



“Education is a human right with immense power to reform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable development... there is no higher priority, no mission more important, than that of Education for All.”
Kofi Annan (1998)



Special Edition: Salamanca – Ten Years On
 Produced in co-operation with UNESCO

Daniadi Mamman, GOEN, Nigeria



Enabling Education

At a recent conference in Hong Kong, the Australian academic Roger Slee argued that the idea of inclusive education is showing signs of jetlag: it is losing its freshness and is being used to mean too many different things. He went on to explain that at its point of origin, inclusive education was essentially a radical idea that rebelled against medical and psychological explanations of educational difficulties. For him, many of these explanations are part of the tradition of special education that has to be challenged.

So, if we are to make progress we have to be very clear what inclusion means. For EENET it involves efforts to reform policy and practice in education in ways that respect the right of all children to take part, whatever their personal characteristics.

In this edition of ‘Enabling Education’, we continue to report on the way that many friends around the world are taking up inclusive education as a radical idea. We also celebrate the tenth anniversary of UNESCO’s Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education.

EENET has promoted the inclusion of marginalised groups in education through information sharing and networking during the last seven of those ten years. This special edition newsletter has been produced in collaboration with UNESCO in order to promote reflection internationally on the changes which have taken place in education systems and in communities since Salamanca.

By creating conversations about the way in which inclusive practices can be developed in particular contexts and cultures – even with very few material resources – EENET provides opportunities for practitioners to share ideas and reflect on their own practice. This growing collection of stories, in the newsletter and on the website, is a source of inspiration. Although carefully written policies, rights-based legislation and international declarations are extremely important, people need to know how to implement inclusive education. In this sense, EENET is a post-Salamanca initiative which aims to provide guidance and support to individuals and organisations struggling to promote inclusion.

MeI Ainscow, UK

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 Enabling Education Network

www.eenet.org.uk

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Editors:
Susie Miles and Ingrid Lewis

Source

Source provides free online access to over 22,000 information resources on subjects including disability, health, evaluation, communication, HIV/AIDS, information management and poverty, within a developing country context. The contacts database contains hundreds of organisations working in these areas. Source would like to do some research to find out what resource centres and networks exist around the world and help in the process of developing links between them. Please contact Source at source@ich.ucl.ac.uk; www.asksources.info; or through EENET.

EENET News

Using images to promote reflection

We have been thinking for some time about the use of images associated with inclusion. What does inclusion look like? What kind of images could help us to reflect on inclusive practice? In the last issue of the newsletter we featured a diagram of a tree to illustrate the way families can play a vital role in promoting inclusion in education. 'Enabling Education' readers have sent us their own tree (and flower) diagrams, illustrating the ways they work in their contexts. A new section has been created on EENET's website to display these images from readers, and to encourage more debate about image-based reflection.

Writing Workshops

We have completed this action research project (see the 'action learning' section of the website) and are now working on a series of dissemination activities, funded again by DFID. We have begun by analysing EENET's correspondence files, covering the last seven years, to identify user trends and the success of different types of dissemination. The next step is to produce an interactive CD-ROM based on the guidelines (about how to capture inclusive education experience) developed during the research project. Over the coming year we hope this resource will be used by various people working in inclusive education. We also aim to develop further the use of images during this process.

Working children

In this issue we have our first article on working children. It introduces the need for flexibility in education systems to accommodate working children, to protect them from abuse and to offer quality education which discourages early drop-out in order to enter employment. The article from ANPPCAN Kenya also raises the issue of child work in relation to high rates of children dropping out of school.

Focus on the Caribbean

Also for the first time we are featuring articles from the Caribbean. Our contact with St Lucia was made possible by CAMRODD (see pages 26-27), a regional networking organisation based in Suriname, South America. EENET was invited to collaborate with them in revising, and teaching, a module on inclusive education on their SCcOPE course in March 2004.

'Disability World' article

'Disability World' is a bi-monthly web-zine of international disability news and views. In April 2004 Susie Miles was interviewed about EENET's development and the 'highs and lows' of networking on inclusion. The article (and other news) is available from: www.disabilityworld.org.

International Deaf Children's Society

Over the last year EENET has played a key role in researching work with deaf children, young people and their parents in the South. The research was in collaboration with IDCS, in preparation for the launch of their website – www.idcs.info – a valuable new resource which aims to be a 'one-stop-shop' on deafness internationally. IDCS will continue to work closely with EENET in sharing information on the education of deaf children.

EENET wishes to thank NFU (Norway) for its financial support, from 1997 to 2004.

Focus on Policy: Language and Inclusion, Lao PDR

Anupam Ahuja

In Lao PDR children are instructed in the official language, Lao, from the beginning of primary school. Yet 43 per cent of school children are learning to speak, read and write Lao as a second language. These learners are at an enormous disadvantage and often have significant linguistic difficulties – contributing to learning breakdown. Low expectations, discrimination, and a lack of role models and cultural peers mean that children who do not speak Lao as their first language are more likely to drop out of school. Anupam Ahuja demonstrates the link between linguistic exclusion and school failure, and describes the Lao Government's strategy to address this issue.

In order to promote Lao as the national language, the education policy requires that it be used as the medium of instruction in schools. This is problematic as there are 82 officially recognised languages in Lao PDR and many different dialects. All are living languages, but not all have scripts.

Although the law states that minority languages can be used for teaching, in reality the Lao language is used. Mother-tongue teaching is difficult, as it is not clear which language(s) should be used.

Statistics show that non-Lao speaking children frequently experience early learning failure. This is partly responsible for the high drop-out and repetition rates, especially in primary grades one and two. This proves costly to the Ministry of Education, as high repetition rates mean the per-capita costs of education are also high. The socio-economic development of the country is suffering and the rights of minority peoples are being overlooked. Effective interventions to minimise the inherent problems of this policy need to be developed.

Language difficulties are intensified by traditional teaching methods. Most teachers have a limited understanding of how children develop language and literacy, and of how to plan useful language activities. The curriculum and textbooks focus on mainstream culture and language. Changes are taking place, however, and a more welcoming and diversity-responsive system is being developed.

The Ministry of Education is taking appropriate measures to minimise the negative effects of the policy, and to consolidate and improve the national language. Teachers are:

- being prepared to use suitable methodologies to teach Lao
- equipped to bring language to life by arranging classroom interactions so that children talk, read and write about things familiar to them
- encouraged to use a variety of teaching and learning aids (eg, pictures, visual aids and body language) to give meaning to the language used
- given training in active learning methods and activities, which allow children to link what they see and hear with what they

experience – essential for language development

- learning that small group work is an integral part of active learning.

Dr Anupam Ahuja is a freelance consultant with over 20 years of experience in the field of education and a focus on developing inclusive practices. She has worked at national and international levels in Africa and Asia and can be contacted at:

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Vieng's story

"She is shy because of her hare lip and seems to have difficulty in learning", insisted the four pre-school teachers. "Vieng speaks Hmong at home. She does not know much Lao. She is shy to go outside – it's the hare lip", Vieng's mother told me.

When I asked if anyone could speak Hmong, two girls and a boy came forward. I asked them to help me teach the class how to count in Hmong. We said the numbers in Lao and in Hmong. I looked over to Vieng. Suddenly she sat up and joined in – she blossomed like a lotus bud in a muddy pond.

On the way out, I spoke to her teachers about encouraging the children to teach each other some words and songs in Lao, Hmong and Khmu. "Do you think Vieng is mentally disabled?" one teacher asked me. I switched instantly from Lao into Hindi and babbled on for about a minute. They didn't understand me. "You are speaking a foreign language to her" I said.

"Can you encourage the Hmong children to help everyone learn some Hmong words?" I asked the head teacher. She agreed, but gave me a hesitant look. She would be breaking the regulations.

Inclusive Education and Parents' Involvement in Mongolia

Mongolia and special needs education

Mongolia is in the heart of Central Asia, between China and Russia. Its population of 2.6 million is sparsely spread. The country is divided into 21 provinces and one municipality which is divided into nine districts. Mongolia is a relatively young country with 30.7 per cent of the population of children aged 0–14 years.

Before 1989, the socialist government of Mongolia pursued a policy of institutionalising disabled people by building a network of special schools and residential care facilities. While this system addressed basic needs for disabled people, it excluded them from social and political life. Following the political and economic changes of the 1990s, this institutional framework collapsed. Due to shortages of funds and resources, special schools in rural areas were closed and social benefits for disabled children decreased dramatically.

The compulsory school education system has weakened since the transition period, and disabled children are now forming a visible part of school drop-outs. Disabled children have very limited access to

education, especially in rural areas. Very few special schools exist for children with hearing/speaking disabilities and mental disability. Such schools are only located in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar. Just one offers classes for blind children.

Challenges facing disabled children

- 527,000 children are in secondary schools, 40,000 of whom are disabled and 0.38% are in special schools
- 10.3% of 8-10-year-olds eligible to study in schools, and 66.6% of kindergarten-aged children, cannot be provided with educational services
- 7.1% of children who are studying in schools are disabled
- 11.6% of children who are eligible to study in school cannot go due to serious disabilities, as stated in the conclusion of the study from the Inclusive Education Unit of the Ministry of Education (MoE).

According to education indicators, Mongolia is a highly educated country with 98.5 per cent of the population literate. Gender discrimination in education is

relatively low and there is a higher percentage of disabled children in regular schools than in other countries. However, the education is often unproductive, with poor access for disabled children. Often, educational programmes are not flexible enough for disabled children, and teachers have poor understanding of disabled children's needs, abilities or skills. Some teachers have discriminatory attitudes towards disabled children, who are often invisible because of large class sizes. Many severely disabled children are still at home.

Inclusive education

The beginning of integrated education in Mongolia was closely associated with the DANIDA Special Needs Education Project, 1994-98, implemented in three provinces and in two schools in the capital city. Save the Children UK's (SC UK) programme (1998 to the present) on the integration of children with disabilities into regular pre-schools, and more recently into primary schools, was implemented in three provinces.

Successful implementation of integrated education programmes requires the involvement and support of the parents of disabled children at all levels. From 1998, with the support of SC UK, a group of families with disabled children formed an unofficial association which became closely associated with SC UK in the implementation of its integrated education activities. By 2000, this informal association had developed into a formally constituted NGO – the Association of Parents with Disabled Children (APDC) – dedicated to protecting the rights of, and providing assistance to, disabled children.

During the international workshop on 'Inclusive Education Policies for Children with Disabilities', held in Ulaanbaatar in March 2003, the term 'integrated education' was



changed to 'inclusive education', at the suggestion of SC UK's Mongolia Programme Director, Mr Karlo Puskarica.

The workshop was organised by SC UK. It aimed: to renew the inclusive education initiatives in Mongolia; to help participants share with, and learn from, other countries in terms of policy development and implementation; to identify priority issues and recommendations for policy development and implementation in Mongolia. SC UK believes that influencing policy is the main approach to solving problems.

The MoE has made changes in its structure and established an Inclusive Education Unit (IEU) with SC UK's technical and financial support.

Partnership

SC UK has a solid partnership with APDC, and, through the partnership with the IEU, an Inclusive Educational Programme for Disabled Children is being developed. This was jointly agreed by the Minister of Education, Minister of Health and Minister of Social Welfare and Labour in December 2003. Currently these ministries, SC UK, APDC and other related organisations have formed a Programme Implementing Committee to co-ordinate programme implementation.

