

Free Wheelchair Mission®
TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH THE GIFT OF MOBILITY

TRANSFORM A LIFE...



“...and when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will break out in thanksgiving to God.”

– 2 Corinthians 9:11

● **Felicity, age 42, South Africa**

“I could never play as a kid. I had to rely on my mom to get around, but now I can do all that I’ve missed. I never dreamed of owning my own wheelchair as it is an expensive item – far too expensive for our family to afford. Thank you very much – God bless you and this must not be the end – please continue to bless others.”

● **Guadalupe, age 75, Nicaragua**

“I am very grateful for the wheelchair from Free Wheelchair Mission because now, most importantly, I will be able to go to church and the hospital, as well as move around the house. I have not been able to leave this room, have no money, and so my daughters and I are always looking for ways to survive. My only income is that from selling nacatamales, and social security payments I receive. I thank God and these organizations for helping me, God bless you for performing these great acts.”

● **Trung, age 43, Viet Nam**

“When I was small, my parents occasionally took me outside. But as I got older, it became more difficult. Imagine a big man being carried by his parents or his wife in public places? Why would I want people to see me like that?”

● **Jennifer, age 22, Uganda**

“My name is Jennifer. I am married with 6 children and I am 22 years old. When I was young, I had polio and it caused my legs to weaken. I had never used a wheelchair in my life until today. I learned how to tie my babies on my back and crawl to any place. I had a hard time doing that because the stones scratch my knees and hands and cause wounds. On the days when it was muddy I would still crawl in the mud. I am so happy that I have received a wheelchair because I now do not have to worry about the stones and rainy seasons. This will save my legs. This wheelchair will also help me go to church. I want to thank you all very much for the wheelchair. God bless you.”

Free Wheelchair Mission | Board of Directors

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
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Mission and Vision

Our mission is to provide the transforming gift of mobility to the physically disabled poor in developing countries, as motivated by Jesus Christ.



Our vision is to provide 20 million wheelchairs.

Greetings!

As I reminisce back upon the year, I cannot help but think of the recognition Free Wheelchair Mission received last March. On a beautiful spring morning in Washington D.C., I was presented with the “Above and Beyond Award” by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. I had the chance to represent you, our loyal supporters, at Arlington National Cemetery and on the NBC national news. My wife, Laurie, and I spent the day with 34 Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, our nation’s dearest heroes. They know the devastations of war. They know the need for wheelchairs in countries we serve, like Iraq, Afghanistan and Viet Nam. I was your representative, and this was your award. You made it possible. You are my heroes!



Fiscal year 2008 was a time of many sterling accomplishments. We were able to give away more wheelchairs than ever. In addition to private donations, much of our funding came from our three major campaigns – Run for Mobility, Mobility in Motion and our annual Christmas campaign. We continued to be blessed with success in our major summer event, the Magic of Mobility dinner celebration. We received a major USAID grant from our own federal government. The generous contribution base this year allowed us to add 11 countries to those we already serve, and to ship an additional 105,050 wheelchairs in fiscal year 2008 alone, bringing our total to over 300,000.

It was a very good year to send the transforming gift of mobility around the world. We are ever blessed by your support, and we thank you for sharing this journey.

God bless,

Don Schoendorfer

Don Schoendorfer

For me, the highlight of the year and of any of the past seven years was giving away wheelchairs. In November, we met Huong from Viet Nam. There was no shortage of love in her family. This charismatic young lady looked forward to her birthday, the one day she was taken outside. It was just too difficult for her parents to do more. Did she ever smile, after that first full day enjoying her new wheels! Now, Huong has the chance to go out every day! This is why we are here – that Huong can enjoy the fresh air and feel the sun on her face and have a reason to smile – this is the blessing.



The Journey of a Wheelchair

Free Wheelchair Mission is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to providing wheelchairs for the impoverished disabled in developing nations. Working in partnership with a network of humanitarian, faith-based and government organizations, FWM has sent wheelchairs to hundreds of thousands of people around the world, providing not only the gift of mobility, but of *dignity, independence, and hope.*

The Story

Years ago in Morocco, a man and his wife witnessed the plight of a disabled woman struggling to drag herself across a busy thoroughfare. Unable to forget the scene, the man would eventually walk away from a successful career in biomedical research and development, retreat to the basement, and develop an inexpensive and durable wheelchair. His unique design would grow into a humanitarian organization which by the end of fiscal year 2008 would distribute over 300,000 life-changing devices to underserved regions around the world.

