generate the following key outputs; a comprehensive training module, innovative training methodologies and a national action plan.

During the startup phase, a National Planning Workshop was conducted with the participation of experts in agriculture, social service officers and others who are engaged in related work in the area to assess training needs. A cursory study was carried out to

identify potential trainees in districts of Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Moneragala and Ratnapura and a market survey was conducted to identify agriculture and food processing enterprises having market potential in the area. A group of forty trainees with different disabilities such as deaf, physical disability, poor eye sight, mental and stammering were selected considering age, gender, education and also previous training.

In the second phase, training materials and facilities were developed by national / international consultants with the support of agriculture and food processing experts in respective local agencies and the modules developed were approved by stakeholders at a planning workshop. The infrastructure such as field plots, irrigation facilities, food processing laboratories and other essentials required for a residential training programme were developed at the VTC through the project.

In phase three, forty trainees were enrolled for a two months residential training programme which was organized in two main streams, namely horticulture and food processing. In horticulture, vegetable cultivation, fruit cultivation, nursery management and mushroom production backed by basic principles and field practices were taught. Similarly, modules on food processing included dehydration of vegetables & fruits, preparation of cordials & pulps, preparation of short eats, sweets, grinding of cereals & condiments, packaging of fresh cut vegetables and marketing of packeted food preparations.

Both theoretical and practical aspects were supported by field demonstrations. Training was conducted by experienced trainers selected from the Department of Agriculture under the strict supervision and guidance of two national consultants. Interpreters were used whenever necessary for easy communication.

In the final phase, post training follow-up activities were conducted to assist trainees in selecting a suitable income generating vocation. Twenty trainees have selected vocations in horticulture and 16 trainees selected enterprises in food processing while there were four dropouts due to a variety of reasons. Consultants and VTC staff visited all homes of trainees after the completion of residential training to provide preliminary instructions, necessary assistance and to monitor progress.

The trainees were of different disabilities and with a range of educational standards varying from no schooling to GCE (O.L). Therefore it was difficult to adopt a uniform training methodology for all and necessitated following a variety of teaching tools.

However, the training helped them to develop interpersonal relationships, became independent and learnt to make free decisions.

The training programme is a success as almost all the trainees except four are involved in small scale enterprises and some were earning a reasonable income just after few weeks of the training. The training module is suitable for the disabled persons of the area and this was demonstrated through the high level of participation of trainees to embark in a vocation with success. Those who did not proceed to do a vocation did not do so mainly due to the lack of support from parent and due to poor health conditions. The most important outcome of the programme was the social acceptance for these persons, who were neglected before, as productive members of the society. The Ministry of Social Welfare could use this model to train similar type of disable persons in other areas as well.

Abstract no: 19

Management of Social Issues in Institutionalising Livelihood Programmes in Moving Disability into Development

Author : M.R.M.Farook, Consultant – Entrepreneurship Development Expert, CBCQE – GTZ/UNICEF Project

Man is a mixture of abilities and disabilities. The concepts of ability and disability, are conveniently put at the extreme ends of a bipolar continuum. However, in reality such total differentiation does not occur in any human being. What we notice in either case is the ‘apparent’ polarization of one aspect (ability or disability) which virtually prevents us seeing the other aspect – disabilities hiding abilities and vice versa.

Human history is the glorification of abilities in man and this has led to the total disregard to look into the potentialities of those with disability. Yet there are instances which have shown great work done by people with disabilities – but we do not delve much into it and completely ignore the possibilities of getting the best out of people with disability. At least for the reasons of social justice and fair play humanity as a whole are duty bound in this post modernist era to look into what society could do to people with disability to reap mutual benefits, and not merely pay lip service. Let us not look at the superficially visible disturbing side of disability but move to look more productively at the fascinating side of disability.

The various definitions of disability have their shortcomings – one is that of attaching disability to a person as an inherent condition, and not one that is induced by socio-cultural environment. We have to look at disability in a broader way and define it as a social product, conditioned by the relationship between deficiency (either physical or mental) of a person and the social, political, economic and cultural environment in which the person lives and evolves. Disability is not inherent to the person with a deficiency; rather it is society that disables the person.

The main objective of this paper is to first identify the socio-cultural factors which act as barriers in the intervention processes of livelihood programmes to move disability into

development. The sub objective is to design rectification mechanisms to overcome such barriers through awareness creation, education, societal commitment and political will. The research question is: “Will it be possible to minimize the social-cultural barriers to the process of mainstreaming disability into development?”

The methodology consists of review of relevant literature on disability, getting the views of authoritative and informed Sri Lankan personnel on disability; speaking to various categories of Sri Lankan people with disability; and the views of managers who as at present have employed people with disability in their workplaces.

All data and information so obtained will be analysed using qualitative approaches and a framework developed for making people with disability get involved in development. The management aspect involved in tackling the socio-cultural factors will be accentuated through this study / research.

