

INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES – CHALLENGES AND POSIBILITIES **2024.**

Introduction

Inclusion of children with disabilities has become an area of public concern since it's the most neglected area in our societies, due to lack of accessibility to rehabilitation, lack of awareness, stigmatization and financial constraints.

Aim:Maisha outreach therapy organization has dedicated their work in seeing that people with disability would access to inclusion that being children through their core vision in ensuring quality therapeutic interventions, social support and trainings following their core values. However through the use of assessment tools, therapy professionals in conduction rehabilitation services to children with disability and providing them with assistive devices being successful yet there is a gap in the society involvement and engagement in daily life activities involving schools and environmental factors.

The Approaches used by maisha outreach therapy organization in their work through promoting inclusion are, identifying children with disabilities through population based surveys acquiring our clients through referrals and through the clients we attended, categorizing the type of disability and plan for an assessment visit, the use of standardized tools in assessments and measuring tests the functional independence measure and the gross motor function classification. Our assessment focuses on the International functioning model and our interventions focuses on the Community Based Rehabilitation Matrix.

Results; In the year 2020 we were able to conduct a simple research survey together with our partners it was an ambitious research project to refine how we work in a post-COVID environment, and how to support the needs of vulnerable people especially children, communities, and rehabilitation specialists to bring about change in Tanzania. Which resulted to 2021 and to 2022 to have more interventions to children with disabilities, the research was conducted using a mixture of questionnaires, interviews, and case studies on a face-to-face interviews, with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment and/or social distancing in place to support vulnerable people. MOTO provided Personal protective equipment for participants who require it and do not have access to it. All participant's information is treated as confidential unless consent is given by the participant and identities will be anonymized in any produced reports. In the year 2022 together with our partners, we managed to conduct 15 home visits to the most vulnerable people and provided 11 wheel chairs, providing them with different education based on their needs and requirements, during the field visit, we came to realize that more community education about people living with disabilities is still needed to de stigmatize disability, as most within the community still believe disability is a curse. We did 4 awareness trainings and attending the national day of people with disabilities. In the year 2023 our work was increasing due to positive feedbacks and through our evaluation we were able to manage 25 house visits for assessments and 2 trainings via community mobilizations and caretakers living with children with disability and 19 assistive devices where provided to promote their social and functional activities.

In conclusion: inclusion takes a big part of children's lives does not only focus on an individual aspect it has to be holistic that is working with the child, their environment and the people around them to bring about inclusion and access to health services, education and empowering their parents or guardians. We did not only end there we managed to MOTO was proud to have been one of the organizations chosen to participate in the development of Tanzania's very first National Rehabilitation Strategic Plan 2021 - 2026 which involved Community Based Rehabilitation Networks - Tanzania with more than 30 organizations and rehab centers, access to rehabilitation remains a significant challenge within the country, and MOTO

has helped blaze the path forward towards change and access. The National Rehabilitation Strategic Plan of 2021 – 2026 focused on Strengthen rehabilitation leadership, planning, and generation of evidence and Information, increase the availability of rehabilitation services and expand financing, strengthen and expand the rehabilitation workforce, and lastly increase the access and provision to assistive devices.