The man is Don Schoendorfer. The organization is the Free Wheelchair Mission. And, in March of 2008, Dr. Schoendorfer was presented the "Above and Beyond Award" by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society for his work among the disabled poor, one of only three civilians ever to receive this accolade.

The Need

Hundreds of millions of people in developing nations struggle with a variety of disabilities. Disease and lack of access to immunization, injury and the inaccessibility of health care, birth defects, land mines – disability has a variety of contributing factors but one of the most powerful links is the relationship between poverty and disability. Poverty causes disability through dangerous living conditions, lack of health care and malnutrition. Disability creates poverty when it excludes the disabled from full participation in the economic and social aspects of community. It is unfortunately true that on a global scale, disabled people are vastly more likely to be impoverished than their physically healthy brethren.

For the tens of millions worldwide suffering with a walking disability and unable to afford a wheelchair, the future may be one of struggle, restriction and dependency. Subjected to danger, disease and hopelessness, the physically disabled must often crawl on the ground or wait to be carried to reach their most basic of needs. Their families strain to care for their loved one within an already overburdened existence.

In the United States the majority of disabled people who need a wheelchair will find a way to receive one, even in the face of scarcity of resources or trials of circumstance.

For the disabled impoverished in underserved regions around the world, a wheelchair may be a dream far beyond their wildest imagination.

The Chair

The FWM wheelchair was developed for use in the rugged terrain of rural and under-resourced areas. It combines the durability of a resin lawn chair with the strength of a custom steel frame, all tucked into a sturdy pair of mountain bike tires. Each chair costs just **\$51.29** to manufacture and deliver, and is provided at absolutely no cost to the recipient.

How FWM Works

Free Wheelchair Mission utilizes an organizational model that leverages development and support efforts alongside an extremely economical design and a vast network of manufacturing, shipping and distribution partners – the resulting system stretches donor dollars and maximizes beneficial impact on a global scale.



Step One | Stateside

1



Wheelchairs begin their journey stateside, in the planning and development of Free Wheelchair Mission's extensive fundraising efforts.

In addition to direct donor support, individual fundraising efforts, foundation assistance, government grants and FWM events are vital to funding on-going program expenses.

Step Two | Factory – Shanghai, China

2



Two factories in Shanghai, China, manufacture the wheelchairs to the exact FWM specifications.

The chairs are stacked and the accompanying parts are boxed for transportation.

Step Three | Loading – Shanghai, China

3



At the factories, shipping containers are loaded. Each container holds a total of 550 wheelchair kits,

along with cushions, hand pumps, patch kits and assorted hardware.

Step Four | Transporting – Port of Shanghai

4



The containers are then trucked from the factory to the port of Shanghai where they are loaded on freighter ships and

transported to their country of destination.

Step Seven | Distribution Ceremony

7



Wheelchairs are distributed at ceremonies, large or small, or are distributed individually as needed.

The partner organization records and photographs the distribution process and sends reports back to FWM headquarters.

Step Six | Unload and Assemble

6



Local workers and volunteers unload the container and assemble the wheelchairs. Working with local government,

charitable, church and medical authorities, the distribution partner establishes guidelines for recipients, working to verify need and locate appropriate beneficiaries.

Step Five | Port Destination – Customs

5



Upon reaching the port destination, the qualified, in-country distribution partner working with FWM meets

the container at the dock. The partner organization works with local authorities to clear customs, then arranges for the container to be transported to the site for distribution.

YOUR GENEROSITY HAS IMPACTED THE WORLD

Juan | Nicaragua



Juan is 37 years old, a humble and hard-working man. A coffee harvester from the state of Matagalpa, Juan fell out of a tree and damaged his spinal chord, causing both legs to become paralyzed.

"In the hospital, they told my wife and me that an operation would cost 300 dollars but we could not afford it," Juan said. "They sent us away but we did not have enough money for bus fare. My wife had to beg on the street just to get us home."

After his accident, Juan could not find work and struggled to feed his family. In receiving his wheelchair from FWM's distribution partner, the America Nicaragua Foundation,

Juan has renewed hope and faith in the future.