Abstract no: 20

Identification and Addressing the Problems of Physically Disabled in the Clothing Industry

Author : Maj. Ajith Jayatissa, Factory Manager, Ranaviru Apparels

The objective of this paper is to provide information and guidelines to employ people with disabilities in the most effective and efficient manner in the clothing industry. The following aspects are taken into consideration in order to achieve this objective;

- Ensure that people with disabilities have equal opportunities
- Provide safe accessibility and healthy workplace

People with disabilities are not a homogenous group. Their disabilities vary. They can be physical, sensory, intellectual or mental. Throughout the world people with disabilities are participating and contributing in the world of work at all levels. However many have not got the opportunity to work due to many barriers. As per the records available from European countries, disabled people are as productive and as reliable as any other employees.

This paper discusses the problems faced by the people with disabilities in their employment and the ways to employ them in the Apparel industry. People with disabilities have a right to employment opportunities, equality of treatment and decent productive jobs. It is clear however that these rights will not be fulfilled unless people in positions of responsibility are committed, able and willing to take positive action.

To be active, a disabled person should be able to commute between home, work and other destinations. As far as the built-up environment is concerned, it is important that it should be barrier-free and adapted to fulfill the needs of all people equally. Practical solutions are discussed in the paper.

Where employers are not immediately in a position to employ a disabled worker, they could consider providing work experience opportunities to jobseekers with disabilities, to

enable them to acquire the skills, knowledge and work attitude required for specific jobs in the workplace.

Specially designed machines are not available in the clothing industry for people with disabilities. Required modifications and attachments could be manufactured at the factory workshop itself. Some of those modifications are unique to the particular operation. Sensors and electronic devices could ease the task in modern innovative technology. Pneumatic modifications could be done if such provisions are available.

Assessment of the type of physical disability and methods to adjust them to the work environment in a garment factory is essential. Automation is not a new term when considering the garment industry. Automation also helps disabled people to work in the garment industry.

The case study on the Ranaviru Apparels proves that employing the disabled people in the clothing industry is possible. The Sri Lanka Army started a rehabilitation project called Ranaviru Apparels to employ some of disabled soldiers with the objective of providing disabled soldiers with a near and normal life while giving them an opportunity to acquire skills so that they will be able to gainfully employed even if they are medically boarded out. This has proved so far to be a success.

Abstract no: 21

Disability and Development

Author : Lionel Gulawita, Consultant(Expert) - PERC, Secretary/Director -Diriya Foundation

Poverty, as it relates to Sri Lanka, has many a special characteristic of its own. Though its percentage has dropped in the recent past, at very modest estimates, a minimum 25% of the population live in abject deprivation in the North, South and other parts of the country. Besides lacking in basic means of subsistence including food, clothing, housing, education, health facilities etc., their destitution also covers inadequacy in resources and regular employment resulting in insufficient income.

Social irresponsiveness

Poverty stricken families are prone to malnutrition, epidemics and illiteracy. They are subject to suspicion, arrest and even unethical prosecution. Poverty also has its potential negative influence and even danger to the society. In developed countries poverty has impacted with further ill-effects of drug dependence, mental depression, illnesses and crime, creating a host of serious sociological problems. When the political authority and enlightened society becomes less responsive to these resulting consequences, illegality and immorality would quite unsurprisingly be on the increase, as already seen in Sri Lanka's recent crime rate. Therefore it is explicitly clear that disability, vulnerability, and defenselessness of the poor under social irresponsiveness is not an end in themselves. Hence the fallout is unpalatable, both politically and socially.

Initiative and drive

Some believe that poverty is the result from lack of resources such as land, capital, building material etc at global level. Some are of the opinion that uneven distribution of resources is the cause of poverty. In the history there have been many who became big businessmen and even global transnational tycoons without having owned an inch of land

or initial venture capital. But they possessed the initiative and drive which in gradual process resulted in their fortunes.

Many advanced traits and skills could emerge in people with little training and without any degree or qualification. They include scientists and inventors whose findings were later developed into useful technological innovations and theories.

Tested results

The Model Parliamentary concept is one such personal development strategy with excellent outcome. The participants, after a brief training on the Parliamentary procedures, initial addresses and brain storming by organizers, and awareness on expected role-play as Speaker, Minister/Member in Model Parliamentary session, skillfully make their contributions, with self-esteem plus good humor. They air their views intelligently on many different topics.

Outcome

The participants become self-reliant and knowledgeable and find ways and means to resolve their own problems- economic and social - and succeed in their life. They steadily become enlightened citizens, cultured and bent on peace. They would become masters in looking after their family economy, reaching at the same time their personal goals and aspirations.

Tried and Tested:

- a. Tested examples have proved that people of many walks of life were delighted and full of accolade for the opportunity they received to participate in model Parliamentary sessions.
- b. Given an opportunity to participate in regulated discussions, exchange of ideas, group debates on selected issues, they would articulate their hidden talent which contributes to their own welfare in many aspects of life.

