

COMMUNITY BASED NETWORK FOR REHABILITATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

1. INTRODUCTION

(a) WESTERN CAPE ASSOCIATION FOR PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

The Western Cape Association for Persons with Physical Disabilities (hereafter the Association) was founded in 1937. The Association is a registered private welfare organisation and affiliated Provincial Association of the National Council for Persons with Physical Disabilities in South Africa. The Association is based in Cape Town in the Western Cape Province of South Africa and has 21 branches. The latter have established infrastructure and facilities, which are utilised to render developmental social work services to persons with disabilities. The branches also have special care centres for children with disabilities, protective workshops and homes for persons with disabilities and 4 Independent Living centres.

A Management Committee in partnership with a Provincial Director manages the Association. A registered South Africa auditing firm annually audits our finances.

(b) SERVICE HISTORY

Persons with disabilities have in the past spent every day of their lives in a segregated protective workshop without direction or guidance. Day services here were heavily influenced by the social education model. This resulted in us adopting a heavily programmed approach where individuals were assessed to identify the shortcomings in their skills and abilities and were put through a programme of sequential skill training. Some parts of our day services provision retained elements of the adult training model, maintaining an interest in prime manufacturing and sale of goods.

Our day services, in common with almost all other local services, did not achieve any significant movement of people with severe disabilities from day centres into an independent life in the community, be that embracing work, leisure or education.



(c) OUR NEEDS

We are of the opinion that in order to cost effectively ensure independent community life for persons with disabilities we have to transform our services in order to concentrate on community based rehabilitation, skills training and job creation programs that will break the poverty cycle. Our needs in order to do this are:

Community Need

This Association and its branches render services in areas which have large disadvantaged rural communities and which have a growing need for rehabilitation, special care, practical skills training and work creation facilities capable of serving the specific needs of persons with disabilities.

These branches and other non- governmental community based organisations rendering services to persons with disabilities need specialised support services focussed on rehabilitation, which will enhance their service delivery.

Legislative Need

Commercial enterprises need to comply with the new South Africa Equity Act's affirmative action requirements in respect of persons with disabilities. Problems however arise in finding suitably trained individuals who are able to satisfy their employment requirements. The new South Africa Children's Bill also requires that we transform our facilities and services to children with disabilities.

Needs of persons with disabilities

The mentioned new legislation has created opportunities for persons with disabilities to enter the open labour market. Community based rehabilitation, skills training and work creation will be the gateway for these people to prepare and support them to enter the market of community-based employment and independent living which is the only way to alleviate poverty.

The Association realised that we need to not only cater for the needs of a limited number of persons with disabilities in the workshops and special care centres but must attend to the needs of all those individuals who need to experience the outside world. We need to achieve significant movement of persons with disabilities from workshops and those presently at home into an independent life in the community.

We need to focus on * **person centred assessment and care management**, career pathing, development, education and training of persons (and children) with disabilities to enable them to make the right choices, either complete their education or master a marketable task and by so doing, empower them to build a career and better future.

**Person centred planning is a way of helping people who want to make some changes in their lives. It is an empowering approach to helping people plan their future and organise the support and services they need.*



Apart from the latter it is of the utmost importance that we need to **develop partnerships** with the corporate sector, state and other community based organisations and professionals in order to be successful.

Effective partnerships with employers have been a significant driving force for the development of successful agencies. Effective partnerships could speed up the process further, particularly for those individuals who could easily fast track through the system. Good partnerships can be positive and productive, creating opportunities for all, with none of the vitally important stakeholders feeling redundant or threatened by the changes.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION
WESTERN CAPE ASSOCIATION FOR PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES - MODEL

The solution is community based rehabilitation, special education, development, skills training and supported employment. Client centred assessment, training and development of career and education paths need to be implemented and extended to address the needs of persons with physical disabilities.

The United Nations has determined that one of the most effective means of improving the lives of people with disabilities is by creating and supporting community based rehabilitation.

We underwrite the Swedish Organisations of Disabled Persons International Aid Association definition of community – based rehabilitation namely:

“Community-based rehabilitation is a strategy within community development for the rehabilitation, equalisation of opportunities and social integration of all children and adults with disabilities. Community-based rehabilitation is implemented through combined efforts of disabled people themselves, their families and communities and the appropriate health, education, vocational and social services”.

