

COMBRA

The Community Based Rehabilitation Alliance (COMBRA) is an indigenous, non-governmental organization that was founded in 1990 (registered under the NGO Registration Statute, 1989 and under the Company Act, 1965) that empowers and advocates for and with persons with disabilities (PWDs) for their sustainable development through community based rehabilitation (CBR).

Vision: A World Where All People with Disability have Equal Opportunities in Society.

Mission: To Empower and Advocate for and with Persons with Disabilities for their Sustainable

Development through the Community Based Rehabilitation Approach.

Values:

- Partnership
- Accountability
- Team Spirit
- Innovativeness
- Transparency
- Striving for Excellence
- Sharing Knowledge

Background:

In 1990 two Ugandan students studying in London became inspired to return to their homeland and establish a center to address the needs of people living with disabilities. Thus, COMBRA was born, founded in 1990 with the initial motivation to train people working with PWDs as well as PWDs themselves in community based rehabilitation (CBR). COMBRA's founding members were motivated by the need to increase rehabilitation services, reduce societal attitude barriers, and enhance community participation through CBR.

COMBRA is convinced that every human being has a right to a decent quality of life and equal opportunity in accessing social services. She also advances the reality that each person can contribute towards nation building and therefore, should not be segregated against on the basis of gender, age, race, or existence of a disability.

COMBRA has since emerged as a pioneer in CBR training and has gained a reputation as a center for excellence at home and abroad. The key to her success has been the development of a vital human resource base necessary for the implementation of CBR, not only in Uganda, but for Africa at large. The first pioneering CBR course was held in 1994 with only 12 students. To date, the Organization has successfully trained over 250 CBR workers through 17 courses, 60 Community Development Assistants (CDAs)

through 3 specially designed courses and conducted various short and tailor-made courses for students from over 10 African nations.

As a proud member of the Ugandan disability fraternity, COMBRA has also used its deep knowledge base in CBR to contribute to the development of guidelines, policies, training manuals and curricula for various aspects of disability at local, regional and governmental levels.

The Organization is proud to celebrate nearly 20 years of success in CBR via the promotion of dignity and self reliance for all. Thank you for taking time to share in our experiences and we look forward to the coming years as we can continue to strive for excellence.

COMBRA Services

1.

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Training:

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is a strategy within community development, for the rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities, poverty reduction and social inclusion of all people with disabilities. It includes people with disabilities and impairments of all types. CBR targets children, youth, adults and the elderly. The effort is implemented through the combined efforts of people with disabilities themselves, their families and communities along with the appropriate health, educational, vocational and social services. *ILO, -WHO UNESCO (2004)*

CBR OBJECTIVES ARE:

1. To ensure that PWDs are able to maximize their physical, sensory, and mental abilities, to access regular services and opportunities, and to become active contributor to the community and society at large.
2. To activate communities to promote and protect the human rights of PWDs though chances within the community for example removing barriers.

The COMBRA CBR Certification Course started in 1994 with the aim to impart knowledge and skills in CBR to community workers. Since the initial training class of 12, the Organization has trained over 300 workers from; Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan, Botswana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, Namibia and Zambia. The course comprises of 13 weeks of participatory learning, 4 weeks of community practicum and 1 week of examinations.

COMBRA has succeeded in aiding the development of a critical human resource base for implementation of CBR in Uganda and for the rest of Africa. The CBR course is a broad based multi-sectoral training aimed training personnel at all levels in CBR in order to meet the demands of PWDs in their communities for self-sustainability.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course trainees should be able to:

- (i) Demonstrate positive attitudes towards PWDs and their families

- (ii) Apply knowledge and skills in rehabilitating PWDs within their communities.
- (iii) Produce and demonstrate the use of appropriate assistive devices in supporting PWDs.
- (iv) Disseminate information on the nature, causes, prevention and management of disability.

Course Units:

Unit One: Introduction to Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)

Unit Two: Management of Impairments and Health Conditions; Background Information to Impairments and Health Conditions

Unit Three: Management of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programmes

Unit Four: Contemporary Issues in Disability

Unit Five: Community Practice

Admission Requirements and Target Group

The training is open to people with various experiences related to community development and rehabilitation. These include; teachers, community development workers, community health workers, PWDs, Parents, and other persons interested / involved in community based rehabilitation work.

The Minimum qualification to this course is a Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) / Ordinary level Certificate or its equivalent. Students from non- English speaking countries should demonstrate a reasonable command of English language. Persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups who do not meet the above criteria are subjected to a special examination administered by the COMBRA examinations Board.

The Tuition fees for the whole course:

For the National students

One million nine hundred and thirty thousand Uganda thousand Shillings only (**Shs. 1,930, 000**) or **\$ 965** as course fees covering tuition, full board and local travel within the course activities. In the third month of the course, trainees return to their respective communities for fieldwork.

