

Disabled people's campaign for equality – to **MAKEDISABLISM**HISTORY - goes on. ADD will continue to support disabled men, women and children in Africa and Asia to bring about the **positive changes** needed in order to be able to enjoy their equal rights and participate as fully as they choose at every level of society.

The changes achieved by disabled people, will not only lead to a better world for ALL disabled people, but for every one of us - society as a whole. An environment that accepts differences leads to better place for us all to live.



Action on Disability and Development

MAKEDISABLISM

Disabled People's Campaign for Equality



Disabled people's organisation meeting, Kompong Speu, Cambodia



Khotun (pictured centre in blue shirt) leads a march on Human Rights day in Bangladesh

If you would like to support ADD's work or receive more information about any aspect of our work or the countries we work in please contact either Gail on 01373 475723, email gail.johnston@add.org.uk or Ruth on 01373 475722, email ruth.knagg@add.org.uk

Published by:

Action on Disability and Development
Vallis House, 57 Vallis Road, Frome, Somerset, UK, BA11 3EG
Telephone: 01373 473064 **Fax:** 01373 452075
Email: add@add.org.uk **Minicom:** 01373 463932
www.add.org.uk

Editor: Gail Johnston **Charity Commission number:** 294860

**This leaflet is also available in other formats.
For more information please call 01373 475723.**

Action on Disability and Development works with disabled women, men and children in 12 of the poorest countries in Africa and Asia and has a vision of a world where all disabled people are able to enjoy their rights and participate as fully as they choose at every level of society.

Established in 1985, ADD's work originally focussed on supporting disabled people's organisations by providing basic services. Over the last 20 years we have learnt that **helping to change attitudes, laws and policy has a longer term impact** on the lives of disabled people and now the emphasis of our work is to support disabled people's organisations to campaign for their rights.

Disabled people are their own most powerful campaigners, playing a vital role in the struggle for equality in their own countries, and are instrumental in removing environmental, legal, institutional and attitudinal barriers. ADD supports groups of disabled people who are striving to change the environment in which they live, to challenge "disablism" and the injustices they face... **to break down the barriers!**

Institutional: schools not admitting disabled children; banks not accepting disabled customers; employers not hiring disabled applicants. **Environmental:** a building has steps but no ramp; public transport is inaccessible; lack of information available in Braille, audio and Sign Language. **Attitudinal:** the negative way disabled people are perceived by others. **Legal:** legislation does not recognise that disabled people have the same rights as non-disabled people.

These barriers all arise from a phenomenon known as disablism, namely the belief that disabled people are inferior. A term generally used for breaking down these barriers is "influence and advocacy", in other words working to bring about **positive change**. Within ADD this happens on two levels - internationally in the countries where ADD works and in the UK.



Positive change is important because...

... the pledge in 2000, by all 191 United Nations member states to reach the Millennium Development Goals will be impossible to achieve unless disabled people are included.

The Goals include the:

- halving of extreme poverty
- provision of universal primary education
- promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women
- reduction of child mortality; improvement of maternal health
- combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

How do we make sure that disabled people are included?

ADD's approach is to help build and strengthen disabled people's organisations in Africa and Asia by raising awareness of their rights, providing training, funding, support and encouragement. This gives disabled people's organisations the skills and confidence to lobby for **positive change** at all levels, from making wells accessible to the passing of disability laws. In the UK we raise awareness of the need to include disabled people and influence policy.

ADD staff and disabled people's organisations work hard, campaigning, organising and participating in activities that challenge the barriers – with many major positive changes such as...

Education for disabled children...

ADD supported the setting up of the parents network in Bobo Dioulasso, **Burkina Faso** where two groups – the Association of Parents of Children with Hearing Impairments and the Association of Parents of Children with Learning Difficulties - decided to combine their experiences and fight for changes to improve the lives of **all** disabled children in the area (pictured below left).

In **Bangladesh** ADD supported a disabled people's organisation to set up a school for both disabled and non-disabled children (pictured below right). Workshops and meetings were organised with teachers, parents and education officers to raise awareness about the need to adopt inclusive education policies.

And in **India**, ADD supported disabled people's organisations as they successfully lobbied for disabled children's admission into mainstream schools.



Campaigning for accessibility...



Hem Hok (36), a member of a disabled people's organisation supported by ADD, at the accessible well in his village of Ang Tonorn, Cambodia.

Often, water wells are inaccessible to disabled people. In **Ghana** ADD took the opportunity at a 'Meet the Press' event to raise this issue. The story quickly reached World Vision head office, who immediately contacted their drilling team and told them to fit lower hand pumps and provide ramps in order to make the wells fully accessible.

In **Bangladesh** posters, leaflets and signs were put in bus stops and public places to highlight the issue of inaccessible transport. The outcome is that disabled people now receive subsidised fares, reserved bus seats and bus passes.

A similar campaign in **Zambia** resulted in the reservation of front seats for disabled people and senior citizens.

Bosherulla (right) from Bangladesh receiving his bus pass.



Rallies, marches and demonstrations...



