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## 6th CBR Africa Conference Updates

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### Message from CAN Executive Director



2018 is yet another very fruitful year for CBR Africa Network (CAN). After undertaking preparations efforts in a bid to ensure a successful 6th CBR Africa Conference, we can safely say all is well.

To reach this point was not easy as it required careful coordination efforts from all participating stakeholders.

We must say we are more than grateful to every one who has contributed financially and active organisation of

the conference.

Most importantly, we are grateful to the Government of the Republic of Zambia through the Ministry of Community Development and Social Service for accepting to not only host the conference but for its massive financial contribution towards the success of this year's conference.

I also wish to appreciate all stakeholders who have supported the conference. These include: Lilian Foundation, World Health Organisa-

tion (WHO), CBM, Light for the World, Handicap International, among others and our partners; Norwegian Association the Disabled (NAD) and CP Trust.

In order to ensure continuous conference information sharing, the organising committee has set up a media centre for purposes of providing delegates with updates on conference proceedings. The media centre runs the daily magazine.

On this note, I wish to invite you to our first edition of the CBTR conference magazine.

**Dr. Abdul Busuulwa**

**Executive Director,**

**CAN**

## The CBR Conference journey

As Zambia is hosting the Sixth CBR Africa Conference from 7th, ending 11th May, 2018, we take a look at the past five Conferences and their main calls and achievements so far scored.

2001 saw the inaugural Conference for the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Africa Network (CAN) held at the Faculty of Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation, Kyambogo University in Kampala, Uganda.

The first Conference under the theme "CBR a Participatory Strategy for Africa" had key Ingredients for CBR in Africa with a view to create base for for CBR to take a rights based approach, empowering people with disabilities and their

families.

The conference came up with resolutions that CBR must involve disabled people, their families and organizations from the start and must enable key stakeholders to access information on all issues including HIV/AIDS information.

The second held in Lilongwe, Malawi in 2004 was themed "CBR as part of Community Development" and had a number of key messages among included that called on CBR to address poverty because it was a major need of people with disabilities and that millennium goals could not be achieved if they did not include people with disabilities.

CBR was also to promote education at ALL levels if people with disability were to have economic empowerment, communicate its concepts in a language which can be understood and prioritize research to address local resources and participation and make sure that deaf people are not being left out.

"CBR: Inclusive Policy Development and Implementation" was third Conference in 2007 held in Johannesburg, South Africa. The resolutions were that DPOs and PWDs should participate in the development, implementation, and use



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## Employment of persons with disabilities

By Arthur Sikopo

Zambia’s employment record of persons with disabilities has been challenged by a disability Rights activist at the Sixth CBR Africa Conference being held in Lusaka, Zambia from 7 to 11th May 2018.

Lango Sinkamba, a former athlete specialised in wheelchair marathon and currently Ottobock Country Manager says a number of issues have affected persons with disabilities not being employment while those in employment facing a numerous challenges at place of work.

He says despite policies being in place and Zambia being a signatory to international documents such as the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities among others, PWDs are facing challenges where employment is concerned.

Records from the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates about 2 million people in Zambia which is 15 per cent of the country’s population have a disability of which a larger percentage live in rural areas. WHO says 45.5 per cent of the population in 2005 were employed as opposed to 58 per cent and of that a large percentage of people with disabilities are self-employed workers, while very few are employers.



Mr. Sinkamba noted that support services in most education facilities are not user friendly for PWDs thereby making it unbearable for them to complete education and get employed.

“If you look at the University of Zambia today, it lacks lifts as most building are inaccessible to some people with disabilities. If the support services are not there in these training institutions, what does that

entail? It entails that because you cannot have qualified persons with disabilities they cannot be employed and therefore reducing the number of employed persons with disabilities,” he said.

On sentiments from some sectors of society that PWDs are not as effective once employed, Mr. Sinkamba said it was unfair that PWDs have been treated like that because they too have the Right to employment and have proved to perform better.

He said there is a lot of myth related with disability and sometimes employment is denied on that aspect a thing he said was wrong and unfair. Once employed, he says none disabled persons do not usually offer support to persons with disabilities due to stigma.

The disability activist has since called for unity and working together to end inequalities in work places and this could only be achieved by people learning and understanding to respect Rights of persons with disabilities.

Implementation of policies is one critical thing Mr. Lango says can help the country appreciate and increase the number of persons with disabilities in employment just like others.

## Mukanda beats odds to achieve his dream

By Arthur Mwansa

The 6th CBR Africa conference opens today in Lusaka with an inspiring case story of Stanlas Mukanda who, against all odds, has become a role model to many Zambians, especially for persons with disabilities.

Despite Mr Mukanda having struggled with an impairment for many years, activity limitations or participation restrictions are not lagging behind in achieving his goals.

