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CHESHIRE FOUNDATION ACTION FOR INCLUSION



Report on the Wheelchairs for Children with Disabilities in Dessie town & its surrounding towns In 2015

To be submitted to:- The Volunteers Group to Send Wheelchairs to Overseas Children in Japan.

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July/ 2016

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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1. Introduction:-

Cheshire Foundation Action for Inclusion under its Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities program, has different types of activities, which support the target clients among which appliance provision is one. Accordingly, at the beginning of this year/2016/, CF-AI received 160 CP wheelchairs from “Japanese volunteer group to send wheelchairs to overseas Children” to be distributed to Children with Disabilities. Based on the memorandum of understanding signed between the Japanese NGO Volunteers Group to Send Wheelchairs to Overseas Children and Cheshire Foundation Action for Inclusion 160 wheelchairs were donated to Dessie CBR project. This report will therefore explain the whole process in brief.

2. Background

Cheshire foundation Action for Inclusion is an Ethiopian resident charity established in 1985. The organization is currently working to serve and promote the best interest of PwDs residing in different parts of the country. CF-AI is successfully re-registered as an Ethiopian resident charity organization according to the Ethiopian charity and society’s proclamation No. 621/2001 and secured legal license Ref. 0298 that would enable to intensively carry out its disability prevention, rehabilitation, and inclusion programs in Addis Ababa City Administration, Amhara, and Oromia National Regional Governments.

The Foundation is one of the pioneers local NGOs working for the best interest of PwDs. The organization strongly believes the need to join hands with various development actors to make a difference to the life of PwDs. Networking with various development actors and consult them to consider that PwDs are in one way or another members of the community or social groups. CF-AI believes that the national Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) cannot be achieved unless this significant portion of the societies is addressed in an inclusive manner.

To this end, creating inclusive environment wherein persons with disabilities undoubtedly get equal access and opportunities as citizens to be involved in the national and local socio

economic development is the ultimate goal of the organization and it is working towards contributing to the national and global agenda. All its interventions whether it is direct rehabilitation or persuading others to mainstream the issues of PwDs in both cases the intention is to creating an inclusive society wherein PwDs rights to development are respected.

3. Objectives

The general objective of this project is to improve the lives of children with disabilities through its community based rehabilitation and inclusion program activities in the country.

The specific objective is to provide wheelchairs and other adaptive sitting chairs for needy 160 children in Dessie and its peripheries, Amhara Regional National State, Ethiopia with the support received from the Volunteers Group to Send Wheelchairs to Overseas Children in Japan.

4. Major Activities Accomplished:-

This project has gone through many different activities until the wheelchairs reach to Dessie to be distributed to the target children with disabilities.

4.1. Communications:-

After designing the project and signing an agreement with the Japanese NGO Volunteers Group to Send Wheelchairs to Overseas Children, the two organizations have exchanged many emails and necessary documents for clearing, securing duty free privilege and safe transportation. The wheelchairs bill of loading, donation certificate and other related documents were received from Japan and CF-AI then hired clearing Agent called Marcan Logistics PLC without whom it would have been impossible to clear the items and to go through the duty free processes. The delegated staff from the PLC went through all issues and cleared the wheelchairs, after which they were transported to Dessie town, which is located 400kms north of Addis Ababa.

In addition to this, CF-AI has been communicating with all concerned government stakeholders on the issue to get the necessary support from their respective Offices, among

which, Civil Society Agency, Offices of labour and Social Affairs, Custom Office, Dessie City Administration, the Embassy of Japan are few.

4.2. Transporting the wheelchairs:-

The wheelchairs and assistive sits were collected, refurbished and then transported to Ethiopia from Japan. After the clearing process was completed, they were transported to Dessie where the handing over ceremony was prepared. Transporting the wheelchairs specially from Mojo to Dessie has been very difficult, because there were no specialized vehicles for such services and it was with great care that it was possible to successfully transport them to there. The help we received from the clearing Agent, Marcana Logistics PLC. was of great importance and at this particular juncture we would like to thank them for the help they provided to us.