Importance of parents' participation

Parents believe their participation and voice is a very important element in implementing inclusive education programmes. APDC is capable of assisting in the development of more educational services and improving living conditions for their children. It is implementing the Institutional Strengthening of APDC Project, funded by the European Union and SC UK.

APDC's achievements include: international relationships and information flow, organisational development, strategy and structure. Most importantly, it has united over 700 parents. This has raised the voice of disabled children and there is a growing public awareness of their rights.

We recently had the chance to visit EENET in the UK as part of a study tour. We met Susie Miles, who gave us many ideas about inclusive education. Information is essential for parents, for other related organisations, and for the general public. Sharing information and experience with other countries on inclusive education is important for a developing country like Mongolia.

Conclusion

Every child has a right to education. Every child would like to go to kindergarten and school, but at the present time not every child has the opportunity. We believe inclusive education is the right path to follow in order to fulfil the child's right to education. The first step to inclusive education is being built in our country, with the effort of all sections of society: children, parents, as well as governmental and non-governmental organisations.

The Association of Parents with Disabled Children looks forward to networking and sharing ideas and initiatives with other members of EENET throughout the world.

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In partnership with SC UK, the Government is involved in a number of 'inclusion' programmes, such as work with street children, school drop-outs and families affected by poverty and family breakdown. The MoE's Inclusive Education Unit also has a broad focus, which includes street children and other economically disadvantaged groups. APDC's work with disabled children, therefore, does not stand alone. I have been the Advisor to APDC from the outset and have been impressed by their work and dedication to the programme's development. The Executive Staff Team are enthusiastic and hard working. In a relatively short time they have managed to create an organisation that is democratic in structure and involves both parents and children in raising their voices throughout the wider Mongolian society.

Peter Blackley,
NGO Development Advisor

"Thank you for accepting us in Manchester University... it has made a profound impression on us. Your newsletter and website is the huge source of information on disabled children's education issues and it is greatly helping our work... I would like to express that EENET is the valuable, great resource of information and would like to name it 'the best intellectual investment'."
N.Enkhtsetseg

Working Children and Education

The issue of working children is complex and context specific. This article introduces some key issues and suggests a few important steps for improving the educational inclusion of working children. It highlights the key challenge of ensuring working children's right to a useful education, while upholding their rights to survival and protection.

Children work for many different reasons. They may be poor and have to work to ensure the survival of themselves and their families. Other children may work because it is the cultural norm to start work at a young age, rather than spending childhood playing or at school. Work may be seen as an essential part of children's development; transmitting vital skills from parents to the next generation. Some groups of children – eg, girls, children from ethnic minorities or disabled children – may be more likely to be pushed into (more harmful) work, because of society's attitudes towards them. Factors within the education system – irrelevant curricula, inappropriate teaching methods, discrimination, abuse – can also lead to children leaving school and entering the labour market before they have completed their education.

“A 12-year-old girl... was enrolled in a public school, but was later withdrawn to work as a house-help to a wealthy couple...her father decided to withdraw her from school because he didn't want to 'waste' his meagre resources on educating a female child who will eventually be given out in marriage.”

Danladi Mamman,
teacher, Nigeria

Child work can be paid or unpaid, and take place inside and outside the home. Many children (especially girls) carry out domestic duties for their families or guardians. Others are involved in, for example, agricultural work, trading, factory work or sex work.

Working has profound effects on children's education and on their lives as a whole. Working may offer help with financial difficulties and ensure basic survival, but can often involve long hours and lead to exploitation, abuse, ill health or injury.

Many working children do not continue with schooling, because they cannot afford to, or do not have the time or the energy to attend school. Their lack of education often limits their future employment and earning opportunities, meaning they cannot move out of poverty or provide sufficient education for their own children.

For other children, work does not mean a total end to schooling, but it can lead to irregular attendance, poor academic results and children repeating classes several times.

Working can deny children their rights to a meaningful, quality education, and deny them rights to protection from harmful forms of labour and other abuse.

What can you do?

All children have a right to a meaningful education, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes children who work. A long-term goal is to ensure that children do not have to work, but in the short term we need to acknowledge that many children will continue to work. How do we balance children's need for earning income with their needs/rights to education; and how do we ensure that this education offers sufficient development opportunities that are relevant and beneficial to the child's future in the world of work?

Researching and addressing the factors that push children into work is very important. We need to understand the root causes of child work in a particular context, before we can find ways of tackling the problem. We also need to develop integrated strategies and partnerships, not just with those working in the education sector, but with those in other sectors concerned with poverty reduction, livelihoods, labour, etc, and those in government, NGOs and business.

“I was really good at my schoolwork and got on well with my teachers”, Melaku, child worker, Ethiopia
Melaku's teachers and community workers said he was a bright pupil who was getting good grades in his exams. Melaku's father died and his mother left him and his five siblings. Melaku took responsibility as the sole provider for his family, helping a local craftsman. He had to leave school to support his family. Life in his school for a working child had not been easy. Teachers had rarely understood the challenges he faced at home. Memmenasha Haile-Giorgis, Ethiopia

“There is a profound interaction between education and child labour: just as work can keep children away from school, so poor quality education can cause children to drop out of school to start working at an early age.” GCEN

The involvement of parents, pupils and communities is essential – for raising awareness and understanding of the issues; for developing and managing appropriate projects, locally-relevant curricula or acceptable teaching methodologies; and for helping us all share experiences and ideas on child work issues.

Working with an entire community rather than with just a few selected children has also been shown to be less costly and more effective in reducing the numbers of children who work.

Girl Child Empowerment Nigeria (GCEN) works to raise awareness among parents/guardians about educational rights, especially for (working) girls. One innovative activity took place during national strike action held in response to increased fuel prices:

“...[the strike] has been an opportunity for me to meet [in the queues waiting for transport] many civil servants and parents... we have been sharing information on inclusive education, listening to the cassettes [of EENET’s newsletter] and many of them started having a clear change of attitude towards education. I have been able to convince some parents who have never sent their house helps to the school before and they have assured me that from September they would enrol them into school.”

Nene Azubuko, GCEN

Addressing factors within the education system which may make children give up school completely in favour of work can be tackled in various ways. For example, some situations may require the introduction of policies and practices that tackle discrimination or abuse in schools.

Other contexts may prioritise a focus on improving teacher education and support so that teachers can manage the diverse and individual needs of all children (including those who work), and apply child-centred, active learning methodologies which may encourage children to stay in education. Ensuring that children are taught subjects and skills that will be relevant to their future working lives, and which also use skills/knowledge learned in the workplace, can also encourage children to stay in, or return to, education.

Developing innovative, flexible timetables and curricula can ensure that children are not excluded because of their work.

These might be designed to accommodate daily or seasonal work commitments or might allow for flexible attendance spread over longer periods.

Alternative, non-formal education options need to be guided and regulated, so they link adequately with, and inform improvements in, the formal system. Certain non-formal education options like night schools and one-off residential courses need to be used with care, because of their potential to undermine children’s other rights. For example, they may fail to protect a child from harmful work during the day or from abuse in a residential setting.

Education and working children is a complex issue which cannot be fully discussed in a short article. There is no single solution to the question of how to stop children working or to the dilemma of how to provide education for children who continue to work. But if we are to achieve education for all, then working children must be part of all inclusive education initiatives.

Children interviewed by GCEN believed a policy of free education in Nigeria would enable them to access education, instead of going to work.

“I am working here because my parents don’t have money to send me to school. Please tell the government to make education free so that we can go back to school.”

“My parents sent me to hawk here because we are poor. I cannot afford to be in school. I want our President to make education free. I want to start school like my friends.”

This article was compiled by Ingrid Lewis (EENET), based on Save the Children UK’s document *‘Planning Working Children’s Education: A guide for education sector planners’*, (available on EENET’s website) and on short articles by Girl Child Empowerment Nigeria and Memmenasha Haile-Giorgis, Ethiopia. Contact GCEN at: girlchildemp@yahoo.com or via EENET.

Post-primary Education, Kenya

Hellen Obande

Kenya must address the issue of transition in education for primary school leavers if it is to meet the EFA goals.

Kenya's commitment to EFA

Kenya is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which proclaim that education is a basic right for all children. Realising that free and compulsory education is key for achieving universal education, the Kenya Government introduced its free primary education policy in January 2003. However Education For All (EFA) will remain an uphill task, unless the issue of transition from primary to secondary school is addressed.

Kenya's education system offers eight years in primary, four in secondary and four in tertiary education. Before January 2003 there were over three million out-of-school children. The cost-sharing policy in education had made schooling unaffordable, and pushed many children out of school and into work. An estimated 1.3 million of those children went back to school as a result of the new policy.

Transition from primary to secondary level still remains a challenge, and is sure to undermine the gains made. Many children, particularly those aged 14-18, are still at risk of not accessing education and of becoming child workers.

The issue of transition is of grave concern. Large numbers of children are unable to proceed with post-primary education. Just over half a million candidates sat the Kenya Certificate of Primary Examinations (KCPE) at the end of 2003, yet only 46 per cent had the chance to proceed to secondary schools. Although the number of candidates enrolling for primary level examinations has steadily risen, the number of secondary schools has

remained the same. Unless this issue is addressed, Kenya will be dealing with an explosion at the end of 2010, when the children who enrolled in 2003, with the abolition of school fees, will be taking their primary level examinations.

Vocational training

Currently the secondary schools can only absorb 200,000 children, yet an estimated 700,000 will be jostling for placement in secondary school. There are alternatives for children who cannot proceed to secondary school, such as vocational training. A recent symposium organised by ANPPCAN Regional Office identified some of the challenges regarding vocational training:

- negative attitudes towards skills training
- lack of clear policy on technical and vocational training
- poor financial support for skills training
- primary school graduates are too young for employment and cannot access financial assistance for technical training institutions
- poor staffing levels in training centres.

Recommendations

- Extension of basic education
This could be extended from eight to twelve years. This would give every Kenyan child an opportunity to attain a minimum of secondary school education. The country could work with partners to make this education free and compulsory.
- Expansion of secondary education
The government should expand secondary education countrywide, and strongly control fee payment. Currently, the fee ceilings provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology are not adhered to. Effective monitoring is needed.
- Non-formal training opportunities
Training opportunities in the non-formal sector need to be

enhanced and revitalised to meet current needs. The government needs to have a clear policy on non-formal education, ensuring the certification of graduates and helping change attitudes towards non-formal education. The participation of girls and children with disabilities needs to be addressed if all children are to benefit from technical and vocational training. Key to this is the need for the government to subsidise post-primary education for children with disabilities.

Civil society must continue advocating for the relocation of government resources to target the 54 per cent of children who cannot access secondary education. There is a need to lobby for increased budgetary allocation by the government for education, particularly technical education, if the goals of Education For All are to be met.

About ANPPCAN

ANPPCAN is a pan-African organisation, whose mission is to prevent, and protect children from, all forms of maltreatment – thus ensuring that their rights are realised. ANPPCAN has various programmes: child rights and child protection, combating the worst forms of child labour, early childhood education, and community organisation. ANPPCAN has a broad objective of building the capacity of government and community structures to combat child labour by initiating programmes that help children at risk of joining hazardous work, and support those who have withdrawn from work.