"I thank Free Wheelchair Mission and ANF, who are compassionate and make the effort to help the poor and disabled like me," said Juan. "I can go to church and visit my mom, and I can go to the health center to see the doctor. Most important, I know I will be able to find a job and take care of my family."

Zhao | China



Zhao is a 35-year-old man from Datong City in the Shanxi Province of China. He lost his legs in an accident 15 years ago. "The only way I could move around was to ask my parents to carry me on their backs," he said. "For 15 years now I have been dreaming of walking out of my house on my own and enjoying life as every one else does."

When the China Disabled Peoples Federation, an FWM distribution partner, arranged for Zhao to receive a wheelchair, his dream of independence came true. "From now on, I can walk about in my new wheelchair," Zhao said. "I feel like I am a member of society again. I will never be isolated from the outside world." "I will never be lonely again. Never!"

Vinci | India



Vinci was like any child until the age of nine. When she was stricken with polio, both legs were paralyzed and she was unable to walk. Her parents refused to give up and insisted she continue her education, carrying her to school and home as she had no wheelchair. She completed high school and entered college, earning a degree in Economics. Vinci heard about Free Wheelchair Mission through Sathyam Ministries. She applied and received her wheelchair on Christmas day.

"Now I can move around, going from room to room without crawling on the floor," Vinci said. "I really enjoy going out in the evening and wheeling around the courtyard!" Vinci is so thankful, telling every body about the gift she got from Free Wheelchair Mission.

"I used to doubt God's love toward me," said Vinci, "and I felt that I was beginning to back away from my faith. But after last Christmas I began to walk closer to the Lord, praising and thanking Him for His dealings in my life."

Doan | Viet Nam



Doan's parents are poor farmers. They live in Binh Dinh Province. "When my mom was pregnant with me, she had a traffic accident and it affected my development in the womb. I have been in a paralytic situation since I was born."

Doan has been paralyzed for 14 years so she just stays at home. Despite her less-fortunate fate, she has never given up the dream of finishing her studies. She has wished to have a wheelchair to go to school everyday and to go out with her friends. "It will be easier for me to go out with this wheelchair. I can roll around by myself without anyone helping me. Before I get the wheelchair I must crawl to anywhere I want to go. It makes my hands and knees painful; and my clothes dirty. But now, without crawling, I can go out. I feel so happy! I don't know what I should say right now. I want to thank the donors and FWM for the wheelchair. I hope that you will pay more attention to those who have the same situation as me."

Doris | Chile



The town of Melipeuco is located along the border of Argentina, near the foot of the Andes. It was at a distribution ceremony here that FWM partners Steven and Grace Colon met 45-year-old Doris.

"Doris broke our hearts," said Steven. Diabetes left her blind and unable to walk, and her husband abandoned the family, leaving her to provide for their four children. She lives in a tiny house, without even a bathroom.

"Doris was so happy and grateful after receiving her wheelchair," said Steven. "She stayed and stayed at the ceremony, thanking God for this miracle." He added, "The further you go into the country, the more you see the need."

Zibukwake | South Africa



Zibukwake is a 52-year-old woman from Soweto, Johannesburg. She lost the use of her legs due to a stroke eight years ago. "What I miss the most about walking is just not being able to do everything normal people do," she said. "I miss socializing with my friends and family."

Before receiving a wheelchair from Free Wheelchair Mission, Zibukwake used to have to crawl to leave her home. She is most excited now about being independent.

"I am very grateful and wish the sponsors of this gift all the best," she said. "My family will be so happy that they can push me around instead of carrying me or watch me crawl."

Wheelchair Distribution
350,733*
 * AS OF NOVEMBER 27, 2008

Free Wheelchair Mission | Financial Overview Fiscal Year 2008

Balance Sheet

	March 31 st	
	2008	2007
Assets		
Total Current Assets	\$1,073,186	\$1,162,814
Other Assets	\$52,459	\$123,481
Total Assets	\$1,125,645	\$1,286,295
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	\$343,101	\$303,904
Accrued Expenses	\$28,274	\$23,808
Deferred Revenue	\$279,788	-
Total Liabilities	\$651,163	\$327,712
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted – undesignated	\$312,851	\$601,809
Temporarily restricted	\$161,631	\$356,774
Total Net Assets	\$474,482	\$958,583
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,125,645	\$1,286,295

