



SUCCESSFUL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF TAJIKISTAN

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ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY

This case study is a product of a KIX EMAP Rapid Customised Country Support (RCCS) activity. The KIX EMAP RCCS is a demand-driven activity that follows up on regional capacity strengthening and peer-learning exchange activities to ensure that countries have the opportunity to uptake the learnings at the national level. This particular RCCS focused on promoting the exchange of good practices for inclusive education among five participating countries—Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Moldova, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. This case study is authored by the members of the Tajikistan team participating in the RCCS activity. It provides an assessment of the state of inclusive education in the country. This case study is accompanied by three databases compiling information about inclusive education-related **legislations, teaching and learning materials**, and **organisations** contributing to the advancement and delivery of inclusive education in Tajikistan.



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CONTENTS

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	5
Acknowledgements	6
Executive Summary	7
1. Objectives of the Knowledge and Experience Exchange	8
2. Introduction and Prospects of Inclusive Education	9
2.1. Public Awareness and Response	9
2.2. Inclusive Education: Legislation and Policies	9
2.3. Inclusive Education Legislation: Current Situation and Compliance Practices	10
3. Statistical Data on Students with Disabilities	12
4. Organisations Involved in Inclusive Education	17
5. Educational and Methodological Support	19
6. Conclusion and Recommendations	20
References	21

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EMAP	Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Pacific
GPE KIX	Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PMPC	Psychological, Medical and Pedagogical Consultation
RCCS	Rapid Customised Country Support
SEN	Special educational needs
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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We appreciate the unique opportunity provided by the organisers to learn about inclusive education practices in the Consortium countries and to share best strategies and experiences. These efforts contribute to the formation of a unified approach to inclusive education in the region.

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As part of this activity, the team from Tajikistan visited Georgia and Uzbekistan to learn about successful inclusive education practices in mainstream schools in these countries. They also conducted a comparative analysis of methods and approaches to teaching children with special educational needs in primary schools.

We would like to thank Jekatyerina Dunajeva, Senior Inclusive Education Expert, Research Fellow at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and Associate Professor at the Institute of International Studies and Political Science, Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest, for her extensive support in writing the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of a KIX EMAP Rapid Customised Country Support (RCCS) activity supported by the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX) Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Pacific (EMAP) Hub and implemented in partnership with Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Uzbekistan, the Tajik team analysed and assessed the implementation of inclusive education in the country. In Tajikistan, inclusive education is being implemented as part of the state policy aimed at reforms in the education sector, including the provision of free education for children with disabilities. The National Concept of Inclusive Education, adopted in 2001, and subsequent legislative amendments have created a basis for the integration of children with special educational needs (SEN) into mainstream education.

Inclusive education in Tajikistan is being implemented alongside traditional special education models for children with SEN. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children with disabilities studying in mainstream schools. The methodological approach to inclusive education involves the preparation of specialised teaching materials, including Braille books for the blind and large-print books for those with visual impairments, as well as television teaching using sign language for deaf and hearing-impaired children.

However, despite the progress made, significant challenges remain. The unpreparedness of teachers to integrate inclusive practices into the teaching process and the lack of specialised materials for core subjects reduce the effectiveness of education for children with SEN. It is important to enhance the system of teacher professional development and to create conditions for the full inclusion of all learners in the educational process.

Overall, the study found that legislative changes and strategic documents adopted in Tajikistan guarantee the rights of children with disabilities to education and social inclusion. The adoption of international conventions and the National Education Strategy shows the government's commitment to creating an enabling educational environment and implementing inclusive education in the country. However, in order to achieve full inclusion, it is necessary to develop a system for monitoring and evaluation of the learning outcomes of children with disabilities, which would not only track their academic progress but also assess their social and emotional development. This approach would help improve the quality of education and create an enabling environment for all students in Tajikistan.

1

OBJECTIVES OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE

This case study was produced in the context of the Rapid Customised Country Support (RCCS) “Europe and Central Inter-Country Exchange on Inclusive Education for children with disabilities” in partnership with Georgia, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and with support from the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX) Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Pacific (EMAP) Hub. The activity aimed at the exchange of innovative knowledge and successful practices in inclusive education among five countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus – Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The main objective of this initiative was to explore the Consortium countries’ experience in implementing inclusive education policies, with a special focus on legislative and regulatory frameworks, inclusive education training materials and common implementation strategies.

