

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cerebral Palsy Africa is a **Dutch Charitable Incorporated Organisation** working in countries throughout Africa to improve the lives of children with cerebral palsy. CPA works with all who strive to enable children with cerebral palsy to reach their potential. It is important to note that it appears a large number of children with neurodevelopmental disability (NDD) born in Low-and Middle-Income Countries such as Ghana and most countries in Africa and their parents/caregivers, are struggling to come to terms with the challenges of managing life (often from birth to adulthood).



Kiss and Huib facilitating the NDD Master Training Workshop



Cross section of the invited guests and participants

It is also evidence that most low middle-income countries especially Ghana lack needed qualified therapists and CBR practitioners to manage NDD conditions. It is against this backdrop CPA-AFRICA, Netherlands, The Salvation Army Ghana and Togo Territory as well as the University of Education, Winneba and two other partners – Multi-Kids Africa and Heart, Hands and Voice Foundation decided to collectively host the first-ever training conference on “BUILDING A NETWORK OF AFRICAN MASTER TRAINERS IN NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES” which seeks to improve the competencies in the management of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families in Ghana. This is in line with CPA’s main purpose which is to develop expertise and evidence of best practices on rehabilitation for children with NDD in low middle-income countries and also to provide training programs for fieldworkers to improve skills on identification and functional rehabilitation, including appropriate assistive devices, for children with NDD and their families. This current training held at Gloriaka Marquis hotel in Winneba, Ghana was connected with concrete and



TC & Hon. Presiding Member in a pose during the opening session of NDD Training

practical implementation in the field, with the focus on the participation of the child with NDD in family life and community Monitoring evidence is part of the planning process.

INTRODUCTION

The Opening ceremony of the first training for Africa Masters in Neurodevelopmental Disability was hosted by The Salvation Army Ghana and Togo Territory in partnership with the University of Education, Winneba with support from Cerebral Palsy Africa was graced by the above-mentioned personalities. Participants are from Ghana, Uganda, Ethiopia, DR Congo and two additional facilitators from Netherlands, CPA-Africa.



The above picture shows Huib, David (Chairman) and Kees

The programme began with a prayer by Major Edward Kyei (Divisional Commander / a Priest /officer of The Salvation Army Ghana after which Mr Acheampong introduced the Chairman for the occasion in the person of Mr David Norden Botwey, Executive Director of SWEB Foundation a disability-focused non-governmental organisation based in Accra.



Major Agartha in the middle together with Major E. Kyei & the new communication Secretary Capt. Kyle Maynor-USA

Major Agatha Essel delivered the welcome



Colonel Amponsah presenting Certificate to a participant from Ghana while Huib looks on!

address, she said she has been observing from close quarters, children who are perpetually trapped at the back of their mothers from birth till age twelve and counting. Some are not able to ambulate no matter how hard the therapist's tries. She further stated that through the forty years journey of CBR services in The Salvation Army- Ghana no children with Neurodevelopmental Disability has been cured. What is of extreme importance is to enhance the lives of the children through therapy and assistive technology on one hand and social interventions for mothers, on the other hand, to build their economic capacity to be able to support the needs of their children.



The above picture shows the Hon. Mayor of Winneba, Ghana, Chief Secretary and the 2nd in command of The Salvation Army Ghana Lt. Col. Ayanam Friday & wife Lt. Col. Glory Friday and the Wife of the Territorial Commander Colonel Hagar Amponsah

Colonel Dr Samuel Amponsah delivered the Introductory Speech, he said the current training is timely and underpinned the mission and vision of The Salvation Army. Despite a clarion call for inclusion, children, young adults and families with Neurodevelopmental disabilities still face the worse forms of rejection, stigmatization, discrimination,

exclusion, lack of access to appropriate assistive technologies and more prominently, inadequate human resources to manage the NDD conditions not only in Ghana but Africa at large. He further added that a large number of children with neurodevelopmental disability (NDD) are born in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs), and their parents/caregivers, are struggling to come to terms with the challenges of managing life (often from birth to adulthood) (CPA-AFRICA Strategic Plan for 2021/2022).



The above flags represent the countries who attended the NDD Master Trainers Workshop in Ghana

While the needs of children with NDD and their parents are enormous and well documented, the tragedy is that LMICs resources (human and material) for appropriate services/interventions to these children and their parents are scarce. In practice, it means that there is a serious shortage of:

- competent rehabilitation professionals and field workers
- appropriate assistive technology as mentioned earlier on and others.

