



British Royalty visits Lesotho

Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, visited Skillshare's office in Lesotho on Wednesday 16 July as part of a southern African tour. The Princess Royal met staff, development workers and representatives from our partner organisations, including Mrs 'Makholu Matete, Skillshare's Country Director in Lesotho, and development workers, Pricilla Gathica and Gershom Mwansa (pictured above).

Sustainable human development is the cornerstone of the Lesotho government's economic and social development strategy, particularly in rural areas. Development priorities include access to adequate health care, education and employment opportunities, and the resources and services needed to accommodate an acceptable standard of living.

Since the inception of Skillshare International's programme in Lesotho more than 30 years ago, over half of our activities have been to improve people's employment prospects and to help build the skilled workforce needed for economic growth. Currently, Skillshare has 18 international development workers in Lesotho, 11 of whom work with the government's Technical and Vocational Division (TVD) which coordinates the provision of technical and vocational education across the country.

Skillshare has also been supporting the development of roads in rural areas for almost 20 years to improve access to goods and services for rural communities. During the last three years, poverty has worsened in Lesotho due to severe drought conditions that hit the southern African region and lowered agricultural production. Starvation among rural communities, dependent upon subsistence farming for their survival, had become so serious that earlier this year the government of Lesotho declared a state of famine in the country and appealed to the international community for assistance. Food delivery to the rural communities required accessible roads and demonstrated the vital

contribution made by Skillshare's development workers to the construction and maintenance of rural roads and footbridges.

Unemployment in Lesotho is estimated to be between 45 and 50%, mainly as a result of the retrenchment of Basotho miners from South Africa as more mines are being closed down. These people require entrepreneurial skills that will help them earn a living in trades such as horticulture, welding, repair of farm tools and equipment, masonry and bricklaying.

The Taung Rural Skills Centre is one of Skillshare's partners and is a good model of a community based institution that can provide the kind of skills that are urgently required for employment in rural areas. The aim is to give people a real chance to work towards an improved standard of living for themselves and their families through skills training and support for income generating enterprises.

Skillshare also works in Lesotho to improve the livelihoods of disadvantaged groups including women, young people, the disabled and people living with HIV/AIDS. Our input is through the provision of development workers who work with, advise and train staff of NGOs that are working with disadvantaged groups. We also assist with accessing funds to support special projects aimed at addressing issues pertinent to empowering disadvantaged groups.

Mrs 'Makholu Matete, Skillshare International's Country Director in Lesotho, said:

"We were delighted that the Princess Royal came to visit Skillshare International in Lesotho. We designed a comprehensive exhibition of our programme activities with our partners which demonstrated that working together with the people of Lesotho in the development process is vital if the long-term development goals of the country are to be achieved."

Skillshare ENABLEs support for disabled people in South Africa

By Rachel Haynes | International Programmes Officer

Disability and poverty in southern Africa are inextricably linked: "Poor people face a greater risk of impairment or disability.... the birth of a disabled child or the occurrence of disability in a family often places heavy demands on family morale, thrusting it deeper into poverty.... This means not only that there is a higher proportion of disabled people amongst the very poor, but also that there is an increase in families at the poverty level as a result of disability."

(South African Government Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997)

July 2003 saw the launch of a new project in KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa providing adult basic education, training and development opportunities for people with physical disabilities and their carers.

The project is the first South African project funded through Skillshare International, following a successful application to the European Union NGO Co-Financing Support Budget Line for £98,593 over three years.

The project will be led by Skillshare's South African partner Natal Adult Basic Education Support Agency (NASA), who is working with disabled learners in six local disabled people's organisations in KwaZulu-Natal. According to the South African census of 1996, KwaZulu-Natal has the highest total number of people with physical disabilities in the country (about 130,000 or 23%). 39% of this group in KwaZulu-Natal have no schooling at all and 69% have not reached secondary school.

The experience of NASA is that the situation in rural areas is worse because of poor infrastructure and lack of resources. Other barriers to learning that people with physical disabilities encounter include discriminatory attitudes based on fear and lack of awareness, lack of equipment, and inaccessible transport and venues.

Over three years, the project should reach 145 learners between the ages of 16 and 60. The majority of disabled people and their carers in this target group experience poverty, unemployment, low self-esteem and a sense of helplessness. However, many also belong to disabled people's organisations and self-help groups, and are trying to address their needs. Appropriate education and training could lead to income generation opportunities as well as greater participation in their families and communities.

NASA carries out research with the learners at each project to find out their specific learning needs. As well as placement tests for each learner to assess their literacy and numeracy level, NASA takes into account the social and economic environment of the learners, to ensure that the skills are relevant to what they need to be able to live and work on a daily basis.

