SHORT-TERM POSITION (3 MONTHS)
DISABILITY & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS ADVISOR
JOB PROFILE / PROGRAMME NEPAL

Summary information

Job scheduled in steering contract: Mainstreaming disability and people with disabilities into
disaster management in Nepal (DIPECHO, funding secured)

Date of request: February 2008
Desired date of arrival: APRIL 2008

Country: NEPAL
Place: based in KATHMANDU
(With very regular field visits)

Field of activity: Disability Advisor to Disaster Preparedness / DIPECHO Project

Job creation: Yes
Present international worker: NA

Date of end of mission: After 3 months

Role: DISABILITY ADVISOR
Expected mission period:
2 missions; 3 months followed by 2 months over the 1 year period

Desired date of arrival: ASAP, March 2008

Marital status: Single: Yes; Couple: Yes; Children: Yes;
Hospitals nearby: Yes; French/English language school: Yes

Possible status: Salaried

Country context (political, religious, security...)

Despite more than 4 decades of development efforts, Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita income of 250$ per year. About half of the population lives below the poverty line, the great majority being in rural regions where living conditions are extremely hard.

The armed insurgency, launched by the Maoists in February 1996 to overthrow Nepal's monarchy, has to date claimed more than 13,000 lives with most of the deaths occurring from 2002 onwards.

While the conflict has dominated the national agenda, it has also generated considerable instability and served also to seriously undermine most of the activities and projects that tried to tackle poverty and underdevelopment. During the conflict, movement was quite restricted due mostly to intimidation by Government forces and Maoists as well as the lack of transport services in the more rural and conflict affected areas. As a result, PwD living in these areas were kept isolated and did not have the opportunity to get rehabilitation services or even minimum basic needs such as nutritious food or primary health care.

After the King took Executive power on 1 February 2005, violence escalated and respect for human rights deteriorated considerably. In such an atmosphere, prospects for dialogue or consensus were few. During 2005 however, the momentum for change grew and the seven political parties jointly initiated a mass movement against the Kings' ruling. On 24 April 2006, the King finally capitulated in face of a mass movement that demanded democracy and the restoration of parliament. A serious peace process has been initiated with the signature of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in November 2007 and the recent nomination of an interim Government. However, there are still various ethnic and social tensions throughout the country, particularly in the Terai belt, and the announced elections of a Constituent Assembly are also possible sources of trouble and instability on the political scene.

Since April 2006 the situation of people in the conflict affected areas has changed considerably. There is now more freedom of movement. A comprehensive peace agreement has been signed
between the warring parties. The comprehensive peace agreement signed on the 21st of November 2006 between the Seven Party Alliance and the Communist Party of Nepal/Maoist marked the end of armed conflict prevailing in the country since 1996 and the beginning of a new era for peace and cooperation. Both sides have committed to respect the sovereignty of the Nepalese people, to work for a progressive political solution, and to transform the ceasefire between the Nepal government and the Maoists into permanent peace.

In Kathmandu and tourist places, security situation remains relatively safe for international staff. Regular incidents (blockades, general strikes, demonstrations, riots) following from political instability require vigilance and strict respect of security procedures and instructions. But daily life remains relatively safe and easy, with possibility to travel most of the time in the Kathmandu valley (taxi, public transports etc.) and to the tourist places (local flights, after approval from programme management). Once again, international people are normally not directly targeted and the number of tourists has again increased since the end of the conflict.

Life is relatively comfortable in Kathmandu, with nice houses available, well-stocked supermarkets, easy access to common goods and products (local/imported), numerous and exceptional cultural sites, important expatriate presence, restaurants etc. The country presents various exceptional tourist opportunities, including trekking in the Himalayas, visits to the numerous natural reserves and architectural / historical heritage sites, travels in the region (direct flights to Tibet, India, Thailand) etc.

The Hindu religious majority (around 80%) and the different minorities (Buddhists, Christians, Muslims...) live together in a relatively easy and peaceful coexistence. The Caste system is still very significant, leading to a relatively rigid social system. Therefore, strong intercultural capacities are required to adapt and positively grasp the context and relations. The Nepali population is generally extremely friendly, respectful, helpful and tolerant.

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**Project Context:**

The vulnerability of Nepal to disasters resulting from natural hazards is well known. The country ranks 11th with regard to earthquake vulnerability and 30th with regard to flood vulnerability. Fires are common during the dry season as are landslides in the hilly areas in the monsoon. The Government of Nepal has recognised the link between natural hazards and disaster management, and poverty alleviation, natural resource management and sustainable development.

Within this vulnerable environment people with disabilities are especially at risk. Already marginalised and discriminated against, people with disabilities face particular problems in preparing for or responding to a natural hazard. Potential issues include physical barriers to participation in often inaccessible environments, attitudinal barriers caused by ignorance or superstition, inability to receive early warning messages and lack of infrastructure to cater for basic needs. There is widespread acceptance among groups working in disaster management of the uneven impacts along gender, age or socio-economic lines. Women, children, the aged and the poor are often targeted as being most at risk. People with disabilities belong in all of these groups. Moreover, when poverty is viewed more broadly to include factors like access to human rights and social exclusion, people with disabilities can be seen as some of society’s poorest members.