“Community based rehabilitation is a initiative in which all facets of a persons life, such as health, physical and emotional needs, educational programs, employment needs and recreational and social lives are considered” John Paterson – Training the trainers: CBR

The latter, we believe, has to be done from a community-based centre where all activities could be co-ordinated and managed in order to address the needs of persons with disabilities.

The formation of **REHAB.NET** centres, which is **community based rehabilitation, assessment, skills training and work creation centres**, with community-based education and employment is our aim. These centres will:

- seek the integration of the interventions of all relevant sectors;
- aims at the full representation and empowerment of persons with disabilities,
- to make available adequate and appropriate rehabilitation services to a greater portion of the disabled population and
- to focus on partnerships and community participation.



We want to establish 9 Centres in the Western Cape Province of South Africa, which have large disadvantaged communities with a desperate need for people to become economically active. 27% of households in this province live in poverty and 46% of persons with disabilities to whom this Association renders services, are unemployed. The branches of this Association who are at present in a process working towards establishing these centres in partnership with the provincial Department of Health and community based organisations, are :

**Paarl, Worcester, Oudtshoorn, George, Knysna,
Vredenburg, Helderberg, Cape Town and Vredendal.**

Once in operation these Centres will be linked with each other. Existing services, workshops and child care centres will operate in partnership with these centres which will undertake to assess and direct individuals in these communities into educational, developmental and economic activities. This will be achieved by building on their latent skills, strengths and aptitudes through hands-on education and training, and by providing assistance in identifying economic opportunities.

This Association has the advantage of having the capacity, resources, knowledge, administrative and social work infrastructure as well as the necessary expertise on hand to set up these Centres. We do, however, need input from occupational-, speech and physiotherapists and funding for skills training, education, accommodation for the Centres, furniture, equipment staff and partnerships with other community based organisations.

3. REHAB.COM CENTERS SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

Objective:

A **REHAB.NET CENTRE** will be a multidisciplinary specialised service with an integrated community development program specifically aimed at empowering individuals towards independent living and becoming economically active in the community with the following objectives:

- to make rehabilitation services available and accessible to persons with disabilities.
- to reduce the prevalence of physical, mental and sensory disabilities by focussing on prevention and intervention to such a degree that it would cease to be a health problem.
- to develop among the disabled a positive image, a sense of self-reliance and full integration with the community including the exercise of their rights and privileges.
- to uphold, recognise and respect at all times the dignity of the disabled.
- to “ level the playing field “ in the dispensation of rehabilitation services.



Selection of Participants:

These Centres will focus primarily on persons with disabilities **but will not exclude other disadvantaged groups should the capacity for doing so exist.** Individuals and their family members with the necessary motivation to participate will largely be identified by this Association's social work services network in the communities where these centres will be established.

Methodology:

The empowerment process will generally follow the following stages:

1. **Assessment / Client Profile** Client centred assessments of persons with disabilities in the community will be done by the centre. Referrals from hospitals will be attended to after intake.
2. **Development plan.** To compile individual development plans for persons with disabilities as to their future and to identify educational needs, skills and aptitudes, which can best be reinforced and developed.
3. **Education.** An educational/stimulation program will be designed for the children in the child care centre or at home and the carers will be trained to implement it successfully. Assessment of children to determine school readiness or school leavers to determine a career path will be done.
4. **Training.** Training will be conducted according to prescribed methods and other manuals as well as accredited courses. The training will include a period of practical 'hands on ' experience by temporarily linking the individual to the workshop system. The aim will be to develop identified skills and aptitudes into marketable channels. On average training will have duration of up to 6 months and can for example include the following areas of economic activity:

- Sewing (Manufacture, repair work)
- Wood Work (Fitting, small item manufacture)
- Metal Work (Welding, small item manufacture)
- Food Processing Services (Domestic, Laundry)
- Upholstery
- Clerical (including computer work)
- Handyman
- Food gardens
- Chicken farming
- Entrepreneurship
- Small business development
- Financial administration
- Jewellery making (Non precious metal/stone)

Training courses will be developed as the need arises.



