

The goal of education for All can only be achieved if  
authorities, schools and communities recognize their  
legal and moral responsibility towards All Children.

UNESCO National Commission for Malaysia

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## From the Editors

Dear readers, welcome to the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of the EENET Asia Newsletter. Venita Kaul has been invited to write a guest-editorial about early childhood education as a foundation for life. Children's voices are heard throughout this issue, from schools in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Tajikistan, while teachers from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan are writing about their experiences in making schools more inclusive and child-friendly. This all highlights the progress that has been made throughout the region over the past few years. Reports from programmes on inclusive education in Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, Lao, Pakistan and Timor-Leste encourages us to move forward and gives us ideas on how inclusive education can be implemented in countries where there are few resources.

Three research programmes; on school health in Pakistan, on the relationship between "defectology" and inclusion from Uzbekistan and Central Asia, as well as on barriers to enrolment and regular school attendance in Indonesia are being presented in this issue. We hope this will encourage more of you to do practical research and share it with our readers. An article from India shows us the

importance of films in promoting awareness about inclusive and child-friendly education.

The courage of many of our colleagues working in conflict-affected areas is a source of inspiration to us all. Hundreds of girls have been killed by the Taliban in Afghanistan merely for going to school, and four outstanding colleagues from IRC [International Rescue Committee] made the ultimate sacrifice earlier this year when they were assassinated by Taliban for providing education to children throughout this war torn country. Despite of our grief we must never forget that the results of their efforts, and the efforts of countless others in government and non-government organisations have resulted in 2.1 million girls being enrolled in Afghan schools today, an increase from 0 just 7 years ago.

Events that have taken place in Brunei Darussalam, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Tajikistan and Thailand have been reported. The next issue of EENET Asia Newsletter is due in March 2009 - please send us articles, your response to this issue, and report on events in your city or country - we are looking forward to be hearing from you. Happy reading.

## Guest Editorial: Early Childhood Education - The Foundation for Life!

**Venita Kaul**

Have you ever wondered how important the first few years of life are for a child's life, or for that matter for every individual? As somebody has rightly observed - "*the first few years of a child's life last a lifetime!*" Our Asian cultural heritage also regards the first five years of childhood as the formative years for it is at this age that children imbibe values and develop habits which stay with them till much later in life. And now the recent international research coming in from the field of neuroscience, particularly on the development of the brain, is also confirming that these early childhood years are the most critical for life-long development, since the pace of brain development in these years is extremely

rapid. There is evidence that "experience based brain development in the early years sets neurological and biological pathways that affect health, learning and behaviour throughout life." [Mustard, 2007]. There is growing evidence now that during these early years of life there are some segments that are considered "critical periods" for development of specific cognitive, social and psychomotor competencies, which significantly contribute to later success in life. More specifically this period is critical for development of language and social skills, symbolic thinking and skills associated with being able to make relative comparisons, all of which are very important for later schooling and for life.

If during these 'critical periods' the child does not get the benefit of a stimulating and enriching physical and psycho-social environment, the chances of the child's brain developing to its full potential are considerably, and often irreversibly, reduced. This research finding places a very large percentage of children in poverty contexts, particularly in the developing world, "at risk", in terms of their life chances. "By the time poorer children in many countries reach school age, they are at a significant disadvantage in cognitive and social ability" [WDR, 2006]. What follows logically is the crucial importance of investing in these years, to ensure an enabling environment for every child and thereby, a sound foundation for life. This is not only the right of every child, but will also impact in the long term, on the quality of human capital available to a country, especially in our region, given that our main asset in the years to come will be our 'youth power!!"

How do we ensure that every child gets a sound foundation for life? The best investment we can make for children in these early years is to provide children with a good quality Early Childhood Care and Education [ECCE] program. There is now significant international research which has shown that children who come through a good ECCE program benefit for life, especially in terms of their quality of life in terms of family life, work situations and overall adjustment in society. The need for ECCE is becoming even more important, given the changing social, economic and demographic contexts over the last few decades, which have often rendered homes ill-equipped to ensure optimal child care. These changes are more specifically associated with changes in the family structure, from joint to nuclear, so that parenting, which was earlier a shared family responsibility, is now solely the responsibility of the parents; this responsibility is again often further delegated. While children from the higher socio economic strata are often left with paid but untrained surrogate care givers, in the lower socio-economic communities the responsibility of child care gets loaded on to the older sisters, thus keeping them often out of school and robbing them of both their childhood, and basic education. In addition, the growing urbanization and increase in maternal employment outside the home has

further affected the possibilities of ensuring "quality informal early care and education" for the young child within the home. It has been this changing social context, along with also the realization of the importance of these early years which has made the availability of good quality ECCE a priority.

What is a good quality ECCE? A good ECCE program is one that supports young children's needs holistically in terms of health, nutrition and education. While nutritional needs of children are required to be addressed on priority in the first three years which is the critical period at which children are more at risk of becoming malnourished, the 3 to 6 year olds need a developmentally appropriate Early Childhood Education [ECE] program. In many countries now this sub stage of education is being extended to children upto eight years, since it is believed that the developmental needs and characteristics of children from 6 to 8 years are more in common with the younger early childhood stage than with the primary stage of education. The methodology of teaching-learning needs to therefore continue to be play and activity based, as for ECCE. Most certainly the 6-8 years should be seen as a period of transition, which should be as smooth as possible for children to begin to cope successfully with the demands of the more formal primary education.

A developmentally appropriate ECCE program is essentially aimed at providing children with a foundation for all round development. This includes activities for physical and motor development, language development, social and emotional development, cognitive development and development of aesthetic appreciation and creativity in children. It is believed by all educationists that "play" is the best medium for learning at this stage, since play comes naturally to children and is key to creating and sustaining in them a basic interest in learning. It is also best to conduct the ECE program in children's own mother tongue which they have already learnt and begun to use, so that they can construct and process the new knowledge more easily. Activities for children need to be stimulating and should be planned in a graded way covering all aspects of development, given that each child develops at his/her

own pace. Also their developmental needs keep on increasing in complexity and require increasingly higher levels of stimulation. Play way activities for children include *stories, rhymes, language games, pre-number and number games, music and movement, creative art and craft, play with dolls and soft toys, activities for fine and gross motor development, creative drama and activities which allow children to explore, experiment, ask questions, reason out and solve little problems*. Play/learning materials include picture story books, story cards, building blocks and other manipulative material, puzzles, dolls and soft toys for imaginative play, language and number cards, dominoes, material for picture reading and so on. The program needs to have a good balance of free and guided play, indoor and outdoor play, individual, small and large group activities and quiet and more energetic activities. Five to six year old children need specific school readiness activities which are referred to as pre-writing, pre-reading and pre number skills and concepts. A good child-centered program needs to therefore be one that is planned on the basis of children's developmental needs, characteristics and interests and which should focus on developing in children some basic skills and competencies which will prepare the child for school and also for life. Some of these are listed for easy reference in the center fold. Teachers may consider making this into a wall chart and putting it up in the classroom so that they are constantly reminded that this is what they are working towards. there is often a risk of teachers doing activities for activity sake and losing focus!

Unfortunately, as we look around us, this kind of developmentally appropriate ECE is available to very few children. While a majority of children especially from the poorer communities do not get any organized ECCE or very poor quality, there is a large number of children who attend the private nursery schools which have mushroomed all over. In the absence of any regulation or system of recognition, these nursery schools are often run by teachers who have no training in ECE. As a result, these schools introduce children to formal learning of literacy and numeracy [which should be taught at the primary school] and for which children are not maturationally

or experientially ready.

This puts a lot of academic pressure on children which can be detrimental to their development. While children do manage to learn what they are taught, even though superficially, through rote learning there is research to show that this can be harmful for their personality development. Firstly, when they are expected to learn beyond their ability, the chances of failing are higher than success. This may result in what is termed as the "*learned stupidity*" syndrome - which means a child may not be actually stupid but because of this unreasonable expectation, begins to believe that he/she is stupid and this mars the confidence level for life. A second adverse effect is that the early academics provide a very *weak foundation* on which all future education is built. Also, children under pressure learn only through rote learning and this leads to an *imbalance* since other cognitive and language skills are thus not developed to the extent they could. Most important of all, it is seen that this early pressure results in what is known as a "*damaged disposition hypothesis*"! This means children do manage to learn the skills they are being made to learn, but because of the undue pressure to learn, they lose the disposition or interest in using these skills - have we not heard so many teachers and parents complain that their children have learnt to read, but are not interested in reading books other than their textbooks!! It is important for both parents and teachers to remember that this may well result in the educational program getting distorted into a developmentally inappropriate program and becoming in the long run counter productive for children!! It is therefore very crucial for us educators to advocate and share widely this information of what is a good quality ECCE program, so that through the simple process of demand and supply we can regulate the demand for good quality ECCE which is undoubtedly the right of every single child!!

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In memory of Nicole Dial, Shirley Case, Mohammad Aimal, Zabiullah [IRC, Afghanistan] and Jackie Kirk [IRC, headquarters] and all other brave and committed national and international professionals, teachers, parents and students, who have become victims of armed violence in conflict affected countries while developing and supporting education for the most vulnerable children in the most difficult circumstances.

## Enabling Education in Conflict-affected Countries: Rebuilding for Inclusiveness and Relevance

The Editors

Education is a basic human right - one that all children, including those in conflict affected countries - must be able to access. Education is not a relief activity: it is central to human and national development. In emergency situations educational activities must be established or restored as soon as possible. Children cannot wait for a conflict to end before their educational rights and needs are addressed. However, education for children affected by conflict is largely absent from educational planning documents, international conferences on education, and debates about education for all [EFA], even though the Dakar Framework for Action [2000] states that in order to achieve EFA, the international community must meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural disaster and instability. It urges international partners to work with governmental and non-governmental partners to restore and provide education in such situations.

Armed conflict creates large populations of displaced people and exposes children to serious risks. Young people, living through conflict face injury, trauma and death, as well as the prospect of being forced into exploitative labor or military servitude as child soldiers or sex slaves. They face new - adult



courtesy of Save the Children Sweden

- responsibilities, such as earning a living or caring for siblings. Even when conflict has ended, their futures are damaged due to the learning time they have lost.

Enabling education in conflict-affected countries faces special challenges. Armed conflict badly affects education. Families split up and survival becomes the most urgent need. Education systems break down. Yet education can give children the skills and knowledge they need to survive and, as they become adults, to reduce the chances of armed conflict happening again. In a formal or non-formal school environment children can begin the process of recovering from trauma and grief, and voice their feelings without fear. Schools are vital in protecting children and supporting their emotional and social development by providing them comfort, security and opportunity, for which teachers need to be trained and supported. The routine of going to school provides a sense of normality and the environment is one in which children are allowed to be children. For societies affected by conflict, education should be seen as integral to building long-term peace and well-being.

Although the number of out-of-school primary-age children in the world has fallen from 100 million to 72 million in recent years, the situation in conflict-affected countries has seen little improvement. These countries are home to half of all the children out of school worldwide.

It can take years for an education system to recover from war, during which time an entire generation may have lost out on education and its benefits, and low levels of international investment in education in conflict-affected countries do little to relieve the situation. The top 20 of “Most At-Risk States” in the “2008 Failed States Index” includes Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and North Korea. Many poor countries are on the list of failed states, which reinforces the message that conflict breeds poverty and vice versa, while history has also taught us that half the countries embarking on the road to peace fall back into conflict within five years. Countries often slip in and out of conflict, and in and out emergency and development phases, as has been seen in Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste. Children often spend their whole childhood living in [post] emergency situations. Supporting education in such situations with a special focus on systems that are inclusive of all cannot be more urgent. Experience however shows that even in the most challenging context it is possible to deliver quality education. In Afghanistan, primary enrolment figures have increased steadily over the past years. With 1.7 million girls currently in primary school this is the highest number in Afghan history and a major milestone for the country. However, many girls continue to face obstacles to education, such as the lack of, and distance to schools, and early marriage. In southern and eastern Afghanistan, insecurity, including targeted attacks against schools, continues to hamper children’s ability to attend school, while various minority groups and children with disabilities have also been denied their right to public education.

National and international organizations in Afghanistan now focus on strengthening the Ministry of Education [MOE] with school construction and rehabilitation, provision of stationary and book-bags, and accelerated learning programs aimed at reintegrating out-of-school children into age-appropriate grades.

In addition non-formal and inclusive programs have been developed for marginalized children, like nomadic children, children from Sikh minorities, children with disabilities, internally displaced children [IDPs] and refugee children returning from neighboring countries.

The challenge has been to develop a twinned approach which balances practical and immediate needs with longer-term education needs of the population and country at large, based on the ultimate goal of inclusive and equitable national development. Afghanistan for example needs 100,000 more teachers including some 48,000 new female teachers, if there is to be an essential increase in the enrollment and retention of girls. Only one female teacher in three has the required education; some 27,000 current teachers will need ongoing professional support to enhance their knowledge and teaching skills.

**The situation of children in conflict-affected countries is like drowning without life-boats available. Their fate and perhaps their loyalty may be decided by which lifeboat comes first to “rescue” them - the armed group, criminals, an extremist group - or the school. If no school rescue boat comes or does not have space for all school age children, chances are that others will provide the only, often destructive and forced alternative.**

Despite all challenges, Afghan children and their families have shown amazing resilience in the face of the ongoing conflict and insecurity. Education must now serve as a tool for contributing to peace building and the prevention of conflict. It is thus important to design and implement context-specific interventions which may have to be different for different parts of the country, while considering local security concerns, government capacity, areas of greatest need and how to best coordinate with other donor and local efforts on the ground. Enrolment campaigns have created an extraordinary return to school in Afghanistan [a 400% increase in 2002]. Simply returning to school, however, is not enough and such campaigns must be complemented by measures that improve what happens in classrooms in terms of teaching and learning. Education responses

must also be holistic and flexible incorporating health, nutrition, water and sanitation, protection, and other basic needs and rights, while building on what already exists. Upgrading the quality of teacher education, actively involving communities in school planning and management, and curriculum review for discriminatory content, while developing programs that teach and practice human rights and peace building, are critical to improved quality education. Education needs to become an integral part of Afghanistan's process of nation building!

Education based on the principle of non-discrimination needs to become an integral part of every emergency response. Well-designed education programs protect children cognitively, psychologically, socially and physically while promoting conflict resolution, tolerance, peace, equity and human rights. This includes teaching life skills such as related to landmine awareness and HIV and AIDS. Even in times of peace, some groups of learners such as girls, children with disabilities,

those from minority populations may be socially marginalized and excluded from public education. During emergencies the likelihood that these groups are denied their rights to education increases, and new groups of children with "special needs" emerge, such as child soldiers, children disabled by landmines, separated children, internally displaced children, refugees and orphans. The rebuilding of an education system provides an excellent opportunity for transforming education so that it welcomes and meets the development needs of all children. This is an opportunity not to be missed in Afghanistan.

**Nicole, Shirley, and Jackie did take this opportunity and worked tirelessly to transform education to become more inclusive of and responsive to all children. Their contributions are felt in the hearts and minds of the Afghan communities, staff, and peers they worked with, and will be missed. We commit ourselves to continuing their work and living the values that they so clearly demonstrated.**



courtesy of Simon Baker

## Taking Care of Children is Taking Care of Our Future

**Farida Torobekova**

"After the 3-day training, I realised that there are various categories of children living in the country including those with disabilities, of poor families, of families with many children, working children and children deprived of parent's care, and we, teachers, should work actively with parents, communities and government authorities so that children can get education along with other children and live in their families. Taking care of children is taking care of our future!" Upon the completion of the first module on basic principles and the concept of inclusive education, almost all teachers filled out such forms for trainers. The Project "Protecting Children's Rights to Education and Development" is funded by UNICEF and was launched in May 2008. The project primarily aims to protect children's rights

to education, promoting teachers' friendly attitude towards children and their use of inclusive education methods in the Kadamjai rayon of Batken oblast.

**Successful integration of children requires strong support from parents who need to be aware of the importance of education as children in villages are working in the field and on the farms.** Kalbu Monolova, Primary School Teacher, Maidan School.

As a part of the project, 129 teachers have been trained and started activities to identify children who for various reasons do not attend school.



Teachers have realised by now that children miss school for reasons no one used to think of. According to primary findings obtained by teachers during the week, children of religious families prefer going to a madrasah and thus completely deny mainstream school education. Many children with disabilities learn at home as the current education system allows for individual schooling. However, in all such cases, children are not involved in school life and school activities, they do not spend time with other children and, which is the most important, may not have quality education. Due to economic reasons, parents often prefer boarding schools and orphanages to educate their children. In the project implementation, we faced a rather difficult case. During a training session for members of psychological medical and pedagogical commission, a woman requested the Uchkorgon boarding school to take her 7-year old son. All commission members examined the boy during the session and concluded that the boy was healthy and should attend mainstream school. We talked to the mother for a long time trying to explain that the boarding school provided education to children with mental and emotional disorders and learning in such an institution was not appropriate for her son. We could clearly see that she was forced by poverty, but we explained to her that it should be her main objective to make her son's childhood happy which would be impossible for the boy when living far away from his home and parents. In the end, the mother took her son home.

