DISABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Working with disabled people and their organisations in developing countries

- Strengthening partner organisations
- Disabled children and girls’ education
- Disabled people’s rights
- Mental health self help groups
- Deaf children’s education
- Disabled people’s livelihoods

Participants at an AJODEMO (the national association of young disabled people) workshop in Rebaúé district, Nampula province, Mozambique. Cantol Pondja (far right), is president of the Association.
Earthquakes hit Nepal

The devastating earthquakes which hit Nepal in April and May directly affected nine million people, a third of the population, of whom 8,702 are known to have died and over 24,000 were injured. 750,000 houses were completely destroyed. The earthquakes affected everyone in Nepal but what about the impact on disabled people? Our lead partner Nepal Disabled Human Rights Centre (DHRC-Nepal) along with other DPOs and the National Federation of Disabled Nepal have been working tirelessly to make sure that disabled people’s needs are counted and included in emergency relief.

We have heard many stories but the lucky escape of Dipendra, DHRC-Nepal’s severely disabled board member and his mother from the collapsed brick building in the historic centre of Bhaktapur City was indeed a miracle. They were pulled out alive and unhurt by Dipendra’s brother who happened to be there on a visit.

Only one of DDP’s local partners in Tanahun District, western Nepal was significantly affected with 123 disabled people’s homes being damaged or destroyed. Among them were 26 new project beneficiaries – disabled people who had just started new livelihood enterprises only to have their prospects dashed.

DDP’s other partners, KOSHISH (a mental health self help group) and SHRUTI (working with hard of hearing people) suffered minor damage to their office buildings and SHRUTI had to move as theirs was unsafe. KOSHISH has started giving post trauma counselling in Bhaktapur, hiring 16 trained counsellors as part of a 6 month emergency project.

The deep trauma and the long term impact of this disaster has yet to be fully felt, although we are proud of our lead partner DHRC-Nepal for the resilience they have showed (in the face of great personal loss) as they engage with the continuing struggle for disabled people’s inclusion in Nepal’s (re) development and post earthquake planning.

Alleviating poverty among disabled people

Bir Bahadur is disabled and lives with his sister’s family. They are Dalits and landless and came to Bardiya District seven years ago in search of a better livelihood. The family just about survives growing their own food and keeping goats. Bir’s disabilities meant that he has never been able to walk, but he has over the years made and mended simple farm hand tools and earned money to help his family.

Bardiya Rehabilitation Centre of the
Disabled (BRCD), one of four local DPO partners for DDP’s poverty alleviation programme in western districts of Nepal, selected Bir as a beneficiary. However the monsoon floods that raged through the district last year changed everything. Bir’s family lost all they had and they ended up in a Bardiya Red Cross temporary shelter. As winter approached DDP’s own emergency relief kicked in with warm jackets, bedding and school materials for his youngest niece.

When we met Bir again in March 2015, he was still living with his sister’s family in a new house that neighbours helped build and all the lost equipment for his mini forge had been replaced as well his tricycle, which is of course of vital importance for his mobility. Bir says he has a simple philosophy ‘to keep going day by day, but always striving to live better’.

**Alleviating poverty in Western Nepal** is a 3 year UK Aid/ Global Poverty Action Fund project that started in April 2014. DHRC-Nepal, DDP’s lead partner, is working with four DPO partners in Bardiya, Surkhet, Dang and Tanahun districts to lift 7,500 people out of poverty. In the project’s first year 329 disabled men and women and their family members (a total of 2280 people) benefited from direct livelihoods support, while others accessed skills training and rehabilitation services. We also thank Jersey Overseas Aid Commission for their support in helping us provide emergency relief aid for monsoon flood and landslide affected people in Bardiya and Sindhupalchuk.

Poor ear health is overlooked in children – that was the main finding of a pilot survey carried out by SHRUTI – the National Association for Hard of Hearing and Deafened, Nepal – a project funded by the Equitable Charitable Trust. Hearing tests of 450 primary age children in two Kathmandu schools found that the majority of them had poor ear health, while parents and teachers were unaware of the importance of good hearing for good learning – a problem SHRUTI aims to rectify.
MOZAMBIQUE

Empowering disabled young people in Mozambique

We are delighted that we are now working with the Mozambican Association of Disabled Young People (Associação dos Jovens Deficientes de Moçambique – AJODEMO) on three projects:

1. Promoting the participation of young disabled people in local governance in Maputo and Gaza provinces (South region) – funded by the Commonwealth Foundation.