To the international Students: Three thousand fifty four dollars (**USD \$ 3,054**) COMBRA facilitates the process of obtaining medical insurance for the international student which increases the course fee. International trainees have the option of returning to their country or carry out their fieldwork in Uganda. In case they prefer to do it in Uganda, COMBRA will arrange all that is necessary if confirmation is done well ahead of time. If the trainee prefers carrying out fieldwork in his/her country, it would not be necessary to pay the extra US\$ 694 for fieldwork.

Tuition, full board and local travel	US\$ 1,575
Airport tax on departure from Uganda	US\$ 20
Medical insurance	US\$ 110
Out of pocket for 120 days	US\$ 600
Pupils visa	US\$ 55

Fieldwork for 30 days (away from training centre)

US\$ 694

Total

US\$ 3,054

To confirm attendance, prospective trainees are requested to pay a non-refundable fee of US\$ 100 deposit. This deposit is included in ones tuition fees.

All payments are made to:

**Barclays Bank,
Plot 16 Kampala Rd. Branch
P.O. Box 7101, KAMPALA
Telex No. 61014
A/c No. 4001502**

2. Appropriate technology:

Appropriate Technology is an important component in community based rehabilitation service by providing alternatives in provision of assistive devices. The Organization implements this component as a strategy to equip students both national and international, undergoing CBR training, with knowledge and skills in making simple assistive devices as well as offering some devices to clients in the communities where COMBRA operates.

Goal of Appropriate Technology: To equip rehabilitation workers with adequate knowledge and skills to make simple assistive devices for persons with disabilities.

COMBRA specializes in training rehabilitation workers to make various devices that help persons with disabilities gain functional-ability and maximize their full potentials. Devices produced include Corner seats, Walking sticks, Toilet seats, Stimulating toys, Simple white canes, Feeding straps, Parallel Bars, and Learning boards to mention a few. Additionally, the Organization also conducts tailor-made trainings in making simple devices for partner organizations. In the last 3 years, such trainings have been conducted for local artisans located in Busia, Kayunga; with Local Governments in Uganda; AVSI in Gulu, and for CBR workers in the Kingdom of Lesotho

COMBRA is in the process of developing a modern appropriate technology workshop that can meet the needs of an expanded client base. The creation of this workshop is among the mechanism of sustaining the Organization through income generation in order to diversify COMBRA's revenue streams. Please join us in realizing our future developments in this exciting and dynamic time for the Organization. All forms of your support are most welcome.

Upcoming events in Appropriate Technology Research study. The organization is planning to carry out a study to measure effectiveness of simple assistive devices in rehabilitation of person with disabilities in Uganda.

Review of Appropriate technology training manual.

Plans are under way to review a manual entitled “Make it in the community “ which guides rehabilitation workers to make devices in villages. It has been a long time ever since this manual was produced and COMBRA feels now is the time to bridge the gaps in order to make it more functional

3. Community programmes:

In 1991, with support from Action Aid and Oxfam, COMBRA began its first community based rehabilitation outreach in the low-income suburb of Bwaise on the northern outskirts of Kampala City. The purpose of the Bwaise community project was a two-fold attempt to provide services to PWDs and secondly to provide a hands-on training ground for COMBRA’s CBR students. As the community project grew, the Bwaise community purchased land and COMBRA constructed its training center and developed a curriculum for training in CBR for grassroots workers. The project was handed over to the community of Bwaise in 2003 and has continued successfully to this day.

Today, COMBRA continues to provide service and hands-on training for students with the outreach now focused on Goma sub-county in the Mukono district. The community outreach continues to produce success stories while serving as a practical venue for students to hone their skills.

COMBRA relies heavily on its Community Coordinator and a vast network of community volunteers to identify potential clients for the Organization. Hard work is put into creating an understanding between COMBRA, the clients and their care takers to ensure expectations align with a clear path forward. Once an agreement is reached a group of two students is provided access to clients as they carry out assessments and determine the best course of action to meet the client’s needs. Students then have an opportunity to return to COMBRA to design and craft appropriate assistive devices. The COMBRA Workshop provides students the perfect forum to carry out this crucial aspect of CBR training.

The outreach has also proven a success for providing a training ground to international students undertaking concentrated studies in Physiotherapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) respectively. In the future the Organization seeks to strengthen its ties with international institutes so that a genuine and productive collaboration between the Ugandan disability fraternity and the global movement in PT / OT can be strengthened for the benefit of all.

4. Tailor Made Courses: Aside from the annual CBR course, COMBRA makes a dedicated effort to meet the requests of organizations and partners from a variety of backgrounds by designing tailor made courses to specifically meet their needs.