



# MAITS

Impact report  
Annual report 2016-17



The WHO estimates that 15% of the world's population has a disability, approximately 80% of whom live in the poorest parts of the world, where the vast majority do not have access to services provided by trained personnel. This has become a global health priority<sup>1</sup>. Recent efforts to promote inclusion have not addressed the need for skilling up workers providing mainstream or specialist services to enable an equitable service to all. There are a lack of resources to assist staff and caregivers and those that exist are largely unevaluated

Since 2008, MAITS has established itself as a go-to organisation for developmental disabilities in the sector and is unusual in that the focus has been almost exclusively on training and capacity building of professionals from a range of disciplines within the disability sector. Our work ties in very closely with the recommendations on training from the WHO.

<sup>1</sup>Emerson E, Yasamy MT, Saxena S. Scaling up support for children with developmental disabilities in low- and middle-income countries. J Appl Res Intellect Disabil. 2012 Mar;25(2):96-8.

# Message from the Chair of the Board

This is an exciting time for MAITS. We started up in 2008, with the simple vision to improve the lives of children with disabilities by bringing together some dedicated individuals from a special school in the UK with educational institutions in India and Pakistan. Seeing how training to special needs staff made such a difference to how they supported the children they worked with and receiving requests for further training visits, we saw potential and MAITS was born. From that, the charity grew and brought together many other organisations and expanded into healthcare as well as education for adults as well as children, because we saw so much potential for positive change.

At MAITS we believe education is key and through our training and capacity building programmes, skills can be shared all over the world to help some of the most vulnerable members of society.

MAITS' work has been made possible by our qualified professionals and through a small grants programme to enable training to take place. What really drives us is the desire to support and empower communities. Our volunteers from all around the world giving freely of their time makes all the difference.

We had a review last year which confirmed to us MAITS' potential and we decided to follow the recommendations, which set us on the path to looking for a CEO and we welcome Esther as our new CEO for MAITS. She has put in place a new strategy focused on empowering communities to support their most vulnerable. This is the beginning of a new chapter for us.

We know that action provides results. Our charity is growing and expanding because as a board, we saw the potential for working in some of the world's most marginalised areas to make sure that professionals and communities can truly fulfil our passion of supporting those most in need by working in different sectors according to greatest need.

It is our passion and pride here at MAITS that has stood out and we have been making progress on our feeding projects linked to disability and premature birth - which have been life-saving and for community workers.

My sincere thanks go to all the people who help grow and support MAITS as, without them, we could never have accomplished such rewarding results and we are looking forward to the next chapter.

Asif Rangoonwala



**Asif Rangoonwala**

# Message from the CEO



**Esther Hamilton**  
Chief Executive Officer

Photo credit: Desdemona Varon

The international development community has in recent years made steps towards greater disability inclusion, with the no-one left behind agenda. The United Nations' sustainable development goals included specific goals around disability for the first time and there is greater acknowledgement of the need to include and meet the needs of people with disabilities. However, there is still a lot of work to be done – and the needs of people with disabilities are often overlooked particularly in countries which are affected by poverty, lack of access to education and poor healthcare services. The reality is that they are often seen as less able to contribute to society, therefore, people still often equate meeting the needs of the general population as a better investment in the future. When I hear people saying things that reflect this view, I am always minded to mention Stephen Hawking, one of the greatest minds of the 21st Century, who has led in field of theoretical physics and who has not let his disability define him. Or Stephen Wiltshire, an autistic artist who creates incredible landscape drawings and was able to draw an 18ft picture of the New York skyline from memory after a brief helicopter ride over the area. Like all of us, people with disabilities have different skills and needs and the right to respect and dignity.

I have always believed that it is not the individual who is disabled, but that it is society that disables, by failing to address the obstacles that exclude people with disabilities and stop them accessing their rights to education, healthcare and social integration.

Most disability programmes focus primarily on physical disability. MAITS' work predominantly addresses the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities, such as autism, cerebral palsy and global learning delay. MAITS therefore works not only with those with physical disabilities, but also with people that have non-physical and often, on first-glance, invisible disabilities. They can often be under-represented and overlooked when it comes to development programmes on disability, because for so many the word "disabled" still conjures up images of a wheelchair and yet, as a society, we are somewhat more understanding of a person who cannot do something because they have an injured leg than we are of a person whose neurological make-up means that they struggle in social situations and find it hard to relate to others. Our focus on developmental disability addresses a real gap in a lot of development programming for disability, recognising disability in its various forms.

But at MAITS, we do not focus on what a person cannot do, but what they can do and believe that there is an innate ability inside each person to grow and develop. MAITS promotes an understanding of neurodiversity – an appreciation and acceptance of those with neurological conditions such as autism, ADHD and Cerebral Palsy.

We believe passionately in everyone's right to be a fully included member of society and this is why we focus on ensuring that people with developmental disabilities are able to access better quality health and education services, as this is key to ensuring they can achieve their full potential. We are somewhat unusual



in that our focus has been almost exclusively on training and capacity building of professionals from a range of disciplines within the disability sector and bringing together organisations in some of the poorest countries in the world, with people from around the world whose expertise can help to address need. As such, our work ties in very closely with the recommendations on training from the WHO.

MAITS is going through an exciting period of change – last year we underwent a strategic review and on the basis of that, the board made the decision to take on the charity's first CEO to drive MAITS' work forward and expand our programmes and build the organisation. I started in February 2017 and was attracted by MAITS' commitment to developmental disability and the potential it has for creating sustainable change through building the capacity of those working with and caring for people with disabilities in some of the world's poorest countries. Particularly as someone who has cared for a family member with a developmental disability, I know first-hand the difference that the right, professional input can make and am passionate about ensuring that other families are able to benefit from high quality support to help those they care for to reach their full potential.

Since the review and since I came into post in MAITS, we have developed the new organisational strategy, for the next three years. The strategy has an increased focus on trainer of trainer projects – more emphasis on building the skills of local professionals through local volunteers who can then roll out training and support a broader approach to working with disabilities at a local level, so that disability professionals can bring about change within their own communities.

We emphasise working within local structures, engaging with the ministries of health, local and international NGOs as well as with local healthcare and education providers, so that we are working towards improving local systems from within, in a way that is most sustainable.

