

**LESSONS FROM PARTNERSHIP
WITH A PARENT ADVOCACY GROUP FROM JAMAICA**

**Evaluation of the Development Cooperation between
the National Parent Advocacy Group (NPAG) of Jamaica and
Norsk Forbund for Utviklingshemmede (NFU)
the Norwegian Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities**

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FOREWORD

This evaluation was conducted by independent evaluators commissioned by NFU. After the initial introductions and clarification of the purpose the evaluation, respondents made themselves available for interview, sometimes at short notice. There was candidness during the interview process and evaluators believed that those questioned saw value in their association with NPAG.

We interviewed a range of persons and were able to obtain multiple perspectives about the operations of NPAG and its partnership with the NFU. We were fortunate to speak to persons who were in the roles of parish representatives, participants, parents and trainers associated with the NPAG. We were also able to speak to government representatives from different state agencies as well as representatives from NGOs.

We are grateful for the contributions of all of the interviewees as they allowed us to get a broad view of NPAG's operations from which we drew conclusions and made recommendations.

DECEMBER 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background to the Evaluation

In 1997, the partnership between National Parent Advocacy Group (NPAG) and the Norwegian Association for persons with Developmental Disabilities (NFU) began. NFU provided the funding to establish the NPAG organization. It also allocated funds for running the organization and for the different training programs and organizational activities. In this way NPAG could concentrate exclusively itself on advocacy efforts. In the case of the NFU - NPAG cooperation, the development activities were supposed to strengthen the advocacy skills of the parent groups in the different parishes of Jamaica.

This evaluation reviews NPAG's development as a democratic member based advocacy organization for persons with developmental disabilities, assess NFU's approach and contribution to NPAG's development, and assesses NPAG's long-term capacity for sustainability as an advocacy organization.

Norwegian Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (NFU)

NFU was founded in 1967 and the majority of its members are parents and people with disabilities. It is part of the Atlas Alliance which provides support to persons with disabilities in developing countries. NFU is a national advocacy organization in Norway which promotes inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities and emphasizes the responsibility of the society to care for them. This theme is extended to its international work and NFU will only form partnerships with organizations which are primarily concerned with persons with developmental disabilities and children with disabilities. NFU provides support to democratic, member based parents' organizations.

National Parent Advocacy Group (NPAG)

NPAG is a national advocacy organization of parents of persons with developmental disabilities in Jamaica. It was established in 1996 as a result of the need to have a nationwide parent-driven organization that could advocate for and promote the rights and interests of persons with developmental disabilities. NFU played a significant role in the creation of NPAG, since it was through NFU's influence that the organization was formed. The mission of NPAG is the protection of the human rights of persons with developmental disabilities, which should be accomplished particularly by working on changing attitudes at all levels in society. NPAG has since its birth had as main objectives, advocating for the rights of persons with developmental disabilities; acting as a pressure group for lobbying government for the implementation of laws and policies; acting as a watchdog of the government to guarantee equal accessibility to services for persons with developmental disabilities; and the establishment of parish chapters to promote the organization's work.

Summary of Findings

NFU conducted workshops, based in the main around the development of NPAG. These were organized to empower members of the NPAG to properly represent its membership at all levels of society and assist NPAG with the clarification of roles and responsibilities, development of by-laws for NPAG and the development of a set of principles and plans based on those principles.

Due to the efforts of the NPAG, children were integrated into regular schools in several parishes. Parent groups were strengthened and parents' perception of disability changed from the belief that they had been punished or cursed to improvement of their self esteem and most importantly the relationship with their disabled children. Parent groups created the environment in which they could support and encourage each other. More parents began to bring their children out into the community as they became more informed and confident to speak out for the rights of their children and persons with developmental disabilities. Local authorities also became more aware of the needs of the disabled population and have started to pay closer attention to the existing legislation that caters to those needs.

Final Recommendations

One benefactor of one of the local groups has suggested that NPAG should begin their sponsorship drive at the local level to develop the skills necessary to seek sponsorship externally.

