

**Inclusive Education for Persons With Disabilities (INEDIS) with specific focus on
Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) awareness raising workshop organized for 40
primary school teachers**

**For Gedeo & Sidama Zones
Dilla University in collaboration with APPEAR
Gender Focused Training for Selected Primary School Teachers**

Report by
Redae H.

Dilla 14/11/2017

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Program Workshop For Gedeo & Sidama Zones

Core Areas:

- Gender and Disability: Mainstreaming gender and development with emphasis on practice and implementation of inclusive education
by *Dr. Solomon Sebro*
- Technical and vocational training perspectives on gender and disability
by *Mr. Ababu Teshome*
- “Identification and assessment of learners with special needs. How do teachers identify and assess students with disabilities.”
by *Mr. Kebede Abichu*
- Truth about disability and people living with disability
by *Dr. Dejene Tefera*

(All photo copyrights: Reday Hailu)

In order to improve the life standard of a given country, creating multiple opportunities to offer knowledge and skills to the people has an indispensable role. In our country, Ethiopia, hence, different trainings on various issues are underway to secure the GTP-Growth transformation plan in the country. Many governmental and non-governmental organizations are taking actions to support this sacred national dream. Universities are among the governmental institutions which have to support the national transformation. Accordingly, 23 male and 17 female primary school teachers attended the workshop to meet the objective of the workshop. The workshop was paid attention with news coverage from Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional (SNNPR) Radio and TV mass communication including Dilla Website.



Mr. Ababu Opening the training

Trainees

Accordingly, training on CBR- Community Based Rehabilitation, was held for two days in Yirga Chefe town by the department of Special Needs Education from the college of Behavioral

Science and Education. The stage was blessed by a remarkable speech of the dean of the college Dr. Habtamu Disasa. He opened the speech by raising brainstorming questions on issues of disability and the problems in our culture. As a continuation of the previous year he underscored the importance of this kind of training to upgrade the level of understanding of different social groups especially teachers in elementary schools and high schools. This type of training is valuable as the understanding of our society on disability and related challenges is at its grass root level.

Following the opening speech the most important person in the training, Ato Ababu Teshome, proceeded with the activities ready to be done in the two days training. Hence, the first day's training was started by introducing the participants. The participants were from different woredas (districts) of both Gedeo and Sidama zones. The participants were either persons with disability or graduates of special needs education who directly or indirectly can support the implementation of the program. The training was organized into 4-phases- morning and afternoon sessions.

1. Gender and Disability: Mainstreaming Gender and development with emphasis on practice and implementation of inclusive education. By *Dr. Solomon Sebro*



Dr. Solomon and the Trainees

His honor, Dr. Solomon came up focusing on one important issue: gender and development. According to Dr. Solomon there are different problems related to disability, despite the relative changes nationwide. Still now, persons with disability suffer a lot from the backward beliefs and traditions. Relatively speaking this challenge is more intense on women with disability. Studies indicate that females with disabilities are less privileged as compared to males with disability as well as their non-disabled female counterparts. This shows being female with disability has double impact as compared to other persons since the society has wrongly framed and wrongly molded tradition.

Citing reports from Kenya, Tanzania, AAUW, 1993, and elsewhere the problems females with disabilities face may be manifested in terms of sexual harassment, physical attack, and other

subtle but painful experiences. Therefore, avoiding double discrimination should be part of the contemporary changes. Solving this problem has to be part of our development programs because issues of disability are part of the index of a country's growth. Unless we solve such and related societal problems, our civilization will be slower. Above all we will not use their potential though they have skills and knowledge. Secondly, we will fail to respect international conventions and declarations.

Once we accept the conventions and want to use their potential the groups need to get attention. This effort will have meaning via the activities and decisions in our locality. Especially, teachers in elementary schools should have the responsibility to make different decisions considering the persons with disabilities. Especially, unlike males the females with disability do experience the menstrual period which requires more attention and care. During such period teachers ought to understand the challenge and make further support. In addition, schools, transportation, hotel services, offices health centers and other facilities must consider the persons with disability, especially females with disability.

However, it is not necessary to overprotect and let them feel dependent. Safety concerns and overprotectiveness do have other side effects. So, let them do what they can do without support and the intention here is to maintain the balance and to protect the right of such endangered social groups reasonably. Following the presentation the participants were asked to share ideas and experiences on the following concepts. Namely:

1. Who are the persons with disability?
2. What are the challenges facing the females with disability? And what are the problems facing the females with disability in your area?
3. How are females with disability valuable for national development?
4. How are females with disability different from males with disability?
5. State the difficulties facing females with disability on education.
6. What should be done to help persons with disability in general and females with disability in particular?
7. How can the school environment be improved to help female students with disability?

