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**Community-Based Rehabilitation in  
the City:**

*- A Case of Jamestown-Accra, Ghana*

**Alexander Kwesi Kassah**

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# **Community-Based Rehabilitation in the city:**

## **A case of Jamestown-Accra, Ghana.**

**ALEXANDER KWESI KASSAH**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The adoption of the «World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons» by the United Nations General Assembly in 1982 paved the way for governments and people of the world to take a closer look at the living conditions of disabled people. The Program aims at providing effective measures for the prevention of disability, rehabilitation and the realisation of goals of «full participation» and «equality» of disabled persons in social life and development (UN, 1983).

Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) came to be recognised as a means of attaining the goals mentioned above in many developing countries, including Ghana. According to Helander, CBR is a strategy designed to meet the needs of populations which are mostly rural and have little or no access to rehabilitation services (Helander, 1992). He described CBR as a strategy for enhancing the quality of life of disabled people by providing more equitable opportunities and by promoting and protecting their human rights (Helander, 1992). The approach also seeks to resolve the problem of integration by direct involvement of disabled persons, their families, and the entire community in which they live (ILO, UNESCO, WHO, 1994). The goal of community programmes according to Peat, is to enable a person with disability to establish and maintain a lifestyle in which they enjoy equal access to social, cultural and economic privileges and opportunities (Peat, 1997).

ALEXANDER KWAME KARAH

### 1.6 Introduction

The adoption of the 'World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons' by the United Nations General Assembly in 1982 paved the way for governments and people of the world to take a closer look at the living conditions of disabled people. The program aimed at providing effective measures for the prevention of disability, rehabilitation and the realization of goals of 'full participation and equality' of disabled persons in social life and

development (UN, 1982).

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cultural and economic privileges and opportunities (Fox, 1987).



Community-Based Rehabilitation was initiated in Ghana by the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare in June 1992. This step was taken in collaboration with the Ministries of Health, Education and some Non-Governmental Organisations. Financial backing was given by the Swedish Organisation of the Handicapped International Aid (SHIA) and the Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD). The World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) were instrumental in strengthening the capacity of the Community-Based Rehabilitation Program (CBRP) through technical guidance and training of personnel (Hoel, 1996).

Community-Based Rehabilitation Programs are more often than not, designed to meet the rehabilitation needs of rural communities. In the rural communities, where everybody knows everybody else, the bonds of solidarity and the spirit of communal help is often high.

Voluntary work is thus a more welcome activity. This is to say that people easily volunteer or come together to resolve common problems, for example build latrines, till the land for farming purposes, harvest crops, to mention but few of them. In other words community members put together their resources to help members in need. Such pro-social or helping behaviour is often devoid of direct economic strings or considerations. Choosing Jamestown which is located at the city centre of Accra as a district for CBR activities, thus raises many fundamental problems. The main problem here is how can community-based rehabilitation thrive in the city? Life in the city often provides for greater individualism and a struggle for survival. Can a voluntary program based on the unemployed city poor survive?

Secondly, it seems that recruitment of disabled people may not be easy in the city. Disabled people seem to be exposed to other ways of survival in the city, for example begging. Apart

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Community-Based Rehabilitation Programs are more often than not designed to meet the rehabilitated needs of rural communities. In the rural communities, where everybody knows everybody else, the bonds of solidarity and the spirit of communal help is often high. Voluntary workers take a more welcome activity. This is to say that people easily volunteer or come together to resolve common problems. For example, build latrines, till the land for farming purposes, harvest crops, to mention but few of them. In other words, community members put together their resources to help members in need. Such reciprocal or helping behaviour is often devoid of direct economic strings or considerations. (Creating Inclusion which is located at the city centre of Accra as a district for CBR, will discuss the relevance of fundamental workers. The main problem here is how can community-based rehabilitation thrive in the city? Life in the city often presents the greatest individual and a struggle for survival. Can a voluntary program based on the principles of the rural setting? Secondly, it seems that involvement of disabled people may not be easy in the city. Disabled people seem to be exposed to other ways of survival in the city, for example begging. Some

from the fact that begging in the city, provides the quickest way of getting ones daily bread and independence, it is seen by many disabled people as a less stigmatising condition and also one of the fastest ways disabled people and their families can avoid stigmatising environments (Kassah, 1998). By resorting to begging, disabled people seem to contribute economically to the upkeep of the family, thereby playing a highly valued social role. Are community-based rehabilitation programs capable of competing with the other forces in the city which pull disabled people and their families?