Income Statement

	March 31 st	
	2008	2007
Support and Revenue		
Contributions	\$5,465,775	\$5,345,045
Event Ticket Sales	\$11,876	\$33,158
Other Revenue	\$64,699	-
Total Support and Revenue	\$5,542,350	\$5,378,203
Expenses		
Program Services	\$4,691,470	\$3,537,733
General and Administrative	\$424,247	\$272,674
Fundraising	\$910,734	\$1,276,084
Total Expenses	\$6,026,451	\$5,086,491
Change in Net Assets	(\$484,101)	\$291,712
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$958,583	\$666,871
Net Assets, End of Year	\$474,482	\$958,583

Free Wheelchair Mission | Fiscal Year 2008 Expenses

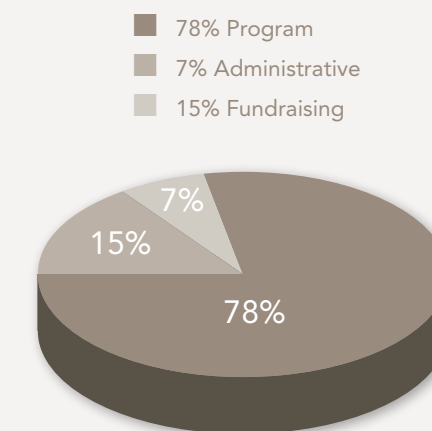
Fiscal year 2008 marked another 365 days of growth, change and success as Free Wheelchair Mission continued in its quest to send the “transforming gift of mobility” around the world. This year alone, Free Wheelchair Mission shipped a total of 105,050 wheelchairs – that’s 12 wheelchairs an hour, every hour of every day. By the end of fiscal year 2008, FWM had shipped over 300,000 wheelchairs since its inception in 2001.

Forty-nine countries received wheelchairs; eleven of these were first-time recipient nations, including Cameroon, Columbia, Comoros, Cuba, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Senegal and Thailand. Their unique distribution model of partnering with established organizations already working in-country continues to allow FWM to reach some of the most remote, impoverished areas of the globe.

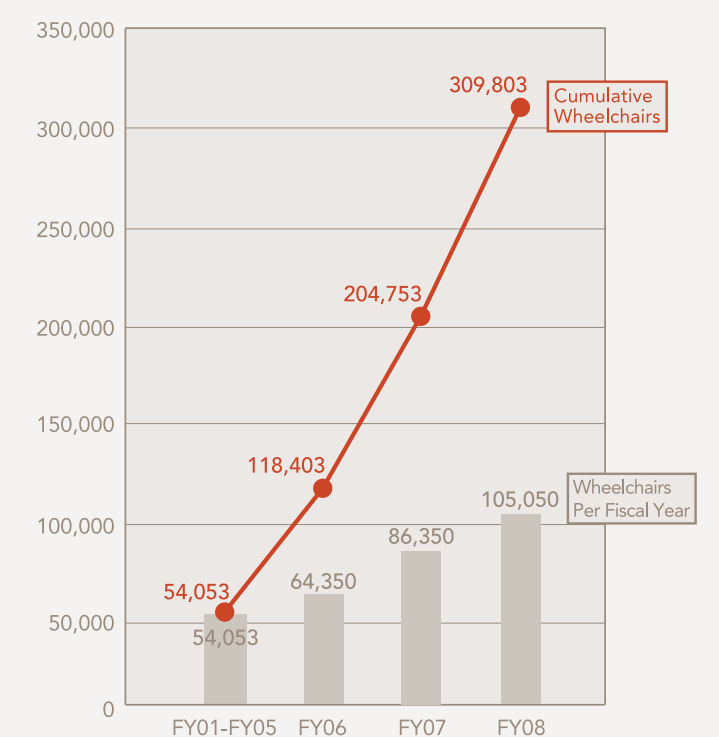
Stateside, FWM continued ongoing efforts to raise awareness and funds while advocating and providing for the disabled. The 3rd annual Run for Mobility raised over \$370,000, summer’s Magic of Mobility gala tipped the scales at almost \$1,000,000, and the year-end brought with it the traditional holiday campaign, sharing cards and ornaments to honor family and friends. Mobility in Motion headlined local fundraising efforts, recognizing outstanding individuals and creative collaboration from Seattle, Washington to Wheeling, West Virginia. FWM’s first-ever USAID government grant award put the finishing touches on an already stellar year.

