

**Promoting evidence based**  
**Community Based Rehabilitation**  
**(CBR) practice through**  
**documentation and research (D&R)**

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## Purpose

To promote documentation and research as an integral component of CBR.

Paper draws from CBR experiences from Malawi, Uganda and Zambia where the Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD) is supporting a Documentation and Research (D&R) in CBR Project

# Project description

- A multi-country initiative that aims at building evidence for CBR to inform and influence disability programming and policy development, and to facilitate sharing and learning from best practices in CBR.
- Project implementation is championed by in-country teams comprising government and non-governmental Community based inclusive development partners

# Background

Documentation in NAD supported CBR:

- Varied in terms of quantity, quality, and applicability.
- Of limited access to professionals and project staff across projects countries.
- Mostly program-specific and in the form of program review / evaluation reports.

# **Rationale for promoting documentation and research in CBR**

- Need for empirical data through rigorous research and documentation to effectively inform advocacy by DPOs and policy development
- Need for evidence based justification for investment in CBR as an effective strategy for influencing change in the lives of disabled people, their families, communities and even government policy.

- Lack of data for comparative analysis across country programs or across years to generate evidence based information that can inform programming and policy.
- Need to continuously assess the relevance of CBR as an approach and strategy in its different contexts and to establish a foundation of data that can be used for documenting the added value in using CBR as an approach and strategy in disability programming.

- Systematic documentation as an area that needs on going improvement based on evaluations of NAD supported programs (Uganda 2005, Palestine 2009, Lesotho and Malawi 2009,2014 and Zambia 2014)



# **Overall objective**

To ensure that knowledge and experiences accumulated and lessons learned from the various CBR program countries are documented and used to inform CBR programming and advocacy work.

# Project components

- Documentation component aims to improve the ability of partners to document processes, progress and results of their CBR interventions within particular themes
- Research component both builds upon existing CBR and other relevant documentation, as well as activities and outcomes of the documentation component, and initiates action research on specific CBR-related themes.

## **Expected results**

1. A system for data collection, analysis and documentation of experiences, practices and lessons learned is established and in use

2.CBR databases and other information are being used in generating research papers (action research)

3. CBR is contributing documentation and evidence based research information to inform and influence disability programming and policy development

# **Selected indicators of achievement for expected result 1**

- Web based DMIS developed and in use (Malawi and Zambia)
- Electronic database on existing CBR documentation available : Malawi from 2011, Uganda, and Zambia (2012).

- Key CBR documents scanned and uploaded on website of the Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA - [www.macoha.org](http://www.macoha.org))
- CBR documents for Uganda scanned, indexed and available on CD Rom and on CBR Africa Network (CAN) website ([www.afri-can.org](http://www.afri-can.org)).

# **Selected indicators of achievement for expected result 2**

## **a) Action Research**

Baseline studies , CBR documentation and experiences have generated the following action research: “Empowerment from the perspective of persons with disabilities in Malawi: Lessons for the Empowerment component” (2012); “Mapping of CBR in Uganda” (2013);

“An inquiry into factors that contribute to sustainability of CBR approach in Uganda: A case study of Bushenyi CBR programs” (2015);



“Factors contributing to high prevalence rate of epilepsy in Eastern Kazungula District (Zambia): Possible solutions through CBR” (2015);

“Barriers and enablers to education for children with disabilities in Ntcheu District, Malawi” (2015).”Mapping inclusive education in Zambia and Malawi” (2015)

## **b) Papers for publication**

- Compilation of a researched booklet on “CBR Impact stories from Malawi” to be submitted for possible publication by CAN soon.
- Paper from study “Empowerment from the perspectives of persons with disabilities in Malawi” to be submitted to the *Journal of Social Science* (University of Malawi).

- Paper on “A situation analysis of persons with disabilities in Malawi” submitted to the *African Journal of Disability* with prospects of being published within 2015.

## **c) Dissemination**

- Key findings and recommendations from action research disseminated locally
- Over 10 papers presented at international workshops

## **Selected indicators of achievement for expected result 3**

- Data from Malawi and Zambia DMIS being used to lobby for mainstreaming of disability issues in development plans of local councils
- Increased engagement by CBR stakeholders and national bureau of statistics to mainstream disability in national surveys and to work towards undertaking national disability specific surveys

- Electronic publications (newsletter) and regular features in electronic and print media on CBR processes and outcome contributing to progressive active participation by CBR stakeholders in Zambia.
- Increased awareness on need for a robust system for sharing of CBR practices/ experiences and for evidence based planning and reporting on CBR in Uganda.

Findings from study on “Empowerment from the perspective of persons with disabilities have led to increased investment the design of livelihood component of CBR (in Malawi) through:

- Establishment of partnership with micro finance institutions (Concern Universal Microfinance Organization and Opportunity Bank of Malawi) to promote access to microfinance (savings and loans) among persons with disabilities

- Submission of a cabinet (policy) paper calling upon the line ministry for planning and development to implement measures for more equitable and increased access by persons with disabilities to social cash transfer and farm input subsidy programs
- Increased access to training in vocational skills for persons with disabilities



**THANKS**