As part of the initiative, the team from Tajikistan had the opportunity to visit Georgia and Uzbekistan, where they learned about effective pedagogical practices for teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools. A comparative analysis of the methods and approaches used to teach such children in primary schools was also conducted.

Overall, this initiative provided a valuable opportunity for the participating countries to learn about inclusive education practices and to share best practices with each other. Such joint initiatives contribute to a harmonised approach to inclusive education across the region.

2

INTRODUCTION AND PROSPECTS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The education policies of Tajikistan aim at addressing essential changes in the education system, with national legislation guaranteeing free education for children with disabilities.

Inclusive education is a relatively new phenomenon for the Tajik society that was first introduced in the early years after the country regained its independence and continues to gain momentum. One of the most important steps in this regard was the adoption, in 2011, of the Government Decree on the *National Concept of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2011-2015* (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2013). This document introduced the terms 'inclusion' and 'inclusive education' in the country's education system. As part of this effort, Tajikistan has set the goal of improving and reforming the education sector, making education more accessible to children with SEN.

Parents of children with SEN play an equally important and active role in this process. The enhanced participation of parents in civil society organisations in recent years indicates their growing competence and understanding of the importance of their role in children's development and in the promotion of their right to equal access to early childhood development and education in general.

As a result, Tajikistan has seriously addressed the issue of the inclusion of children with disabilities in the educational process. This issue requires a multifaceted approach and the identification of learning and educational opportunities, taking into account the individual characteristics of each child. A number of legislative, policy and practical measures are being taken in the country to introduce inclusive education and make education accessible to children with disabilities. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and parents play a crucial role in this process. Overall, the country's commitment to inclusive education is evident, but further efforts and dedication are required to achieve full inclusion.

2.1 Public Awareness and Response

There have been no systematic and comprehensive surveys on the public perception of inclusive education in the country. In the absence of representative data, a small survey was carried out by the authors of this study to assess public opinion and attitudes in the country. The survey was conducted from September 10 to October 10, 2023, and aimed at identifying the importance of inclusive education. It included 10 mainstream school teachers and 20 parents of children with disabilities in the Sughd and Khatlon provinces, as well as in Dushanbe.

The survey showed that teachers are overall willing to work with inclusive classes. Parents, in turn, work closely with schools to ensure that their children participate in the learning process and receive a quality education. Unfortunately, the lack of adequate infrastructure and accessible sanitary facilities in schools is perceived as a major barrier for many children with disabilities. Not all teachers have the necessary skills, methodological tools, or programmes to work with children with SEN, as each child needs an individualised approach based on their abilities.

While more research is needed in this area, this survey shows emerging positive attitudes towards inclusive education and the urgent need for changes and reforms to facilitate its implementation in schools.

2.2 Inclusive Education: Legislation and Policies

Tajikistan has laid the foundation for inclusive education. After regaining independence in 1991, the country acceded to key international human rights instruments, ratifying almost all major United Nations (UN) documents on human rights and committing to their implementation (Bakhrieva, 2011). For example, in 1993, Tajikistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In 1999, the country also adopted the International Covenant on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, along with several other instruments (Bakhrieva, 2011). These documents emphasise the right to education for all, with the CRC and CEDAW specifically highlighting this right in relation to children.

In order to implement inclusive education, the Government of Tajikistan has adopted recommendations related to the rights of children with disabilities, detailed in the *Alternative Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Republic of Tajikistan* (Bureau of Human Rights and Rule of Law, 2016). This report, supported by other legal documents and reports, serves as the basis for this section of the report.

In 2012, Tajikistan endorsed the National Education Strategy by 2020. This enabled the opening of Psychological, Medical, and Pedagogical Consultation services (PMPC) in the cities of Dushanbe, Khujand, and Bokhtar (formerly Kurgan-Tyube) in the Sughd and Khatlon regions, aimed at the timely identification of children with developmental delays of various etymologies (Bureau of Human Rights and Rule of Law, 2016).

In 2013, Tajikistan carried out legislative reforms in education and adopted two new laws: the “Law on Education” and “Law on Preschool Education and Upbringing of Children”. The “Law on Education” defines inclusive education as the creation of favourable conditions for children to receive education regardless of their sex, race, language, nationality, religious beliefs, physical or mental disabilities, abilities, cultural or social status. According to Article 6 (parts 7, 8) of this law, the state shall guarantee the provision and financing of education and upbringing of children with disabilities, ensure their employment after graduation from educational institutions, and provide free education at home or in medical institutions for citizens who are unable to attend general education institutions for long periods due to illness (Bureau of Human Rights and Rule of Law, 2016).