Fiscal year 2008 saw the advancement of FWM’s mission and vision; in looking forward to FY2009, FWM plans to focus on continuing the march toward 20 million wheelchairs while tightening belts and getting leaner close to home. The office plans to reduce postage and mailing costs, improve targeted marketing, and create an improved website presence.

Program Expense Percentage FY2008



Total Wheelchairs Delivered



* 2001-2005 Fiscal Year was January 1st to December 31st
Current Fiscal Year is April 1st to March 31st



A Free Wheelchair Mission. . . Accomplished!

In the fall of 2007, 15-year-old Quinn Eliason viewed the award-winning documentary, Emmanuel's Gift. The true story of a Ghanaian man born with a severely deformed leg, the film chronicles Emmanuel's courageous journey, and his quest to change the perception of disabled persons in his country. Powerful and inspiring, the film ends with an acknowledgment of Free Wheelchair Mission and its role in providing wheelchairs for people with walking disabilities around the world.

The Chino Hills Boy Scout decided to plan his Eagle award around a wheelchair project, and contacted FWM to get started. Quinn's initial venture in January 2008 was an effort to fund and assemble fifty wheelchairs, which he quickly accomplished with the support of family, friends and community members. FWM does not distribute within the United States, so Quinn's first fifty were used for fundraising and marketing purposes, with the remainder utilized on a small distribution in Mexico. Goal accomplished, Eagle award in hand, Quinn could have patted himself on the back and called it a day.

But Quinn wasn't done yet.

In addition to being profoundly moved by Emmanuel's Gift, Quinn has a deeper, personal connection with the issue of disability. His cousin in Utah uses a wheelchair, and in the 2006 St. George Marathon, Quinn helped push for the last two miles as the family ran together in the event. With such a close connection, the teenager understands deeply the struggles of the mobility-impaired population.

"Life is hard enough being disabled when you have a wheelchair," he said, "but imagine how much more difficult it would be if you were left to drag yourself around on the ground."

Knowing how quickly he was able to reach his initial goal of fifty wheelchairs, Quinn believed that he could do a lot more. He decided to keep the project going, and to raise enough money to send an entire container of 550 wheelchairs to India, a country with a great demand for mobility.

"I knew I could count on people to continue to donate," said Quinn. "How can you not, knowing that for about fifty dollars, you can change a person's life forever?"

It should surprise no one that this enthusiastic young man met his goal. The new Eagle Scout was successful in raising a total of \$27,875.50 and with it, a container of 550 wheelchairs. And, when Quinn Eliason travelled to India to help assemble and distribute, the story came full circle as he and his family shared the transforming gift of mobility with a host of courageous and inspiring beneficiaries.

Free Wheelchair Mission has met many special people on this journey, but occasionally we have the pleasure of joining hands with someone extraordinary. Quinn Eliason is one of those truly remarkable individuals.

On behalf of the 550 recipients now enjoying hope, opportunity and the chance for a new life, FWM would like to congratulate Quinn Eliason on his Eagle award, and to thank him for his dedication to humanity and service to mankind.



View Quinn's footage of the journey at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRJlqhg0MG4&feature=related> and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otDhKQZYnel&feature=related>.