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“...we already have enough knowledge to develop schools that can be successful in educating all children. The big question is, do we have the will to make it happen?” Mel Ainscow

Special edition

Salamanca - Ten Years On



© UNESCO/Olav A. Saltbones

The tenth anniversary of the Salamanca Statement provides us with an opportunity to consider its impact internationally. In particular, we can reflect on how, through the leadership provided by UNESCO, it has encouraged moves away from a narrow focus on the impairments of individual children, towards a much broader concept of inclusion. This is about overcoming the barriers facing all learners within education systems.

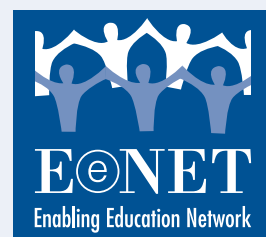
During the ten years since Salamanca, there has been considerable activity in many countries to move educational policy and practice in a more inclusive direction. There is no doubt there has been progress, although this remains very patchy, and often limited to small projects.

Progress is hampered by the widespread confusion that still exists about what ‘inclusion’ actually means. It is now well established that educational reform is particularly difficult in contexts where there is a lack of

common understanding about what is intended. The articles in this section of the newsletter illustrate the very wide range of perspectives on inclusive education, its definition and its implementation. They help to throw further light on what is meant by inclusive education.

Some articles only refer to children with ‘disabilities’ or those identified as having special educational needs – which Salamanca set out to address. Others take a much broader view of inclusion and focus on all vulnerable groups of children

in the particular context in which they are working – this represents the new thinking Salamanca aimed to stimulate. In particular, the articles remind us of the importance of seeing inclusion as a way of achieving Education for All, as recommended in the Salamanca Statement.



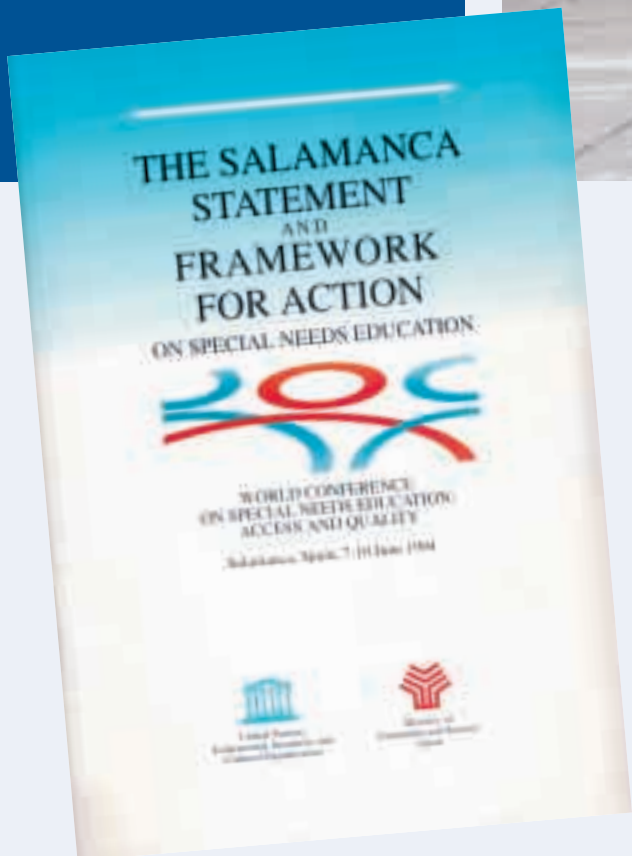
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The Salamanca Statement emphasises that all learners must be catered for by education systems – if the goal of Education For All is to be achieved.



Photographs: © UNESCO/Olav A. Saltbones



“The guiding principle that informs this Framework is that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social and emotional, linguistic or other conditions.”

Promoting Inclusive, Learner-friendly Environments in the Asia-Pacific Region **Olof Sandkull**

The principles of inclusive education articulated in the Salamanca Statement were re-adopted in the Framework for Action at the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 and form the basis for all UNESCO's activities in this area. UNESCO's regional office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok supports Education for All (EFA) in the countries of the region with a special emphasis on removing barriers to access and learning for girls and women, marginalised groups, disabled and out-of-school children.

Every child has a fundamental right to *quality* education. Inclusive education is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners and to improving the quality of education. However most schools in the Asia-Pacific region face many challenges in responding to children with diverse learning needs:

- many teachers are not prepared to welcome every child in their classrooms
- the community does not always provide support
- national education policy and school management do not always support inclusive approaches.

Despite these challenges many countries in the region are making real efforts to reach out to all excluded children by applying inclusive approaches in mainstream education systems.

Regional co-ordination and technical advice is provided to the 13 field offices and 45 member states in the Asia-Pacific region on how to promote inclusive education. The Japanese Government is funding a project in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Indonesia entitled, 'Capacity Building and Resource Development of Basic Education Focusing on Combating Marginalisation and Exclusion'.

The purpose of the project is to give countries experience in including students who are vulnerable to exclusion and marginalisation through developing welcoming educational policies, practices, curricula and cultures.

Developing resource materials

UNESCO Bangkok published a practical '*Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-friendly Environments*' in April 2004. The Toolkit offers a holistic and practical way for schools and classrooms to become more inclusive, learning-friendly and gender-sensitive. It is aimed at teachers, school administrators and education planners and contains six booklets with the following information:

- characteristics and benefits of inclusive learning-friendly environments
- how to work with families and communities
- practical ways of including excluded children
- tools and ideas for making classrooms more inclusive, child-centred and gender-sensitive (two booklets)
- creating healthy and protective school policies and services.

An English version of the Toolkit is available online at www.unescobkk.org. It will be adapted to the needs of

specific country contexts and translated into several languages of the region.

For more information on the Toolkit, please contact: gender@unescobkk.org

Commemorating the ten years since the Salamanca Conference in 1994 19-21 October 2004

A regional workshop on inclusive education will be organised in Bangkok together with UNESCO HQ. The purpose of the workshop is to share experiences of inclusive practices in the region and explore future strategies and action to promote it within the framework of EFA. More information is available online at: www.unescobkk.org

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An Inclusive Approach to EFA: UNESCO's Role

Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education.

UNESCO believes that the issue of inclusion has to be seen as part of the wider international activities stimulated by the 1990 Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA). In the early documentation on EFA, there was a rather token mention of 'special needs'. This has been gradually replaced by a recognition that the inclusion agenda should be seen as an essential element of the whole EFA movement. Thus, instead of an emphasis on the idea of *integration*, (with its assumption that additional arrangements will be made to accommodate pupils seen as being special within a system of schooling that remains largely unchanged), we now see moves towards *inclusive education*, where the aim is to restructure schools in response to the needs of all pupils.

The Dakar Framework for Action and the subsequent Millennium Development Goals on Education, provide the most up-to-date frame of reference on making EFA a reality by 2015. However, the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and the Framework for Action continue to provide a valuable reference point for all those involved in lobbying for inclusive education. It also provides a framework for thinking about how to move policy and practice forward. Indeed, it is arguably the most significant international document that has ever appeared in special education.

The statement concludes that regular schools with an inclusive orientation are:

"...the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all."

Furthermore, it suggests, such schools can:

"...provide an effective education for the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system."

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education – Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994

"More than 300 participants, representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations, met in Salamanca to further the objective of Education for All by considering the fundamental policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education, namely enabling schools to serve all children, particularly those with special educational needs."

Preface to the Salamanca Statement

We call upon all governments and urge them to:

- give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties
- adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise
- develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools
- establish decentralized and participatory mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating educational provision for children and adults with special education needs
- encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities and organization of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision-making processes concerning provision for special educational needs
- invest greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocational aspects of inclusive education
- ensure that, in the context of a systemic change, teacher education programmes, both pre-service and in-service, address the provision of special needs education in inclusive schools.

Article 3

Salamanca encourages us to look at educational difficulties in new ways. This new direction in thinking is based on the belief that changes in methodology and organisation – made in response to students experiencing difficulties – can, under certain conditions, benefit all children. In this way, students who are currently categorised as having special needs come to be seen as a stimulus for encouraging the development of richer learning environments.

National EFA Action Plans

UNESCO assists member countries in developing their National EFA Plans. It sets out to make sure that these plans really are inclusive, ie, that they cater for all learners. This means that the principle of inclusion must inform and permeate strategies at all levels of an education system. This is a major challenge and will require expertise that is not always available within countries.

UNESCO has identified four components of the technical assistance and support required:

- formulation and review of the National EFA Action Plans
- capacity building for implementation
- monitoring and evaluation
- mobilising partners.

Inclusion is a cross-cutting issue in UNESCO's overall programme. If EFA is to be achieved, inclusion also has to be seen as the guiding principle of development work with governments. However, countries must themselves identify the types of technical support needed for the implementation of their EFA Plans.

Taking a lead

UNESCO continues to see inclusive education as a priority and will provide a lead in

encouraging developments around the world. In this connection, the EFA Flagship '*The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion*' was developed over the last three years to ensure that the goals of the Dakar Framework are realised for individuals with disabilities. Its main goal is to provide access to education and promote completion of quality education for every child, youth and adult with disabilities. This will be achieved by ensuring that National EFA Plans incorporate persons with disabilities, and by encouraging policy makers to identify and remove barriers within the education system.

The strategic objectives of the Flagship are to:

- provide access to education and promote completion of quality education for every child, youth and adult with disabilities
- change attitudes towards different children by forming the basis for a just and non-discriminatory society which encourages people to live and learn together.

The Flagship works in partnership with other UN agencies, international and national disability organisations, and donors.



Sharing ideas

UNESCO will continue to encourage the sharing of experiences internationally and make available materials that can be used to support the development of inclusive policies and practices. Details of the materials currently available can be found on page 24.

New directions

UNESCO is in a process of change. Regional offices are increasingly taking over responsibility for implementation and there is a move from a project to a programme oriented approach. This means that the field and regional offices of UNESCO will carry out the programme, leaving the headquarters in Paris to take on more of a co-ordinating and facilitating role. Less than 30 per cent of available funds are spent by Headquarters and more than 70 per cent by the regional offices.

With very limited funds, UNESCO needs to work in different ways to promote real change in education. In particular, change must be stimulated at the policy and system level if it is to be sustainable. By working in co-operation with governments and local, national and international disability organisations, UNESCO works towards the Salamanca vision of educational systems that are truly inclusive.

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Moving Towards Inclusive Teacher Education

Windyz B. Ferreira

In 1996 I was invited to participate in a 'Special Needs in the Classroom' teacher education workshop where I learned how to use inclusive strategies in order to respond to diversity in learning styles. The workshop used the UNESCO Resource Pack. From that moment on my beliefs about how to teach – at any level – have been regularly shaken and my academic practice has changed dramatically. These new ways are very different from the experience I had myself as a university student.

Before, I used to have a few clear beliefs about how to teach, such as: learning every student's name at the beginning of the term; that a good lecturer should prepare interesting theoretical lessons, during which students learn mainly by listening; that audiovisual resources help to get students engaged; that it was useful to organise the class in a semi-circle, so everyone was able to communicate better with others; and that students should be invited to participate in the lesson by sharing experiences.

I believed that I was ensuring participation, sharing of experience and expertise and that my practice reflected the best I have learned throughout my own life as a student and teacher. However, the Salamanca Statement and the movement towards inclusive education brought a new dimension to my understanding of working in teacher training in higher education.