Moreover, Article 4 of the “Law of Tajikistan on Protection of the Rights of the Child” guarantees the development of children with disabilities in all spheres, with Article 17 ensuring their access to education with the use of special teaching methods. According to Article 45, children with disabilities have the right to specialised care, education and training to enable them to live a full life and achieve social integration (Commissioner for Children’s Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan, 2015).

On August 1, 2015, the Government of Tajikistan adopted the State Standard of General Education, which provides for the creation of special conditions for students with disabilities in schools (CIS Legislation, 2015). In 2016, the country adopted the National Programme for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities for 2017–2020, and in 2017, it approved the Strategy of the Commissioner for Children’s Rights for 2018–2020, emphasizing the importance of quality education for children with disabilities in an inclusive environment (Commissioner for Children’s Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan, 2017). In 2017, in

order to enhance the training and professional development of teachers in compliance with international standards, the Government approved the “State Programme for Developing the System of Advanced Training and Retraining of Teachers in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2018–2022” (Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2017).

In 2018, Tajikistan signed, but did not ratify, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 24 of the Convention guarantees the right to inclusive education for all persons with disabilities (Khovalar – National Information Agency of Tajikistan, 2023).

In September 2020, the Government of Tajikistan adopted the “National Strategy for Education Development by 2030”, setting the main long-term goal of “an effective education system that promotes inclusive and equal opportunities for creativity, intellectual development, employment and well-being of the population of the Republic of Tajikistan” (Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2020, p. 1).

It is important to note that the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan (MoES) has developed a draft Education Code and established the Working Group on Inclusive Education for the strategic planning of inclusive education.

The above legislative reforms and other associated measures clearly demonstrate Tajikistan’s commitment to promoting inclusive education. However, despite the progress, the implementation of inclusive education programmes requires further efforts.

2.3 Inclusive Education Legislation: Current Situation and Compliance Practices

The education legislation establishes a state standard for each form of education to regulate the education process. For example, paragraph 8 of the State Standard of General Education in Tajikistan, approved by Government Resolution № 494 of August 1, 2015, provides for the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream educational institutions. Paragraphs 106 and 127 of this standard require that mainstream educational institutions have the necessary infrastructure and accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities and that these students must be provided with access to education and social adaptation (CIS Legislation, 2015).

The “National Concept of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2011–2015” (MoES, 2011) is one of the mechanisms for regulating legislation in this area. The Concept divides the implementation of inclusive education into two phases: from 2011 to 2015 and from 2016 to 2020. Due to the expiration of the previous Concept, in 2023, the MoES

established a working group to develop a new Concept of Inclusive Education.¹

The MoES and its departments carry out activities to ensure the implementation of inclusive education and expansion of inclusive practices across the country. These measures include the introduction of amendments to legislation regulating education, social welfare and local government, in order to create favourable financial and technical conditions for the organisation and implementation of inclusive education. Additional actions include retraining and professional development of teachers, updating of educational programmes and materials, and other related initiatives.

The authors of the report believe that, in addition to the above measures, increased funding is necessary to ensure access to education for children with disabilities. Mainstream educational institutions should create an accessible environment to ensure the inclusion of children with SEN in the educational process. For example, they should provide adapted books for children with all types of disabilities, including visual, hearing, motor and intellectual impairments. To ensure the inclusion of children with

disabilities in the educational process, school administrations should support inclusive education initiatives and provide training and professional development for teachers to work with SEN children. Furthermore, the lack of developed methods and tools for monitoring and evaluating the learning outcomes of students with SEN poses significant challenges for inclusive education. Currently, there are no structured support systems in place to assess the individualised learning pathways and achievements of children with disabilities. This gap prevents educators from providing individualised instruction and necessary interventions, which ultimately affects the academic achievement and integration of these students into the mainstream educational environment. Overall, meeting the educational needs of children with disabilities in Tajikistan requires both increased financial investment and the development of robust assessment systems. The creation of an inclusive environment through accessible resources and ongoing teacher training should prioritise the development of effective support systems.

¹ See Order No. 137 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan. Dushanbe, February 10, 2023.

