

REPORT ON THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND WITHDRAWAL PROCESS OF SPARC INDIA CBR PROGRAMME by ActionAid India Bangalore Program

SPARC India is a voluntary organisation established in the year 1994 with a view to promote the holistic development of people with disabilities in the state. SPARC India initiated a CBR programme in the selected slums of Lucknow city in the year 1999 and moved to selected villages of Deva block of Bharabanki district of UP state in the year the long term partnership with ActionAid has been started in the year 2002 and Mid Term Review was conducted in the year 2004. The first Perspective Document was prepared in the year 2005. As per the initial agreement with ActionAid the project span is seven years which will come to an end by 2008. The CBR project has completed almost seven years of its implementation phase right from NF till today.

This impact assessment exercise has been conducted with the participation of all the concerned stakeholders in order to assess and document the impact and the changes observed in the lives of people with disabilities, families and communities as a result of seven years of interventions by the project. This stock taking exercise will provide an incite to the organisation and the project to strategise future plans, withdrawal strategies and sustainability plans so that community and primary stakeholders would carry forward many actions and processes initiated by the project for these years. This exercise has two main objectives. The first objective is to asses and document the impact and changes observed in the lives of primary, secondary and tiarsuary stakeholders of this project. The second objective is to understand and provide strategic direction to the project towards withdrawal and sustainability of the essential and important processes and actions initiated by the programme.

The project has been working intensively to enable people with disabilities to attain the goal of full citizenship rights. The main areas of interventions include; right to health and medical rehabilitation, right to appropriate form of education, right to livelihoods, right to dignity, right to equal participation and right to access of both natural and built environment.

Main strategies include; building human capital to facilitate the process inclusion, generating awareness, building the institutions of people with disabilities, networking with other development and state players, transfer of skills and provision of basic rehabilitation services.

The essential indicators of achieved goal and objectives include; increased; participation, involvement, visibility, decision making, dignity, self worth, respect and opportunities for people with disabilities; enhanced; mobility, functional ability, communication, self care skills, income, knowledge, skills and inclusion of people with disabilities; increased awareness, political participation and contribution of people with disabilities to the larger development processes; and increased access to natural and built environment, institutions, information, resources, opportunities, decision making and participation in all spheres of life.

This withdrawal exercise aimed at documenting the qualitative impact of the interventions, assessing the sustainability plans and withdrawal strategies, strategic directions with value addition to the existing plans and strategies towards withdrawal and sustainability.

The process was facilitated by a group of facilitators who include; Victor, Disability Unit; Sudipta and Shrikant, Lucknow regional office; Amitab, SPARC India; Kanaiah, CBR project; Field supervisors; CBR workers; people with disabilities; family members of people with disabilities; representatives of women's group; community members and the representatives of groups and federations of both disabled and non-disabled.

This process was facilitated through various tools which include, FGD with different groups; Interviews with different individuals; case study of individuals with disabilities; observation; Questionnaire; record review; meeting with implementing team and governing board; informal interactions and other participatory methods.

These tools were used to elicit information from different stakeholders who include; implementing team, Viklang Mitra, women's groups, SHG of people with disabilities, Sayyog Manch, teachers, parents of people with disabilities, Activists group, Governing board members of the organisation, charitable organisations, community members, people with disabilities and other appropriate stakeholders.

The three day exercise with field work in villages and towns helped the facilitators to have a fair understanding of the interventions of the project with a holistic manner. The facilitating team looked mainly on the issues such impact of the interventions, existing plans for sustainability, withdrawal strategies and plans, support structures for enabling sustainability, change in attitudes, knowledge and skills of the core implementing team, community CBRWS, activists, leaders, parents and People with disabilities in general to carry forward sustainability in a long run and facilitate the withdrawal process smoothly. Facilitating team also looked at the specific measures taken towards sustainability and withdrawal during few years. These plans and strategies were examined with the present situation of the project in terms of the capacity of activists, CBRWS, parents, leaders and structures both in terms of human resource and financial resources.