"We need to speak and write in English to promote our crafts to the tourists."

Jabulani Craft Centre learners

"Numeracy skills would help to develop our income generating sewing project."

Siyazama Sewing Group learners

"We want to be confident in counting money and to read where the bus is going."

Amaoti Disabled People's Association learners

"We need to know how to write our names and we would like to read the newspapers."

Nduduznie Centre and KwaMakaye Disabled People's Organisation learners

The ENABLE project is run on a participatory basis, reflecting the international slogan of the disability movement: "Nothing about us without us". The structure of the programme is set up in a way that disabled people are involved at all levels of decision-making and implementation. The ENABLE project will also recruit and train people with disabilities as adult basic education trainers, providing role models and contributing to the understanding of the needs of those with disabilities in a learning environment.

The surrounding community will also benefit from the ENABLE Programme. For example, the Jabulani Craft Centre is seen as a resource that may be used by others in the community including the local farm workers. This integration of disabled and able-bodied learners helps to break down discriminatory attitudes, promotes equality and awareness of the abilities of disabled people.

The three year EC funded project will pay for tuition, teacher training and learner assessment, as well as classroom equipment, venue adaptations, and curriculum and materials development. Skillshare International's office in South Africa will assist NASA in terms of managing the EC funds and in monitoring the progress of the project.

Join the appeal for ENABLE

The ENABLE programme in South Africa addresses the urgent need to provide adult basic education, training and development opportunities for learners with physical disabilities and their carers in KwaZulu-Natal.

The main activities of the programme include literacy classes, numeracy classes, activities raising awareness about disability and linking adult basic education with vocational training, income generation and life skills. The aim is to provide learners with adult basic education for life and work skills, promoting independence and self-reliance.

Skillshare International has secured 75% of the funds for the ENABLE project through the European Commission on condition that we find the remaining funds from other sources. We need to find a further £10,000 a year for the next three years and we need your help!

How can you get involved?

1. Register your interest with Skillshare International by contacting Stephane Mousley, Supporter Development Officer on 0116 257 6615 or email supporters@skillshare.org or visit our website www.skillshare.org
2. Receive your fundraising pack containing:
 - Information about our two week fundraising challenge.
 - "The ENABLE Challenge" is a fun and flexible activity that challenges you to make some simple changes to your lifestyle: STRETCH YOUR POUND EDUCATE YOURSELF AND INVEST IN THE FUTURE!
 - Additional fundraising ideas (alternatives to the 2 week challenge).
 - How to send in your donations and what will happen to the money once it is received.
 - More information about ENABLE.
3. Complete the ENABLE challenge!
4. Send in your donation.
5. Receive an update from the project about how your money has been spent.

The appeal is running from August 2003 until Christmas.

(Any money raised by this appeal which is not required for ENABLE will be used by Skillshare International to support similar projects.)



Supporters weigh in for trade justice

The world's poorest countries lose £1.3 billion every day in unfair trade. On Saturday 28 June a trade justice event took place in Leicester's Town Hall Square to raise awareness of international trade laws and campaign for trade rules to benefit poor countries and the environment. Supporting organisations included Skillshare International, Oxfam, Christian Aid, CAFOD, World Development Movement and the Just Shop.

There were a variety of unfair games for people to take part in which were designed to illustrate how trade varies from country to country. Participants were also asked to 'weigh in' for trade justice to show support for a change in trade laws by putting their weight behind it.

Patricia Hewitt, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and MP for Leicester West attended the event and joined campaigners in an unfair game of 'hook a duck'. Competitors representing rich countries were given much better hooks than those representing poor countries. Ms Hewitt who was representing Mozambique, where 80% of the population live in poverty, had to change the rules to hook a duck.

Stephane Mousley, Skillshare's Supporter Development Officer, explains: "The rules of the game were fundamentally unfair so they had to be changed in order for Mozambique to be able to trade successfully. The games demonstrated how poor countries must have rules in their favour if they are to overcome the disadvantages they currently face in trade."

If you would like more information about the trade justice movement visit www.tradejusticemovement.org.uk or if you would like to get involved in similar events email: supporters@skillshare.org

Local groups update

Skillshare International's supporters association is focusing on developing and increasing the impact of local groups. Local groups provide a unique opportunity for supporters to identify and plan activities, such as fundraising, campaigning and development awareness, with other supporters.

We want to hear from supporters who would like the opportunity to meet people with an interest in international development or who would like to share their own personal experiences of development.

The London group members met for the second time in May at the Friends Meeting House in Euston to discuss the activities they would like to undertake over the next few months to promote the work of

Skillshare International and raise awareness of development. Various fundraising and development awareness activities were discussed and the group will meet again in early September to assess progress.

