

campaigning and raising awareness

Although Handicap International helps the most vulnerable, mainly people with disabilities, its mission is also to illustrate and make their difficulties understood by constantly bringing these issues to the attention of civil society and political representatives.

Awareness-raising activities in the countries of the North and the South are mutually enriching because of the social, cultural, political, religious or economic differences.

The association has acquired a certain legitimacy from this diversity, which has enabled it to intervene in a whole range of disability-related issues, both at national and international level.

Defending the dignity and rights of people with disabilities, making the public aware of the distress they experience and denouncing the causes of this are all part of Handicap International's continuing struggle to bring about lasting change.



Bearing witness to the facts and mobilising citizens

Landmines and cluster bombs are weapons which make no distinction between civilians and military personnel. Handicap International has been condemning the illegality of landmines since 1992. The signing of the Ottawa Treaty in 1997 was an important first step, but the final objective is to make this treaty universally applicable. For the last two years the association has been equally active in its condemnation of cluster munitions and is currently calling for them to be banned because of their indiscriminate nature.

Landmines and cluster munitions: disregard for international humanitarian law

In November 2004, five years after the Ottawa Treaty first came into application, the first mine-ban treaty review conference was held in Nairobi. The Ottawa Treaty marked an historic turning point in international humanitarian law. It is in fact the first text to prohibit the use of a conventional weapon, which is widely

deployed. In the course of this review conference, the State Parties adopted an action plan for 2005-2009. Although ambitious, this plan still leaves certain questions unanswered. Above all, it must be translated into concrete measures if we are to meet the challenge of providing the victims with better assistance and speeding up mine clearance. In addition, unless there are more and longer lasting resources and unless action against landmines is made a national priority, a lot of states will not meet the ten year deadline

Cluster munitions: the cynicism of an allegedly legal weapon

The recent conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo have brought to our attention another threat to civilian populations during and after conflicts: cluster bombs. Dropped indiscriminately over very wide areas, including urban ones, they are regarded as "attack weapons." However, 5% to 30% of them, depending upon the conditions in which they are used, fail to explode on impact as they should, and therefore become "delayed action weapons," like antipersonnel mines. No longer distinguishing between civilians and soldiers, these weapons which have "malfunctioned" openly flout the rules of international humanitarian law. In 2003, at The Hague in the Netherlands, Handicap International helped launch a coalition against cluster bombs. Today more than 150 non-governmental organisations throughout the world belong to the CMC (Cluster Munition Coalition). The association wants to achieve the banning of these weapons by putting pressure on governments, informing public opinion and collecting thousands of signatures every year.



In the summer of 2004, the association staged its annual campaign to ban cluster bombs.

for demining their territory. This would result in the death or mutilation of thousands of civilians, victims of the inconsistencies of the State Parties to the Treaty.

15,000 to 20,000 new landmine victims each year

In spite of the progress made, the task is still a daunting one. There are currently 300,000 to 400,000 surviving victims of a landmine accident, and this number is unfortunately going to increase inexorably. Every year, between 15,000 and 20,000 new victims are recorded according to the Landmine Monitor annual report, and 200 million mines are still stockpiled by various countries, 110 million by China alone. The latter, like Russia and the United States, has still not ratified the Ottawa Treaty. It is therefore essential for states and civil society to remain on the alert so that these countries eventually comply with common law and the will of the people.

Mobilisation: an action force and a responsibility

It is essential to mobilise citizens as this strengthens the legitimacy of the fight waged by Handicap International. Through their support, the members of civil society “mandate” the association to act in their name. This mobilisation is an action force for Handicap International, but also a responsibility.

Pyramid of Shoes: gathering to change a state of fact

The 10th Pyramid of Shoes was an opportunity to invite people to renew their commitment to a “mine-free world.” While continuing the fight to ban landmines, this tenth event raised the awareness of the public and mobilised them against the scourge of cluster bombs. In addition to its civic nature, this event is also a festive and friendly occasion. Artists put on entertainment, street theatre and concerts. Thirty four towns took part this time,



four more Pyramids than in 2003, and nearly 63,000 signatures against cluster bombs were collected. 3,000 volunteers and 24 regional branches took part in the Pyramids. Tens of thousands of people were made aware of cluster munitions, with the fight and the mobilisation set to continue into 2005.