5. **Economic activity placement.** As a first option every effort will be made to assist individuals who are capable of full-time employment to be placed in the open labour market.
6. **Part-time employment.** The work creation centre will endeavour to set up partnerships with commercial enterprises to facilitate the following scenarios :
 - Whereby individuals may be placed to gain experience and extend their training in formal places of work for a period of time – supported employment.
 - Where from an enterprise may draw personnel when temporary staff is needed. (I.e. ‘Temp’ agency)
 - Use the centre as a resource for locating trained staff for employment.

The economic activity of the individual will be channelled as follows:

 - Full-time employment – corporate sector
 - Part-time employment agency work.
 - Home-based supported self-enterprises.
 - Employment in workshop.
 - Workgroups.
 - Formal studies.

The Centre will set up a local home industry system in each area of activity in which training is provided to supply the following services:

- Provide capital in the form of equipment, which can be paid off by the individual. (The centre will endeavour to create an equipment pool for this purpose)
- Central buying. One of the big difficulties for individuals working in self-enterprises is the purchasing of raw materials at competitive prices. The aim will be to supply materials for a range of economically viable goods on a reasonable payback system.
- Provision of certain labelling and packaging
- Technical assistance
- Marketing assistance. This will be in the form of limited advertising and the direct sale of items through the selling mechanisms run by the workshop or Association’s branches in the area. (e.g. Shops, stalls, functions etc)

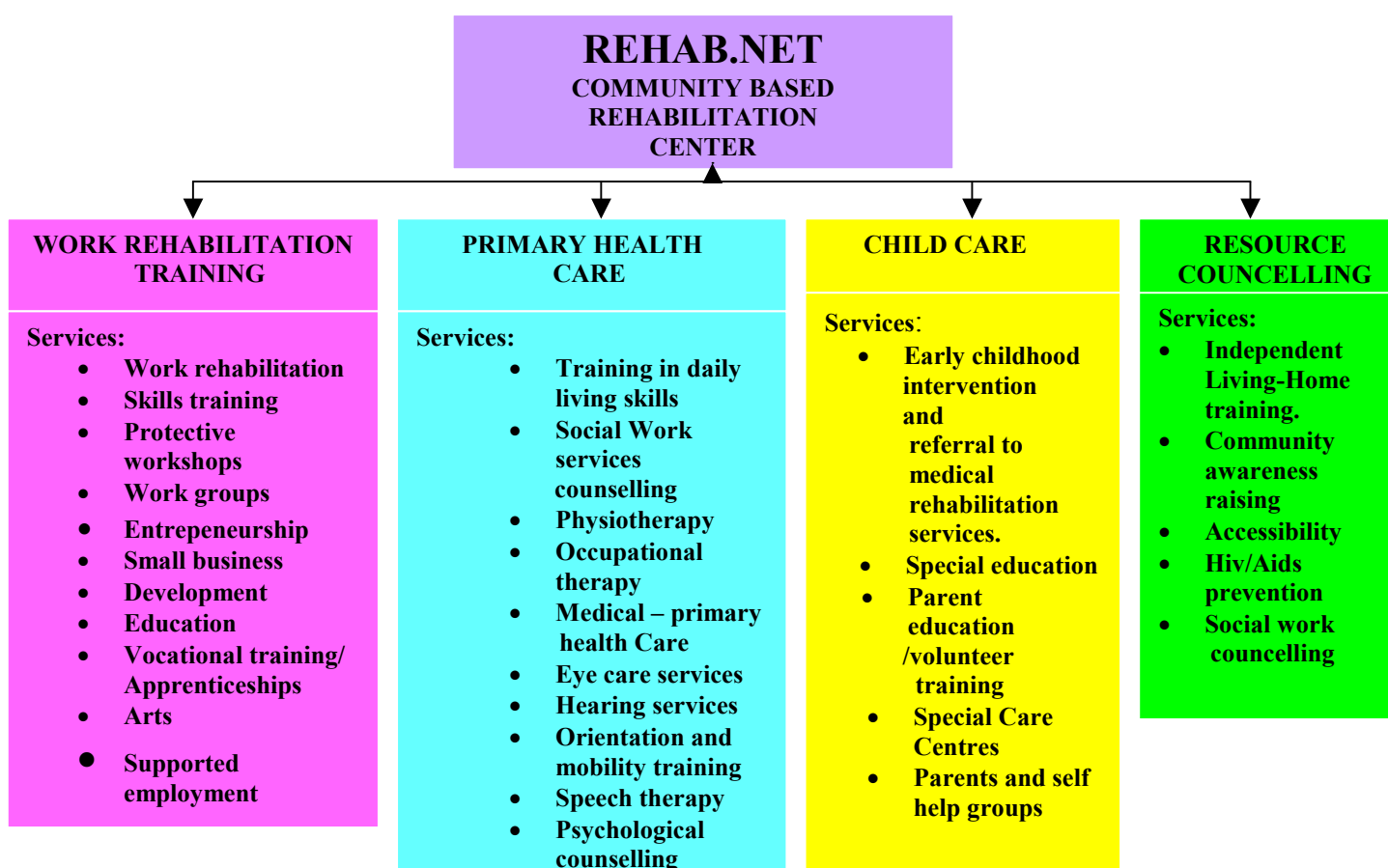
The Home Industries will be an extension of the workshop and be managed in partnership with the disabled entrepreneurs. The advantages will be that persons with disabilities can work from home but still get the training and support services from the Rehab.net Centre. The latter will reduce the running cost of the workshop e.g. rent and transport.