Now, I believe that:

Material resources have no value at all if the human resources are overlooked.

- Today, many university students are experienced teachers themselves – their knowledge, expertise and skills should not be overlooked in teacher training programmes.
- Listening to the students' voices and experiences should be an integral part of university teaching.
- The development of meaningful teacher knowledge must involve the direct participation of the university students in decision-making about curriculum content and teaching style.

- There should be equal participation by students and lecturers in the construction of a collective knowledge.
- Planning a single teaching strategy for all students will increase the chance of exclusionary practice, because each student will respond differently.

Learning by doing

- Listening to a lecture about a theoretical issue, disconnected from reality, does not foster meaningful academic learning.
- It is much more effective to learn by knowing, reflecting, debating and writing about a concrete educational context than to spend a whole year in university classrooms reading, listening and writing about this reality.
- Educational theory should be seen in the context of students' experiences, backgrounds, interests and skills, and of schools and communities.
- Creating opportunities for student participation in the classroom goes far beyond 'allowing them to contribute to the lesson'.

Assessment

- Exams are neither effective nor fair instruments to assess learning. They are applied to all students equally and are disconnected from real contexts and real time.
- Learning is a process and, therefore, assessment must be continuous, considering each student as an individual learner with a different style of learning.

As I move on to develop my inclusive practices at the university, I feel shocked by the fact that ten

years after Salamanca, the higher education institutions are still resistant to change. The debate about moving towards more inclusive practices remains at the margins of universities and teacher training programmes. I hope to stimulate debate about the role of the higher education institutions in inclusive education, and to provoke university staff to reflect on their academic practices. I end this article with a statement from one of my students that illustrates problems and solutions:

“Six months ago, I was invited to be the Teaching Co-ordinator [who supports teachers with their classroom practices] in a basic school. I truly needed that job, but I could not accept the offer because I felt incapable of supporting teachers' planning and teaching. Even though I had been a teacher myself for several years, I did not think I was sufficiently well prepared to help other colleagues. Today, after having learned to work with inclusive strategies in the classroom, to manage time, to teach the curriculum content to all pupils and to create opportunities for pupil participation, I know I could accept that job...” Zenaide, student, Teacher Training Programme

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Inclusive Education through Community Development in Bangladesh

Nicolas Heeren

Salamanca stressed that inclusive education is not the task of the Ministries of Education and schools alone – it requires the co-operation of community and voluntary organisations. Since 1998, Handicap International (HI) and its local partners (including Christoffel Blinden Mission) have been implementing a new form of community-based rehabilitation, called ‘Community Approaches to Handicap’ and Development’ (CAHD) in Bangladesh and Nepal.

In this programme the partners work with more than a hundred local community development organisations (CDOs), normally active in mainstream development activities like micro-credit unions, women’s groups, agricultural and rural development or slum work. CAHD believes that by working through existing mainstream CDOs, it will not only multiply the number of stakeholders and so increase impact, but also help work towards inclusion. In this way the disability issue is being taken up by organisations which formerly did not work in this field. Also, ideally, the disability issue is taken up, not as a separate line of action, but within existing activities.²

CAHD has a double objective:

- improving rehabilitation services by bringing them closer to and actively involving caregivers, and by improved and early referral
- inclusion of people with disabilities in existing mainstream development initiatives.

It has been possible to include children with disabilities in the existing education system in an efficient and interesting manner through this approach.

An external evaluation showed that out of the CDOs participating in this work, two-thirds were indeed generalists with no specific activity for, or by, people with disabilities. The remaining third were disability-orientated organisations and disabled people’s organisations (DPOs). It would seem to me that this ratio of two-thirds to one-third was a good mix ensuring that

‘disability’ remained the ultimate issue (under close scrutiny by the DPOs), while the majority of generalist CDOs brought in new ideas, greater impact and greater inclusion potentially for people with disabilities within the mainstream activities of these CDOs.

Specific training modules, with each module being aimed at different target groups, is the core of this programme. Training starts with the CDO managers. They need to be sensitised first, if inclusion of disability in their programmes is to have any success. This is a crucial stage in inclusive strategies. Without the managers’ active participation no real inclusion can take place. Other modules focus more on community-based rehabilitation skills and on inclusion.

To put it simply, the staff members of these CDOs ask themselves the question: “Do people with disabilities in the communities where we work benefit from our mainstream development activities?” If the answer is negative, then this exclusion is challenged and work towards an inclusive approach is implemented.

Working through the existing staff of the CDOs does not involve any extra cost, and CAHD benefits from their community work skills, and their community connections and knowledge. This proved to be a good choice. For example, in the case of getting disabled children into school (not having been there before), or back into school (after dropping out), intensive work often has to be done with the local

school teacher, the parents of the child, and with the other children and parents in the school. A community worker, with good ‘community communication’ skills, who is already well accepted as part of the community, will obviously have less difficulty in creating awareness.

HI and its partners have been able to include more than 1,000 children with disabilities in the existing school system in Bangladesh alone. HI is considering using the CAHD principle in other countries, notably in Africa, and applying the same methodology in its work on HIV/AIDS.

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Notes

¹ ‘Handicap’ in French is less negative than in English. It entered the French language in 1827 through horse-racing. Jockeys on stronger horses raced with one ‘hand in (their) cap’ and one on the reins, making the race more difficult for them. In English, by contrast, it is associated with begging: ‘cap in hand’.

² An evaluation showed that a number of organisations began disability activities with specifically-appointed staff – but did not necessarily open up their other activities to people with disabilities. The added value – through inclusion in mainstream activities – was not really attained.

Developing Inclusive Environments, Oriang, Kenya

Orpa Ogot



Salamanca stresses the importance of 'external support services' and 'community perspectives' to make inclusive education a success. In this article Orpa highlights the achievements of teachers, parents, pupils, community members and Leonard Cheshire International staff in a cluster of five schools in Western Kenya in promoting inclusive environments and practices. A support structure has been put in place in order to ensure the sustainability of this inclusive initiative and to encourage community ownership. Resource centres have been established in each school to both support and document the inclusive process.

Leonard Cheshire International (LCI) has been supporting a pilot inclusive education programme in five schools in Oriang, Western Kenya, since 2001. The project benefits 2,200 children of whom 178 have minor-to-severe disabilities (mainly low vision, physical disabilities, epilepsy, learning disabilities, and a small percentage have hearing difficulties). Many children have intellectual impairments caused by malaria and the lack of access to appropriate treatment.

Through its Regional Training and Development programme, LCI provides technical and financial support to the project. LCI's East and North Africa Strategy highlights the promotion of inclusive education, with a general shift from long-term residential support to community-oriented activities. Support is provided to Oriang through two technical staff experienced in inclusive education, and includes: the development of structures; appropriate attitudes; and the capacity building of teachers, pupils, parents and wider communities to achieve quality education for children with disabilities.

Inclusive learning environments

A core strategy is the enhancement of classroom environments, which has led to the creation of language-rich classroom environments and the introduction of the learning centre concept. The learning centre is a carefully planned area of the

classroom where children can engage in active learning, interaction, sharing and co-operating with each other. Emphasis is placed on allowing learners to develop at their pace, become confident and self-motivated. Activities involve children in peer teaching for developing valuable leadership skills. Children share experiences rather than compete, they are involved in self and peer evaluation in a non-threatening environment, and they develop and explore their own individual learning styles. The learning centre encourages choice and decision making as well as good time management and keeping on task. Through in-service training activities, the project encourages change in the teacher's role from one of imparter of knowledge to one of facilitator of learning, becoming a full partner in the learning process.

The following improvements have been made to the learning environment – many have been achieved through community mobilisation:

- building ramps to classrooms and school buildings
- construction of adapted latrines for children with physical disabilities
- enlargement of classroom windows
- painting walls to improve the lighting in some classrooms
- rebuilding of all the dilapidated classrooms

- levelling of the play grounds to ease mobility.

Using all the senses

Training workshops have been held to encourage teachers to integrate all the senses in their teaching, helping learners with special educational needs to make use of their remaining senses. For instance, a learner who does not hear well is offered opportunities to use amplified sound, special seating and enhanced classroom visual cues, including charts and real objects. A learner with visual impairment can use touch and auditory senses.

Whole Language Approach

The 'Whole Language Approach' has been introduced in Oriang. This is based on the inter-connections between the six language skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing and dramatising. This promotes children's physical, emotional, spiritual and cognitive development. It also provides a useful platform for exploiting children's interest in nature, stories, poems, humour and music. As children participate in interesting but purposeful activities, their language abilities and thinking skills will develop in natural ways.

African culture in classroom instruction

Teachers from the lower primary (and the head teachers) have recently had training in using this

approach to language teaching. They are encouraged to incorporate positive aspects of African culture and tradition in primary school literacy and language studies. With an initial focus on oral culture, teachers can create enjoyment in language and literacy learning through artistic conversations (one person acting more than one role in story telling) puns, tongue twisters, riddles, proverbs, folktales, myths, legends, and songs. By incorporating African culture into classroom instruction, it is envisaged that the community will become more involved in the school.

Teacher education

An agreement with the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) has led to ongoing in-service training for Oriang teachers. KISE offers certificate and diploma qualifications, lasting one and two years respectively. There is distance learning during term-time, and meetings with tutors in the school holidays.

This model of training, although available for other curriculum areas such as Maths and English, is the first of its kind in Kenya to incorporate inclusive education. The results of a baseline survey by LCI in 1999 played a significant role in the design of the course. At the moment 15 teachers are on an in-service Diploma Course in Inclusive Education, which includes sign language, Braille, and use of teaching and adaptive aids.

Community involvement

The project is run by a management committee from the local community, in the interest of sustainability. The committee has been trained in community project management, and this capacity building is ongoing. The 16-member committee supervises the

work of five School Disability Committees (SDCs). An SDC consists of two people each from the following groups: disabled people; parents of disabled children; teachers; school committee members; and community health workers. Each SDC works with support groups (mainly organisations of disabled persons) to identify disabled children and support their education and welfare. Through the SDC parents receive training in education and care of disabled children. The project has empowered all parents as partners in school management to be more involved in decision making.

Child-to-Child

Using Child-to-Child principles the project has been able to disseminate key messages to pupils and community members through participatory theatre, storytelling, music and poetry. Following the teaching of teachers in the Child-to-Child approach, children are now working with parents and community health workers on action plans to help pass disability messages to the community and promote community action towards disability.

Resource materials

A central resource centre has been established which provides specialist support for schools and families. This has a library, training facilities, a therapy area, and a communications unit. In future it will offer Internet facilities. It was decided that a central resource centre was not sufficient, so each of the five schools also has a small resource point offering a mini-library, access to play materials and teaching/learning resources, including pupil and teacher-made resources.



Documentation

This year we intend to document the process of inclusive education and how it has changed the lives of so many – not only disabled children, but also their community. We intend to do this through a newsletter and a video documentary. Both will include stories of human interest and lessons learned. We plan to use these for education, sensitisation and mobilisation of key players, including the Ministry of Education. In this way we hope to influence change at policy level, in teacher education and in the community.