In **Bangladesh**, five disabled people (pictured above) took part in a ten day, 125 mile wheelchair march to lobby the government - successfully - for a disability act. Disabled people also formed a human chain in front of the National Press Club to demand that ten parliamentary seats be reserved for disabled people.

The Disabled Persons' Act in **Sudan** was revised to include disabled people in national health insurance and to introduce Sign Language into schools. These changes were made following a march by disabled people to raise awareness of the lack of support from the government.

Raising awareness of disabled people's rights...

...within the community that disabled people have the right to participate as fully as they choose at every level of society.

...within local government that the needs and rights of disabled people are not being met.

...within other international agencies that the needs of disabled people are not being considered in their relief and development work.

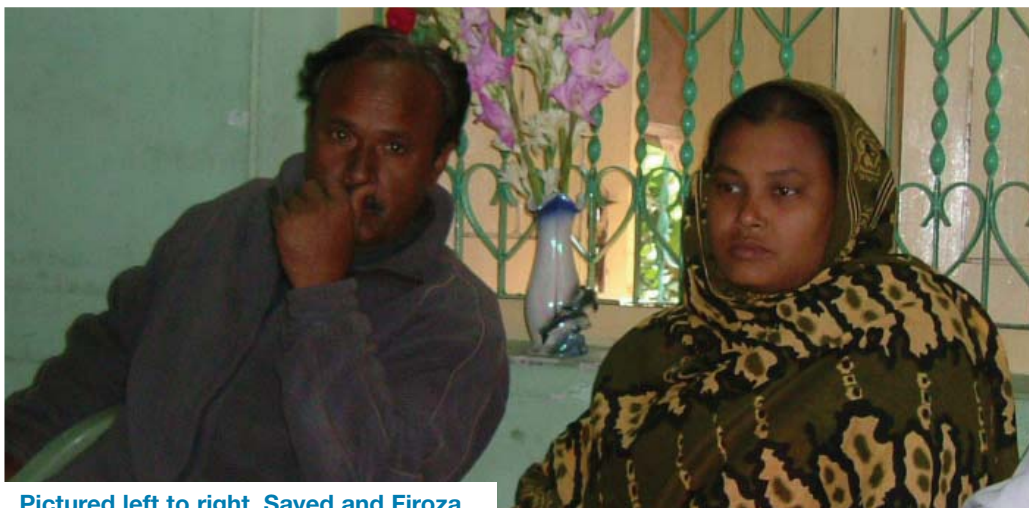
In **Cambodia** for instance, ADD provided training for two international development organisations who, as a result of the training, changed their policy to include disabled people. They said it was the first time they had considered looking at disability from a human rights perspective.

Ghana introduced a televised news summary with Sign Language interpretation, while in **Tanzania** disability awareness issues were given a 30 minute slot on two TV channels.

Disabled people often have to campaign for their rightful place in government. In **Mali** the government recruited 25 disabled people into the civil service and after the successful lobbying of village councils in **Cambodia**, disabled people were for the first time able to stand for election as village chief. In **Bangladesh** 80 disabled people stood as candidates in local elections. Two successful candidates were Sayed Mohammed Wasique and Firoza Khatun, members of a disabled people's organisation supported by ADD; Sayed says:

"When my group first come together we came to know our rights. We knew that if we came and joined the election, it would be easier for us to represent ourselves. Then there was an announcement that disabled people could be nominated, so I registered my name."

"We believe we are equal to non-disabled people so we feel we can participate in the process of development of the country."



Pictured left to right, Sayed and Firoza

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) are required by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank before a country will be considered for debt relief within the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Programme.

Bangladesh published their PRSP in February 2005 which included two pages on disability issues. This was a direct result of campaigning by disabled people's organisations, based on the outcomes of workshops across the country organised by ADD.

Everyone has the right to make their voice heard through a free and fair electoral process, but many disabled people are excluded from this fundamental right.

ADD decided to change this, so in 2000, after training by International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), ADD supported disabled people in **Ghana** to train and work as election observers. In 2001, 360 disabled people in **Bangladesh** monitored parliamentary elections for the first time in election history. This work was replicated in **Zambia** and **Cambodia**, where ADD worked with the Committee for Free and Fair Elections, the National Election Committee and the Electoral Commission, to ensure the inclusion of disabled people. And disabled people were trained and acted as election observers - portraying a **positive image** to both disabled and non-disabled people and helping to **change attitudes**.

"As a person with a disability I am very happy that I was an election observer. This is the first time in my life that I can demonstrate my capacity, involvement and contribution to society. I had never dreamed about this before"

Quote from a disabled observer in Tep Loap village, Cambodia.

In 2002, ADD worked with disabled people's organisations in **Sierra Leone** on the production of the tactile ballot guide (see right) which is like a folder into which a standard ballot paper is slipped. The ballot guide has tactile markings representing each party or candidate. The blind voter can feel for their choice and make their mark on the standard ballot paper through windows cut in the ballot guide. This enables blind and visually impaired people to vote in secret and unassisted.