7. **Training of parents**, volunteers and family of persons with disabilities in order to build capacity so that they can actively participate with professionals and persons with disabilities and support the community based rehabilitation programs.
8. **Referral** to community based support structures, i.e. workshops, childcare centres, schools, etc.
9. **Youth Services**. Provide individual and family counselling to disabled youth between the ages of 14 – 22, and their families, provide technical support to special education teachers, assisting students with goals of their individualised education plans / career paths.
10. **Incontinence Supplies and Assistive devices – Independent Living** .
These Centres can be involved in the distribution of assistive supplies and act as a resource advice centre that will be linked with Independent Living Centre Western Cape who can supply these centres with advice, equipment and supplies as and when necessary. The Centre will also implement home training programs in this regard to enhance, and assist people to make choices towards, independent living.

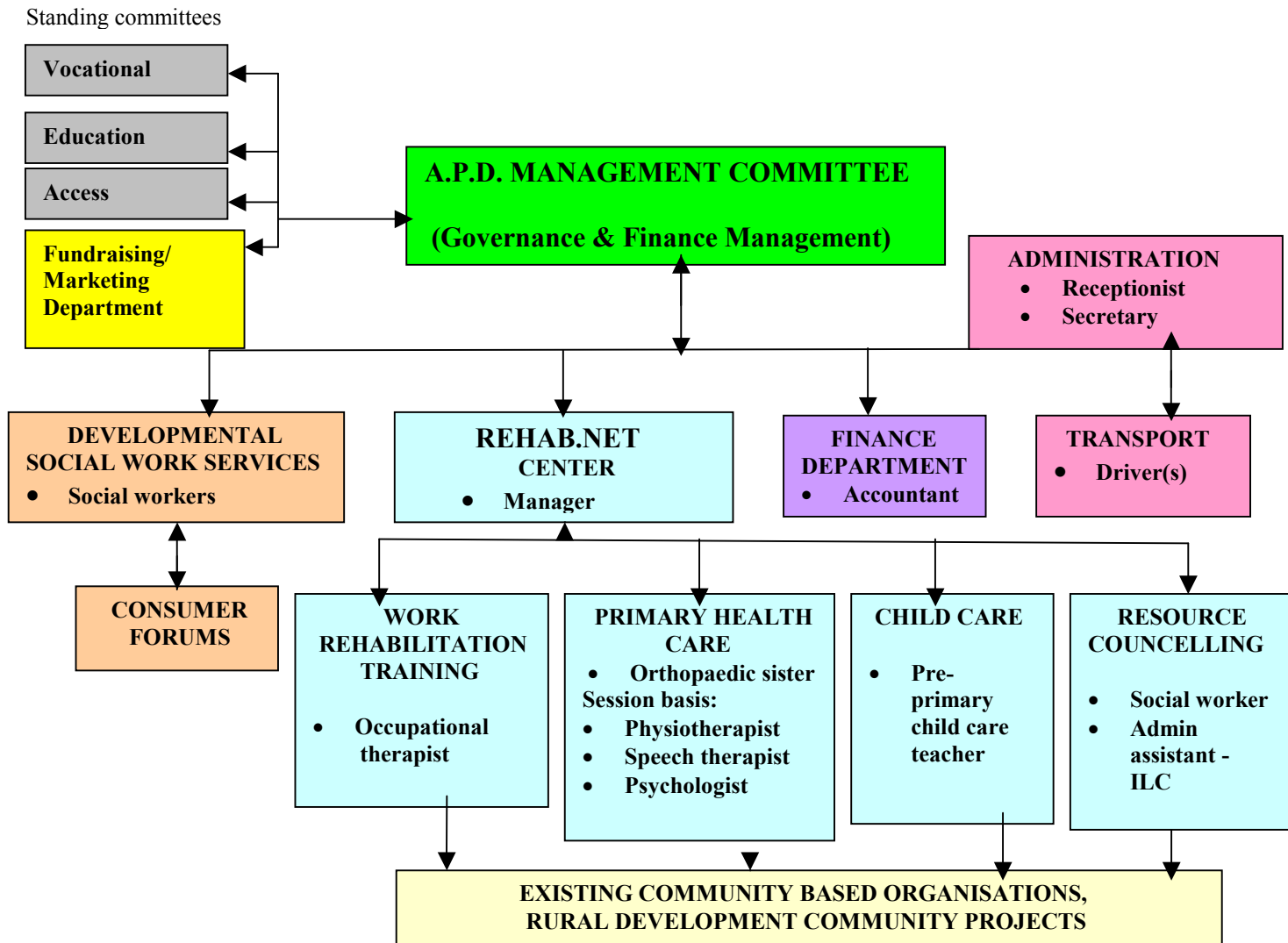
The following diagram summarise the services to be rendered by these Centres