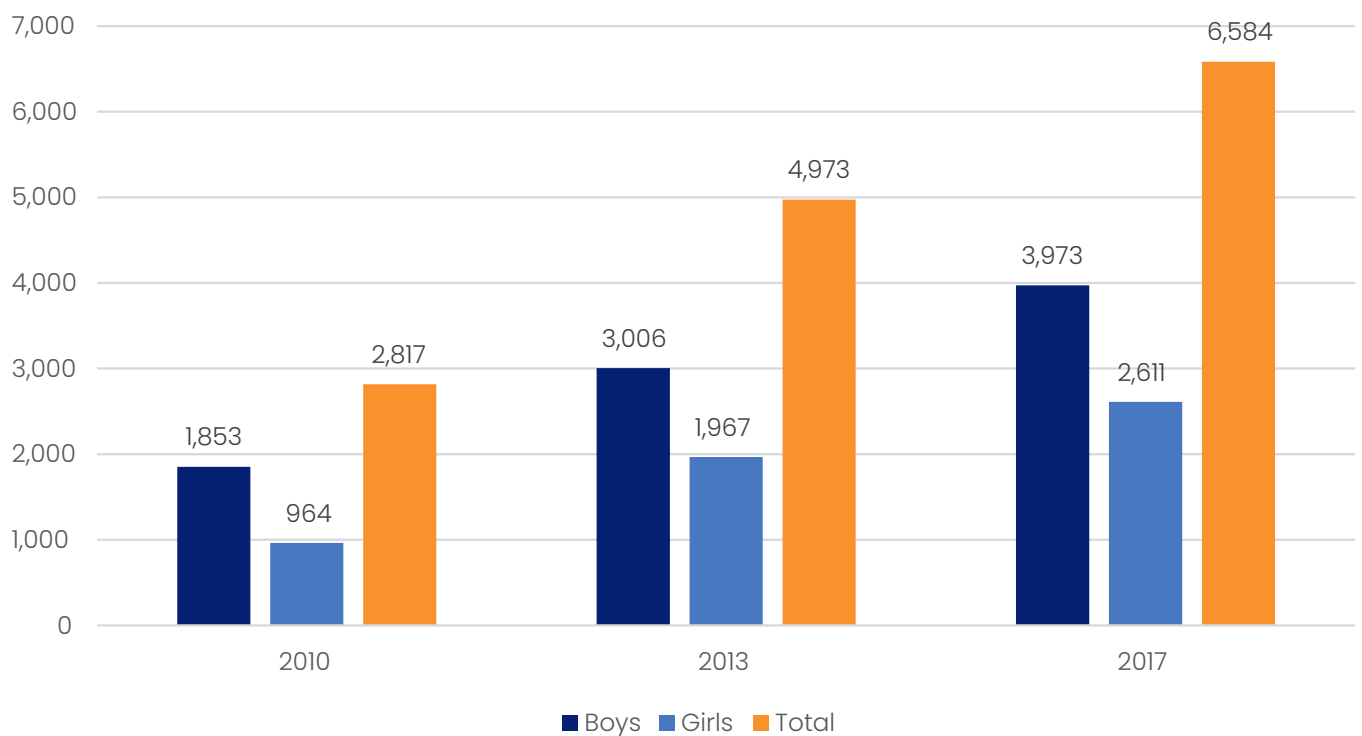
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STATISTICAL DATA ON STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

According to the MoES (Golubeva, 2018), by the beginning of 2018, 25,548 children with disabilities were registered in Tajikistan, of which 6,584 were enrolled in mainstream schools (see Figure 1).

The general primary and secondary education system includes special schools that were established in the Soviet era and still play a key role in meeting the educational needs of children with SEN (see Table 1).

Figure 1: Number of children with disabilities in mainstream schools of Tajikistan (2010–2017)



Source: Golubeva (2018).

