

*Promotion of Inclusive and Protective environment for children with special needs (CWSNs) through community based rehabilitation - (CBR) Intervention in Puducherry Union Territory, India*

**Activity: Capacity building of staff:**

The capacity building program for project staff was held in May, 2018. In total 6 training programmes each one for 3 were organised. Totally the program was held for 18 days in different months. The participants after the sessions in the evening would go home and come back for the sessions on the next day. It was meant for the staff members who are directly and indirectly involved in the CBR project implementation process. The training was about Organization Development along with individual capacity enhancement of the participants so that they would be strengthened to contribute positively towards the community and the



Organization development. The training focused on reorientation about the Vision of Satya special school. And integrating the organization vision to individual vision of the project team members and enable them to acquire knowledge clarity on CBR, perspective of CBR, methods of CBR and community organisation in the Indian context. About **30 persons** participated and benefitted of the program. The training was planned to improve the self-confidence of the project team and improve their commitment to serve the CWSN and their families and the community at large.



Experienced facilitators in the development sector specifically on issues relating to disabilities facilitated several topics throughout the training course. Suitable topics relating to the overall establishment of CBR concept and social inclusion of the people with disabilities as a strategy were earmarked as part of the training. Ms. Philomena, Social worker cum Trainer from Banyan Tree foundation, Chennai was the resource person for the training. The resource person clearly explained the motive and the purpose of the training and the definition of CBR as to have proper understanding and perspective of community based rehabilitation and how to work in the community where the project is concentrated.

The training course considered **set objectives** in order to achieve the desired results as follows;

- To situate disability in a broader cultural, political and social discourses on human relations, power, knowledge, development and legal international instruments as per the UNCRPD.

- To be acquainted and able to implement participatory approaches to enhance actions for community advocacy, self-awareness, empowerment and enhance to impact on welfare and other schemes meant for PwDs.

It was also envisaged that at the end of the training course, participants should have understood and promoted the following;

- To analyse disability concepts and definitions.
- To address basic issues of persons with disabilities.
- To initiate/strengthen cross disability SHGs and DPOs of persons with disabilities.
- To promote the rights and opportunities of persons with disabilities.
- To discuss on support the inclusion process of PWDs in the society.

Ms. Josephine from Banyan tree, Social activist cum training resource person said since, the project activities were based in the community and institutional level it becomes utmost important that the social workers, the field animators and the special educators who will be visiting the children and parents of special need children must know how to approach the community because the community may have certain expectations from the person whoever intends to approach them and give them instructions or awareness for their attitudinal changes to bring societal changes. Therefore, she insisted on certain qualities, expertise in the concerned subject or topic the staff will be dealing with the community.



The resource person further explained that the community organisers need to plan well and be very clear about what they are going to do in the community. She said the goals and objectives must be very specific and very realistic and feasible because the community is very important since we expect the change to happen from the community. Therefore, she insisted on the prior work out in order to meet the challenges in the community.

She also said the community workers in order to mingle with the community people, they must first approach the village leaders, ward members, Panchayats Raj members and inform them that you are conducting such program and try to get their consent in this regard. The community workers must be able to identify the issues or any problem that affect all the people in the community. So, that they can suggest new ideas for people to think about inclusion and relevant information on provision of functional rehabilitation services. Very often as people with disabilities require assistance to overcome or minimize the effects of their functional limitations, she said the CBR workers need to provide primary rehabilitation therapy while professionals provide referral services, she added. The training was identified as a key challenge for the CBR project. Throughout the training, strong emphasis was placed on awareness-raising and the promotion of inclusive development in order to continue the CBR programme as a community strategy.

The perception of CBR workers towards Pwds before and after the training was held in order to change the perceptions they had about disability. This was to a larger extent successful due to the overwhelming understanding of Pwds potentials. At least 20 out of 25 staffs strongly agreed that the training met their expectations. Overall, the expectations of CBR workers towards the training were to a larger extent met.

The following recommendations were made:

- That subsequent training considers field visits in CBR project communities in order to interact with the communities and Pwds themselves.
- That conflict management is included in the next training session.
- CBR should be packaged and integrated into other relevant courses.
- That project considers the provision of transportation facility to each CBR worker in order to be more effective at community level.
- That key stakeholders at local and commune level be included in subsequent CBR training in order to fully support CBR as a state level strategy.