4. PROJECT COMMUNITY SERVICES DIAGRAM:





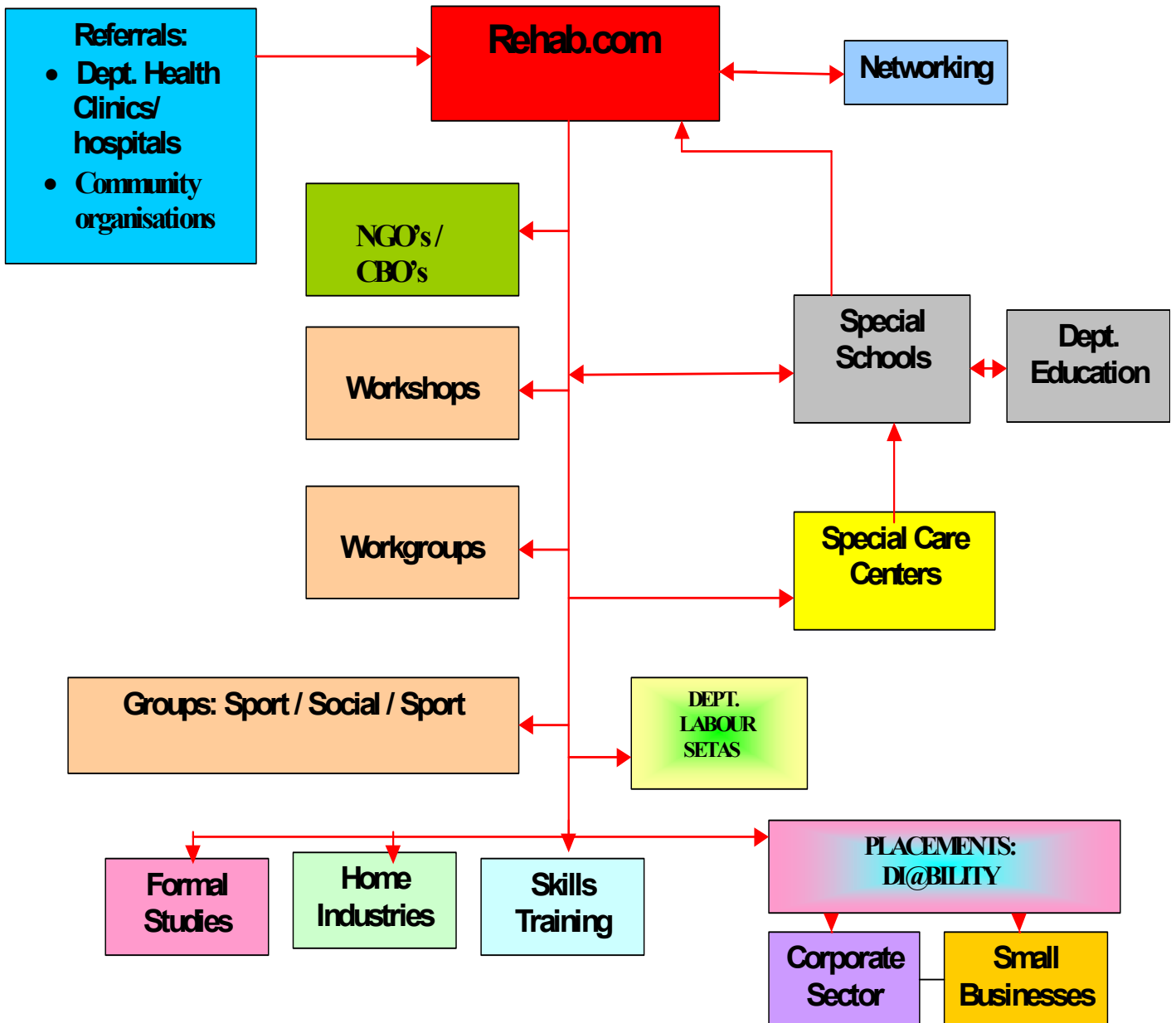
5. REHAB.NET MANAGEMENT AND STAFF ORGANOGRAM



It should be pointed out that this proposal conforms to the United Nations resolution 48/1996, the Standard Rules of Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities



6. ROAD TO REHAB





7. HOW WILL REHAB.NET CENTERS BE LINKED TO EXISTING COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS/SERVICES?

A basic tenet of the project will be to link REHAB.NET centres to existing community based organisations, centres and facilities rendering services to persons with disabilities. The Rehab.net centres will be a support and resource centre enhancing existing community based services to persons with disabilities. The Centre as explained in paragraph 4 above will attend to services organisations and social workers, due to a lack of manpower and funding at present, could not attend to.

Linking of the centres in this manner has several distinct benefits:

- The administrative infrastructure staff already exists.
- Some, if not all, of the equipment/tools required will already be available.
- Special Care Centres already exist.
- Functioning workshops imply existing facilities. (Work space, toilets)
- Experienced staff available on site.
- The Association's Branches and other organisations have networks with community resources in place.

8. FUNDING OF PROJECT –REHAB.NET CENTERS

We invite the corporate sector and any other interested parties to enter into a partnership with and assist us to establish and develop these centres.

The following funding resources, to be developed will secure the future sustainability of the project.

- Protective workshops are registered for subsidization by the South Africa government. They also generate income from sales of products.
- Financial support from the SA Government Department of Labour and their Education Skills levy and Training funds.
- Donations by corporate sector on employment of persons with disabilities trained at the center.