To address issues like that, parent and teacher associations and children's clubs were formed within the project in five pilot villages of Kadamjai rayon. Associations consisted of parents, teachers, social workers, and representatives of local authorities.

#### **The association's main functions are:**

- protecting children's rights and interests
- cooperating with local authorities to create conditions enabling children to learn and participate
- mobilising parents and community in order to provide education to all children.

To fulfill the above functions, the associations decided to closely cooperate with local

mosque leaders to inform religious parents on the importance of quality education for all children. To provide inclusion of children learning at home, the Orozbekov village association members decided to form a resource group at Okhna gymnasium where children, prior to becoming fully included would first have individual classes with a teacher, followed by inclusion in the mainstream group. We also noted the importance of consultations with parents as many of them are unaware of child rights and often do not take the children's interests into account. take the children's interests into account.

**Frankly speaking, before the training, I never thought of children who are not included in the school process, I just thought this was the way it should be. Children do not go to school for various reasons such as disability, poverty, many children in the family, work, etc. But now I understand that it is important for all children to be included since they all have the same rights.**

Saliyma Zikirova, Primary School Teacher, Okhna Hogn School

#### **What is a Children's Club?**

A children's club enables children to express their views, participate in interesting activities involving large numbers of students, discuss issues of school and village life and these clubs play a significant role in integrating children in the mainstream school. Currently, parent and teacher associations and children's clubs discuss ways to create a more friendly, open and inclusive environment in schools. This may require funding, and the groups are willing to develop projects and carry out fundraising and awareness raising activities. As a result, the entire community will benefit. Every integrated child is a chance for schools to become more flexible and open. The work has started recently and we believe we will achieve great results if we act together with children and for their best interests!

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# Pupil Voices on Inclusion from a BRAC School

Tahiya Mahbub

Two years ago a ten-year-old Jyoita, with a mild speech and visual disability said to me, *"Ami chai shobai shikte par"* meaning *"I want that everyone can learn"*.

Being one of my initial experience with a young pupil studying in an inclusive setting I did not fully understand the depth of her wish. Through continued work in inclusive education, I have now come to understand the significance of her words and the feelings of many others like her for whom education in today's world is still a distant dream.

In South Asia alone, more than 17 million children are still out of school. To help children, who cannot attend school due to overstretched government systems, social discrimination, and high hidden costs of education, NGOs [non-government organizations] initiatives are gaining momentum. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee [BRAC] the largest NGO in Bangladesh working actively in the field of inclusion and the Spastics Society of India have started a collaborative education program geared towards promoting inclusion. BRAC is currently operating over 50,000 primary and pre-primary schools all over Bangladesh - serving more than 1.5 million children. The schools are usually one-roomed bamboo or mud houses, operated over 4 years by a single teacher. These schools are located within one-kilometre radius from the student's home and are usually run at a time convenient for the students. Since 2003, BRAC schools are being run with an underlying inclusive philosophy that reads: **Inclusion is an approach which addresses the needs of all learners in ordinary classroom situations, including learners with special needs, indigenous children, children with disabilities, girl children and poor children.**

This article reports children's voices from one such BRAC school. This school had a diverse student population in terms of age and gender and, range of disability. Using the Index of Inclusion, I designed a multi-method case study that included observations, special

techniques for the children [drawings and message writing], a questionnaire, and focus groups discussions and studied the school culture, policy and practice. In share some on my observations and learnings from this work.

## Culture

A school's culture is reflected in the shared philosophy of those employed and enrolled. The culture of a school allows us to wholly understand its atmosphere - respect, belongingness, and support which are important for teachers, staff and students. Most children at the Tongi School felt that their school did have a positive culture, where the students and teachers shared a sense of belonging and respect. The following comments reveal some of their feelings.



Picture above: The field officer [in-charge of a particular area] will often come for inspections. Here the field officer is helping the students with a math assignment.

courtesy of Tahiya Mahbub

**"When I first came to this school, everyone came. They [the other children] played with me and did not fight with me. Apa [teacher] taught me. They want me here because if I don't come to school even one day, Apa worries. Everyone wants me here and I will come every day."** [Shamaila, 10 years old]

**"If I learn a poem, then I come to school and tell Apa that I have learnt a poem and I want to teach my peers, then Apa tells me that also write the poem in my diary and then Apa can also learn the poem. I feel happy."** [Shamaila, 10 years old]

However, lack of respect among the students was also evident, especially between the team

leaders [or all 4 years] and the non-leaders. Perhaps the non-leaders did not like that their team leaders were always identified by the adults as being 'brighter' and 'smarter'.

**"The team leaders speak more in school and they try to control us when we are naughty. But nobody listens to the team leaders in the small groups; the other students slap them or hit them with the ruler. If the team leader gives a job, the other students hit the team leader."**

[Rongon, 12 years old]

At times, students reported feeling 'not respected' as regards their preferred learning style.

**"In the small groups when I don't say anything, everyone says 'Why don't you say anything?' or 'Why don't you know?' or 'You cannot do it, but we can'. Everyone tells me to study and so I don't like it'."**

[Shelu, 8 years old]

As for expectations, the teacher put a lot of effort into 'fair expectation', and gave children extra time and help whenever they needed it. Most of the children had high aspirations of learning. In the "Message in a Bottle" activity, the students listed up to 35 entries on how they liked reading, writing, and studying at school. Nevertheless, this did not seem to be the case for one of the disabled children, who said she learned 'nothing much' over the past three years. She said that she did not have any books, was often 'brushed aside' and not given enough time to answer questions in class.

### Policy

Policies determine the kinds of plans in-place which determine decisions and actions at a school. For understanding the policy it is important to identify whether students feel that rules and regulations support their growth and provide them a safe learning environment. Themes of settlement, physical appearance of the school and teasing were considered important.

For the children, settlement in the school had mostly to do with their new friends. They keenly mentioned how their peers helped them settle in, when they first arrived. For one of the disabled children, this involved others sitting

next to her. For the others, it was mostly about peers extending their help with a drawing or writing activity.

One of the students mentioned, "when I first came to this school, Apa taught me how to stitch a book together". Hence, settlement for most of them seemed to be a smooth process, a month-long activity whereby students and teachers both worked towards building a sense of community.

Accessibility, physical appearance and school timing were three highly debated topics for the children. The children really appreciated having a place to study.

**"I like my schoolhouse. If we did not have a schoolhouse, we would get wet in the rain outside. We can all study together inside the schoolhouse."** [KumKum, 10 years old]

However, some did complain about the rough burlap they sat on, the limited amount of light, and distracting noises inside the schoolhouse. Others were not satisfied with the placement and timing of the school. For example, for the child with the severe physical disability, a five minute distance from her house seemed far while for others a twenty minute walk was short. As for the timing, the Tongi School usually operated from 1-5pm; however, because the teacher was having exams classes were being held from 9am-1pm, by a substitute teacher. Some of the students liked this change while some didn't. One of the students mentioned that the afternoon timing is better because "Apa can come from college and then teach us".

Students reported with heavy heart, their experience of teasing at the school. Teasing is an important aspect of school policy as it is a controllable factor. Nevertheless, even in a school of this size, teasing was a prevailing part of the children's lives. One child said:

**"Everyone laughs at me when I cannot understand English. English is hard for me...and my schoolmates laugh."**

[Shamaila, 10 years old]

Observations, reveal that the child with the speech disability was laughed at when he tried



to speak in class. In the focus groups, students reported use of word such as “donkey”, “weird”, “show-off” and “stupid”. Some children even reported hitting and slapping during group work.

However, it is important to note here that all students felt comfortable turning to their teacher if they became victims of teasing.

**“If someone teases me, I can turn to Apa. Apa will then tell the student who teased me ‘Just because you know the material, you tease others? Is this any good?’ Then that student will stop saying mean things.”** [Rongon, 12 years old]

### Practice

Practice is about the tangible teaching-learning methods followed in a classroom. In observing lesson responsiveness, it was very interesting to discover that the students didn’t really require the lessons to be too responsive to their needs. They were happy with the teacher’s guidance in getting them to memorise the text.

**“If I cannot understand something, then Apa tells me to learn it over and over again, she does give me extra time. But I must memorise the page I am on before moving onto the next.”** [Shamaila, 10 years old]

**“Apa gives me extra two hours to memorise the materials and then present those to her.”** [Shelu, 8 years old]

In the school students equated learning to memorisation and not so much to comprehending information. Peer help, on the other hand, was seen in practice and the students were all very happy to help one another.

**“My peers help me. KumKum helps me with maths. She draws it for me on the slate, she says ‘this is a triangle, and it has three sides’.”** [Jyoita, 10 years old]

**“I am the team leader which I am very responsible about. When Apa teaches us a lot of stuff, and my friends cannot learn those, I can re-teach them.”** [KumKum, 10 years old]

The children were content with the way resources were used at their school. In the focus group discussions, many students mentioned how they liked not having to buy any materials. They also appreciated having all the educational materials distributed to them equally at the beginning of every school year. The disabled child reported not having any Class 3 books or notebooks. Her books were given to another pupil by an adult and as a result she could not effectively complete her class work and homework.

School is a personalized experience for each child and it is important for us to bring voices of children to the surface and try to be more sensitive to their needs. What Jyoita wants is still a distant dream for Bangladesh, but BRAC and other NGOs have started taking small steps towards this goal. We still have many, many miles to walk but if we can understand and give importance to children’s experience at the very start of this journey, we can be sure that this movement of inclusion will continue in the right direction.

**Ms. Tahiya Mahbub** recently completed her M.Phil. in inclusive education at the University of Cambridge and is currently working as a Lecturer of English and Education at North South University. She can be contacted at: [t.mahbub.05@cantab.net](mailto:t.mahbub.05@cantab.net) and Hs. 37, Road 9, Sector 4, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh

courtesy of Simon Baker



# Writing for EENET Asia

We hope you have found the articles in this and our earlier newsletters informative and inspiring. Do you feel moved enough to write about and share your own inclusive education experiences? We know that many people are interested in sending articles to EENET Asia, but they often don't know where to start with preparing their articles, or feel too nervous to send us what they have written. So here are some ideas to help you get started.

## Who can write for EENET Asia?

Everyone! We encourage all our readers to consider writing an article. We really want authors who have direct experience of inclusive education - for instance, as a teacher, a student, a parent, a youth worker, an activist or a campaigner, a local education officer, or a local NGO member of staff.

## What if you have never written an article before?

Don't worry! You do not have to be an experienced writer. We at EENET Asia can help you to develop your ideas and edit what you write. If you send us an article, which we think is not ready for publishing, we will offer ideas, or ask questions to help you collect suitable information. Don't be upset or put off if we ask you to do more work on your article. Every article we publish goes through a process of rewriting and editing.

## Who decides which articles to publish?

EENET Asia has an editorial team which supports writers with advice and ideas. In each issue we try to publish articles:

- from countries not featured before
- about aspects of inclusive education that have received less attention
- including the views of children and parents
- that communicate in different ways - e.g., using diagrams, photos or drawings, instead of just words.

## What can you write about?

- You can write about any issue related to quality, inclusive education.
- We encourage you to write articles that give practical advice. We want to know what you did, what you learned, and what impact this had on children's education in your situation.
- Look carefully at previous newsletters to get an idea of the type of articles we publish.
- We particularly need more articles about inclusive education in relation to:
  - refugees and emergency situations

- early childhood development
- secondary and higher education
- life-long learning and vocational education
- private schools
- non-formal education.

## How much should you write?

The maximum is 600 words for a one-page article, or 1,200 words for a two-page article - less if you want to include photos or diagrams.

## How should you present your article?

- Email it to us as a Word document, with a font size of at least 12pts.
- If you do not have access to a computer or email, you can type or handwrite an article and post it to us at: EENET ASIA, Jalan Panglima Polim X No. 9, Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta-Selatan 12160, Indonesia
- You can also send us articles on audio-cassette or in Braille.
- Ideally, articles should be written in English. But if you send us an article in another language, we will try to find a volunteer translator to help us.
- Remember to tell us your full name, postal address, telephone number and email address, and write a short paragraph about yourself - who you are, what your job is, etc.

## Other advice

- Use simple language - short sentences; no abbreviations, jargon or academic-style referencing.
- Break up your article into small sections, using sub-headings or text boxes.
- Include quotations, e.g., from students.
- If you are using people's names, get their permission first, or change their names in your article.
- If you send us a photo, make sure everyone in the photo [and the photographer] has given their permission. If there are children in the photo, ask their parents or guardians for permission to publish the picture.

**We look forward to reading your articles!**

# Non-Attendance in Eastern Indonesia

Kym Holthouse

**Save the Children UK undertook a participatory research project with 22 schools and communities in 3 districts in the eastern Indonesian province of Nusa Tenggara Timor [NTT], to better understand barriers to enrolment and regular school attendance.**

Indonesia has been widely recognized as having achieved universal primary education for more than a decade. Participation rates exploded in Indonesia during the '70s and '80s when the government undertook the most rapid program of school construction seen anywhere in the world.

Since 1994, Indonesian law has required that every child between the ages of 7 and 15 must be enrolled in school, extending the period of compulsory basic education to include 3 years of junior secondary school. In introducing the law, the government set a target of 96% junior secondary enrolment by 2009. The latest official figures available [2005/06] show there is still some work to be done: 87% of 13-15 year olds enrolled, but only 62% at junior high.

The difference between the 2 figures mainly reflects the number of children aged 13-15 who are still at primary school. These are children who either started primary school late, or have since repeated a grade or two. Repeating grades is common in Indonesia and places considerable extra pressure on the education system.

A major factor in students repeating grades is absenteeism, as students who attend irregularly inevitably fall further and further behind. In spite of its multiple impacts, absenteeism is rarely captured in statistical representations of school participation. Yet, widespread, chronic absenteeism can obviously make the most impressive enrolment figures almost meaningless.

To better understand the causes of persistent non-enrolment and absenteeism, Save the Children UK recently launched a participatory research project in the eastern Indonesian province of NTT. Not surprisingly, in a country as large, and economically diverse, as Indonesia, school participation rates are not uniform, and can vary even more within provinces than between them. As discussed

below, rural and remote schools face multiple additional challenges in getting children to school, and invariably do so with fewer resources.

## NTT Province

Government figures [2005/06] show that in NTT only 94% of 7-12 year olds, and only 77% of 13-15 year olds, were enrolled, significantly below the national averages for both age groups.

NTT is one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia. Schools, teaching personnel and resources in many parts of the province, in particular rural and remote areas, are insufficient to meet demand. Since Indonesia embarked on a radical decentralization program in 2002, district governments have been responsible for supplying education services. However, NTT's district education departments are still heavily reliant on central government funding, which is insufficient to meet their budgetary needs.

At the household level, income in NTT is  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the national average. Although mandatory school fees were recently abolished in Indonesia, the associated costs of schooling - uniforms, books, transport and lunch money - continue to impact more heavily on parents' ability to keep their children in school in poorer areas.

## Results

Three districts - Sumba Barat Daya [SBD], Kupang and Belu - were included in the study. SBD had by far the most serious problems both in terms of enrolment and absenteeism. SCUK's own survey found only 89% of 7-12 year olds in SBD were enrolled at any level of school, compared with 95% in Belu and 99% for Kupang. This gap widened further when 13 and 14 year olds were also included.

The difference was even starker for absenteeism. At the schools surveyed in SBD, on average one out of every five student days was lost. Put another way, the average student missed 48 days, or 8 weeks, of school



between July 2007 and May 2008. By contrast, in Kupang the average student missed only 6 days over the same period.

What do these different figures reflect about schools in these communities? In many ways the communities appear quite similar: they were all rural or remote; have similar climates; and measured in terms of cash income at least, have similar levels of wealth. However, from our survey of parents, and from focus group discussions with parents, teachers and children, several points of difference emerged that help explain why school participation is less entrenched in SBD.

