Edited by

Hannu Savolainen, Marja Matero and Heikki Kokkala

When All Means All:

Experiences in Three African Countries with EFA and Children with Disabilities

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Foreword

Five years have passed since the Dakar World Education Forum 2000, and the Education for All (EFA) process is well on its way. To the satisfaction of all of us working in the field, the issues relating to the education of children with disabilities and/or special educational needs are at last solidly on the EFA agenda, with many activities being implemented by international organisations and through global agreements.

But to what extent is the idea of the right to education for persons with disabilities included in the global EFA process? And what is happening concretely at the grassroots level? Does the EFA movement reach the most disadvantaged of the disadvantaged children? Is inclusive education becoming a reality? What are some of the lessons learned thus far? These are questions that this new book intends to answer by looking at the global situation and focusing more closely on selected country cases from Africa. As the stories in this book show, there have been many successes with EFA, good lessons have been learned about inclusive education, and notes of caution have been sounded: all of these are worth sharing with the international community.

This book is divided into two major sections. The first section discusses the education of children with disabilities from a global and general perspective, and looks into the latest global developments and issues on quality of education. The second section discusses more concretely developments in three countries selected as case studies in inclusive education: Ethiopia, South-Africa and Zambia. A short afterword then summarises the stories in the book and gives a picture of the situation as it is now.

The first chapter, by Mr Heikki Kokkala, discusses some of the most important recent global developments related to the education of persons with disabilities. Beginning with a description of the primary reasons for the exclusion of disabled learners from mainstream education, he continues with an analysis of some of the more concrete measures and agreements made during the last few years to promote education for children with disabilities, and concludes with a quick review of activities being carried out in this regard by Finland, both at home and in development cooperation.

In Chapter 2, Mr Kenneth Eklindh, and Ms Jill Van den Brule-Balescut of UNESCO, trace the development of current ideas about inclusive education since the UNESCO Salamanca Statement of 1994, discussing how the inclusive education movement links with EFA. This discussion highlights the activities in EFA related to the "Flagship on the Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion", and the role of UNESCO in promoting both inclusive education and Education for All.

Dr Siri Wormnaes asks in Chapter 3 the important question of what 'quality of education' is and how 'quality' can be measured. She also goes into an analysis of the most important factors on which the quality of education depends, in particular from the perspective of educating children with disabilities. She concludes with a review of comments in the latest EFA Global Monitoring Report on the current state of the quality of education for children with disabilities.

The first case study country in the second section of the book is Ethiopia; and the first chapter in this section, Chapter 4, is by Dr Tirussew Teferra, who presents an overview of inclusive developments in Ethiopia during the last fifteen years. Dr. Tirussew places inclusive education within the context of the recent history of Ethiopia, analyses the latest policy developments in different administrative sectors, and concludes with a possible scenario for inclusive education in Ethiopia in the future.

In Chapter 5, the provision of special needs education in Ethiopia is analysed by Mr Adugna Ayana and Dr Elina Lehtomäki in regard to its inclusion in federal level education sector policy development. The chapter begins with an account of the process of developing the policy strategy for special needs education, and goes on into an analysis of the current situation, strategic priorities, and implications for the future of special needs education in Ethiopia.

The third chapter concerning Ethiopia, Chapter 6 by Dr Berit H. Johnsen and Mr Alemayehu Teklemariam, first presents a short historical overview of the training of teachers of special education, then analyses the current state of affairs in regard to the university level training of teachers and other experts in special education, and concludes with a presentation of concrete developments in the field of special education teacher training in Ethiopia. The authors further provide a commentary on how teacher training and university level expert training contribute to attaining the goals of EFA.

The next two chapters present the situation in two provinces of Zambia: North-Western Province, capital city Solwezi, and Western Province, capital city Mongu. Both chapters are related to a recent Education Sector Development Programme (ESSP Phase III) in Zambia that set out to develop education for children with disabilities in two Zambian provinces, utilising an inclusive education approach already developed in Zambia.

In Chapter 7, Ms Hanna Alasuutari, Mr J.L. Chibesa and Ms Minna Mäkihonko analyse the development of the inclusive education programme in Zambia in North-Western Province, and emphasise the important role played by teachers in implementing inclusive education development programmes.

In Chapter 8, Mr Progress Muhau and Mr Pasi Siltakorpi analyse the activities of ESSP-III in Zambia's Western Province. The authors describe the recently launched literacy training programme in Zambia, and analyse what the inclusive education

component of this programme achieved. They conclude with a discussion of the challenges in inclusive education still remaining, and the issue of sustainability.