In **Ghana's** 2004 general election 420,000 tactile ballot guides were printed and distributed across the country to every polling station – a first in Africa – along with 110 disabled people who were trained as election observers.



Celebrating success...

International Day of Disabled People; Children's Day; Human Rights Day; Womens' Day; HIV/AIDS Day and Deaf Day are annual events. Disabled people's organisations play a huge part in organising dramas, football matches and rallies which are attended by political and civic leaders. The events always receive a massive amount of media coverage and give disabled people the opportunity to celebrate their abilities and increase awareness.

In **Burkina Faso** the High Commissioner of the Comoe Province was so impressed with the International Day of Disabled People in 2003 that he pledged to fund future celebrations.

2000 – 2009 is the **African Decade of Disabled Persons**, a dedicated period aimed at raising awareness and promoting the rights of 80 million disabled people in Africa and to get their needs onto the agenda of African governments.

2003 – 2012 is also the second **Asia Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons**, representing a commitment by governments to promote the full participation and equality of more than 400 million disabled people.



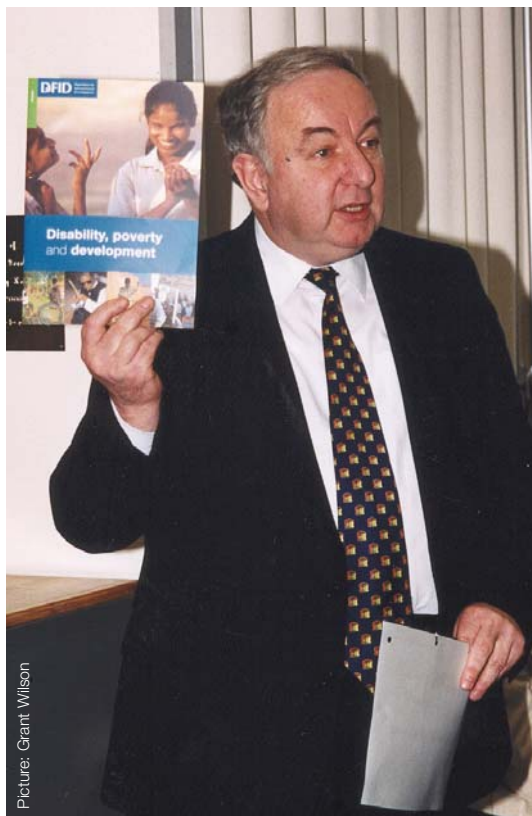
1 International Disability Day in Ghana
3 Human Rights Day in Sudan

2 New Pallisa Group Uganda
4 International Disability Day in Bangladesh

5 International Children's Day in Cambodia
7 International Women's Day in Zambia

6 International Disability Day in Tanzania
8 Celebrations in Mali

...this work is different, ADD staff take every opportunity to raise awareness within other international development organisations and the UK government of their responsibility to include disabled people in all development, emergency relief and poverty reduction work.



ADD contributed to the paper "Disability, Poverty & Development" published by the UK government's **Department for International Development (DFID)** in 2000, calling for the inclusion of disabled people in poverty reduction work. In 2002, DFID selected ADD as one of the organisations to work with them to meet the international development targets including halving world poverty by 2015. This important link with DFID enables us to keep disability inclusion on their agenda and lobby for its inclusion in other issue papers. We have also encouraged ADD country offices to take part in the Commission for Africa consultations.

The then MP and DFID Minister George Foulkes talking about the issues paper at the opening of ADD's new office in 2000.

As a member of the International Disability and Development Consortium ADD was involved in lobbying for the implementation of the **Resolution on the rights of disabled people and older people**, which was adopted by African Caribbean Pacific and European Union Joint Parliamentary Assembly in the European Commission in 2001. ADD was also part of the successful campaign for reform of the European Union's (EU) development programmes to low-income countries which resulted in the 2003 publication of the guidance note on disability and development for all overseas EU delegates.

In 2002, ADD successfully lobbied four **Members of the European Parliament** to ask questions on our behalf on "The inclusion of disabled people in poverty-reduction work".

With the University of Manchester **Chronic Poverty Research Centre**, ADD conducted a survey with UK based international development organisations on the inclusion of disabled people. In 2002 the results were published in a paper called "Including disabled people in poverty reduction work: 'Nothing about us, without us'".

Regarded as the main source of advice and information for agencies involved in relief efforts ADD contributed to the revised handbook "a humanitarian charter and minimum standards in disaster response". Published by the **Sphere Project** in 2004 it ensures disabled people are included in disaster and emergency relief work.

In 2005, as part of a worldwide Call to Action Against Poverty the UK **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** campaign was launched. A coalition of UK charities, trade unions, campaigning groups and celebrities demanding that rich countries increase aid and make it work better for poor people, cancel world debt and change the rules of world trade so that they favour the interests of the poor.



ADD joined the campaign to help make sure disabled people are included - poverty cannot be made history without "MAKINGDISABLISMHISTORY".

Pictured left, the Zambia National Association of the Physically Handicapped - a disabled peoples organisation supported by ADD - wear white bands to show their support for the MAKINGDISABLISMHISTORY campaign.