2. Skills training and business start-up funds for 300 young disabled people in Maputo and Gaza – funded by the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission.

3. Training in rights (particularly the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities) and skills, and business start-up funds for nearly 200 young disabled people in Tete, Manica, Sofala, and Zambesia provinces (Central region) – funded by the Medicor Foundation.

We are grateful to all three agencies for the opportunity to increase knowledge among young disabled people about their rights and entitlements, and to bring about materials improvements in standards of living. We are joined in this initiative by the government skills training agency in these six provinces – more than half of Mozambique – who are working with AJODEMO and us to make their training programmes properly inclusive.

Ramosse Pedro lives with his mother in Chiure district, Pemba. She is Maria Momola, who is 60 years old, his sole carer and apart from the local children he has no friends at all. He has not been able to travel anywhere outside his immediate locality because until a few months ago he never had a wheelchair. Ramosse wants independence and so his mother built him an outside sleeping space adjacent to her house. Ramosse is one of many hundreds of disabled people and their families in Pemba that AJODEMO is reaching out to.
We thank also the Mercury Phoenix Trust for their support to raise awareness of HIV & AIDS among students in a Beira school by AJODEMO’s Sofala branch.

**Organizing young disabled people**

**Tete province**

The Tete delegation is one among AJODEMO’s 11 provincial and city branches – AJODEMO have full nationwide coverage – and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the DDP/AJODEMO programme in Mozambique’s Central Region. Celebrating their tenth anniversary this year and with 238 members throughout the province’s 14 districts, they have been working with the government skills training agency, *Instituto Nacional do Emprego e Formação Profissional*, to provide training opportunities for disabled youngsters, and have been concentrating lately on training disabled people about HIV & AIDS.

Much of what the Tete delegation does is intended to influence opinion about disabled people’s rights among policy-makers and duty-bearers, especially in the areas of including disabled people in teacher training, and being able to get access to the social assistance and benefits that do exist. The delegation is led by the provincial delegate, Sérgio, the Treasurer, Tavares, and Secretary, Acacia, all of whom are disabled people.

Sérgio Reis who leads the delegation in Tete is working with the Changara district office to set up training on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities aimed at both district officials and young disabled people.
BURUNDI

Boudeciane puts down roots at last

Displaced from her native province of Gitega by the civil war in 1993, Boudeciane, 38, has been fending for herself and her three children in Gatumba, outside the capital Bujumbura. As a widow she has suffered much exploitation at the hands of unscrupulous people who took advantage of her hard work and desperation to keep her children fed and sheltered. Her children went hungry because Boudeciane was cheated of her daily wages toiling in other people’s fields.

The Twunganire Abahungutse (TA – Everyone supports returnees) project team found her living with her children in a tiny mud house that a landowner had provided in return for her labour. Bodeciane always wanted to farm and was so happy when the TA project negotiated the ‘hire’ of a piece of land and gave the tools for tilling the land. She is proud of the maize, beans and cassava she has planted and the fact that she is able to provide food for her children every day and send them to school. Bodeciane laughs when she says ‘sometimes we have sauce to go with the food and my children eat and eat’.

She knows farming is hard: in the dry season cattle roam about eating everything and rains could be late. The two seasons of growing have enabled her to stockpile food and save money selling the surplus which has helped her to renegotiate renting the same piece of land for next year and future years.

Twunganire Abahungutse (TA – Everyone supports returnees), a 3 year project started in January 2014 with local partner ACPDH – Association of Community Human Rights which is funded by the Baring Foundation. TA is helping returnees (former refugees) and displaced people to know their entitlements and is providing practical assistance for starting livelihoods, getting legal documents, enrolling children in school and at the same time advocating with the Burundian government to ensure that returnees’ rights are not forgotten. The project is the winner of the 2015 Ockenden International Prize.

Boudeciane stands proudly on the hired piece of land which she has tilled thanks to the TA project. She has already produced one season’s crop of maize, beans, cassava and sweet potatoes.
Sadly, the run up to July 2015 elections have been marred by political violence that have left scores dead and once again many thousands have fled the country as refugees to Tanzania and Rwanda. The TA project’s activities in Gatumba, Mutimbuzi commune have not been hampered as the area has been largely unaffected by the violent demonstrations that have shaken other communes and parts of the capital Bujumbura.

**Deaf children learn to use computers**

IT training at *Ecole Ephphatha pour les Sourds* – EES (Ephphatha School for Deaf children) has opened up a whole new world for deaf children, adding a new and different dimension to learning and communications.

