Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Diplomatic Academy.

Education Learning and Development Module

DISABILITY- INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Practitioner Level

2019

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

AQEP   Access to Quality Education Program

CEDAW   Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

CRC   Convention on the Rights of the Child

CRPD   Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DFAT   Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

DPO   Disabled People's Organisation

ECE   Early childhood education

EFA   Education For All

EMIS   Education Management Information System

ICESCR   International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ICT   Information Communication and Technology

IEPs   Individual Education Plans

MESC   Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture

MoET   Ministry of Education and Training

PacREF   Pacific Regional Education Framework

PFRPD   Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

PSET   Post-school education and training

SDG   Sustainable Development Goal

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

WASH   Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

1 INTRODUCTION

This module is designed to inform those who engage with and lead policy dialogue with international and domestic partners of diverse implementation strategies and key priorities in disability-inclusive education.

It is recommended that users complete the *Disability-Inclusive Education: Foundation Level* module as background information to this Practitioner Level Module.

2 SPECIAL, INTEGRATED OR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

As outlined in the Foundation level module, it is common for countries to educate children with disabilities in a range of settings. While supporting disability-inclusive education is generally the most effective approach, good quality special schools and appropriate and periodic use of integration approaches within mainstream settings can be valuable.

Mainstream schools

Integrated – separate classrooms within mainstream schools

Some children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms benefit from participating in some sessions in a separate room. This may be due to attention, behavioural or sensory difficulties. While it can be useful to withdraw some children from their mainstream classroom for short periods for specific purposes, such as remedial work, time spent outside the regular classroom should be limited.

Inclusion – in mainstream classrooms, with age-mates

Benefits of attending the local mainstream school include the following:

- children with disabilities can live with their families instead of moving away to be closer to special schools
- saves cost of transport and accommodation in boarding facilities
- maintains social connections with local community.

Inclusion in mainstream schools promotes cooperative, collaborative activities and increases positive attitudes towards disability, reducing stigma and discrimination and leading to inclusive societies.

It benefits all students in the classroom through:

- promoting the use of teaching methods that are based on individual student capacities, needs and learning preferences
- enhancing learning that happens in peer mentoring and cooperative learning methods

- promoting lateral-thinking and problem-solving approaches to working with peers.

Mainstream inclusive schooling also supports academically optimal learning, provided schools are adequately resourced and accessible, and teachers have positive attitudes and appropriate skills and confidence.

Special schools – separate institutions for education of people with disabilities

Special schools – as resources to inclusive mainstream schools

Special school teachers have knowledge and expertise which can support inclusive education efforts in mainstream schools. Special schools may have close links with disability and health services and can assist mainstream inclusive schools to identify and use referral services. Enrolling some students with disabilities in a special school prior to their attendance at a mainstream inclusive school can be of benefit for:

- children who need to learn Braille
- deaf and hard-of-hearing children who benefit from immersion in a sign language environment.

Special schools may provide services, such as early intervention, which supports and improves children's readiness for mainstream schools.

Special schools – as the only school option for children with disabilities

Special schools can benefit children with complex difficulties and high support needs, including for learning, toileting and feeding. Benefits include specialised equipment, resources and support staff, lower class sizes and specially trained teachers.

In some countries, development partners have faced significant criticism for prioritising and pushing an inclusive education agenda without due consideration for context and resources. There is evidence from some countries which indicates that where inclusive education reform has been rapid and lacked adequate resourcing and capacity development, detrimental outcomes for children with disabilities have resulted. This has sometimes undermined individual, family, school and community expectations of the capacity of children with disabilities to learn in regular settings.

Sources: Grech, S 2011, Recolonising debates or perpetuated coloniality? Decentring the spaces of disability, development and community in the Global South; Kalyanpur, M 2014, Distortions and dichotomies in inclusive education for children with disabilities in Cambodia in the context of globalisation and international development; Schuelka, M Johnstone, CJ 2015, Global trends in meeting the educational rights of children with disabilities: From international institutions to local responses; Thomas, G 2013, A review of thinking and research about inclusive education policy, with suggestions for a new kind of inclusive thinking; Urwick, J Elliott, J 2010, International orthodoxy versus national realities: Inclusive schooling and the education of children with disabilities in Lesotho; Artiles, A Dyson, A 2005, Inclusive education in the globalization age - The promise of comparative cultural-historical analysis, In Mitchell, D 2005, Contextualizing inclusive education: Evaluating old and new international perspectives

In Lesotho, a rapid, over-zealous policy shift to inclusive education led to the enrolment of children with disabilities in mainstream schools, often without basic assistive devices such as glasses, sitting in classrooms of up to 80 children, with untrained teachers who had no resources, skills or support to create an inclusive classroom. The shift to disability-inclusive education needs to be planned and staged.

Sources: Urwick, J Elliott, J 2010, International orthodoxy versus national realities: Inclusive schooling and the education of children with disabilities in Lesotho; Artiles, A Dyson, A 2005, Inclusive education in the globalization age - The promise of comparative cultural-historical analysis, In Mitchell, D 2005, Contextualizing inclusive education: Evaluating old and new international perspectives

An activity for you

Special, integrated and inclusive education

What types of education are available to learners with disabilities at the Early Childhood Education (ECE), primary, secondary and Post-School Education and Training (PSET) levels in your context? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these?

