

USAID Lauds Five Sri Lankan Health Care Professionals



USAID in partnership with Motivation Charitable Trust honored graduates from the Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics at the American Center in Colombo recently. The five prosthetist-orthotists who recently completed the course are already stationed in disability centers in Kandy, Tangalle, and Galle. They include H R Prasanga, Chathuranga Munasinghe, Darshani Pragnarathna, Nadeera Samasekara, and Hiranthi Nirosha De Silva. They spent three years learning state-of-the-art theory and hands-on technology in the field of prosthetic and orthotic devices for the disabled. "This group of young professionals will have a profound impact on the lives of the disabled in Sri Lanka;" said Dr. Carol R Becker, USAID Director. "Their expertise fills a gap in the medical profession, and promises to help thousands of people live happier, more productive lives. They can also help other Sri Lankans in the medical field to do their jobs better;" she added. A key technology the graduates bring to Sri Lanka is the prescription and fabrication of lightweight polypropylene prosthetics. These are more comfortable and durable than the heavier aluminum variety commonly in use. The new prostheses can also be fabricated with a bending joint, permitting unprecedented flexibility for above-the-knee amputees. Thomas Keolker, Motivation's Program Director, lauded the five graduates for their courage to live in a strange country for three years to study, and said their excellent grades throughout the courses show a high level of commitment to their new vocation. "Your accomplishments are something to take great pride in;"

he said at the event.