The observations made in the report are largely based on the secondary, primary and first hand information collected by the facilitator through FGD, interview, case study and observations with people with disabilities, parents, care givers, community members, implementing team, activists, CBRWS, leaders, office bearers of the proposed structures, and the project director. The main objective of this process was to examine the present institutions and mechanism with the given situation in the project area and villages. After examining these find out the feasibility and possibility of sustainability and withdrawal process without letting go the investment made by the project for the past 8-9 years both on community and people with disabilities.

Since this is a qualitative process generally based on the qualitative information rather statistics. There is no need of secondary or primary data to substantiate the observations or the conclusions drawn through this process.

The facilitating team mainly looked at following areas during their field visit to various villages and small towns. The areas include;

- Impact of the last 7-8 years CBR interventions on the lives of people with disabilities, families, community at large.

- Extent of the coverage of the interventions.
- Relevance and efficiency of the sustainability plans.
- Effectiveness of the withdrawal strategies.
- Capacity of the staff, people with disabilities, families and community at large to sustain common minimum activities, actions and processes initiated by the project.
- Appropriateness and adequacy of the measures taken towards withdrawal and sustainability.

The team also looked at the change in attitudes, knowledge and skills of all the appropriate stakeholders involved in the process to carry forward the process in a long run. The main observations and suggestions for further improvement are as follows:

Observations:

1. Medical interventions such as clinical assessment, surgical, therapeutic interventions, assistive devices and other need based interventions have yielded very good result in terms of increased functional abilities of people with disabilities particularly people with mobility impairments with a coverage of about 70-80% of the target group.
2. CBR Initiative has been successful in enabling 90% of people with disabilities to access medical certificate and 60% people with disabilities to access their entitlements such as pension, transport concession, scholarship and other facilities.
3. Awareness programmes have been proved effective in raising the awareness level and changing the attitudes of people with disabilities, families and communities to an extent of 40%.
4. Educational interventions have succeeded in enrolling 70% people/children with disabilities in to the regular schools with little modification in the physical environment of the schools which is beneficial to children with mobility impairment and changing the attitudes of the teachers.
5. Micro credit and micro finance activities of the project and groups have enabled almost all adult disabled people to engage in meaningful and gainful livelihood activities and earn their livelihood to supplement the income of the family.
6. Mobilisation efforts have enabled women to organise them selves in to SHGS and under take savings and credit activities with effective bank linkages. They have also raised and addressed few issues with regard to the general development of the village.
7. The attempts made to organise people with disabilities as exclusive and inclusive groups have are still in the initial stage and require adequate inputs to strengthen them selves to raise and address the issues concerning people with disabilities.
8. Viklang Mitras have acquired adequate knowledge and skills to provide simple therapeutic interventions, referral services, facilitate meetings of the groups and general development activities but they need equip them selves with influencing, lobbying and advocacy skills to address issue effectively.
9. The implementing team is equipped with knowledge and skills necessary for providing basic rehabilitation services to people with disabilities but need to be equipped with mobilization, advocacy skills, right and current perspective and attitudes and knowledge on legislations.
10. The initial efforts to build alliance with women groups have succeeded in launching collective campaigns at the micro level to access entitlements from the state.
11. The concept of Sayyog Manch and Sayyog Nidi is a very good initiative which needs systematic planning, capacity building exercises to the members and management skills.

12. The Assistive devices repair and maintenance unit is providing its services to needy and the sustainability plan in collaboration with CRRC Lucknow is a very good step towards withdrawal and sustainability of this activity.

Areas of concerns and suggestions for improvement:

1. There is a great need to build the right and present perspective on disabilities among implementing team

Though they are equipped with adequate knowledge and skills.

