

Review of New Evidence on “Leprosy Rehabilitation”

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Rehabilitation

- Not limited to medical rehabilitation, but also related to socio-economic rehabilitation, education, autonomy, participation, equal opportunities, etc.



Materials reviewed

- One systematic review and some additional papers that came out during 2002-2009
- Published good quality research on this subject remains limited
- Rehabilitation is a multidisciplinary area but multi-disciplinary research on the subject is rare
- While CBR and integration are terms often used, research has usually single disability (leprosy) focus



Issues: Effectiveness of community approach

- Community approach is effective for learning new skills, activities of daily living & autonomy
- Stronger support for promoting community-based approaches in rehabilitation of persons affected with leprosy



Issues: Approach of rehabilitation

- Human rights approach – supporting people to access and exert their rights
- Strengthening wider areas of support in leprosy rehabilitation services and not just service provision including self-help groups, client organisations and advocacy



UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

- A new instrument for advocacy and national laws that is being used by organisations of disabled persons to improve access to rehabilitation
- Leprosy rehabilitation programmes and client organisations to network and participate in these processes to ensure their needs are represented in the discussions



Conclusions

- There is a huge gap in research about different aspects of rehabilitation – systematic scientific evidence is lacking but there are examples of good practices and consolidated field experience in many areas, that needs to be looked into through new research and shared more widely for field application



Conclusions (contd.)

- Many of the research issues such as human rights approach, empowerment and advocacy require multi-disciplinary approach in research that goes beyond “medical” view of issues

