

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

Activity: Consultations with stakeholders

As the project is aiming to promote inclusion through Community Based Rehabilitation and various training programs that included therapeutics and educational intervention program for the children with special needs; the project had involved in capacitating various stakeholders in order to ensure an inclusive and protective environment for the CWSNs at different levels. The consultations with stakeholders were organized in different places during this year 2018.

700 different people participated in the consultation. It was held in June, July, and August months' time.



The meetings had facilitated the dialogue among the different stakeholders (Parents of CWSNs, Anganwadi workers, youth groups, SHG members and school teachers) involved in the project's activities. The project reached more than the target number of the activity. About stakeholders were reached and benefited through this activity this year. The stakeholders were sensitized on the need of the hour i.e., understanding different perspectives on inclusive education, inclusive society, disability rights awareness, family care and positive parenting, mainstreaming PWDs, rights awareness, prevention, and referral services to various state and central govt. schemes meant for PWDs in order to build an encouraging environment for PWDs.



The meetings also covered facilitating the recognition of the disability right to be informed and to participate to discussion concerning their education, health and child friendly environment. The meetings further sensitized the public about the sensible issues considered by the project. Inclusive education for CWSNs was object of specific consideration. 5 consultations were organized in five commune this year.



Points discussed:

- People with disability must have access to all parts of buildings utilized by the Government like schools, hospitals, all government buildings, bus stand, and railway station in the same way as person without a disability.
- Children with special needs at the mild level must attend regular school.
- The news, the public and social media must cover the life situation of persons with disabilities.
- All publicly available disability information must be provided, upon request, in formats accessible to people with a range of disabilities.
- The Govt. department or institution must display non-discriminatory attitudes in the workplace.
- Where necessary, adjustments are to be made to the workplace so that people with disability have equal opportunity to use and display their skills.

The **stakeholders** and the **participants'** perceptions towards PwDs were taken to test their before and after training mind status. The 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 centres.

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 need inclusive education in the regular school run by both Government and private organisations.
37. Special educators must be recognized as Government employees and should be given equal opportunities in the regular schools.
38. Persons with disabilities can get married and enjoy family life.
39. There are right based policies and programmes for persons with disabilities in Liberia.
40. Persons with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and multiple disabilities face more barriers than other disabled persons.
41. CBR principles and components need to be included in national programmes planned for other persons in Liberia.
42. 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 pre and post training tests revealed that there are wide-ranging differences between previous perceptions before and after the training. For example; statements 35, 36 and 37 state that persons with disabilities need to have inclusive development and education and equal opportunities. Prior to the training, 11 out of the 25 participants said YES and after the training all 20 participants said NO. This shows to a greater extent that the training yielded substantial results as far as the perception of stakeholders 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. 15 out of the 25 participants said YES while 10 person said NO. It was observed that the participants 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, stakeholders and the participants intimated that the questionnaire helped greatly in changing the negative perceptions they had about Pwds.

Feedback

- Most of them appreciated the orientation sessions that gave them in-depth knowledge about disability.
- Raise community awareness on disability preventive steps.
- Raise awareness about nutrition required for the pregnant ladies and new born children.
- Promote different therapy required for the children with disability.
- Training cum awareness sessions must be conducted in Disability reasons, types of disability, symptoms and preventive measures for mothers and pregnant ladies.
- Training or orientation to Disability and Inclusion to community leaders or village leaders, youth group.
- Disability awareness and Inclusion to all the school going children in all the commune in Pudukcherry.

PHOTO GALLERY