Since it commenced its operations in Nepal in 2001 Handicap International has become aware of the vulnerability of people with disabilities to the risks posed by natural hazards and the need to mainstream disaster management into its ongoing work with disability-focused organisations. Much of this work takes the form of building the capacity of local partners to deliver services at a local level through teams of community workers/community development workers. Many of these working areas are remote and inaccessible, leaving residents in general, and people with disabilities in particular, especially vulnerable to the risks posed by natural hazards. Even less remote communities can also be vulnerable, for example due to flooding in the low-lying ‘Terai’ region.
Despite this recognition of the acute vulnerability of people with disabilities to the dangers posed by natural hazards only very few of Handicap International’s local partner organisations are currently running disaster management programmes. There are, however, numerous organisations which operate programmes in disaster management. However, despite widespread awareness of the need to include society’s most vulnerable groups in disaster management, none of these organisations has a specific focus on people with disabilities.

Through the implementation of this project Handicap International Nepal will be able to raise awareness of the vulnerability and specific needs of people with disabilities in the context of disaster management, and build the capacity of stakeholders to undertake actions to address these needs.

Through the direct implementation of this specific project, a complementary goal is to develop more global approach, actions and strategies for the HI Nepal programme in the fields of Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management.

Project Description:

Project Title: **Mainstreaming disability and people with disabilities into disaster management in Nepal**

**Overall objective:** The vulnerability of people with disabilities to natural hazards (floods, landslides etc.) is reduced

**Specific objective:** The capacity of Handicap International’s HI’s local partners to integrate DM into programmes for people with disabilities (PwDs) in Nepal and other Disaster Management (DM) focused organizations to mainstream disability into DM is enhanced.

Job description

**Title:** Disability Advisor

**Primary Objective:**

The disability adviser’s main role be in ensuring the quality of the technical assistance given to the local organisations focussed in disaster preparedness and management in order to enhance their capacity to include disability in their disaster management programmes; it will also assist the proper integration if Disaster Preparedness into HI-supported disability projects and actions. This will be required in the first few months of the project implementation period for a period of 3 months with a subsequent follow-up period of 2 months during the latter half of the project period – times will be negotiated with the applicant.

**Specific Objectives:**

- Support the Project Manager by providing senior level technical expertise with international standards on disability issues for reinforcement of sustainable capacities and skills in integrating and mainstreaming disability into Disaster Preparedness (as well as integrating Disaster Preparedness into HI-supported disability projects)
- Assist, advice, support, train and supervise the Project Team on disability issues in line with the project’s Objectives
- Develop and implement a training strategy adapted to the project needs and requirements in the field of disability
- Build mechanisms and tools to ensure the project’s quality on disability issues through appropriate quantitative and qualitative monitoring of project implementation and delivery of international-level technical expertise.
✔ Ensure appropriate capacity building of the local project partners on technical issue related to disability within Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management.

**Difficulties involved in the job (isolation, security, travel, climate, living conditions)**

The country is still in a political sensitive and unstable phase. This requires strict respect of the security rules and instructions as well as cautious and adapted behaviour in line with the Organisation's approaches and recommendations.

Due to specific country and beaucratic requirements there maybe some procedures that are important to comply by in regards to obtaining a necessary visa.

The position will require some travels to the different project locations and other places in the country for the delivery of training.

As mentioned above, life in Kathmandu is quite comfortable; housing conditions are specific for short-term missions might require sharing accommodation and/or staying in hotels as per the Organisation’s standards and policy. Depending of the locations, travel conditions in the countryside can obviously be tougher. In Kathmandu, atmospheric pollution is a real problem, particularly during the dry season (October to April).

**Climate:**
- Summer (May to September): monsoon (temperate in Kathmandu valley, regular floods and landslides in the countryside), hot and wet, around 30° C.
- Winter (December to February): mild during the day (around 20° C) and cold at night (2° to 10° C), dry.
- Spring and Autumn: nice weather, dry with moderate temperature (20 to 25° C)

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**Applicant profile**

**Qualifications sought:** preferably Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy degree

**Essential:**
- Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapy degree; however other relevant degrees and experience will be considered
- At least 3 years of practical experience in working with people who have disabilities, preferably in development context
- Experience in natural hazards, disaster preparedness or post disaster would be an advantage
- Excellent capacity of adaptation, transfer of skills and training
- Great capacity of adaptation, used to work in multicultural contexts
- Capacity to work in team and autonomously
- Strong oral and written communication capacities
- Dynamism, constructive, high level of motivation and with a strong result-oriented approach

**Desirable:**
- Experience in social inclusion and/or mainstreaming of disability
- Experience in infrastructural design and modifications for people with disabilities

**Languages:**
Advanced oral and written English mandatory

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