So much of our work is dependent on the time and dedication of our trainers, who are qualified professionals who provide training and follow-up support on a voluntary basis and an increasing number of these trainers are based in developing countries and sharing their skills with others both locally and internationally. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank our small staff team, all of those who have given of their time to support MAITS work and those we serve – our trainers, our grantees, the organisations who reach out to us for support for their capacity building needs and to everyone who takes what they have learned and uses it to improve the lives of those living with a disability.

MAITS is harnessing expertise that is providing a practical solution to global guidance that recommends training and capacity building as a way of addressing issues faced by those with disabilities and it is an honour to be taking this work forward.

Esther Hamilton

# Impact report



Annual report 2016-17





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# Impact report



150 million

More than 1 in 12 children worldwide have a disability and the majority live in developing countries

## Since 2011, MAITS has

Awarded **187** training grants to provide **97** training programmes to **4700** staff working with individuals with disabilities

benefitting more than **600,000** service users



in **20** countries





# Who we are

MAITS is an international disability charity that works with people with disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy and learning disabilities in developing countries. We have a team of healthcare and education professionals who volunteer their time to provide training to those working with and caring for people with disabilities.

We have a small team of specialists who create resources and we connect those looking for training with those who can provide it.

We bring people together to improve the lives of those with disabilities.

## Vision

We envision a world in which individuals with developmental disabilities are fully able to access the health and education services they need to achieve their full potential.

## Mission

MAITS is an international disability charity whose mission is to improve the lives of some of the world's poorest people with developmental disabilities and the lives of their families, through better access to and quality of health and education services and support.

## Aims

The aim of MAITS is to improve the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable individuals living with disabilities by helping them to reach their full potential, with good health and wellbeing, through access to family support, quality healthcare and education. MAITS specifically supports people with developmental disabilities such as cerebral palsy, autism and learning disabilities. We do this through a team of volunteers from all over the world, who are experienced professionals, and provide capacity-building training and resources to those caring for and providing health and education services to individuals with disabilities in community or institutional settings.

## Strategic objective

To improve the lives of children with developmental disabilities living in some of the poorest countries in the world, by strengthening the skills of carers and those working in disability and mainstream health and education services, to ensure better, more accessible and sustainable services.

Our work directly contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals 3, 4 and 8<sup>2</sup> – emphasising the importance of health and wellbeing for all, access to education by building inclusive learning environments, as well as promoting the social inclusion of persons with disabilities. We work through volunteer trainers, who are either qualified healthcare staff or special educators, with at least four years' experience post-qualification, a background of training and experience in a developing country. Our trainers typically volunteer for two weeks and then provide follow-up remotely, often returning for repeat visits.

<sup>2</sup>SDG 3 = End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, SDG 4 = guaranteeing equal and accessible education, SDG 8 = Promoting inclusive economic growth and employment

# Where we work

We have worked globally in 20 countries and will be focusing on South Asia and Africa for our larger Trainer of Trainer programmes.

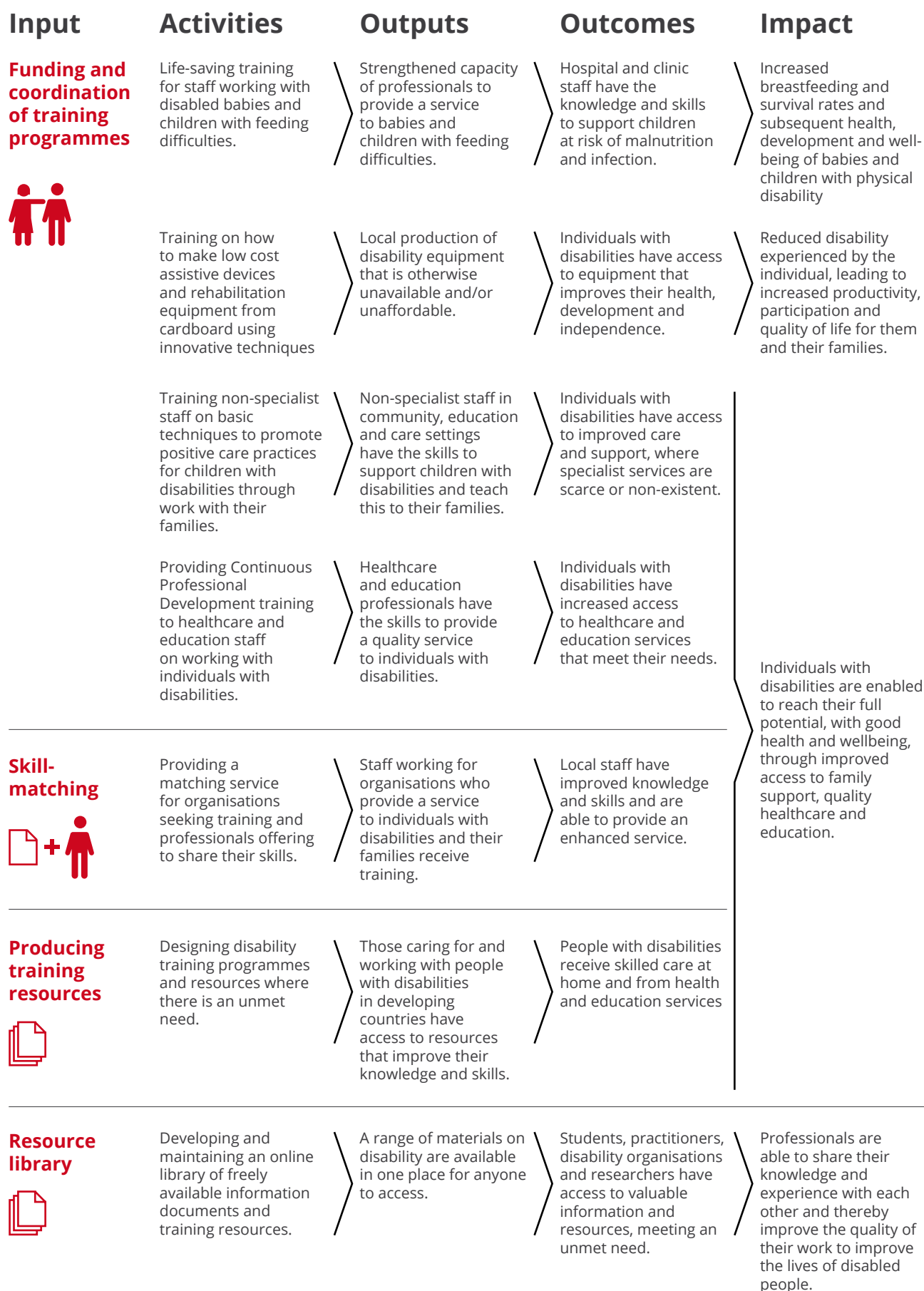
For our small grants, MAITS does not restrict the geographical areas we deliver training in through grantees. These training programmes can be delivered, enabling skill-sharing with those serving marginalised populations in any part of the globe, from refugee communities in Tibet to people living in war-torn countries such as Palestine.



