

## **Developing an Occupational Therapy Curriculum for Zambia - a collaborative process**

Marianne Olsen<sup>1</sup>, Angela Wilson<sup>2</sup>, Judith Beeson<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø, Norway*, <sup>2</sup>*Canterbury Christ Church University, Kent, UK*, <sup>3</sup>*Leeds Mental health Trust, Leeds, UK*

**Rationale:** Occupational therapy services have existed in Zambia since the 1970's but no in-country occupational therapy training programme had been developed. In 2011 a decision was taken to develop an OT training programme for Zambia. This paper highlights the drivers and group dynamics contributing to the creation of a working partnership delivering a credible OT curriculum for Zambia.

**Objectives:** To explore the working relationships that allowed for the creation of a culturally relevant OT curriculum.

To identify the drivers of the process of working together in partnership.

To acknowledge the multiple challenges and group dynamics that frustrated, and provided impetus to, progress.

**Approach:** A reflective approach was used. Individual perspectives and the complete process were considered and challenged through regular discussions including meetings, skype, email and on-going reflection.

**Practical Implications:** Four aspects were identified as important for the working partnership:

- - Just get started, the situation will never be right
- - Resourcefulness
- - Doing with, not doing for
- - Being resources, not experts.

Key drivers identified include: personal qualities, personal engagement, motivation, adaptability and perseverance together with a collaborative attitude and informal relationships.

**Conclusion:** The experience of developing a curriculum together built a feeling of sustainability and capability that could not have been accomplished by an individual working alone. There is an African proverb 'if you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far, go together. This has been our experience.