Other suggestions from the evaluation team:

For NPAG:

- apply for support from local organizations project by project. Seek technical support and guidance, from local organizations that have the capacity, to plan and manage the projects
- seek support and guidance in organizational development from local businesses and local professionals and look for partnership opportunities
- deliver some form of returns for the persons or organizations that assist by public acknowledgement of their assistance or some form of advertising for the organizations
- bring the children with disabilities into the community so that when applications are made on their behalf persons know who will benefit, the challenges they encounter
- seek assistance and guidance from local organizations with the capacity to help with financial management and record keeping
- continue networking informally with the other parish groups until this network

can develop into a stronger national network for advocacy

For NFU

- spend more time in the early stages of a partnership understanding the operating context, culture, and capacity of its partners
- move beyond a single point contact approach to understand the roles of members within partner organizations and their level of involvement and commitment to partnership objectives
- determine the level of follow-up required when making recommendations for organizational development
- develop a process to triangulate or cross reference the reports received from partners

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the Evaluation

In 1997, the partnership between National Parent Advocacy Group (NPAG) and the Norwegian Association for persons with Developmental Disabilities (NFU) began. NFU provided the funding to establish the NPAG organization. It also allocated funds for running the organization and for different training programs and organizational activities.

During an evaluation conducted in 1998 between NFU and the Dedicated to the Development of the Disabled (3D) Projects in Jamaica, some observations were made about the NPAG organization. References were made to

- the lack of clarity about the concept of advocacy among the membership
- the need for a more realistic, coherent and concrete plan to be developed by the NPAG
- the need for the NPAG constituency to be broadened
- the role of the NFU as the major factor in NPAG's sustainability.

These references were examined in the conduct of this evaluation

Norwegian Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (NFU)

NFU was founded in 1967 and the majority of its members are parents and people with disabilities. It is part of the Atlas Alliance which provides support to persons with disabilities in developing countries. The Atlas Alliance is a foundation which engages in fundraising and these funds are in turn allocated to members of the Alliance for use in their different projects. The Norwegian Government Agency for Development Abroad (NORAD) also contributes a substantial part of Alliance funds, and members are thus obligated to account for the use of the allocated funds.

NFU is a national advocacy organization in Norway which promotes inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities and emphasizes the responsibility of the society to care for them. This theme is extended to its international work and NFU will only form partnerships with organizations which are primarily concerned with persons with developmental disabilities and children with disabilities. NFU provides support to democratic, member based parents' organizations.

Program Officers work with organizations in different parts of the world, and make site visits during which they meet with personnel and elected leaders in the partnering organization. They also assist, when requested, with development interventions by facilitating workshops or locating resource personnel. The organization employs a development cooperation strategy as it responds to organizations which request funding.

National Parent Advocacy Group

NPAG is a national advocacy organization of parents of persons with developmental disabilities in Jamaica. It was established in 1996 as a result of the need to have a nationwide parent-driven organization that could advocate for and promote the rights and interests of persons with developmental disabilities. Prior to the inception of the NPAG, NFU supported the Dedicated to the Development of the Disabled (3D) Projects in Jamaica, a Community Based Response (CBR) program which had a twofold focus: service-provision and advocacy. NFU played a significant role in the creation of NPAG, since it was through NFU's influence that the organization was formed by parents of the 3D Projects as a response to the suggestion of dividing the roles of providing services and advocating for rights. In this way NPAG would exclusively concentrate on advocacy.

The mission of NPAG is the protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities, which should be accomplished particularly by working with changing attitudes at all levels in society. Since its birth NPAG's main objectives have been:

- advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities,
- acting as a pressure group to lobby the government for the implementation of laws and policies
- acting as a watchdog of the government to guarantee equal accessibility to services for persons with disabilities
- establishing parish chapters to promote the organization's work.