The last three chapters relate to the third case study country presnted in this book, South Africa. Chapter 9 is a critical analysis of the implementation of the South African inclusive education policy, presented by Dr Sigamoney Naicker. Dr Naicker analyses the important roles of teacher training and the curriculum in the implementation of inclusive education policy. He emphasises that good principles and aims may remain merely rhetoric unless a new inclusive understanding and the related intellectual tools become part of the everyday work of professionals in the field.

Ms Nelly Lekgau and Ms Marja Matero describe in Chapter 10 some of the activities of a recent development project (SCOPE) in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) that was designed to support the implementation of the new inclusive education policy in RSA. Among other issues, Ms Lekgau and Ms Matero discuss the challenges created by the attitudes in RSA towards inclusive education, and those factors in the target communities that seem to promote or hinder progress in inclusive education.

The final chapter on RSA, Chapter 11 by Dr Sai Väyrynen, is based on a comparative, qualitative case study of inclusion and notions of participation. Here, Dr Väyrynen discusses the notions of 'participation' and 'coping' as concepts related to inclusive education and learning taking place in two very different schools, one in a rural township in RSA and the other in a Finnish suburb. Dr Väyrynen emphasises the importance of proper understanding of school contexts as a prerequisite for the successful promotion of inclusive education initiatives.

The book ends with an Afterword by Dr Hannu Savolainen, who briefly summarises some major developments since the Dakar World Education Forum, and then discusses a few major challenges, inherent in the EFA monitoring process and the current inclusive education debate, that may be of importance for the future of the EFA process.

Acknowledgements

Terms such as inclusive education, special education, special educational needs, and special needs education are commonly used in the education and development policy discussions. As the chapters in this book show, the practical implementation of educational services for children with disabilities is far from satisfactory; and, therefore, more research and discussion on the topic is urgently needed. A previous book in this series, *Elements for Discussion*, entitled "Meeting Special and Diverse Educational Needs, Towards Inclusion", (Savolainen H., Kokkala H., and Alasuutari H., 2001) described the ideas, attitudes, and discussion of inclusive education current at the time when that book was published, soon after the Dakar World Education Forum. On many occasions since then, questions have been asked about what has happened since Dakar: has the situation improved, do children with disabilities now have better access to education?

This book is an attempt to seek responses to these questions, which we wish to address at two interlinked levels: global and national. The book in your hand is the product of an intensive process that took much more time and effort than any of the editors and writers anticipated. It is a product of substantial teamwork. The team worked mainly online: hundreds of e-mails have been sent and read. We just wonder how these types of publications were prepared before the technology that we now have was available.

We wish to thank all the experts who have dedicated their precious time to writing the chapters. We as editors have gained a great deal and learned more from the discussions centring around the topics presented here. Our work has been both challenging and rewarding. We further wish to extend our sincere thanks to Deborah Kela Ruuskanen, Senior Lecturer in English at Vaasa University and our language editor, who made our texts coherent and readable. We have also had the pleasure to work again with Information Officer Outi Einola-Head in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, who has always been available to assist us, and has reliably guided us through the technical process of publication.

No book is a book before it has been read. Our wish is that this book is widely read and distributed. We hope that it will serve as an basis for further discussion. As the case-studies presented here show, in far too many cases providing education for children with disabilities is not as obvious a right as it seems to us. Discussion, research, and firm guidance from government officials and policy makers are all required to make Education for All true for everyone. Only then will all really mean All.

Jyväskylä, Joensuu and Paris, December 2005

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1. Five Years after Dakar

Heikki Kokkala

1. Background: Major Reasons for Exclusion

Within the past ten years the number of children in the world who are actually attending school has gone up by tens of millions. Education systems have been expanded to the extent that one can say that whole new generations have been able to begin school. At the same time, there are still currently more than one hundred million children who have no chances to obtain any educational services. Who are these children? Where are they? What has been done to try to get them into school? This chapter tries to answer these questions, and discusses general developments that have taken place in inclusive education during the past years, especially since the World Education Forum in Dakar of May 2000.

Data from the recent report from the *UN Millennium Project 2005, Toward Universal Primary Education: Investments, Incentives, and Institutions. Task Force on Education and Gender Equality (UN, 2005)*, describes the situation as follows.