Qualitative interview was mainly used in the Jamestown CBRP study. Jamestown is one of the CBRP districts in the southern belt of Ghana. The area is subdivided into four sub-districts or zones. These are Akwashong, Atukpai, Sakumetsoshishie and Shuino. The local supervisors in charge of the zones were interviewed. Some disabled persons and their families were also visited for exchange of views on the program. Other major respondents were the project manager, the deputy project manager and the CBR agent responsible for the district. The green light for the commencement of data collection was given by the director of Social Welfare in Ghana.

## **2.0 Jamestown CBR**

Jamestown CBR is being steered by a CBR Agent, Local Supervisors and a five man CBR committee. CBR Agents are full-time employees of the Department of Social Welfare. They have it as a duty to create awareness in their respective districts, encourage communities to establish rehabilitation committees, to support communities to improve the conditions of people with disabilities, to train volunteers in the communities or local supervisors and last but not the least inform communities about available services and opportunities.

from the fact that begging in the city provides the only way of getting extra daily bread and independence, it is seen by many disabled people as a less stigmatizing condition and also one of the fastest ways disabled people and their families can avoid stigmatizing environments (Kassari, 1988). By resorting to begging, disabled people seem to maintain occasionally to the upkeep of the family, thereby playing a highly valued social role. An interesting aspect of rehabilitation programs consists of cooperation with the other forces in the city which guide disabled people and their families.

Qualitative interview was mainly used in the Jamstown CBR study. Jamstown is one of the CBR districts in the southern belt of Ghana. The area is subdivided into four sub-districts or zones. These are Akweshong, Akyem, Sakumatsesimie and Shumso. The local supervisors in charge of the zones were interviewed. Some disabled persons and their families were also visited for exchange of views on the program. Other informants were the project manager, the deputy project manager and the CBR signi responsible for the district. The green light for the commencement of data collection was given by the director of Social Welfare in Ghana.

Social Welfare in Ghana

## 2.1. Jamstown CBR

Jamstown CBR is being started by a CBR Area Local Supervisor and a District CBR committee. CBR Areas are led by the employees of the Department of Social Welfare. They have it as a duty to create awareness in their respective districts, encourage community to establish rehabilitation workshops, to support committees to improve the condition of people with disabilities, to work voluntarily in the communities or local supervisors and last but not the least inform communities about available services and opportunities.

Local Supervisors are volunteers selected by the community through the chiefs. Preferably, a man and a woman are chosen to perform this role. They are trained by the CBR Agents in simple rehabilitation techniques, for example how to complete and use registration/assessment forms and the World Health Organisation manual respectively. The Local Supervisors have it as a duty to identify people with disabilities (PWDs), assess their needs, train family members in how to support and interact with PWDs, refer PWDs and their family members to services and opportunities within the community in the form of education, skills training and health, and last but not the least discuss with CBR Agents opportunities which may exist outside the community. Family members are also trained by the local supervisors to provide ADL (Activities of Daily Living) training (O'Toole, 1996).

A Community Rehabilitation committee comprises of a disabled person or a relative, a health worker (nurse & others), a teacher (peripatetic) and a church leader or philanthropist. The responsibilities of the community rehabilitation committee are; to meet and discuss issues pertaining to people with disabilities in the community, select dedicated individuals in the community to be trained as local supervisors, include disability issues in all community development activities in the community, and to initiate activities to improve the lives of people with disabilities, and their families, and to ensure their human rights (CBR-Team, 1995).

**Table 1. Disabled people in Jamestown CBR**

Primary disability	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Seeing	5	6
Hearing/speaking	22	26
Moving	45	53

Local supervisors are volunteers selected by the community through the class. Typically, a man and a woman are chosen to perform this role. They are trained by the CBR Agents in simple rehabilitation techniques, for example how to construct and use repetition equipment forms and the World Health Organization manual respectively. The local supervisors have it as a duty to identify people with disabilities (PWDs), assess their needs, train family members in how to support and interact with PWDs, refer PWDs and their family members to services and opportunities within the community in the form of education, skills training and health and last but not the least, discuss with CBR Agents opportunities which may exist outside the community. Family members are also trained by the local supervisors to provide ARI.

