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ACTIVITY BRIEF

Networking for Mobility

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Regional Services Center



Wheelchair users assembling wheelchairs in the Motivation Romania workshop

Partners:

Motivation Romania Foundation

Geographic Targets:

Romania, Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Project Duration:

9/30/2004-9/30/2007

Contact Information:

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Activity Background

In spite of an overwhelming need, only a small percentage of people in Southeastern Europe are able to obtain and afford an appropriate wheelchair and training to live independently. Networking for Mobility aims to create a regional solution to the overwhelming need for affordable wheelchairs and to improve the quality of life and integration of wheelchair users in their communities.

Core Interventions

- Establish a wheelchair production, distribution, and training network through which low-cost and efficient wheelchairs will be distributed in Romania and Moldova and one additional country in Southeastern Europe.
- Facilitate the integration of wheelchair users in their communities through education, peer group training, advocacy, and networking.

Activity Results

- With the opening of its new factory in Bragadiru, Romania, in November 2005, MRF has progressively expanded its wheelchair production capacity from 20 to 60 wheelchairs/month.
- Over the past quarter, MRF produced and distributed 100 customized wheelchairs and components in Romania and Moldova, bringing the total under this project to almost 580, with a substantial percentage supported by the Dutch and Romanian governments.
- Since the project began, MRF has trained almost 500 people in wheelchair use and independent living skills, such as driving, to increase their opportunities for integration.
- In cooperation with UNICEF and Trebuie Braila, MRF has launched a rapid intervention program to provide support to 40 institutionalized children in Braila, Romania. As a result of improved care, living conditions and physiotherapy, many of the children are walking and learning to use wheelchairs for the first time in their lives.

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