

## COMMACT International Solidarity Partnership update

As part of their existing partnership ON-Q Human Resources Ltd (ON-Q) sponsored two delegates from Patan Community Based Rehabilitation Organization (Patan CBR) in Nepal to attend the 2008 COMMACT International Conference in Brisbane, Australia.

Patan CBR provides support to children with a disability and their families by offering a range of services such as a small school, a daycare facility for children with multiple disabilities, home visit to remote villages and disability awareness training in the community.

Since 2006, ON-Q has purchased a small bus to assist with the transportation of children with a disability to the school and daycare facility, provided funding for staff wages and purchased 12 wheelchairs for the children. Many ON-Q staff also contribute a small amount from their salaries to provide other resources that will assist Patan CBR to provide quality support to people with a disability. Additional funding for support projects is drawn from an Innovative Projects Fund established by the ON-Q Board of Directors.

In 2007, ON-Q sent two staff members to Nepal to work with the staff at Patan CBR in order to transfer skills. The staff members assisted Patan to develop an organizational structure and clarify staff roles. This process has assisted Patan CBR to run more efficiently. In addition, the staff were able to identify areas of need and future support requirements.

The 2008 COMMACT International Conference provided both ON-Q and Patan CBR with the opportunity to renew their partnership and to learn about successful partnerships in other regions of the world. Following the conference the delegates from Patan CBR attended workshops at some of ON-Q's offices, interacted with ON-Q staff and clients and visited similar organizations such as the Biala Special School (Ballina, NSW) and the Endeavour Foundation (Miami, Qld). During their stay, the delegates from Patan CBR also had an opportunity to experience the Australian culture by visiting Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, spending a day seeing the sights in Brisbane and exploring Kirra Beach near their accommodation.

From this skills share experience a project plan and clear action plan was developed outlining the funding and accountability for the next two years of the partnership. In 2009, ON-Q intends to send another delegation to Nepal to further the skills transfer between the two organisations.