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1977)

Table 1. Disabled people in Jambesuan CBR

Primary disability	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Seeing	2	0
Hearing/Deafness	13	26
Moving	15	30

No feeling	2	2
Strange behaviour	1	1
Fits	5	6
Learning	5	6
Other difficulties	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

**CBR Agent, July 1997**

The Jamestown program took off after the CBR Agent responsible for Jamestown met the chiefs and elders of the district and sensitised them about disabilities. The meeting was directed at educating them to erase the previous notions that disabilities are curses on the families and that disabled people should not be seen at public places. They were also told about the fact that disability should not be seen as sickness and that disabled people can be productive and active members of society if granted the necessary support.

As can be seen in the table 1, 85 disabled people have been registered at Jamestown. These include people with the following disabilities; seeing, hearing/speaking, moving, no feeling, strange behaviour, fits and learning. Six percent (6%) of disabled people at Jamestown have seeing disability, twenty-two percent (22%) have hearing and speaking disability, 53 percent

Primary disability	No showing improvement	Showing improvement
Seeing	5	1
Hearing/speaking	15	7
Moving	25	28
No feeling	-	2

No feeling	1	1
Strange behaviour	1	1
Fits	3	3
Learning	2	2
Other disorders	-	-
TOTAL	8	100

CBR Agent, July 1987

The Jamstown program took off after the CBR Agent responsible for Jamstown met the chief and others of the district and presented them about disabilities. The meeting was directed at educating them to make the previous notions that disabilities are curses in the families and that disabled people should not be seen in public places. They were assured about the fact that disability should not be seen as sickness and that disabled people can be productive and active members of society if granted the necessary support.

As can be seen in the table 1, 35 disabled people have been registered at Jamstown. These include people with the following disabilities: seeing hearing, learning, growing, no feeling, strange behaviour, fits and learning. Six per cent (6%) of disabled people at Jamstown have seeing disability, twenty-two percent (22%) have hearing and speaking disability, 33 percent



have disabilities pertaining to moving, and the remaining 15 % have disabilities described as strange behaviour, no feeling, learning and fits.

### 3.0 Discussion

The CBR agent in charge of the Jamestown district pointed out in an interview that one of the disabled people recruited to the program was left in bed and had been indoors for the past eight years. Many have not even dreamed about the possibility of seeing the sun since wheelchairs were expensive and difficult to acquire. Neither did they have the chance to undergo therapy to enable them become mobile. Some disabled people in the area were given little or no attention, and have also not acquired «ADL» or activities of daily living training. The idea of sending disabled people to school never occurred to many of the inhabitants. The «normal» children were given greater priority when it comes to educating children in many households. In any case, there seems to be no provision in the public school system for admission of disabled children. Since the commencement of the CBR program at Jamestown, there has been an increase in awareness about the causes of disability, even though the feeling of stigma and the thought that disability is a curse for something one has done wrong in the family, has not been completely erased.

**Table 2. LIFE-QUALITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (%)**

Primary disability	No. showing improvement	% showing improvement
Seeing	1	1,0
Hearing/speaking	15	17,7
Moving	28	32,9
No feeling	-	0,0

have disabilities pertaining to moving, and the remaining 12.7% have disabilities described as strange behaviour, no feeling, learning and the

### 3.0 - Discussion

The CHR agent in charge of the handover district pointed out in an interview session of the disabled people recruited to the program was left in bed and had been there for the past eight years. Many have not even dreamed about the possibility of seeing the sun since wheelchairs were expensive and difficult to acquire. Whether did they have the chance to undergo therapy to enable them become mobile. Some disabled people in the area were given little or no attention, and have also not acquired AIDs or activities of daily living training. The idea of sending disabled people to school is not accepted by many of the stakeholders. The enrolment children were given greater priority when it comes to educating children in many households. In any case, there seems to be no provision in the public school system for admission of disabled children. Since the commencement of the CHR program at handover there has been an increase in awareness about the cause of disability, even though the feeling of stigma and the thought that disability is a curse for something one has done wrong in the family, has not been completely eradicated.

