**DAISY PETAL PICKING**

*Maltese media’s love-hate relationship with vulnerable people*


---

**ABSTRACT**

This chapter will focus on people, vulnerability and the media. It will analyse the forced connection that comes to be when people who are going through a vulnerable state are exposed in the media. It will also reflect on the implications of such connection and propose a more equitable relationship between vulnerable people and the media.

Like a lover picking the petals off a daisy, Maltese society has ever been in two minds regarding vulnerable people: on the one hand this is manifested by fear and denial, and on the other hand by a humane urge to protect and support. The urge towards benevolence is further complicated by a rose-tinted sentimentality which the Maltese media manufactures into culturally attractive imagery. The ‘split mind’ approach to vulnerable people on the part of society is closely mirrored in the way Maltese media depicts the social groups generally regarded as ‘vulnerable’.

What do we understand as “vulnerable”? Going back to the etymological root, the Latin ‘vulnerare’ means ‘to wound’. In this sense then, vulnerable people may be regarded as those individuals who are easily wounded, harmed, or generally exposed to damage. Potentially vulnerable individuals are persons of all ages who are experiencing very stressful situations, be they emotional, physical, mental, financial. They could also be persons who cannot foresee, or comprehend the implications and repurcussions of their exposure in the media. Their vulnerability becomes exacerabated when they are made to speak and/or appear in person and to disclose personal information.

“To be vulnerable means to be unprotected and exposed to various forms of physical and emotional abuse and deprivations. Although we are all
vulnerable at various points in our lives, it’s unequivocal that some sections of the population are more vulnerable than others; notably, small children, women, old people and disabled people.” (Barnes, 2008: 2).

Some other examples of people, who are, or who at some point in their lives, have been in a vulnerable state:

- Persons with a mental health condition;
- Prisoners serving a sentence (as well as their families);
- Young people, or adults, who were adopted;
- People who have a specific illness;
- Individuals addicted to drugs, alcohol, or gambling (including their families);
- Persons living in an institution;
- Bereaved persons (particularly following a recent bereavement);
- Victims of usury, of racism, of sexual and/or domestic violence, or abuse.

Defining “vulnerability” is in itself complex as it is not the authors’ intention to portray a definition that encompasses ‘all’. However, mental health conditions, for example, such as depression do tend to increase stress: be it financial, where the person may be finding it difficult keeping up a work routine, social, with the symptoms probably blocking the person from interacting with others in the community, and also physical where the individual may be putting on extra weight. Stressful personal experiences have similar repercussions. Such stresses add on further frustrations and needs.

Exposing one’s deeply felt frustrations and personal issues on the media can lead a person to believe that there is a quick solution to some of the problems being faced, leading to a “let me try it out” approach. There is an added complexity to the concept of “vulnerability” as living such generally stressful circumstances makes it more likely for an individual to have limited vision of the implications of such exposure. However, this may not be the case for everyone. Such limited vision on implications raises the ongoing dilemma about media participation and truly informed consent.

**Some social constructs of vulnerability in Malta**

In the 11th century with the establishment of a strong Judeo-Christian tradition under the Roman Catholic Church the Maltese became strongly opposed to infanticide and, especially through the Catholic Church’s emphasis on ‘good
works’, prominent individuals within Maltese society began to develop a readiness to ‘care’ for the ‘sick’ and the ‘less fortunate’ either through alms giving or the provision of ‘direct care’ (Davis, in Barnes 1997). There can be no doubt that the Roman Catholic Church has exerted a profound influence on every aspect of Maltese life ever since. (Camilleri & Callus, 2001).

In this context so-called ‘vulnerable’ people were instrumentalised as the means by which self-proclaimed ‘normal’ people were tested and spiritually purified. Furthermore, while certain social minorities (especially disabled people) were regarded as objects worthy of pity and deserving of charity, religious symbolism still projected them as images of Man’s fall from grace: biologically, morally and cultically impure (Leviticus 21:16-23). The indelible stigma resulting from such negative imagery was seen to impact negatively on all members of the family and not just the 'afflicted' individual (Camilleri & Callus, 2001).