# **What we do**

The impact of our work

Theory of Change – how what  
MAITS does contributes to what  
we want to achieve



# The focus of our work

**Our work has focused on the following things:**

## 1.

### **Funding and coordination of training programmes**

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We work with organisations overseas to develop sustainable development programmes, building the capacity of health and education services to meet the needs of disabled people. Our training projects are designed to provide sustainable solutions to unmet need. Our focus is increasingly on training experienced therapists and special educators to roll out MAITS' training programmes in their own countries. MAITS provides discreet grants to enable training to take place.

## 2.

### **Skill-matching**

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We have a matching service for organisations looking for training and professionals able to provide training on disability. Organisations can request training in a specific area of therapy or education and we match them with suitable trainers and both trainees and trainers are eligible to apply for grants.

## 3.

### **Producing training resources**

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MAITS develops training resources to be used by trainers to improve the delivery of therapy, healthcare and education of individuals with disabilities in low-resource countries. The resources are developed by experienced trainers and tested out and evaluated by local staff in their communities. The resources are then modified according to the feedback and evaluated for their effectiveness.

## 4.

### **Resource library**

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MAITS' website also houses a resource library with training materials and guidelines available free of charge, bringing together a range of disability resources in one place.



## Key achievements in the areas we work in:

# 1.

## Funding and coordination of training programmes

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### MAITS' flagship Trainer of Trainer (ToT) programmes

MAITS is placing increasing emphasis on Trainer of Trainer programmes which allow the building of skills and capacity within communities so that they can create change from within and to support the wider dissemination of much needed expertise. One of our ToT programmes is on infant feeding:

#### Infant feeding

The facts

- **15 million babies are born prematurely every year**
- **1 million babies are born with a disability**
- **200,000 are born with cleft lip and palate**

In developing countries, 50% of babies born at 32 weeks die due to lack of support, including support to breastfeed. Pilots in Malawi, Uganda and Sri Lanka achieved the goal of exclusive breastfeeding with 100% success! Using our techniques, 60% of the babies started feeding within minutes – and feeding means the difference between life and death.

MAITS' infant feeding programme aims to reduce infant mortality and improve the lives of babies with disabilities and those born prematurely, by enabling healthcare staff to support mothers to use simple feeding and caregiving techniques that can significantly improve their chance of survival and improve their quality of life.

To date we have piloted this life-saving training in Sri Lanka, Malawi and Uganda, training 199 staff in neo-natal units and clinics and they have reached approximately 58,000 babies.

The programme is a simple easy-to-follow course for staff working with infants with feeding difficulties in low-income countries. This is the first infant feeding programme of its kind which is specifically for babies who are having feeding difficulties due to an underlying disability or premature birth.

The story of Precious, told by Himali De Silva – one of our trainers on infant feeding and one of the authors of the MAITS' infant feeding package.

*"Baby Precious, was one of the babies we worked with. She was born premature, at 28 weeks and weighing just 800g. She had been in the special care ward for a long time, attempting to establish breastfeeding without much success. She was routinely placed on her mother's breast to 'feed'. She struggled to attach on to the breast, and fell asleep, tired from the effort and hunger. One of the nurses we had trained started working with her mother Joyce, and within minutes helped Precious to attach to her mother's breast and establish breastfeeding, using the techniques we had taught her. Precious fell asleep, satisfied.."*

## 2.

### Skill-matching

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There are 1 billion people in the world living with a disability. Around 150 million of these are children. 80% of people with disabilities live in developing countries, where there are insufficient resources to support them.

MAITS provides a skill-matching service for organisations in low and middle income countries, who are seeking disability training by qualified professionals from all over the world, offering to share their skills for free. MAITS trainers are enhancing existing services for individuals who have a disability and/or mental health challenges by training workers in new skills and upgrading their existing skills. We provide skill matching both through direct contact with our register of trainers and through our online matching service.

MAITS has also provided small grants to enable training to take place. Since 2011, we have provided 187 grants to enable 97 training programmes to 4700 staff members working with individuals with disabilities, in a range of areas, including special education, rehabilitation and the making of low cost equipment to promote learning and independence.

#### Some feedback from trainees

**AutismCare Nepal** reported that, following training from an Occupational Therapist in 2013 and 2014, *“our staff can now carry out individual OT assessments, promote skills of functional daily living activities, and understand about sensory diets. This training has taught us about the importance of connecting therapy with the child’s functional living. We continue to share this important message during our trainings and daily work.”*

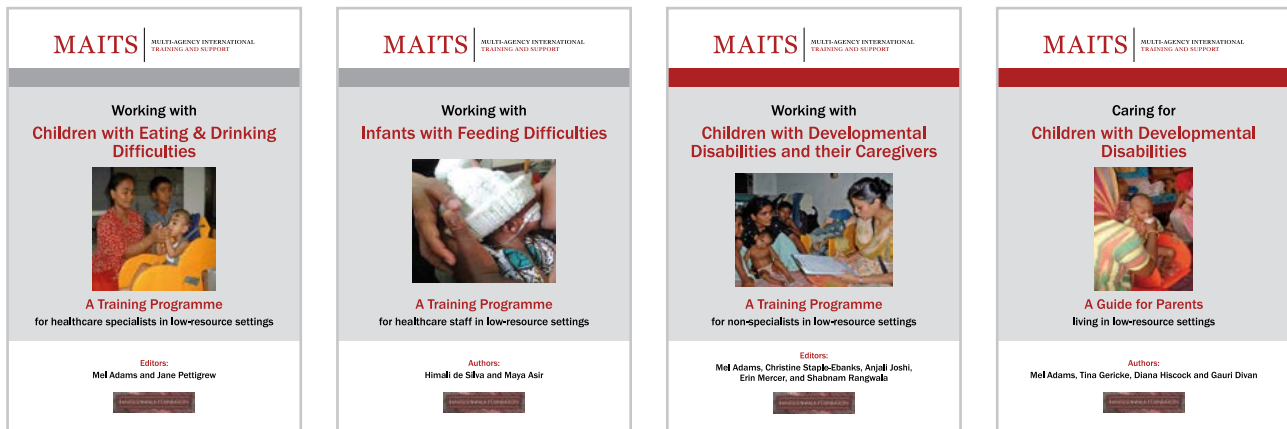
**Staff from the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh**, who received training in making low-cost therapy equipment using paper and cardboard (Appropriate Paper Technology) in 2011, 2014 and 2016 explain how *“Utilising original concept of Appropriate Paper Technology, we have been transforming our skills to produce different, more sophisticated products. Our APT unit staff members therefore are now very much engaged producing furniture for external schools. This is the way we have changed our service.”*