It is against this backdrop that The Salvation Army Ghana & Togo Territory through its Medical Social and Community Services and Rehabilitation Programs agreed to collaborate with its partners to host this maiden training program here in Ghana in order to change the narrative and to bring about the needed change we all desire to see.

The former Director of Liliane Fonds (Foundation) a Dutch-based disability organisation Mr Kees Van Den



The former Director of Liliane Foundation – Kees van der Broek in a media briefing with JOY NEWS

Broek stated that the purpose of the training was to adopt new ways of managing the condition. He said the old approach/ways that were used in the 80s to manage orthopaedic conditions such as club foot, polio etc. is the same approach being used to manage neurodevelopmental disabilities which don't yield good results. He added that this African Masters' training in Neurodevelopmental disability is to adopt different ways/approaches to manage and help children with the condition and their families with a call on professionals to look for new effective ways to manage NDD.

He further reiterated "There is the need for a different approach in managing neurodevelopmental disabilities which focuses on the wellbeing of the child and the family and centres on the role of parents.

Mrs Hannah Awadzi, Executive Director of the Special Mothers Project, said it was important that therapists and rehabilitation professionals embrace a new way of engaging parents in their approach to managing cerebral palsy and other neurodevelopmental conditions.

Professor Sakina Acquah the Dean of Educational Studies of the University of Education, Winneba has urged parents with children born with a neurodevelopmental disability to take proper care of them to realise their full potential. According to her, there are institutions and Non-governmental organisations available to assist in caring for such children to grow up to be useful to society.



Professor Sakina Acquah the Dean of Educational Studies of the University of Education, Winneba

Hon. Captain Kwesi Eyi Acquah, Presiding Member of the Effutu Constituency represented the Member of Parliament for the area Mr Alexander Afenyo -Markin pledged the MP's commitment and support towards children's neurodevelopmental disabilities. He also stated the need for all to get on board to solicit support for children with NDD and

their families. Ms Annelove Prempeh, the Mother of an 18-year-old girl with cerebral palsy shared her experiences with the participants.

Narrating the experiences she has acquired as a primary caregiver to her daughter and was also grateful to professionals who supported her in this journey. A short video of her daughter's rehabilitation was screened.



Mrs Hannah Awadzi –Executive Director Special Mothers Project/Journalist & Mother with NDD child sharing her true life story and experiences with the delegates



Mr David Norden Botwey, Executive Director of SWEB Foundation –Chairman for the ceremony.

Mr David Norden Botwey, Executive Director of SWEB Foundation, a disability based non-governmental organization who chaired the opening ceremony said the training programme was innovative.



Miss Annelove, the mother of Nabilla sharing her experiences with the participants and invited guest during the opening session of the conference.

The story of Nabilla was quite revealing and the delegates were touched as lots of lessons were learnt. Especially the role of mothers and importance of family support and how it plays a critical role in an NDD Child quality of life as part of treatment/therapy process.

PARTICIPATION:

Participants of the workshop were CBR field workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, Speech therapist, University lecturers and many other dignitaries who attended the training.

OPENING CEREMONY: 4TH OCTOBER, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Col. Dr Samuel Amponsah - Territorial Commander, The Salvation Army Ghana & Togo
- Col. Hagan Amponsah - The Salvation Army, Womens' Ministry
- Lt. Col. Ayanam Friday - Chief Secretary, The Salvation Army
- Major Agatha Essel - Director, Medical, Social and Community Services
- Hon. Alexander A. Markin - Member of Parliament and Deputy Majority Leader
- Prof. Dr Sakina Acquah - Dean, Faculty of Educational Studies, UEW



A section of university of education, Winneba delegates



Kees and other delegates visited a family as part of training fieldwork

- Hon. Dr Robert Ghanney- Head, Department of Special Education, UEW
- Dr Yaw Nyadu Offei - Senior Audiologist, UEW
- Dr Samuel A. Gyimah - Senior Lecturer Deafness Studies,
- Dr Daniel S. Dogbe - Senior Lecturer & former HOD SPED, UEW
- Mrs Joyce Tsatsu - Administrator, SPED UEW

DAY ONE:

The afternoon session saw the start of the training where the goals and objectives of the training were stated as below:

OBJECTIVE 1

To build the capacity of rehabilitation professionals to impact New thinking and improve their knowledge of NDD children and their families from X no. of African countries and bridge the competency gap in the area of neurodevelopmental management.

OBJECTIVE 2

Define results/reflections which we like to achieve 'on the ground' considering the following:

- The functionality of the child
- Quality of life of the child.
- Parents involvement in the child's life and wellbeing 'if the parents do well, the children will do likewise



SECTION OF THE DELEGATES DURING HOME/FIELD VISIT