Table 1: LIFE-QUALITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (%)

Primary disability	No. persons	Percentage
Seeing	1	1.0
Hearing/feeling	13	12.7
Moving	28	27.0
No feeling	28	27.0

Strange behaviour	-	0,0
Fits	4	4,7
Learning	4	4,7
Other difficulties	-	0,0
TOTAL	52	61,0

### CBR Agent, July 1997

With the help of the local supervisors, some disabled people were identified and given the necessary support. This is to say that efforts have been made to improve the quality of life of some of the disabled people who joined the program. According to the CBR agent responsible for Jamestown, 52 of the 85 disabled people have admitted having some improvement in their daily lives after joining the CBR program. Some could now take part in household chores (sweep the house and wash dishes), and walk around on their own. One boy who hitherto could not walk has not only learnt to walk but also learnt to ride a bicycle. It was also made possible for some others to acquire wheel chairs, which means that they could move around freely in the community, an important element of Community-Based Rehabilitation Program. Some have gained admission into public schools while others have gone into trades, some of which are socially devalued, or place them in low status roles, for example shoe repairing. In short, many of them have started doing things they could not do earlier. Table two gives an insight into the percentage of disabled persons showing improved quality of life or have met some of their needs after being registered as active members of the Jamestown CBR program. Even though CBR seems to be doing relatively well at Jamestown, the program is far from realising its goals. The first problem is a practical, organisational or rather structural one. Poplin, pointed out that communities differ not only in terms of uniqueness, but also in terms

Strategic behavior	-	4.0
Fits	4	4.7
Learning	4	4.7
Other difficulties	-	0.0
TOTAL	23	67.0

CER Agent, July 1987

With the help of the local supervisor, some detailed points were identified and given the necessary support. It has to say that efforts have been made to improve the quality of life of some of the hardest people who joined the program. According to the CER agent reports for January, 25 of the hardest people have admitted having some improvement in their daily lives after joining the CER program. Some could now take part in household chores (swap the house work with others), and walk around on their own. One boy who earlier could not walk at all now can walk but also learn to ride a bicycle. It was also made possible for some others to learn wheel chair, which means that they could go to work freely in the community, an important element of Community-Based Rehabilitation Program. Some have gained admission into some schools while others have gone into higher schools which are socially deprived, or placed them in low income areas for example, also reporting that many of them are started doing things they could not do earlier. The two given an insight into the percentage of their of users showing improved quality of their lives. Some of their needs after being registered as active members of the Jametown CER program have been through CER agents to be being met. Well at Jametown, the program is far from reaching its goals. The first problem is a political, organizational or other structural one. Fofin pointed out that government's different role in terms of responses, but also in terms

of variations in ideology (Poplin, 1972). Taking into consideration the variations, Borkensha and Hodge suggested, that the type of social relations within community should determine the choice of interventions that may be used (Borkensha and Hodge, 1969). The Jamestown project is cited in a city community, but based on the principles characteristic of rural communities. Locating CBR at Jamestown seems to contradict Helander's view, that Community-Based Rehabilitation is to serve people in the rural areas with little or no access to rehabilitation services (Helander, 1992). Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft/ Gessellschaft* dichotomies may be to some extent of analytical significance here, especially in pointing out the need to take seriously variations in society (Tönnies, 1957). This is also to avoid planting strategies meant for rural communities on the city communities. Despite the criticisms levelled against the dichotomies, it cannot be denied that the rural communities and city communities are characterised to some degree by unique behavioural patterns. While excessive individualism, impersonality, acquisitiveness and rational calculativeness are said to constitute non-communal relations, communal relations seem to be characterised by a high degree of intimacy, emotional depth, moral commitment, social cohesion, and continuity in time (Nisbet, 1994). Care must therefore be taken when models meant for the rural community are to be applied to the city community. One special difference is that city dwellers and rural dwellers operate with different forms of solidarity. While many in the rural communities may operate to some degree with what in Durkheimian terms could be referred to as mechanic solidarity, many city community members may operate to a greater extent with organic solidarity (Durkheim, 1893). This implies also that the premises for survival of CBR in both communities differ, so are the daily challenges. While many city poor find themselves in an ongoing struggle for survival and have little or no time for voluntary activities, their counterparts in the rural communities might have a more accommodating attitude towards