Abstract no: 22

Importance of Capacity building on Disability Issues for Developmental Organizations

Authors : Jeevan Kodithuwakku (Leonard Cheshire International), Samantha Wakista (Disability Studies Unit, University of Kelaniya)

Introduction

Leonard Cheshire International (LCI) is a UK based organization and it provides its services to Sri Lanka through LC Disability Resource Centers in Sri Lanka (LCDRC). This organization is directly involved in Disability issues globally and its main thematic areas are Economic Empowerment, Inclusive Education, Inclusive Community Services and Advocacy & Campaigning. Action Aid International Sri Lanka (AAI-SL) is an international development agency which is an active INGO in Sri Lanka with 23 partner organizations through out the country working on poverty and Women's Rights.

Sri Lanka is a country with a high prevalence of disabilities and the majority consists of the poorest segment of the country. According to various statistics this amounts to 10% of the total population and the majority are youth. With regard to gender, the percentage of disabled females is higher than their male counterparts.

Both organizations decided to merge their organizational strengths in order to deliver better, cost-effective services to the community by capacity building on disability issues for partners of AAI-SL. AAI-SL has a wide spread coverage with around 525 developmental workers, and LCDRC a high level of expertise on disability management.

Methodology

Training is designed by LCDRC considering various factors for 2 levels of workers namely for managers and grassroots level developmental workers. In the first stage all were given basic training on disability identification (short listing) of PWDs in their working ground which is followed by a short follow up training. At the second stage they

were given specific knowledge on low cost appliances, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy and Rights of the Disabled. Training is carried in their local areas—both indoor and field training. This method was earlier used by LCDRC to train its own field staff and it turned out to be very successful according to external reviewers.

Outcome

This is an ongoing project and within a short period we were able to train more than 68 staff in the identification of disabilities, conduct proper needs assessments on PWDs, change the attitudes of developmental workers and their communities towards disability, address issues on inclusive education with positive outcomes, increase awareness on accessibility and change the environment accordingly with local resources, preparation of low cost appliances, utilizing local low cost materials and expertise. The other significant outcome is that these developmental workers were able to identify an extra number of disabled people who were not identified earlier and who were considered as unproductive—were chosen for many economic empowerment schemes.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Because of the high prevalence of disability in Sri Lanka any organization working with the community should have a sound knowledge on disability issues since a considerable percentage of the local community is disabled. Most of the organizations working with marginalized groups have a poor knowledge on disability issues and their approach to PWDs is mostly charity /sympathy based.

This training enabled our partners to work on developmental/right based approaches. We strongly recommend similar kinds of training for all organizations working with communities in order to deliver better services.

Abstract no: 23

Role of Development Organisations in Disability Mainstreaming through Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)

Author : D.H. Janaka Piyal Hemathilake, Director, Nawajeewana, Tangalle, Sri Lanka

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is an internationally recognized approach to the inclusion of People with Disabilities (PWDs). This approach has been practiced by many organisations including *Nawajeewana*, a local NGO working in the southern region of Sri Lanka. *Nawajeewana* initiated a programme for 15 children with disability (CWDs) with the support of 3 volunteers. Today *Nawajeewana* proudly celebrates 20 years of service, having provided services to over 3000 (PWDs) in Matara, Hambantota Districts. The CBR programme of the Southern province is coordinated by *Nawajeewana* and it is supported with a few other programmes such as a community mental health program, mobility aide provision, multifold clinic and therapy service, counseling, as well as income generation and livelihoods activities. This paper analyzes the success of CBR programmes with and without involvement of development oriented organisations.

The approach followed by *Nawajeewana* in its CBR programme is comprised of 2 components;

1. Early identification of persons within the communities and making an individual rehab plan (IRP) with the involvement of the family, volunteers and staff members
2. A treatment plan is designed in consultation with qualified and experience therapists – physiotherapy prosthetic/orthotist; occupation therapist, speech therapy

Both these components work towards the rehabilitation and inclusion of PWDs to facilitate the process of mainstreaming. It also follows the principle of rehabilitation of PWDs within their socio-cultural set-up with the facilitation of external society.

However, the approach has faced many challenges in achieving proper results in inclusion and mainstreaming. A comprehensive rehabilitation approach should consist of skills development and full participation in social, cultural and economic life of an individual. *Nawajeewana* and similar capacity institutions can provide services and assistance in terms of rehabilitation from early childhood up to complete education and vocational training. The continuous therapy treatments and aids can also be supported through the institution to make him/her functional, mobile and independent.

However, this process needs a higher degree of support from other development agencies which is the missing link of the entire CBR process. Especially with PWDs in poverty, support of poverty reduction processes and institutions is very important. *Nawajeewana* experience has shown that meeting the basic needs is a priority to any PWD and it could be achieved through employment for breadwinning, a decent house, access to clean water, sanitation, medicine, etc.

More improvements are needed to ensure total rehabilitation, such as accessible built environment, improved communication (such as sign language), financial support for poor PWDs for assistive devices, etc. At the same time there is a need for integration and mainstreaming of disability into the large-scale development programmes such as Samurdhi, as well as the inclusion of PWDs into development programmes of other organizations. Skills of development workers of both government and NGO sectors should be built to incorporate disability sensitivity in development programmes. To ensure total CBR and inclusion of PWDs in social, economic and cultural life there should be a right mix of disability focused initiatives and development aspects. Integration and interactions with development agencies and programmes is key and without their active involvement the CBR process is incomplete.