Supporting the continuation and further development of a rehabilitation centre in Bangladesh

Lessons learned

A service providing institution can play a relevant role in

- human resources development for health and rehabilitation,
- advocacy,
- collaboration with the Government on policy change regarding disability issues,
- supporting persons with disabilities in becoming advocates for the rights and equal participation of persons with disabilities.

Photo: http://www.crp-bangladesh.org/
CRP prioritizes awareness raising, inclusion and the promotion of an accessible and enabling society

Background

The Danish Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh, has supported several initiatives for people with disabilities through the Democracy and Human Rights funding framework. These initiatives, spanning the production of information materials, Braille transcription, support for service delivery and income generation, are often run by NGOs or DPOs (Disabled People's Organisations).

One of the organisations receiving support is the Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP), which has existed since 1979. The Centre has developed from a service provision site for people with spinal injuries to an organisation working with physical, psychological, and economic rehabilitation. Furthermore, CRP works in the areas of human rights, poverty alleviation, health care provision and education

Location:
Bangladesh

Title in Danish:
Støtte til fortsættelse og videreudvikling af aktiviteter ved Center for Rehabilitering af Paralyserede

Year of implementation:
2001-2004

Funding:
DKK 2,995,008 (USD 485,000) from the Danish Embassy in Bangladesh

Objectives of CRP

- To provide treatment, rehabilitation and support services focusing on physical, emotional, social, psychological and economic aspects.
- To promote the development of skilled personnel in health care and rehabilitation in the country and the region.
- To develop sub-centres in different parts of the country to expand the services for disabled people in collaboration with other organisations (NGOs, Government, self help organisations and private sector).
- To organise and promote programmes for the prevention of disability.
- To develop programmes for disabled children, focusing on early identification, therapeutic interventions and education.
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- To promote advocacy and networking on disability issues focusing on equalisation of opportunities for disabled people through the removal of physical and social barriers.
- To promote empowerment of disabled people through community based services in collaboration with other organisations and social institutions (NGO's, Government, Self help organisations and private sector).
- To promote empowerment of disabled girls and women, focusing on confidence building,

education, Vocational Training and employment.
- To raise awareness about disability issues nationally, regionally and internationally.
- To conduct research consistent with the vision, mission and overall objectives of CRP.
- To promote sports and recreational opportunities for disabled people.
- To promote collaboration opportunities nationally, regionally and internationally to share experiences and expertise.

Main activities of the Centre

- Physical, psychological and economic rehabilitation and planned discharge of people with spinal injury
- Training of health professionals to the level of BSc Honours Degree at the pioneering Bangladesh Health Professions Institute (BHPI), which is also affiliated with Dhaka University and the Bangladesh State Medical Faculty
- Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) projects operate in 13 districts. Self help groups are established, awareness campaigns are carried out and mobile clinics cover the districts.
- Accident and disability prevention programmes include research components and aim to educate vulnerable groups on safe working and living practices.
- Advocacy and networking activities to mobilise and coordinate officials and collaborating organisations.
- Awareness raising and publicity campaigns inform the population about disability and attempt to diminish stigma and discrimination of persons with disabilities.

Income generating activities

CRP runs a variety of income generating activities to raise its own funds and also to provide vocational training to disabled people while they are at CRP.

Fish farming and the cultivation of plants, fruit, vegetables and medicinal plants are undertaken, which is useful training for patients before returning to their communities.

Production also includes greeting cards and calendars, hand made clothing and other crafts. The wood workshop makes a wide range of furniture to order. Items include tables, beds, chairs and wardrobes. A special 'Balans chair' is produced for use by computer users. The wood workshop also makes a selection of wooden toys, some of them specially designed for children with cerebral palsy to increase their functional capability.

Photo: http://www.crp-bangladesh.org/
Two patients potting seedlings in the plant nursery.

Further Reading:

Annual Report from CRP, 2003-2004
http://www.crp-bangladesh.org/Publications/annualreport2003-4.pdf

Accessibility Newsletter 2002: An overview of international instruments and the Bangladesh national disability policy and legislation http://www.crp-bangladesh.org/Publications/AccessibilityNewsletter_july-dec2002.pdf