> In the developing world as a whole, 85% of boys and just 76% of girls complete primary school. World and regional averages obscure the sharp differences in completion rates across countries. Primary enrolment rates and completion rates are lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. About 81% of children in the developing world complete primary school, but in Sub-Saharan Africa that number falls to only 51% of children who complete primary school.

The above report lists some factors that affect enrolment and retention rates, including extreme poverty, which seems to be the most common reason for dropping out of school or for leaving school before completing even the first primary cycle of three years. In general, urban settings seem to provide better guarantees for educational services than rural ones. Ethnic and other minorities seem to suffer more from a lack of education than the majorities. Disability has also been mentioned as one of the factors hindering education. These factors will be looked at in more detail below.

POVERTY: In Western and Central Africa, the median grade completed by the bottom 40% of the income distribution is zero, because less than half of poor children complete even the first year of school. By contrast, the wealthiest quintile has a median

of 4–6 years of schooling. The gap between the rich and the poor is highest in South Asia; in India there is a 10-year difference between the median attainment of the poor (0 years) and the rich (10 years). Poverty strikes the girls even more than boys. In India for example, the difference in the enrolment of girls and boys in the poorest households is 24%.

RURAL SETTING: In Mozambique average completion is 26%, but rural completion is only 12%. The same pattern exists in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Madagascar, Niger and Togo (Filmer and Pritchett 1998; Filmer 1999, UNDP 2005). Again, girls suffer more. Girls in rural areas register even lower levels of completion, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Niger, primary school completion among rural girls is 15%. (Bruns et al., 2003.)

ETHNO-LINGUISTIC DIVERSITIES: In Latin America, indigenous children have lower enrolment rates than non-indigenous children. In Mexico school enrolment rates for indigenous people are 20% below the national average. In Guatemala and Peru language barriers delay primary school enrolment. Ethnic differences also exacerbate gender differences in school enrolment: in Peru 65% of indigenous women and girls are illiterate, compared to 26% of the non-indigenous population. Ethno-linguistic diversity creates serious challenges also in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Pakistan. (Menezes, 2003.)

CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT COUNTRIES: In Somalia only about one in five children of primary school age attends school (UNDP 2005). In Afghanistan nearly all schools were closed in the nineties. In 2002 when the schools were reopened, millions and millions of boys and girls registered. It has been estimated that, during the first school year, up to 30 per cent of the primary school aged girls enrolled. (UNICEF, 2003.)

DISABILITIES: About 40 million of the world's out-of-school children have some form of disability. Less than 5% are estimated to complete primary school, and many never enrol or drop out very early. (UN, 2005.)

GIRLS: Girls make up a disproportionate share of out-of-school children. Children who are out of school tend to be poor, live in rural areas, belong to an ethnic and/or linguistic minority, have a disability, or live in a region affected by or recovering from conflict. (UN, 2005.) Although the gender gap in primary enrolment narrowed during the 1990s, still the majority of the children not in school are girls. (UNICEF, 2003.)

EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005: *Education for All - the Quality Imperative* gives even more detailed information on the current situation regarding school enrolment. Of the 103 million out-of-school children in 2001, 96% live in developing countries. The greatest concentration of educational deprivation is in Sub-Saharan Africa, and South and West Asia: together these areas account for almost three quarters of children who are not enrolled in school. About 57% of all out-of-school children in

the world are females, but the proportion of girls was 62% in South and West Asia, and 60% in the Arab States in 2001. The lowest Net Enrolment Ratios in Africa (<50%) are in Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Niger and Djibouti. Countries with a Gender Parity Index below 0.90 are situated mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab States, and in South and West Asia. (UNESCO, 2004a.)

2. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The global education development community set common targets for itself as early as 1990 in Jomtien, and subsequently in 2000 in Dakar, and once more in the UN Millennium Summit. The final target year for reaching these goals, 2015, is approaching. One-third of the initial time has already passed. It is time to take stock, to analyse what has worked and what lessons have been learned.

The developing countries and the countries in transition, together with the donor community, are currently working within a jointly defined framework, whose two main poles are the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are based on the Declaration. The goals as a whole, and especially two of them, number two and three, cover education. The right to education for all is clearly spelled out in the Declaration and the MDGs, but the rights of the disabled for inclusion in education are, perhaps, not emphasised enough.

