

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN SENSITIZATION AND MOBILIZATION  
FOR CBR IN MANGU L.G.A. PLATEAU STATE

CBR is a programme introduced world wide for providing services for PWDs and give them equal rights in the community. The services provided in CBR include medical care. School. Vocational training and employment to PWDs. However there is difficulties in the provision of these services because of wide spread illiteracy. Ignorance and poverty, these barriers have been broken

Religious leaders where CBR programme are implemented have great roles to play in breaking these barriers. In view of these I wish to us this article to discourse the roles of religious leaders can play in CBR activities to enable members to participate.

The hospital is situated at the northern part of Mangu ,5km away from town in the central zone of plateau state, named COCIN hospital and rehabilitation center. CBR programme was initiated by COCIN and the funding organization CBM in Mangu COCIN hospital in 1995. CBR started working with the hospital and all the local church leaders in ter5m of identifying client to benefit CBR services

The church leader nominate the CBR director to take care of CBR programme by the management board members of COCIN. then the hospital central management committee nominate who to monitor field workers as supervisor to co ordinate the programme and 4

field workers to take up field work which Mangu LGA is shared into 4 zones-A B C and D respectively. The hospital started work at Mangu in 1952 as leprosarium center with very few staff and today the hospital has 120 staff, along with other medical conditions it takes up as a full hospital.

**SARVICES PROVIDED INCLUDE:**

- (a) Tuberculosis and leprosy savvies- for patients diagnosed with TB or Leprosy as screen for treatment and integration. Associate NGOs the Nether Land Leprosy relief supply drugs and funding.
- (b) Wards and maternity admission is given to serious illd patients for bed resting and medication. Maternity for the pregnant mothers and children under 5 to come for monthly antenatal visits and immunization.
- (c) Physiotherapy department- treats patients with physical orthopedic conditions and provides orthesis.
- (d) Out patient department-registers and issue cards, assed and refer to doctors for proper management and referrals.
- (e) Eye department- sees eye conditions for treatments and surgeries.
- (f) Technical workshops includes
  - 1 carpentry workshop
  - 2 shoe making workshop
  - 3 welding workshop
  - 4 tailoring workshop.

The workshops assist the departments for treatment of patients and rehabilitations incase of making ortheses.

CBR programme and the need for religious leaders to be involve, the hospital is own by the church, to sustain CBR work, religious leaders have to give they charity and moral support to enable PWDs feel the impacts of CBR through the church leaders.

The role of the religious leaders in the community owns responsibility of sarving as a link in the chain of CBR activities within their members, for they provide and create awareness and information on the nature of CBR services.

In a case where a voluntary organization is coming to give a charity services to PWDs, we use the church as the easiest means of passing information to members and the community to participate.

The religious leaders identify easily due to their good relationship with their members in the community, they provide counseling to ignorant and careless who may delay early detection of disabilities and further prolonged the treatment which can otherwise be avoided.

When a field worker identifies clients with polio contracture the family members look down upon the disabled child, whatever the field workers will advice to come and benefit CBR services, they refused the offer. So religious leaders are with their members in the community, they are obeyed and respected, the field workers call the attention of the religious leaders to intervene with cheerful and caring words to counsel the clients to enable members accept CBR services.

Religious leaders organize volunteers to participate in a case where a member has a disabled child he will be taught on how to care and assist the disabled in terms of need, as well as forming CBR committees by appointing members who show interest in accepting CBR services within the community. From the church treasury the religious

leaders fund CBR to succeed in case of fueling motorcycles to reach far villages. The religious leaders are engaged in decision making, resolving conflicts among members, unnecessary expenses and neglect from family commitments towards other members may lead to misunderstanding.

The religious leaders organize workshops to other religious leaders on how to sensitize members on CBR services. Sermons are used as a referee to demonstrate the activities and good work of Jesus Christ when on earth, showing love, care, healing the sick and feeding the needy.

The religious leaders should encourage members to always express their attitudes towards the disabled members and are motivated to donate individually to assist PWDs, liaising with other NGOs to pay for treatment and surgeries of the less privileged and source for other materials like tricycles. NGO based in Jos named the Beautiful Gate Initiative provide services to PWDs coordinated by Mr. Ayuba Gufwan. They provide services like

- a) Provision of tricycles
- b) Walking canes for the blind
- c) Provision of arm pit and elbow crutches
- d) Carry out occupational rehabilitation in their workshop (welding)
- e) Carry out campaigns on let PWDs come out and go to school
- f) Organizes screening material to PWDs to enable movement as any other person in the community.
- g) The BGI involves in sensitizing individual philanthropists including the government to contribute funds for the progress of the organization.

This year 2007 CBR with the assistance of the religious leaders members are sensitized, PWDs 25 identified benefited from tricycle to enable them go to school. The religious leaders carry out health education to primary / secondary schools on CBR activities.

#### **ACHIEVEMENTS.**

COCIN hospital exists for fifty five years, most of her doctors are missionary oriented from different parts of the world. This year January 2007, from Holland Dr. Sprong came for charity and free surgeries to PWDs, out of which 27 children benefited from free surgeries on polio contractures.

The CBR field workers in line with the religious leader identify PWDs e.g. cataract patients identified by field workers are screened, if they would gain surgeries they benefit low charges from the actual price, instead of paying sixteen thousand for bilateral cataract they pay eight thousand only. From January to June 2007 250 cataract patients benefited CBR services and they regained their sights.

#### **Conclusion**

The religious leaders owns it a duty in the COCIN church to sensitize and mobilize members to participates in order to benefit from CBR services because it enhances a better life of PWDs.

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