

Actions speak louder . . .

## Fact Sheet no.2: Livelihoods for the disabled

### **Description and analysis**

There is a disproportionately large element of disabled people in economically viable age groups in developing countries. Disability is often caused by diseases such as River-blindness and Leprosy, injury sustained during conflict or from road accidents. Many more people are permanently afflicted by such injuries than in countries with better health services. Absence of social security results in many disabled people becoming beggars, whereas in suitable circumstances they could be found work.

### **Design response**

There are many tasks that can be performed effectively by people who have lost one or more limbs, or have become blind. In labour-intensive production of building materials, tasks such as controlling and operating vibrating tables can be performed by most categories of disabled people.

### **Parry Associates technical input possibilities**

Most categories of building materials production equipment designed by Parry Associates has at least one in five tasks designed to be suitable for a disabled worker to become a fully effective member of the team. Parry technical services are available when called upon to assist the training and induction of such workers.

### **Local resources required**

Arrangements to make working premises fully accessible for disabled workers will include the construction of ramps alongside steps for wheelchair users, and a range of amenities to assist visually impaired workers so that they can reach their working stations conveniently and safely.

### **Potential local business response**

In unregulated economies market mechanisms may lead to tasks which employ the disabled but pay them a low rate. However encouragement should be given in the form of grants and revenue support to meet the cost of adapting workplaces and topping up levels of payment. Better still would be for the disabled worker to perform the essential jobs as well as anyone else could.

### **Real case studies**

The need for employment opportunities for the disabled has been met successfully using Parry technology in the Sierra Leone Affordable Housing Programme(1998-2001). For a list of case studies where Parry technology has been used to combat problems in the developing world see the Success Stories page on the website.

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