Mr Mukanda who was discriminated, teased and bullied all his school life has managed to augment whatever he has to lead a meaningful and respectable life.

He shares his story with this writer.

“Six years after I was born, in 1964 I was diagnosed with poliomyelitis; I was left permanently paralyzed from the waist down. I experienced paralysis in both my legs. In short, I was born able-bodied. Unfortunately, there was no proper treatment for the disease at the time,” says Mr. Mukanda.

Mr Mukanda experienced discrimination and stigma during his school life and among his friends. For him life meant learning how to deal with unkind words and impolite stares.

Sadly, for Mr Mukanda some school and college administrators often raised the first hurdle, some pointed to physical barriers such as steep stair cases and inaccessible bathrooms as reasons to

exclude him from attending class.

Despite being mocked, Mr Mukanda was unshaken, he persevered. He found ways of convincing those around him including teachers and employers that he was capable of making meaningful contributions to the country’s development.

Having being a polio survivor all his life, Mr Mukanda has come to realize that disability is not inability; but that it requires hard work and determination.

“I want to urge other persons with disabilities not to be discouraged by negative sentiments from people who are not focused in life. We must be able to prove to society that despite our disabilities we are human beings, created in Gods’ image and can contribute to the development process of our economy,” laments Mr Mukanda.

Mr Mukanda suggests that there is need for all stakeholders to start looking at standardization of accessibility, affordability and availability of things like transport, housing, education and employment.

Thank God, Mr Mukanda is a teacher by profession. He is currently employed as a senior human resource development officer at the Ministry of Finance. Previously he worked as human resource development officer at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services.

Mr Mukanda says the sky is the limit because nothing has prevented him from being hard working and successful in life.

“I can proudly inform you that I am a breadwinner, looking after so many of my relatives, others have completed their tertiary education and are working. I want to repeat, disability is not inability,” says a visibly happy Mukanda.

He has since challenged parents and other guardians to have positive mindsets towards children with disabilities.

Mr Mukanda is a proud husband and father. He is also engaged in the supply of school uniforms and selling of charcoal. He further wants to venture in agriculture.



## CBR- Effective Empowerment Strategy for Persons Living with Disabilities



The introduction of the Community Based Rehabilitation programmes (CBR) in Zambia has brought about incredible changes in the way Persons Living with Disabilities (PWDs) are perceived and has resulted in great strides towards their inclusion in socio-economic empowerment interventions.

Government led CBR Zambia Programme Officer Edward Mutopola said in an interview that since the programme was started in 2012, monitoring results have indicated a decrease in discrimination levels, and society becoming more open to inclusion of PWDs in various

sectors of development.

“Before CBR people who had children or relative living with disabilities would hide them in the house due to fear of discrimination from society, however after the various CBR interventions, we have seen a positive change in perception. Further, we have seen PWDs themselves gaining confidence to want to be participants in various sectors”. He said.

CBR was established under the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services in Zambia in 2012 as a deliberate programme to foster inclusive development, in particular for PWDs. The aim of

CBR is to help people with disabilities, by establishing community-based programmes for social integration, equalisation of opportunities and rehabilitation programmes for the disabled.

Mr. Mutopola said the programme uses various interventions such as community awareness through media programmes and community meetings, as well as trainings from national down to community level. Specifically, in the education sector, Mr. Mutopola said after trainings on CBR teachers have become knowledgeable on the rights of PWDs and six schools in Southern Province are implementing inclusive enrolments

meaning that children with disabilities are admitted without discrimination and measures are put in place to ensure a conducive environment for learning.

“In CBR, the disabled person, family, community, and health professionals collaborate to provide needed services in a non-institutional setting, and in an environment or community where services for disabled persons are seriously limited or totally absent, in formal settings, the same principles are applied to ensure reduction of limits for PWDs”.

Mr. Mutopola said national attention to issues of disability have been evidenced by the enactment of the Disabilities Act of 2012 and the Disability Policy of 2016. He said disability issues are inter-Ministerial with all government ministries expected to play their respective roles. Each government ministry has an appointed focal person on disability; this was as a result of lobbying by the disability movement.

Minister of Community Development and Social Services Emerine Kabanshi said that government scaled-up social programmes that are meant to alleviate the suffering of persons with disabilities including their parents who are often discriminated and marginalised. She stated that PWDs were the key target to the country's social cash transfer programme.

“The Social Cash Transfer programme has since been scaled up from 78 districts in 2016 to all the districts across the country and the number of beneficiaries is expected to increase from the current 242,000 households to more than 600,000,” she said.

## The CBR Conference journey

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of policies, guidelines, and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Others were to ensure effective service delivery of the CBR strategy, enhance the development of CBR take lessons from other development programmes (e.g. gender, small business schemes), take their strong points and avoid their failures.

Abuja, Nigeria host the fourth under the theme “Linking CBR with Disability and Rehabilitation” and looked at the family as the heart of CBR planning and practice children with disabilities should be supported to advocate for themselves.