NPAG has a Board of Directors comprised mainly of parents of persons with developmental disabilities who are representatives from each of the 11 parishes in Jamaica. The organization also had an Administrative Director or Coordinator employed in its main office, based in Spanish Town. This office ceased to exist from the beginning of 2006.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Development cooperation strategy

One perspective of development is that of a process by which institutions within a society address problems in order to bring about benefits for members of the population. NFU employs a development cooperation strategy in its funding initiatives. The historical context for this strategy came from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an international organization focused on economic and social issues. Its members are developed countries committed to the principles of democratic government and free market economics. At the May 1996 Thirty-fourth High Level Meeting of its Development Assistance Committee, member countries adopted a new strategy for poverty elimination which called for the “focused use of development cooperation in support of developing country efforts to reduce income poverty by half by 2015”⁽¹⁾. According to these authors, the meeting was guided by the “thinking developed in several UN Conferences, including the 1995 Copenhagen Summit on Social Development”^(1, footnote, p.228). In this context, Northern non-governmental organizations (NNGOs) from those member countries employed a development cooperation strategy in the partnerships they developed with southern institutions. NFU is one such NNGO.

NFU as an organization assists fundees like NPAG to implement development activities which benefit persons with developmental disabilities and children with disabilities. One method of measuring the impact of these development activities would be the examination of changes in behaviour of participants and the persons with whom they interacted. In the case of the NFU - NPAG cooperation, the development activities were supposed to strengthen the advocacy skills of the parent groups in the different parishes of Jamaica.

The NFU - NPAG cooperation was terminated on December 31, 2005. NFU cited administrative and communication challenges as the catalyst for termination of the partnership. Prevailing theory on partnerships indicates that a lack of motivation or the ability to absorb and communicate knowledge as well as the dynamics of power, opportunism, suspicion, and the difference in information sharing strategies can hinder the processes which allow organizations to learn from each other⁽³⁾. The extent to which these barriers existed and impacted upon the NFU – NPAG partnership were examined during the evaluation process.

Principles of effective partnerships

In this evaluation the team sought to discover what persons associated with the two organizations understood about the parameters of the partnership and the roles and responsibilities of each organization.

Some of the accepted principles of effective partnerships^(2,3,7) include:

- establishing clear goals for the partnership
- regular measurement of progress
- the inclusion of key stakeholders from the beginning
- involving 'champions' who would work to make initiatives from the partnership visible to the public
- establishing clear governance structures that define roles and responsibilities of each

- partner
- the establishment of ground rules that guide the work of the partnership especially with regard to a communication protocol
- adapting the goals or initiatives to changing conditions and resources which include changes in personnel or location of administrative facilities
- drawing on the strengths and contributions of each partner for mutual benefit
- developing strategies to maintain momentum and to sustain the work of the partnership over time

There are two factors ⁽⁷⁾ which can also undermine the effectiveness of partnerships. Firstly, when one is a good partner this can invite exploitation by other partners who may attempt to maximize their individual appropriation of the mutual gains and undermine and minimize the collective knowledge development in the strategic alliance. Secondly, when the partners are not highly receptive to information sharing and transparency of processes, then the collaboration would be compromised.

As the evaluation team sought to understand the partnership, they were guided by the Terms of Reference for this evaluation ⁽⁹⁾, and the theoretical framework of partnerships and advocacy.

Types of Advocacy

For the purposes of this evaluation the following definitions or contexts for advocacy drawn from literature in the field will be examined. Five main types of advocacy ⁽¹⁰⁾ have been identified.

- Individual
 - The advocacy efforts are centered around one or two people. It may happen informally with relatives and friends, or through the efforts of voluntary community based organizations
- Citizen
 - This is usually a community based movement that recognizes, promotes and defends the rights of a group. Commitments are sought from persons for voluntary service to the cause.
- Systems
 - This type of advocacy is focused on influencing and changing legislation, policy and practices.
- Parent
 - This type extends the individual advocacy efforts to the issues that affect the family of the vulnerable person.
- Self Advocacy
 - This is undertaken by persons who share the same characteristics or interests on behalf of the same person or group. A major concern would be the exposure of the vulnerable group to further abuse, discrimination and ridicule as a result of their advocacy efforts.

EVALUATION APPROACH

Objectives of the evaluation

1. Review of NPAG's development as a democratic member based advocacy organization for persons with developmentally disabilities since 1998
2. Assess NFU's approach and contribution to the development of the organizational structure and content on all levels of NPAG (national and local)
3. Assess NPAG's long-term capacity for sustainability as an advocacy organization and make appropriate recommendations for future institutional and economical sustainability

Data Collection

The team employed qualitative methodology in the data collection for this evaluation but also used 1 survey (Appendix A) to assist in gaining a public perspective of the NPAG. Our data collection strategies included parish visits, conducting individual interviews as well as focus groups, and the review of documents. Each parish representative was given 20 – 30 surveys to be distributed within the individual parishes in order to obtain a public view of the NPAG. The list of interviewees is attached as Appendix B.