**Training Methodologies:** The following methodologies were applied throughout the training period; Group work and presentations, brainstorming, social games, simulation exercises, individual presentations and discussions, role plays, demonstration/practical exercises, storytelling and analysis. The participants were asked to read each and every statement carefully and tick against that statement which they agree with and cross if do not agree with it. They were also told to just leave it if they do not agree on both sides. Each of the responses was the opinion of each participant and did not represent other views or any conclusions. Participants were also free to make statement or other options. However, the questionnaires were intended to give an overall idea of thinking, developing right attitude and knowledge towards persons with disabilities.

The **participants** perceptions towards PWDs were also taken to assess their before and after training mind status.

At least 40 questionnaires were presented to the participants before and after the training. As listed below;

1. People with Disabilities are gifted with special abilities by God.
2. Children with disabilities should not be allowed to play games and discharge their daily routine which will hurt them.
3. People with disabilities are more efficient than non-disabled people.
4. Persons with hearing and visual impairment tend to be more shy than nondisabled.
5. People with Disabilities cannot lead their struggle without the support of nondisabled people.
6. Persons whose both legs are weak or non-functional can break stones.
7. Social welfare or social security benefits are only the way to rehabilitate persons with disabilities.
8. CBR is a best and effective way to rehabilitate persons with disabilities.
9. The potentials of persons with disabilities are fully made use in the development process.
10. Service to disabled is service to God.
11. Persons with disabilities should only fight for concessions, schemes and programmes.
12. Disability issue is given high priority in the country.
13. All NGOs who are working with disabilities have positive attitude towards persons with disabilities.
14. Children with mental retardation can read and write.

15. Children with disabilities can study in regular schools.
16. All disabled persons are helpless.
17. Persons with disabilities cannot compete with non-disabled people in any manner.
18. Persons with disabilities always need help from others.
19. Human rights of persons with disabilities are fully protected.
20. Persons with disabilities are more marginalized and excluded than any other marginalized groups.
21. Only sympathy and compassion will help persons with disabilities.
22. Disability is not just a rehabilitation issue but it is an inclusive development and human rights issue.
23. Generally, it is a good idea not to try to win a game when competing with a physically disabled person.
24. People with disabilities can also occupy higher positions in the society.
25. Disabled feticide is the best preventive measure of disabilities.
26. IBR is the best option for the severely disabled persons.
27. CBR need to be backed up with resource/information/day care centers.
28. DPOs and SHGs are the better forums for discussing issues of persons with disabilities in the society.
29. Employment is the empowerment for any persons in the society.
30. Women with disabilities are triply marginalized in the community.
31. Persons with disabilities need recreation, leisure and sports.
32. Persons with disabilities should be part of political processes in the country.
33. Persons with disabilities are in better position to represent themselves.
34. Mothers are the best persons to represent children with disabilities.
35. Persons with disabilities need inclusive development in the community.
36. Persons with disabilities can get married and enjoy family life.
37. There are right based policies and programmes for persons with disabilities in Liberia.
38. Persons with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and multiple disabilities face more barriers than other disabled persons.
39. CBR principles and components need to be included in national programmes planned for other persons in Liberia.
40. Do you think this questionnaire has helped you to think better for the inclusion of all kinds of people with disabilities at your work?

The assessment revealed that there are wide differences between previous perceptions before and after the training. For example; statement 17 states that persons with disabilities cannot compete with non-disabled people in any manner. Prior to the training, 8 out of the 11 CBR workers said YES and after the training all 11 CBR workers said NO. This shows to a greater extent that the training yielded substantial results as far as the perception of CBR workers towards Pwds is concerned. Several other statements which were negatively perceived by CBR workers were subsequently considered positive as it was observed. Notwithstanding, some perceptions were still difficult to be changed before and after the training. For example; statement 25 states that disabled feticide is the best preventive measure of disabilities. 10 out of the 11 CBR workers said YES while 1 CBR worker said NO. It was observed that CBR workers at the time did not have a broader understanding of the word "Feticide". This was subsequently explained in depth thereby grasping the full concept. Overall, CBR workers and the participants intimated that the questionnaire helped greatly in changing the negative perceptions they had about Pwds. At the end of the training, participants were fully endorsed as CBR workers and the participants. Their first task was to embark on the identification and registration of Pwds in their assigned communities. CBR workers and participants promised to be fully supportive of the CBR project in their respective communities thereby ensuring sustainable results. This report is the output of the training and is organized on the basis of the training objectives.

**PHOTO GALLERY**