3   KEY PRIORITIES IN STRENGTHENING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

An activity for you

Access and participation in education by people with disabilities

Watch the following videos and reflect on the situation of people with disabilities. Identify some of the factors that prevent and facilitate access and participation in primary education and PSET for learners with disabilities and think about strategies that may promote inclusion.

A Classroom for Everyone: AQEP Disability Inclusion Program

Skills for All: Disability Inclusion, Bisnis blong yumi evriwan

Improving educational options for people with disabilities necessitates strengthening of the broader education system. This requires several foundational enabling factors, including partner country engagement and commitment from the beginning, development of strategies that are grounded in local contextual and political realities and adaptive to changes in these, and an integrated approach. Development partners can play a key role as collaborators to support the stewardship of education system strengthening.

While the organisation of education systems varies greatly across contexts, five common dimensions of education systems have been identified – governance, service delivery,

workforce, information and finance. Approaches to disability-inclusive education also vary, however several factors have been identified as central to an inclusive education system. Key priority strategies for strengthening disability-inclusive education are presented below and have been organised according to these five dimensions.

Governance

Disability-inclusive education policies, standards and guidelines

Disability-inclusive education policies, standards and guidelines provide a supportive scaffolding for developing and improving inclusive education across all areas and all educational levels. These may include the following elements.

- An overarching policy which establishes a position on the types of education available or intended nationally (i.e. special, integrated or inclusive) for students with disabilities and outlines a national direction and commitments to achieving this.

- Policy statements regarding the availability of reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. These may include waiving of school fees, financial support for teacher aides and/or information, communication and technology (ICT) devices, and modifications to assessment processes which enable participation of students with disabilities in examinations on an equitable basis with others.

- Minimum standards for ECE, primary, secondary or PSET providers which incorporate expectations regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities.

- Minimum standards for accessible school infrastructure, including accessible water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities that meet the requirements of both boys and girls with disabilities.

- Policies or guidelines which support disability-inclusive education in emergencies.

- Curricula which represents the diversity of the national population, including people with disabilities, and which can be adapted by teachers to enable its accessibility to learners with a range of disabilities.

Management processes

Effective governance involves strong institutional management processes. These are required at the central, decentralised and school levels to enable management of quality accessible and inclusive educational options for students with disabilities. These could include establishing the following processes.

- Ministry-level steering or advisory committees to guide and monitor implementation of disability-inclusive education policies.

- Ministry responsibility and processes for the implementation and monitoring of inclusive school practices.

- At the school level, School Management Committees which review inclusive education practices and identify and address issues as a standing agenda item.

Accountability

Informed and adaptive governance of disability-inclusive education systems relies on the presence of effective accountability systems. This enables quality improvement processes, which can enhance inclusion efforts and improve attendance and achievement of students with disabilities.

Schools and governments need to monitor and report transparently about efforts towards disability-inclusive education, including financial data and indicators measuring policy, legislative and treaty obligations. Much of the data to inform these processes relies on disability disaggregated education management information system data (see *Information* section for more details).

Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) and other important stakeholders can participate in disability-inclusive education working groups to whom data can be regularly reported. This provides regular deadlines for data analysis and opportunities to discuss factors underlying the data and actions that can be taken in response. Reporting processes for frameworks such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can also be a useful mechanism for accountability.

Collaboration and partnership

Disability inclusive education at all levels requires collaboration and partnership with stakeholders outside of the education system.

Agreements between Ministries of Education, Health, Social Welfare and civil society organisations can guide and enforce school-level referral processes which enable students with disabilities to access health services (including screening and assessment, early intervention, therapy and assistive devices and technology) and available welfare supports, such as transport passes or allowances.

Inclusive schools require collaborative relationships with DPOs to facilitate referrals of students with disabilities, including those out-of-school, for advocacy support. Inclusive schools also need to develop collaborative relationships with community leaders to promote welcoming attitudes and an inclusive culture.

Strategic and operational planning

Ministries of Education and schools may require annual or multi-year plans to guide the allocation of resources to priority areas, and the monitoring of progress according to priorities. It is essential that disability-inclusive education policy priorities are operationalised by being incorporated into strategic, operational, corporate and/or other plans.

Case study: Governing inclusive education in Samoa
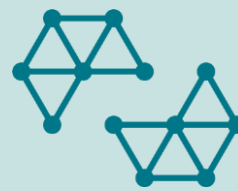
Samoa's Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) oversees the implementation of its Inclusive Education Policy. To facilitate a collaborative approach, MESC invited stakeholders including special schools, disability service providers, DPOs, the Ministries of Health and Women, Community and Social Development and others to establish an Inclusive Education Working Group.

This Working Group meets monthly to discuss issues arising, good practices, and opportunities for collaboration and coordination. In 2018, with financial and technical support from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Working Group undertook a collaborative review of the Inclusive Education Implementation Plan, which used reports, data and organisational perspectives to inform a progress report. This resulted in a new implementation plan which was more finely adapted to contextual realities.

The Inclusive Education Working Group reports to the Inclusive Education Task Force, a high level MESC governance body which has overall responsibility for implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy. Task Force reports inform MESC decision-making regarding resource allocation to support the operationalisation of policies.

Service delivery

Positive attitudes

Two of the most critical barriers to disability-inclusive education are stigma and discrimination. Schools must ensure that their community is welcoming of all children.