of variations in ideology (Poplin, 1973). Taking into consideration the variations, Jankowski and Hodge suggested that the type of social relations within community should determine the choice of interventions that may be used (Jankowski and Hodge, 1989). The Jankowski project is cited in a city community, but based on the principles characteristic of rural communities. Looking back at Jankowski seems to contradict Helander's view, that Community-Based Rehabilitation is to serve people in the rural areas with help of its assets to rehabilitated services (Helander, 1993; Jankowski, 1993). Jankowski's definition may be to some extent of methodological significance here, especially in pointing out the need to take seriously variations in society (Jankowski, 1987). There is also a third starting strategy meant for rural organizations in the city communities. It points the criticism level of the dichotomy of rural-urban that the rural communities and city communities are characterized to some degree by unique behavioral patterns. Which successive path is chosen: impersonality, egalitarianism and rational calculation are said to constitute one communal relations, communal relations seem to be characterized by a high degree of intimacy, emotional depth, moral commitment, social cohesion, and continuity in time (Hodge, 1984). One must be careful when words are used for the rural community and to be applied to the city community. One special difference is that city dwellers and rural dwellers engage with different forms of solidarity, which exist in the rural communities may operate to some degree with what in the Jankowski terms could be referred to as mechanical solidarity (Jankowski, 1983). The latter also that the evidence for equality of CBDR in both communities differs as we the daily challenges. While many city poor neighborhoods in an ongoing struggle for survival and have little or no time for voluntary activities, the counterparts in the rural communities might have a more accommodating attitude towards

voluntary activities. The emphasis here is that pro-social and solidaric behaviour is more characteristic of rural communities as against the city community. Pro-social behaviour in the city is often less characterised by the fact that people readily help others without attaching economic strings. Apart from the poor incentives attached to the CBR agent role, Jamestown CBR is overdependent on the goodwill of community members for the implementation of the program. While the CBR agents are full-time paid government employees, the Local Supervisors, who do the most difficult task of recruiting the participants receive no payment for their efforts. The model of reaching people with disabilities based on the conception that all communities constitute units for voluntary social action, is problematic. Following Helander, the community spirit is not easy to identify in this setting (Helander, 1992). This problem may be compounded by the waning trust between the CBR Agents, Local Supervisors and Rehabilitation Committee members. Due to the fact that the CBR program is financed by foreign non-governmental bodies, there is the tendency on the part of the volunteers to develop some form of mistrust. The suspicion that the CBR Agents and other government officials may be depriving them of what is due them, is ever present. A politics of mistrust could dampen the spirit of the Local Supervisors in their efforts to help their disabled people. Simply the city community members see their role in the program as worth some economic remuneration. Development of mistrust as a result of not considering their roles in the program in economic terms may ruin the program. The city poor, unlike the rural counterparts seem to operate with a different form of economic rationality and hardly accept the idea of working without any form of remuneration. Social cohesion exists in the city community, but unlike the rural communities, it does not necessarily make solidaric action easy.

voluntary activities. The emphasis here is that pro-social and coherent behavior is more characteristic of rural communities as against the city community. The social behavior in the city is often less characterized by the fact that people readily help others without asking economic strings. Apart from the poor incentives attached to the CBR agent role, the CBR is overemphasized on the goodwill of community members for the implementation of the program. While the CBR agents are full-time paid government employees, the local Supervisors, who do the most difficult task of teaching the outsiders receive no payment for their efforts. The award of teaching credit with disabilities based on the cooperation that all communities containing costs for voluntary social action is problematic. Following Heider, the community spirit is not easy to identify in the village (Heider, 1957). The problem may be compounded by the widening rift between the CBR Agents, Local Supervisors and Rehabilitation Committee members. Due to the fact that the CBR program is financed by foreign non-governmental bodies, there is the tendency on the part of the volunteers to develop some form of mistrust. The suspicion that the CBR Agents and other government officials may be depriving them of what is due them is ever present. A similar question could be asked the agent of the Local Supervisors in their efforts to help their disabled people. Surely the city community members see their role in the program as worthwhile economic investments. Development of mistrust as a result of not considering their role in the program as economic gains may run the program. The city government makes the trust counts more to operate with a different form of economic responsibility and hardly a sign of working without any form of compensation. Social cohesion exists in the city community, but unlike the rural communities, it does not necessarily imply a similar action