All 130 pupils have time-tabled access to IT classes, a remarkable advantage where very few Burundian children have access to electronic gadgets of any sort. With additional French and English language tuition older children are prepared for entrance exams to ‘hearing’ secondary schools (there are no secondary deaf schools) and set on the path to better opportunities.

‘We were apprehensive about how the children would take to this new technology as many of them had never seen a computer before. We were so surprised when they showed no fear and very quickly learnt the basics of using computers. This is a very good thing for deaf children, they won’t be left behind’ said Maurice Murishi, EES headmaster. The IT centre is open to all children at EES and accessible for parents and siblings of deaf children and for members of Burundi’s national deaf association who are developing and recording signs for a Burundian sign language dictionary.

The IT centre was wholly funded thanks to the British & Foreign Schools Society. We are grateful to the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission for their support in raising teaching quality at EES through sign language and interpretation training and introduction to special needs education, and for improvements to the school buildings and perimeter wall. The project gave significant support to the Association of Parents of Deaf Children who have produced a report with data from 13 provinces to campaign for government support for deaf children’s education.

IT trainer Chantal has quickly learnt the basics of sign language to keep up with deaf children’s speed of learning to use computers.
Health Awareness and Livelihoods in fifty villages

The 26-strong HAL team have reached all the project’s 50 villages getting the project under way in its first year. This is evident in the 63 self help groups (SHGs) that now flourish, and the 264 health and hygiene awareness sessions conducted among women and adolescent schoolgirls over the year as well as through the increased access to disability assessment and rehabilitation services which are an integral part of the project.

More than 1,000 women are saving money in their SHGs and their savings are making loans available to others who need capital to set up small enterprises, buy farm implements or seeds, or to pay for their children’s schooling, all without recourse to moneylenders.

In local schools the team have helped older girls form into groups, and taught basic hygiene and reproductive health, as well as tackling sensitive issues such as early marriage. They have introduced child protection ideas in schools using videos to get the message across. These messages are reinforced by a massive campaign of posters and wall paintings.

Health Awareness and Livelihoods (HAL) is a four-year programme in partnership with the Kiran Society, and funded by the Big Lottery, in 50 villages of Varanasi and Mirzapur districts which started in April 2014. The programme’s aims are to reduce unacceptably high rates of mother and child mortality, and to reduce poverty and hunger.

Self Help Groups – more than money

Kewala showed leadership potential from the first day the HAL team went to Tikri village to see if women wanted to form a self help group (SHG). At the first meeting, only seven of the 120 women present showed any interest but Kewala went door-to-door explaining in detail the benefits of a savings-and-loans scheme.

Just 16 months later, the village has 10 SHGs with more than one hundred members. And they have saved in total over £2,500 – not bad for very poor people from the lowest castes who work as casual labourers and are at the mercy of moneylenders. The main opposition to SHGs came unsurprisingly from those very moneylenders who put up barriers to prevent the groups flourishing, literally, by barricading the one road leading into the village.

SHG members came together to protest, and with 600 women lobbying local government officers the complaint reached the District Magistrate, who immediately ordered the removal of the barricade, and formed a committee to look into the matter. It found in favour of the SHGs and indeed led to the construction of a brick road.
to replace the previous mud track. Altogether 11 women in Tikri have started their own small businesses, mostly in agriculture, animal husbandry, and roadside stalls, but now the SHG members have decided to put up candidates for the forthcoming local elections, which really does show how SHGs can empower women, and in ways other than purely financial.

Kewala (foreground, right), leader of one of 10 self help groups in Tikri village.

Graduates and trainer of the Vocational Computer Training Centre run by the Sirivilliputhur Development and Education Trust (SDET) in Tamil Nadu celebrate their successful completion of training. 65 out of 100 trainees are now employed in decent paying IT related jobs. We thank Logica CMG Staff Project and the North South Development Trust for their support.
ETHIOPIA

Special needs education in Hawassa schools

Mekedes Mesfin has been a teacher for five years. She trained at the Hawassa College of Teacher Education with which DDP and partner Berhan Lehetsanat are closely involved through our project From Childhood to Livelihood. There, Mekedes chose to learn Braille and sign language, and found herself increasingly drawn to working with children with special needs. She’s now in charge of a resource centre full of materials designed to improve the quality of education for disabled children, serving a number of schools.

