

THE FIRST PACIFIC ISLANDS COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION FORUM

**Nadi, Fiji Islands
12 - 15 June 2012**

COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The First Pacific Islands Community Based Rehabilitation Forum was held in Nadi, Fiji and was attended by Government representatives, Service providers and representatives of Disabled Persons Organization (DPO) of the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Kiribati, Republic of the Fiji Islands, the Republic of Nauru, Niue, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and the Republic of Vanuatu.
2. In attendance were seventy eight participants representing DPOs, government Focal Points and Disability Service Providers from the Pacific Region and also stakeholders' representatives and development partners. A list of participants is attached as **Annex 1**
3. We, the representatives of the First Pacific Community Based Rehabilitation Forum consisting of Government representatives, Service providers, Disabled Persons Organization and representatives of training institutions from the 16 Pacific countries and territories, who met in Nadi from 12-15 June 2012, thank the sponsors, the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF), World Health Organization (WHO), Motivation Australia and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) for the organization of the CBR Forum. This document focuses on the outcomes of the presentations in the four days of the Forum.

4. The CBR Forum's key objectives included:- to increase knowledge of community-based rehabilitation (CBR) as a strategy to increase the rights and quality of life of people with disabilities in the Pacific; to identify the link between the Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and CBR, with a focus on the Pacific context; to strengthen partnerships and collaboration between government , DPOs and disability service providers across the Pacific; to increase knowledge of CBR practices and identify the features of successful disability approaches in the Pacific:- To introduce the CBR Guidelines as a tool to support planning, implementation and evaluation of CBR; to highlight key needs , benefits services and gaps for rehabilitation and assistive devices across the Pacific region and to develop a regional plan of action for CBR services and approaches.

5. Organizers and Participants expressed their deep gratitude to Mr John Davidson, Minister-Counsellor AusAID, Australian High Commission, Suva, the Government and people of Australia for the support in funding the First Pacific CBR Forum. The support of the Disability Policy Section in Canberra was also acknowledged.

6. It was noted that although the concept of CBR has been around for sometime, this is the first forum of its kind to be held in the Pacific region. This was made possible from funding support from W.H.O and the Australian government through the AusAID International Seminar Support Scheme (ISSS).

7. The PIFS Disability Coordination Officer, in his opening remarks, reiterated the importance of working in partnership and noted that the coming together of DPOs, Service providers and Government in this Forum is an exemplar of the working in partnership platform that should form the basis of working at national level to achieve common goals in CBR.

8. The Co-chair for the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) in his opening remarks acknowledged the partnership between PDF and PIFS and their development partners who were instrumental in the organization of the first ever forum on CBR in the Region. The Co-chair for PDF, in expressing his appreciation and in emphasizing the importance of working

together, drew attention to the logo of PDF that includes a canoe, that is symbolic of the need to work together to further the disability agenda in Pacific Island countries.

9. The CEO for PDF, Mr. Setareki Macanawai reiterated the importance of collaboration in CBR and acknowledged the collaboration that has already gone into the preparation of the Forum.

10. The Forum acknowledges Mr. Davidson's affirmation on the Australian government's continuing commitment to inclusive development in the Pacific

We commend and express our appreciation to the distinguished speakers for the valuable insights and information presented.

11. In his presentation, Mr. Miller provided the history and context of disability development in the Pacific, of the DPO movement, development of PDF, the disability desk at PIFS and the Regional Disability Strategy. He highlighted the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders to advocate to their Governments to be accountable to commitments made through PIFS communiqués and commitments to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

12. Mr. Chapal Khasnabis in his overview of CBR stated that CBR is commonsense rehabilitation and is a comprehensive, inclusive development model. The key development areas of health, education, livelihoods and social development in the Matrix provide guidelines for the achievement of inclusive communities which benefit all people including people with disabilities. The foundation of CBR is empowerment. It is a key strategy for achieving sustainable change and community ownership is the key to success of CBR. The guidelines provide the way forward for CBR in any country or region, are flexible and can be modified by users.