Another major problem is how to recruit disabled people to the program. According to an informant, it is difficult to get those responsible for the disabled to come out readily and be part of the program. Further, local supervisors being community members are not unaware of the social consequences of exposing families with disabled members. In the first place, parents or relatives of disabled people are still being haunted by what Goffman refers to as courtesy stigma (Goffman, 1963). This is the case because many still feel ashamed of being parents or close associates of disabled persons. In other words parents of disabled people, are still looked down upon by members of the community (Kassah, 1998). Many will rather not disclose the fact that they have a disabled child to avoid stigmatising themselves and the rest of the family. In Ghana many people still find it difficult to choose their marriage partners from a family which has a disabled member. The knowledge after marriage that a partner has a disabled family member may easily result in divorce. It therefore takes the agents much time to identify people with disabilities and give them the necessary support.

Recruitment to the program is also dependent on the past experiences from similar programs. Many disabled people who have acquired training at rehabilitation centres do not put their knowledge to use. According to the CBR agent, it is not enough to train and give tools. What happens after acquiring skills? Apart from the fact that disabled people are pushed into «socially devalued roles», borrowing Wolfensbergers terms, that is, in low status trades, initial capital is needed to get them started after acquiring the skills(Wolfensberger, 1992). They do not only need a place to live and enjoy family life without interference from family members, but also a place to practice their trade, money to buy the initial inputs like raw materials and tools. The point here, is that the majority of people who live in the community are poor, parents of disabled people inclusive. Most of them can neither pay the admission fees nor the graduation fees, let alone rent a store or purchase the needed tools to enable their wards

Another major problem is how to recruit disabled people to the program. According to an informant, it is difficult to get those responsible for the disabled to come out readily and be part of the program. Further, local agencies and community centers are not aware of the social consequences of exposing families with disabled members in the first place. Parents or relatives of disabled people are still being treated as what informants refer to as "country singers" (Latham, 1983). This is the case because many still feel ashamed of being parents or close associates of disabled people. In other words, parents of disabled people are still looked down upon by members of the community (Kasson, 1987). Many will rather not disclose the fact that they have a disabled child to avoid embarrassing themselves and the rest of the family. In China many people still find it difficult to discuss their disabled family members with a family which has a disabled member. The knowledge after marriage that a partner has a disabled family member may easily result in divorce. Informants believe the stigma given time to identify people with disabilities and give them the necessary support.

Recruitment to the program is also dependent on the past experience from similar programs. Many disabled people who have acquired training at rehabilitation centers do not feel that knowledge is lost. According to the CHR agent, it is not enough to train and give work. What happens after acquiring skills? Apart from the fact that disabled people are pushed into socially deviant roles, borrowing Wolcott's terms, that is, in low status, under-mental capital is needed to get them started after acquiring the skills (Wolcott, 1987). They do not only need a place to live and to go to, family life without interference from family members, but also a place to gather their own money to buy the initial capital for new investments and tools. The point here is that the majority of people who live in the community are poor parents of disabled people. Most of them can neither pay the admission fees nor the graduation fees, let alone rent a store or purchase the needed tools to enable their wards

practice the trade they have learnt in the city. The individualistic nature of many people in the city which is encouraged by the struggle for survival make it difficult for community members to pull resources together to provide the things needed for sustaining community based rehabilitation efforts. The thought of acquiring knowledge that can only be put on the shelves, kicks off many disabled people and their families from joining the program. The above point is strengthened by what a disabled man who has a wife and seven children said. He pointed out, that even though he graduated at one of the rehabilitation centres, he had to go begging because of lack of financial support to practice his trade. «There is therefore no need learning trade that cannot be put to use», he lamented. These experiences can to a large extent have a discouraging effects on those who are being convinced to join the program.

Disabled people in the city are open to other opportunities as compared to their counterparts in the rural communities. Begging is one of the major opportunities open to many disabled people in the city. While begging for instance is not frowned upon by many city dwellers, it is associated with shame or stigmatised, a condition which labelling theorists refer to as «difficult to reverse» (Friedson, 1970; Albrecht et al, 1982). People who are so labelled in the rural communities, unlike their city counterparts become victims of society and subjected to strict formal and informal sanctions. Begging does not only constitute the fastest and easiest way disabled people can adjust to the hard conditions in the city, it offers the disabled person the chance to improve upon his «spoilt identity» (Goffman, 1963). The rich in all human societies are often revered and many disabled people who have acquired some wealth are no exceptions. Begging may uplift the person's image in society. This however may have negative consequences or may constitute a great threat to recruitment of disabled people to CBR programs in the city. Begging in the cities, seem to constitute a pull factor or a centripetal force which easily attracts disabled people to the city centres. Rumours that