Earlier this year, Mekedes was one of 24 teachers selected for intensive training in making and using learning resources which was given by DDP’s Indian partner agency, Seva-in-Action, who are consultants in special education. Mekedes tells us that she learned so much about the way locally-available materials can be transformed at low or no cost into really good quality materials to help disabled children learn.

She is adept at making teaching materials such as puppets and also very creative, making up a song about a mountain she made out of mud, which, she says, may be the closest some of ‘her’ children ever get to a real mountain.

Education and Livelihood Opportunities for Girls and Women (ELGW) is a five-year programme funded by Comic Relief, in the 12 kebeles of Tulla sub-city, Hawassa, in southern Ethiopia, concluding in August 2015. Achievements include: setting up eight centres providing alternative basic education for out-of-school children, and adult literacy for women who never went to school; improved livelihoods for nearly 600 women; and a start in tackling deep-rooted and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting.

Very useful skills training for young disabled people

Although he finished primary education, Meles Yohannes couldn’t get a job due to employers’ attitudes to his disability, and so he decided to earn a living by shining shoes. Being a member of the local disabled people’s organization, he was among the first to join the From Childhood to Livelihood (FCTL) skills training programme for young disabled women and men.

Meles completed his two months’ training at the government-run Technology Transfer and Research Centre with flying colours. Unsurprisingly he chose to do leatherwork – designing and making shoes, belts and other products, as well as learning how to repair shoes. The FCTL team helped him to find premises and provided a leatherworking machine and tools, and then he was ready for business.

Meles’ skills training experience was profoundly life-changing and for the first time he felt he was treated with dignity and respect, as well as doing useful training. He said: ‘I really appreciate how the trainers pushed me to excel, not only in the technicalities of leatherwork, but also they taught me how to run a business and deal with customers’. Now business is booming, his life has changed beyond any expectation, and he is even thinking of...
taking on an apprentice.

**From Childhood to Livelihood** is a four-year programme in partnership with Berhan Lehetsanat, funded by BIG Lottery, which started in May 2013. The project provides young disabled people with high-quality vocational training so that they can earn a living. Alongside individual opportunities, a Special Needs (SN) department is being opened at the Hawassa College of Teacher Education, to include SN in the standard teacher training curriculum and so complete the circle of disability awareness and training.

Deaf entrepreneurs make great role models

An enterprising group of ten young deaf people (five men, five women) in Kirkos sub-city of Addis Ababa have really been trying to make a “go” of the internet café set up by our project. They’ve been working up to seven days a week, ploughing back profits into the business and, having started with just the two desktops provided, now have seven.

The Kirkos group has also diversified, adding power points where people can re-charge their phones for a modest fee, and serving coffee and snacks. The jewel in their crown is a TV on which they show English Premiership football, charging five birr (about 15p) a match.

Passion about football is shared by deaf and hearing people alike, and it’s encouraging to know that the café’s largely hearing customers have started to learn a little sign language so they can communicate with the deaf people running the cybercafé.

*This one year project with Deaf Development and Information Association is one we hope to expand. It was made possible thanks to funding from Jersey Overseas Aid Commission.*
DDP’s project *Twunganire Abahungutse* (Everyone supports refugees) with Burundian partner ACPDH won the 2015 Ockenden International prize as the best example of sustainable support for returnees (former refugees) and internally displaced people. The judging and presentation was held at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford on 24th February. Michael Buerk, the well known TV and radio presenter, chaired the panel and Dr. John Sentamu, Archbishop of York, presented the prize.

Clotilde Nyandwi (L) and Mathieu Sake of ACPDH (R) with Kamala Achu, DDP’s director and the Archbishop of York, Dr. John Sentamu. *Photo credit – Richard Budd/Ockenden International*

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

DDP relies on you to continue our work – the most helpful way is by a regular monthly or annual donation. To see how go to: [http://www.ddpuk.org/support.html](http://www.ddpuk.org/support.html)

If you are a UK taxpayer, don’t forget to boost your donation by adding GiftAid.

If you would like to help in any other way, please call 020 7700 7298 or email mail@ddpuk.org or visit our Facebook page (look for Disability and Development Partners)

**DDP’s Income and Expenditure**

**Expenditure 2014-2015: £677,053**

- Programmes & Projects: £653,467 (97%)
- Management & Administration: £14,276 (2%)
- Fundraising & Publicity: £9,310 (1%)

**Income 2014-2015: £814,391**

- Grants: £730,086 (90%)
- Voluntary Income: £83,885 (10%)
- Other (Interest): £420 (<1%)

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