Opportunities

On October 02, 2006, the Chief Evaluator and the Evaluation Consultant met with all Board members except the representative from Trelawny to explain the purpose of the evaluation, the approach to be taken and also to enlist their assistance and cooperation. The representatives also assisted with the final version of the survey. When questioned further, the member for Trelawny indicated insufficient notice for the meeting as the reason for her absence. We were able to arrange an interview schedule with the different parishes to maximize the use of time during that first week spent in Jamaica. The Chief Evaluator returned on two occasions for further data collection. As we visited the different parishes we were able to get a first hand experience of the challenges faced by the parish members to communicate in their communities as well as to travel into Kingston and Spanish Town.

Limitations

The evaluation team was unable to contact Christine Sterling, who was NPAG's Managing Director until mid 2005. There were indications that she had migrated to the United States of America. We were unable to access much documentation on NPAG's operations prior to 2000 and this evaluation team could not ascertain the circumstances that led to Christine Sterling's transition from the voluntary position of President of NPAG to that of Managing Director, one of the only three paid positions within NPAG.

The evaluation team arranged a workshop with the NPAG Board in November 2006 to determine the way forward for the NPAG. Due to the inclement weather and flooding in parts of Jamaica at that time only two Board members showed up for the meeting.

Most of the team's communication with Board members was via the cell phone. The economic reality of the participants in the parish groups was evident in two main areas.

- Members did not have access to the internet, email or fax. There was a fax machine in the office in Spanish Town. However, this location was 4 – 5 hours away for most representatives as they had to rely on public transportation.
- Members did not own their own vehicles and the cost of transportation was prohibitive.

FINDINGS

Objective 1 – Review of NPAG's development as a democratic member based advocacy organization for persons with developmentally disabilities since 1998

4.1 *Review briefly the political, legal and institutional climate in Jamaica for people with developmental disabilities since 1998.*

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The Jamaican Constitution has many laws that outline the parameters of the rights of the persons with developmental disabilities population. The evaluation team found that the parent leaders within NPAG were unaware of most of them.

The Government of Jamaica manages the PATH Programme – Programme to Advance Health and Education. While this is not specifically for the disabled population, persons with developmental disabilities and their family members can benefit from this programme. Apart from the monetary allowance of three hundred dollars monthly, they can have access to free health care and education.

During the period under review, the stigma associated with being disabled or having a disabled family member, especially a child, was gradually changed through the efforts of organizations such as the NPAG. One interviewee described a situation where she lived next to a family with a disabled person for seven years before she or her family realized that there was a disabled person in the family next door. That person was hidden from the community by his family.

The Government of Jamaica now funds the 3D Project which provides some services for the disabled. NFU at one time provided funding for this organization's work.

The Government of Jamaica also provides a Rehabilitation Grant which is given to persons with disabilities for income generating projects.

4.2 *Assess the impact NPAG's work has had for persons with developmental disabilities in Jamaica, particularly with emphasis on the local government and society.*

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- Because of NPAG's efforts children with disabilities were integrated into the regular schools across many parishes.
- Many parent groups were strengthened and parents' perception of disability changed from the belief that they had been punished or cursed to improvement of their self esteem. With this improvement came a better relationship with their disabled children.

- Parents groups created the environment for parents to provide support and encouragement for one another.
- More parents began to bring their children out into the community.
- Relationships among family members in homes where there were children with developmental disabilities improved as their attitudes and perspectives of themselves as a family changed.
- Parents became more informed and confident to speak out for the rights of their children and persons with developmental disabilities.
- Local authorities became more aware of the needs of the disabled population and have paid attention to existing legislation that caters to those needs. One example described by a government official from the Falmoth area was with regard to approval of building plans with accessibility provisions for the disabled.