### Causes of Absenteeism/ Dropping Out

- Parents in SBD had overall far more severe problems accessing water. Poor access to water can mean that collection becomes an extremely time-consuming task, one that falls at least partly to children in rural Indonesia.
- Only in SBD, did parents, teachers and students report unanimously that children rarely, if ever, ate breakfast. Teachers there observed that students were often 'half-drunk' with hunger and unable to concentrate on lessons. In the other districts, parents said children ate something before going to school.
- A much higher birth rate in SBD, meant the average household had 5.4 children to feed, clothe and school, compared to only 3.8 and 3.6 in the other two districts. Children and teachers reported that due to peer pressure, children were always reluctant to attend school without a uniform, even if teachers allowed it.
- Related to the high birth-rate, schools in SBD were bursting at the seams, and lacked enough trained teachers to accommodate the goal of universal participation. The average student/teacher and student/classroom ratios in SBD were 70/1 and 64/1 respectively, around 3 times the provincial average. Many students were forced to 'queue' because of a shortage of teachers and classroom space, and often students simply went home instead.
- Furniture shortages meant some students were sitting on the floor whilst classmates had chairs and desks. Teachers report that behavioral problems arise when schools are unable to provide equally for all students.
- Significantly, in SBD only 28% of mothers and 16% of fathers had completed a primary

school education or higher. [In Kupang  $\frac{3}{4}$  of mothers and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of fathers had reached the end of primary school or higher].

Obviously the challenge is how to break this intergenerational cycle of disadvantage.

- Perhaps reflecting its greater level of deprivation, teachers and parents in SBD more frequently reported that children accompanied parents to the market, or stayed home to take care of younger siblings while parents went to market, worked or collected water.
- In all three districts, but possibly more often in SBD where traditions appeared to maintain a stronger grip on daily life, students sometimes missed school to attend family and kin group ceremonies.
- Even though more parents said their children walked longer to get to school in Kupang than in SBD, distance obviously had little effect on attendance in Kupang. However, walking time to school did impact on absenteeism in SBD, with children who lived further from school significantly more likely to miss more days of school. That the distance effect was not apparent in the other districts suggests that even moderate distances can be a barrier when combined with other factors.
- In SBD, boys [58%] were more likely to be 'chronically absent' [41 days or more in the year] than girls [42%], and conversely, girls [29%] were more likely to have an excellent attendance record [0-20 days missed] than boys [19%]. However, gender did not have a major effect in the other districts, suggesting again, that gender becomes relevant when other factors are present.

In addition, schools in all districts did not actively create opportunities for parents to become involved in the school, or to take pride in their children's progress. Communication between teachers and parents was minimal, made difficult by distance, lack of communications infrastructure, and the demands of an agrarian lifestyle, but also by a cultural separation of the school and school-based knowledge from other aspects of village life.

School committees had been enlisted to encourage parents to ensure their children went to school, but the effect of home visits was often short-lived. In many cases, parents and teachers claimed that the child simply did not want to go to school. The challenge for

organizations working with schools and school communities, then, must be to find out, if true, why children do not want to go to school, and then work to make the classroom experience a more meaningful, and enjoyable one.

Save the Children is continuing to support the schools involved in the research to find and

implement their own solutions to overcome barriers to participation.

**Ms. Kym Holthouse**, consultant with Save the Children UK. Email: [kym\\_holthouse@yahoo.com.au](mailto:kym_holthouse@yahoo.com.au) or post to Save the Children UK, Education Unit, Jalan Pejatan Barat No. 8, Jakarta Selatan 12550, Indonesia

## What is the Purpose of Education?

### Balochistan Focus Group on Inclusive Education

In mid 2007 the Department of Education in the Province of Balochistan, Pakistan and IDP Norway launched the idea of inclusive education in 4 primary schools in and around Quetta. Two schools for boys and two schools for girls were selected. One of the schools is in a small village in the outskirts of Quetta, while the others are in the centre of the city.

The headmasters and teachers of the four pilot schools were asked to discuss the purpose of education using questions such as "Why do we send our children to school?", "What do we want to achieve with education?" Their answers follow below:

1. Foster unity, respect and understanding among people - bringing honour and dignity to the nation.
2. Create awareness among all children about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship - develop respect for the freedom of expression and human rights among future generations.
3. Help all children develop their full academic, social, emotional and physical potential - improving their own welfare as well as the welfare of their families and communities.
4. Help children to become good human beings, serving their communities, country and humanity - develop enlightened citizens.
5. Prepare children for life - being able to successfully face challenges, conquer obstacles and provide leadership to others.
6. Provide good professionals for the country, actively participating in the sustainable development of Pakistan.
7. Build character and develop self-confidence in all children

Help children become law abiding and responsible citizens - learning how to distinguish between right and wrong - develop self-discipline, punctuality, independence and self-reliance.

8. Help children develop healthy and clean lifestyles.
9. Help children to become good Muslims - raising awareness about sound Islamic teachings and principles. While children with other religious backgrounds should learn to follow the teachings and principles of their faiths.

We [headmasters and teachers in the four pilot schools] all agreed that with the way we teach our children today, with the current curriculum, and the way we assess children through rigid exams, we will never be able to achieve the true purpose of education.

Implementation of inclusive and child-friendly education will help our schools to better respond to the individual needs of children, their families and communities, as well as help us to educate a future generation of Pakistani children that can help to build our nation. It is of great importance that all children are given equal rights to access quality education in their home towns and communities, regardless of their gender, abilities, disabilities and backgrounds.

The steps we have taken in Quetta may be small, but we have started on our journey Towards Inclusion and towards achieving the true purpose of education for our children.

**Balochistan Focus Group on Inclusive Education**, Department of Education, Quetta, Email: [pakistan@idp-europe.org](mailto:pakistan@idp-europe.org)

## Now They Respect Me...

**Karima**

My name is Karima. I am a teacher in the Khir Khana Government Primary School in Kabul, Afghanistan. I have received training on inclusive education for the past two years through a Ministry of Education programme supported by UNESCO and UNICEF. I have been selected to be a Master Trainer in this programme. Currently we are conducting training for 120 school teachers about inclusive education. I also have a child with hearing impaired in my own class. I want to tell you a little bit about this child, Mohammad. He is 12 years old and he is Deaf. He started school late so he is now in second grade.

When Mohammad came to my class he didn't have any language to communicate with, just a few family signs, which is not enough to communicate with others outside his family. Last year he joined our programme. In the beginning his family was not quite sure if it was right to send a deaf child to school. They were afraid that the other children would tease him. They didn't know how he could possibly understand the teacher since he couldn't hear so at first they refused to bring him to school. But our team talked a lot with his family, especially with his father. He had the idea that his son would become a tailor and he didn't think there was any need for an education. He was saying: "What is the purpose of sending him to school? What can he possibly learn? He needs to learn some vocational skills, that is enough. I am not educated and I have survived, and he will do the same."

After much convincing, he finally agreed to send his son to school, but he did not want to participate in any training for parents as he said he was too old, and if his wife would go it would be a shame for his family. He said: "I am not going to allow my wife to go to that kind of class. I am also busy and we don't have time. It is better for our child not to go to school." However, his older son volunteered to come to the training instead of his parents. He is in grade 7 in the same school. He started to support his brother by coming to the training for parents. He soon wanted to learn more

about different ways of communicating with his brother and he wants to learn Sign language. Now he freely communicates with his brother and is helping him with his sessions. He doesn't know all the official signs but he has found a way to communicate with his brother.

In the beginning the Mohammad was very afraid of the other children and of the new environment. He felt ashamed when he used signs or asked for support. If someone would talk to him about personal hygiene, he would be upset and not accept what they say. He didn't know anything about rules and regulations in school and would sometimes behave a bit "naughty." However, he quickly learned. He now feels self-confident, and is interested in learning new and different things. Mohammad is doing all the tasks that are given to him by his teacher. He is participating in all the different events in school, and he now knows how to read and write.

Mohammad is coming to school every day, even when he is sick, because he believes that going to school is the best way for him to change his life. He says that: "Now I have friends, and I am responsible for some work at home and in the class because I am the oldest student in my class. Now I have a role to play in my family, and they respect me, and I have learned to respect them. Although they don't know signs they changed their attitude towards me. I am happy to be Deaf, I hope all other parents think positively about their deaf children and try to support them. I hope one day I can finish school and get a good job."

His family is very happy now and they encourage him in every thing he does.

You can contact Ms. **Karima** through the Ministry of Education, Curriculum Department, Inclusive Education Division in Kabul, Afghanistan on: [parween\\_azimi@hotmail.com](mailto:parween_azimi@hotmail.com)



# Promoting Child Participation in Mountainous States in North-East India

**Vedabhyas Kundu**

Over the past 10 years or so children and young people's participation has been an issue of considerable interest. This interest has been buttressed by the growing significance of Article 12 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child which states, "parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." The Convention goes on to argue in Article 13 that: The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

Even though child participation has been a subject of discussion observations reveal that children are given limited opportunities to voice their opinion or take independent decisions. They are often thought to be incapable of decision making and invariably parents, teachers or community elders are taking decisions for them. This appears to be a reality in the family, educational institutions and in the community.

In this backdrop, the Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti [the National Memorial of Mahatma Gandhi in New Delhi], UNICEF and the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Assam have initiated a programme to promote child participation, aiming to build child right issues in the north-eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. The initiative was launched with a belief that children can play an important role in the development process including education, peace building and community work.

To start with an inclusive child participation programme has been initiated for children in regular schools and those living in protective homes. It is hoped that this initiative can lead to a culture wherein adults start listening

to and valuing children's opinion. A series of workshops are being organized wherein through interactions, group discussions, peace, games, drawings, cartoons and songs children are collectively learning how to express their opinion. In the initial phase, themes such as child rights, the importance of education, peace and non violence have been taken up to make children aware of their rights and responsibilities and develop their own perspectives.



courtesy of Vedabhyas Kundu

## Major outcomes

Interacting with each other children have collectively developed a framework of action suggesting ways of improving the existing teaching- learning process in schools as well as how peace can be promoted in the families, schools and community. Another outcome of this initiative has been the formation of Shishu Samagams [Children's Assembly] in several rural areas of Assam. "Through interactions we have learnt a lot and are able to interact and voice our concern on various social issues and be a part of the decision making process both in schools and in the community. We have felt the need for extensive interaction at the grass root level in order to create more awareness and to involve other children in this process. Me and my new friends from the protection home are involving children in tea gardens of Jorhat to highlight the voice and concerns of children of the area", says, Subhalika Barua, a class X student of Jyoti Balika Vidyapeeth, Tiyo, Jorhat.

Children have also started demanding increased participation in the community. For example, at a workshop on child participation [initiated and moderated by school children] children and young adults collectively demanded that the Guwahati Municipal Corporation give space in public to put up posters, slogans and paintings on promoting girls education and highlight other social issues. According to Disha Barua and Sandhya Narzary, class VIII students of Delhi Public School, Guwahati, and this concern on public issues will help involve more children for voluntary participation.”

Children involved in the child participation initiative have also demanded that a media literacy programme be initiated which would enable them to look at what is reported in the media critically. “We are greatly affected by the media so critical understanding of the role of media is extremely important. By using the media appropriately we can become advocates of social concerns related to education”, says Parthapratim Hazarika student of class XI, Tejpur. He wants to involve children in other districts of Assam for bringing out a children’s newspaper which would highlight issues concerning them.

The programme activities thus far indicate that children’s participation is an ongoing process of children’s expression and active involvement in decision making at different levels. Further it is becoming apparent that it requires information sharing and dialogue between adults and children on social and educational concerns. Genuine participation gives children the power to shape both process and outcome. The initiative taken by Gandhi Smriti, UNICEF and Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust can go a long way in bringing children in the mainstream of the developmental process and making them aware of their aspirations and rights. However the promotion of genuine participation with an inclusive approach involving children from diverse background is a long drawn process. Thus, there is need for a conscious attempt to make child participation an integral part of school education process.

**Mr. Vedabhyas Kundu**, Programme Officer, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti. He can be contacted at Gandhi Smriti, 5 Tees January Marg, New Delhi, India  
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If you would like to send a comment, submit an article or just want to get in contact with EENET Asia, please send an email to:

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**Jakarta Selatan 12160**  
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# Defectology - Friend or Foe? The Relationship Between Defectology and Inclusion

Andrea Vogt

In 2007 I conducted primary research as part of an MSc at CIHD in London in “International community disability studies”. The subject of my research was “Access to education for children with disabilities in transitional countries”, focusing on the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union and here particular on Tajikistan. The research included interviews and focus groups discussions with parents, teachers and people with disabilities as well as an in-depth literature review on the subject. One key area of the literature review which was particularly important in this region was the subject of defectology.

From 1997 to 2005 I worked as a practitioner in Uzbekistan involved in Inclusive Education and CBR. During this time I often met people who had studied the subject of defectology and now saw themselves and were seen as the main people responsible for the education and development of children with disabilities. Most of the staff working in special schools or institutions, run by post-soviet Ministries of Education, Social Protection or Health, have been educated within the framework of defectology. Defectology, or corrective education as it is sometimes called, is a pedagogical framework, which created a classification system for children with disabilities. It declared some in-educable and referred them into care of social and medical institutions. This led to the common but incorrect assumption, that in the former communist countries the majority of children with disabilities are living in institutions. Despite the strong recommendations by defectologists, research shows that the large majority of children live with their parents in rural communities, with no or very little access to education or even rehabilitation services.

The Russian psychologist L. S. Vygotsky [1896-1934] first developed the concept of Defectology in the 1920s. The theory is based on the idea that human development is the process of a child’s mastering its experiences in its social environment. The adult and the child’s peers play the important

role of continual guidance and meaningful relationships during this process. Vygotsky was extremely progressive for his time when he argued that “defects” should not be perceived as abnormality, but need to be brought into social context, coming surprisingly close to recent developments in the International Classification of Functioning designed by WHO, that include environment and personal factors rather than the medical diagnosis.

Defectology was primarily a method of child development for children with mild to moderate learning disabilities. Vygotsky strongly opposed the mostly western idea of IQ testing for assessment and definition of developmental levels. Delays in children, who showed strong potential in the assisted tasks, are assumed to be based on social environment, pedagogical neglect or a secondary impairment like Cerebral Palsy and are seen as reversible when taught in the right environment. A much cited example for Vygotsky’s development theory in opposition to an IQ based approach is a bilingual Tatar girl, who had previously been labelled “mentally retarded”, while Vygotsky proved that it was her lack in communication due to bilingual upbringing that lead to her developmental delay.

This example is especially strong as it shows how far today’s defectologists have moved from their founder; as all over Eastern Europe, Roma children live in institutions for learning disabled, due to assessments that neglect their mother tongue and unique cultural upbringing.

Based on this assessment, defectology aims at developing a differentiated learning environment through for example interactive teaching styles, to overcome impairments as much as possible and assist the child in achieving the regular school curriculum. Vygotsky challenged all educators to have a “positive differential approach” of identifying the children’s strength not their disability.

In contrast to the roots and original progressive ideas of defectology, the



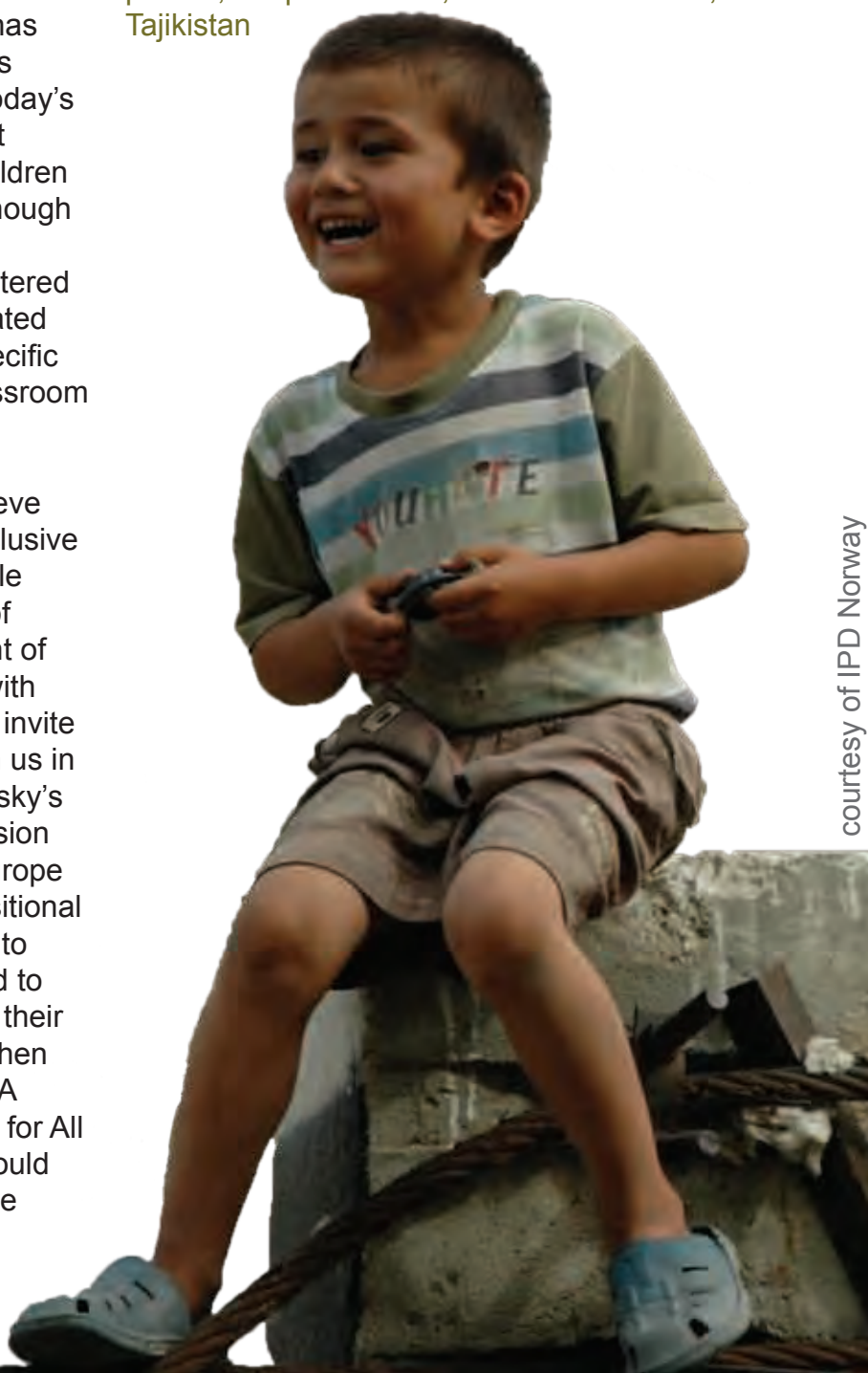
experience many of us have made when working in the in Eastern Europe or the CIS are rather negative. Ainscow describes how he experienced today's defectology: "Defectology is usually associated with the education of children with disabilities in special schools, separated from other children. These schools clearly do not encourage any social integration, particularly when they take the form of large-scale residential institutions of the type that exist in some parts of the region."