Values-based leadership by school principals and school management committee leaders, who demonstrate their commitment to disability-inclusive education in their words and their actions, can create a culture of inclusion.

Codes of conduct for teachers, which specify respect for diversity and require efforts towards disability-inclusion can help to reinforce school values.

Activities which help children to understand, respect and be proud of their disability-inclusive school can promote welcoming classrooms and may reduce bullying. An anti-bullying culture, in which teachers and principals consistently and strongly address bullying incidents can also assist.

DPOs can play a transformational role in building positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and towards disability-inclusive education.

Case study: Promoting positive attitudes in Fiji

In Fiji, as part of its Disability Inclusion Strategy, the DFAT-funded Access to Quality Education Program (AQEP) partnered with Fiji's DPOs to design and implement a "roadshow" in which representatives of each DPO travelled together and conducted awareness raising activities in communities surrounding five inclusive education demonstration schools.

The activities were highly effective at increasing awareness of the rights and benefits of children with disabilities going to school.

The roadshow provided communities and children with disabilities opportunity to meet confident and articulate role models with disabilities who had graduated and established careers. It also provided linkages between schools, communities, families, DPOs and disability services.

Accessible school infrastructure

School buildings, including Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, classrooms, libraries, walkways and other amenities must be physically accessible and safe for children, parents, teachers and volunteers with disabilities. This includes installing ramps and hand rails, widening doorways, ensuring there is adequate light and using tactile markers for people with vision impairment. Detailed information on creating an accessible school environment is available in the Accessibility Design Guide: Universal design principles for Australia's aid program.

Case study: Planning accessible schools in Vanuatu

As part of its commitment to disability-inclusive education, Vanuatu's Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) designed accessible school infrastructure plan templates. These were informed by DFAT's Accessibility Design Guide, and importantly, by the perspectives of DPOs and other stakeholders in the disability and education sectors.

Extensive consultation processes involved the MoET sharing the plans with members of the Vanuatu Civil Society Disability Network, who then provided feedback and advice regarding accessibility issues and priorities. These were integrated into the designs by the MoET. As a result, the MoET now has a set of standard designs for school infrastructure, which incorporate contextualised accessibility priorities.

Teaching and assessment

Everyone has basic needs. If these needs are not met inside or outside of the school, children will not have optimal learning. The more needs are met, the more students can effectively learn. The most fundamental needs are adequate food, water and rest,

healthcare, safety and security. Other needs include positive relationships, open communication, and a feeling of accomplishment. Students with disabilities may experience additional needs in these areas, which need to be identified and addressed as a precondition for effective learning.

To enable disability-inclusive classrooms, teachers should be willing to be flexible, and to try various strategies to individualise teaching. They must be supported to adjust the classroom environment and learning materials and use inclusive teaching strategies which enable the delivery of the curriculum in ways which suit the learner. These include differentiated instruction, group work and peer-to-peer learning. Teachers need to be supported to progress at the learning pace of the student and discuss progress and challenges with the parents or caregiver. In line with the school's welcoming culture and values-based leadership of the principal, teachers must demonstrate a positive attitude, commitment and patience.

The achievement of learning goals by students with disabilities, particularly those who are less likely to participate in standard assessment processes, for example students with intellectual disabilities, is greatly assisted by the establishment of Individual Education Plans (IEPs), also known as Individual Learning Plans. IEPs are developed collaboratively with engagement by teachers, parents / caregivers, teacher aides and support services (where applicable), and contain important personal student information and an outline of the teaching strategies and required adjustments to enable the student to meet their learning goals. IEPs generally contain two or three goals, often focused on literacy or numeracy and/or social-emotional learning areas. IEPs are continually referred to in order to see if learning goals are being met and are reassessed at the end of each term.

Identification, screening, assessment and referral networks

For some children, access to early intervention, rehabilitation, medical services and assistive devices/technologies is required to enable full participation in education. School-based referral networks should be strengthened to help families access these services as well as transport, social welfare and transition options for students with disabilities.

School staff, led by the principal, should map referral needs and options, ensure teachers are aware of these, and establish processes for making and receiving referrals. Where Ministries of Education can partner with health, social welfare and other relevant ministries to establish and maintain a referral directory of disability-related services, schools should be provided with (or connected online to) this resource.

Identifying children's difficulties, such as seeing and hearing, is important so that schools can make appropriate referrals to specialist organisations. In the short-term, there may be readily available solutions such as glasses and hearing aids or medical management of treatable conditions such as trachoma, cataract or ear infections. In the medium to longer-term, some children may benefit from transfer to a specialist setting for some time to learn sign language or Braille before returning to the mainstream school. Others may benefit from therapy, prosthetics and orthotics or assistive devices. Early identification and intervention minimise the extent of disability and allows optimal preparation for engaging in education.

Community-based rehabilitation programs, DPOs and primary health care services can provide an important entry point for linking with services and providing support and information for families of children with disabilities. Schools should actively find these services and form networks with them to facilitate referrals.

Resource centres for inclusive education

Many countries have established Resource Centres as a part of their approach to disability-inclusive education. These centres provide specialist services to mainstream schools, including Braille learning and assessment materials, undertaking or facilitating specialist assessments and services, supporting the development of IEPs, teaching sign language to students, teachers and families, mentoring teachers, facilitating the development of parents' groups, sharing good ideas between schools and supporting schools to find solutions to overcome barriers.

