



SPECIAL NEEDS NETWORK

National Association Networking for the Special Needs of the Individual

TEL: +264 61 224562 / FAX: +264 61 228255

email: autnam@iway.na

365 SAM NUJOMA DR

PO BOX 11606

WINDHOEK

NAMIBIA

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir, dear Madam

**CONCEPT NOTE: MULTI-PURPOSE RESOURCE AND TRAINING CENTRE
FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES**

BACKGROUND:

Special Needs Network - Namibia (SNN) has been working as a parent and teacher support and training organisation for the last 15 years. Except for year 3 & 4 of the Early Intervention Project in Katutura, all the work was done on a voluntary basis by everyone who was involved.

Through awareness raising and by word of mouth of those who have benefited from the services, the demand and need for more has grown to such an extent that there is a dire need of premises, development and staff to be able to deliver an ongoing and professional service. At the same time the need for an adult sheltered workshop and training facility has become acute.

Partnerships with Universities and tertiary education institutions (local and abroad) are sought to assist with the empowerment, development, training and research of and about the plight of people with disabilities in this country. Collaboration with relevant Government Ministries and NGO's is good.

RATIONALE:

Namibian policy and State legislation does exist to provide equality and opportunity for people with disabilities, but in the majority of cases it does not reach out to the poorer or even the most relevant communities of need. The result is that many of these disabled people become marginalized, are taken advantage of and deprived of the chance of achieving their true potential. At a personal level, a significant number of them lose hope, become depressed and gradually lose any skills they ever managed to learn or acquire. A facility such as the one planned and outlined in this proposal will address these issues in a positive way.

ORGANISATION OF THE PROJECT:

As stated above, the project and its activities are managed by an existing organisation formed several years ago to promote work with people with a disability and their families. SNN (Chairperson – Petra Dillmann) has the necessary experience and skills to know what is needed to establish, equip and run and maintain a Disability Resource Centre and has been planning the venture with the help of other interested individuals and organizations in a spirit of partnership and empowerment for some considerable time.

SNN is in the process of regularizing its legal status by applying for recognition as a Welfare Organization and An Association Not for Gain.

Focus Areas:	Purchase of property to function as Multi-purpose Resource and Training Centre ; Early Intervention , School- and Transition Adolescent Services; Adult Services , including Sheltered Workshop & Job Coaching; Autism Spectrum Disorders ; Alternative & Augmentative Communication ; Library & Resources , Newsletter & Networking ; Training for Families, School Assistants, Teachers & Professionals; Support for Specific Disabilities and Organisations
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NEED FOR PROJECT AND PARTNERSHIPS:

With some small modifications the Day care Centre will initially provide daytime accommodation and care for 10 people with disabilities, working up to a maximum of 30 within a planned timescale. It will have a staff of full time (paid) and volunteer helpers, carers and managers. The Centre will also be used for monthly support group meetings, training of staff and volunteers and for the assessments for at least 100 people. The Centre will eventually accommodate – a woodworking workshop, a sewing centre, an olive leaf tea packing venture (adjuvant to HIV/Aids treatment), making of gluten-free products, jams and preserve making kitchen and an administrative office. Office, training venue and administrative functions will be shared in a partnership with affiliated smaller organisations.

FINANCIAL ASPECTS:

Because of the small number of volunteers who assisted with the running of the projects, funds were raised at an ad hoc basis as needed for an activity, training or project. The funds for the Katutura Early Intervention Centre were mainly raised in Germany. There is steady support from service organisations like Round Table, Lions International, Rotary and private Trusts or individuals. Funds were also raised through regular flea markets, cake sales and fund raising activities.

Over the last 10 years volunteer time to an equivalent N\$ value of at least N\$15 000,00 per month was donated. This will continue, but to function effectively a base to work from is required and permanent staff and trainers must be employed to meet the demand and to provide quality assistance and education to the most marginalised in society, namely those with special needs.

SUMMARY:

After working from home, from rented premises or in ad hoc locations, it has become clear that to develop and to provide a transparent and measurable service which is accessible and visible, a cost-effective location which is suitable for a variety of purposes is needed, where people with disabilities can showcase their abilities and learn to work as independently as possible, as well as giving families the necessary home, school or respite support.

By providing opportunities to meet and collaborate between teachers and parents, by providing opportunities to learn alternative communication strategies for those that have no voice, and by living inclusion in the workplace, and by doing relevant research, we can teach the broader community that people with disabilities can lead a quality life and in many cases can be employed in the mainstream.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attached please find our aims and objectives, as well as our shortened list of activities.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely

Petra Dillmann
CO-ORDINATOR

ONLY TOGETHER WILL WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Focus Areas:	Purchase and Development of Property as Multi-purpose Resource and Training Centre; Early Intervention , School- and Transition Adolescent Services; Adult Services , including Sheltered Workshop & Job Coaching; Autism Spectrum Disorders ; Alternative & Augmentative Communication ; Library & Resources, Newsletter & Networking ; Training for Families, School Assistants, Teachers & Professionals; Support for Specific Disabilities and Organisations
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