- Corporate sector funding.
- South Africa Government Department of Health subsidies for special care centers for children with disabilities.
- SA Lottery
- Donations and fundraising projects.



9. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

The social workers and occupational therapists will support persons with disabilities and employers for a period of time to ensure successful integration in the community e.g. into the workplace and with further advanced training in partnership with the employers.

10. EVALUATING RESULTS

The results of services rendered by REHAB.NET centres will be measured against the improvement of quality of lives of persons with disabilities participating in the centre's programs. The latter will be determined by their:

- Emotional well being
- Interpersonal relations
- Material well being
- Personal development
- Physical well being
- Self determination
- Social inclusion
- Rights

11. PROJECT OUTCOMES

The project (centres) could render services to, build capacity, empower and create social inclusion in the Western Cape province of South Africa for :

- 22944 persons with disabilities. (*12888 persons with physical, 4319 intellectual and 5737 multiple disabilities) and their
- 68832 family members and dependants on a ongoing basis.

Almost 21 non-governmental organisations in the disability and welfare sector, in abovementioned towns in the Western Cape Province, will benefit from these Centres. **(Statistics South Africa 2001)*

12. SUMMARY

The Association working in the field of disability, at present renders valuable services to persons with disabilities through our existing social work services, workshops and special care centres, but only to a small group. We believe that these proposed REHAB.NET Centres would enable us to include more people and that through these centres, we can make a meaningful contribution towards community based rehabilitation and employment for persons with disabilities but most important, alleviate poverty.

Compiled by : Johan vdM Joubert