Teachers based at Resource Centres who visit children with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools can be a cost-effective means of addressing a lack of specialist teachers. It is increasingly common for special schools to play the role of Resource Centres and assist nearby mainstream schools in disability-inclusive education.

Parent/caregiver and community involvement

Parents/caregivers and families can have a significant impact on a child's education and their involvement and cooperation is very important. Caregivers know the child's strengths, difficulties and preferences which can help teachers form relevant strategies and goals within IEPs. Caregivers can support the consolidation of school learning at home as well as facilitating the child's inclusion in non-formal learning opportunities such as traditional or religious activities, life skills and livelihood skills, community celebrations and sporting opportunities.

Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities can often be more marginalised from community development processes. Through Parent / Caregiver Support Groups, caregivers can be linked to services and programs run by government or non-government organisations. The groups can be an opportunity for exchanging positive stories and ideas to support individual learning goals of the students, receiving emotional support, sharing common challenges, ideas and resources, advocacy, and helping each other in practical ways.

Community members can play an important role by:

- supporting children with disabilities to attend school
- supporting school management committees and school leadership to change programming, policies and school grounds to facilitate inclusion
- volunteering in classrooms
- teaching important cultural skills, life skills and vocational skills
- assisting with transport to and from school
- ensuring social, religious and sports activities in the community are inclusive of children with disabilities and their families

- helping to identify out-of-school children with disabilities and supporting their referral to health and education services

- addressing negative misconceptions and stigma and discrimination related to disability

- providing work experience for older students with disabilities and employment opportunities upon graduation.

Addressing factors related to out-of-school children with disabilities

Many children with disabilities face significant barriers to attending and completing schooling. Out-of-school children are those who do not have access to a school, do not enrol despite availability of a school, do not attend even if enrolled, or have ceased attending. A disproportionate number of out-of-school children have disabilities. Reasons for this may include:

- inaccessible school buildings and learning materials

- common teaching approaches are not meeting learning needs, leading to children with disabilities dropping out

- inaccessible or demeaning WASH facilities at school make it uncomfortable or impossible to attend for a whole day, particularly affecting girls as they reach menstruation

- prohibitive costs of accessible transport or time required to assist the child to get to school

- stigma and discrimination within the family, community and/or school

- low expectations about the value of education for the child, reducing family motivation to support them to attend

- lack of helpers or assistants in the classroom meaning a family member must forego their income to assist the child at school

- poverty and complicated home circumstances

- families may be over-protective due to concerns about bullying or abuse and so choose to keep the child at home.

Increasing access for local out-of-school children with disabilities requires schools to identify these children and the barriers that prevent their attendance and encourage their families to enrol them. Linkages between schools, disability services and DPOs can increase identification of children with disabilities in the community and offer a mechanism for enrolling and supporting children with disabilities to attend schools.

Schools can work with other stakeholders in the community to identify out-of-school children with disabilities and support them to attend. This can include village leaders, faith-based leaders, women's group leaders, parents' association, youth associations and other civil society organisations.

Factors that compound marginalisation

Several factors compound marginalisation of students with disabilities. Strategies that include people with diverse experiences should be considered and developed, as described below.

- **Gender**: girls with and without disabilities are less likely than boys to enrol in or complete education, and less likely to transition to higher levels of education. This may be due to expected roles of girls and women with disabilities and family choices to prioritise education for boys in households where money is limited. In some places, shame, stigma and inadequate WASH infrastructure leads to fragmented or discontinued school attendance amongst girls with and without disabilities, especially when managing menstruation. Attendance at school can put girls at risk of bullying and gender-based violence, which can cause them to discontinue their studies. Those with disabilities experience disproportionate risk of violence. Female-headed households are less likely to have resources that enable the enrolment and attendance of a child with disabilities in school.

- **Sexual orientation and gender identity**: People of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity may experience a higher risk of bullying and violence compared to others. This is particularly important in boarding schools, and when WASH facilities are located some distance from main school buildings. While the evidence is limited, it is expected that people with disabilities who also express diverse sexual orientation and gender identity will experience greater degrees of risk.

- **Disabilities which are less visible and more vulnerable to exclusion**: Deaf people, people who are hard-of-hearing and people with intellectual disabilities are, in some contexts, less likely to be included in schools due to perceived challenges in teaching and supporting them. Teachers require access to training and knowledge resources to support their confidence and skills in ensuring all children with disabilities have access to inclusive schools.

Disability-inclusive education in emergencies

Emergencies of different types disrupt education in similar ways, plunging people and systems into crisis. The education system may no longer be functional. In conflict-related emergencies, education is likely to have been disrupted for some time.

In times of crisis, the aim is to restore education programs as early as possible to create a sense of normality, provide reassuring routine and continuity, and restore hope for the future. However, if schools are damaged and populations displaced, all the preconditions which enabled inclusive education during peace-time may no longer exist. Students with disabilities are at greater risk of having their education disrupted by emergencies than others.

Following an emergency, it is important that education efforts utilise a disability inclusive approach. These can include the following activities.

- Find out who is not participating in education and why.

- Design a disability-inclusive education in emergencies response and allocate

appropriate budget.

- Build community support for disability inclusion.

- Ensure the built environment is accessible.

- Prepare teachers to include children with disabilities into their classrooms.

- Partner with DPOs to enable practical, collaborative efforts.