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Including Deafblind Children

Sumitra Mishra and Ben Simms

For deafblind children and their families, the Salamanca Statement was a breakthrough. It was the first major international declaration to make reference to the specific needs of deafblind children.¹ However, in the experience of Sense International and its partners, Salamanca has had little or no positive effect on the numbers of deafblind children² accessing formal educational opportunities, and there is little understanding of how a deafblind child can be supported within either mainstream or specialist settings.³ This article highlights the problems facing deafblind children with examples of individual children with whom Sense International is working in India. It raises questions about our understanding of the term 'inclusion' and how this is being interpreted 'on the ground' by national governments and child rights activists.

Ten years after Salamanca, the overwhelming majority of deafblind children remain excluded from education settings. Those who are in school struggle in the face of large children-teacher ratios, and teaching approaches which fail to take account of the specific communication needs of deafblind children – drop-out rates remain high.

Deafblindness is not recognised as a distinct disability; national education plans for achieving Education for All do not make reference to deafblindness; no statistics exist to underpin the planning of education provision; there is a lack of expertise in the classroom; and little consultation takes place directly with deafblind children and their families themselves.

Vibuti is an eight-year-old deafblind child contacted by the Blind People's Association, Ahmedabad. Despite her abilities, no mainstream school could be persuaded to accept her. In the last few months Vibuti was rejected from the special school she has been attending. In both cases the schools felt they lacked resources and expertise.

These issues are addressed in Salamanca, but little practical effort is being made at a national level to implement its vision of specialist educational strategies for deafblind

children. Rather, Salamanca has been used as a rationale by governments to reduce both the size of, and the funding available to, the special education sector. Deafblind children, the overwhelming majority of whom require specialist educational support, have fallen on the 'unfashionable' side of the debate around inclusion. The resulting neglect of specialist educational provision means that deafblind children's exclusion is as profound now as it was in 1994.

Rumi, a seven-year-old girl from a village in Orissa, joined 35 other classmates in her village school in 2003. She sits at the back, isolated, unable to participate in the activities. Her teacher has resisted making allowances for her impairment. "My hands are full", he told Sense International. "I have to pay attention to the whole class not to individuals."

Typical of our experience, and that of our partners, was the attitude of Brazilian government and World Bank officials at a conference held last year in Rio de Janeiro: long discussions around the 'mainstreaming' of children with learning disabilities and those with physical impairments, on the one hand; silence and incomprehension in the face of questions from parents of deafblind children, on the other.

In this situation, what choices face an educator, or an advocate working on behalf of the deafblind child? Is it not better to keep a child at home, providing specialist individual support through a parent or a field worker?

Javed attends a residential school for blind boys in Delhi. He has moved up through the school never once having taken an exam. "He is too weak in his studies", a teacher explained. Recently the school discovered he has a hearing impairment. The response of the school was a request to Javed's family to remove him to a school for learning disabled children. His future is unresolved.

Sense International believes that deafblind children have a right to be part of the education system and that they should have the appropriate support to access this. We embrace a concept of education which takes account of the needs of the individual child, and which delivers appropriate physical, learning and social environments in which children can learn. Because of the unique and complex needs of deafblind children, we recognise that their education might more suitably be provided in specialist education settings or special schools. However, we also recognise that at times with appropriate specialist support deafblind children can also flourish in mainstream settings.

To this end, Sense International is involved in a range of activities:

- In Romania, we have worked closely with the Ministry of Education: for the first time in that country's history, deafblind children have been accessing classrooms within state-funded special schools; an accredited in-service teacher training course has been developed; a teachers' network channels peer support, and a range of publications has been produced to support teachers in the development of their expertise.
- In India, we have pioneered community-based rehabilitation approaches, which ensure early identification of children, support to families, and attitudinal changes amongst the wider community. At its best, these programmes have led to children being included within village schools, supported by trained field workers.
- In Bolivia, we have worked to keep children with Usher syndrome⁴ within the special education system, by providing information and training to teachers reluctant to adapt their approaches.

Sense International derives some pride from this work. However, with each step we take, we become more conscious of how much further we have to go.

It is time for us to forge a wider partnership with those working to implement the vision of Salamanca. However, for this to happen, we need to project a more balanced interpretation of its goals. For too long, governments and international agencies have been allowed to ignore the challenge



deafblind children present educationalists and planners. Now is the time for change.

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Notes

- ¹ "Educational policies (can) take account of individual differences and situations... (since) Owing to the particular communication needs of deaf and deaf/blind persons, their education may be more suitably provided in special schools or special classes and units in mainstream schools" (Article 21)
- ² The UK Government adopted a formal definition of deafblindness only as recently as 1989: "Persons are regarded as deafblind if their combined sight and hearing impairment cause difficulties with communication, access to information and mobility." Department of Health (2001) Social Care for Deafblind Children and Adults, UK: HM Government
- ³ There are no comprehensive statistics relating to the numbers of deafblind people. The most effective identification of deafblind people to date has been carried out by Bradford City Council in the UK, which identified 90 deafblind people per 100,000 (2003).
- ⁴ Usher syndrome is a genetic condition that causes deafness or partial hearing from birth and sight loss from teenage years onwards. It affects about five per cent of the deaf population.

Sense International would like to establish a dialogue with EENET readers which will bring fresh momentum to the work we are doing with deafblind children and their families across the developing world. Please contact us!

What is a Culture of Inclusion?

Judy Kugelmass

The Salamanca Statement defines inclusion as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity among all learners. Its aims are to eliminate social exclusion that is a consequence of responses to diversity in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and ability. This definition is not, however, applied universally.

In schools throughout the world, 'inclusion' is often used to refer only to the placement of children with disabilities in ordinary classrooms alongside their peers. I am interested in understanding how definitions of inclusive education are reflected in the way schools operate. This led me to investigate publicly-operated schools in England, Portugal and the United States that describe themselves as 'inclusive'. In this article, I describe what I learned from three inclusive schools whose publicly articulated mission reflects the definition of inclusion articulated in the Salamanca Statement.

Schools have unique organisational cultures that reflect aspects of the societies in which they are found. There are, however, also organisational cultures that represent new ideas. These kinds of progressive institutions introduce innovations and serve as models for what may be possible in their respective societies. The three schools I studied represented these kinds of organisations. Each served culturally and linguistically diverse populations of students with significant numbers coming from low-income families.

The American school was located in a small city in New York State and served a student body that represented a range of economic and cultural diversity (European, African, Asian and Latino-Americans). There were also children of new immigrants and refugees, many of whom had limited English language skills. The school in Portugal served an economically disadvantaged and culturally diverse district in Lisbon, including growing numbers of non-Portuguese speaking children who

had arrived from former Portuguese colonies or as refugees from other African, Middle-Eastern and Eastern European countries. The British school was located in London and served a similar population with the majority of students being bi- or multi-lingual. Among these students were children who were immigrants and/or asylum seekers from East Asian, Middle-Eastern and African countries. In each school, children with disabilities and other special educational needs were educated in general education classrooms alongside their peers.

All cultures operate on multiple levels – linked to, and supporting, one another. These levels include the visible, technical and artistic aspects of an organisation. The values and beliefs that members of the organisation share with one another are reflected in these observable features. This represents a second dimension of culture. The underlying meaning of the connections between these two levels represents a third and often hidden dimension of culture. At each school, this link was established and sustained by the uncompromising commitment to principles of inclusion I found among the entire staff. The cultures of these schools were characterised by:

- seeing differences among students and staff as resources
- organisational features that supported teaming among staff
- a collaborative interactional style among staff and children
- leadership that was shared and distributed among formal leaders and staff
- a willingness to struggle to sustain inclusive practices
- an understanding of the social/political nature of inclusion

- the use of language and symbols to communicate ideals and spread commitments across the school and into the community
- an uncompromising commitment and belief in inclusive education.

The development of inclusive approaches did not emerge as a mechanical process in which any one specific organisational restructuring, or the introduction of a particular instructional practice, generated increased levels of participation among students. Rather, what was central and common to all three schools was a focus on collaborative processes. Collaboration was both a form of practice and a manifestation of the inclusive values articulated by the staff as they attempted to create a community in which all individuals – staff and students – were valued. In each school collaborative instructional practices and organisational features were supported by a shared belief among staff and children in the value of every adult and child. This belief went beyond the way children were treated, extending to the ways adults interacted with one another, and included a celebration of the unique gifts each brought to their respective communities.

Dr Kugelmass is an associate professor specialising in teacher education. She has worked towards developing inclusive schools internationally.

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Focus on Policy Development, Sri Lanka **Padmani Mendis**

Sri Lanka has paid particular attention to the education of children who have disability. The first School for the Deaf and Blind was started in 1912! In the early 1970s the Ministry of Education started increasing educational opportunities for children who have disability through integration. Since the adoption of the Salamanca Statement, however, the emphasis in Sri Lanka has been on inclusive education.

The majority of children who have disability attend mainstream classrooms in government schools. Small numbers attend Special Education Units attached to government schools and non-governmental special schools. In 2001 children who have disability in mainstream classrooms represented 2.37 per cent of the total student population of just over four million.

Primary school reforms, introduced in 1997, provided a boost to the inclusion of children who have disability in mainstream classrooms. Competency-based curricula and continuous assessment replaced end-of-semester and end-of-year examinations. Changes were introduced in classroom teaching towards a learner-centred approach, with group and activity-based teaching of practical and technical skills. Co-curricular activities, counselling and career guidance, and new strategies for teacher education, all benefit children who have disability in inclusive education.

Assessments are made by a medical officer and class teacher when a child enters primary school. Parents are also involved. The assessment enables the teacher to practise child-centred teaching methods that address each child's particular problems. It requires effective, appropriate and relevant training of all teachers, on a continuous basis. Assessments continue until the children complete primary school.

Teacher training for inclusive education has also seen advances in recent years. The National Institute of Education provides

preliminary and continuous education of 'Master Trainers' in inclusive education and in primary education. A three-year course to produce resource teachers for inclusive education has been established and special education teachers are trained on two-year courses. Continuous education of teachers is provided through an islandwide network of teacher centres. Inclusive Education Zonal Officers are trained to prepare curricula and teaching-learning materials for the training of all these cadres, as well as for mainstream teachers and for resource teachers

In August 2003 a National Policy on Disability was approved, and legislation is presently being drafted to put this policy into effect. The National Policy on Disability contains a special sectoral policy on school education based on inclusive education. This inclusive education policy took into account two things: many children who have disability are still not starting school, despite a national primary school enrolment rate of 92 per cent; attrition (drop-out) rates of children who have disability are exceptionally high.

The high attrition rate may be one reflection of the inadequate quality of education children who have disability receive. Very few children go beyond primary level and only a handful proceed to college level.

In December 2003 the National Education Commission in its 'Proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri Lanka' included, within the subject 'Educational Opportunity – Equity and Excellence', a separate area, 'Education for Children with

Disability'. This encompasses the policy and strategy recommendations from the National Policy on Disability.

The use of the term 'children with disability' is significant. A recent review of inclusive education for children who have disability found that teachers very rarely identified these children as being within the 'special educational needs' group. Identifying disability in children is necessary so that their particular needs can be met, and so that mainstream teachers will acquire knowledge and skills to deal with them. The term does not emphasise difference but is used in a social context, describing a particular situation.

Primary school reforms have provided the required strategies for improving the quality of education, but we have yet to see results for children who have disability. When the policy and strategy recommendations to strengthen inclusive education are given their due place in both the National Policy on Disability and the proposed General Education Policy, it is hoped that children who have disability will enjoy their right to education.