Vivathlon: a day of interaction between people with and without disabilities

Started in 1999 by Handicap International and associations for social tourism, the Vivathlon is a national day of solidarity organised in holiday villages throughout France in aid of Handicap International. This remarkable event helps to raise the awareness of holidaymakers to disability and difference and raise funds for the association's activities. 140 villages with approximately 25,000 holidaymakers took part in this sixth event, and about 70,000 euros were collected in total. During this event, holidaymakers, the able-bodied and people with disabilities all intermingle, and take part with family and friends in the many different activities put on by the organisers. The atmosphere is always friendly and the sports activities are usually the most popular. They encourage interaction and mutual assistance between able-bodied people and people with disabilities, who can show what they are capable of at these events.

Integrating people with disabilities into social development

2005 is the European Year of Citizenship through Education. In this context, the association wanted to highlight the connection between the disability awareness and social development. There can be no lasting change in behaviour, nor any significant social progress applicable to all, unless disability is integrated into development projects. In order to decide upon actions to be taken this year, Handicap International consulted its French partners, other NGOs and the association's branches and volunteers in 2004. Everyone is now in a better position to make the public aware of the universal reality of disability.

The Pyramid of Shoes and the Vivathlon: two events to raise awareness and interact with the public.

Recognising the rights of people with disabilities

Handicap International is involved in various think-tanks and action plans concerning the recognition of disabled people's rights. Within this context, the association intervenes both with European and international decision-making bodies, and in the countries where it is operating.



The same rights for all

Since 2003, Handicap International has been participating, under the auspices of the United Nations, in the drawing up of the International, Global and Integrated Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. A great deal is at stake with this Convention as it will become binding for those countries ratifying it. It will ensure "the full, effective and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities" (article 1 of the current draft Convention).

Civil society plays an active part in debates, along with state representatives and bodies of the United Nations, via the ad hoc committees that have been set up. Handicap International is involved in this and has three main aims.

First of all, the association is part of the International Disability Caucus which represents the unified voice of civil society and uses its expertise to influence debates.

In addition, Handicap International is

responsible for one of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) working groups. Made up of associations working in the field of disability and development, IDDC wanted the link between human rights and development to be taken into consideration during the drawing up of the Convention. The group has therefore tabled an amendment, which aims to strengthen the inclusive approach to development, both at the level of national strategy and within the international cooperation framework.

Finally, Handicap International raises awareness and provides information on the Convention in France, in the sections and in the countries where it operates.

Including disability in European development programmes

In June 2004, the European Union, in partnership with the IDDC, set out guidelines detailing the extent to which disability had to be taken into account in the development projects that it was financing. Drawn up for the services managing European cooperation, these guidelines also provided for a budget to be used for training staff appointed to delegations abroad in disability in development issues.

Despite undeniable progress being made in the recognition of disabled people's rights, there must be no let up in our efforts. These guidelines are in fact only a first step. The aim of the IDDC and Handicap International is to have the issue of disability in development included in a directive, a wider and more restrictive legal framework, voted on by the European Parliament.

Share-SEE: pressure groups

Share-SEE* is a scheme started in 2003 by Handicap International in South-East Europe (Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania) to support civil society and enable it to play a part in the recognition of disabled people's rights.

Consisting of more than two hundred associations in the Balkans,

Share-SEE's actions revolve around four main areas:

- a very flexible training and counselling system;
- a support fund for ground-breaking initiatives;
- a platform for regional exchanges;
- an on-line information tool with data bases, a forum and research work (www.share-see.org).

In one year, the development of the project has shown how relevant the regional dimension can be for this type of action. Tight competition between associations and the mistrust that sometimes exists between local and international agencies have gradually given way to a desire to exchange information and collaborate, thus creating an entirely new dynamic.

* Self-Help and Advocacy for Rights and Equal Opportunities – South-East Europe.

Donations, partnerships a solid guarantee of the

The year 2004 saw an increase in private funding. This was due in large part to diversifying ways of bringing in money. Developing partnerships, which have practically doubled, adopting new forms of fund-raising like the “face-to-face” method, particularly popular with the younger generation, and increased solidarity trading have all helped to strengthen this vital part of the association’s activity. Private resources are vital for Handicap International. Any autonomy of action on its part depends on its financial independence.

An increase in public generosity

There has been a clear increase in support from the general public, with 84,500 new donors in 2004, compared with 74,000 the previous year. There has also been a significant stabilisation of direct debit donations, which have increased from 15,900 in 2003 to 21,700, creating revenue of almost 3 MUS\$ (an increase of 36% in one year and 90% over two years).