4.3 Review NPAG's efforts to provide knowledge and know-how about different issues related to their work (advocacy work, local and national legislation, technical skills in lobbying)

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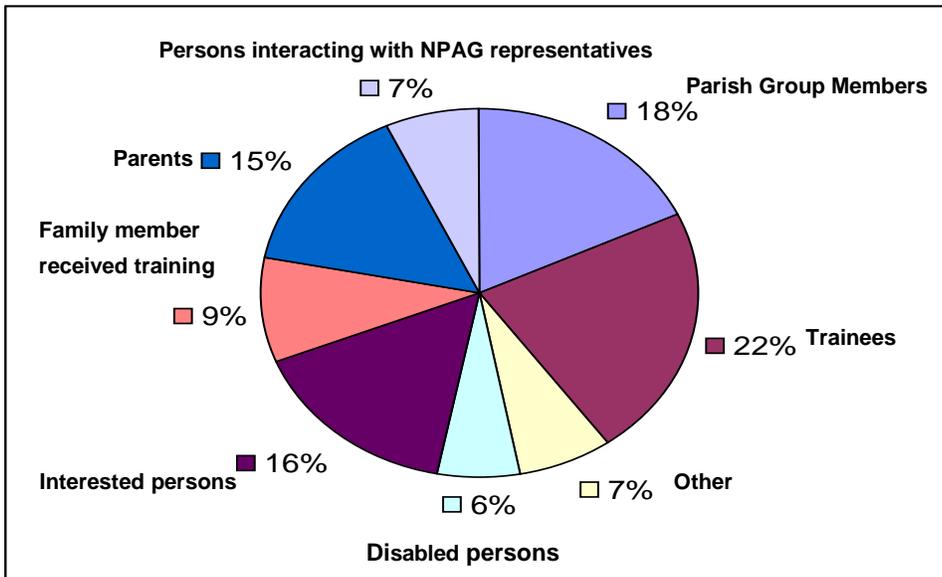
- NPAG through their National Conferences and training seminars have provided knowledge on many of the issues related to their work on advocacy. Some themes of the conferences were : *National Policy Document for Persons with Disabilities, Ensuring full Participation for All* and *Advocacy the Agent for Change*
- Training seminars included:
 - Parent training sessions – to give support and information to parents who had recently recognized or been informed that their children had a developmental disability and also for persons with disabilities who did not accept their limitations
 - Leadership Training – to introduce participants to principles and policies that govern the advocacy process to ensure the equalization of opportunities for all persons with disabilities
 - Parent Mobilization - to explore the process of achieving goals through social change – at the individual, service and system level, to foster regular contact with local politicians and Government representatives.
- Meeting with government officials
 - Representatives of NPAG met with the Minister of Labour and Social Security in 2003, to discuss the social security benefit for persons with developmental disabilities.
- Members of NPAG have made presentations in meetings and church services to sensitize the community and stimulate the inclusion process for persons with developmental disabilities into the community.

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4.4 Assess how members, authorities and society perceive the role of NPAG.

- Members of the NPAG have been recognized for their advocacy work and the Board member for Trelawny has received many local and international awards for her work from organizations such as the United Council for Senior Citizens and the United Nations Volunteer Programme.
- The work of the NPAG has attracted the attention of international students doing post graduate work in the area of advocacy and disabilities.
- Members of the NPAG have been invited to participate in the round table discussions on Education Transformation and other initiatives related to disability issues.
- Board members have been asked to speak in different community settings to promote the awareness of the plight of the disabled and the NPAG still has a presence in most parishes in Jamaica.
- NPAG has been able to attract assistance from the Lions Club, the Social Development Office, and the Environmental Agency in Jamaica to assist with the efforts of parish groups.