Other researchers found that defectologists were especially opposed to new ways or even consider integration or inclusion. In Serbia, the defectologists see themselves as the only people who legitimately can teach children with disabilities. The Faculty of Defectology at the Belgrade University has been opposed to any movement towards Inclusive Education. Some agree with today's defectologists, that mainstreaming is not successful in providing education for children with disabilities, concluding, that even though Vygotsky criticised special education as combination of low expectations and watered down curriculum, his call for a differentiated environment and the employment of specific methods cannot be met in a regular classroom situation.

I disagree with his assessment and believe that if we look at the cornerstones of Inclusive Education; child centred teaching, flexible curricula adapted to the child, removal of barriers to participation and achievement of all children; these are very compatible with Vygotsky's original ideas. I would like to invite colleagues from around the world to join us in the discussion, to rediscover how Vygotsky's original ideas can be a catalyst for inclusion and child centred learning in Eastern Europe and the CIS. If the governments of transitional countries start to take the commitments to international policies seriously they need to be aware of their own heritage and how their local knowledge and culture can strengthen an international goal rather than fight it. A positive role of defectology in Education for All and making such education. Inclusive could provide an example for a locally sensitive implementation of international goals.

The main research results were that the access to education for children with disabilities in transitional countries needs to be seen in the context of their communities. Solutions will need a twin track approach: inclusive community development, tackling the underlying problems of poverty and attitudes; and disability specific programmes that make mainstream schools more inclusive. But one key to success will be the inclusion of the existing cadre of defectologists in the search for solutions, based of the true meaning of defectology.

**Ms. Andrea Vogt** is the country director for Operation Mercy in Tajikistan. She can be contacted via email: [avogt@opmercytj.org](mailto:avogt@opmercytj.org) or post: 3, Loiq Sherali St.; Dushanbe 734003; Tajikistan



# Inclusive Education - Need of the Hour

**Kanchana Narasimhan**

In ancient times, education was imparted through the gurukul system in India. In this system, the guru [teacher] used to teach the students verbally at his residence and the pupils used to stay with their guru. This system slowly evolved into the present day formal education. The British were mainly responsible for this transformation.

During the British rule many missionaries who came to India started special schools for educating the disabled. Ms. Annie Sharp founded the first school for the blind at Amritsar in 1887. After shifting to Dehradun in 1903 it came to be known as the Sharp Memorial for the Blind. Efforts to educate the visually impaired and impart vocational training are being undertaken by non-governmental organizations.

Well known educationists who were/are themselves blind took the initiative to educate the visually impaired in regular school settings. Their hard work resulted in the introduction of integrated education in the country. These initiatives have helped in promoting inclusive education. The Rehabilitation Council of India is the apex body which looks into the education and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and has started courses to prepare teachers.

With the Salamanca Declaration of 1994 came the concept of inclusive education. Many teachers in regular education feel that inclusion is just another name for special education. They lack the required preparedness to work with children with disabilities or those belonging to other marginalized groups. This is so because they have limited exposure and therefore apprehensive about the effectiveness of the whole process of inclusion.

What teachers and other authorities in education need to understand is that every child whether disabled or not has a right to be educated in a school of his or her own choice. For this, what they need is training in understanding their special learning needs and provide for them in regular schools. The

authorities need to realize that they need to support teachers engaged in building inclusive environments. Teachers need to adapt their teaching methods and ways of instruction to suit the requirements of every student. They also must know the different ways of modifying the curriculum and weaving in appropriate adjustments whenever necessary. This will give a fillip to the entire process of inclusion and improve the quality of education for all children.



courtesy of Amar Jyoti School, Delhi

## My Rendezvous with Education

Looking back at my school and college days, I come across some grey zones which reflect the inadequacies of the educational system. I and my younger brother are both visually impaired and have studied in regular schools. We have seen doubts and mistrusts regarding our potentials in the eyes of our teachers and friends at school and college. This was more so because I took up Geography and my brother opted for Economics as our chosen disciplines in Graduation. It needs to be mentioned here that my brother was in a better position than I was and did get a lot of support from his teachers.

It was difficult for me because I choose to take up Geography as my discipline. I had a liking for the subject since my school days and this was the 'push' factor in my life. I had the will power and the courage to do things differently and not just follow the expected norm.

There were many hurdles in my educational endeavors. When my vision started decreasing in Standard III, I began going closer to the

board to take down what was written on it. The teachers did not take notice of this change in my behavior. I cannot attribute this indifference on their part due to lack of training or exposure or training alone.

This sudden change in my behavior was first noticed by my mother when she observed that I was holding the book close to my eyes and I was not writing on the line. Thereafter, medical examinations proved that I had Macular Degeneration in my eyes and the doctors said that I would gradually lose my sight. Finally I was prescribed magnifying glasses at Shankara Netralaya [Chennai, India] and the doctors told my parents not to stop me from pursuing my studies. My parents took their advice seriously and countered the myth that if children with low vision use their sight it deteriorates further.

They have supported me all along in my pursuits without having any training to handle children with visual impairment! They used to read aloud and draw enlarged diagrams and maps with contrast colors. They learnt by hit and trial what worked and simply followed it. These adjustments are a proof of the will power to encourage and provide suitable education for one's child. I wondered could not my teachers have done the same?

The real problems began when I was in school and college. Most teachers were always doubtful of my capabilities particularly, my Geography teachers. However when my parents started interacting with them and sharing how simple small modifications can help, I gradually started getting support from my Science, English and History teachers at school. Soon they started portraying me as a model for other students. These teachers also did not have any training but they began to recognize my hidden potentials. They knew that I could pursue my discipline given the necessary scaffold which was not an impossible task.

I need to mention here my and my brother's vision stabilized after Standard X and this has also enabled us to pursue our fields of interests. I feel that Geography can be easily understood by anyone if he/she has

the interest in the subject and with some imagination of the different features and processes. Contrary to prevalent belief it is possible for persons with low vision to study this subject! But it needs to be mentioned that it is essential to have the support of one's parents and teachers. One needs to view enlarged maps and diagrams to understand different geographical features etc. Care should be taken to use contrast colors and not too many features in one map. One must also provide large font size print materials to read. These are only small and simple methods and modifications which help in promoting inclusion.

I believe that all teachers at school and at college need to be given training in working with diverse groups of children and not only how to work with students with disabilities. This kind of training would enable teachers to understand that each student is unique, has potentials and collectively with appropriate support his/ her needs can be met.

It is my belief that inclusive education actually caters to the whole gamut of individual differences arising from physical, economic, social, cultural, emotional and ethnic diversities. Inclusion is just a way of thinking and is merely an attitude. It does require a person to think of how to adjust one's communication skills and pedagogy in order to meet the special needs of others. It is rightly said "Where there is a will, there is a way" and "Brave people have the heart of a lion"!

*The road is long and weary  
but far away I see a shady tree  
I know it is there and it will be  
waiting for me*

These lines are dedicated to my parents and teachers for their unstinted support in my endeavors.

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# Professional Teacher Standards to Enhance [E-]Quality of Education

The Editors

In different countries in Asia processes are underway to develop standards for teachers to improve the overall quality of education. It recognizes teachers as agents of change because their attitudes, behaviour and methods can either enhance or impede a child's ability to learn. It is thus necessary to invest in the skills of teachers, while focusing on how teachers can create learning environments where children not only pass exams, but where teachers model values and seek the participation and contribution of all students, while challenging stereotypical views and promoting respect for diversity. Whether children stay in, and benefit from, school depends on what happens in classrooms. Teacher education must thus play its part by transforming teachers into reflective practitioners who are able and willing to reflect on their own practice.

## Quality Standards

For the development of standards it is important to identify what knowledge, understanding, skills and values must characterize professional teaching. It is therefore critical to also involve teachers for the development and endorsement of standards. Standards help to acknowledge good teachers, guide professional development, improve teaching and learning at the school level and enhance teacher accountability. For education systems, standards provide a benchmark for selection, accreditation, promotion, professional development and support of teachers. Indicators monitoring a teacher's professional standard must assess knowledge as well as performance.

## Examples of Teacher Standards

Most countries have 9 to 14 standards. For the purpose of this article some sample standards and indicators are shown; collected from different countries.

### Standard 1: Content Knowledge

The teacher understands the central concepts, methods of inquiry and structures of the subject[s] and knows how to create meaningful learning experiences for different students, while relating to relevant developments in educational theory.	<p>1.1 S/he demonstrates knowledge of latest developments in educational theory and research-based subject specific pedagogies.</p> <p>1.2 S/he demonstrates knowledge of the school curriculum requirements</p>
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### Standard 2: Instructional Delivery

The teacher possesses good knowledge of different instructional strategies and uses them to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, independent learning skills based upon knowledge of discipline, student diversity, the community, and curriculum goals.	<p>2.1 S/he knows how to improve learning for students with diverse learning characteristics through the use of different materials, human and technological resources</p> <p>2.2 S/he varies his/her role during the teaching-learning process as instructor, facilitator, mentor or audience in relation to the content and aims of instruction and the needs of students.</p> <p>2.3 S/he demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the process of second language acquisition and strategies to support the learning of students with a different mother tongue.</p>
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**Standard 3: Personal and Professional Conduct and Growth**

The teacher continuously reflects and evaluates how choices and actions affect students, and actively seeks opportunities to grow professionally and personally.	<p>3.1 S/he demonstrates respect for the culture, religion, gender and sexual orientation of individual students and their families</p> <p>3.2 S/he uses classroom observation, information about students, pedagogical knowledge and research as resources for active reflection, evaluation and revision of practice</p>
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**Standard 4: Learning and Development**

The teacher understands how individuals grow, develop and learn. S/he provides learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students.	<p>4.1 S/he demonstrates knowledge of different learning styles and needs and strategies for teaching students with different needs.</p> <p>4.2 S/he understands principles of and strategies for effective classroom management, while keeping in mind official policies and regulations</p> <p>4.3 S/he uses information about students' families, cultures and communities for connecting instruction to students' experiences and prior learning.</p> <p>4.5 S/he introduces concepts and principles at different levels of complexity so that they are meaningful to students at varying levels of development.</p>
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**Standard 5: Communication Skills**

The teacher uses knowledge of effective, written, verbal, nonverbal, and visual communication techniques to foster self-expression, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.	<p>5.1 S/he understands communication theories, language development, and the role of language in learning.</p> <p>5.2 S/he uses effective questioning techniques and stimulates discussion in different ways for specific instructional purposes.</p> <p>5.3 S/he practices effective listening, conflict resolution, and group-facilitation skills</p>
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**Standard 6: Assessment, Monitoring and Providing Effective Feedback**

The teacher exhibits a broad range of effective formative and summative assessment strategies and uses them to support the continuous intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development outcomes of all students.	<p>6.1 S/he understands the purposes, characteristics and limitations of different kinds of assessment (e.g. formative and summative; authentic and curriculum-based assessment)</p> <p>6.2 S/he understands how to use the results of assessment to reflect on, and modify teaching-learning approaches</p> <p>6.3 S/he knows methods for monitoring progress of learners with learning difficulties or minor/moderate disabilities.</p>
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**Standard 7: Collaborative Relationship**

The teacher demonstrates understanding of the role of the community in education and maintains collaborative relationship with colleagues, parents/guardians, and the community to support student learning and well-being.	<p>7.1 S/he understands the benefits, barriers and techniques involved in parent/family relationships</p> <p>7.2 S/he participates in collaborative decision making and problem solving with other professional to achieve student success</p>
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# Inter-Agency Collaboration in the Education of Children with Disabilities in Cambodia

**Vichetra Kong and Maya Kalyanpur**

Inclusive education was first endorsed as an international guideline to provide educational services for children with impairments at the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education in 1994. In 2000, the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, set the goal of achieving Education for All [EFA] by 2015 towards including all traditionally excluded and marginalized groups, such as girls, poor children, ethnic minorities and children with impairments within the educational mainstream. The same year, the World Bank argued that disability, being both a cause and consequence of poverty, needed to be targeted specifically in any development efforts towards poverty reduction. In response to that, Cambodia began to provide inclusive education for children with impairments.

Since 1992, NGOs like Krousar Thmey, LaValla School and the Rabbit School offer education for children with impairments through special schools. All were located in the Phnom Penh. While Krousar Thmey focused on children with visual and hearing impairment by building one school for each, LaValla School served children with motor impairment. The Rabbit School emerged from the need to educate abandoned or orphaned children with moderate to severe intellectual impairment who were not adopted because they have an impairment. Although the Ministry oversaw these programs, its involvement was minimal.

In 1998, the Disability Action Council [DAC] was officially established as a national advisory and advocacy agency on disability-related issues. Unique to the region, it was deliberately set up as a semi-autonomous body to ensure an effective advocacy role with government and NGOs alike, through a government edict by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation. DAC endorsed inclusive education as the most appropriate and effective educational option for children with impairments and began to collaborate closely with the Primary Education Department [PED] in Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth [MOEYS] to coordinate efforts to promote it.

A report by the Cambodian Disabled People's Organization [CDPO] in 1997 found that a major constraint to access to education for children with impairments was the lack of teacher training. Based on this, and with input from NGO and ministry partners, in 1999, DAC decided to pilot a Project in one school cluster. With technical assistance from an international consultant and funding from the Australian Expert Services Overseas Program and InterPART Australia, the project focused on training teachers in inclusive education.

K'Chay School Cluster in Svay Rieng province was selected for the pilot because it had a secondary school, health center and a pagoda, and most significantly, the commitment of the core school director or principal, himself the parent of a child with a disability, and a baseline study conducted. The project was implemented in 9 primary schools in September 2001, at the beginning of the school year, with funds from UNICEF, UNESCO and the Nippon Foundation, for an initial period of 3 years. The funding covered operational costs for the project, which was expanded to include another school cluster in Rumduol district in Svay Rieng in 2002, as well as awareness-raising and capacity-building through materials and activities.

Awareness raising activities included a day of festivities in June 2000 in Phnom Penh where senior ministry officials, NGO representatives, teachers, monks, and the public were entertained by children with impairments performing traditional dances and singing songs. Awareness raising materials included a comprehensive report on the situation of children with disabilities in Cambodia, developed by DAC. In April 2001, the first National Workshop on Education for Children with Disabilities was organized by DAC and MOEYS in Phnom Penh to raise awareness within the Ministry and the community, increase collaboration between special schools and promote their development as resource centers for teacher training and develop ideas for an inclusive education program.



To build capacity, a team of MOEYS and DAC staff took a study tour to neighboring Lao in November 2000 to learn about the successful inclusive education program there. Based on the Lao cascade model of trainers training, a National Implementation Team was set up, consisting of DAC staff and Ministry officials, to provide training and develop materials. The primary level training materials in inclusive education the Team developed were used not only with all the teachers within the pilot project, but also at a national training of primary school inspectors conducted by the Teacher Training Department in MOEYS. In the pilot province, a Provincial Implementation Team to provide on-going technical assistance to teachers was set up, which consisted of one representative each from the Provincial and District Education Offices and the Provincial Social Affairs Office, the school director, and a representative from the CDPO.