4.3. Handing over Ceremony:-

The wheelchairs handing over ceremony was prepared and was held in Dessie town inside the compound of Prosthetic Orthotic Workshop. At the event, **Mr Morita** and his team from Japan, **Ato Kedir Mohammed** executive Director and **Ato Alemtsehay Maru**, programme Manager from CF-AI, the dessie Cheshire project manager and the staff, government sector offices and City administration delegates, parents of Children with Disabilities with their children and other invited guests attended the programme.

The event was started by first introducing the schedule of the event and then Ato Keder Mohammed, Executive Director of CF-AI made a welcoming speech by making few important remarks on the relationship created with Volunteers group, which has enabled the Foundation to reach the unreached children with physical disabilities. He explained that there are a lot of children who remained behind the door in their respective houses due to lack of such appropriate assistances, among which the few lucky ones in dessie will be able to break this barrier today and will get the chance to be included in the community's day to day communications/activities. Finally, thanking all concerned delegates for coming to the handing over ceremony and the Japanese NGO Volunteers Group to Send Wheelchairs to Overseas Children and the Japanese Embassy in Ethiopia for

the support given to the children, cordially invited the honourable Delegate, 1st. Secretary, Mr. Yamada from the Embassy of Japan to make a speech.

Mr Yamada, 1st. Secretary of the Japanese Embassy, after expressing his greetings, explained the commitment of the /embassy to such noble works in the world and in Ethiopia. He said that he is very happy to be part of the event, which has enabled him to witness the wonderful work the Japanese team has accomplished in this direction. He also expressed that the Embassy will give its support in the future also to bring out more children from their closed houses and get better education and other life skills, which will make them self- supporting citizens.

Then, Ato Keder invited Mr Hirokazu Morita, the president of the Japanese NGO to express the overall relations made and the supports delivered to children with disabilities in Ethiopia through the NGO todate.



Mr. Morita, while delivering his speech

Mr. Morita, the Japanese team leader delivered a speech in which he explained the objectives of the wheelchairs support from Japan to Ethiopian. He mentioned that the wheelchairs from Japan is to support the Ethiopian needy children with physical disability who do not have the means to access the device due to poverty and other related reasons. Further more, he explained how the

wheelchairs are collected, refurbished, packed, loaded and transported to Ethiopia. He further explained how the people of Japan are committed and relentlessly involved in the process to support the Ethiopian children with disabilities with all the means they have.

Finally, he thanked the Japanese families in collecting the wheelchairs, the Japan government in supporting the process with financial and technical aid without which the mission of the volunteers group to support the Ethiopian children would not be possible.

In addition to these, Mr Kuwayama, explained the process of the wheelchair collection and refurbishing with pictorial slides, which gave clear picture on the process.

Next to these, the City administration delegate made a speech by appreciating the both sides efforts, from CF-AI and from the Japanese NGO and he expressed that he would like to see the relationship grown to a better position. He thanked the honourable 1st. secretary of the Embassy of Japan in Ethiopia and asked him to strongly work to strengthen the sisterly relation between the two countries in this and other development regards.

Then the attendants of the event were asked to visit the imported wheelchairs and supporting sits for CwDs and then to attend the handing over the wheelchairs to those Children with disabilities who came to the event. At this process, many parents were asked how they feel about the support given to their respective children, where all of them explained that they are very happy now and they see the bright future of their children because of the assistive appliances they got. They also promised to return the wheelchairs when a child outgrows or when it gets idle or without use so that it can serve other children. (Please, refer to the attached questions with answers for your clear understanding. They have also appreciated how the Japanese people are loving, caring and committed as well as strong and systematic in mobilizing resource in a very organized and successful manner.

The handing over ceremony was also attended by local Medias from the Dessie city administration and press who were there to attend and record the event for public consumption.