2. The level of understanding on people with disabilities act 95 is very poor among implementing team and more or less nil among people with disabilities. There is a great need and urgency to build the capacity of all on specific legislations concerning people with disabilities.
3. Data collection, processing and documentation process needs to be institutionalized and computerized. The project monitoring mechanism needs to be regularized and put in place with effective and functional systems.
4. Effective, appropriate and adequate measures should be taken to stream line the financial systems at the project level in order to ensure timely deposit of cash collected by the community groups and prevent misappropriation or misutilisation.
5. The implementing team is not aware of the withdrawal process and clear and specific plans and strategies towards withdrawal and sustainability. There is a great need to develop specific and clear withdrawal strategies and sustainability plans in consultation with implementing team and primary target group.
6. Staff reduction and clear definition of changing roles and responsibilities of implementing team and community groups needs to be developed in consultation with the implementing team so that they can invest their energy and time more on sustainability issues.
7. The involvement and role of governing board seems to be very limited and board should proactively involve in the planning, strategy development, formulation of policies, establishing functional and effective systems both at the organizational and project level.
8. There is a great need to focus the future interventions and strategies on those areas which have got less attention so far. The areas include; People/children with severe and profound disabilities, multiple disabilities, people/children with visual, hearing, intellectual and psychiatric disabilities in order to enhance their functional ability and participation.
9. There is a great need to establish effective linkages with SSA and state education sector and adequately equip the teachers of regular schools with appropriate knowledge and skills to provide quality education for children with visual, hearing and intellectual disabilities. Home Based Education programme of SSA needs to be activated and linked to Viklang Mitrs.
10. There is a great need to undertake massive capacity building programmes for disabled activists on leadership, management and advocacy in order to address issues concerning them effectively.
11. There is a great need to revisit and review the concept of integrated SHGS and mixed SHGS of disabled and nondisabled since these groups are not proactively addressing the issues concerning disabled people and enabling people with disabilities to take up leadership roles.
12. The cooperative business initiative proved not effective and served the purpose hence there is a need to reconsider the concept and systematic and meticulous planning.

13. The micro level processes at the project level are missing the links of macro level processes and disabled people's movement. Effective linkages should be established with the macro level processes.
14. The processes initiated at the project level should significantly contribute to the district and state level process of UP Viklang Manch and SPARC India needs to take proactive measures to ensure this process.
15. There is a need to establish effective general grievance and grievances concerning sexual harassment for the staff both at the organizational and project level.
16. It is essential and important to establish effective monitoring mechanism at the project level in order to assess and review day to day activities, development, programmes, activities and conflicts.
17. An effective financial systems needs to be established at the project level in order to ensure effective and timely deposit, utilisation and avoid misappropriation and misutilisation of community and project money.
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Source:

1. Presentation on the project interventions and impact, Implementing team, Project office, Deva, July 16 2007, 12.00 PM.
2. School visit, GOVT Primary and higher primary school, Peed, Deva, July 17 2007, 10.00 AM.
3. Visit to Asha Kiran, Missionary school, Douri Har, July 17 2007, 11.30 AM.
4. FGD with women's SHAG, Gandhi Nagar, July 17 2007, 12.30 PM.
5. FGD with Sayyog Manch, Gwari, July 17 2007, 03.30 PM.
6. FGD with Viklang Mitra, Gwari, July 17 2007, 04.30 PM.
7. Visit to Assistive devices repair and maintenance unit, Kesarwa, July 17 2007, 05.30 PM.
8. July 17 2007, 05.30 PM.
9. FGD with SHAG of people with disabilities and visit to dairy unit, Dou Mau, July 17 2007, 06.00 PM.
10. FGD with implementing team, Project office, Deva, July 18 2007, 10.00 AM.
11. Visit to Therapy centre, Deva, July 18 2007, 02.00 PM.
12. FGD with Governing board, SPARC India, School for children with CP, Lucknow, July 18 2007, 05.00 PM.
13. Interactions with Project Director, SPARC India.