13. Pacific experiences of CBR and CBR training courses were presented from Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Solomon Islands. Elements of Mr. Khasnabis's key messages were evident, in particular the importance of multi-sectoral involvement and partnership and

ownership at local levels. The examples demonstrated that all CBR Programmes are different. Each presenter offered a list of strengths, challenges and recommendations which included the need for data collection, monitoring and evaluation. The presentations outlining training programmes strongly highlighted the need, interest and demand for improved and increased training opportunities for all levels of CBR implementation.

14. Mr Ghulam Nabi Nizamani, the Asia Pacific CBR Network Representative, presented a regional perspective and the link between CBR and CRPD, emphasizing that CBR is an effective strategy for the achievement of CRPD. He also emphasized the important link between DPOs and CBR where DPOs can be seen as a resource and key decision makers. He provided an overview of the Asia Pacific CBR network and raised the possibility of formalizing a Pacific Sub-regional CBR network.

15. Mr. Macanawai emphasized to the participants the importance of both their individual and collective contributions to the outcomes of the Forum.

16. The results of the Pacific Disability Services Mapping exercise, jointly conducted by AusAID, PDF, PIFS and the CBM-Nossal Partnership for Disability and Development was presented by Angeline Chand, Development Officer, PDF and Christina Parasyn, Regional Disability Specialist, AusAID. The mapping provided a snapshot of disability services and facilities that exist for persons with disabilities in twelve Pacific countries. Results provide a baseline to inform future developments and indicated positive developments and opportunities in many areas, including Pacific Government and regional commitments to disability including national disability policies, the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability (PRSD) and the CRPD.

17. The Mapping exercise also highlighted areas of extreme need in terms of training for rehabilitation workers, and teachers capable of implementing inclusive education. The need for sharing information on good practices was emphasized, with the example of the SENESE programme in Samoa and *Wan Smol Bag* theatre productions in Vanuatu.

18. A highlight of the morning was the second presentation of CBR ‘Guru’ Mr. Chapal Khasnabis, on CBR Models of Rehabilitation and Service Delivery. Mr. Khasnabis challenged participants with case studies needing CBR solutions, and illustrated the use of the CBR Guidelines and Matrix with a number of inspiring examples. He also illustrated the importance of the link between Institute-Based Rehabilitation (IBR) and CBR and stated that without this partnership it is not possible to achieve the goal of reaching everyone everywhere. He further emphasized that the optimal outcome of effective CBR is inclusion and participation in all aspects of life, total wellbeing, for the individual and the whole community. He stressed the key importance of economic development which has the power to change lives.

19. Mr. Khasnabis concluded with ideas to specifically address the Pacific situation in terms of CBR development :-

- a) Acknowledge that rights cannot be achieved without services;
- b) There is a need for a regional and national approach which may include a limited number of full rehabilitation centers and a greater number of mini-rehabilitation services;
- c) A Pacific Network will be a key component of the solution for the development and expansion of CBR services throughout the Pacific region.

20. The 2011 World Report on Disability (WRD) prepared by World Bank and WHO was presented by Kristen Pratt and Pauline Kleinitz provided an overview of Non-Communicable Disease related disability in the Pacific. The findings of the WHO World Bank WRD support national and international level implementation of the CRPD with significant implications for Institute Based Rehabilitation and CBR. Ms Pratt provided an overview of the key findings and recommendations of the WRD and encouraged participants to use the WRD as a key resource in informing policies and programs and influencing leaders. She highlighted the value of national-level launches of the WRD in bringing

together Government, DPOs and Service Providers to build understanding of the WRD and translate the findings and recommendations into local action.