The recently published report on the fulfilment of the MDGs, entitled "Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to achieve the Millennium Development Goals", and the Final Report of the special task force on education, entitled "Toward Universal Primary Education: Investments, Incentives and Institutions (UN Millennium Project, 2005)" both make mention of the challenges remaining, including the challenge of including the disabled. The positive achievements so far are mentioned, although the reports mainly analyse the problems still remaining. The current situation regarding reaching the two MDGs set for education is as follows:

MDG #2: Achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE)

The target of universal primary school education has been achieved or is on track in 51 countries. It is lagging far behind or slipping back in 24 countries. There is however, no up-dated data from 93 countries! The target of children reaching grade 5 has been achieved or is on track in 44 countries. Work on achieving this goal is lagging far behind or slipping back in 8 countries, and 116 countries did not report on this target.

MDG #3: Promote gender equality and empower women

The target for female primary education has been achieved or is well on track in as many as 90 countries. The situation is much worse in 14 countries. There is no reliable data from 64 countries. The target for female enrolment in secondary school has not been as easy to achieve. This target has been achieved or is on track in 81 countries, while 20 countries are lagging far behind or slipping back, and there is no data from 67 countries. (UNDP Website, 2002)

The scarcity of the data available makes all international comparison difficult. Although data collection has been improved and statistics have been updated as far as possible, still, the available figure can in many cases only give information as trends. Global statistics concentrate on the key goals and their targets. The main emphasis has thus far been on access and enrolments, equity – especially gender equity, and on the quality and costs of education. (UNESCO 2004b)

The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005: *Education for All - The Quality Imperative* uses an Education for All Development Index (EDI) as an international parameter. The EDI provides a summary quantitative measure of the extent to which different countries are meeting four of the six EFA goals: UPE, adult literacy, gender parity, and quality education. The EDI can be calculated for 2001 for 127 countries (almost 2/3 of the world's countries). According to EDI calculations, massive educational deprivation continues in Sub-Saharan Africa, some Arab States, and South and West Asia. Significant efforts are still required to reach the goals in Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, and Central Asia. Most countries in North America and Western Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe, have already reached the goals or are close. Progress between 1998-2001in the 74 countries with available data were widespread but not universal: about three out of four of these countries registered an increase in their EDI value. The average increase in the EDI in these countries was just over 2%, but some low-income countries are still far from even having a gain. Overall, EFA saw gains of 15% or even more. (UNESCO, 2004a)

While enrolment has been increasing, many children still drop out before finishing the fifth grade (UNESCO 2004b). Global and regional primary school completion rates have improved since 1990, but many countries are far off track for meeting the UPE Goal, and gender disparities remain. Even though the figures for school completion are far from meeting the goal for UPE, they represent important gains since 1990. Around the world, primary school completion rates for girls rose substantially in the 1990s; and gender parity is one of the fastest-moving development indicators.

Nonetheless, significant gender differences remain: in the developing world, 85% of boys and only 76% of girls complete primary school. Gender parity on enrolment exists in East Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America; but in Sub-Saharan Africa,

Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and particularly in South Africa, completion rates of girls lag behind those of boys. Gender concerns go far beyond the qualitative indicators of enrolment and completion, however. A wide body of research highlights the lack of a gender dimension in school curriculum and in classroom interactions, in which boys' participation is favoured over girls'. Elimination of these differentials, which do not show up in statistics, is critical to achieving true gender parity in education. Quickening the pace of progress toward UPE in the developing world will be a tall order. Unless current trends change significantly, the MDGs of UPE and gender parity in education will not be met in many countries in the developing world. (UN Millennium Project 2005.)

3. The Right to Education

Education has been defined as one of the basic human rights, in both the International Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and in the International Covenant on Educational, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966). However, even after so many years and numerous attempts, so many international treaties and agreements, this right is still not a reality to millions and millions of children, youth and adults. In order to make *de facto* the *de jure* international declarations and covenants on this right, the UN has prepared draft guidelines for countries to help them write and implement national laws ensuring the right to education for all.

Colclough (2005) analyses the status of ratification of the most central and important declarations and conventions. What follows below is a summary of Colclough's (1990) findings.

Most countries have ratified international treaties which enshrine the right to education and to gender equality. As a result, they are legally obligated to meet the provisions of these treaties, and to follow a reporting procedure assessing the extent to which the provisions are being met. However, the record on reporting is patchy. Both the MDGs and the Dakar goals reinforce and go beyond the human rights treaties in substance, by setting time-bound targets. The international agreements which most affect education, and gender equality within education, are:

The Declaration of Human Rights 1948
The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) 1966
The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) 1966
The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979
The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989

According to Colclough (2005) the process of ratification is important, since it accords the treaty an internationally recognised legal status, which obliges ratifying countries to implement its provisions. In addition to that, each of the human rights treaties listed above entails a reporting procedure, which requires the government's periodic self-assessment of its compliance with that treaty.

