

THE WHO NEWSLETTER ON DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION

Issue No. 12, February 2011

The World Health Organization (WHO) Disability and Rehabilitation newsletter is produced three times a year and distributed via e-mail. Subscription/unsubscription requests should be sent to WHO's Disability and Rehabilitation Team (DAR) via: mackenzier@who.int

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Launch of the *World report on disability*

9 June 2011 - a big day for Disability!

The *World report on disability* will be launched on 9 June 2011. Mandated by the World Health Assembly Resolution 58.23, and jointly published by WHO and the World Bank, the Report summarizes the best available scientific evidence on disability and makes recommendations for action to support the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

The WHO Director-General and the Vice-President of the Human Development Network at the World Bank will launch the *World report on disability* at the World Health Organization Headquarters in Geneva, in the presence of high-level representatives from Member States,

celebrities with disabilities, together with representatives of disabled people's organizations, professional groups and nongovernmental organizations. This will be followed by a half-day technical session on how to implement the *World report on disability*.

The Report addresses the need for better research and data on disability. It will include the first update of WHO's global disability prevalence estimates for more than thirty years. The Report also explores evidence about discrimination and barriers, identifies needs and provides an analysis of what works to improve the lives of people with disabilities in the areas of health, rehabilitation, support services, information, infrastructure, transportation, education and employment.

People with disabilities have been involved in every stage of the development of the Report - as advisors, editors, authors and reviewers. Disabled people's organizations have been consulted at the global level. People with disabilities have had the opportunity to submit their own stories, many of which are quoted in the Report and others of which will feature in associated sensitization activities.

In the run up to the launch a series of videos featuring women with disabilities talking about their lives is being released, starting on 3 December 2010, International Day of Persons with Disabilities. These videos can be viewed on the [WHO YouTube channel](#):

(www.youtube.com/user/who#g/c/50649F9C524CBAC4). The Report will be available on the WHO website following the launch on 9 June:

www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/en/index.html

We would like to thank all partners involved in the development of the Report for their valuable support and contributions. For more information, please contact Alana Officer (officera@who.int).

What's disability to me?

As part of the campaign to promote the *World report on disability*, WHO has commissioned a series of films featuring women with disabilities answering the question "What's disability to me?". We caught up with Jazz Shaban, a film maker with a disability, who shot the films featuring Rachael, Mia and Feliza.

Q: Tell us about your background, Jazz.

A: I started out in film and television working as a freelance researcher and then producer/director in the independent sector. Although I am of Jordanian origin, I was born and brought up in the UK and the harsh realities of being a disabled woman trying to survive a Middle East environment was lost on me. My steep learning curve started when I got a job at a disability development NGO, and spent the next seven years working with disabled people's organizations in Africa and Asia. I then did a Masters in International Development and Communications, to marry the two sides of my career

Q: Your film with Rachael shocks people, because it shows how discrimination remains a big issue even in a high-income setting. Have you experienced similar barriers?

A: Certainly, I can remember being asked to prove that I could hold a boom microphone when I went for my interview at university where I studied film. I was even asked to reconsider my choice of course by the Disability Adviser there, because she didn't feel that the course was suitable for me. So I can appreciate Rachael's experience. Things were even harder trying to work in the media industry. Getting work on mainstream programmes

was almost impossible. Much of my experience came from working on disability programmes or doing my own stuff. Obviously it is difficult for anyone to get a job in media, but I don't think any of my colleagues were asked if they could carry a tray of coffee, as happened at one of my interviews.



Photo of Rachael at work. (WHO / Jazz Shaban)

Q: In April, we will launch a film featuring Mia, a woman with intellectual disability from Lebanon. Is her life typical of disabled women in the region?

A: It is fair to say that if you are disabled and female in any country you are going to be disadvantaged from the outset regardless of region or the social standing of the family because the perceptions of disability and womanhood evoke such strong emotional responses. In a Middle East context, as in many places in the world, superstition, family expectation and negative community attitudes can be oppressive and cause isolation and segregation. Occasionally that cycle is broken and a disabled woman is able to participate and have an independent life. Mia was brought up in an educated family who saw the value in ensuring she was educated and encouraged her to follow her dreams. In this regard she was not typical of disabled women in the region, but probably was typical in her social class. For the majority of disabled women from the region being sidelined is an everyday occurrence because of social stigma and

lack of provision and thus parents of disabled girls will shy away from anything that will draw attention to the family's shame. Had I not been given a British upbringing, it would also have been my experience.

Q: Our film for May features people with disabilities working together to remove barriers in Bolivia. Tell us about that shoot.