Figure 1
Findings – NPAG Survey – Public Perception



The pie chart provides an illustration of the diversity of the group which responded to the survey. Parish group members and trainees were the largest groups represented. The persons who interacted with NPAG representatives were employees in the education and health sector, and

persons whose awareness had increased to improve their delivery to disabled persons accessing their services. Interested persons included volunteers who assisted with NPAG activities and different categories of donors. Among the group in the category 'other' were persons who had been part of a congregation during an NPAG presentation at a church service, a guest speaker at one of NPAG's activities at the parish level and a local government representative. Responses to the survey items are tabulated below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I learnt about the challenges of persons with disabilities because of my knowledge of NPAG's work.	63.8	29.8	4.3	2.1	—
Efforts should be made to include persons with developmental disabilities in all sectors of the society.	91.7	8.3	—	—	—
The challenges of persons with developmental disabilities should be highlighted.	89.6	10.4	—	—	—
NPAG has strived to promote the needs of persons with developmental disabilities.	67.4	23.9	8.7	—	—

The suggestions from respondents for the last survey item indicated that the NPAG become more involved in influencing government policy, having representation for persons with developmental disabilities in all the community groups in the parish, and seeking more human and physical resources to assist with vocational skill development for persons with developmental disabilities.

The evaluation team recognized that the success and visibility of NPAG's projects was very much dependent on the leadership and will of the parish groups. The groups have engaged mainly in parent advocacy and individual advocacy to a lesser extent. Members spoke of the cost of the media, but at least one parish was able to get a journalist at one of the radio stations to broadcast upcoming meetings as a public service announcement. The team felt that this could have been extended to all of the parishes, but we were also able to discern that there had been some challenges with communication and cooperation among the parishes.

From the survey responses and also during the interviews there was a strong appeal for baby sitting services for parents with disabled children. This would facilitate parents getting a few hours to be able to seek employment, transact their business or perform advocacy activities.

4.5 Assess the impact of participating in a network such as CAMRODD on NPAG.

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- The Parish President for St. Catherine was a member of CAMRODD's Board in 1998.
- The Managing Director of NPAG was elected to the Board of CAMRODD, since then she attended the Board meeting that was held in Trinidad in December, 2003.
- CAMRODD has provided Leadership Training in Jamaica where NPAG members were among the participants. NPAG has in turn conducted leadership training in alignment with

the concepts taught by CAMRODD.

- Members of NPAG's Board have attended various courses conducted by CAMRODD
- NPAG's work is in alignment with the principles outlined in the CAMRODD Blueprint which has been used as a reference point for NPAG's objectives.

4.6 *Were the recommendations from the 1998 evaluation incorporated and further developed?*

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Based on the recommendations from the 1998 evaluation, NPAG has sought training from NFU to increase their understanding of the concept of advocacy and to develop plans for their advocacy work. Through workshops and recommendations, NFU has provided guidance which assisted NPAG to increase its membership and establish new parish groups.

NFU made provisions in its grant budget for NPAG for the use of a consultant to assist with guiding NPAG's organizational development. This was not utilized by NPAG.

Objective 2 – Assess NFU's approach and contribution to the development of organizational structure and content on all levels of NPAG (national and local)

2.1 Assess NFU's contribution and its influence on the development of NPAG as an advocacy organization, especially with regards to training provided (methodology and contents) and general communication with the organization.

NFU acknowledged that working in Jamaica required a different approach to advocacy work than with its home country Norway. They recognized that the economy, living conditions and culture of Jamaica were different from those in Norway. They made recommendations to NPAG which were focused on organizational improvement. NFU also made recommendations about guidelines pertaining to both meeting structure and activities at the local level. NPAG members through its Board were encouraged to share information in their parishes, among parishes and at the national level. Through workshops, NFU assisted NPAG to develop and adopt action plans based on those principles. NFU encouraged NPAG to focus on local parent meetings, and provided guidance about keeping the momentum in local groups. The evaluation team believes that here is where NPAG had its biggest impact by advocating to parents to allow their children to exercise their rights as citizens of Jamaica instead of hiding them away.

NFU conducted workshops, based in the main around the development of NPAG, the organization, through strategic measures. These workshops served to empower members of NPAG to adequately represent its membership at all levels of society and also assist NPAG with:

- clarification of roles and responsibilities for Board members and representatives of NPAG
- development of by-laws for NPAG
- development of a set of principles for NPAG
- develop plans based on those principles

Strengthening of Local Parent Groups

On NFU's invitation NPAG's President Mrs. Shirley Brown and the Managing Director Mrs.

Christine Sterling visited Norway to observe its General Assembly in October, 2003. This provided exposure for these individuals to view the conduct of a large general assembly.