After the tea break the participants were conjoined and made to discuss the above questions. Accordingly, the first group presented the persons with disability, the visually impaired, hearing impaired, mentally retarded, the handicapped and other persons with different problems were among the groups. These groups face different challenges like sexual harassment, discrimination, stigma, lack of access to different facilities, cultural influence in marriage and other challenges. However, these groups are potentially productive for their country. They can support themselves and their family if trained. The females with disability are different from males with disability. They have biological endowments like menstruation, pregnancy, birth and

other related qualities. These do have special impacts on their life and personality. When we think of the toilets and other facilities in most parts of our country, they are not comfortable and accessible. School teachers as well as parents are not aware of their rights. As a result, they are hurt physically and psychologically.

To alleviate the problems such groups are facing school environments need to be improved. As stated earlier, all services should be accessible to them. In order to make these ideas possible we need different changes. Above all, working on the cultural transformation and attitudinal change will be most important.

2. Technical and vocational Training Prospective to Gender and Disability. By Mr. *Ababu Teshome*



Mr. Ababu Teshome presenting how to offer technical and vocational support

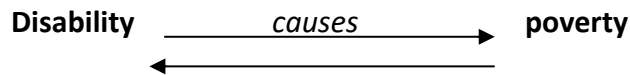
In the afternoon the training continued with a new topic which focused on vocational and gender issues. This concept is the next important issue that has to be discussed in order to enhance the confidence of persons with disabilities by allowing them to boost their economic empowerment. Issues of vocational areas include such important skills as working in all aspects of livelihoods that can generate income. These are foundation skills, technical skills, vocational skills and communicative skills.

Historically speaking, these types of trainings were started before 40 years in some places. At the beginning vocational trainings used to be given following a medical approach, next to that centralized approach appeared where the persons used to be gathered in specified settings and trained, and now we are practicing CBR- community based rehabilitation - trainings where the persons with disability are served in a decentralized manner considering a deserving regard in their community.

Recent studies indicate that the world figure about participants in the formal education is not more than 10%. Besides, when we come to the context of Ethiopia only about 4% of persons with disabilities have got the opportunity to go to formal schools. When we come to the

vocational area, this concern still falls down significantly to lower magnitude. However, as a principle our citizens with disabilities must get the access to vocational trainings. The most difficult thing in these societies is the involvement of persons with invisible disabilities.

His excellence, Mr. Ababu tried to link the relationship among disability, poverty and development. Especially finding out the relationship between poverty and disability was one of the impressive parts of the discussion. The sequence of poverty and disability was discussed in depth by the participants. These two things are sometimes confused but the reality shows that they do have interchangeable relationship and sequence.



The reality indicates that most persons with disability are living in poverty due to poor management and wrongly constructed attitudes. Therefore, all persons – especially teachers in elementary, high schools and higher institutions – should make efforts to enhance their engagement in vocational trainings. To support this it is better to offer ways out and models who can teach others. This is the way to change the persons with disability. On the training Ato Habtamu’s experience from Dilla town was presented. Ato Habtamu is the owner of different businesses like poultry, dairy farm and grocery. He has hired currently about 8 workers in his businesses.

In addition to the formal and informal initiatives our government needs to share other countries’ experiences. In some countries businessmen that hire persons with disabilities are encouraged by reducing taxation; so, our country can learn a lot from such experiences. Therefore, if business owners can get recognition and support for allowing persons with disabilities they can change their minds.



Mr. Habtamu (Business man in Dilla Town) and participants explaining solutions

The Types of skills, persons with Disability can learn:

Either from the vocational or non vocational areas persons with disabilities can learn different kinds of skills to enhance their involvement in business. These skills can be any of the following:

1. Foundation Skills - generic skills/key skills: as stated earlier there are different kinds of skills that persons with disabilities can learn. Foundation skills are then the type of skills that are related to the basic skills related to writing, reading, listening and speaking skills. In our community there are different kinds of person with disabilities related to the problems of foundation skills. Lack of such skills has greater impact on one's life because they have the power to block information receptions in this era. We can easily identify such persons who lack foundation skills. Especially, teachers can easily identify students with such problems and make efforts to help them. These include dyslexia, aphasia, dyscalculia and the like.