Sorting the mail and donations enables us to follow up donors and Solidarity Sponsors.

In addition, there has been a steady increase in the number of Solidarity Sponsors from 18,400 in 2003 to 19,200 this year, with income of more than 7 MUS\$. This gives a net margin of 25.1 MUS\$ in 2004, compared with 24.2 MUS\$ in 2003, an increase of 0.9 MUS\$.

A desire for rationalisation

These positive results are based on continuous efforts to rationalise fund-raising: fewer appeals, more coordination between postal appeals for donations and

mobilisation activities and increased media awareness. The individual act of generosity cannot be isolated from collective, civic mobilisation in favour of the association’s long-term actions, like those in response to a crisis.

Company partnerships: a new approach

2004 marked a turning point in the association’s partnership activities with companies. The creation of a post especially for this task has enabled it to develop smoothly. The first objective was to strengthen existing joint ventures like those with the Institut Chronopost (the “Montre ton cœur” scheme), the Sanofi-Pasteur group (a model partnership which has lasted more than fourteen years) or the Crédit coopératif (the Agir savings scheme with half the interest being paid to the association). The other objective was to start new partnerships, as was the case with the Société générale Services or Loisichèques. These first initiatives have had the effect of almost doubling the volume of finance resulting from these partnerships, increasing from 337 KUS\$ in 2003 to almost 485 KUS\$ this year.

Significant growth potential

Handicap International is continuing to structure this action so as to be able to make proposals to all types of company (small and medium sized businesses, large groups). These joint ventures with the private sector help with the necessary diversification of the association’s resources. They also enable us to improve our work by using practices which differ from those otherwise used in the world of humanitarian aid.

Tsunami in South-East Asia: a tremendous display of solidarity

The solidarity of donors after the tsunami on 26 December 2004 resulted in an exceptional 8.7 MUS\$ being raised in France. The donations allocated but not used in 2004 have been carried over to the 2005 financial year and total 764 KUS\$.



ps, solidarity trading: association's independence

Solidarity trading on the increase

In the search for independent funding, solidarity trading has been an alternative to fund-raising for several years. With almost a million Shared Products sold each year, this sector represents 13.5% of the sum donated by the public to Handicap International. In 2004, this activity continued to increase with a net margin of 1.82 million MUS\$ before company tax (compared with 1.53 MUS\$ in 2003).



A craftwork stall manned by volunteers and employees of the association at one of the Pyramids of Shoes.

Craft work products, some from fair trade and solidarity trading, sold direct (thanks to the efforts of a network of volunteers) and by mail order (500,000 catalogues sent out each year), have generated a net margin of 464 KUS\$, with donations of 228 KUS\$. A fairly positive result for a market which has serious competition from the private sector.

This year there has also been an increase in the sales of company greeting cards and chemist shops have started selling soft toys.

In the 2005 projections, priority is given to developing the sales of cashew nuts produced in Senegal by people with disabilities. The aim of this pilot project, set up in Casamance, is to study possibilities

for promoting the professional integration of people with disabilities in developing countries.

Plio Kit associative partnership in Portugal:

This year, the Solidarity Trading unit has launched a new area of development abroad. An original and unique form of cooperation has been started with a Portuguese NGO (AMI) to market the Plio Kit in Portugal. Profits from these sales will be shared with AMI, which has similar commitments and objectives to our own.

* CATs (work aid centres) are specialised establishments offering productive activities and support to adults with a disability whose capacity to work is limited.



Once again this year, thanks to the work of the CATs* and to continued support from suppliers, distributors, the media and voluntary workers, the Shared Products marketed by Handicap International have been very successful. The Tree Tidy (Sac à Sapin) remains the most popular product, with 580,000 of them being sold over the Christmas period. A biodegradable version, which is environmentally friendly, has been developed and will be on sale for Christmas 2005. This illustrates the desire to give these products an ethical dimension, as does the fact that they are packaged by people with disabilities working for the CATs.

Ways of guaranteeing our autonomy

Whether regular donations, legacies, long-term partnerships or one-off gestures of solidarity, all private contributions made to the activities of Handicap International are vital for its independence. The level of private financial resources (not connected with public subsidies or aid) thus represents two thirds of its requirements, i.e. 65% of resources, with 2004 figures confirming the trend recorded during previous financial years. Over and above the figures, however, it is also a strategic objective laid down by the association's administration council: the association's autonomy of choice has to be safeguarded, however the funding policies of national and international institutions may develop.