

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)

CBR is the core programme of Navajeevana and remains at the heart of everything we do. The programme is based around the ethos that a disabled person experiences the same hopes, fears, worries and pleasures as any other person. People with disabilities are fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, daughters and sons, just like their peers and community around them.

Trained volunteers work alongside Navajeevana's specialist field officers in the districts of Hambantota and Matara to identify those most in need of our services. The Navajeevana approach is a holistic one, taking the disabled client right through from early identification to treatment, education rehabilitation, and ultimately to full rehabilitation – where the person is participating equally in a non discriminating society and is economically independent.

The CBR unit is made up of the core **CBR field unit**, the **mental health unit**, the **education unit**, with its four schools for children with special needs, and the **income generation unit**. This team is supported by a cadre of committed volunteers and family carers.

Reaching the unreached

Despite twenty years of dedicated work by Navajeevana, living with a disability in southern Sri Lanka is not easy. People with disability still face discrimination, stigma and poor services. The area has one of the highest levels of disability in the island, at 10 percent. This is due to a combination of poor infrastructure, the remote location of rural communities, and lack of understanding amongst ordinary people about the prevention and treatment of disabilities. Moreover, intermarriage and incest is still prevalent in this area, causing higher than average numbers of genetic and birth defects. People with disabilities are therefore some of the most isolated in the region. The CBR programme is designed to reach these unreached members of society.

How the CBR programme works

Once identified by one of our 140 trained volunteers, the client is given a rehabilitation plan - often for two years - which is regularly reviewed and his or her progress plotted by the dedicated field worker. Each plan may involve one or more of the clinical/ production services offered by Navajeevana, including speech therapy, physiotherapy, special education, or aids such as spectacles, hearing aids, wheelchairs, or prosthetic aids. The field workers and volunteers also motivate and train the family members to address the special requirements of the client and to improve their living standards and social mobility.

A key part of Navajeevana's work towards its mission is to facilitate people with disabilities to earn income for themselves. Sadly many people with disabilities live in poverty in Sri Lanka. Although increasing numbers are entering employment, these numbers remain far below the national average, and self employment remains the only source of revenue for many. Our income generation programme helps build up people with disabilities in earning their own money. People are encouraged to use the resources around them, and to develop skills in new areas, such as manufacturing tools and crafts, or getting the best out of their gardens.

As well as helping people with disabilities generate income, these activities can also empower them and give people a sense of purpose, self worth and belonging. We believe that this is as vital as bringing in revenue.

Contact us for more information at:

Navajeevana
320, Mahawela Road,
Tangalle
Sri Lanka

T: 047-2242718/2241345
F: 047 224 0579
E: Navajeevana@sltnet.lk
www.navajeevana.org