In addition to enhancing existing services, new ones have also been set up, including the first specialist neonatal feeding services in Malawi, Uganda and Sri Lanka, and new low cost equipment workshops in various countries to make bespoke low-cost therapy aids.



### 3.

## Producing training resources



Our training resources have been accessed by more than 200 individuals and organisations in over 40 countries around the world.

There is a lack of resources for trainers and staff working in low and middle income countries on developmental disabilities. MAITS has produced a range of training resources, where there is a gap.

### The focus of our resources

We have infant and child feeding programmes which have a specific focus on the management of feeding difficulties, to enable improved nutrition and better chances of survival in this most vulnerable group, for whom specialist services are rarely available. These resources teach life-saving feeding techniques and strategies to promote ongoing health and development to those caring for babies and children with disabilities at risk of preventable death due to feeding difficulties. We provide simple yet life-saving training to healthcare staff.

Our other resources help staff and parents to support children with disabilities.

All of our resources have been created through a process of writing, peer review, piloting, amending and evaluation.

### Evaluation of our resources

Our Guide on Caring for Children with Developmental Disabilities was evaluated by researchers from Aga Khan University, Karachi, in 2016.

The purpose of the evaluation was to:

- Trial the materials to evaluate their effectiveness in supporting child development, health and wellbeing.
- To evaluate the overall format and content.

It was trialled with a range of professionals working with children with disabilities, including a neurologist, special educators, a psychologist and a speech and language therapist, as well as Community Health Workers and carers in a children's home, to evaluate whether the resource could be used in a setting with a larger group of staff and what adaptations would be needed. It was evaluated by 21 members of staff with 34 children and their caregivers over a six-week period.

The study was extremely informative in terms of the accessibility of the materials to the different professional groups and the effectiveness of the Guide in different contexts. Despite variations in the feedback from different groups, the consensus was that the materials were beneficial and would be an asset to the different services. We went on to adapt the materials so that they are more accessible to a larger group. The Guide will be used in the first training of trainer programmes about to be delivered to Master Trainers from Pakistan and Nepal, who will be rolling it out to Community Health Workers in their own countries in 2018.



## 4.

### Resource library

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MAITS developed a library of training programmes and other resources for parents, community health workers and healthcare staff. We have included our own resources, with experts and also enable others to share their resources. These focus on promoting the health and development of infants and children with developmental disabilities; a population at great risk of neglect, poor quality of life and early death.



# The impact our training has had globally

MAITS' funding has enabled change within the communities we have worked in, to improve and establish courses that will increase the skills of people working with individuals with disabilities.

Some of our achievements include:

- **Supporting the development of the first Speech and Language therapy introductory university course in Cambodia** - MAITS helped to fund a speech and language therapy project organised by City University London, whereby groups of newly qualified therapists travel to Cambodia for periods of 3 months, to work alongside staff in disability units there. After 10 years of the project, an agreement has now been signed with Pannasastra University to run a free 12-week introductory course on Speech and Language therapy to Cambodians, with a view to it becoming the first speech and language degree programme in the country.
- **Backing from Ministry of Health for 3 year ToT programme for Therapeutic Art in Zambia** - Therapeutic Art in Zambia: MAITS trainers have been successful in introducing Therapeutic Art into the curriculum for mental health workers in Zambia. The Ministry of Health and key Mental Health institutions have endorsed the development of a 3 year ToT programme to enable local staff to become the trainers.
- **Accreditation for MAITS programme by Jamaican National Training Agency** - The Ministry of Education in Jamaica has recently acknowledged our local partner, the Nathan Ebanks Foundation, as a centre of excellence for disability in Jamaica, following multiple visits from MAITS' trainers.

The Nathan Ebanks Foundation is now applying for accreditation from The National Training Agency of Jamaica for the MAITS' programme for Community Health Workers. One of the children's homes we worked in has since gone on to employ two of our trainees.

## Long-term implications

In the long-run, a nationally recognised programme for Rehabilitation Aides in Jamaica, and similar programmes in other countries, will save these children from a life of mere existence, cared for by people who don't understand their needs, suffering the consequences of poorly managed disability, and consequent ill-health, lack of independence and well-being. The Rehabilitation Aide model and caregiver training provide these children with the possibility of a healthier, happier life, learning to do things for themselves – not merely surviving but thriving.

## Contribution to international guidelines and resources

MAITS is known for its register of experts and is called on by outside agencies to request expertise to help with the development of international policy documents and other resources. MAITS trainers have contributed to the infant feeding section of the revised WHO IMCI guidelines as well as educational materials used by aid agencies in refugee communities in Syria.



# Case Study

Emily is a recently trained Occupational Therapy Assistant, who took part in our Assisted Paper Technology training in Bangladesh. The training helps those working in Occupational Therapy to produce functional therapeutic and educational equipment using low/no cost materials to support children with disabilities in their therapy sessions and at home.

Emily has gone on to produce therapeutic equipment out of materials like paper and indeed set up her own business with three staff, to help others with disabilities.

Emily was born with a cleft lip and palate. Despite having had an operation, she tells us *"I was not very much accepted in my society, school and friends."* But Emily was determined. In 2007, after meeting with one of our trainers and completing her assistant course in Occupational Therapy at the CRP (*Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed*), Emily decided she wanted to support the inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

Emily discovered a real skill for creating resources to help transform young lives. *"I realised that this the way I wanted to work... She taught me lot of things, but one most important thing that I learned is that nothing is useless if you know how to make it beautiful."*

Emily has come a long way from the young woman who, not too long ago, felt alienated by society. *"Now friends feel proud of this Assistant who can change lives through waste materials."*

Through a MAITS' training programme, Emily found her purpose and used her skills to support other people with disabilities. Emily has successfully turned a simple idea into a venture that has made a real difference to the lives of children in the disability sector in countries with a lower income.