NFU arranged for two representatives from the International Museum of Children's Art to visit the National Parent Advocacy Group to conduct art workshops for children with disabilities in an attempt to expose them to novel activities. This also helped to draw the attention of the Jamaican public to the activities of NPAG parish groups.

Review the effectiveness of NFU's phasing out strategy

NFU conducted workshops with the parish groups to announce their withdrawal from the partnership and to assist with developing a way forward for the continuance of NPAG. NFU recognized that there was energy to continue the organizations at the parish level. NFU continued funding NPAG for 2005 and assisted with paying NPAG's outstanding bills in 2006.

Objective 3 – Assess NPAG's long-term capacity of sustainability as an advocacy organization and make appropriate recommendations for future institutional and economical sustainability

Is their will from NPAG's side to continue being a merely advocacy organization?

Based on interviews with individual board members and members of the parish groups this evaluation team believes that there is will to continue NPAG's work in advocacy and this will continue through the work of the parish groups. Work continues within the parishes and some parents groups continue to hold regular meetings. During 2006, at least one parish parent action group has registered itself as a legal entity in Jamaica. In 2006 NPAG continued to have representation, through members of the parish groups, on steering committees and round table discussions regarding social services and benefits for the people with disabilities.

Assess the financial and technical sustainability of NPAG and give recommendations for its continued existence as a national (advocacy) organization for persons with disabilities

This evaluation team has concluded that at this present time NPAG does not have the financial capacity or organization capability to function as a national network. The NPAG board has not met during the last ten months of 2006 except for a workshop with this evaluation team to launch the evaluation. The evaluator had to promise to cover the cost of their transportation to and from the meeting in order to facilitate board members attendance at the workshop.

Board members indicated that while they had received financial reports and other reports from the NPAG Secretariat they did not have the technical skills necessary to draw conclusions and thus relied solely on the Managing Director's comments. Thus, they did not ask questions about the financial affairs of the NPAG. Senior members admitted that they were intimidated by the former Managing Director, an employee, who not only openly embarrassed them during meetings but also controlled the operations of the organization which included the finances, the processes, and the flow of information. Some board members admitted that while they were representing their parishes they were not clear about their roles and responsibilities as board members.

The Parish groups benefited from NFU's funding through training from NFU's programme officers and from training programmes organized by the board. They were able to access information through NPAG's office. However, most of NFU's funding was used to cover administrative costs, office salaries and training. The parish groups managed on their own funding and therefore were not extremely affected financially by NFU's termination of the partnership. Once there is enthusiasm and leadership within these groups, NPAG's work will continue.

One benefactor of one of the local groups has suggested that NPAG start a sponsorship drive at the local level to develop the skills necessary to seek funding internationally. Other suggestions that the evaluation team offers include:

- applying for support from local organizations on a project by project basis; seeking technical support and guidance, from local organizations that have the capacity, to plan and manage the projects and partnering to achieve its goals
- seeking support and guidance in organizational development from local businesses and local professionals
- delivering some form of returns to the individuals or organizations that assist by public acknowledgement of their assistance or some form of advertising for the organizations
- bringing the children with disabilities into the community so that when applications are made on their behalf persons know who and what they are helping with and especially the challenges which these persons encounter
- seeking assistance and guidance from local organizations with the capacity to help with financial management and record keeping
- continuing to network informally with other parish groups until this network can develop into a stronger national network for advocacy

How can NPAG benefit from continuing being part of a regional network like CAMRODD?

CAMRODD has the potential to effectively advocate at the regional level and members of the NPAG can benefit from CAMRODD's capacity and knowledge and from participating in their training programmes.

NPAG can also participate in the Jamaica aspect of CAMRODD's regional projects.

Parish Advocacy Groups are also encouraged to consider joining the Combined Disabilities Association of Jamaica. NPAG has been a member of this organization which is a member of Disabled International Caribbean Chapter and had a large contingent at the Disabled International's conference in Trinidad in December 2006.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The evaluation team recommends that NFU spend more time in the early stages of a partnership to understand the operating context, culture, and capacity of its partners. It is important to move beyond a single point contact approach and get a feel for the capability of members within partner organizations and their level of involvement. This would allow NFU's programme officers and members to determine the level of follow-up required when they make recommendations for organizational development. It is also important to develop a process to triangulate or cross reference the reports received from partners. This is supported by the findings of Lister (2000) ⁽⁵⁾ who suggested that the intra organizational relationships need to be monitored in order to support the structural relationship between the two partners.