practice the trade they have learnt in the city. The individuals cause of many people in the city which is encouraged by the struggle for survival make it difficult for community members to pull resources together to provide the things needed for sustaining community based rehabilitation efforts. The thought of acquiring knowledge that can only be put on the shelves, kicks off many disabled people and their families from joining the program. The above point is strengthened by what a disabled man who has a wife and seven children said. He pointed out that even though he graduated at one of the rehabilitation centers, he had to go begging because of lack of financial support to practice his trade. There is therefore no need learning trade that cannot be put to use in the market. These experiences can to a large extent have a discouraging effect on those who are being encouraged to join the program. Disabled people in the city are open to other opportunities as compared to their counterparts in the rural communities. Begging is one of the major opportunities open to many disabled people in the city. While begging for trade is not frowned upon by many city dwellers, it is associated with stigma or stigmatized conditions which labelling theorists refer to as difficult to reverse (Frison, 1978; Albrecht et al, 1985). People who are so labelled in the rural communities, unlike their counterparts become victims of society and resistant to strict formal and informal sanctions. Begging does not only constitute the least and easiest way disabled people can adjust to the hard conditions in the city, it offers the disabled person the chance to improve upon his or her ill health (Kilham, 1963). The rich in all human societies are often targeted and many disabled people who have acquired some wealth may do so. Begging may uplift the person's image in society. This however may have negative consequences or may constitute a great hindrance to the person if disabled people in CBR programs in the city. Begging in the city, even to constitute a full factor of occupational force which assists street-vended people to the city centers. The above that

begging is lucrative in the city makes it difficult for disabled persons in the city to get involved in CBR activities (Kassah, 1998). These rumours are compounded by the fact that some rich family members capitalise on the situation and exploit disabled people. It was pointed out by one informant that, some rich people buy wheelchairs for some disabled people and put them in the streets to beg. Wheelchairs are expensive (about 600000 Ghanaian cedis/2000 Norwegian kroner) and are beyond the budget line of most disabled people.

Another side of the issue is the general attitude of Ghanaians towards disabled people in the city. Many are most often than not full of pity and readily give alms to beggars who parade the streets. This behaviour cannot be explained only by their sympathetic view of disability, but also by their traditional and religious beliefs which are deeply rooted in the social structure. In any case the sympathy stems from their beliefs that the living, the dead and the yet to be born play active roles in the Ghanaian's daily life (Sarpong, 1974). The ancestors or the dead have the responsibility of rewarding or punishing the living when they do good and bad respectively. In the rural areas people keep their disabled people at home, and try to do their best for them until they retire to their graves. By so doing, they avoid punishment from their ancestors and gods, of which sending them another disabled child, and bareness in the family are considered as some of such punishments. This caring behaviour, it seems, is imported into the city and manifests itself in a form of readily giving alms to disabled people in the street. Accra is a hetero-religious city and many inhabitants of the city may best be described as notoriously religious and often combine traditional religious activities with the imported ones. Giving of alms may often be seen in terms of receiving blessings from God. The teachings of the Koran, also seem to reinforce this behaviour, since giving alms is encouraged.

begging is intuitive in the city makes it difficult for disabled persons in the city to get involved in CSR activities (Kassab, 1998). These activities are encouraged by the fact that some rich family members capitulate on the situation and exploit disabled people. It was pointed out by one informant that, some rich people buy wheelchairs for some disabled people and put them in the streets to beg. Wheelchairs are expensive (about 600000 Ghanaian cedis) (Nwagwu, 2009) (Nwagwu, 2009) and are beyond the budget line of most disabled people. Another side of the issue is the general attitude of Ghanaians towards disabled people in the city. Many are more often than not full of pity and readily give them to beggars who parade the streets. This behavior cannot be explained only by their sympathetic view of disability but also by their traditional and religious beliefs which are deeply rooted in the social structure. In any case, the sympathy stems from their beliefs that the living, the dead and the yet to be born play active roles in the Ghanaian's daily life (Kwame, 1974). The sympathy of the dead have the responsibility of rewarding or punishing the living when they do good and bad respectively. In the past, some people keep their disabled people at home, and try to do their best for them until they return to their graves. By so doing, they avoid punishment from their ancestors and gods of a fact which is more than a fact. In fact, the disabled people in the family are considered as some of such punishment. This saying however, it seems to be imported into the city and migrants' culture as a form of readily giving alms to disabled people in the street. Alms is a basic-religious duty and many inhabitants of the city may not be described as non-religious persons and often combine religious activities with the imported ones. Given, it also may often be seen in terms of receiving alms from God. The teachings of the Koran also seem to reinforce this behavior, since giving alms is encouraged.