Pictures of the Wheelchairs handing over

5. Achievements

As the main/specific objective of this project was distributing/providing Wheelchairs and assistive sits to children with disabilities in Dessie, it has been possible to hand over the wheelchairs to 77 (48 Male & 29 Female) CP/other Physically handicapped children/, from Dessie City Administration & other additional 63 Wheelchairs, (38 Male and 25 Female) were distributed to the children from surrounding woredas; such as, Kombolcha, kemisse, Haik, Albiko, Wogidi, Mekan-Selam, Kalala, Woldia, Meket, Kobo, Sekota etc, in collaboration with Dessie Physical Rehabilitation Center. All children who took wheelchairs were first evaluated by the Dessie Prosthetic Orthotic Centre. The Workshop administration has also agreed to give all required supports afterwards, which means to maintain and repair the wheelchairs, when Cheshire office refers to them. CF-AI will make follow ups with the provision of guidance and counseling on proper utilization of the materials. With these provisions it has been possible to see children and family members very happy. They have expressed their gratitude to CF-AI and to the Japanes NGO for the help their children received and promised to keep the wheelchairs in good shape so that they can serve even after their children grow out to utilize them.

The following few picture will give clear understanding on the improvement made after the provision of the wheel chairs.

Children With Disabilities with happy faces



Child Rihana Mohammed, Female, 13 years old,

Ato Mohammed, the father of Rihana was very happy to see her citing in the wheelchair.



Child Eyosiyas Andualem, male, 5 years old, very happy with a smiling face.



Child Mohammed Ebrahim, Male, 4 years old



Child Abenezer Teshome, Male, 3 years old

6. Challenges encountered:-

- The clearing process of the wheelchairs was time taking and bureaucratic
- Transporting the wheelchairs to the Dessie was to some extent problematic, due to lack of proper service providing Agents,
- Lack of own store to keep the wheelchairs until distribution
- Lack of fund to give supplementary support to the targeted clients and their families

7. Measures taken to overcome the challenges:-

In order to mitigate the encountered challenges the following measures were taken;

- ❖ Closer follow up and working with the clearing agent
- ❖ The clearing Agent helped us to find trust worth firm to carefully transport the wheelchairs from MoJo to dessie.
- ❖ The Desie Prosthetic and Orthotic Centre was asked and became willing to provide space.
- ❖ The Dessie Cheshire project has started to network and established referral to the existing microfinance institutions for the provision of loans to target clients and their parents.

8. Lessons learnt

CF-AI by going through the different processes has been able to learn the following.

- that partnership enables to solve difficult problems and reach the unreached poor,
- that Well designed/planned works could easily become successful and sustainable
- that involving all stakeholders enables to attain the objectives in a sustainable manner. Here, the city administration and sector offices are made to play their roles;

- It has been learnt that resource mobilization should be strengthened in order to provide similar assistance to children who reside in the different parts of the country.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

From the above explanation, it is possible to understand that the project has been successfully accomplished, where it was possible to reach the planned target clients in Dessie and the neighbouring towns. All partners have performed their duties and responsibilities with great commitment. The involved members of the Japanese NGO Volunteers Group to Send Wheelchairs to Overseas Children have been always alert and very timely right from the start to the handing over ceremony and in the same manner, the responsible bodies from the CF-AI's side also have been following the case and have performed all needed works bringing all the local stakeholders forward to realize the objectives of the project.

9.1 Conclusion:-

From this, it is possible to conclude that the project was successful in achieving the objective set, which was bringing wheelchairs from Japan and distributing to children in Dessie and the surrounding towns to improve their mobility or interaction in their day to day activities, where it was possible to benefit 160 children with disabilities. These children are now capable of joining schools and their parents are capable of working by going out of their houses to make money, which in turn enables them earn better income for living. It will be necessary to thank specially the donor group for the unreserved support provided to these children, without which it would have been impossible to see these changes.

9.2. Recommendations:

After seeing the changes made in the individual families and in the target children, we recommend that the project should continue to reach more children in other parts of the country by assessing and prioritizing for there are a lot of similar children with disabilities in the country who are very poor and are unable to get such devices in their residing localities.

Therefore; it is with great satisfaction that the donor partner is kindly advised to extend its support in the same manner to reach the unreached children with disabilities who very badly need similar mobility assistive appliances which will enable them to go out of the closed doors and participate in education and other social services.