While there were administrative and communicative challenges within the NFU-NPAG partnership, this evaluation team found that NPAG's advocacy efforts were effective at the parish level. Because of the social climate in Jamaica, advocacy needed to start at the ground or grassroots level, encouraging the parents and families to desist from hiding their children with developmental disabilities and to assist them to exercise their rights as citizens of Jamaica. Through funding, training, workshops, and development activities, NFU has facilitated NPAG with improving the lives of persons with disabilities in Jamaica. Through their training programmes and the provision of information, available at their office, NPAG has engendered the confidence and empowered its parish group members to advocate at the parish level. This has achieved many results; from children with developmental disabilities being accepted into regular schools to people with developmental disabilities coming into and interacting with the communities in which they live.

The success stories, the changes in perception about themselves and their families and increase in the self esteem of parents and persons with developmental disabilities are results of the NPAG-NFU partnership. The knowledge and skills provided by the training, together with the confidence and reinforcement provided by the success stories have provided the desire to continue the work of NPAG at the parish level.

REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A
NPAG Survey – Public Perception

(TICK ALL THAT APPLY)

I know of the work of NPAG because –

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of a parish group | <input type="checkbox"/> I assisted with an activity/interested person |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was part of a training programme | <input type="checkbox"/> A member of my family was trained |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Of interaction with NPAG representatives | as _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a person with a disability | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a parent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE

I learnt about the challenges of persons with developmental disabilities because of my knowledge of NPAG's work.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Efforts should be made to include persons with developmental disabilities in all sectors of the society.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

The challenges of persons with developmental disabilities should be highlighted.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

NPAG has strived to promote the needs of persons with developmental disabilities.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Example

I would like to see NPAG involved in

Other Comments _____

APPENDIX B

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Persons Interviewed	Relationship to NPAG
Shirley Brown	President NPAG
Paulette James-Brown	NPAG Board Member - Coordinator
Madge Sanderson	NPAG Board Member
Iris Morrison	NPAG Board Member
Charmin Wilks	NPAG Board Member
Norris Maraj	3D Coordinator
Veachlyn Bedford	Parent of Person with Development Disability
Carol Green	Past 3D Coordinator
Tamara Cohen	NPAG Board Member
Chenelle Hogan	Participant Leadership Training Sister of Michael Hogan (disabled)
Mr. Hogan	Father of Michael Hogan (disabled)
Carol St Clair	Parent of pwdd- past Secretary of Portland Parish Parent Advocacy Group
Michael Hogan	Person with Developmental Disability
Johnathan Bartley	Mayor of Falmoth
Roylan Barret	Acosta's Rotolorum
Molly Thorburg	CAMRODD Advisor
Hugh Dixon	Environmental Officer – Southern Trelawny Environmental Agency (NGO)
Jennifer Williams	President – Trelawny Clarks Town group (parent)
Avis Whotms	Secretary - Trelawny Clarks Town group (parent)
Minnett Pryce	Principal Dutch Hill Basic school
Millicent Foster	Parent of Person with Development Disability
Owen Stewart	Secretary- Ulster Spring Parent Advocacy Group
Beverly Higgins	Albert Town Parent Advocacy Group
Mableta Sterling	Parent of Person with Development Disability
Eugenia Beckford	Parent of Person with Development Disability
Ditha Johnson	Parent of Person with Development Disability
Luise Bet	Parent of Person with Development Disability
Delroy Sullivan	Person with Disability

D Bennett	Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities
Mary Mitchell	Past Chair Person Combined Disabilities Association of Jamaica
Devon Brown	Field Services Manager - Social Development Commission
Betting Thorvik	NFU programme Officer
Julia Throchez	NFU Programme Officer
Eli Lidal	Past NFU Vice President
Kari Melby	NFU Programme Officer