Can the preference of begging be explained in economic terms? Some of the beggars, according to an informant, are well to do economically, and some even own taxies, but could still be found at strategic places in the city begging. An informant pointed out that on one occasion, officials of a non-governmental organisation went into the streets to discourage some of these people from coming back to the streets by giving them huge sums of money, but to their surprise found them back to base after some few days. It can therefore be said, that it is not necessarily the desire to get rich which is paramount to their decision to be on the streets begging. Rather, this phenomenon could be explained in terms of an acquisition of a new identity which is attached to the new role as beggars. Many find out that begging which has hitherto been a taboo and strictly sanctioned, is an acceptable way of life. In the streets, many disabled people interact with others who do not consider begging as stigmatising.

Feelings of stigma is also reduced as a result when disabled people experience that they are no longer dependants, but productive members of the family. Their social needs also seem to be met as a result. In other words, they cease to be reduced to the four walls of their rooms, waiting although sometimes in vain, for their daily bread. Given the above, it is not easy for many disabled people to join programs that restrict them from begging activities.

The last but not the least factor in favour of begging is the fact that a majority of disabled people in the city are engaged in begging activities, meanwhile plans have not be made to include them in the program. Jamestown is the only area chosen in the Accra area to participate in the program. Other communities in the city have therefore been left out of the program. As mentioned already, those who are outside the program may serve as bad influence on those in the program. While those participating in the project are forbidden or

Can the persistence of begging be explained in economic terms? Some of the reasons, according to an informant, are well to do essentially, and some even own houses, but could still be found at strategic places in the city begging. An informant pointed out that on one occasion, officials of a non-governmental organization went into the streets to discourage some of these people from coming back to the streets by giving them large sums of money, but to their surprise found them back to back after some few days. It can therefore be said that it is not necessarily the desire to get rich which is paramount to them, but to be on the streets begging. Rather, this phenomenon could be explained in terms of an acquisition of a new identity which is attached to the role of beggar. Many find out that begging is such has helped them a lot and they are strongly attached to it as a respectable way of life. In the streets, many disabled people are seen with others who do not consider begging as a disgraceful thing. Feelings of stigma is also reduced as a result when disabled people experience that they are no longer dependent, but productive members of the family. Their social needs also seem to be met as a result. In other words, they seem to be related to the life style of their towns. Writing strongly continues to say, for their daily bread. Given the above, it is not surprising that many disabled people in poor countries like Kenya have been begging since then. The fact is that the main factor in favour of begging is the fact that a majority of disabled people in the city are engaged in begging activities, because their needs have not been met. In the program, however, it is the only one chosen in the Area area to participate in the program. Other organizations in the city have therefore been left out of the program. As mentioned already, those who are outside the program may serve as bad influence on those in the program. While these organizations in the program are trying to



fired when seen begging, a large percentage of disabled people are not bound by this sanction.

The minority who are members of the program may easily fall victim to the desires to beg.

#### **4.0 Summary**

CBR is an important strategy to enable disabled people to live an improved life quality. The Jamestown CBR has made it possible for some disabled people to move around, go to school, learn trade and participate in social activities in the district. The program is however burdened with structural problems. The program has been initiated making limited room for city/rural dichotomies, even though research has been very critical of planting plans from one unit onto another. Jamestown CBR is based on the fact that people readily give help without expecting reward in the cities, a phenomenon which is often the case in rural communities. Even though the program seems to be doing well, de-stigmatising effect of begging in the city will continue to threaten recruitment of disabled people in the city. How then can CBR survive?

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to threaten resiliency of disabled people in the city. How then can CBR survive?

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