Source: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) 2009, Education in emergencies: Including everyone

In a new crisis it can be very difficult to get disability-inclusion issues on the agenda. The environment is usually chaotic, and the main focus of all stakeholders is on getting lifesaving interventions such as food distribution, water and sanitation, shelter and health services up and running. Disability-inclusive education in emergencies efforts are most effective when built into response plans as a part of preparedness activities.

Please see the *Education in Emergencies: Foundation* and *Practitioner Level* modules for further information.

Workforce

Human resource management/development

Effective disability-inclusive education requires appropriate allocation of adequate skilled and confident education sector leaders and teaching personnel. These may include:

- **Ministry-level staff** with qualifications and/or experience in disability-inclusive education, who can advocate for and lead disability-inclusive education efforts, in close collaboration with others across the education sector, and in partnership with others outside the sector.

- **Principals / Head Teachers** who are committed to creating inclusive schools and can facilitate and support decisions to problem-solve and overcome barriers. Examples include supporting teachers in choices around reasonable accommodations for exams, recruiting teaching assistants, purchasing assistive technologies, linking with health and welfare services and communities, and negotiating with the school management committee.

- **Classroom teachers** with training and confidence in applying teaching approaches and principles which enable all students with disabilities to learn effectively.

- **Trained classroom assistants / helpers / aides** or itinerant teachers who can cost-effectively assist to support with learning in the production of teaching and learning materials, support the transition of students with disabilities between year levels and schools, temporarily meet teacher shortages and help children to develop skills such as Braille literacy, sign language and orientation and mobility.

Large class sizes and regular rotation of teaching staff between schools are two factors which can have a negative effect on disability-inclusive classes. Strategies to mitigate these circumstances should be enacted.

Training effective teachers

For optimal learning by all, including students with disabilities, teachers must be confident in engaging with students in a way which retains their interest on a subject, to enable them to work towards appropriate expectations within a welcoming classroom community.

Teachers must ensure key information is equally perceptible to all learners by providing the same information through different modalities. This requires teachers to make adaptations to the curriculum so that all students can learn it. Universal Design for Learning approaches can be utilised. These encourage the planning and delivering of educational programs with the needs of all students in mind. It applies to all facets of education: from curriculum, assessment and pedagogy to classroom and school design.

Source: Mitchell, D 2010, Education that fits: Review of international trends in the education of students with special educational needs

Teachers must also allow for multiple forms of response to ensure that all students can participate in learning activities and assessment, for example through writing or using ICT.

Teacher training on disability-inclusive education should be integrated into compulsory core curricula for teaching at universities and other training providers to ensure that the values and principles of inclusive education pedagogy are infused at the outset of teaching careers. Confidence and skills in these areas requires further development through effective pre-service and in-service teacher training. This must be led by effective teacher trainers who are themselves leaders in this area.

Information

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Transition to a disability-inclusive education system requires concerted efforts to learn and reflect as reforms are taking place. Information systems are increasingly including disability data and it is imperative that data is used and not ignored.

Article 31 of the CRPD obliges States Parties to collect statistical and research data to enable the formulation and implementation of policies to give effect to the Convention. Additionally, leaders at the World Education Forum 2015 resolved to develop comprehensive national monitoring and evaluation systems to produce accurate evidence for policy formulation, education system management and accountability. They specifically requested development partners to support governments to develop data collection, analysis and reporting processes, including in capacity to disaggregate data by disability.

Building a culture of learning and reflection about disability inclusion should happen at all levels – classroom, school and ministry. For each of these levels, different processes can inform learning, such as the examples provided here.

Source: United Nations 2006, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Teachers can use:

- Individual Education Plans

- class based and other forms of assessment

- discussions and reflections with families and other staff about individual student progress.

Schools can:

- monitor student data to track progress of students with disabilities, including enrolment, attendance, participation and progress

- reflect and report on disability inclusion policies and action plans to the School Board or to an Inclusive Education governance body

- arrange periodic reflections with the staff, parent support groups and external stakeholders such as DPOs to discuss progress towards disability inclusion

- conduct accessibility audits around the schools with students with disabilities, in partnership with DPOs where relevant, checking for any barriers that might exist or have arisen (e.g. maintenance required on the accessible toilet, clearing pathways)

- use system data (discussed below) to inform discussions.

The Ministry can:

- actively review data from the Education Management Information System (see below) to monitor progress against disability-inclusion indicators

- develop detailed action plans based on data (for example, where the data shows low enrolment or an increase in dropping-out amongst children with disabilities in particular schools or districts, arrangements should be made to meet with those schools and districts and identify supports required)

- convene regular disability stakeholder meetings at which data is reported and discussions facilitated to reflect on progress and plan for improvements.

Education Management Information Systems – Disability Disaggregation

Disability disaggregation of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) is essential to providing data to inform and monitor disability-inclusive education.

The main administrative data mechanism within Ministries of Education is the EMIS. The chief purpose of an EMIS is to collect and integrate information about educational activities, and to make it available in comprehensive yet succinct ways.

Governments use EMIS to manage education systems in several ways, for example, to record and monitor school staffing, infrastructure and school grants, or to calculate enrolment rates, student teacher ratios, and completion rates. EMIS enable learning outcomes to be compared between sub-populations to assess, for example, effects of policies or capacity development approaches, or to identify students at risk of dropping out.