Table 1: General education institutions (by type) in 2023

Type	Number	Including				Number of branches	
		Location		Ownership			
		Urban	Rural	State	Private	Urban	Rural
Primary schools	293	14	279	282	11	0	45
Lower secondary schools (grades 5–9)	416	21	395	413	3	0	5
Upper secondary schools (grades 10–11)	3,049	468	2,581	3,017	32	3	75
Gymnasiums	76	50	26	58	18	0	0
Lyceums	83	69	14	70	12	0	1
Boarding schools for orphans	18	8	10	18	0	0	0
Boarding schools for the deaf	2	1	1	2	0	0	0
Therapeutic boarding schools	2	0	2	2	0	0	0
Boarding schools for hearing-impaired children and children with acquired deafness	2	2	0	2	0	0	0
Boarding school for blind and visually impaired children	4	4	0	4	0	0	0
Specialised boarding schools (poliomyelitis)	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Special school for children with behavioural problems	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Special needs school for children with delays in psychological development	4	3	1	4	0	0	0
Preschools	8	7	1	1	7	0	0
Music boarding schools	2	2	0	2	0	0	0
Sports boarding schools	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Boarding schools for the gifted	5	3	2	5	1	0	0
Total:	3,967	654	3,313	3,882	84	3	126

Source: MoES (2023).

Tajikistan currently has 34 special institutions for different disabled communities, including boarding schools for orphans, the deaf, the visually impaired and others (see Table 2). These schools are attended by 6,174 children, including 1,763

girls (28.7 per cent). There is also a growing network of schools: in the academic year 2022–2023, there were 84 private schools in the country, attended by 31,812 children.

Table 2: Number of schools and students (per type) in Tajikistan in 2023

Type	Number of schools	Number of students		
		Total	Girls	Boys
PUBLIC SCHOOLS				
Primary schools	282	14,710	7,280	7,430
Lower secondary schools (grades 5–9)	413	74,872	37,750	37,122
Upper secondary schools (grades 10–11)	3,017	2,009,300	985,954	1,023,346
Gymnasiums	58	51,280	20,270	31,010
Lyceums	70	38,689	13,602	25,087
Boarding schools for orphans	18	3,515	948	2,567
Boarding schools for the deaf	2	647	261	386
Therapeutic boarding schools	2	205	61	144
Boarding schools for hearing-impaired children and children with acquired deafness	2	399	164	235
Boarding school for blind and visually impaired children	4	441	140	301
Specialised boarding schools (poliomyelitis)	1	298	58	240
Special school for children with behavioural problems	1	34	0	34
Special needs school for children with delays in psychological development	4	608	131	477
Preschools	1	424	145	279
Music boarding schools	2	915	382	533
Sports boarding schools	1	355	0	355
Boarding schools for the gifted	5	3,610	978	2,632
Total:	3,883	2,200,302	1,068,124	1,132,178

Type	Number of schools	Number of students		
		Total	Girls	Boys
PRIVATE SCHOOLS				
Primary schools	11	1,220	462	758
Lower secondary schools (grades 5–9)	3	468	174	294
Upper secondary schools (grades 10–11)	32	12,790	4,415	8,375
Gymnasium	18	8,022	2,855	5,167
Lyceum	12	7,050	2,402	4,648
Preschools	7	1,874	720	1,154
Boarding schools for the gifted	1	388	45	343
Total	84	31,812	11,073	20,739

Source: MoES (2023).

According to the “Strategy of Inclusive Education in the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period up to 2045”, approved by Decree No. 515 of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on 30 September 2025, there are currently 34,034 children with disabilities in the country, including children with hearing, visual, speech, intellectual, and musculoskeletal impairments (Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2025). As shown in Table 3, between 2015 and 2019 the number of children with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools increased from 4,168 to 5,757. However, after 2019, a decline was observed in their number in mainstream schools, alongside an increase in both

their number and proportion in specialised boarding schools. In response to these trends, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan adopted the “Concept of Inclusive Education in the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period up to 2045” in December 2024, followed by the “Strategy of Inclusive Education in the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period up to 2045” in September 2025 (Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2024, 2025). These strategic documents aim to promote the development of an inclusive education system and to enhance the participation of children with disabilities in mainstream schools.

Table 3: Trends of the number of children with disabilities in schools of Tajikistan

No		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1.	Total number of special needs students in schools	5,633	6,139	6,584	7,278	7,378	7,362	7,132	7,030	7,465	7,460
2.	Number of special needs students in mainstream schools	4,168	4,137	4,467	5,320	5,757	5,722	5,481	5,142	4,096	4,882
3.	Percentage of special needs students in mainstream schools (%)	73.99	67.39	67.85	73.10	78.03	77.72	76.85	73.14	54.87	65.44

No		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
4	Number of special needs students in special boarding schools (%)	1,465	2,002	2,117	1,958	1,621	1,640	1,651	1,888	3,369	2,578
5	Percentage of special needs students in special boarding schools (%)	26.01	32.61	32.15	26.90	21.97	22.28	23.15	26.86	45.13	34.56

Source: Calculated by the authors based on MoES data (2023, 2024).