# Annual report 2016-17

# Where we have been and what we have done in 2016 - 2017

24 travel grants were awarded to provide training in 10 different countries.

685 staff were trained, benefitting approximately 43,000 users in this year.

**227** 

Teachers trained to work with children with special needs in Ghana and Cambodia.

**228** 

Mental health professionals in Zambia trained on the use of Therapeutic Art.

**27** 

Staff from disability organisations in India, Sri Lanka and the UK trained to produce low-cost equipment for children disabilities, using Appropriate Paper Technology.

**8** 

Healthcare professionals working with refugee communities in Tibet taught simple physiotherapy techniques.

**44** 

Speech and language therapists from all over South Asia trained in working with children with cleft lip/palate.

**27** 

Rehabilitation staff trained to promote positive care practices in children's homes in Jamaica.

**8** 

Healthcare professionals in Sri Lanka trained to work with infants with feeding difficulties.

**44** 

Healthcare staff in Uganda and Pakistan trained to provide a service to children and adults with feeding difficulties.



# Our programmes

In the year 2016-17, 24 grants have been awarded to enable the training of 685 staff and healthcare trainees working in 10 different countries, in charities, clinics, special schools and university hospitals, benefiting 43,000 service users in this year.

Training topics this year have included the following:

- Supporting children with developmental disabilities at school, in institutional settings and in the home – Jamaica, Cambodia, Ghana, India.
- Working with young children with cleft lip/palate to eat and drink and communicate – Sri Lanka (South Asia conference) and Uganda.
- Simple physiotherapy techniques for staff working in refugee communities - Tibet.
- How to make low cost equipment for children with disabilities – Sri Lanka.
- Higher education speech and language therapy training - Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- The use of Therapeutic Art in working with individuals with mental health challenges – Zambia.
- We also provided grants for therapists to attend training in Sri Lanka on cleft lip and training on assisted paper technology in the UK.

training through the Nathan Ebanks Foundation (a local charity), who then approached MAITS. The staff in these homes had received no training on disability and there was nothing available locally.

In 2015, MAITS conducted a needs assessment with a multi-disciplinary team at a children's home, housing children with complex disabilities. The visiting therapists observed that all of the children lacked postural support and all of them were fed lying flat on their backs on the floor. Five of the children had serious medical conditions warranting emergency treatment: two had been aspirating food into the lungs, two had severe hip dislocation and were in excruciating pain, and one had a shunt in her head that had shifted position. The staff in the home had never had disability and rehabilitation training (just some health training) and were not able to identify these issues.



## Rehabilitation Aide Model of Support

The Nathan Ebanks Foundation decided to bring in rehabilitation aides who would be employed in teams to work alongside the care staff in the children's homes, providing training and support in 6 monthly rotations around the island. A pilot programme funded by the Rangoonwala Foundation and MAITS was set up to evaluate the effectiveness of this model over a 6 month period, the outcomes of which would be used to provide the evidence needed for local funding. Five Rehabilitation Aides (RAs) were recruited by the Nathan Ebanks Foundation and trained by MAITS and then placed in a children's home caring for 82 children with disabilities. In this initial phase, they focused their

## Jamaica case study

### Impact of the Training Programme for the Rehabilitation Aides in Jamaica

In Jamaica, 3000 children are living in children's homes, 1/3 of whom have a disability. In 2015, the Jamaican Child Development Agency, which manages eight children's homes for children with disabilities on behalf of the government of Jamaica, requested disability



input on 20 children in the home who were identified as having the greatest need and their caregivers. The aim was to provide the children with support to minimise the impact of their disabilities on their overall health, improve their everyday living skills and work on their overall mobility. Their role was also to show the caregivers how to do the same.

## Impact of the Rehabilitation Aide (RA) model of support

An initial review of the programme took place after 6 months. In just a few months, the staff could see the children's skills developing – children who had previously not been given the opportunity to do things for themselves. They reported understanding the children better and consequently being more patient with them.

*"The Rehab Aide has caused me to be more patient with the kids and deal with them better."*

*"The RA has help me understand more about kids with disabilities. I have gained knowledge and my confidence has excelled to the point in working with other kids, not just the ones I was taught to work with."*

In addition to increased confidence in working with the children, the RAs the mentioned increased skills in how to position, handle and feed the children.

*"Based on watching the RA work with A and K, I now know how to help them. I've learnt how to address them before feeding or bathing. I know how to help A to feed herself and how to position K."*

The photos below were taken of one the children at lunch, before and after caregiver training from the Rehabilitation Aides, which clearly shows how she is being allowed to feed herself more independently and the positioning is better.

*"I've seen RA's transforming kids from using the wheelchair, to holding on and moving around. I now understand how to manage them. I have stopped using*

### Before



### After



*the wheelchair and have started holding the child by the hand and walking her to the bedroom or bathroom."*

The staff admitted they hadn't realised what the children could learn to do for themselves.

*"I now realise that despite the severity of the disability the child has, they can learn."*

*"Kids whom I thought would never function independently are now feeding themselves."*

The senior Rehabilitation Aide talked about the positive health outcomes she had observed since working at the children's home. In her follow-up interview she reported the following:

*"The programme has been very beneficial for the children. ....But since the Rehab Aides are here, they pass the information onto the caregivers on how to position and handle the children, hence there is a decline in visits to the hospital".*

She also talked about a change in the level of responsiveness of the children towards them, which

she attributed to the fact that they knew that the Aides would help them to do more things by themselves.

Kemar is 14 years old. He has moderate cerebral palsy and severe learning disabilities. His caregiver reported the following: “After seen the Rehab Aid working with Kemar, communicating with him, his behaviour has changed and I feel confident working with him.”

She explained that he used to receive total support for all of his needs and did not socialise. Since the Rehab Aides have been working with him and the staff in his residence, he has become more communicative, more sociable and more independent. He is now communicating when he needs to go to the bathroom, he has lunch with everyone else rather than alone in his residence, and he likes to stay closer by to everyone during that day rather than wandering off on his own.

manage their disabilities. This means they are less likely to suffer from ill-health and will gain greater independence and have a better sense of wellbeing. The Rehabilitation Aide model and caregiver training provide these children with the possibility of a healthier, happier life, learning to do things for themselves – not merely surviving but thriving.