Disability-disaggregation of EMIS relies on being able to determine disability in students. Once there is a valid and reliable way of determining if a child has disability, governments can: calculate disability loading for school grants; determine staffing needs; plan for provision of student learning supports and staff capacity development; budget for implementation of disability-inclusive education policies; measure outcomes of those policies; and determine whether there are differential outcomes for students with different types or degrees of disability.

There are two types of EMIS:

- **Census-based systems**: Annual school census surveys conducted early in the school year comprising a (generally) lengthy form for schools to complete with a variety of matrices that aggregate data based on manual calculations by teachers.

- **Granular systems**: Individual student electronic files, including variables such as registered birth number, parent details, gender, ethnicity, date of birth, school attendance, literacy and numeracy assessment results, or financial assistance. Aggregations are automated, and reports are generally available on demand.

There are an increasing number of countries who have or are shifting from a census-based system to a granular system (Fiji, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Indonesia, India, Jordan, to name a few). UNESCO's OpenEMIS free software is granular and is used by an increasing number of countries.

Indicators for disability-inclusive education

Selection and use of relevant indicators is critical to inform disability-inclusive education. Various indicator frameworks have been developed. Indicators from key global frameworks related to disability-inclusive education are presented in Table 2. Due to the global nature of these frameworks, the indicators are (mostly) high level and the data would come from national EMISs.

Table 2 – Disability-inclusive education's indicators from key global frameworks

SDS – indicators to be disaggregated by disability	Incheon Strategy	CRPD
Overarching SDG disaggregation: 4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintiles and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated.		
Quality indicators – based on learning outcomes, completion		
4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex.		
4.1.4 Completion rate (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary).		

4.1.6 Percentage of children over-age for grade (primary, lower secondary).		
Accessibility of school environment, provision of accessible materials and teaching formats		
4.a.1 (d): Proportion of schools with access to adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities.	% of students with intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, deaf-blindness, autism and other disabilities who have assistive devices, adapted curricula and appropriate learning materials.	Schools are accessible.
4.5.2 Percentage of students in primary education whose first or home language is the language of instruction.	% of children who are deaf that receive instruction in sign language.	
	% of students with visual impairments with educational materials in readily accessible formats.	
Participation		
4.1.3 Gross intake ratio to the last grade (primary, lower secondary).	Primary education enrolment rate of children with disabilities.	Every child with disabilities has access to mandatory primary education.
4.1.5 Out-of-school rate (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary).	Secondary education enrolment rate of children with disabilities	Every child with disabilities has access to mandatory secondary education.
4.2.4 Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio in (a) pre-primary education and (b) early childhood educational development.		
4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex.		
4.3.2 Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education, by sex.		
4.3.3 Participation rate in technical and vocational programmes (15- to 24-year-olds), by sex.		

Sources: United Nations Statistics Division 2018, Metadata Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2014, ESCAP guide on disability indicators for the Incheon Strategy; CRPD 2009, Guidelines on treaty-specific document to be submitted by states parties under article 35, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Two further indicator frameworks provide indicators relevant for national and school-level planning and monitoring. These are the Pacific Indicators for Disability-Inclusive Education (see Pacific INDIE case study), and the Index for Inclusion.

Challenges with gathering data

Solid evidence regarding the situation and needs of students with disabilities is an essential element in policy development, planning, reporting and budgetary allocation. However, measuring the exclusion of children with disabilities from and within education has proven difficult globally. Whilst many countries can count numbers of children in special schools, very few collect accurate and reliable data on those in mainstream schools.

A lack of data on out-of-school children with disabilities makes it difficult to gauge how many are out of school, why they are out of school and how best to fulfil their right to an education. Also problematic for ascertaining information on disability is the widespread under-reporting of children with disabilities by parents. This may be related to stigma and discrimination towards children with disabilities and their families, a lack of awareness of the disability due to non-availability of screening services, or a perceived lack of benefit to identifying the child as having disability.

Case study: Pacific INDIE – Pacific indicators for disability-inclusive education

Pacific INDIE is a set of contextually specific indicators for disability-inclusive education in the Pacific and guidelines for implementation.

Designed to support appropriate data collection to inform policy development and monitor and report progress towards disability-inclusive education, the tool has 48 indicators across 10 dimensions:

- Policy and legislation
- Awareness
- Education, training & professional development
- Presence and achievement
- Physical environment and transport
- Identification
- Early intervention and services
- Collaboration and shared responsibility
- Curriculum and assessment practices
- Transition pathways.

Pacific INDIE was funded by DFAT and the guidelines and many research publications have been downloaded hundreds of times globally. The research process resulted in multisectoral collaborations in the four case countries, which strengthened disability-inclusive education efforts.

Some examples of applications of Pacific INDIE include informing the development of Inclusive Education Policy Implementation Plans in Fiji and Samoa. Consideration of the

means of verification for each indicator, as laid out in the Pacific INDIE manual, guided stakeholders towards selecting indicators that measure key policy commitments in reliable and realistic ways. In Vanuatu, Pacific INDIE was used as a source document to inform the development of a monitoring and evaluation tool which tracks disability inclusion across the post-school education and training sector. In Papua New Guinea, it was used to structure research reviewing progress towards disability-inclusive education.