When the Cambodian government endorsed the Millennium Development Goals in which the targets for the education sector include EFA and universal primary completion by 2015, the PED in MOEYS was reorganized to create the Special Education Office [SEO] within the PED, and a new Department for Early Childhood, separate from PED. Staffing at the SEO consisted of a Deputy Director, a Chief and a Vice Chief Disability Officer each. This demonstrated the government's commitment to respond to the educational needs of children with impairments and contributed to an increased visibility of these issues within the national education agenda.

In the following years, the Project on Education for Children with Disabilities was further expanded to one district in each mostly UNICEF supported provinces; SEO and DAC continued to provide technical assistance. At the same time, the NGOs began to collaborate with MOEYS to provide inclusive education. LaValla School arranged for their students with motor impairments who had completed primary education to continue their education at government regular secondary schools in the area. Similarly, Krousar Thmey started to send its students to neighboring government schools for a part of the school day. Students with visual impairments were included after grade 3 and students with hearing impairments

after grade 5. In addition, Krousar Thmey also opened integrated classrooms in government primary schools in various provinces where Krousar Thmey-trained teachers taught students with visual or hearing impairments Braille or Sign Language.

In 2006, SEO, with technical assistance from an international consultant and funding from UNICEF, developed a policy and action plan on inclusive education for children with impairments that recommended the need for identification of children with impairments both in and out-of-school, the provision of appropriate assistive devices, in- and pre-service teacher training programs in inclusive education through the Teacher Training Department of MOEYS and quality assurance through an adequate monitoring and evaluation system. While the policy awaits final approval, the action plan has been subsumed under the Fast Track Initiative that enables countries which meet certain specific criteria, such as a national education plan, to receive additional funding to enable them to reach the EFA by 2015 goal. The implementation of the action plan will continue to require inter-agency collaboration. The School Health Department of MOEYS will need to work with NGOs providing rehabilitation services to ensure early identification of children and the provision of appropriate assistive devices and supports, such as wheelchairs, calipers, or hearing aids. The Teacher Training Department will need to collaborate with SEO and DAC as well as with NGOs such as Krousar Thmey to infuse inclusive education into the pre- and in-service training curricula, and to develop short-term, government-certified courses in Braille and Sign Language. The purpose is to develop a sustainable system that ensures that all children with and without impairment receive appropriate supports that enables them to learn in school, stay in school and fully includes them in school as well as the community.

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## David - A Fountain of Inspiration...

### National Association of the Blind, Kerala Branch

**It was a dark lonely world for a little boy named David. Born to poor laborer parents of the Ponmudi estate a hill station in Trivandrum District, little David responded to the bleak world around him with resilience - forging ahead with his dreams of being a teacher.**

courtesy of National Association of the Blind, Kerala Branch



David the youngest of 5 children was born blind. His two brothers and sisters are sighted. Being the youngest and with the liability of feeding 5 children, his parents, mere daily wage labourers could not provide him the necessary support. In spite of not receiving the much-needed support from his elders, David did not sit back and bemoan his fate. Instead, through his will power and positive approach to life, he carved a niche for himself in society. He studied at the Light to the Blind School at Varkala and later in integrated set up at the SMV Boys High School at Trivandrum. After completing his 10th standard, he did his Pre- Degree Course at the Government Arts College. Many people including fellow students, did not believe that a blind boy could study. But David did not allow such things to deflect him from his chosen path. He went on further with his studies by completing BA from the Kerala University and later the Teachers Training Course at the Government TTI, Palode, Trivandrum.

After finishing all these courses, David was back home. Now the subject of sustainable employment came up and along with it came the extra load of challenges every blind aspirant has to face. His brothers and sisters were all married now and the sole responsibility of looking after him fell on his poor parents. For David this was a challenge. He wanted to look after his parents. But the wait was long. Meanwhile to enhance him with the techno savvy world for the visually challenged, David joined the computer course with the National Association for the Blind, Kerala State Branch in 2003. But unfortunately family problems dissuaded him in continuing the course and David deserted it halfway through.

True to his determination and dreams, he was recruited by the Government and joined the Government Service as a Primary School Teacher in 2004 at the Government UPS Ponmudi. Ponmudi is a hill station with rough terrains and improper roads. The hills are divided into two tea estates, the Merchinston Estate & the Ponmudi Estate. David overcame all these terrains with ease. For David this job was a dream come true, a school, which was near his home.

It was with great enthusiasm that David appeared in the school for the first day. But he soon learnt that no one was willing to manage this school and its children because of its remoteness. David was now all alone, in a school like structure with minimum facilities and 22 children studying from 1- 6th standard. The school itself was a huge rectangular hall with dilapidated walls and roofs.

Being a very patient man David gathered the children and cleared the so-called school hall and its surroundings. The children of the locality were a great support to David.

**Well one wonders how David manages the whole school, alone? The story goes thus...**

David is the sole person who manages all the activities of the school from being a Head - in charge to the role of a peon. David opens the school on time in the mornings at 8.30 a.m and closes at 4.30 p.m. He teaches all the classes from 01st to 06th Standard. He uses educated persons from the community to teach subjects like mathematics, science, etc for higher standards. The senior children from 6th standard are used to teach the younger ones studying in 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> standards. He conducts tests and examinations and values the paper with the help of senior children and his close associates from the colony.

The Kerala Government provides the facilities like provisions for preparing noon meals for the children studying in the School. The same has to be collected from the nearest Government warehouse at Vidhura, which is 25 kms away. David manages to get these things to his school with the help of local people. After procuring the same, he prepares the noon meal with the help of an old lady from his colony. All the children studying in this school belongs to the labourers working in the tea estate. They are very happy with the way their children are progressing in the education.

How can a person with an impairment could do so much alone? For David patience, positive attitude towards life and the motivation to give something instead of expecting from others bring success to his life. David is content and happy with his job and responsibilities. After all he dared to venture into an area where no one was willing to take up. Dedicated to his work David continues to inspire us by his example of simplicity and dedication.

The NAB Kerala Branch recently donated a computer for David to give him long lost aspiration to become computer literate. For many of us, David's accomplishment is not something great, when compared to eminent blind men who have achieved great things in life, but we at NAB felt that true worth cannot go unnoticed.

David's story is an unending fount of inspiration. Surmounting all odds and obstacles he has emerged as a winner setting an example for others.

**The Kerala Branch of the Indian National Association of the Blind** can be contacted by post: National Association for the Blind, Kerala Branch; 80, Manjadivila Road, Plamood; Trivandrum-695003; Kerala - India. or via email: [nabkeral@gmail.com](mailto:nabkeral@gmail.com)





# Social Inclusion Starts at School: Children Who Learn Together, Learn to Live Together

International Rescue Committee [IRC]

## **Inclusive Education: WHAT is it and WHY is it important in Afghanistan?**

Inclusive Education [IE] is a strategy to improve education systems for all children. IE works to minimize and remove barriers to access, participation and learning for all children, especially those who have been socially discriminated against because of poverty, gender, disability, ethnicity or any other factor that leads to marginalization or exclusion. IE challenges education systems and schools to make education activities more learner-centered, flexible and diversity-friendly. Through promoting IE and diversity in classrooms, all children benefit from the variety of teaching & learning styles. IE asserts the right of children to be included in mainstream education and mainstream development opportunities. IRC believes that inclusive education is a crucial step towards an inclusive society.

**“Schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.”**

**[UNESCO, Salamanca Statement 1994]**

## **IRC's Inclusive Education Initiative - Emphasis on Disability**

There are approximately 196,000 school-aged children with disabilities in Afghanistan, 34,700 of whom are sensory impaired; and 64% of these children are not accessing education opportunities. Children with sensory disability, particularly girls, are the group most often deprived of education because of social prejudices. Compounding the problem, educators and administrators lack the skills to meet the needs of children with sensory disabilities. There is a desperate need to include these children in schools and train teachers in appropriate teaching approaches that are understood by all children in the classroom.

Since 2005, IRC has been involved in the development of inclusive education initiatives

in Afghanistan, in particular for children with disabilities. IRC began its IE program with a pilot project in Hirat Province to mainstream children with visual and hearing impairments into government schools. This work was expanded in 2006 with support from USAID's Displaced Children & Orphans Fund [DCOF]. In 2007, IRC again expanded this project to four additional provinces [Kabul, Paktya, Laghman and Nangarhar], with support from the European Commission, and incorporated inclusive education activities into an ongoing community-based education project. Currently, IRC, along with a local partner the National Association for the Blind [NAB], conducts integration activities in government and community-based schools for nearly 200 children with sensory disabilities in more than 80 communities. IRC is also partnering with Disabled Persons Organizations [DPOs] to support their organizational capacity and promote mutual learning.



courtesy of IRC

## **First Steps for Inclusion: Community Awareness and Mobilization**

**General awareness-raising** among community members is a critical first step to improve understanding of the ability of sensory impaired children to participate in mainstream school, play with non-disabled children, and participate in other social activities.

**Community members and parents participate in training** on communication skills [Braille or Sign] and conflict resolution

skills to be the first level of mediation should problems arise during the integration of sensory impaired children.

### **Creating Inclusive Classrooms: Making Education Better for ALL Children**

**Teaching material development:** IRC develops teacher training materials in child-friendly and active learning methodology and innovative teaching/learning styles benefiting not only children with sensory impairments but all children. These materials are reviewed and updated regularly with inter-agency working groups to share experiences and best practices.

**Awareness campaigns for classmates** are conducted to ensure that key components of successful integration are happening, such as social inclusion among peers including play and social engagement with other classmates.

**Teacher training & classroom support** focus on awareness raising and skill building of teachers to overcome negative attitudes toward children with disabilities. IRC's training builds the knowledge and skills of the teachers to support children, in particular those with sensory impairments, in the classroom, which includes Braille and/or Sign Language skills and inclusive, participatory teaching methodology. Through discussion and demonstration lessons, teachers are trained to understand the abilities of children with sensory impairments to participate fully in a mainstream classroom environment.

**Teaching & learning materials for accessibility** are provided to promote active classroom participation of children with sensory impairment. These materials include flash cards, shape blocks, visual aids/posters, Braille machines, recorders, and Sign Language books/posters.

### **Supporting Successful Inclusion of Children**

**Supporting children prior to enrolment** with a focus on communication proficiency (Braille and Sign Language), mobility (especially for visually impaired students), psychological preparation for the challenges of entering a mainstream classroom, and tutoring in the appropriate level classroom curriculum are essential before integration.

**IRC provides support through home visits and tutoring**, while working closely with families, classmates, teachers and community members to build their capacity to support the needs, both academic and personal, of the integrated children.

**Establishing peer support** through Child-to-Child (CtC) groups allows children to share experiences and learn from each other.



courtesy of IRC

### **Inclusive Education Stakeholder Networking**

IRC is active in the development of a strong coordination and referral network, both at national and provincial levels, with stakeholder organizations. Through networking, stakeholders are able to share resources, plan complementary and collaborative activities, and promote national advocacy and policy initiatives.

Currently, the network of major actors include UN Agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNMACA; international NGOs such as Save the Children, Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, SERVE, and ICRC; and local NGOs and Disabled Persons Organizations, including Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation [AABRAR], National Association of the Blind [NAB], Family Welfare Focus, and the Afghan National Association of the Deaf [ANAD].

For further information about the IRC in Afghanistan please contact Mrs. **Nicole Walden**. Email: [Nicole.Walden@theIRC.org](mailto:Nicole.Walden@theIRC.org) or post: International Rescue Committee [IRC] House No 61, Kochai Afghanha, Shash Darak, District [9] Kabul, Afghanistan

## My Dream ...

**Madina Ghafurova**

Every person in the world has a dream, also every child. I have a dream too. From my childhood I dream to become a leader like Indira Gandhi the leader of incredible and fairy-tale India. She was one of the first women who was a leader in the world and I want to follow in her footsteps. I think maybe I will never reach my dream in life, and it will be just a dream. If you want to be a leader, first you must be healthy, have much knowledge and educated. I want to learn the new modern science of the world and become an informed and modern person. But where can we get new knowledge and good education?

They say that the school is the main place for culture and education for every person. But unfortunately our school has not such opportunities, to give good education for children. I don't want to say that we have a bad school, but our school does not satisfy our wishes and needs. I understand the situation of our school, and our teachers want to make something better for us, but it's because of the poor economy of the country. Therefore the school does not have good conditions for study, especially in winter period. There were cases of children coming to school from far places in the cold weather with the great hope to learn something in the school. But there was no teacher to teach them. There is lack of experienced and well qualified teachers in our school. Most of qualified teachers we had have retired already.

As we know, English language is the most popular and widespread language in the world, and therefore every person is trying to learn it. I wish, and dream to learn and speak this language too. I think if you can speak and understand this language then you have good opportunities and for traveling to the developed countries of this world. English and Russian are the languages for communication between people in our country now. As English is a new language in Tajikistan there are lack of English teachers in most schools of our country, in our school too. Now I am in 11<sup>th</sup> grades and sometimes I notice that a great part of my friends do not want come to school

anymore because of shortage of good teachers. If children see that they can not get an good education in school, they will want to stay at home and help their parents with their work instead.

But I and my classmates are trying to learn the different subject matters that are taught in school, and we want to overcome all these difficulties. Due to International organizations like UNICEF, Save the Children and Public Association Dilafruz we have a Child Lead Organization [CLO] in our school now. And in our CLO, we organize some extra-curricular activities. Together, a group of us - girls and boys - are trying to involve and help the children who don't want to come to school anymore to become active again. The boys in the CLO wish to become famous sportsmen, to play football or basketball and the girls want to become doctors, journalists, teacher and dressmaker.

I have many dreams and hope that maybe they all come true some day. I think if the school wants to give good education for the students, it must provide them with new modern technology, and new equipments. If the children will learn about computer at school, and have access to internet then they can do something better for themselves, and learn from all the information on the internet. They can find people, countries, and libraries and get all information on all they need. All the children from our CLO dream to have such possibilities, and we hope that our dreams will come true and we will be as the children from development countries in the world.

I hope I do not bother you with my wishes and dreams but I want you to realise that this article is the sound of every child's hearts from school No. 63 in Rudaki District. In spite of all difficulties and challenges we love life and hope a better future.

**Ms. Madina Ghafurova** is a student in grade 11 and a member of the Child-Led-Organisation PARASTU in Rudaki district. If you would like to contact her please send an email to EENET Asia.



# Why Should Do We Have a Separate Special Education System?

**Zakia Minaas**

With the introduction of Inclusive Education by IDP Norway in collaboration with the Federal Directorate of Education [FDE] in Islamabad, many people from the Educational sector have started to rethink and review some aspects of the educational system.

On one hand, the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan recognises equal rights for all children to quality education and access to a safe and healthy environment. But on the other hand, almost all our big cities have “special schools” for children with disabilities. This inconsistency raises many questions about how we - as a society - see the children we call “special.” Are they not part of the harmonious whole we call “society?”

This society runs an educational system for the social, moral, physical and mental development of its future generations. If we are one society, why do we have a separate system for so called “special” children? Are they going to live and work in separate social systems and communities when they have completed their education? No, they will not. So why are we alienating these little flowers from the rest of the garden? Isn't it, the duty of the education system to welcome these children as is the case with other children?

Our schools and classrooms are miniature societies, where we have children with different abilities and from various social, religious, ethnic backgrounds. A child, who is a leader in a classroom, will most probably develop into a leader in some other field in the future. On the other hand, a child, who is excluded, marginalised or not able to overcome her/his shyness in a

classroom, may not be able to fight for her/his rights in a big society later in life.

Teachers are often heard complaining about their overcrowded classrooms. But in reality it's a blessing in disguise for both teachers and students as an overcrowded class always provides an enriched environment as compared to a small class. Teachers have to prepare their students for an overpopulated real society and not for some fantasy world, where flowers and food abound and no body has to fight for its rights. Apart from over-crowded classrooms, we have also over-crowded streets, markets and hospitals. Moreover, we also see in this our overpopulated society, that people with disabilities are performing various tasks and can be computer operators, shape keepers, teachers, and factory workers, but unfortunately also beggars. If we accept the fact, that all children at the end of their educational development, are going to be part of the same society, then why don't our educational institutions welcome them? If they are going to line and share with people without disabilities later in life, then why not from day one as part of the mainstream educational system. On the other hand, we have these special educational institutions only in our main cities. What about children living in rural areas? Where will these “special” children go? The answer is making mainstream education inclusive based on the recognition that all children, excluding none, have the right to quality education in a school that is close to their home.