In the case of disabled people, a number of Maltese proverbs cast them in a very unfavourable light. Note, for instance, the old adage: ‘min jagħmilha maz-zopp, isir zopp bhalu’ (if you keep company with the lame, you will become lame). This highlights at once disabled people’s perceived physical and moral imperfections while also emphasising the widely held conviction that impairment was easily transmitted. Also, Maltese folk-tales, such as the ever-popular Ġaġan stories, depict people with intellectual impairment as lovable fools at best and at worst as crassly incompetent adults who are a danger to themselves and others. Maltese literature also perpetuates pejorative images of people with impairments. In his novel Taħt Tliet Saltniet, Ġużé Aquilina creates the character of Miju Mekkek who is described as: ‘ħotbi, faqmi u werċ’ (hunchbacked, prognathous, and squinted). Mekkek’s main role in the novel, was, like Ratatosk the squirrel’s, in Norse mythology, to roam widely, spying, spreading gossip and fomenting all manner of strife. One should bear in mind that the negative portrayal of disabled people, and other vulnerable, social groups, is not a phenomenon which is exclusive to Maltese literature, as negative imagery and stigmatisation of minority groups is almost universal.

While it is an undeniable truth that traditional misconceptions about vulnerable people are inherent in Maltese culture, they ‘persist partly because they are constantly reproduced through the communications media: books, films, television, newspapers and advertising.’ (Barnes, 1991).

A major overhaul of local media
Prior to the turn of this century the audio-visual media in Malta underwent a major overhaul in the type of programmes offered to the public. With the introduction of multiple local radio stations in 1991-1992 and television channels in 1994 (Cutajar, 2001) came the ordinary citizen’s direct involvement in the media. In the early 1990s the Maltese became accustomed to seeing Italian television transforming ordinary Italians into overnight celebrities. Maltese programme makers soon followed suit.

By the late 1990s there was an increase in ‘reality’ programmes of a social nature. It became common to watch programmes with individuals who had experienced a personal trauma forming part of a panel of specialists discussing a particular topic, or where the vulnerable individuals were the protagonists relating their experience in full detail. One can argue that programmes of such nature were already being transmitted in the 1980s, however, at that time, such programmes were few and far between. This is a stark contrast to what one can find on practically all the local television stations in 2008!

**What are social stereotypes?**

Vulnerability in the media is often a reflection of social mores and the media is often a willing instrument of perpetuating social stereotypes … usually at the expense of quality of life issues for vulnerable groups. While it would be inaccurate and unfair to hold the media solely responsible for perpetuating social inequalities, neither should their influence and impact be underestimated, for the media is often a willing partner in the perpetuation of damaging myths. The media often equates mental health with criminality, as this example from the U.S.A. testifies:

“The typical viewer of prime time television drama sees an average of three characters labelled mentally ill each week, one in about every 11 programmes. This is by far the most pervasive, vivid, and compelling source of public information, or misinformation, about mental illness.” (Gerbner, 9 March 2005)

Given that due to Malta’s smallness of size anonymity is difficult to maintain, the depiction of vulnerable people on television is less direct and more ambiguous. In
most instances the producers do not have an overtly negative agenda, however, given the media’s dependence on sensation, principally visual and aural, the generality of programme designers will opt for the simple directness of the camera angle which astonishes and arrests the viewer, or the instantly digestible and unforgettable sound bite and a profuse, public outpouring of emotions. In this way, complex situations and emotions, sometimes having equally complex roots are ‘dumbed down’ to fit into time constraints and appeal to as wide a mass audience as is possible --- and popular with advertisers.

Maltese audiences, like audiences world-wide, are conditioned to accept certain ‘cultural norms’, categorising people and situations into a bland duality of ‘normal’, or ‘abnormal’. This is especially true for instance of programmes like ‘Arani Issa’ (‘See Me Now’) a reality show, which builds on people’s obsession with the cult of the ‘body beautiful’ and where people volunteer to undergo physical make-overs with a view of approximating more closely to accepted norms of physical beauty. Such shows, even when the producer’s intent is to improve the quality of life of selected individuals, feed off the vulnerable person’s pervasive feelings of inadequacy, while strongly suggesting that a ‘quick-fix’ is equally desirable and attainable, when the opposite is generally the truth. Thus, the typical person who ‘volunteers’ to undergo such interventions is generally attracted by the prospect of access to surgical procedures that they would never normally be able to afford. Naturally, in such circumstances they are clearly even more vulnerable to manipulation by programme producers who specialise in this type of programme content.