2. Core Skills: are knowledge based skills, knowledge and competencies that enhance a workers ability to secure and retain a job, progress at work and cope with changes, e.g. music, literature, construction, engineering, and other similar skills can be included here. These skills include such abilities as: Problem solving skills, communication skills, team work, initiative and enterprise management skills, planning and organizing skills self management skills, learning skills and other sub skills.

3. Technical Skills: these skills are the type of skills related to performance of certain particular tasks and activities. Technically, a person can learn different kinds of skills that can be changed into investments. Then to make it clear, when we see the efficiency of different persons who are engaged in the same profession they do not show equal performances. Such variations are the results of different technical skills. So, females with disabilities must be trained to enhance their technical capacity to enhance their productivity.

4. Entrepreneurial and Management Skills: include the type of skills related to running different kinds of businesses. These include shop keeping, running a hotel business, launching other businesses and so on.

Generally, disability is a common issue. The rights of persons with disabilities must be respected as any human rights. We all must make efforts to improve the culture we have concerning the individuals with disabilities. In relation to this, the government is doing well despite the slow changes. Supporting and encouraging persons with disabilities has to refer to technical and vocational trainings too.

As part of the consensus the participants asked the following important questions. It is part of the conventionally accepted human rights. But who prepares the trainings? How can the awareness raising tools be used on media and avoid the use of some offensive expressions? Who is leading and concerned about the issues of disabilities? How can we fill our gaps and get access to help persons with disabilities for some subjects? Especially, how can we teach mathematics and other hard sciences? How can graduates be supported when they leave the campuses? Finally, Ato Ababu tried to reflect on the questions and wound the daily meeting at 5:30 in the late afternoon.

3. “Identification and assessment of learners with special needs. How do teachers identify and assess students with disabilities.” By Mr. Kebede Abichu



On the second day the training continued with the participants’ group discussion on such important issues as:

- How teachers can identify persons with disabilities;
- How they can label the level of the disabilities;
- How teachers can help such kinds of groups and minimize the challenges they face.

A) Hearing Impairment: According to the participants, children with hearing impairment can be totally or partially deaf. These children are able to be identified in such different ways.

- They face difficulty of listening at the naturally audible range for human beings.
- They show the need of repetition and ask to repeat again.
- Sometimes they try to use their hand and listen side way.
- Some of them try to focus on the speakers’ non verbal signals cautiously.

In order to support these children it is possible to

- Bring them to the front seats in the classroom.
- Use the budget allocated for such purposes and creating resources accessible.
- Raising the awareness of the community about hearing impairment.

- Training them to use sign language.
- Contact different organizations.

B) Visual Impairment: Unlike the other persons with disabilities these individuals' problem is vision; so, the signs are related to their sight conditions. One can identify such persons by having close observation on his/her eye and sight responses. These signs include:

- Prolonged red eye color, especially in the morning hours.
- Stress and discomfort.
- Need of sitting too close or too far away from normally visible object.
- Unable to walk in dark where healthy persons can easily do.
- Taking readable materials too close or far away from the normal human sight range.
- Continuous, pus-covered eye condition.
- Inability to measure distance while jumping, throwing objects, or receiving materials mechanisms etc.

To help such kind of children the participants suggested different ideas. Primarily, they have to be taken to health centers, in addition to the medical treatment teachers can help them by speaking louder in the classroom, giving them freedom about where to sit, using real objects while teaching, copying different resources and adding some more resources like braille can support them.

Q. How do we see the religious arguments related to the different faiths? Religious persons are preaching that some of the disabilities are related to spiritual problems and can be healed spiritually; so how should teachers respond to such kinds of arguments?

This issue was one of the controversial cases in the discussion. However, in the end most of the participants responded that this can be possible to be entertained in their respective faiths. And this has to be carried out safely as some incidences are aggravating the problems.

C) Emotional Behavioral Disorder/Social maladjustment: Children with emotional behavioral disorder can also be identified on the basis of their activities. To help such kind of children having contact with their parents, approaching them in a way which they feel comfortable would be preferable. In other words we have to approach such kinds of individuals scientifically; so, for most of such problems we can have such hinting signals;

- They can be angry by simple incidences which other persons can easily manage. This occurs with friends as well as with teachers.
- They can hate an overcrowded and shouting/ disturbing environment.