A: The combination of language and distance was always going to be a challenge. Most of the pre-production had to be done after I arrived to shoot the film and could see for myself the issues people were facing. Feliza had played a pivotal role in bringing disabled people together to campaign for better access in Sucre and although I had witnessed her energy and determination in the two Skype conversations we had prior to my arrival, getting detail was hard to pin down. Everything had to be done face to face which was much better because you could see what all the excitement was about. However things did become more complicated when we worked with Julia and Jhosimar who used sign language because an interpreter had to voice in Spanish to my translator who translated in English to me - it made for very lengthy 'takes' indeed.



Photo of Jazz filming in Bolivia

Q: What's your next move, after making these films for WHO?

A: I am working freelance, developing media projects with organizations who want to promote inclusion. I am also playing my role on the boards of several UK disability and development organizations. So I am kept pretty busy!

Regional and national launches of the *CBR Guidelines*

Following the global launch of the *CBR Guidelines* in Abuja, Nigeria on 27 October 2010, there have been a series of regional/national launches. The WHO Regional Office for Europe hosted a European launch of the Guidelines during the 9th European Conference on Rehabilitation, organized by Rehabilitation International in Copenhagen, Denmark on 9-10 November 2010.



Professor Jose Martin-Moreno and Ms Anne Hawker

The event was attended by more than 300 rehabilitation professionals from across the region. Professor Jose Martin-Moreno, Director of Programme Management at the WHO Regional Office for Europe introduced the Guidelines and officially presented the Guidelines to Ms Anne Hawker, President of Rehabilitation International and other distinguished members of Rehabilitation International.

The CBR Malaysia Network and the CBR Asia-Pacific Network, in partnership with UN organizations, Members States and the Asia-Pacific Centre on Disability, organized the 1st Asia-Pacific Convention on CBR from 13-15 November 2010. This

served as a forum for launching the CBR Guidelines for the Asia-Pacific region. More than 500 people from 32 countries in the region took part in the Convention. The Honourable Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, Y.B. Senator Dato' Sri Shahrizaat Abdul Jalil, launched the Guidelines and pioneers such as Dr Einar Helander and Dr Maya Thomas introduced the Guidelines to the participants.



Honourable Minister Y.B. Senator Dato' Sri Shahrizaat Abdul Jalil and Mr Chapal Khasnabis

During the commemoration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) on Friday 3 December 2010, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) hosted an event focussing on "Keeping the promise: Mainstreaming disability in the Millennium Development Goals towards 2015 and beyond". During this event, Mr Werner Obermeyer, Executive Director ad Interim at the WHO Office at the United Nations, introduced the CBR Guidelines and distributed copies to all the key participants of the event. Following these launches several other national launches have taken place (India, The Netherlands, Pakistan and Sweden).

WHO Task Force on Disability supports web access

In the first week of February 2011, about 60 WHO web professionals from across the Organization gathered in Geneva for a training course on accessible web design. This initiative was supported by the WHO Task Force on Disability and funded by the WHO Global Learning Committee.

The goal is for web pages and Intranet applications to be more accessible to people with visual impairments and other disabilities, reinforcing our commitment to disability equality and the right to health. Participants gained valuable knowledge that could be put into immediate practice in incorporating accessibility issues in improving web designs.

Updates from the Regions

Focus on disabilities and the right to health in the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific

In conjunction with the visit of Tom Shakespeare, Technical Officer, Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability, WHO/HQ, the Mental Health and Injury Prevention Unit and the Health Care Financing Unit from the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, in cooperation with the Regional Office staff association, organized a lunchtime session on 27 October 2010 to raise awareness on the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD), as well as WHO's responsibilities derived from the adoption of the Convention.

A meeting was also held to discuss opportunities to mainstream the rights of people with disabilities in various technical programmes and in their work in Member States and possible partnerships with other UN and donor agencies and relevant Ministries.



Photo of the meeting participants

Interns update

Sarah Mak, currently completing a Masters in International Public Health at the University of Queensland, recently completed a 3-month internship with the DAR team. Her main task was to work closely with the Corporate Communications team to edit and subtitle several promotional films for the *World report on disability* entitled "What's Disability to Me?" (see page 2)



Photo of Sarah in the video lab

Sarah also spent some time working on a publication about supporting the development of children with disabilities which will be launched later this year in conjunction with UNICEF.

Upcoming events

- ♦ **9 June 2011:** Launch of the *World report on disability*, Geneva, Switzerland
- ♦ **12-13 September 2011:** USA launch of the *World report on disability*, Washington D.C., USA

More information

For further information please contact: Disability and Rehabilitation Team,
Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability,
WHO, 20 Avenue Appia
CH-1211 Geneva 27 Switzerland.

E-mail: mackenzier@who.int or visit our web site: <http://www.who.int/disabilities>

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