Pacific INDIE was developed through research in 14 countries, with in-depth work in four countries – Samoa, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Fiji. The research was conducted through a collaboration of Monash University, Nossal Institute for Global Health - University of Melbourne, CBM, Pacific Disability Forum and partner DPOs in the four countries, and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

Finance

Financing disability-inclusive education requires annual budgets to facilitate the implementation of evidence-based disability-inclusive education policies, standards and guidelines.

Budgetary allocations for disability-inclusive education could include the following elements.

- Incentives for schools which enrol children with disabilities, as reported and monitored through EMIS.

- The provision of additional teaching support for schools which enrol students with disabilities, for example teacher assistants or itinerant teachers.

- Financial support to cover the cost of reasonable accommodations. These are the additional costs faced by students with disabilities, which can be barriers to school attendance. Examples of these include, but are not limited to, transport costs and the cost of technology to support learning, for example a computer with screen-reading software for a student with vision impairment. Stipends of cash transfers can be considered for families of students with disabilities, to enable self-determined coverage of costs associated with attending school.

- Provision of additional budgetary allocations to support the building of accessible school facilities, noting that when new school facilities, including WASH facilities, are designed and built in an accessible way, the cost of accessibility is less than 1 per cent of the full cost of construction.

Sources: World Bank 2005, Education notes: Education for all – the Cost of accessibility, Washington.

Case study: Access to quality education program

In Fiji in 2011, the majority of children with disabilities enrolled in school attended one of seventeen special education centres concentrated in urban areas. Access to education for children with disabilities in rural and remote areas was limited. Policy focussed on strengthening special schools, and many children with disabilities were out of school.

DFAT's six-year (2011-17) Access to Quality Education Program (AQEP) worked together with schools and Fiji's Ministry of Education, Heritage and the Arts towards improving the ability of children, including those with a disability, to access a quality school education.

AQEP's inclusive education efforts were guided by a Disability Inclusion Strategy developed in 2012, which focussed on:

- modelling inclusion in five inclusive education demonstration schools
- creating an enabling policy and systems framework for inclusive education within the Ministry of Education
- collaboration with DPOs.

Results included:

- attendance of children with disabilities rose, representing 3.3 per cent of all enrolments at target schools, and meeting the end-program target of 3 per cent
- the number of out of school children with disabilities in communities surrounding target schools fell by 43 per cent.
- the number of children with disabilities sitting for national standardised exams focussing on numeracy and literacy increased
- 49 schools were made accessible
- teacher confidence in teaching children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms increased
- funding for Teacher Aides was taken over by the Ministry of Education
- a new Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2017 – 2020 and accompanying implementation plan was established, providing a road map for further efforts
- a summative evaluation of the Disability Inclusion Strategy found that AQEP had "proven the case for inclusive education in Fiji".

Success factors and lessons included:

- an initial study of the drivers of exclusion of children with disabilities from school informed the development of a contextualised disability inclusion strategy
- supporting the practical aspects of school inclusion in demonstration schools, while also strengthening the policy framework allowed policy and practice to influence each other

- implementation utilised a learning-by-doing, adaptive and staged approach

- strong collaboration with the Ministry allowed the identification of shared objectives, and development of mutually agreed work plans in order to reach these

- cooperation with DPOs ensured both representation of people with disabilities in policy and direction setting as well as more impactful community awareness work

- the development and use of Fiji's EMIS, incorporating a disability disaggregation package, made program and Ministry reporting against disability-inclusive indicators possible

- embedding inclusive education efforts within the framework of a mainstream education program resulted in broader and stronger local ownership and sustainability.

4   HOW DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS CAN CONTRIBUTE

Prior to investment in disability-inclusive education, it is important to assess and develop options that are sensitive to the relevant country context. An early appreciation of existing laws, policies and plans, as well as data, cultural sensitivities, norms and political realities will form the basis for subsequent investment plans.

Development partners may invest in disability-inclusive education priorities through a range of modalities:

- Targeting disability-inclusive education as a key area for support, and designating specific funding for it:
  - o Within a broader Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp). This supports an education sector policy and expenditure program under government leadership and progresses towards government responsibility for disbursing and accounting for all funds.
  - o Within an education sector-focussed investment aligned with partner government priorities, building disability-inclusive approaches into a broader suite of education priorities. These may include teacher training, learning resources, curriculum development, infrastructure, oversight functions, learning assessment, systemic reform and strengthening.
  - o Through a standalone, targeted, disability-inclusive education-focussed program to be implemented in close collaboration with partner governments and/or relevant civil society organisations.
- Supporting particular disability-inclusive education priorities, for example:
  - o Supporting stronger disability data collection, monitoring, reporting,

learning and communication through strengthening disability data collection and disaggregation systems within Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), so that data on facilities, staff, student attendance and achievement, fees, etc., can be used to analyse trends, successes and issues.

- o Supporting school infrastructure efforts which incorporate accessibility principles. The Accessibility Design Guide can be used to inform initiatives which seek to improve school facilities, including accessible classrooms and WASH facilities.

- o Supporting DPOs to challenge stigmatising attitudes and discriminatory policies by advocating and raising awareness of the rights of children with disabilities to attend school.

- o Investing in the health sector, improving access to early intervention and assistive technology services which enables children with disabilities to attend school.

- Providing targeted technical assistance in key priority areas, as identified in collaboration with partner governments.

The chosen approach should be developed collaboratively with the partner government, other development partners including DPOs, and education stakeholders.

Source: DFAT 2009.