Ms. **Zakia Minaas** is a teacher in a pilot school for special education in Islamabad, Pakistan. To contact Zakia Minaas please send an email to [pakistan@idp-europe.org](mailto:pakistan@idp-europe.org)



# The Lao Inclusive Education Project 1993-2008

**Peter Grimes, Khomvanh Sayarath and Sithath Outhaithany**

As the Lao PDR Inclusive Education [IE] Project approaches its 15<sup>th</sup> birthday in November 2008, it seems appropriate to reflect on the challenges that have been encountered along the way and the lessons learnt. As part of the process of handing over management of the project to the Ministry of Education in Laos, Save the Children has begun a process of assessing the impact of the project and documenting lessons learnt and best practices. This will be published in a forthcoming publication scheduled for May 2009. In this article we would like to briefly introduce the project to those who may not be aware of it and describe some of the more recent activities.



Prior to the establishment in 1992 of a special school for blind and deaf children, in the capital city of Vientiane, Lao had no education provision for children with special needs. In order to address this, the IE Project was introduced in November 1993. This was seen as a significant step towards fulfilling the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the United Nations World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons. With support from UNESCO and Save the Children UK, the project was initially piloted in one primary school in Vientiane Municipality. The number of schools had expanded by 1995-1996, to include 9 primary schools and 3 pre-schools. Each year since then, with SIDA becoming the major donor, expansion to new schools, provinces, and districts has taken place. There are currently 538 IE schools

covering all Districts of the country. In May 2009 the responsibility for administering and managing the project will be transferring from Save the Children Norway to the Lao Ministry of Education.

The Lao IE project has developed from one that was essentially concerned with the placement of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools to a project that is trying to support schools in embracing student diversity through identifying and removing all barriers to participation and achievement [Booth and Ainscow, 2002]. An approach to special educational needs which demands highly specialised teaching methods and the provision of complex resources is not practical. Developing more child centred and active learning approaches to classroom pedagogy has been the most successful means of including children with special needs into the classroom.

Two recent initiatives have been the development of an Inclusive Self Evaluation Tool for use by IE schools together with a project designed to collect quantitative data from every IE school in order to assess the impact of the project.

The Self Evaluation Tool activity involved 9 Primary Schools in 3 districts, from 3 provinces. The teachers and advisors from these selected provinces worked collaboratively to develop the tool which was based on the index for Inclusion [Booth and Ainscow 2002], a set of indicators for the development of Inclusive practice in schools which has been adapted and used in many countries internationally. The aim was to produce a tool which was relevant to the Lao context and which could be used by schools as a self assessment tool. The tool was developed over 3 years between 2005 and 2008. During this period, the schools involved designed and piloted the materials which necessitated the involvement of the whole school [teachers and pupils] and the wider community, in making judgements about the

school in relation to inclusive indicators. This process was then used to initiate school action planning and improvement activity.

In relation to the practicalities of working in schools there are some challenges. There are clear professional development and cultural challenges when introducing concepts such as 'self evaluation and 'school improvement'. Our experience taught us that the Index for Inclusion in its UK format, is very complex for teachers who may have had little training. Therefore, some important adjustments were made. The original Index has 44 indicators - the Lao version has 14. In the original index, each indicator has between 8 and 17 clarifying questions to support their use and stimulate discussion and enquiry - the Lao version has 8 questions. The teachers and advisors felt it was important that the tool was 'manageable'. It had to be diverse enough to cover the issues relevant in Lao schools but compact enough for schools to feel that they could manage it. The concepts behind the tool had to be clear enough so that their meaning transferred across cultures. In addition the participants being introduced to the materials in their schools had to be clear about the purpose of the exercise, i.e. - that this was a self evaluation and not an external one.

The development of the tool has been a great achievement for the Ministry of Education in Lao and it is hoped that it can be introduced in schools across Lao PDR from next year. It has been re-named 'Improving the Quality of Schools for All In Lao PDR: A School Improvement and Self Evaluation Process' to reflect the fact that the tool supports a comprehensive school development process. A more detailed overview of the tools development will be available in the Save the Children publication mentioned earlier in this article. We will also be presenting a symposium on the impact of the Lao IE project at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement in Vancouver in January 2009 [<http://www.icsei2009.org/index.html>]. Alternatively, an account of the development of the tool up until January 2007, is available at: <http://www.fm-kp.si/zalozba/ISBN/978-961-6573-65-8/117-131.pdf>

One of the weaknesses of the IE project to date has been the lack of quantitative school based data which would enable a more in depth analysis of the projects impact on schools. Therefore, as part of the IE Exit Strategy, Save the Children, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, developed forms to collect data from schools on the performance and attendance of disadvantaged groups of students, including children with special needs. This was sent out to all 538 IE project schools via the 17 provincial offices.

The data collection required school principals to submit data, broken down into different categories of groups known to be most vulnerable to experiencing barriers to participation and achievement.

Data was returned from all 538 schools by the end of June 2008. Given that existing system for collecting and storing data is undeveloped, the training and support given at school level was not always adequate. Consequently the Provincial Teams, who had to supervise the data collection from schools and Districts offices, were aware that there are questions about the quality of the data. This exercise has highlighted the need for more systematic training and support to schools for data collection, entry and analysis.

Following the completion of the data analysis in October 2008, there will be a series of evaluation visits to a sample of schools to check the reliability of the data they entered. The visits will also aim to provide an in depth qualitative analysis of the impact of the IE project on schools and communities. We look forward to sharing a more detailed description of the findings from these visits and other aspects of the IE project, in a later edition of EENET Asia.

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# Educators' Perceptions about Resources Needed for Effective School Health in Government Schools in Pakistan

**Parvez Pirzado**

A small scale research study was carried out by the author as part of his Masters from Institute of Education, University of London, UK. Some of the major findings are being shared through this article.

Focussing Resources on Effective School Health [FRESH] provides an important and valuable framework for improving the health of children especially in the developing countries. The 4 core components of FRESH [1] Health-related school policies, [2] Provision of safe water and sanitation, [3] Skills-based health education, and [4] School-based health and nutrition services are important for every school to protect and enhance children's health, because "healthy children are happy and learn better", hence create a healthy society.

This research study aimed to understand the importance of the FRESH framework and to identify the resources for effective school

health programs in poor government primary schools. The study sought to answer the following questions;

1. What resources educators perceive to be needed for effective school health in government primary schools of Pakistan?
2. How do educators believe that these resources can be gathered?

Data were collected through a small survey, through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. A semi-structured questionnaire was developed and sent to the respondents by email for self-completion. The study sample consisted of educators with some health education experience. They were first contacted and asked for their willingness. Out of 35 members contacted, 20 showed their willingness. 18 [10 male, 8 female] of the respondents sent back the completed questionnaires



courtesy of Parvez Pirzado

## Findings:

### Importance of Health Education in Pakistan

Respondents were asked to rate the statement “Health Education and Promotion is an important area for government primary schools of Pakistan” 16 out of 18 responses ticked ‘Strongly Agree’, clearly indicating that teacher educators consider health education and promotion important for government primary schools of Pakistan.

### Current Situation of Health Education in Pakistan

All 18 respondents rated the situation either poor or very poor on a five-point scale. Based on the non-availability of drinking water, latrines, poor hygienic conditions and lack of adequate health education material and information in the current government syllabus and the practice of corporal punishment in government schools, which affects children’s mental health.

### Gathering Resources

Some of the common missing resources mentioned are lack of trained teachers for health education, lack of health education curriculum and lack of school health policy. Majority of the teacher educators feel that the situation regarding effective school health in government schools can be improved if the following resources are available.

- Trained and motivated staff for effective delivery of health education lessons
- Policy making health education compulsory for all government primary schools
- Health education curriculum
- Water and sanitation facilities
- School health services
- Strong school-community link
- Provision of healthy environment

### Conclusion

All participating teacher educators stress the importance of health education in government primary schools of Pakistan. They feel there is dire need for health education at the school level. Some of the respondents have a rich working experience with teachers and children at the grassroots level and understand the situation well. Their concerns and suggestions are therefore valuable for future policy formulations.

The views expressed by the educators show a link with the FRESH framework to improve the health education situation through sustainable interventions in Pakistani schools. The resources suggested by participants are similar to the FRESH components. Government commitment is needed to introduce school health education in a systematic and formal way. For example if the Government makes health education compulsory for primary schools and each school allocates a minimum of 30 minutes per week teachers will feel responsible and comfortable to teach health education.

The opinions of teacher educators must now be conveyed to the policy makers to develop a link between planners and implementers. It is important for policy makers to realize that people at the grassroots level recognize the importance of health education and promotion in primary schools, therefore they must think of ways to make health education compulsory for primary education in Pakistan. This will hopefully lead to a new era where our society can be transformed into a healthier society.

**Mr. Parvez Pirzado**, Aga Khan University - Institute for Educational Development [AKU-IED], Karachi, Pakistan. He can be contacted via email: [parvez.pirzado@aku.edu](mailto:parvez.pirzado@aku.edu) or post: The Aga Khan University; IED-PDC; 1-5/B, VII F.B.Area; Karimabad; Karachi; Pakistan

## FRESH - Focusing Resources on Effective School Health

### Four core components:

- School health policies
- Water, sanitation and the environment
- Skills-based health education
- School-based health services

### Three supporting strategies:

- Partnerships between education and health
- Community partnerships
- Pupil awareness and participation

### Online Information:

UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/education/fresh>

UNICEF: [http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index\\_7262.html](http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_7262.html)

## Movies that Educate Us

Prof. M. M. Chaudhri

Marshal McLuhan one of the greatest Media Philosopher and Writer had said: "Some day all of us will spend our lives in our own school the WORLD. And Education - in the sense of Learning to love, to grow, to change can become not the woeful preparation for some job that makes us less than we could be but the very essence, the joyful whole of existence itself."

One of greatest thinkers of our time, Jiddu Krishnamurty, set up numerous schools in India with a philosophy to liberate the child. His concept of liberation was giving the child freedom from FEAR - of the book, examination and the teacher. This liberation brings out creativity and joy, so very essential to develop his full potential to love, grow, learn and evolve into a peace loving person.

Aung San Suu Kyi had said:

**"The only real prison is FEAR, and the only real freedom is freedom from FEAR."**

So, who gives this freedom? It has to be both parents and teachers that constitute the critical segment of any society. It is well known that you cannot give something if you do not have it yourself. It may be money, knowledge, discipline or freedom from fear. The major question that remains a puzzle more than ever is how to inculcate that freedom and some of the critical values in adults necessary to liberate the child in their interaction with her?

Movies over the last hundred years, have been telling stories that often have morals to entertain everyone without the barrier of any language, nationality and economic level of the audience. They can be a great force towards equity of people - adults as well as children. We see the young ones loving cartoon films on TV irrespective of the country they come from.

Of late feature films have emerged that take a real story to tell about human values that are universal - freedom, love, peace, truth,

justice, equality and courage that need to be essential part of education. Many of us would remember the movie **To Sir with Love** that became extremely popular. **Lean on Me**, **Dead Poets Society** and **Finding Forrester** are other examples of films that are set in an educational environment to enrich the adults - parents and teachers to value freedom for the child.

A recent film, **The Freedom Writers** is based on the book Freedom Writers Diary. It depicts the conflict between the establishment and an enthusiastic young white teacher played by the Oscar winning actress Hillary Swank (of **Million Dollar Baby**, **Boys Don't Cry** fame). Her colleagues and the head do not want her to deviate from the school teaching curriculum and methodology. Yet she goes ahead first to know and understand her teenage students.

Her English class of students from low-income ethnic background come from tragic homes with scars of drug and violence. They perceive Whites as their enemies and are least interested in studying.

Her struggle in the movie comes at three levels. Firstly, she has to manage her rowdy class where boys and girls full of hatred for each other, are constantly fighting. Secondly, she needs to remain unperturbed by the remarks of administration and colleagues. Lastly, at the home front, her husband begins to feel neglected by her and eventually leaves her.

The teacher drawn by the challenge to enable her students to be at peace to learn gradually dissolves her own ego to work overtime in her mission. Once the students notice her sincerity they begin to bond with her and with each other. They now begin to enjoy her class thereby making her journey to educate them easier and enjoyable.



In the process she keeps constructing the content and methodology to give them the most precious gift - self-identity by making them write about their own past. This becomes a healing process for the angry students to forgive themselves and each other. When their teacher gets all their short biographies published in the form of a book they are not only ecstatic but discover a dignity of their own that had been missing in their lives.

Besides weaving a beautiful story into an engrossing film, the Director brings out the fact that once the teacher can let go her/his ego to become sincere, kind and loving, her mission can become very enriching, rewarding and enjoyable.

A major film from India, **Taare Zameen Par** (Stars on Earth) is not only a brilliant film but is a landmark to educate the adults about children. The recognition that every child is a different even when they are identical twins has been with the child psychologists and educationists since decades. But they (the educationists) almost all over the world are too inert and self-righteous to alter their methods and ideas that would bring changes to allow the children to discover and develop their own talent along with the 3Rs.

In this context Amir Khan, the Producer and actor of the film, has made a significant breakthrough to create a feature film that dwells around the agony and trauma of a child suffering from dyslexia and show how his handicap is not understood by teachers and parents. When the child is sent to a boarding school away from home he withdraws further. The adults view it purely as a problem of discipline.

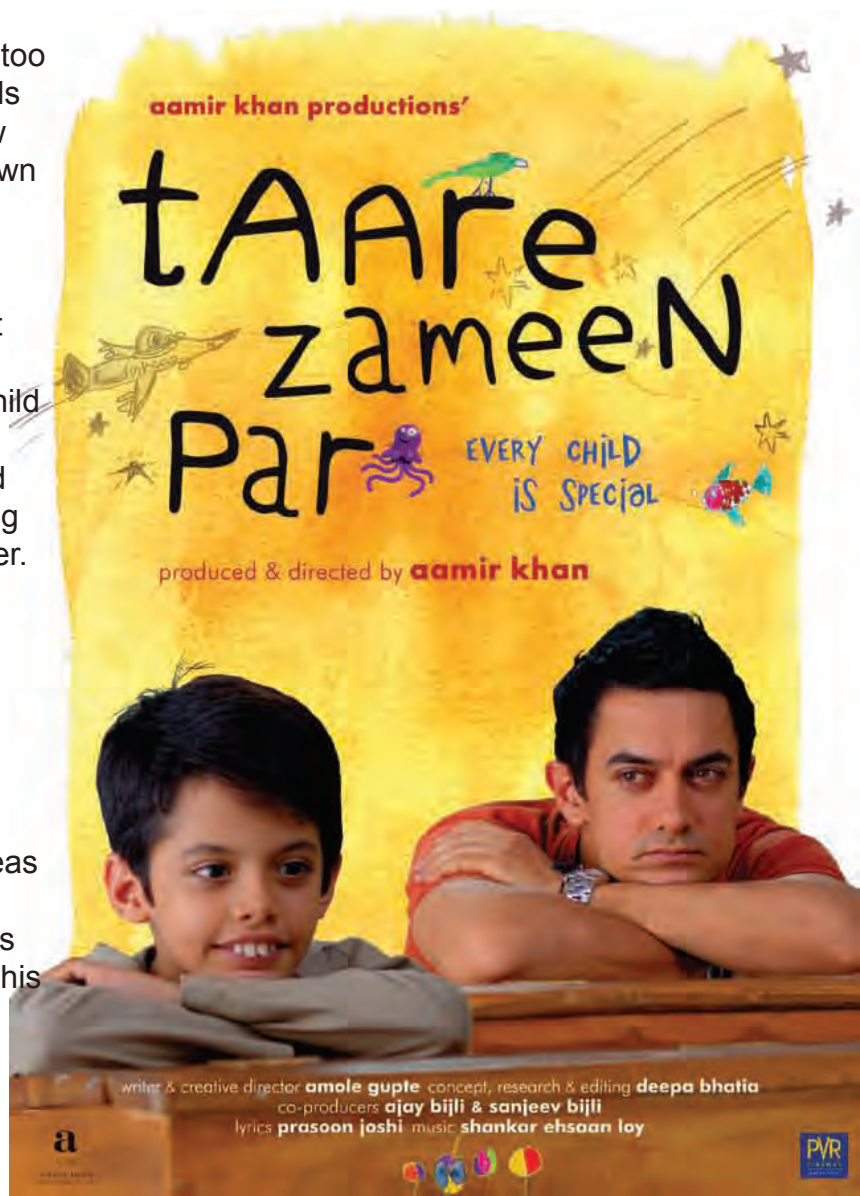
The newly appointed Art teacher after little investigation finds that the child is suffering from dyslexia. When adults are persuaded to take part in a painting competition they discover their own limitations to draw whereas the children are born artists. Dyslexia can be overcome with proper help but can adults begin to draw and paint like children? No. This

experience changes their attitude towards children. The end of the film is truly touching and uplifting when spirit wins and yet we know life is not all about winning.