4

ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In Tajikistan, all mainstream education institutions are obliged to accept children with disabilities. The process of implementing inclusive education encompasses several important aspects, including teacher training, the involvement of child development centres and community-based organisations, as well as the contributions of international partners.

Training teachers to work with students with special needs is an important issue. Currently, this training is conducted at five² higher educational institutions. Since the 2011-2012 academic year, these institutions have established specialised departments in oligophrenopedagogy,³ speech therapy, defectology,⁴ and deaf education. This initiative aims to prepare qualified specialists capable of supporting students with diverse needs. Between 2016 and 2019, a total of 197 graduates from these specialised programmes received diplomas and subsequently secured employment in their respective fields.

The Inclusive Education Resource Centre at Sadridin Aini State Pedagogical University also plays a key role in training special education teachers, conducting research, and developing teaching methods for children with disabilities (Khakimov, 2018). Another important stakeholder is the Department of Social and Vocational Pedagogy of B. Gafurov State University of Khujand, which is recognised as a leader in training specialists in oligophrenopedagogy (Khudoynazarova & Rakhmatona, 2020). Thus, the faculty of this department have identified several shortcomings, particularly in curriculum development and in addressing practical difficulties in teaching students with disabilities.

It is also important to note the work of school-based child development centres that were established in accordance

with the National Education Strategy of Tajikistan by 2020. “Such centres help to meet children’s needs in mental, sensory, social, physical and moral development” (Norova, 2021, p. 3).

Furthermore, a number of NGOs play an important role in inclusive education:

- The Association of Parents of Children with Disabilities actively promotes inclusive education in the country (Association of Parents of Children with Disabilities, n.d.). The Association cooperates with educational institutions and the MoES to support the integration of children with SEN into mainstream schools and preschools. It provides consultations and training for teachers and parents, as well as it contributes to the development of the National Inclusive Education Concept.
- The Initiative of Parents of Children with Autism “Iroda” promotes the rights of children with autism to early diagnosis, inclusion and integration into society. The organisation believes that parents play a crucial role in ensuring their children’s full participation in education and other areas of life, and it works to provide them with information and psychological support (Iroda, n.d.).
- The Association of Parents of Children with Down Syndrome “SiDa” promotes inclusive education in Tajikistan through collaboration with other NGOs involved in inclusive education, supporting the integration of children with disabilities in preschools and schools, and offering additional guidance and counselling to parents (SiDa, n.d.).
- The Association to Promote Inclusive Education in Tajikistan cooperates with the MoES, universities, training centres and

2 Sadridin Aini State Pedagogical University, Nasir Khusrav Bokhtar State University, Abu Abdullah Rudaki Kulyab State University, Bobojon Gafurov Khujand State University, and Moyonsho Nazarshoyev Khorugh State University.

3 Oligophrenopedagogy is a specialised field of education focused on teaching and supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities. It involves developing tailored educational strategies and interventions to enhance learning and promote independence for students with varying degrees of cognitive impairments.

4 Defectology is an interdisciplinary field that studies and educates people with various disabilities, including physical, intellectual, and sensory impairments. Its goal is to understand the nature of these impairments and to develop effective pedagogical approaches and treatment methods to support the learning and social integration of individuals with such disabilities.

special schools. It also promotes the integration of children with disabilities in special schools and preschools, provides additional support to children with disabilities in special schools (school readiness programme, speech therapists and inclusion specialists) and offers counselling to parents (psychological and legal support).

Other NGOs are also active in promoting inclusive education. For example, the “Rushdi Inclusia” provides additional support to children with disabilities in mainstream schools. “Open Hearts” promotes inclusion by offering individual and group classes for children, as well as comprehensive support for parents. The “Rushdi Chomea” is another important actor that unites committees of parents of children with disabilities in Khatlon and Sughd regions.

