



Pictured: The Eden Social Welfare Foundation in Taiwan was one of the organisations to receive funding in 2008 under the international grant scheme run by Rehab, in association with Workability International.

Rehab Goes Global

THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC crisis of the past year has made entering the workforce quite difficult for a great number of people and nowhere is this reality more deeply felt than in developing economies where people with disabilities face an even bigger challenge.

In 2008, Rehab, in association with Workability International, launched an international grant scheme with a fund of up to €50,000 to support organisations seeking to create employment opportunities for people with disabilities. In particular, the scheme seeks to fund new and innovative projects that support the development of enterprise, staff training and personal development for people with disabilities.

Angela Kerins, Chief Executive of Rehab, is delighted with the progress of the initiative to date. "The scheme has already been hugely beneficial in supporting projects in Nepal, India and Taiwan. This year, we saw projects in two new countries successfully

apply for funding while the National Rehabilitation Centre of the Disabled in Nepal received funding for the second year running with a grant this year of €25,770. The successful new applicants for 2009 are the Asociacion Panamena da Industrias de Beuna Voluntad in Panama which was awarded €17,254, and Care-Co, Mauritius, which was granted €6,985."

The Asociacion Panamena de Industrias de Beuna Voluntad, Panama, is a not-for-profit body which provides training for people with disabilities to prepare them for employment. The grant is being provided to support a programme which focuses on training in gardening and landscaping. In total, 80 people with disabilities will access the programme and 16 per cent have already been guaranteed immediate employment upon completion of the training.

Care-Co (Rodrigues) Co. Ltd., Mauritius, is an organisation which provides creative employment opportunities for people with disabilities on the island

of Rodrigues. The grant awarded will enable the expansion of its activities in the areas of bee-keeping and hand-crafted coconut products, along with the development of an improved product range.

The National Rehabilitation Centre of the Disabled (NRCD) is a national self-help organisation for people with disabilities in Nepal. It provides counselling, medical, social, educational, cultural and economic rehabilitation services. The scheme funded aims to employ 250 people with disabilities and victims of armed conflict in candlestick manufacturing and the keeping of goats and pigs. NRCD was also funded in 2008.

Final reports are being received from the projects which were funded in 2008. These also included the Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Taiwan, which improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities, and ORBIT in India which focused on small-scale industry. The scheme has seen great success to date and Rehab aims to build on this in 2010. ■