Plato had said, "We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark. The real tragedy of life is when adults are afraid of the light."

Such films should become part all teacher-training programmes and parent-teacher meetings. A discussion after the film show has to be mandatory to bring home the essential elements of the film.

Prof. **M. M. Chaudhri**, a scientist turned into a filmmaker who taught at IIT Kanpur, NCERT and produced the popular science series *Turning Point*; now conducts workshops for teachers on Freedom, Creativity & Joy for children, paints and runs a Book & Film Club. Email: mmchaudhri1935@yahoo.com



## EENET Asia Interview

with José Da Silva Monteiro, Coordinator of Inclusive Education,  
Ministry of Education, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

courtesy of IDP Norway



During the recent “Regional Preparatory Conference on Inclusive Education: Major Policy Issues in the Asia and Pacific Region” in Bali, Indonesia, EENET Asia met with Mr. José Da Silva Monteiro, the Coordinator of Inclusive Education for Timor-Leste to ask him about the development of inclusive education in his country. These are exciting and challenging times for Timor-Leste, an independent nation only since 2002, which is struggling to emerge from several decades of conflict. In the following interview Mr. Da Silva Monteiro discusses the future of inclusive education in Timor-Leste.

### **How did inclusive education come to be recognised as important for Timor-Leste?**

This is our background, our country has been twenty-four years under occupation by Indonesia and before that, 450 years under occupation by the Portuguese. Many children in our country have not yet had access to education. My country is a new country and there has not been enough time for us to develop, especially in the education area. Now the question is how to develop inclusive education which involves many children; those that have not had education, children with disabilities and others that have stayed at home... how can they access education? So this programme is important now and the Ministry of Education in our country is strongly in favour of developing inclusive education.

### **What challenges do you have in terms of developing inclusive education in Timor-Leste?**

The main challenges at the moment are lack of facilities and lack of human resources. In the future it will be how to organise the inclusion of all children in education.

### **What is the current situation with education and schools in Timor-Leste for children with disabilities and from different ethnic groups?**

At the moment many children with disabilities are accessing school and education, but not yet all children. In the future inclusive education will be for all... this is good news for everyone.

### **You mentioned human resources as being a challenge. Were you talking about human resources inside the Ministry of Education or do you also mean the teachers that are working with the children?**

I am thinking about human resources in terms of getting good teachers for inclusive education, teachers that know the best methods for the teaching and learning process. Also funding is an issue. Although I have many plans, I have very little funds.

### **Do you already have plans for training teachers in Timor-Leste in inclusive education...about teaching all children?**

This we still lack. We want to develop these plans.

### **Are there issues, other than disability, affecting inclusion in Timor-Leste?**

Language is an issue. The first language in our country is Tetum, the national language and the second is Portuguese. At the moment we are trying to improve Tetum for the future, as an academic language and for schools. Tetum is the most widely spoken language now and it is very strong, even ambassadors to Timor-Leste speak Tetum. In the Indonesian period we were using the Indonesian language, so everybody was speaking Indonesian, so there was good access to education. But now the big challenge with language is Portuguese. The teachers they don't know about Portuguese, but now they have to train in the Portuguese language.

**Are there big differences between access to education in urban areas like Dili [the capitol] and more rural areas?**

The challenge at the moment is really for children with disabilities, especially transport for them. The other challenge is about the accessibility of school buildings. We had a meeting recently with UNICEF and I asked if they could please work with us together with the Ministry of Infrastructure because we need to improve school buildings to be more accessible to children with disabilities.

**Has coming to this conference raised any particular issues for you that you want to go back now and consider in Timor-Leste?**

I have heard many things about inclusive education here and I can take these back us to help us develop inclusive education in Timor-Leste. For me this is the first conference I have been to about inclusive education. In the future I really need more information and examples from other countries about inclusive education. Our vision is that by 2015 everyone will be able to access education and by 2020, everyone will be able to read and write. We are a new country, a small country, but we have plans for the future.

**What will your role be when you go back to Timor-Leste? How do you see this developing?**

After this conference, I'm going back to my country to plan how to take the data from all of our country...how many children? How many children with disabilities? When we have this data, we can involve them in inclusive education. We will not do something if we have no data. At the moment we are working with Plan Timor-Leste and EMIS [Education Management Information System] who are helping to advise our Ministry of Education. We will be working together with UNICEF, UNESCO, Plan and Friends from Australia to support the development of inclusive education. This is the main reason I want to visit other countries and programmes that do inclusive education already. At the moment, I have limited funds, but I want to see what methods others have used to implement inclusive education, to be our reference point.

**Is the entire education system in Timor-Leste changing now, because it's such a new country?**

Yes, now primary schools, junior schools and senior schools are free. Also the public University is very low cost.

**What about the curriculum, how much have you changed or reformed from the time of Indonesian occupation?**

At the moment, we still have the books from Indonesia in the Bahasa Indonesia language. In the future there are plans to have books in Portuguese, but we also need to improve Tetum. But now, Portuguese teaching is starting in elementary school, but at primary school they can't speak Portuguese. The challenge is that many teachers don't know Portuguese and so how can they teach the children in Portuguese? This is a challenge ... teacher education.

**One of the most sensitive issues in post-conflict countries is the teaching of history. Is how you teach history in Timor-Leste changing?**

At the moment they want to publish new history books for after independence, but we don't have these yet. They want to publish the story of the struggle for independence and after independence in the Tetum language.

**As the Coordinator of Inclusive Education is such a new role, how will you be working with people in other areas of the Ministry of Education? How do you plan to cooperate between what you do and what your other colleagues do?**

At the moment we have my director general and I coordinate with him and then other stakeholders like UNICEF and UNESCO and Plan Timor-Leste and Friends from Australia ... this is our partnership.

**Is there anything else you'd like to say about your plans for inclusive education in Timor-Leste?**

I have such a strong desire to develop inclusive education in Timor-Leste not just for the disabled, but for all. My plans for the future are also about how to include children who can't access education because of economic reasons. Our country is a new country and we want our students to be thinking about how to develop our country for the future ... we can not just sit and be quiet ... we have to do something. Right or wrong, we need to learn.



## Events ...

# Round Table Discussion on “Inclusive Education: Problems and the Search for Solutions”

**30<sup>th</sup> April 2008, Dushanbe, Tajikistan**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of April, 2008 the round table was conducted in the hall of the hotel “Kayon” in Dushanbe city. It was organized by the public charity organization “Health” in the framework of the project “Inclusive Education in schools of Firdavsi District” supported by international organization “Caritas” [Switzerland].

There were participating 35 people-representatives of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, Department of Education of the Firdavsi District, Psychological Medical Pedagogical Consultation of Dushanbe city, Pedagogical University, heads of the pre-school institutions, boarding schools, daily centers, public organizations, international organizations [UNICEF, Soros Foundation, and Save the Children], representatives of the mass media.

Inclusive education assumes approach where children in spite of their ailment (physical, intellectual and others) included into the general system of education. This approach was acknowledged prior in the Salamanca Declaration joined by Tajikistan together with 92 countries. Recently public charity organization “Health” conducted research of the educational needs of children with disabilities of the district in the framework of the project. It has opened integrative classes on the basis of 2 public schools. First 49 children with special needs entered the school from the 1st of September 2007 chosen by the parents. Some of the children are taught in homes. The courses on reeducating teachers were also organized.

The condition of the inclusive education in Tajikistan was discussed in the addressing speeches of the participants. There were

raised problems of deficiency of pedagogical cadres, unavailability of schools and its' personnel to accept children with the special educational needs, sharp deficit of information and knowledge on inclusive education.

Many participants emphasized the necessity to provide access to education as the basis for transformation to the social model of disability.

Participants of the round table in their reports demonstrated different models and approaches in introduction of the inclusive education, programs of preparation of children to schools, initiatives of the schools. The need for cooperation with the parents' public groups and organizations was particularly emphasized.

Taking into consideration the mentioned above problems, the participants suggested to conduct stage by stage introduction of the inclusive education to the public schools of different levels, develop cooperation with the colleagues from CIS and foreign countries in order to exchange with experience. Administrations of the Department of Education and Ministry of Education expressed positive remarks towards elaboration and acceptance of the Special Program on Education of the Children with the Special Needs. They have promised to coordinate pilot project platform, support events on creation of the environment without barriers, develop the package with methodological recommendations on organization and implementation of the inclusive education on places.

For further information please contact Ms. **Umarova V.M.** via email [caritas@caritas-ch.tj](mailto:caritas@caritas-ch.tj) or post: Caritas; 3 proezd Chekhova; dom 23; Dushanbe; Tajikistan;

# Assistive Technology Conference: Techshare India 2008

4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008, New Delhi, India

Techshare is one of Europe's biggest technology events to promote accessible technology for people with disabilities and is being organized for almost a decade now by The Royal National Institute for the Blind [RNIB] UK.

For the first time in India, Barrier Break Technologies organized Techshare India: 2008 that successfully brought together the entire ecosystem - the government, the corporates, the NGOs, the disabled, the product companies and the education providers for the first time under one roof. Sightsavers International was the silver sponsor for this conference and it also exhibited Dolphin pen in the exhibition.

The conference and exhibition explored the entire gamut of technology working for the disabled and succeeded in breaking barriers between the government, the corporate, the NGOs and the product and service providers on one hand and the disabled sixty million Indians on the other. Excerpts from key note address at the inaugural function are presented here.

At the inauguration, the chief guest Dr. [Smt.] Veena Chotray, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, shared her perspective on the pertinence of an event like Techshare India 2008. She said, "I appreciate the attempt being made by the organisers of the conference, and we are certainly on the right path.". "Most of these issues have come up in the last few decades as technology has evolved. While the Government is aware of these concerns and has taken steps to address them - the gaps do exist. In order to promote employment of People with Disabilities in the corporate sector, the Government of India has earmarked a fund of Rs.1800 crores," she added.

Mr. Shadi Abou-Zahra from the World Wide Web Consortium, in his keynote address highlighted the need for assistive technologies to be built into the design of the web interface. He said, "The web is now the key for every day

life and there are many tools that are available to the designers to make internet accessible to people with disabilities." He also emphasized on the commercial opportunity available in catering to the growing market represented by people with disabilities in terms of products and technologies; and encouraged business houses to play a larger role in this field.

Mr. Javed Abidi, Executive Director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People [NCPEDP] said, "India is a privileged country to have the best of the technology, top corporate houses as well as the best brains that we export around the world. In such a scenario, it is very unfortunate to see that the people with disabilities are losing out." "The situation is such that the corporate sector is not even aware that we have fantastic assistive technologies available and how they can be incorporated to give better opportunities to people with disabilities. That according to me is discrimination," he added.

The thematic tracks for the conference included:

Track 1: The Road Ahead - Envision the Accessibility Road Map.

Track 2: Making a Difference.

Track 3: Bridging the Digital Divide.

Track 4: Joint Papers from Making a Difference & Bridging the Digital Divide.

Track 5: Accessibility in Action - Workshops.

All the presentations including the key note address can be accessed at this link [http://www.barrierbreak.com/techshare\\_presentations2008.php](http://www.barrierbreak.com/techshare_presentations2008.php)

For further information please contact Ms. **Shweta Chooramani**, Programme Officer, Sightsavers International via email: [schooramani@sightsavers.org](mailto:schooramani@sightsavers.org) or post: Sight Savers International; South India Area Office; A-3 Shivdham Building; Plot No. 62, New Link Road; Malad (W); Mumbai 400064; India

# Second International Conference on Language Development, Language Revitalization and Multilingual Education in Ethnolinguistic Communities

1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008, Bangkok, Thailand

More than 2,000 languages are spoken in Asia. However, only a fraction of these languages are used as languages of instruction in schools. As a result, millions of Asian children speaking such non-dominant languages are not able to learn to their potential, as they simply do not fully understand the language used in school. Many underachieve and drop out, for no reason of their own. As most education systems exclusively use dominant languages, many minority parents start believing that their local languages are not worth using, and may no longer speak their first language to their children. This is leading to the possible extinction of hundreds of Asian languages.

It is acknowledged that a large proportion of out of school children and children in school but who are not learning to their full potential, have a different mother tongue than the language of instruction in school. Learners face multiple barriers to learning and if they enrol in school they are more likely to drop-out or repeat grades. The issue of language of instruction is fundamental for the creation of an inclusive and learning friendly environment and must be recognized if the Education For All goals are to be achieved. These and other related issues were dealt with during the Second International Conference on Language Development, Language Revitalization and Multilingual Education in Ethnolinguistic Communities.

The conference brought together some 390 people from 33 countries from and beyond Asia to present, share, discuss and learn what can be done to alleviate the challenges children from ethnolinguistic minority communities face, and how the use of non-dominant languages can be reinforced and increased so that they will not disappear. Participants included members of ethnolinguistic communities, academics, government officials, and staff of international and nongovernmental organizations. The purposes of the conference were to:

- Raise awareness regarding the threats to the world's linguistic and cultural diversity and to

the social, cultural, political, economic and educational injustices faced by people from non-dominant ethnolinguistic communities;

- Raise awareness regarding the purposes and benefits of Mother-Tongue [MT]-Based Multi-Lingual Education [MLE] programs that enable speakers of non-dominant languages to achieve educational success;
- Learn about good practices in language development, language revitalization and MT-based MLE from people with practical experience in such programs;
- Encourage participants - especially members of ethnolinguistic communities - to develop and expand their networks of individuals and organizations engaged in and supporting these efforts

The conference demonstrated that during the last decade increasing numbers of ethnolinguistic communities, NGOs, universities and governments in Asia have expressed interest in and/or have begun implementing mother tongue-based multilingual education programmes for children and adults who do not speak or understand the official language[s] of education. Nevertheless, the purposes and benefits of language development, language revitalization and multilingual education are still not widely understood or accepted. Many such efforts remain weak and do not build on what has been learned through research and practice.

The keynote presentation and the 6 plenary and 93 parallel presentations were roughly divided into 5 main tracks relating to language, culture and education. These were:

1. Preserving intangible cultural heritage
2. Language development and revitalization efforts [with many papers focusing on orthography development]
3. Experiences in establishing mother tongue-based MLE programs
4. Language and language-in-education policies
5. Research related to language and education



'Work Sessions' on the major conference themes provided opportunities to raise questions, share experiences and discuss specific issues in more informal settings, while an Exhibition Area was provided for the participants to display teaching and learning materials, photos, information brochures and other items relating to language development and multilingual education.

The conference was a good example of partnership of local and international institutions. It was sponsored by the following organisations:

UNESCO Bangkok, UNICEF, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization [SEAMEO], SIL International, the Institute for Language and Culture for Rural Development at Mahidol University in Thailand, Save the Children UK and CARE International.

For more information, please visit [www.seameo.org/\\_Id2008](http://www.seameo.org/_Id2008) or contact Mr. **Kimmo Kosonen**, SIL International [email: [kimmo\\_kosonen@sil.org](mailto:kimmo_kosonen@sil.org)] or Mr. **Johan Lindeberg**, UNESCO Bangkok [email: [j.lindeberg@unesco-bkk.org](mailto:j.lindeberg@unesco-bkk.org)]

## A Glimpse of Continuous Professional Training for Brunei Teachers

22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> July 2008, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei

Brunei Darussalam practices an active inclusive education policy. The endorsement of the Inclusive Education Policy through the Salamanca Statement by the Government of Brunei Darussalam provided the catalyst for facilitating and assisting the inclusion of students with special educational needs. Most government schools have at least one trained special education teacher [SENA] and children with special needs considered at risk of exclusion join their peer in the regular mainstream classes.

With no special schools to close down, the Ministry of Education concentrated its efforts on preparing and supporting teachers, administrators, parents and students for a more diverse school culture and population. Professionals at the Special Education Unit provide support to schools by assisting in making inclusion a possibility for the students.

As part of this support, continuous professional development programmes are organised every month. Starting in 2008, the Special Education Unit embarked on a phased project "Inclusive Model School of Excellent Services for Children" and began with two primary schools and two secondary schools in 2008.

Recently a National Seminar and Workshop was co-organised by the Special Education Unit and University of Brunei Darussalam [UBS] and officially opened by the Guest of Honour, Datin Paduka Dyg Apsah bte Hj

Abd Majid, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education. The theme was "Embracing Diversity: Effective Inclusive Schools" and the keynote address, "Embracing Diversity: Strengthening Inclusive Schools", was presented by the guest speaker Dr. Lori Bradshaw.

The main objectives were to:

- Provide a forum of sharing information and experiences on current trends, best practices and the development on special education.
- Establish networking and professional collaboration between Special Education Unit, the school system, Ministry of Education, UBD and various local agencies.
- Review issues and progress of special education programmes and highlight directions for the future.