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C-EMIS as a Tool for Inclusive Education For All

Els Heijnen

Education for All (EFA) is not automatically inclusive. Large numbers of children continue to be excluded from mainstream education. Children who are marginalised from government schools remain 'invisible' in data collection processes, resulting in a lack of reliable information on the number of out-of-school children and the reasons for non-enrolment, irregular attendance, poor learning or dropping out.

Reasons for exclusion are generally based on beliefs that certain children are less able and valued because they are poor, they work, they are girls, they have disabilities, they are from ethnic minorities or are perceived to be 'different' in other ways.

As part of every government's commitment to the EFA Dakar Declaration (2000) national Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) are being developed to systematically collect statistical information for education planning and monitoring and to get all children into school. Though a good start, government EMIS still miss out on many children both in enrolment and programming. An important reason for this is the lack of inclusive thinking and planning among policy planners and decision makers. Other reasons why government EMIS still exclude vulnerable and marginalised children include:

- data collection is top-down – central governments determine the information to be collected
- enrolment rates are over-reported and drop-out rates are under-reported
- there is a focus on numbers, rather than reasons why
- national averages conceal local variations
- school focus, rather than a child focus
- lack of information related to the rights of children
- lack of community participation and capacity building
- focus on government schools only.

There is, therefore, no reliable information on the scale of the problem of out-of-school children, nor enough information about who these children are, and why schools fail them. If schools are to improve and become responsive to local needs, they must be given greater autonomy to assess and resolve their own problems.

Since there are so many limitations in the national EMIS, it is necessary to develop community-based systems, or C-EMIS. This is a decentralised data collection system, implemented with the active participation of communities, parents, teachers, local government officials and even children. Information is analysed and used at the point of collection. One of the objectives is to increase local ownership and accountability – in both formal and non-formal education.

C-EMIS has been piloted in South and Central Asia (Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan) technically supported by Save the Children or UNICEF in partnership with national governments.

Successful implementation of C-EMIS contributes to the empowerment of communities to manage decentralised education systems designed to provide quality education to every child. It is not a parallel system, but it complements government EMIS to create better understanding of, and inclusive educational responses to children. C-EMIS highlights the importance of finding and making visible all children in an

administrative area, especially those whose rights to education have previously been denied. It seeks to build the capacity of stakeholders to use quantitative (EMIS) and qualitative (C-EMIS) data for local level education development and school improvement. As such C-EMIS is a tool for inclusive planning and programming.

Apart from data collection and analysis, communities monitor education performance and management. Criteria for local monitoring are developed in partnership with the government and include tools to measure inclusiveness, quality and local cost-effectiveness. A particular feature of C-EMIS is the inclusion of data on learning achievement, which is overlooked by most government systems. Children, parents and communities have a right to know how well the school is providing basic learning competencies.

“Children who learn together, learn to live together!”

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Inclusion in Central Java, Indonesia

Prof. Moch. Sholeh Y.A. Ichrom and Terje Magnussønn Watterdal

The Indonesian Ministry of National Education decided a few years ago to start preparation for pilot implementation of inclusive education in a small number of primary and lower secondary schools throughout the country. The main focus in Central Java is on including children with visual impairment. In spring 2003 Pemalang, Central Java was selected by the national, provincial and district education authorities to be one of the main pilot areas. This article explores the progress made so far in this pilot project.

Central Java is one of the most densely populated provinces in Indonesia with more than 32 million inhabitants on an area of only 34,000 square kilometres. Despite the population density, Central Java is predominately rural with an agriculture-based economy.

To ensure that the pilot implementation of inclusive education enjoys the full support of the local communities, an awareness programme was developed in co-operation with: the provincial and district education authorities; the University of Sebelas Maret in Solo; headmasters and teachers in special schools; and representatives from NGOs. In addition to introducing the education officials and other stakeholders to the vision of inclusion, we also focused on the link between inclusion, culture and religion. We identified elements of inclusion in the cultures as well as the religion of the different communities involved and built our awareness strategy on familiar values enriched by new ideas.

The response from the provincial education officials was therefore positive. However, since the districts now have the main responsibility for primary education, it was vitally important to seek their support as well. Their response was generally positive, but some education officials worried about the budget implications of inclusive education. Some headmasters and teachers were concerned about how to teach and manage children with special needs in regular classroom settings.

To address the concern of the district education officials it was agreed to find ways to co-fund the pilot implementation using national, provincial, district and project funds as well as to seek support from NGOs active in education and special needs education in the different districts. UNESCO also agreed to support some of the awareness activities with both funds and teaching materials. Furthermore the teachers in the designated pilot schools in Pemalang were offered a series of short and practical on-site upgrading courses in classroom management, teaching skills, orientation and mobility and Braille, since most of the children with special needs in the pilot schools have visual impairment. These courses were organised in close co-operation with the nearby provincial resource centre.

In 1998 the Directorate of Special Education had started to develop a provincial resource centre related to children with visual impairment in Pemalang in co-operation with Braillo Norway (a producer of Braille printing equipment and co-ordinator of education and rehabilitation programmes) and the University of Oslo. The resource centre is based in a special school for children with visual impairment. Many of the teachers from the special school participated in national and regional upgrading programmes and are now spearheading the efforts to pilot inclusive education in their community. The first children – six with visual impairment and two with learning difficulties – were enrolled in the pilot schools in July 2003.

The children and teachers in the pilot schools are supported by itinerant (travelling) teachers from the resource centre and the provincial government has made one full-time resource teacher available for each of the four pilot schools. Books in Braille and adjusted print are made available by the resource centre. Visual assessment of the children, and if necessary eye surgery for the children in the pilot schools, is performed in co-operation with Inverso Baglivo, a specialist low vision and eye health organisation.

Despite these efforts only a small minority of children with disabilities are in school. Most are still studying in special schools. However the move towards inclusive education has begun. More schools are scheduled to start pilot implementation in 2004 with strong support from the national, provincial and district governments. The efforts made by the teachers and the education officers gives us confidence that inclusive education has come to stay in Central Java, and that soon all children in the province will get a good education and be given the opportunity to develop their full potential.

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UNESCO's Useful Publications

Conceptual paper: 'Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education: A challenge and a vision'

This is an important policy document for UNESCO on inclusive education. It has recently been translated into the six official languages of UNESCO. Together with the Brochure on the Open File, also available in six languages, it will provide a good background to the basic ideas and philosophy behind the concept of inclusion in education.

Curriculum Differentiation Material

The materials aim to assist countries in implementing inclusive education policies in their schools on a practical level. Available from August 2004.

The Open File on Inclusive Education: Support Materials for Managers and Administrators

This resource addresses assessment, professional development, the role of families and communities, and the development of an inclusive curriculum.

Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes (Phase 1 1996-1997 and Phase 2 1998-2001)

This UNESCO project was a follow-up to the Salamanca conference in 1994. More than 20 different countries were involved and provided a number of examples on how inclusive education can become an important part of the EFA movement. External evaluators are presently evaluating the project and the final report will be ready this year (2004).

Understanding and Responding to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms: A Guide for Teachers (2001)

This guide provides practical information about teaching children with particular difficulties in learning.

Salamanca – Five Years On (1999)

This provides a review of international developments in moving towards more inclusive education systems and UNESCO's contribution to this development.

The documents above are available to download from UNESCO's website.

Special Needs in the Classroom: A Teacher Education Resource Pack (1993)

This pack provides materials and processes that can be used in the context of teacher education programmes. It has been used in over 80 countries. It has recently been revised.

**Available from UNESCO
Publishing, see website:
<http://publishing.unesco.org>**

Inclusion in Education: The participation of disabled learners: A thematic study (2001)

James Lynch

This study reviews developments in the theory, policy and practice of inclusive education since the World Conference on Education for All (1990) and incorporates commissioned and collected material as well as texts produced for the World Education Forum.



Poverty Eradication through Education: Breaking the cycle of poverty for children

Ministry of Education, Uganda, 2003

This publication arose out of an international workshop held in Uganda in 2002 entitled, 'Creating an enabling environment for poverty eradication'.

Towards Inclusive Practices in Secondary Education (2003)

This book features examples from Chile, Hungary, Nepal, South Africa, Ukraine and the USA.

**These three documents are available free of charge from:
Division of Basic Education,
Primary Education Section
UNESCO**

Email: sdi@unesco.org



To obtain documents listed here (unless otherwise stated) please see UNESCO's website:

www.unesco.org/education/inclusive, or contact:

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Parents Promote Change in Tanzania

Beda Mutagahywa



The Tanzania Association for Mentally Handicapped (TAMH) is a disabled people's organisation consisting mainly, but not only, of people with developmental disabilities, their parents and family members. It is dedicated to advocating for the rights of people with developmental disabilities in Tanzania. It was established in 1981, and was then called the Tanzania Society for Cerebral Palsy and Mental Retardation (TSCP & MR). From the early days TAMH enjoyed the collaboration of a sister organisation, NFU, a family-based advocacy organisation in Norway. In this article Beda briefly outlines the challenges TAMH has faced in becoming a strong association – advocating for the rights of a vulnerable group and promoting the inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in education.

TAMH was formed by groups of parents and professionals in the health and social welfare sectors. The association focused on the provision of education services. It built, or mobilised funds for the building of, units for disabled children and argued successfully for these units to be attached to, and be part of, regular primary schools. The early collaboration with NFU helped TAMH to focus on creating awareness of rights and the facilitation of education services.

The association raised funds to pay for support persons who assisted teachers within those units, and to provide for teaching and learning materials, and second-hand clothes and shoes. The focus was on the provision of charitable and educational services, since no other body had taken on this responsibility. These activities were very time-consuming.

In these early days the leadership was in the hands of the professional members (mainly teachers). Parents and family members played no major role in leadership. In urban centres, where the association was strongest, a number of units were established, and slowly education for disabled children was taken up by Government. However many units were built, they were still too few. It soon became clear that the parents' capacity to build units on their own was limited. The

association's administration costs were very high and the quality of the education provided in the units was not satisfactory. Soon parents started questioning the leadership and there was a clear need for change. However the leadership was unable to take up the challenge and the association went through a period of crisis from 1994 to 1996.

The leadership crisis strengthened the resolve of the parent members and they formed a task force to resolve the crisis. They went beyond the leadership and administration aspects of the crisis, such as financial accountability, transparency and democracy. They also examined the aims and objectives, working strategies and general orientation of the association. During this crisis, formal collaboration with NFU broke down. However informal collaboration continued between NFU and the parents' task force.

The task force recommendations were put to the General Assembly of 1996, which led to major changes in the constitution and to a change of name from 'TSCP & MR' to TAMH.

The focus moved from service to advocacy; and from charity to human rights. The role of people with disabilities, parents, and family moved to centre stage, instead of the professional members. There was also a clear separation between the leadership and the secretariat. Inclusion became the main strategy.

A special effort was made to separate local branch activities from the units and school activities, and to establish new branches in both urban and rural areas. The role played by our partners NFU during the crisis and in the amendment of the constitution was critical. It could be said in fact that NFU's investment in parents' mobilisation and empowerment at local branch level saved the Association and enabled it to emerge from the crisis – strengthened rather than weakened.

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TAMH has 144 basic branches, 66 district branches and 20 regional/provincial branches, with 4,200 members countrywide. The Ministry of Education and Culture, TAMH and other DPOs are embarking upon a project on inclusive education, 2004-06, which will review the curriculum for teacher education trainees and trainers. It is supported by a Norwegian youth organisation, through NFU.