Indeed the techniques used in the training can be applied to a range of different settings and it is being used to develop a Community Health Worker model which is being run from late 2017.

## **Wider benefits**

This learning from this project has enabled us to develop a 10 day course which can be used to train workers globally. The Nathan Ebanks Foundation is currently working on securing funding for the continuation of the programme for another two years, after which they will apply for accreditation for the training from The National Training Agency of Jamaica. West Haven Children’s Home is so happy with the input that they have subsequently employed two of the RAs as part-time members of staff.

Since receiving visits from MAITS trainers, The Nathan Ebanks Foundation has been publicly declared by the Minister of Education as the national bridge for capacity development for those serving children with disabilities.

## **Long-term implications**

In the long-run, a nationally recognised programme for Rehabilitation Aides in Jamaica will ensure that children with disabilities are cared for by people who understand their needs and know how to

# Capacity-building activities in 2016-17

## Communication training in Cambodia

MAITS supported a speech and language therapist (SLT) to spend 3 months in Cambodia, working with other volunteer therapists, to design and run a training module on communication training for teachers and parents, as part of a project being run by the Cambodian Consortium for Out of School Children. Over the course of the project, the organisation aims to enroll 4,000 children that are out of school due to disability. It will receive ongoing input from SLTs volunteering through the City University Cambodia project, which MAITS has supported over the years, so teachers and parents can support children to access education. MAITS has already been able to share this programme with MAITS trainers working in other parts of the world.

## Inclusive Education in Ghana

MAITS has an ongoing relationship with CLED Ghana, a local NGO which promotes the rights of children with special needs to an education. They asked us to provide an occupational therapist who delivered training to 129 teachers as well as to occupational therapy students and parents on techniques to assist children with learning disabilities to access education. Some of the training was co-facilitated by CLED's director who will continue to share these skills with staff locally. The MAITS trainer also instigated weekly parent sessions, which are hosted by CLED. The trainer continues to offer remote support and is encouraging CLED to reach out further into their communities and to organise more training.

## Feeding training in Sri Lanka

In November, MAITS' infant feeding specialists piloted the life-saving infant feeding training that we developed in Malawi and Uganda (see impact report). The training was delivered in 5 locations around the island, training 99 neonatal staff and was very well received. Video footage of the practical sessions was collected to bring to life how the training can work.

## Physiotherapy for Tibetan Communities

A MAITS trainer travelled to Dharamsahala, India, on behalf of a charity called Developing Physio, to provide training to two Tibetan physiotherapists so they could provide training to local communities in Tibetan settlements around India who are unable to access rehabilitation. The trainer used interactive picture slides to practice diagnosis and treatment planning. The aim was for the local physiotherapists to gain the skills to train onward training to local communities in basic physiotherapy techniques. Meetings were also held with government officials to look at improving access to services for the Tibetan community locally. The training was successful and the Tibetan therapists are now equipped to pass on their knowledge to others locally.

## Appropriate Paper-based Technology in Sri Lanka and India

Appropriate paper-based technology is an innovative technique to make low-cost equipment for therapy, particularly for children with cerebral palsy. Equipment can be made out of recycled paper and cardboard and is incredibly sturdy and yet more pliable than wood. It can be used to make tailor-made chairs and tables which meet the needs of people with disabilities, as well as equipment for use in rehabilitation sessions.



Two MAITS trainers provided training in Sri Lanka on Appropriate Paper-based Technology (APT), organised by the Cerebral Palsy Lanka Foundation, so that other professionals located around Sri Lanka could learn how to produce and train others in the making of low-cost environmentally friendly equipment.

The trainers said *"The participants initially said they needed our ideas, but towards the end of the course they began to initiate ideas."* The students discussed how they would train other staff and parents in APT and were provided with a starter pack to take back to their organisations with the basic tools required to make the equipment.

A MAITS physiotherapist provided APT training in Mumbai, for staff of the National Association of the Blind (NAB) who provide services to disabled children all over the country. MAITS had part-funded this therapist to receive her APT training in the UK in order to share her skills in India. She is in regular contact with NAB and returns every year and has created a WhatsApp group to enable peer support trainer follow-up and, over time, aims to help to NAB in setting up their own APT workshops, rolling out the training to other organisations in future.



## Higher education speech and language therapy training Pakistan

MAITS' funding enabled two speech and language therapists originally from Pakistan to provide training to speech and language therapists students on the bachelor programme at Ziauddin University in Karachi, including on the management of feeding difficulties.

## Art Therapy in Zambia

Two trainers in art therapy have been training professionals in Zambia since 2011. Over multiple visits, with the support of MAITS, they have developed a training programme which has the backing of the Ministry of Health. It has already been delivered to a range of professionals including nurses, occupational therapists, police officers, social workers and students in mental health. Their training has been very well received over the years. Trainees' comments illustrate the impact on clinical practice:

*"I now let things come from the patient; I listen and give time." "I can see hidden things emerge through non-verbal as well as verbal communications."*

On our most recent trip, in January 2016, the trainers began planning the implementation of a Training of Trainers programme which has local backing.





*difficulties] was easily taught and understood. Waiting for the next time with you."*

Since completing the programme, the MAITS trainers have set up a closed-forum Facebook page for the trainees, to enable peer and trainer support and sharing of resources. The trainers have also advised the local hospital on the development of their feeding services and they are planning to set up a system of informal supervision with NHS colleagues, in the form of a buddy system. They intend to return to provide follow-up next year.



MAITS' speech and language therapists provided a 5-day training programme to members of the newly formed Speech and Language Therapy Association and other healthcare and education staff working with feeding difficulties. The trainers used the MAITS training package *"Working with Children with Feeding Difficulties"* which had been designed in South Asia, and adapted for the East African setting.

## Feeding training for speech and language therapists in Uganda

*"It was a great opportunity for me to attend this training, I have learnt a lot and looking forward to train others on some of the things I have learnt this week."*

*"The practical activities and videos were really interesting and made it easier to understand...." "Dysphagia [feeding*

## Launch of the South Asia Regional Cleft Network and 1st National Conference on Cleft Lip and Palate in Sri Lanka.

Three MAITS' trainers helped initiate the South Asia Regional Cleft Network and facilitate the first National Conference on Cleft Lip and Palate in Sri Lanka. They also provided training sessions on feeding difficulties in relation to cleft lip/palate and shared the plans to develop a MAITS package on infant feeding. Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) from across South Asia, including those working in government hospital settings, the private sector, universities, and SLT associations, attended the conference, three of whom were funded by MAITS. The conference was well received and plans were made for further training in cleft centres across the region.