- Sometimes some of them can have shouting habits; so, louder or softer voice than usual.
- They can throw materials from their hands and cause destruction.
- Sometimes they hit objects nearby and even hurt themselves, giving inappropriate answers.
- Sometimes they can decide unexpected and unnatural decisions, full or popping ears.
- When they get angry some of them shake and talk too much, complaint of earache.
- Restlessness, inattention, distraction, more responsiveness in calm environment etc.

D) Physical and health related disability: persons with physical and health problems will have a visible loss of the normally existing body organs like the hand, leg, spinal cord, face, mouth structure, cancer, epilepsy, HIV positive, asthmatic, TB and other health problems. These can be identified using:

- Direct observation.
- Clinical check-up.

Q. How should the students with catching diseases be treated?

This was another controversial issue raised in the discussion. For students with health problems making ultimate auditions to help medically, then giving advice for the patient as well as for classmates is better. In addition to this preparing resource rooms for such kinds of problems can help them.

3. Truth about Disability and People living with disability. By Dr. Dejene Tefera



Dr. Dejene Terefa

Trainees

In the afternoon, the training proceeded with another issue of the target area. His honor, Dr. Dejene tried to explore the current realities in relation to the world and the Ethiopian context. Thus he tried to link the world views with various local realities. According to WHO's recent findings international reports indicate that almost 10% of the world are persons with disabilities. On top of this, disability and poverty do have a positive correlation. This problem is

not a problem of specific individuals rather it has a universal perspective. Recent findings again indicate that they have low access to education and job opportunities. Of the 10% of the world's total population who are living with a disability nearly 80% are found in the poor countries.

Educational accessibility: When we analyse the access to education we can see different amazing figures. For instance for grade 1-4 the access reaches to about 11% in the 2nd cycle junior–grade 5-8 it is about 5%, for grade 1-8 total this fact reaches (8%), for grade 9-12 it declines 1,5% according to the 2008 E.C. educational abstract about educational access for persons with disabilities. Relatively speaking this is encouraging but still there are different works we ought to do. The report shows that out of these the majority are males with disability.

Social life: The life of persons with disabilities especially females with disabilities can be diagnosed from their social life point of view. The social standard of the persons with disabilities is improving from time to time, but further effort has to be made to improve our knowledge and views. In the past the life of these groups was worse. For instance, in marriage, participation in different social activities, etc. was not encouraged for such persons because disability used to be considered the result of a curse from God. But still a lot has to be done.

Economic status: Economically these groups are under poverty despite the improvements we can observe here and there. This shows the direct relationship between poverty and disability. These outputs are the result of different deficiencies.

As stated earlier, Dr. Dejene briefly indicated that the persons with disabilities suffering from bad working environment, poor government support, inaccessible technological outputs, inapplicability of the laws and so on. These conditions should be changed because most of them are related to human rights. Moreover the economic empowerments can result into different changes in the life of the persons with disabilities. These all need continuous efforts to change step by step. Generally the objectives expected to be achieved by CBR are:

- ✓ to improve emotional wellbeing,
- ✓ to enhance self determination,
- ✓ to achieve social inclusion,
- ✓ to improve social and personal rights,
- ✓ to enhance personal development,
- ✓ to secure physical well being,
- ✓ to secure equality.

In the end the participants commented on the quality of the training and points that must be improved in the next trainings. They commented on how to secure the rights of the individuals with disabilities in higher institutions as well as in other places. According to the participants, such types of trainings should also be given to the target professionals who can address the important things to other citizens.

For instance, administrators, investors, politicians in different levels, construction designers as well as other persons need to share these important ideas and serve their level best to alleviate the existing problems. Mr. Ababu tried to elaborate the realities and the challenges not only in universities and colleges but also in other places. He underlined the need of a prolonged struggle to bring revolutionary changes.

Generally, the training was impact bearing and it had achieved the set objectives from the training point of view. The trainees have got different valuable points which can help us reduce the challenges facing the persons with disabilities. As to the presenters persons with disabilities do have a number of difficulties to survive. These problems can be expressed in terms of economic, socio political indices. A country's development however is measured in terms of the improvements of the life of such persons. But this is an issue of almost 1/10th of the world. Especially the training focused on the life and challenges of females with disabilities despite the periodic improvements. These persons do have different complicated problems. Teachers in schools have different responsibilities – from identification to support. Finally, the presenters and the participants ended their discussion by coming into common agreement to work on change bearing adjustments in schools and other places as well.