

EDITOR'S COMMENT

The editorial and publishing teams welcome all readers to the launch of *Disability, CBR and Inclusive Development* (formerly Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal).

Over the past 12 years, the Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal developed a readership base in 91 countries that included not only Asia, but also Africa, North America, South America, Europe and Australia/Pacific. The journal attracted a wide range of articles on disability issues, with an attempt to focus on community-based rehabilitation. Given the increasing importance being accorded to disability issues, in particular human rights, CBR and inclusive development, combined with the fact that the majority of persons with disabilities live in low and middle-income countries, the time is right for a journal with a global scope to continue to be free and openly accessible for readers and free for authors; to reach higher international scientific quality; and to be published more frequently.

CBR has grown and evolved over the last three decades, from being a service delivery approach for persons with disabilities living in rural areas in developing countries, to a world-wide accepted strategy and movement, based on inclusive community development principles. Most of the debates that were raging over the past decade, over 'medical vs social', 'rights vs services', 'DPOs vs CBR', are gradually fading, with a better understanding among different stakeholders, as evidenced by the recently launched WHO CBR Guidelines that was developed in partnership between different interest groups. The regional CBR Networks that have been established across Africa, Asia and Latin America will sustain the movement through training, and information exchange.

In order to make the spirit and practice of CBR sustain in the long run, it is important for CBR practitioners world-wide to ensure that they work in line with the principles of the UN Convention, aiming for the goal of community based inclusive development. Strong partnerships are necessary with DPOs and governments, in the interest of sustainability. The field of CBR also needs to build up its evidence base to convince stakeholders that it does work and is the appropriate strategy to reach the goal of community based inclusive development.

There is also a need for more vehicles for information dissemination in different formats; and *Disability, CBR and Inclusive Development* is expected to be one such

medium of dissemination, not only for CBR-related information but for other emerging themes of importance in the disability sector.

The editorial team thanks all the authors and readers who have been associated with the Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal till now, and looks forward to a continued partnership through *Disability*, CBR and Inclusive Development.