Andrew's Story, St Lucia Beverley-Anne Barthelmy and Alma Harris

Andrew goes to school in Castries, the capital of St Lucia in the eastern Caribbean. Including children with Down's Syndrome in primary schools is unusual in St Lucia. At the age of three months, Andrew's parents took him to the early stimulation programme at Dunnottar School, one of four schools which cater for mentally challenged children in St Lucia. Andrew attended the programme once a week until he went to pre-school. Staff from Dunnottar monitored him throughout his pre-school years.

But where would Andrew go next? Dunnottar School was interested in beginning a new programme to include children with Down's Syndrome in regular schools. In September 2001 a school was identified, the principal and teachers were interested in facilitating the programme and Andrew was offered a place. A teacher from Dunnottar School provided support in the regular primary school and four children with Down's Syndrome were included in the programme.

Andrew is now eight and has almost completed three years at the school, two in the mainstream class with occasional reinforcement of learning in the shared resource room. In this room the Blind Welfare Association supports visually impaired children, and others with difficulties in learning receive extra help.

We discuss Andrew's progress on a daily basis. His self-confidence is increasing, he is becoming more independent and is able to mix with others – not just family members. In the following conversation we (Alma, Andrew's support teacher and Beverley, his mother) reflect on the progress he has made:

Alma: How did you feel when we first suggested that we should move Andrew into a regular primary school?

Beverley: Although I felt elated, I was concerned about how he would adapt to being in a class of 35, with children whose learning ability was more advanced.

A: But we told you that he would be in a small group in the school's resource room – were you reassured?

B: Oh yes, that was part of the elation! But even though I knew there was support, I worried about whether the children would accept him and whether he would get along with the teacher.

A: Having met the resource room teacher and seen the school, did you feel that he would 'make it'?

B: When Andrew was born, I didn't think he would ever learn to read or write, but he is able to write his name, read his reading book, and his speech is developing – not perfectly, but I can see him progressing.

A: That's because he is exposed to children speaking well. He would not have had such positive role models if he had gone to a special school.

B: He's also much more confident. He no longer lets his father walk him to the classroom – now he says goodbye to him at the school gate!

This conversation took place in Castries during a SCcOPE course, attended by Andrew's mother in March 2004. His teacher attended a course in Trinidad in 2003 and carried out a community development project – 'Empowering Parents Through Education' – before graduating from the course. Andrew's parents are actively involved in the St Lucia Association of People with Developmental Disabilities (SLADD), which has its own special education centre, Dunnottar School.

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Including Blind Children in St Lucia Anthony Avril

In 1964, when I was a student, we only had one Braille slate to be shared by the teacher and six blind students in the St Lucia School for the Blind. We had a school and a workshop, but the emphasis was on basket weaving, rather than academic education. We were sending our children to the school for blind children in Trinidad and Tobago, but not everyone could go. In 1984 we decided to educate the children in the mainstream. When we made this change, we stopped sending the blind children to Trinidad.

We realised that blind children are going to become adults and they have to function in mainstream society. We need to change society to make it more accommodating to blind people. By exposing our children at an early age to the world, they would develop the skills needed to handle wider society. Children who go to school with blind children will also be in the workplace and they will remember going to school with blind students. The process of change will be advanced by this early contact and the blind population will be better off for it.

The beginning of integration

In 1986 we began to integrate the first blind children in mainstream schools. We chose the brightest children, because we wanted to make a point. We held a workshop for school principals, run by the Ministry of Education and we teamed up with the other special schools in St Lucia. The principals identified children with visual impairments and convinced the teachers. We had three

children in the Anglican school, the first to take blind children. Then a few months later we brought in the TV for a big media splash to convince the other principals. Now we have blind students at college level – we are beginning to see the fruits of the step we took in 1986.

“We didn’t have all the support systems in place when we started, but if we’d waited until we had, we would never have started.”

Resource rooms

We didn’t want to create a school for the blind in a sighted school, so we began to develop resource rooms in mainstream schools. Here the teachers prepare the children, and produce Braille and large print versions of the textbooks. We realised that we would soon have the responsibility for setting up resource rooms throughout the island. But that is the government’s job. We believe that the best role for the association is to advocate for the resource rooms and make sure that they cater for visually impaired children. The St Lucia Blind Welfare Association is a catalyst for change, rather than a service provider.

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Networking in the Caribbean

Marja Themen-Sliggers

CAMRODD – the Caribbean Association for Mobilizing Resources and Opportunities for People with Developmental Disabilities – was launched in Jamaica in 1970 with parent groups from eight Caribbean islands. Its name was then the Caribbean Association for Mental Retardation, and it worked for, and on behalf of, people with developmental disabilities. The Secretariat and President’s Office were run on a voluntary basis and moved every two years to a different country.

In its first 20 years CAMRODD organised conferences every two years on themes related to gaps in service provision. Its focus was on strengthening and educating parents, and on stimulating the formation of parent groups. The parent groups influenced the development of new services and training. The services included: early detection and stimulation, vocational training, integrated childcare, special education, counselling programmes, parent-to-parent support, and speech therapy. The training included portage, job counselling and placement, organisational development, public and parent awareness, advocacy and parent training (including fathers and self-advocacy).

In the late 1980s CAMRODD shifted its focus to rights, based on the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Instead of fighting for services and better treatment, CAMRODD began to fight for rights and inclusion. Slowly the focus was moved from parents working in isolation to collaboration between families and professionals and governments. Leadership training was developed and delivered in a wide range of member countries, and was called SCcOPE. The course was

designed to train parents, family members, teachers, nurses and other professionals so that **S**ervices and **C**ommunities create **O**pportunities for **P**eople with disabilities through **E**quality.

CAMRODD’s Blueprint for Action was first published in 1992 as one of the goals of the leadership project. It was formulated by representatives of 17 member associations and it focuses on five main areas: education; home; parent and public education; services; and employment. The leadership training was sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency, and the Canadian Association for Community Living, and was conducted by the then Director of the Roeher Institute, Marcia Rioux.

During the SCcOPE course, which is delivered by CAMRODD in countries all over the Caribbean, participants design and implement a community development project.

The goals of this training programme are to:

- explore a common vision of human rights based on equality
- link this vision to the UN declarations and countries’ obligations as signatories
- examine social policy development and its role in social change so that new approaches will be put into practice.

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Fostering Partnerships for Education Policy and Reform, Vietnam

Anat Prag

Vietnam's commitment to achieving its Education for All goals by 2015 has been challenged by the nation's children with disabilities, who are often excluded from the formal education system.

To improve the situation for disabled children, inclusive education efforts began in the late 1980s at Vietnam's National Institute for Education Strategies and Curriculum (NIESC). NIESC is the institution accountable to the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) for developing new curricula and teaching practices and assessments in Vietnam. Since the early 1990s, several international organisations have joined with NIESC to develop community-based models of inclusive education.

Successful inclusion requires community awareness, co-ordinated community services, teacher and parent training, adaptive training methodologies, an adjusted curriculum, and low-cost teaching materials and assistive devices. Hence, community-based support for children with disabilities was an integral part of programming. All programming highlighted the need for and benefits of inclusive education, and this has helped to create local support networks.

Between 1992 and 1996, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) worked with

NIESC, piloting small projects to model and promote inclusion in pre-schools, primary schools, and vocational training institutes. In 1995, CRS began to explore ways to expand inclusive education with support from USAID and MOET. Through the USAID-sponsored 'Expansion for Community Support for Children with Disabilities' project in 1998, CRS and NIESC worked on refining models of inclusive education and community support for children with disabilities in three northern provinces. They worked on refining teacher training models and developing community models to strengthen inclusive education by linking education, health, and community support groups, such as women's and youth unions. Linking groups and supporting them with technical input contributed to a rapid spread of interest in inclusive education.

In the project mid-term evaluation in 2000, it was noted that disabled children were becoming full members of their community; each community surveyed could point to specific ways in which public awareness of disabilities had improved; training seminars and workshops helped improve

education for all children in project areas; the project improved co-operation within the community; and had a positive influence on the lives of parents and children.

CRS and NIESC, with assistance from other international organisations, helped generate support for inclusive education based on successes seen as a result of teacher training and community-based initiatives. In addition to strengthening teachers' skills for integrating children with disabilities socially and academically, CRS's work contributed to an increase in community support for the education of children with disabilities.

At the community level, Community Steering Committees (CSCs) of local leaders, teachers and health officials provided guidance and support to mobilise community involvement, organise local training, and engage in advocacy. Locally the committees were securing adaptive equipment (eg, wheelchairs, walkers) and providing tuition assistance for families.

These committees and classroom teachers also developed a Circle of Friends programme for children to help their disabled peers to and from school, and in their academic and social activities. Circle of Friends is an activity established in all classrooms with children with disabilities, which provides peer support in emotional, academic, social and physical development. More children with disabilities began to complete primary school.

Teachers: The key to success

Ten-year-old Phuong's mother recounts how Miss Kien, a pre-school teacher, visited her many times, trying to convince her to send her daughter to school. Phuong could not walk or talk and her mother was hesitant to let her go; she did not believe her daughter was capable of learning. Finally Miss Kien convinced Phuong's mother to let her daughter attend classes. Miss Kien, working with community volunteers and rehabilitation workers, helped Phuong stand on her own and use some speech. Each day when Miss Kien comes by the house to accompany her to school, Phuong now yells happily, "Mama, the teacher is here!"

Good practices gained from these community experiences were shared with MOET. MOET reacted to the experiences by making inclusive education a central component in the national ten-year education strategy.

In December 2000, MOET stated that inclusive education was the most appropriate strategy for educating children with disabilities and that it planned to develop a national implementation plan. MOET asked CRS for assistance in making inclusive education a part of Vietnam's National Education Strategy for pre-school and primary levels. Ambitious targets for inclusion of children with disabilities were set: 50 per cent of all children with disabilities were to be included in school by 2005 and 70 per cent by 2010.

CRS supports the national education strategy by working with MOET to develop inclusive education expansion plans. Specifically, CRS helps to identify and train a core group of MOET staff to work within governmental and educational institutions as technical advisors able to disseminate information on inclusive education throughout the country. CRS has developed many teacher-training programmes with MOET, and has worked with MOET and national teacher-training institutes to create a mentoring system in which each teacher in the programme works with inclusive education teachers at the local level. These mentors provide technical assistance directly to each teacher and keep a record of challenges and good practice, which CRS uses to inform training. Finally, CRS and MOET are working on a policy to modify nationwide testing to accommodate children with disabilities. As education in Vietnam is proscribed by the state and every teacher is literally 'on the same page on the same day', there is a need to fine-tune policy to include measures for disabled children.

Impacting children's lives

Hoang is ten and has severe Down's Syndrome. He wanted to go to school but his parents were worried that the school and his teacher would not be able to support him. His teacher Thuy attended CRS training and learned how to support the development of skills and abilities of children with intellectual disabilities and is devoted to helping Hoang's development. When Hoang started school aged five he had very basic skills. His family helped him walk to school and together they practised speaking at home. His teacher, health worker and parents met frequently to collaborate in supporting Hoang to developing new skills and build on his abilities. His school encouraged him to participate in activities and his friends helped him at school and home with lessons and skills. Every year Hoang has proudly graduated with his friends to the next class. He has improved reading, writing and communication skills and participates in all school activities. Hoang has good relationships with friends, and is very motivated to study. Everyday he walks to class with his friends and loves going to school to learn new things.

