

Disabilities on the move

AUGUST 2011

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Our dream *The Ice Cream Café*



Welcome to **Disabilities On The Move**, our empowerment project by people with disabilities!

It is our dream to introduce a unique lunchroom in, fast growing, Rundu to create paid job opportunities for people with disabilities. This lunchroom (for now we refer to it as *The Ice*

Cream Café) will distinguish itself through its African ambience as well as its variety of home made food: a combination of local food with an international twist, ice cream and pastry.

The aim is to empower people with impairments as well as advocate social justice and equity. This will help them to address the poverty, discrimination and isolation they face everyday.

It is a local for local project whereby the emphasis is on full participation and involvement of beneficiaries throughout the whole process. A strong local steering committee, with help from a big

support-network, is actively taking the lead in setting up the business.

The expected profits will go back into their community through (for example) the provision of tools to enhance their empowerment, or scholarships for education or facilitation of other income generating activities like a vegetable garden or jam making. To secure achieving these objectives, a local Trust Fund Committee will monitor the management of this establishment.

Moreover this project is fully supported by the National Federation of People with Disabilities in Namibia (NFPDN) as well as the North East Association of the Visually Impaired (NEAVI).

Baking with Abilities

Happily, after a long year, the Town Council has recently informed us that they will allocate us the exclusive location (building still to be build this year) in the new Community Park in town!

So now the journey towards our dream has really lifted off! High time we started with the fun part: practically setting up the business, and raising awareness as well as funds ourselves, as we believe this will stimulate more ownership and will have a bigger impact overall.

Our group of people with visual, hearing or physical impairments has therefore recently started baking cookies, muffins, brownies, roasting peanuts, making fresh salads for brotchens, etc, from a home kitchen. Three times a month we then then sell our foodies by going into the community, to various offices, ministries and organizations in town. Here,

the ability counts, not the disability. It is simply wonderful to see how they help each other with challenges and in doing so form a real team. The impact has been even more so on raising awareness and building confidence among the beneficiaries themselves! Keeping in mind that they are all doing this voluntarily, they say they are enjoying it so much as it is breaking their isolation in many ways: 'We learn new skills'. 'People now treat me like a human being', 'I interact with and meet new people in the streets, 'I am no longer bored just sitting at home' are just few of their quotes.

Even the selling itself went beyond our expectations, every time we were sold out in 4 hours! It seems we have found a gap in the market. The response from the community is also encouraging: some place orders in advance or even donate spontaneously being positively surprised by the initiative.

In order to expand our baking abilities we are now trying out new successful recipes. In addition we are currently exploring opportunities to sell our cookies and peanuts on a weekly basis via various kiosks, business and lodges in town.

Last but not least, one local supermarket has already offered to sell our cookies and muffins through its shop!

And the journey continues....



If you would like to know more about this project or would like to support us feel free to call:

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Mpandu Unene

(Thank you very much) to our donors & sponsors:

Addie & Barbara Redmond
 Aniek Haffmans & friends & family
 Fiesta Photolab Rundu
 Georgina & Nigel Hayes
 Jelda Veninga & friends
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 Mr. George Neves (Owner Oceano, Woermann Brock Rundu)
 Mr. Markus Mbambo (TRC Manager Rundu)
 Primary School 'It Lemieren'
 Rundu Spar
 ... and to all our volunteers, supporters and customers.

Entrepreneurs in training

Our beneficiaries do a lot more than just baking and selling. They are fully participating in the business management side of this all as well, as this will ultimately be the key to making and keeping it sustainable for themselves.

Its learning about hygiene procedures, testing and improving recipes, comparing prices of ingredients, discussing marketing strategies, deciding what tools we need, how money should be spent, etc.

Last week we finished calculating the precise costs of all our products. A process that involves quite some steps. First checking prices in all supermarkets, then weighing a teaspoon/tablespoon/cup of each ingredient, translating the costs of a kilo into (e.g.) 8 grams for a muffin recipe, calculating how many muffins we can make from one batch and lastly include the costs of packaging, to determine all costs involved (plus of course costs of labour,

electricity and transport, but for now we leave them out. Let's take one step at the time...).



Our latest highlights

Thanks to a generous donation from Aniek Haffmans and her friends & family we have been able to buy our first big professional oven! Baking has now become 'a piece of cake'.

In addition, the visually impaired are now even more

empowered thanks to the spontaneous donation of Addie & Barbara Redmond in the form of a talking kitchen scale, a talking calculator and a Braille-label-maker! Encouraging them even more to develop their Braille, reading and mathematical skills.

cart, we are also 'making' our own tandem-bicycle-cart with the help of the RVTC. This will definitely be a new sight in Rundu and surely will make many heads turn. One step further in raising awareness and empowerment.



We are excited to share with you that our first, specially-made-vending-cart for more mobility and independence, is on its way! The Rundu Vocational Center (RVTC) has kindly offered to make one for us, free of charge. And not only a push-

Lastly we have approached local supermarkets for sponsorships in return for free advertising. Next week is time for follow-up: so please keep your fingers crossed for positive responses.

The way forward

End of August we will welcome our new volunteer from Peace Corps (United States); she will work with us, fulltime, for the next 2 years and will take over Saskia's role as she will return to The Netherlands soon.

In addition we will finalise the Registration of our Board of Trustees so we can then open our own (trust fund) bank account.

We are now looking at temporary locations where we can move our expanding activities

to while the Town Council is finalizing the park.

And last but not least, we are planning to organize a gala dinner in Rundu; a fundraising event that will certainly be the talk of the town, with special dynamics and entertainment...