Ad hoc, quick-fix solutions have also led to some criticism of another Maltese show: ‘Nies ta’ Veru’ (‘Real People’). Nies ta’ Veru’s express intention was to create a more positive image of the disabled people in general, by focusing on the life of a single disabled person each week. The show took elements from the 1970s – 1990s BBC TV series ‘Jim’ll Fix It’, where the TV presenter makes a viewer, or viewers’ dream come true. The Maltese programme focused almost exclusively on disabled people who were ‘surprised’ during a typical, everyday activity, were interviewed in a way which almost invariably depicted them as stoical and heroic, until the final climax where the dream was made to come true. The vast majority of such dreams consisted of meetings with local, or overseas, celebrities, or, to further cement the illusion of the superhero attempting tasks which were seemingly impossible for people with their particular type of impairment.
Such programmes further compound society’s underlying assumptions about disabled people, in this case, which are erroneously based on what one imagines as individual dependency and functional deficit. On the other hand, the role of the media should not be based on attempts to ‘normalise’, but to bring vulnerable people into the social mainstream, by raising awareness, changing attitudes, identifying the root causes of discrimination and equally identifying opportunities for creating equal opportunities based on long-term changes to the social fabric.

**Children and the media – a case of further vulnerability?**

Earlier on in the chapter we discussed vulnerability with its different facets. We stressed its complexity tied to the fact that every individual reacts differently in different situations, thus it becomes difficult to highlight different categories of people who are more prone to vulnerability because of their common stressful situation. Someone might object to having been referred to as “vulnerable” even though he or she is grieving the loss of someone or the loss of a limb or the loss of freedom. However there is a common consensus that children under the age of sixteen are considered vulnerable, and exposure in the media is a case of further vulnerability. Since 2007 even the Malta Public Broadcasting Act includes a section on requirements regarding participation of vulnerable persons in media programmes, with a specific Article on Children’s participation. (Broadcasting Act, 2007).

Children’s participation in media programmes can take many formats – as actors, interviewees, participants in or subjects of a programme on social issues and at times, even protagonists as programme makers. These different forms of participation generate issues of respect, dignity and vulnerability. However proneness to increased vulnerability generally occurs in programmes of a social nature particularly when the topic is of a very sensitive nature such as traumas and abuse.

Broadcasters need to keep children’s vulnerability constantly in mind. Prior to a child's involvement in programmes, programme makers are to carefully consider the impact of the programme on a child and its long term effects; in most situations children, simply for the fact that they are still children, lack judgement about their own long term interests. Local Television programmes like “Stejjer” (Stories) and “Tista’ Tkun Int” (It Could be You) exposed some complex children’s stories, which exposure gave rise to sometimes grave negative
repercussions on the same children’s lives. When children are to participate in programmes of whatever format, parent, or guardian, consent is to be sought. Parents should not be provided with financial incentives with the purpose of influencing a decision, or the granting of consent. A child’s own consent also needs to be sought from a very early age, and a child’s refusal to take part should not be overridden, even if it implies inconveniences for the adults concerned. In deciding on the age at which a child is able to give consent, the child’s stage of development and degree of comprehension, together with the chronological age, are to be taken into consideration.

The language used to explain to children their involvement in a specific programme and the implications of such participation should be simple and easy to understand. In order to ensure understanding of programme participation the mode of explanation might need to be in pictures or video format. The effort that is required in order to ensure understanding of implications of participation in itself shows the seriousness of the matter. Parents may be more excited in having their children appear on television than the children, thus it is imperative to ask the children about their television appearance, with such consent sought independently of their parents. Admittedly striking the right balance between competing interests of the child, the parent and the audience as a whole is very difficult. BBC’s principles emphasise that children’s involvement must be “editorially justified” (BBC Editorial Guidelines, 2008)

Children should never be questioned about private family matters such as details about heated arguments in the home, and words should never be put in children’s mouths in the form of leading questions. Broadcasters should seriously consider pre-recording programmes where children are to be involved rather than transmitting them live, in order to be able to edit them and make sure that no ethical boundaries are crossed. The issue of children in programmes often requires handling with the greatest of care so as to safeguard children’s rights and inexperienced youth. Although programme makers in Malta have shown an increase in their understanding of complex family scenarios, such care and sensitivity still exists largely on an ideal plane. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)’s children’s editorial principles state that:

“We must ensure that the physical and emotional welfare and the dignity of people under the age of eighteen, and in particular children under fifteen, are protected during the making and broadcast of programmes and online content,
irrespective of any consent given by them or by a parent, guardian or other person in loco parentis” (BBC, 2008).

