



ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Abilis Foundation, established in 1998, aims at promoting the activities, human rights, equal opportunities and independent living of persons with disabilities in developing countries. The Foundation funds small trustworthy high-quality projects planned and implemented by the disabled persons themselves. Thus, the Foundation's method of funding projects is effective and promotes the empowerment and social integration of persons with disabilities. Funding is granted to grass roots organizations for projects whose funding requirement varies between 500 and 20 000 €. The Foundation receives the bulk of its financing from the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) Development Cooperation Fund. The Ministry funding for the year 2012 totalled 1 900 000 €.

The year 2012 was a busy year for the Foundation's funding activities. Abilis received about 450 applications out of which 134 were approved for funding and 265 were rejected. Some 399 applications were processed by the Abilis Office in 2012 while a part was carried over to be handled in 2013. The average amount granted was 7923 €. There were 24 small grants (budget 2 500 € or less) approved by decision of the Executive Director, whereas the number of large, special grants for budgets in excess of 10 000 € was 18.

Throughout the years, the bulk of the Foundation's funding activity has taken place in Africa, while Asia has been slowly gaining ground. In 2012, approx. half of it, 51 % (69 projects) took place in Africa and 46 % (61 projects) in Asia. Measured in Euros, the total amount granted to African countries on the one hand and to Asian ones, on the other, is practically the same, a little over 500 000 €. In Africa, Ethiopia and Somaliland received most of the funding. In Asia, it's in Nepal and in Central Asia, in Kyrgyzstan and Tadzhikistan the biggest increase has taken place. With 4 new projects (3 %), the part of Latin American countries diminished from last year. Almost 70 % of Abilis funded projects emanated from the so-called partner countries which, in accordance with the Foundation's strategy, ensures the funding reaches real local groups of persons with disability.

In the course of the year, a number of projects launched in the previous years were finalized. In total 127 final project reports were accepted. Due to the open call for proposals, the number of projects seeking funding varied during the year. At any given time, the average number of project applications was 250.

Two projects had to be terminated with a demand for reimbursement. The grants were very small (325 € and 908 €) and one of them was refunded at the end of 2012. In the course of the year, the Foundation had to cancel the funding of 4 projects because of the grantee organization's incapability to implement the planned activities and to receive the funds. Furthermore, the funding decision of 18 projects had to be revised because either the project had been completed with a smaller budget than originally planned, the project activities had ceased or due to the insufficient capacity of the implementing organization, the remaining instalments had been ceased. In these cases, according to the results, persons with disabilities had been the main beneficiaries of the disbursed funds and there was no ground for reimbursements.

More than half of Abilis-funded projects (54%) aimed at poverty reduction of persons with disabilities. This was realized mainly through vocational training preparing persons with disabilities for micro-entrepreneurship and improving their chances at employment on the labour market. The Foundation also supported the empowerment, participation and education of persons with disabilities as well as the capacity building of DPOs (26 %). About 10 % of the projects were aimed at the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities while a few of

them focused essentially on promoting knowledge on health and hygiene, on guidance in the use of social and health services, as well as on distribution of supportive tools and accessibility.

In the course of the year the Board assembled six times. The Foundation's Quality Assurance Manual providing the guidelines for its quality and development work in the coming years, was approved in February. In May, the Board confirmed the Human Rights-Based Approach as the policy covering the entirety of the Foundation's activities and reflecting the principles upon which its very existence and work are based. Both formal documents were attached to the new three-year application (2013-2015), prepared in the spring and submitted to the MFA in August.

In September 2012, the Foundation hosted a Partnership Seminar for the representatives of 11 Partner Countries. In the course of the week, partnership practices and experiences were discussed, the guests were introduced to the project management tools and methods Abilis disposes of and met with representatives of the MFA, the Government and Finnish Disabled People's Organizations.

The Partnership Programme is an important part of Abilis Foundation's project administration, especially in as much as background-checks and follow-up are concerned. In 2012 there were in total 11 Partner Countries (Africa: Uganda, Tanzania, Somaliland, Ethiopia, Mozambique; Asia: India, Nepal, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan). Moreover, special arrangements were made for supporting local Disabled People's Organizations in Bangladesh. The most recent partnership was contracted in Somaliland starting from the beginning of June 2012. Towards the end of 2012, the Foundation had a capacity evaluation conducted in Zambia, where a partnership will be started in 2013.

As a part of its quality assurance, Abilis Foundation launched a programme of evaluation and development by means of which, a systematic structure for measuring the results and impacts of projects as well as their sustainability will be created. In the autumn, the focus was on Human Rights projects and the creation of indicators allowing to quantify changes brought about on individual and group level. Operational development was conducted in the Mekong region, where the Foundation will establish a Regional Office and national units of activity in the years 2013-2015. Two preparatory journeys to the area confirmed the need for Abilis support to grassroots groups of disabled people.

The total number of permanent staff members was nine in 2012. Moreover, a new part-time Research and Development Manager started working for the Foundation, which also employed a number of temporary workers. At the end of the year, one Project Coordinator retired.

The Foundation's finances were looked after in a steadfast manner while observing appropriate thriftiness and the funds were invested in accordance with the by-laws. The total actual costs of the Foundation were 1 920 043 €. The Foundation's balance sheet showed a surplus of 15 109 €. In 2012, the total amount of grants by the Foundation to DPOs in developing countries was 1.2 M € (about 66% of the entire costs of the fiscal year). The costs of the information projects were 40 912 €, those of project management 467 621 € and administrative costs totalled 178 454 €.

The auditors for the Foundation were Raimo Hakola (CA) and Kristian Seemer (CA). Timo Vilen (CA) and Kari Mikkola (CA) acted as deputy auditors. Administer Ltd. was in charge of book-keeping, while *eFina* financial management software was used in financial administration and the tool for project administration was *Prospekti*.

Abilis Foundation will continue its funding activities in 2013 as diligently as ever. The new three-year grant (2013-2015) amounts to 8.4 M €, which will allow Abilis to boost its operations and to invest in the quality work. A new activity, Disability Rights Diplomacy, the funding for which is included in the total grant, will be launched in 2013. The state subsidy for 2013 is 2 700 000 €.