One Facebook post read: *"5 nationalities on a single mission! I have yet to meet a group of such enthusiastic SLTs, so passionate about the profession!"*





# MAITS' volunteers

MAITS has trained 4700 staff through our team of qualified volunteers since 2011. Our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds and are mainly healthcare and education professionals who work in the disability or mainstream sectors, who contribute their time without charge, to provide training and capacity building to a range of staff all over the world.

Our volunteers undertake a range of assignments overseas as well as work developing resources and supporting our work in the UK. All of our volunteers are professionals with four years post-qualification experience and experience in developing countries and a previous background in training.

We enable short-term volunteering opportunities that are more accessible to professionals that are established in their field to volunteer their time, without needing to take a career break. This is more sustainable for the organisations we support as we are building the skills of local people, rather than sending in new people who will then leave taking their skills with them. Many of our volunteers establish long-term relationships with the organisations they work with and we promote links between volunteers from all over the world, particularly skill sharing in the global south. We welcome applications from professionals wishing to volunteer with us.

As well as the benefits to the individuals and organisations that receive training, the work that volunteers do at MAITS can be very beneficial to the volunteers themselves, both personally and professionally.

Himali and Maya who are infant feeding specialists, have volunteered many times for MAITS and as part of this voluntary work, MAITS asked them to develop a training package which can save the lives of premature babies in low income countries and can be delivered in neo-natal services globally.



The training resource was developed in Malawi and trialled in Uganda and Sri Lanka, with follow-up visits. The voluntary work has led onto requests for led to paid consultancy work and inspired Himali to apply for a PhD. As Himali acknowledges:

*"MAITS has also continually promoted our work among various sectors, both academic and charity-based, which sometimes has led to some paid consultancies. They encourage us to think beyond providing training, and consider broader options such as research opportunities including applying for PhDs to validate the tools we have developed and evaluate the training. We both have many years of experience working with infants with feeding disabilities and are committed clinicians and trainers. However, it is only through working with MAITS that we have been able to extend that work beyond the immediate. MAITS has helped us focus on the long-term impact of the work we undertake and consider the possibility of working towards practices and policies at a global level. We are grateful for MAITS continuing to support us."*

If you are interested in volunteering for MAITS, please contact us at [info@maits.org.uk](mailto:info@maits.org.uk)

# What next?

## Challenges

- Funding in the non-profit sector is increasingly competitive and MAITS' expansion comes at a time where a lot of organisations are applying for the same funding pots.
- In the disability sector, there is a much greater emphasis on physical, rather than developmental disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy and global learning delay.

During the coming year, we will raise our profile with a range of different donors and raise awareness of MAITS' achievements and impact.

We will also work with other organisations to raise awareness of developmental disabilities and the importance of making sure that the specific needs of people affected by neuro-developmental disabilities are included in health, education and development programmes and strategies in the international context.

## Opportunities

Disability is an increasing priority in the development sector, with the introduction of disability into the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Leave No-one Behind Agenda. However, funding for development is increasingly competitive and with the Grand Bargain, there is a greater commitment than ever to gear funding towards and improve the capacity of local NGOs and partners. MAITS' emphasis has been on building the capacity of local partners in the field and responding to need, as identified by local partners. MAITS places a strong emphasis on the bringing about positive change in communities, led by those communities and that is why our work has a sustainable impact.

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## Priorities

### Work priorities

- Develop Trainer of Trainer projects on disability training for community health workers and infant feeding projects in South Asia and Africa.
- Pilot and evaluate trainer of trainer projects, so that projects can be driven by the local population.
- Continue to respond to needs' led requests for training, by matching organisations wanting training, with volunteers and specialist trainers who can provide it.

### Strategic priorities

- Develop as an organisation, expanding our programmes.
- Develop as an efficient, transparent, needs led organisation which focuses on sustainable projects driven by local people.
- Diversify our funding so that we can expand our programmes.
- Develop our Communications and Marketing Strategy.

MAITS' approach is to prioritise:

1. Improved access to and quality of health, disability, education and early intervention services.
2. Building the capacity of local communities to lead change from within.
3. Ensuring the most marginalised families are able to access support.

### **We achieve this by increasing impact through:**

- Building the capacity of local professionals in a way that is sustainable, through the development and rolling out of Trainer of Trainer courses based on MAITS' packages, working through local master trainers.
- Our global grants programmes respond to local requests for capacity building training.
- Local partnerships are a key priority within our strategy and we want to move towards ensuring that there is buy-in for the MAITS' model at a strategic level wherever we work.

Therefore, we will be prioritising working with Ministries of Health and Education, local authorities, universities and academic institutions (both in the UK and overseas) as we want to ensure the MAITS model is embedded within local structures to ensure it has the maximum impact. We will work through partnerships with local and international NGOs, local schools, health and disability services. We place strong emphasis on working with families and children with disabilities as they are at the heart of everything we do.

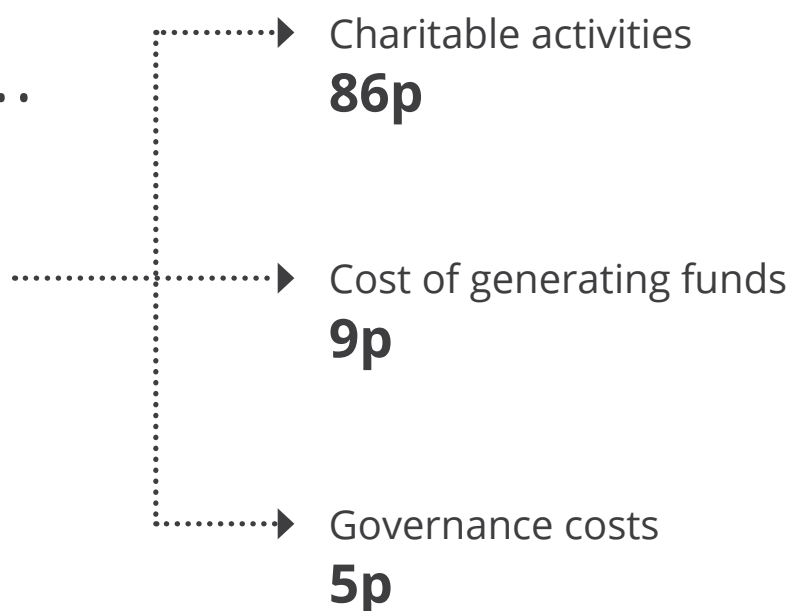
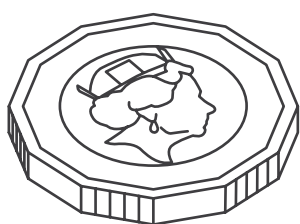
### **Our operational priorities**

- Further developing our programmes.
- Diversifying funding.
- Increasing our external profile and improving our Comms and Marketing, including developing our website.
- Strengthening our social impact assessment.