21. Ms. Pratt further reported that, in her reappointment acceptance speech at the May World Health Assembly, the Director General of W.H.O, Dr Margaret Chan, declared that disability is a priority for her next 5-year term and also pledged her continued commitment to improve the health of the most vulnerable. Ms. Pratt also provided an overview of the WHO Disability and Rehabilitation team work priorities arising from the WRD, in particular the development of Health-related Rehabilitation Guidelines, research on NCD related disability, a CBR monitoring and evaluation guide, CBR online training and model disability survey, and discussed the role for the Pacific in this work.

22. Pauline Kleinitz highlighted the key issue of Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) which account for 63% of all deaths worldwide. Ms. Kleinitz stated that NCDs are at crisis levels in the Pacific. Data is inadequate and unreliable because of the complexity and variability in defining disability. Disability services will need to play a huge role in the provision of necessary services and IBR and CBR responses will be critically important. A multi-sectoral approach is needed to address the risk factors with a focus on prevention.

23. **We welcome** the inputs from the country representatives working in groups whose task was to:-

- a) Map each area of the CBR Matrix in terms of the agencies working in each area and to indicate the degree to which progress has been made towards inclusive approaches
- b) Identify the challenges and problems experienced in working towards inclusive CBR approaches, and possible solutions for achieving more inclusive outcomes.
- c) Develop preliminary national action plans, identifying objectives, actions needed to achieve the objectives, and supports required.

This preparatory task was necessary for the development of the Draft Regional Plan of Action.

24. Extensive discussion was held on the Draft CBR Action Plan, its relationship to the PIFS Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability and the PDF Strategic Plan. It was agreed that the Action Plan is in a preliminary stage of development, requires consultation at national level and further development of the content. The forum noted that the Action Plan is a work in progress and the working group is tasked to continue this process.

We recognize the value of key aspects of CBR which may inform our future implementation and further development of CBR services at national and regional level:

25. **CBR is:-**

CBR is a strategy that can be used to disseminate and implement the CRPD

CBR is a comprehensive inclusive development strategy

CBR is a dynamic, progressive and evolving strategy

CBR is a strategy in which persons with disabilities play a central role, define their own needs and become empowered

CBR builds strong equitable communities

CBR is a catalyst for change in individuals, families and communities

CBR is an effective strategy in all areas of development, including health, education, livelihoods and social development

CBR benefits the whole community and not only persons with disabilities

CBR has the capacity to develop economic empowerment which changes lives

CBR is an investment and leads to increased productivity and reduced expenditure on health and welfare

The goal of CBR is to provide an enabling environment which results in empowerment

CBR is a practical, commonsense, holistic strategy

CBR is most effective when coordinated in partnership with IBR, building a continuum of service delivery

We commit ourselves to:

26. The goal of achieving comprehensive CBR services in the Pacific at national and regional level

27. Obtaining the resources, support and tools to assist countries in the early stages of establishing CBR services

28. Advocating for the necessary training of personnel at all levels of CBR implementation, all stakeholders, DPO's, service providers and including medical, allied health, orthotic and prosthetic services at regional/national level, as appropriate

29. Advocating for the development of necessary tools for data collection, monitoring and evaluation to increase the effectiveness of CBR implementation.

30. Advocating for appropriate training of teachers to ensure all children are included in education with a focus on moving towards inclusive education.

31. The formation of links and partnerships between IBR and CBR to fully meet the needs of persons with disabilities to ensure they achieve maximum functionality to enable their full participation and productivity in the community.

32. Strengthening the link between IBR and CBR in response to the significant increase in people living with NCD related disability, with a strong focus on prevention as well as support

We further commit ourselves to:

33. The establishment of a Pacific CBR Network with links to the Asia Pacific and Global CBR Networks. The network is seated within PDF and a working group has been established.

34. The further development of a Draft Regional CBR Action Plan

35. The belief that people who know the problems also know the answers – all they need is the means – and with leadership, partnerships, sharing and collaboration the means will be achieved in the Pacific.

Nadi , Fiji 15 June 2012