

Community Based Rehabilitation: A Bridge to Inclusive Sustainability Among Persons with Disabilities.

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Abstract

The study intended to explore as to what extend persons with disabilities (PWD) are included in sanitary accessibility, disaster management and prevention as well as in mitigating against environment hazards. To achieve this, the following questions were formulated; Are PWD rehabilitated or habilitated in environmental sustainability? Are they able to access community toilets and other hygiene services such as safe water? Do PWD participate in sanitary infrastructure development planning and programmes implementation? Descriptive survey method was used for this research and data was analysed in a narrative form. Convenient sampling and snow bowling method was used to select persons with disabilities and their families who participated in this study. Literature review showed that people with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and least equipped to deal with environmental hazards and impact of climate change in most African and Asian countries. The findings indicated that people with disabilities in Zimbabwe are excluded from sustainable participation which includes accessing sanitary infrastructures and participating in planning and implementation of environmental sustainability programmes. They have relatively poor access to basic services and these include accessibility to toilets and other hygiene services thus susceptible to diseases. Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes can go a long way in alleviating challenges faced by persons with disabilities in the communities that they serve. Combating life threatening diseases is one of the global Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by the year 2015. Thus CBR can bridge the gap of sanitary exclusionary practices through empowering of PWD and building communities that celebrate differences at all levels of development. Through research conferences and other collaborative approaches, CBR can facilitate the formulation of appropriate sanitary facilities that are need sensitive. More so, it can inform policy as well as to help government to pursue objectives and strategies that guarantees the delivery of optimal outcomes of MDGS in the shortest time possible and at a reasonable cost.

Keywords: *Accessibility/Inclusion, People with disabilities, sustainability, sanitary facilities.*