Furthermore, international organisations play a crucial role in promoting inclusive education in Tajikistan. In this regard, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is one of the most influential international organisations in Tajikistan. UNICEF

actively cooperates with the MoES and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Tajikistan. The ministries support the implementation of the Education Development Strategy by 2030, develop comprehensive programmes for early intervention and early childhood development, and facilitate the development of a national approach to inclusive education in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNICEF is also working in partnership with other agencies to train and retrain teachers (UNICEF, n.d.).

The implementation of inclusive education is a complex process that requires an integrated approach and the cooperation of several actors, including government bodies, educational institutions, NGOs, and international organisations. Together, these stakeholders are working to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for children with disabilities in Tajikistan, ensuring that they receive the education and resources they need.

5

EDUCATIONAL AND METHODOLOGICAL SUPPORT

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as part of its “Learn Together Activity” (USAID, 2023), produced teaching and learning materials for the inclusive education of children with disabilities in Tajikistan. A total of 19,000 copies of several books were published and donated to schools, including:

- 28 Braille books for the blind, and
- 16 large-print books for visually impaired children.
- USAID’s “Read with Me” project, in partnership with the national children’s television network Bakhoriston, filmed and aired 130 episodes of the “Time to Read” show with sign language interpretation for deaf and hearing-impaired children (USAID Central Asia, 2021).

While some resources for inclusive education are available, there are a number of significant barriers to their effective use in teaching and learning. The authors of the report believe that one of the main challenges is that teachers are not prepared to use specialised literature and materials in the classroom, as many teachers lack sufficient experience and knowledge to integrate inclusive practices into the traditional educational process. In addition, there is a lack of professional development and methodological support for teachers, which limits their ability to adapt educational materials to meet the needs of all learners.

To overcome these barriers, regular training and professional development are necessary to enhance teachers’ skills in working with adapted materials. It is also important to develop guidance and provide access to resources to help teachers effectively use inclusive approaches in their classroom practices. On top of that, to date, no methods and tools have been developed to monitor, support, tutor or evaluate the learning outcomes of children with disabilities in Tajikistan.

Furthermore, it is crucial to raise awareness about the importance of inclusive education among all stakeholders. Awareness campaigns and activities should be implemented to promote positive attitudes and understanding of inclusion. Raising awareness will help to create a supportive environment for all learners and promote the wider use of inclusive educational resources.

6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tajikistan has taken steps towards the implementation of inclusive education practices. A number of legislative reforms have been carried out to include all groups of children in the educational process. In addition to State actors, the process involves international organisations, NGOs and academia. However, despite the progress, significant work remains to be done in this area.

One of the key challenges is the creation of enabling environments and accessible education for children with SEN. This requires increased funding to provide adapted materials and technical means to educational institutions, which would facilitate the inclusion of children with various forms of visual, hearing, musculoskeletal, and intellectual disabilities.

School authorities should actively support inclusive education initiatives by facilitating the training and professional development of teachers working with children with SEN. Another important aspect is the creation of resource classes to provide the necessary support and adaptation of education programmes.

The success of inclusive education depends on shifting the attitudes of school authorities, teachers, parents and peers towards students with SEN. This requires systematic training of teachers, the development of informational and methodological frameworks, and the strengthened role of psychological and pedagogical support services in the educational process.

Although Tajikistan has the necessary legal framework for inclusive education, it still faces challenges in overcoming legal, financial, social, and institutional barriers. In order to achieve the

goals of the National Education Strategy by 2030, it is necessary to create appropriate infrastructure in existing mainstream schools and establish new schools that meet the needs of children with disabilities. It is also important to develop adapted learning materials and make them available to children with SEN.

Special attention should be paid to the exchange of best practices of psychological and pedagogical support for children with disabilities, as well as inclusive education methods, practices and techniques implemented in other countries, such as Georgia and Uzbekistan. Familiarisation with tutoring and mentoring practices for children with SEN would help to create an effective and supportive inclusive environment.

An equally important step towards the effective inclusion of children with SEN in the educational process is the creation of a system for monitoring and evaluating the learning outcomes of children with disabilities. There is currently no such system in place in Tajikistan. The monitoring system would not only track academic performance but would also help assess the social and emotional development of students, thus ensuring a comprehensive approach to education. Systematic evaluation would allow teachers to make informed decisions, improve the quality of teaching, and demonstrate the success of inclusion to governmental and international organisations.

Overall, this report shows that Tajikistan needs to not only sustain the progress it has achieved but also continue to overcome existing barriers in order to make inclusive education an integral part of the national education system.

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