Another aspect was looking at training initiatives people with disabilities. The 5th CBR conference held at Nairobi, Kenya, in June 2015 and all CBR stakeholders agreed the recognize and promote the active participation, involvement and ownership of all phases of CBR programmes by Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs) as well as family-based organizations of persons with disabilities.

It further focused on leveraging/ networking as there was need to work closely with established organizations and institutions to mainstream disability at all levels and collaborate data on

disability organisations and practitioners to collaborate with line government institutions to ensure use of available data to inform CBR programming.

This year, Zambia his hosting and the theme is “CBR for resilience building and sustainable development: Leave no one behind” and will provide an opportunity for participants to share information on the various challenges experienced and existing capacities to enhance resilience for the attainment of the sustainable development goals. The conference is co-organised by the government of Zambia and CAN in collaboration with the disabil-

ity/CBR stakeholders in Zambia including Disabled people's organizations (DPOs), national and international NGOs and Development partners, UN agencies, media institutions, disability service providers, Civil Society Organisations, embassies and the business community among other stakeholders.



## Participants expectations

Some participants we interviewed expect the following from the 6th CBR Africa conference:

- ◆ To acquire knowledge in disability issues
- ◆ Make the conference more practical and not theoretical. The conference should at the end of the day be beneficial to the voiceless persons on the ground
- ◆ Learn how to address challenges encountered by persons with disabilities
- ◆ Share country experiences and chart the way forward for championing the rights of persons with disabilities.
- ◆ To gain enhanced knowledge and skill for use in community sensitization and advocacy work
- ◆ To know more about the barriers to school attendance for persons with disabilities.
- ◆ The CBR to develop a comprehensive team building strategy that improves productivity for persons with disabilities.
- ◆ Define and set up a method of comprehensively track staff activities
- ◆ The CRB to improve understanding and communication by giving and receiving good feedback
- ◆ Establish networking/collaboration, garner visibility of our research as far as disability issues are concerned.
- ◆ Improving knowledge and meet new experts in the area of disability.



## Ministerial statement

It is an honour and privilege for me and my Ministry to host the 6th edition of the CBR Africa Network Conference. The Community Based Rehabilitation (VBR) Africa network conference on inclusive development has opened today here in Lusaka at Intercontinental Hotel from running up to the 11th of May 2018 under the theme 'CBR for resilience building and sustainable development: leaving no one behind'

This conference is being hosted in Zambia for the first time and over 400 delegates from different parts of the world are expected to attend. Let me take this opportunity to thank the Government of the Republic of Zambia through the able leadership of his excellency the president, Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu for jointly organising this important conference with CR Africa Network (CAN).

The CBR conference is an opportunity for Zambia to share experiences and best practices on inclusive development regarding the wellbeing of persons with disabilities in communities. The Zambian government through the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services established the National Policy on Disability to ensure that the needs and challenges being faced by persons with disabilities are responded to in a comprehensive and well-coordinated manner. The formulation of the policy was done to create an enabling environment in

which persons with disabilities enjoy their rights and fulfil their aspirations.

The CBR conference brings together stakeholders such as government, Disabled Peoples' Organizations, civil society, development partners and the academia to share experiences, good practices and lessons learnt. It is a great opportunity for us to ensure that issues of disability are mainstreamed in the development agenda of our country in line with the convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The conference will also provide opportunities for acquiring new knowledge and skills as well as demonstrate what CBR practitioners have done. The conference will generate resolutions and recommendations that are relevant to human rights and inclusive development.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia remains committed to uplifting the standards of Persons with Disabilities, as can be seen through the policy and legal framework that has been put in place. The policy is in place and it gives guidance on interventions which, if fully implemented with cooperation and commitment from all stakeholders, would ensure that poverty among persons with disabilities is reduced significantly.

Furthermore, the Persons with Disabilities Act

No. 6 of 2012 provides for, among other things, the promotion of the participation of Persons with Disabilities with equal opportunities in all spheres of life. It recognises mainstreaming of disability issues as an integral part of national policies and strategies of sustainable development. The Act also seeks to promote the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities in the country.

This conference, is an opportune time for achieving a number of milestones including, but not limited to, the following:

To share information on the various challenges and capacities to enhance resilience for the attainment of the sustainable development goals; Showcase best practices on CBR and disability mainstreaming; Influence policy makers to appreciate the cbr approach and support its implementation; Discuss how evidence based research, including the status of disability data and statistics, can be further improved for disability inclusive implementation; and

Inform debate on the paradigm shift from the concept of community-based rehabilitation to community based inclusive development. The conference has a lot to offer to all stakeholders. Mainstreaming of disability in various programmes is key to achieve sustainable development and resilience building for all.

**I Thank You and God Bless You All.**