In this context the notion of informed consent enters a more uncomfortable scenario.

**Informed Consent**

In the media setting ‘informed consent’ is an individual’s permission to participate in a programme after the individual has been informed and has understood the aims and the structure of the programme; how the information the individual has passed on will be used and; the possible implications for the individuals themselves or for third parties that such participation can result in. Limiting information and explanation will jeopardise a meaningful permission. Informed consent prior to a programme’s being broadcast implies that the participating individual is actually able to make an informed decision and is able to see the long term implications and repercussions of the decision for participating. Informed consent also implies the duty on the part of the producer to provide aftercare, or support, for some programme participants.

Connected to the idea of ‘informed consent’ is the Consent Form, a tangible proof of a participant’s consent. In order for the Consent Form to be an effective tool of protection the wording needs to be kept simple and participants need to be given adequate time to understand its wording before being asked to sign it. The fundamental principle is that a participant is left free to refuse participation or to withdraw from the programme at any time.

Individuals who plan to contribute to a programme have a right to know what the programme is, the type of contribution expected of them, whether the contribution will be recorded live or not, and whether the contribution will be edited. When it involves more than one show informed consent is an ongoing process. In such cases consent implies a process of a continuously discussed agreement between participants and programme makers. It is imperative that broadcasters do not increase the distress of individuals who are already in a vulnerable state because they may be experiencing trauma. Due to the sensitive nature of such situations it
is important that individuals experiencing grief, or irrational anger, are not forced to express emotions which they might later regret.

When deciding to transmit programmes dealing with sensitive personal issues, broadcasters need to be equally sensitive to other family members, since directly or indirectly, family members may be mentioned ‘on air’ and consequently affected by the experience. The privacy of vulnerable people and their relatives should be the overriding principle in programme making; the implications for third party participants needs to be thoroughly assessed prior to programmes of a social nature being initiated. In producing media programmes the individual’s dignity is to be respected at all times, thus the notion of information of implications to one’s participation in a programme with the overall guiding principle of informed consent so as to minimise harm is paramount.

Similarly, every effort should be made to obtain consent from people with intellectual disability. While some of the issues are the same as for children, it is imperative that informed consent is sought from the persons themselves not from their parents, or guardians, if they are adults. In respect of people with intellectual disability one should always assume capacity and take the necessary steps to ensure that information is provided in a manner which is accessible to the individual. Often the best method to use is that of treating consent as a process, explaining each aspect and its implications. (Bernal, 2006)

**Charity advertising**

The advertising industry dominates the media with both its imagery and its increasingly commercial agendas. All too frequently, mainstream advertisers seem, at worst, to deliberately ignore, or, at best, to avoid vulnerable people unless they can be packaged into attractive consumables. For instance, for them to feature at all in the media, disabled people usually have to fall into the traditional categories of heroism or pathos. Vulnerable people are consistently overlooked as potential consumers, and therefore as power-wielding groups. For example, while elderly people are a growing consumer group which is ardently courted by the marketing executives, disabled people are generally ignored, this notwithstanding the fact that the European Disability Forum alone represents 50 million disabled persons throughout the European Union (EDF, 2005).
Indeed, ‘some advertisers, notably charities, present a particularly distorted view of disability and disabled people to raise money. In both cases, disabled people are the losers.’ (Barnes, 1991: 47). In this context one can transpose vulnerable, for disabled people. This approach to fundraising is even more reprehensible when the advertising campaign is being run by an organisation purporting to uphold the rights of the particular group, be they disabled, or elderly people, or children, or other minority groups.

Given its tiny size and population of approximately 400,000, one would be justified in stating that Malta has more than its fair share of charity fundraising events throughout the year. These reach their peak over the Christmas period when various groups launch fundraising campaigns which include many different vulnerable groups. Two cases in point are ‘Strina’ and the RTK’s 1 Milied Flimkien campaign.

*Strina* is a national telethon and the foremost among Malta’s annual, fundraising events. It benefits many different, local voluntary organisations which cater for vulnerable groups, but the majority of beneficiaries are almost invariably disability-related NGOs. Notwithstanding this, *Strina*, which is owned and managed by the state-funded Public Broadcasting Services Limited (PBS) does not include an authoritative, disabled representative on its selection board. Over the years this has led to a number of serious criticisms from the disability sector, notably the Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b’Dizabilita’ (KNPD) regarding:

- the manner in which beneficiaries are selected and
- the annual negative portrayal of disabled people, usually as objects of pity and passive consumers of services.