www.youtube.com - search adameliason

Free Wheelchair Mission and USAID

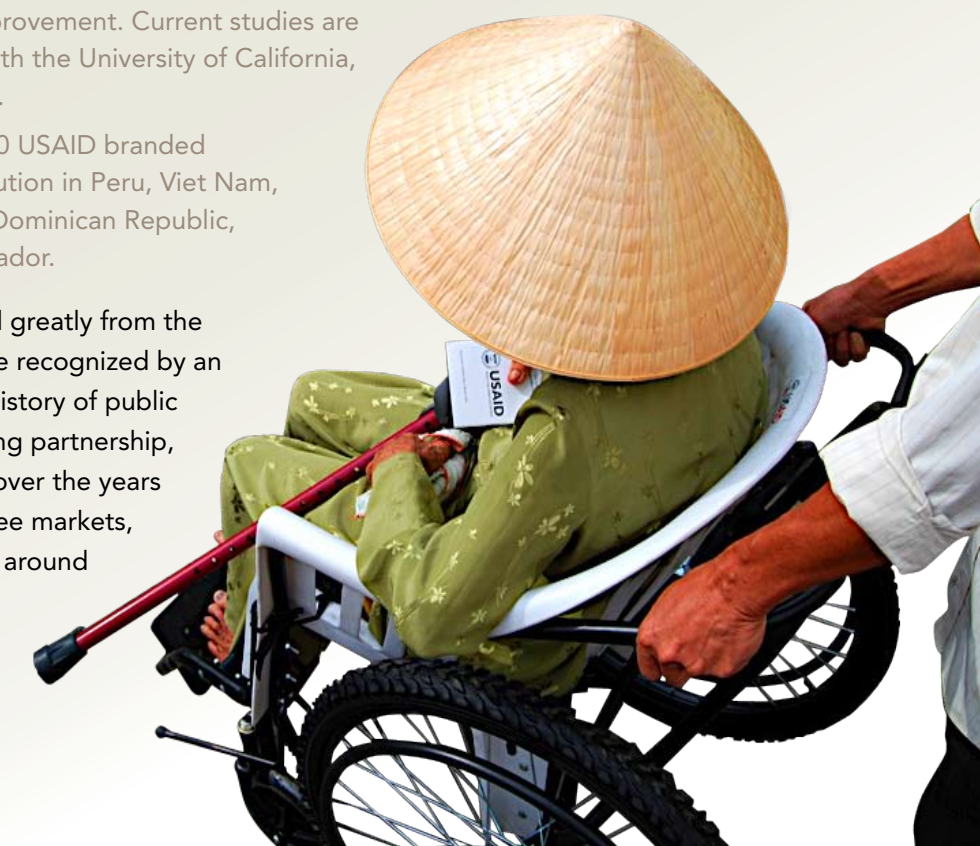
Fiscal year 2008 marked the first year Free Wheelchair Mission and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) teamed up to advocate for the disabled and address mobility issues on a global level. After reviewing the shared goals and visions of the two organizations, USAID awarded Free Wheelchair Mission a \$750,000 cooperative agreement grant. This award provided funds designated to advance wheelchair design, improve the FWM distribution model, and send an additional 12,100 wheelchairs around the world.

USAID is an independent agency that provides economic, development and humanitarian assistance around the world in support of the foreign policy goals of the United States. They work hand in hand with U.S. government policy, extending foreign assistance not only to expand democracy and free markets but to improve the lives of citizens in the developing world. USAID has been the principal U.S. agency working to extend assistance to countries recovering from disaster, trying to escape poverty, and engaging in democratic reforms. The organization's policies focus on economic growth, agriculture and trade, global health, democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance.

As a direct result of USAID's support, the Free Wheelchair Mission program has and will continue to expand to include the following:

- Initial research and design of a second generation wheelchair. The new model will allow a personalized fit that can be adjusted to allow for varying sizes among recipients.
- Improved functionality of the original wheelchair through the development of a footplate, allowing for increased stability, comfort and safety.
- Creation of a training manual translated into ten languages to improve and streamline the distribution process.
- Continued, on-going objective research studies to assess efficacy and to encourage further avenues for improvement. Current studies are being conducted in conjunction with the University of California, Irvine, and Azusa Pacific University.
- Production and shipment of 12,100 USAID branded wheelchairs designated for distribution in Peru, Viet Nam, Chile, India, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Bangladesh, Honduras and El Salvador.

Free Wheelchair Mission has benefited greatly from the support of USAID and is honored to be recognized by an institution with a long and respected history of public service. We look forward to a continuing partnership, and salute the role USAID has played over the years in advancing democracy, expanding free markets, improving lives and reducing suffering around the world.





Free Wheelchair Mission®
TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH THE GIFT OF MOBILITY

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www.freewheelchairmission.org

Free Wheelchair Mission is an international non-profit organization dedicated to providing wheelchairs to the impoverished disabled in developing nations. Working in partnership with a network of like-minded, international, faith-based and indigenous humanitarian organizations, FWM has provided wheelchairs to hundreds of thousands of disabled people around the world, providing not only the gift of mobility, but of dignity, hope, and independence.