5 TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Assessment questions

Answer the following questions by ticking 'True' or 'False'. Once you have selected your answers to all the questions, turn the page to 'The correct answers are...' to check the accuracy of your answers.

Question 1

When funding education for people with disabilities, development partners should only support special education.

Is this statement true or false? ☐ True ☐ False

Question 2

All responsibility for the governance and management of disability-inclusive education sits with schools.

Is this statement true or false? ☐ True ☐ False

Question 3

Negative attitudes towards people with disabilities can be a key barrier to their inclusion in education.

Is this statement true or false? ☐ True ☐ False

Question 4

Inaccessible school buildings and facilities have an equal effect on boys and girls with disabilities.

Is this statement true or false? ☐ True ☐ False

Question 5

To be truly disability-inclusive, schools must be able to provide assistive devices, therapy and early intervention services to students with disabilities.

Is this statement true or false?   ☐ True   ☐ False

Question 6

Disability-inclusive education works best when there are trained, committed staff at the Ministry, Head Teacher / Principal, Teacher and Classroom Assistant levels.

Is this statement true or false?   ☐ True   ☐ False

Question 7

EMISs only focus is on collecting data regarding students enrolled in schools.

Is this statement true or false?   ☐ True   ☐ False

Question 8

Disability-disaggregation of EMISs relies on being able to determine the disability status of students.

Is this statement true or false?   ☐ True   ☐ False

The correct answers are...

Question 1

When funding education for people with disabilities, development partners should only support special education.

This statement is false. Development partners must work with local stakeholders to understand the local context and plan a staged approach to supporting education for people with disabilities in various settings as required. This may include through disability-inclusive and special education approaches.

Question 2

All responsibility for the governance and management of disability-inclusive education sits with schools.

This statement is false. Responsibility does sit with schools, but it is also the responsibility of the Ministry of Education or relevant authority. Intersectoral committees can play an important role in supporting the implementation and monitoring of disability-inclusive education policies.

Question 3

Negative attitudes towards people with disabilities can be a key barrier to their inclusion in education.

This statement is true. Stigma and discrimination can have an exclusionary effect on people with disabilities and their families.

Question 4

Inaccessible school buildings and facilities have an equal effect on boys and girls with disabilities.

This statement is false. Inaccessible WASH facilities can result in additional barriers for girls and women with disabilities, who require dignified access in order to manage

menstruation. The distance of WASH facilities from school can also impact on the safety of female users.

Question 5

To be truly disability-inclusive, schools must be able to provide assistive devices, therapy and early intervention services to students with disabilities.

This statement is false. However, it is important that schools develop and utilise referral linkages with health services, DPOs and other disability service providers, which enable students who need additional supports to access these.

Question 6

Disability-inclusive education works best when there are trained, committed staff at the Ministry, Head Teacher / Principal, Teacher and Classroom Assistant levels.

This statement is true.

Question 7

EMISs only focus is on collecting data regarding students enrolled in schools.

This statement is false. As well as collecting student information to calculate enrolment rates, student teacher ratios and completion rates, and establish learning outcomes, governments use EMIS to record and monitor school staffing, infrastructure, school grants, and the effects of policies or capacity development approaches.

Question 8

Disability-disaggregation of EMISs relies on being able to determine the disability status of students.

This statement is true. Once there is a valid and reliable way of determining if a child has disability, governments can: calculate disability loading for school grants; determine staffing needs; plan for provision of student learning supports and staff capacity development; budget for implementation of disability-inclusive education policies; measure outcomes of those policies; and determine whether there are differential outcomes for students with different types or degrees of disability.

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Learn more about…

- *DFAT's Strategy for Australia's Aid Investments in Education 2015-2020, found at,* http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/strategy-for-australias-aid-investmentsin-education-2015-2020.aspx

- *DFAT's Development for all 2015-2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program, found at,* http://dfat.gov.au/aboutus/publications/Pages/development-for-all-2015-2020.aspx

- *The CRPD General Comment No.4 on the right to inclusive education, which was adopted by member States in 2016, and expands upon Article 24 of the CRPD providing detailed information for implementation of the Article, found at,* https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fGC%2f4

- *UNICEF guidance on disability disaggregation of census-based systems can be found at,* https://www.openemis.org/files/resources/UNICEF_Guide_for_Including_Disability_in_Education_Management_Information_Systems_2016_en.pdf

- *United Nations Statistics Division 2018, Metadata Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, found at,* http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/metadata-compilation/Metadata-Goal-4.pdf

- *Guidance on granular disability disaggregation systems is available within a package of Fijian resource materials, developed through the DFAT-funded Access to Quality Education Program, found at,* http://www.education.gov.fj/images/FEMISdisabilitydisaggregationpackageFinal.pdf.

- *Two indicator frameworks provide indicators relevant for national and school-level planning and monitoring. These are the:*

- *Pacific Indicators for Disability-Inclusive Education* http://monash.edu/education/research/projects/pacific-indie/outcomes.html ,

- *Index for Inclusion*
  https://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Index%20EY%20English.pdf

- *A wide range of resources on disability-inclusive education are available on the DID4all website under the topic 'Disability inclusive education'. This includes peer-reviewed evidence, case studies and practical guidance, including modifications to physical environments and teaching approaches. These can be found at,*
  https://www.did4all.com.au/ResourceSubTheme.aspx?37169662-93b2-44bb-a44c-abafe03e742a