Besides *Milied Flimkien*, which benefits children in church homes, the Maltese Catholic Church also raises funds for *Dar tal-Providenza*, which is a residential complex for very severely disabled people, established in 1965. Over the years, *Dar tal-Providenza*’s fundraising activities have projected respectful images of disabled people, while more recently *Milied Flimkien* has also become more sensitive to the potential long-term effects of its own marketing methods. But nothing can illustrate the schizophrenic attitude that the Maltese public has

---

1 RTK (Radju ta’ Kulhadd) is a local radio station owned and run by the Maltese Roman Catholic Church.
towards vulnerable groups than the contradictory stands taken by a leading local journalist when writing about *Strina*, and then again about *Dar tal-Providenza*.

“Is it ethical for the organisers of *Strina* to tug at our heart strings so as to make us part with our money? […] Quite frankly, I don’t see what right and wrong have to do with it. The organisers have one goal only: to raise as much money as possible for particular charities. To achieve this goal, they will use any legal means possible … If it takes a show, fine. If it takes heart-string-tugging film footage, fine. If it takes a mad frenzy of enthusiasm, fine. If it takes valuable prizes and the great incentive to gamble, fine again. The means justifies the end.” (Caruana Galizia, 2004)

Others have disagreed with the notion that *Strina*’s ‘mad frenzy’ of high profile donations, in some cases, translated as free publicity for local businesses, is really morally defensible. Spiteri (2003) writes: ‘I find repulsive the idea that one takes part in a charity activity to gain or - to put it more generously - not to lose political points.’ Mercieca (2004) draws a line at the ‘pitiful portrayal of disabled children combined with the background movie soundtrack of the film Schindler's List. What does the Holocaust have to do with all this?’ While the *Maltese Council of Disabled People* (2003) strongly objects to the media’s portrayal of ‘disabled persons as almost completely incapable.” (MCODP, 2004), Testa warns of heartrending imagery creating ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ (Sutherland, 1981), stating ‘clips could have a boomerang effect. Children who were portrayed as being helpless would be seeking a job in the near future but the image that would remain in the minds of the public was that of helplessness’ (Testa, 2003).

Only a year later, the same journalist reinforces the point raised by Barnes, that ‘normal able-bodied people do not depend on charity for life's necessities.’ (Barnes, 1991). Referring to residents in church-run homes in Malta, she writes, they ‘have a right to funds and shouldn’t have to be dependent on others to beg charity on their behalf. They are entitled to state funds, and tax-payers want them to have those funds.’ (Caruana Galizia, 2005). Once again, it is clear that Maltese society is in two minds vis à vis vulnerable people, recognising on the one hand their right not to have to depend on the fickle charity, and the indignities offundraising events, while condoning a very questionable ‘ends justify the means approach’ to charity advertising.

As elsewhere, in Malta we are experiencing an increase in reality-type programming --- sometimes put forward as programming of a social nature. On
the one hand, such an increase in programmes of this sort seems to have brought with it an increase in people’s awareness of social issues and surely facilitated the discussion on sensitive issues and on topics that were taboo. On the other hand, at times one finds oneself asking whether the media considers vulnerable people as a commodity on which to maximise profit? The risks of such programmes being produced commercially is that trauma and pain is transformed into a show. Should all the world become a stage, one wonders? Another risk is that serious problems are not tackled thoroughly and in a respectful manner; it becomes dangerous to simply skim the surface on a very sensitive topic or in a complex family situation, as one runs the risk of having viewers and listeners pointing fingers rather than increasing their sensitivity. One other risk in reality-type programming is that the individuals participating in such shows may unwittingly expose themselves to difficulties that they never imagined having to face.

Programme makers need to strive at maximising the positive aspects that programmes of a social nature can provide, while working at reducing the potential harm that can be caused, both directly and indirectly, when such programmes are broadcast.