About 500 participants consisting of head teachers, principals, primary and secondary, SEN teachers, SEN teachers from Department of Religious Studies, officers and staff from different departments under the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports as well as non-government organizations attended the seminar.

**Ms. Mona Aliana Alimin**, is an Educational Psychologist working at the Special Education Unit, Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam. She can be contacted at: [monalialimin@brunet.bn](mailto:monalialimin@brunet.bn)

# Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Conference for the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Conference on Education [ICE]

29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> May 2008, Bali, Indonesia

This regional conference was a part of the consultative process among UNESCO Member States with regard to the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the ICE, entitled "Inclusive Education: the Way of the Future" [25-28 November, 2008, Geneva, Switzerland] and was attended by 160 participants from 23 countries. It provided participants with an opportunity and a productive setting to discuss and exchange visions, strategies, practices and experiences around inclusive education in the region.

The Regional Conference had identified nine main topics addressed in relation to 4 sub-themes: a) approaches, scope and content; b) public policies; c) systems, links and transitions and d) learners and teachers. The participants felt the need to discuss the following concerns issues and suggestions during the ICE.

## 1. Children with Disabilities

- Formulate policies that to clarify and define inclusion, ensure that segregation is not practiced and address barriers to inclusion
- Issues related to capacity building, resources and facilities and collaboration.
- The role of special schools in supporting inclusion.
- The role of child centered teaching as a strategy towards inclusion.

## 2. HIV and AIDS and Health

- HIV related stigma, discriminatory attitudes and practices that prevent children from accessing quality education.
- Maintaining confidentiality regarding HIV status and providing access for children and youth affected and/or infected with HIV to quality education in their home communities.
- Access to child and youth - HIV prevention and response education, friendly health services, free and voluntary testing and counseling services and treatment for HIV.
- The media's potential role to promote HIV prevention and response education as well as helping to correct myths and misconceptions.

## 3. Minorities

- Develop a legal framework, curricula and content that encourage local adaptations.
- Proactive recruitment policies for teachers' training to increase the capacity of minority groups.
- The role of the education system in inter-cultural/religious dialogues to promote increased understanding and tolerance.
- Progressive introduction of mother tongue based instructions in the early years of primary education as a means of gaining mastery of national and international languages.
- Governments and multilateral organizations should hire and train speakers of minority languages as teachers and develop and distribute bilingual/multilingual materials.

## 4. Migrant Children

Regardless of their status, all children of migrant workers should be encouraged to pursue education.

## 5. Internally Displaced Children [IDC]

*In school-camps:*

- Children should be taught in their mother tongue and refugee children should have opportunities to learn the host nations' language and provided psycho-social support.

*In mainstream schools in host nations:*

- Refugee children should have equal access to education.
- Organize awareness raising about refugees to avoid bullying and discrimination.
- Orphan children should be considered within inclusive education policies and programmes.

## 6. Social Exclusion

- Review existing national level provisions for marginalized groups, support teachers and other stakeholders and address social exclusion within school and society.
- Access to quality education for children affected by war, civil strife and natural disaster.
- Monitoring existing provisions such as scholarships reaching the target group.
- Ensure the quality faith-based schools so that the competencies developed and subjects taught are relevant to national development.

## 7. Gender

- The need for gender disaggregated education data and additional qualitative and gender-sensitive indicators.
- Develop and/or implement legal frameworks protecting against gender-based discrimination
- Integrate gender awareness and sensitization into mandatory pre- and in-service trainings as well as in education materials.
- Gender equality guarantees in education in terms of enrolment, retention, survival and curricula.
- Recruitment strategies to address gender imbalances among teachers, principals and education system officials.
- The role of the education system is to actively challenge gender discriminatory traditions.

## 8. Disaster Risk Reduction [DRR] Education

- Natural disasters represent a major cause of exclusion.
- Children living in disaster-prone areas and children displaced as a result of a disaster, should be allowed equitable access to education.
- Governments must enforce building codes, develop of disaster-resilient school buildings and

provide all children with knowledge about disasters.

- DRR education should be a component of inclusive education and a major policy issue.

## 9. Enhanced learning to achieve quality of education

- Involvement of multiple stakeholders at national and regional levels.
- Diversification and improvement of policies and strategies, so that learners are prepared to face the rapidly changing world.
- Preparation of frames and tools to assist in the measurement of quality in learning.
- Establishment of communities of practices as settings for knowledge sharing on research studies with regards to learning.

Adapted from “Summary of Outcomes - Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Conference for the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the International Conference on Education [ICE] 29-31 May, 2008, Bali, Indonesia”, IBE, For further information contact Ms. **Clementina Acedo** via [c.acedo@unesco.org](mailto:c.acedo@unesco.org) and Mr. **Johan Lindeberg** via [j.lindeberg@unesco.org](mailto:j.lindeberg@unesco.org)

# South Asia EFA Mid-Term Policy Review Conference

16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Juni 2008, Kathmandu, Nepal

With the national Education for All [EFA] Mid Decade Assessment [MDA] reports in place, the next step is to ensure that results of the MDA are used in revising and formulating new policies, programs and strategies to reach the disadvantaged and unreached groups in education.

Representatives from South Asia met in Nepal to prepare policy recommendations aimed at ensuring the achievement of the EFA goals by 2015. The conference was an opportunity for South Asian countries and EFA partners to verify and validate the South Asia EFA MDA sub-regional synthesis report and was organized by UNESCO.

Over 70 participants composed of government representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as well as UNESCO, UNICEF, Save the Children, SIL International Global Campaign for Education, and other EFA partners and donors attended the conference.

Among the key recommendations were proposals for policies to improve teacher education and curriculum delivery, for governments to promote and fulfill free and compulsory education; to provide mother-tongue based multi lingual education [MLE] for early learning and lower primary education; provision of programs for re-entry into the education system; and to ensure allocation of financial resources for unreached groups.

National EFA coordinators also recommended to utilize SAARC as a venue for information exchange and establishing an EFA desk at the SAARC secretariat, while EFA partners suggested that the coordination between EFA partners need to improve to streamline support mechanisms, while the Thematic Working Group on EFA in Asia needs to focus more also on South Asia.

For further information please contact Ms. **Leotes Lugo-Helin** via [lugo-helin@unesco.org](mailto:lugo-helin@unesco.org) at UNESCO Bangkok



## Readers' Response

EENET Asia Indonesia

Sir at the outset I wish the staff of EENET Asia a prosperous and happy new year. It is learned that your organization publishes a newsletter and have so far brought out 4 issues of it. So if possible kindly send me all the 4 issues published so far. Your materials will be a great asset for grassroot level organization here named Orissa Association for the Blind. Kindly send even ink print copies of it because I have a very limited access to internet. We also want to be a part of your network for the smooth implementation of inclusive education programme in the province of Orissa. So kindly let us know the procedure we should follow for this purpose.

Thanking you yours truly

**R. P. Padhi**, Lecturer in Political Science Sonepur College, Sonepur District Sonepur, Orissa, India 767017

Many Congratulations for this amazing team effort.

**Vandana Saxena**, India, Email: vsaxena78@hotmail.com

Dear EENET Asia team

This is just to acknowledge and thanks for sending the newsletter. I will revert back with comments if any after going through the same.

**Imran Nazir**, Email: hamayalrana@yahoo.com

Dear EENET Asia Colleagues,

Congratulations on the e-Newsletter. It has been an excellent way for me to keep up with what is happening in an extremely active field.

May I take this opportunity to inform everybody in the network that, as of the beginning of 2008, I have moved from the SEAMEO Secretariat to take the post of Corporate Planning Officer, at the SEAMEO

Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology in Quezon City, Philippines. Below are my new contact details.

I do look forward to meeting you all once again and please feel free to share some thoughts and news which I am sure would be quite useful in my new post.

Cheers,

**Benito Espena Benozza**, SEAMEO INNOTECH,

Email: bennetbenozza@gmail.com



## Readers' Response

Dear EENET

Happy indeed to receive the new newsletter from you!

I would just like to inform you that through the first link " [eenet.org.uk](http://eenet.org.uk) " you cannot access the NEW newsletter - just the old ones. Only through " [idp-europe.org](http://idp-europe.org) " can you download the new 5<sup>th</sup> issue.

Hope your work goes smoothly and all is well. I am still living and working in Cambodia.

Best regards to all from **Sue Fox**, Email: [suecamfox@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:suecamfox@yahoo.co.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam

I'm Maha Prasad Hadkhale from Damauli Tanahun, Nepal. I like being called Mahesh. I am a college teacher. I have been working among college going disabled students of my locality. EENET magazines have been very much useful for me to use as awareness raising tool in different programs. And they are liked by my students as they are rich in information. This time I got EENET Asia magazines' wonderful six copies freely although I can not do any thing directly to help EENET right now. Thank You for your kind help.

**Mahesh**, Damauli, Nepal, Email: [mahaprasad\\_hadkhale@yahoo.com](mailto:mahaprasad_hadkhale@yahoo.com)

Dear Concern EENET Asia,

We would like to extend our thanks to the EENET concerns for sending us and updating us "EENET Asia News Letters" and "Compendium South Asia". You really took patience to send us such a weighty pack with good learning materials. We really appreciate your efforts and extend our thanks once again for the difficulty you faced in this regard. The receipt is attached herewith.

We do hope and expect that in the coming days we will also receive such materials

Best regards,

**Emamul Haque**, Programme Coordinator Education,  
Save the Children Sweden Denmark, Bangladesh  
Email: [emamul@scsd-bd.org](mailto:emamul@scsd-bd.org)



## Useful Publications

### HIV and AIDS

**2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic**, Geneva: UNAIDS,  
[http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/GlobalReport/2008/2008\\_Global\\_report.asp](http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/GlobalReport/2008/2008_Global_report.asp)

**Denying Entry, Stay and Residence Due to HIV Status - Ten Things You Need to Know**,  
<http://www.iasociety.org/Web/WebContent/File/Entry%20denied%2010%20things%20you%20need%20to%20know.pdf>

**HIV Health and Your Community**, Berkeley: Hesperian Foundation,  
[http://www.hesperian.org/publications\\_download\\_hiv.php](http://www.hesperian.org/publications_download_hiv.php)

### Other

**Innovative Practices in Physical Education and Sports in Asia**, Bangkok: UNESCO,  
[http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/165\\_166/](http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/165_166/)

**Directory of ICT Resources for Teaching and Learning of Science, Mathematics and Language, 2nd Edition**, Bangkok: UNESCO, [http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/169\\_170/](http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/169_170/)

**State of the World Minorities 2008**, London: Minority Rights Group International,  
<http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=6138>

**A Community Guide to Environmental Health**, Berkeley: Hesperian Foundation,  
[http://www.hesperian.org/publications\\_download\\_EHB.php](http://www.hesperian.org/publications_download_EHB.php)

### Human Rights

**Denied Status, Denied Education - Children of North Korean Women in China**, New York: Human Rights Watch, <http://hrw.org/reports/2008/northkorea0408/>

**The General Situation of Children in Afghanistan**, Kabul: Afghanistan Human Rights Commission,  
[http://www.aihrc.org.af/2008/April/Rep\\_eng\\_Chi\\_Nov\\_2007\\_U\\_Apr\\_2008.pdf](http://www.aihrc.org.af/2008/April/Rep_eng_Chi_Nov_2007_U_Apr_2008.pdf)

**A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education For All - A Framework for the Realization of Children's Right to Education and Rights within Education**, New York: UNICEF, Paris: UNESCO,  
[http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/A\\_Human\\_Rights\\_Based\\_Approach\\_to\\_Education\\_for\\_All.pdf](http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/A_Human_Rights_Based_Approach_to_Education_for_All.pdf)

**World Disaster Report 2007**, Geneva: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, <http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/pubs/disasters/wdr2007/WDR2007-English.pdf>

**Child Soldiers Global Report 2008**, London: Coalition to Stop the use of Child Soldiers,  
<http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/>

### Conflict & Emergencies

**Disabilities Among Refugees and Conflict-Affected Populations**, New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children,  
[http://www.womenscommission.org/pdf/disab\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.womenscommission.org/pdf/disab_full_report.pdf)

**Growing up under Militarisation: Abuse and Agency of Children in Karen State**, Karen Human Rights Group, <http://www.khrg.org/khrg2008/khrg0801.pdf>

**Justice for Children - The Situation of Children in Conflict with the Law in Afghanistan**, Kabul: Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission,  
[http://www.aihrc.org.af/Juvenile\\_Detention\\_eng.pdf](http://www.aihrc.org.af/Juvenile_Detention_eng.pdf)

**Non-Discrimination in Emergencies - Training Manual and Toolkit**, New Delhi: Save the Children India, [http://www.crin.org/docs/ND\\_Emergencies.pdf](http://www.crin.org/docs/ND_Emergencies.pdf)



All links to the publications are available online via <http://www.idp-europe.org/eenet>. Just click the newsletter where you have found the publication and again click "Useful Publications". Should you still have challenges please contact us via [asia@eenet.org.uk](mailto:asia@eenet.org.uk).

**Poverty and Economic Vulnerability in South Asia: Does it Impact Girls' Education?**

Kathmandu: UNICEF, UNGEI,

[http://www.unicef.org/rosa/rosa\\_\\_Final\\_Poverty\\_and\\_Economic\\_22may\\_08.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/rosa/rosa__Final_Poverty_and_Economic_22may_08.pdf)

**From Parity to Equality in Girls' Education: How are we doing in South Asia?**

Kathmandu: UNICEF, UNGEI, [http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Final\\_FPEGE\\_23\\_may\\_08.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Final_FPEGE_23_may_08.pdf)

**Progress in Girls' Education: The challenge of Gender Equality in South Asia,**

Kathmandu: UNICEF, UNGEI,

[http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Final\\_Progress\\_in\\_Girls\\_Education\\_23\\_May\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Final_Progress_in_Girls_Education_23_May(1).pdf)

**Gender Mainstreaming: Does it happen in Education in South Asia?**

Kathmandu: UNICEF, UNGEI, [http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Gender\\_26\\_May\\_08.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Gender_26_May_08.pdf)

**Beyond Gender: Measuring Disparity in South Asia using an Education Parity Index,**

Kathmandu: UNICEF, UNGEI, [http://www.unicef.org/rosa/New\\_BeyondGender\\_09June\\_08.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/rosa/New_BeyondGender_09June_08.pdf)

**Diasappearing Daughters**, London: ActionAid,

[http://www.crin.org/docs/diasappearing\\_daughters\\_0608%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.crin.org/docs/diasappearing_daughters_0608%5B1%5D.pdf)

**Gender and HIV prevention education: Effort in the Asia-Pacific Region**, Bangkok:

UNESCO, [http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/145/Gender\\_HIV\\_prevention.pdf](http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/145/Gender_HIV_prevention.pdf)

**Because I am a Girl: The State of the World's Girls 2008**, Surrey: PLAN International,

[http://www.plan-international.org/pdfs/BIAAG\\_2008\\_english.pdf](http://www.plan-international.org/pdfs/BIAAG_2008_english.pdf)

**CBM Disability and Development Policy**, Bensheim: CBM,

[http://www.cbm.org/en/general/downloads/19648/Disability\\_and\\_Development\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.cbm.org/en/general/downloads/19648/Disability_and_Development_Policy.pdf)

**It's About Ability - An Explanation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**,

New York: UNICEF, [http://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_43893.html](http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_43893.html)

**The Convention on the Rights of the Child and Quality Education**, Kathmandu: Save the Children Sweden,

<http://sca.savethechildren.se/upload/scs/SCA/Publications/The%20CRC%20and%20quality%20education%20-%20concept%20paper.pdf>

**Developing Positive Identities: Diversity and Young Children**, The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation,

[http://www.bernardvanleer.org/publication\\_store/publication\\_store\\_publications/developing\\_positive\\_identities\\_diversity\\_and\\_young\\_children/file](http://www.bernardvanleer.org/publication_store/publication_store_publications/developing_positive_identities_diversity_and_young_children/file)

**Making Schools Inclusive: How Change Can Happen**, London: Save the Children UK,

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/making-schools-inclusive.pdf>

**Child Rights Situation Analysis**, Bangkok: Save the Children Sweden,

[http://www.crin.org/docs/Child\\_Rights\\_Situation\\_Analysis\\_Final%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.crin.org/docs/Child_Rights_Situation_Analysis_Final%5B1%5D.pdf)

**EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008 - Education For All By 2015: Will We Make it?**,

Paris: UNESCO, <http://www.efareport.unesco.org>

**Inclusive Education: Where There Are Few Resources - Updated 2008**, Oslo: Atlas Alliance,

please contact [atlas@atlas-alliansen.no](mailto:atlas@atlas-alliansen.no) or [info@eenet.org.uk](mailto:info@eenet.org.uk)

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