# Our finances

Year Ending	July 2014 to June 2015	July 2015 to June 2016	July 2016 to June 2017
Cost of generating funds			£11,017.53
Cost of charitable activities	£91,732.00	£89,323.00	£106,258.87
Governance Cost	£10,352.00	£6,110.00	£6,288.31
Total Expenditure	£102,084.00	£95,433.00	£123,564.71

For every  
**£1** spent...



# How MAITS represents value for money

MAITS is committed to the importance of Value for Money, which is vital in ensuring that funding provided our donors is spent in a way that is accountable and that enables us to ensure that each pound is maximised to make the most difference to the lives of those we are seeking to serve. We take the responsibility of ensuring we are accountable for any funding awarded very seriously.

At MAITS, we view Value for Money in the broader sense of making a long-term difference to both individuals and the systems within the countries we work in and a key focus of our work is not just to provide training, but also to work closely with local counterparts from national and local government, to grass-roots level to build capacity and create change within communities. We do this by building skills and working within local structures so that local healthcare, education services and NGOs are better equipped to respond long-term development of the local healthcare system independently.

These are the key ways in which MAITS represents value for money:

## Economy

**MAITS runs almost entirely on volunteers** – We have trained 4700 staff predominantly through volunteers since 2011. This represents significant efficiencies saved in salary costs, but more than this, we see this as a long-term approach, rather than flying in staff who will take their expertise with them when they leave we are increasingly working to train local teams of professionals, who can then roll out training within their communities, therefore reducing costs. Our approach is designed this way to maximise the benefit to the local community.

**Working with local organisations in the global south** - Our volunteers come from all over the world and many train within their own regions in the global south. When we use volunteers from developed countries, it is to provide skills that are not locally available. Our volunteers do receive a modest contribution towards the costs of providing the training

and they do cover some of the costs themselves too. To further reduce costs, they do often stay in accommodation provided by the host organisation. We also provide modest contributions to enable people to attend training and the host organisation will often support with the logistics.

## Efficiency

**Capturing lessons learned** – MAITS uses the lessons learned to develop more effective systems and programmes – our website shows our skill-sharing activities and promotes much-needed access to information. This is provided through our online resource library that enables disability professionals and carers to access materials that can support them to provide the best quality of care and education for those disabilities. We hold evaluations on some of our resources and materials and adapt both materials and approaches to reflect what we have learnt. For example, we moved increasingly towards a Trainer of Trainer approach enabling the upskilling of local professionals who can train others in their communities. We also maintain a resource library that enables other professionals, community workers and those caring for people with disabilities to access materials that can support them to provide the best quality of care and education for those with disabilities.

## Effectiveness

**Providing experience and expertise in the disability sector** – MAITS was established in 2008 and all of our volunteers and contractors have at least 4 years post-qualification experience, a background in developing countries and training or teaching experience. This means we can offer expertise and we have a very strong focus on ensuring that our work is sustainable, both in terms of the difference made to the lives of the individuals we work with, but also in terms of bringing about long-term changes in the contexts we work in.

**Our focus is on health care, education and building local capacity** - We achieve this by working wherever possible with local academic institutions, ministries



of health or local government and local NGOS for the future to ensure better quality provision and better access to services for more vulnerable groups.

We monitor our products and services through rigorous evaluation activities, and modify them as required, to ensure that our training resources, programme and approaches are as effective as possible.

## Equity

**A strong commitment to some of the most vulnerable members of society** – People with disabilities are the world's largest minority and face stigma and discrimination. Our work improves access to and quality of healthcare and education for individuals with disabilities but also improves independence skills and increases awareness of issues faced by those with disabilities by professionals and carers. This impacts on their long-term outcomes and potential both in terms of accessing services but also participating in society.

**Do no harm** - Across all our approaches we ensure we follow the 'do no harm' principle in terms of the target community especially vulnerable groups.

## Cost effectiveness

**Contributions in kind** - MAITS has benefitted from significant contributions in-kind, which means that our governance costs are only 5.9%. We have generous donations of office space, IT support and utilities.

**Pro-bono/volunteer services** – MAITS has benefitted from significant pro-bono and volunteer services. As well as the volunteer trainers who provide the backbone of our work, we have also received pro-bono legal support, pro-bono graphic design work (including for this report), advice on measuring impact, video-editing for training materials. We have also received support from interns on evaluation, fundraising, comms.

**Low cost support** – We always negotiate for charity rates and source the best value quotes

Our work focuses on improving and building the skills of local professionals and carers to ensure a more equitable society.

# How you can support MAITS' work

- **Become a volunteer trainer** – if you are interested in becoming a volunteer trainer and are a healthcare or education professional with 4 years' experience and experience in a developing country, get in touch via <http://www.maits.org.uk/register/> or contact us via [info@maits.org.uk](mailto:info@maits.org.uk)
- **Pro-bono work** – MAITS has received generous pro-bono support including from law firms and graphic design companies, as well as for office space.
- **For other volunteering opportunities**, whether for fundraising, comms or other please get in touch.
- **Donate** by sending a cheque to our office in Wimpole Street or online at <https://www.justgiving.com/m-a-i-t-s> or get in contact to set up a direct debit.
- **Company giving and Trusts and Foundations** – please get in touch with our CEO, Esther Hamilton on 0207 258 8443

## Acknowledgements

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The Funding Network



Report designed by  
Andrea Cristofaro





**MAITS**

86/87 Wimpole Street  
London  
W1G 9RL

+44 20 7258 8443

Charity number 1126268  
Company number 06695839

[info@maits.org.uk](mailto:info@maits.org.uk)  
[www.maits.org.uk](http://www.maits.org.uk)  
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