Recommendations

Whose interests are served by the involvement of vulnerable people in media programming? If the interests are commercial then vulnerable people are no better than any commodity that can generate profit. They will be used (and abused) in as much as they will “sell” and thereby generate profit. If, on the other hand, a claim can be made that the media is concerned with the interests of vulnerable people, then we need to develop clear criteria that will help us evaluate such a claim so as to ensure that what purports to help NGOs by raising funds for them does not end up being counterproductive by perpetuating the image of the beneficiaries as helpless victims for ever in need of help and never able to make a contribution themselves.

Perhaps an obvious recommendation is that people working in the media need to critically assess their own attitudes and language when producing stories which feature vulnerable people. Appropriate language usage is critical in conveying a sense of dignity and value on a person. Moreover, media content needs to be accessible in a variety of modes, in order for it to be readily available to a variety of audiences. For instance, nowadays, a story printed in the newspapers, is usually
also available in electronic, audio and sometimes, via TV, or the internet, in a visual format. To this we should add an easy-to-read format, when and where appropriate.

Recognising the pressing need for timely information and a touchstone for referral, in 2007, KNPD published ‘Rights, Not Charity: guidelines to ensure that positive attitudes are translated into concrete action for improving the quality of life of persons with disability’. The publication was launched at the University of Malta during a seminar held specifically for people working in the media. Notwithstanding widespread publicity, attendance at this even was as minimal as it had been when similar activities were organised by KNPD in the past. Clearly, the message still isn’t getting through.

A consultative body should be established to which television companies, newspapers and advertisers can come for advice. The consultative body should be made up of representatives of organisations controlled by vulnerable people themselves.

The Malta Broadcasting Authority has already published a code of ethics on the portrayal of vulnerable people in the media (MBA, 2002); a code of ethics which included widespread consultation with and reflecting the views of various vulnerable people and their organisations. (Barnes, 1992)

All media personnel should be encouraged to attend awareness-raising programmes. Locally, KNPD has led the way in this area and has, for the past fifteen years, offered disability equality training (DET), designed and presented by disabled people, to a wide spectrum of audiences --- but, not, sadly to media personnel. Such training, including all groups of vulnerable people, is especially important for those in positions of authority who are responsible for programme production, newspaper content, and major advertising campaigns.

The authors feel they ought to stress that anti-discriminatory legislation and sympathetic policies, practices and regulation may be essential, but alone they will not safeguard the rights and dignity of vulnerable people. Media personnel need to be quick to challenge the received wisdom of social constructs such as who is, or is not, ‘normal’, or that charity and charitable events and NGOs are de facto a ‘good thing’, and that sentimental and patronising language is acceptable if it serves a ‘good’ purpose.
Vulnerable groups usually have little or no say in how they are presented on television or in the press, broadcasters, newspapers. Ignorance about vulnerable minorities in general can only be reduced if media organisations become more open to them. Vulnerable individuals need to become more media savvy. Openness also implies increased recruitment of people from vulnerable groups at all levels within media organisations and this includes inclusion in the field of advertising (Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles (National Organization of the Spanish Blind - ONCE, 2008: 2).

Empowered individuals are less likely to be vulnerable individuals. Therefore, the authors recommend that media awareness training should become more diffuse:

(a) Media education should become an integral part of the curriculum of all Maltese primary and secondary schools and not just in local Church schools, as is the present case.

(b) Media education should also be for different vulnerable groups, the aim being to help them to empower themselves through increased awareness of how the media works and its effects on a mass audience. These courses must help vulnerable individuals learn how they can exert more control over media imagery and language. In this respects, an example of local good practice is KNPD’s SPEAK OUT! programme. SPEAK OUT! has been organised for the last twelve years and the sessions expose disabled people to the world of the media, encouraging them to be proactive and take control whenever they participate in programmes on radio, or television.

Finally, the authors cannot overstress the point that it is only if vulnerable people and their advocates learn to become more assertive and more demanding of their rights, readier to speak out if they feel that they have been discriminated against, will the media begin to take them and the issues which govern their lives seriously and hopefully dispense with the cultural ‘schizophrenia’ which is their present modus operandi.
Select references


KUMMISSJONI NAZZJONALI PERSUNI B’DIZABILITÀ (KNPD): PEKTUR Programme. URL: http://www.knpd.org/


**NOTE** – The authors wish to thank Mr. Fred Bezzina, Ms. Anne-Marie Callus and Mr. Gordon Cardona for reading the paper in draft form and offering critical advice which was much appreciated.

Christina Borg and Joe Camilleri