Other local group meetings will be taking place in Manchester, Leicester and Cambridge during September. For more information please contact Stephane Mousley, the Supporter Development Officer, on 0116 257 6615 or email: supporters@skillshare.org

Express your support for the people of Africa and Asia by joining our supporters association. As a supporter, you'll have the chance to get involved in development awareness, fundraising and publicity activities in the UK, whilst also remaining informed about Skillshare International's work. For more information, please call + 44 116 257 6615 or email: supporters@skillshare.org

Skillshare International works for sustainable development in partnership with the people and communities of Africa and Asia. We do this by sharing and developing skills, facilitating organisational effectiveness and supporting organisational growth.

Skillshare International (Ireland)

Skillshare International has had a close working relationship with the Irish Government's development programmes, through APSO, for at least 15 years. As a consequence, we have recruited many development workers from Ireland and also have a number of supporters there. Currently, APSO provides funding for supporting the costs of nine of our development workers and health trainers in Lesotho, Mozambique and Tanzania.

The outcome of the review of Ireland Aid in 2002 meant that the relationship between Skillshare International and Ireland Aid was likely to change substantially. We therefore took the decision to build on existing contacts and to develop an organisation in Ireland to support

the work of Skillshare International as a whole. Skillshare International (Ireland) was registered in Ireland as a company limited by guarantee earlier in 2003 and has been accepted by the Revenue Commissioners for charitable status in respect of tax.

We are delighted to announce that Fran Flood has been appointed Director of Skillshare International (Ireland) and will be starting his appointment, which is based in Dublin, on Monday 15 September 2003.

The Board has prioritised areas of activity for the new organisation which include:

- Strengthening our relationship with APSO and Ireland Aid;
- Building relationships with other potential donors to support our programmes;
- Networking with other NGOs based in Ireland, including participation in Dochas;

- Contributing to the recruitment, selection and training of development workers and health trainers;
- Developing a Skillshare International constituency in Ireland starting with our existing supporters;
- Promoting Skillshare International (Ireland).

Both the main Board of Skillshare International and the newly established Board in Ireland expect to see the development of a distinctive programme for Skillshare International (Ireland) in the context of Skillshare International's corporate strategy.

Trustee climbs to the 'Roof of Africa' to raise funds for Skillshare

In August, trustee Fred Mear and his wife, Anna, embark on the challenge of climbing Africa's highest mountain to raise funds for Skillshare International. Mount Kilimanjaro is at an elevation of almost 6,000 metres (about 20,000 feet) and it will take six days for the couple to complete the trek. If you are interested in sponsoring Fred and Anna or if you would like to find out more about raising funds for Skillshare International, please contact Stephanie Mousley, the Supporter Development Officer, on 0116 257 6615 or email: supporters@skillshare.org

BBC Appeal raises £11,000

The Lifeline Appeal transmitted on BBC TV in February raised more than £11,000. We received donations from over 300 people and would like to thank all those who made a contribution. We would also like to thank all those who distributed postcards for us and helped raise awareness of Skillshare's activities. More than two million people watched the programme and, after the appeal, our enquiry levels rose by almost one third and we received more than 200 enquiries from potential development workers and health trainers.

Mainstreaming disability in development – a call for action

International Conference in London on 12 November, 2003 at the Tara Hotel, Kensington.

80% of the world's disabled people live in the South and constitute the poorest sections of society in almost every developing country. Yet very few development agencies give any priority to the needs of disabled people and their organisations. This conference has been organised by International Service, Disability Action and Awareness, and Action on Disability and Development, with support from the EU's European Year of Disabled People, to challenge development agencies to address this issue.

The conference will look at examples of good practice, how to work inclusively and how grass roots organisations can work for change. Speakers include Judy Heumann of the World Bank, Sebenzile Matsibula of the South African government, Richard Howitt MEP and Alex Phiri of the South African Federation of Disabled People. For more details please email: conference@unais.org.uk or visit www.international-service.org.uk

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IVSO 2003: Moving beyond the North-South paradigm?

This year's meeting of the Heads of International Volunteer Sending Organisations (IVSO 2003) will be held in Kampala, Uganda, from 9 – 12 November. Delegates will discuss innovation and value in international volunteering and will also have the opportunity to participate in a post-conference study tour organised by United Nations Volunteers.

The conference is being hosted by the International FORUM on Development Service, a network of development agencies from around the world. Skillshare International's Chief Executive, Dr Cliff Allum, was appointed President of FORUM in November 2002.

For more information on FORUM and IVSO, visit www.forum-ids.org or email: jessica.lowe@skillshare.org

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