CRS's work demonstrates how policy and practice operate together. By working with NIESC to create effective local models to support inclusive education while simultaneously working with partners at the national level, CRS contributed to developing a strong relationship between the process of policy and practice. Today, there is greater national awareness of the need for inclusive education. People at the national level are more committed to supporting such efforts through policy reform as a result of successes in programme implementation locally. MOET developed a steering committee on inclusive education and defined a policy to provide it, complete with indicators and targets. In turn, training resources and technical capacity to support inclusive education has been expanded. Finally, advocacy efforts increased, as evidenced by the appearance of articles on disability issues in the media.

The project demonstrates strong recognition of the need to develop and maintain collaborative partnerships: government partners NIESC and MOET; local and national health care providers and educators; between CRS and other international NGOs; with teacher training programmes in Hanoi and the provinces; and between and

within project participants at the local levels. It took partners working together at all levels to initially understand and appreciate the benefits of inclusive education, to demonstrate good practice of inclusive education and subsequently initiate change to education policies to support inclusion for children with disabilities.

Understanding how to improve policies to better support inclusive education programmes is vital for realising full support for such a programme. In Vietnam, CRS continues to learn how best to support national, regional, and local authorities in identifying obstacles to successful implementation of inclusive education, to quickly and clearly communicate policy gaps in the implementation phase, and to eliminate such obstacles by working with communities and national education authorities.

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Regional News

Regional networking

EENET encourages and supports the development of other information sharing networks around the world focusing on inclusive education. We have created a section on EENET's website giving information about national/regional networks. If you are already involved in information sharing work, or if you feel that your organisation already has the basic capacity needed to start networking on inclusive education issues, then we would like to hear from you. EENET may be able to offer you advice on information sharing/networking, and may be able to provide basic core documents and materials which would assist you in the development of your network. But please note, EENET is not a funding agency, so we cannot support your network financially.

EENET-inspired networks exist in: Latin America (Brazil) and West Africa (Nigeria), and there are groups of keen individuals trying to start informal networking in Kenya, Vietnam, South Asia and the Caribbean. If you would like to become involved in these networks, please contact EENET.

Ed Todos, the Brazil-based inclusive education network, has launched its own Portuguese-language website, offering a wide range of information, links and discussion forums. See www.edtodos.org.br or email info@edtodos.org.br for more information about Ed Todos

Translations

EENET strives to offer inclusive education documents in other languages. For example, in partnership with Save the Children UK and Seti Centre in Egypt, we are able to provide Arabic translations and promote networking in Arabic-speaking countries. EENET is run on a very small budget, however, so we cannot afford to pay for translations. We are dependent on our readers and colleagues in

other organisations to help us with translations. If you or your organisation are able to help EENET translate this newsletter (or previous newsletters or website articles) into another language, then we want to hear from you! If you have already translated previous newsletters, let us know – we may be able to make your translation available to hundreds more readers in your country or region.

The Right of Children with Disabilities to Education, Somaliland

The embryonic republic of Somaliland has been trying to overcome the difficulties left by twelve years of civil war, which led to the destruction of all educational institutions. However, in the last eight years public and privately owned schools were opened in almost all the regions, but children with disabilities have no room in these mainstream schools, owing to untrained teachers, unfavourable attitudes, inadequate awareness and, above all, the lack of an educational policy that takes the rights of children with disabilities into consideration. Therefore, Disability Action Network (DAN), whose overall goal is to promote the well-being of people with disabilities, started to work closely with the Ministry of Education (MoE) in order to create an educational environment that is receptive and conducive to disabled children. DAN has invited headmasters and primary school teachers from twelve schools in the capital, parents of children with disabilities, and officials from the MoE to workshops which focused on:

- understanding disabilities (types of disabilities)
- experiences with children with disabilities
- obstacles to integrating children with disabilities into mainstream schools (social and environmental barriers)
- introduction of integrated/inclusive education
- regional and international legal instruments regarding the right of disabled children to education.

Since 1997, DAN has been engaged in awareness-raising campaigns about the rights of children with disabilities, including the right to education, through the mass media, publishing pamphlets and organising events on the Day of the African Child, and the International Day for Disabled Persons. Although much has been altered in the practice and behaviour towards children with disabilities at the mainstream schools, the work done by DAN can only be regarded as a starting point. There is still an acute need for: the disability components to be included in the national education system; affirmative action on the rights of children with disabilities to education; and the enactment of anti discriminatory laws.

Jama Mohamed Askar and Abdikarim Mohamoud Sh. Muse of DAN are based in Hargeisa, Somaliland, and can be emailed at: dansomland@hotmail.com

Your Letters/Emails

Overcoming barriers to inclusion, Nepal

I found the EENET newsletters extremely useful for my job. It is the first time I've ever received any reading material that is useful to mainstream the marginalised groups of people, mainly disabled, in education. My organisation is the first NGO of disabled persons working for the inclusion of disabled children in schools. We have experienced great problems and barriers to join them in school. But reading your newsletters made me feel better. "I used to feel very bad because I didn't have shoes, one day I met a man without feet". I read news about people working in adverse conditions to build a better society. Your reading materials are really inspiring as well as supportive for a person like me working in the disability sector in an underdeveloped community.

Maha Prasad Hadkhale,
Programme Co-ordinator,
Rehabilitation Centre for
Disabled, Tanahun, Vyas
Municipality 10, Parasar Tole,
Nepal. Email:
ghanakhadka@yahoo.com

"Congratulations on the CD-ROM"

The EENET website CD-ROM is very easy to install, is a very practical and useful tool and contains a lot of information. Many, many thanks from the South Indian people.

N. Madhu Balan,
351, T.N.H.B., Vennampatti,
Dharmapuri. P.O 636705,
Tamilnadu, India. Email:
madhubalan93@hotmail.com

Editor's note: An updated EENET website CD-ROM will be available by 2005.

Launching inclusive education in post-conflict Liberia

Before the onset of the civil war in 1989, there were schools for disabled children – both formal and informal education was provided – but since the war they have not been reopened (some were demolished in the unrest). The absence of these facilities has denied thousands of disabled people their right to education. MOPAR-Liberia (Movement for Peace and Reconciliation in Liberia) has petitioned the national government to provide support and promote inclusive education nation wide. The launching of the inclusive education programme will take place on 26 July 2004. MOPAR has also begun a series of meetings with school authorities, organisations and the Ministry of Education.

Neidoteh B. Torbor

To find out more about, or contribute to, MOPAR's inclusive education programme in Liberia, please email: moparliberia@yahoo.com

'Enabling Education' on audio cassette

Thank you for sending me the back issues of EENET's newsletter 'Enabling Education'. I was particularly impressed with the very high quality of the contents. Do you propose to bring out the audio edition, as it will assist persons with vision impairment. In my work I often find myself struggling to catch-up with news, magazines, journals and other serious literature of professional interest. A cassette edition would be great.

Subhash A Datrang, India
Email: subhashdatrange@yahoo.com

Editor's note: During 2004-5 EENET will make more editions of its newsletter available in Braille and cassette formats.

Translation into Telugu, India

We are from India and a regular recipient of the magazine of inclusive education from EENET. We can say that the articles are simply superb. They present different strategies adapted in the world for inclusive education. It is helpful for our organisation to follow some good examples. We are preserving the magazines and we will translate them into the local language, Telugu, for distribution, including to Government authorities.

PG Sundari, Secretary,
Relief Organisation For
Handicapped, India.
Email: roh_hdp@yahoo.co.in

Networking through 'Enabling Education'

After reading Mr Karangwa's article in your last newsletter [issue 7, article about blind students in Rwanda], I contacted him and he told me about his project. Finally he came to visit me and the Africa Group of Stendal (Afrikakreis) which I founded years ago. He introduced the project to us and we agreed to support it. I am happy we could help the people there – and we came into personal contact which is very good! I write you this email to let you know about the effect of the article in your newsletter. Keep up the good work!

Gerhard Reuther, Ruhla (formerly
Stendal), Germany.
Email: rhodender@yahoo.com

Useful Publications

An Investigative Study of the Abuse of Girls in African Schools Education paper no. 54 (2003)

F. Leach, V. Fiscian, E. Kadzamira, E. Lemani, P. Machakanja

Available from:

Website: www.dfid.gov.uk

Email: enquiry@dfid.gov.uk

Tel: +44 1355 843132

Education in Emergencies: A toolkit for starting and managing education in emergencies (2003)
Save the Children UK

A strong case is made in this publication for the importance of including education as a fundamental part of emergency response. It explores which children are affected by an emergency and how their education opportunities may have changed. The book includes ten sets of tools with topics ranging from assessment to teacher education.

Available from EENET's website.

Helping Children Who Are Deaf (2004)

S. Niemann, D. Greenstein, D. David

ISBN: 0-942364-44-9

Developed in partnership with families with children who are deaf, deaf adults, community-based development workers, health workers and educators in over 17 countries, this is a practical, accessible and appropriate publication. It is the second book in Hesperian's Early Assistance Series for children with disabilities aged 0-5.

Available from:

The Hesperian Foundation

PO Box 11577, Berkeley

California 94712-2577

USA

Email: bookorders@hesperian.org

Website: www.hesperian.org

Price: \$12

Inclusive Education Initiatives for Children with Disabilities: Lessons from the East Asia and Pacific Region (2003)
UNICEF

Published by Darnsutha Press Co. Ltd, Thailand

Available from:

UNICEF, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, 19 Phra Atit Road Bangkok 10200, Thailand

Tel: + 66 23569400

Fax: +66 22803563/4

Email: eapro@unicef.org

Missing Out on Education (2003)
Save the Children UK

ISBN 1 84187 077 3

This publication focuses on four groups of vulnerable learners in the UK whose education is interrupted often for considerable lengths of time. They include young people who are labelled as having emotional and behavioural difficulties, refugees and asylum seekers, those affected by domestic violence, and those with complex medical needs.

Available from:

Plymbridge Distributors

Tel: +44 (0)1752 202301

Email: orders@plymbridge.com

Price: £6.95 +p&p

Planning Working Children's Education. A guide for education sector planners (2004)

Save the Children UK

This paper analyses working children's situations and their relation to education strategies. It looks at eight case studies of education provision for working children, and SC UK's own experience in supporting education for working children, and offers a set of recommendations on how the needs of working children should be addressed within education sector planning.

Available from EENET's website.

Schools for All: Including disabled children in education (2002)

Save the Children UK

These are useful guidelines aimed at education staff trying to develop inclusive education practices for disabled children. As well as the printed version, this resource is now available in English Braille and audio formats. Electronic text versions are available in English, Arabic, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

All available via EENET.

Village Learning through Children's Schooling (2002)

S. J. Mosko

This attractive and easy-to-read book documents a pilot programme in North Gonder zone, Amhara. It demonstrates an alternative and sustainable route to basic education for children living in this area. The book argues that the adoption of alternatives to formal schooling is essential if EFA is to be achieved.

Available from:

Save the Children Norway

PO Box 6589, Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

Email: scne@scne.org



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Please tell us about any publications you have produced or that you would recommend to other EENET readers.