Colclough describes the official ratification and reporting process as follows: After ratification of a treaty (including UN Declarations, Covenants, and Conventions), an initial report from the ratifying government provides a baseline review of the situation in that country as regards conformity with the domestic human rights guarantees, together with an assessment of the obstacles to implementation of the provisions of the agreement, and specification of a strategy whereby these problems can be overcome. Subsequent reports monitor progress or regression and again, identify constraints and means of overcoming them. Governments are expected to publicise these reports, and to involve civil society institutions in both their production and dissemination.

Declarations, which do not have the status of a treaty or a convention, have other merits. According to Colclough (2005), the declarations that emerged from Jomtien and Dakar - and from the other major UN Conferences of the 1990s - often put flesh around the rather minimalist bones of extant human rights provisions. The Jomtien and Dakar Declarations, together with respective Frameworks of Action, can be seen as not merely documents which reconfirm a commitment to the existing agreements on the right to an education, but also as initiatives which go beyond previous provisions, sometimes substantially so. (Colclough, 2005)

The main purpose of supplementing these legally-binding commitments with the time-bound goals established in the Dakar Framework and set by the MDGs, is to provide means whereby political messages and legal commitments – at least at the international level – are mutually reinforcing.

The terms of the two MDG education goals, 2 and 3, are more narrowly couched in comparison with international legal commitments. Both these goals have time limits, which creates a number of advantages when using the MDGs for advocacy, for planning, for resource mobilisation, and for monitoring.

Unfortunately, both the Dakar and MDG goals themselves are open to a range of different interpretations. There is a need to stress the progress that has been made towards the goals, rather than outright success or failure. Targets and indicators should not become ends in themselves. Without attention to good governance, education-specific policy tools are likely to fall short of what is required to meet the goals.

In his report to the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Andersson (2005) discusses the concept of a 'rights-based' approach to development cooperation, and to education especially. The partner countries, both donors and recipients, should pay special attention to the principles of equality and non-discrimination in education. This means

initiating activities which will enhance the rights of girls, minorities, children with disabilities, and other vulnerable/disadvantaged groups. A rights-based approach emphasises gradual development toward attaining human rights. The rights-based approach shifts the perspective from unrealistic expectations of fulfilling the rights at once, to seeing them as gradually becoming a reality, i.e. the emphasis is on the process itself. Emphasising the importance of the development processes themselves, implies that there should be more emphasis on the participation and responsibilities of all stakeholders. The indicators of the rights-based approach do not differ much from the socio-economic indicators already in use. Taking a rights-based approach simply means the conscious application of human rights norms when choosing indicators for monitoring progress. One of the central principles of the human rights approach is to assure that the poorest, the most vulnerable, and marginalised groups are taken into consideration in the development processes, and that their equal participation in the process is promoted.

In the context of education, the prioritisation of the most vulnerable groups means that free, basic education is made available to the marginalised and vulnerable groups. This also means that – if there are still groups that are not able to participate in primary education – then the emphasis should be on developing basic education and not tertiary education, for example.

A human rights based approach to development plans for the education sector means that governments begin to draft specific action plans, using participatory processes that involve all stakeholders. The action plans should be formulated on the basis of inputs from different groups, and special emphasis should be on the participation of the most vulnerable groups, such as girls, the disabled, the poor, and the marginalised. These action plans should in particular include programmes which enhance literacy.

In choosing the indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the implementation of the above action plans, it should be kept in mind that indicators that are based on a human rights approach should reach beyond averages, and should be able to recognise the progress of those groups that are in the most vulnerable position. The indicators should also be able to recognise those processes which affect the rights of these groups. The tools of the rights-based approach also include monitoring and evaluation instruments and processes. In a rights-based approach, the development strategies adopted require taking a holistic view of development, because of the interdependency of human rights. Thus, fulfilling the right to education requires the fulfilment of many other rights as well. (Andersson, 2005.)

There are many challenges involved in adopting a rights-based approach to education: primarily, there is the problem of maintaining quality while still providing education opportunities for all children. Then there are the problems of getting all

children to enrol and stay in school. Expansion of the education system, in terms of new buildings and increased numbers of teachers, seems to be politically more attractive than the discussion on quality of education, which in many cases means a discussion of declining quality. The right to quality education has not been met

4.   The Situation of Persons with Disabilities in EFA: The Place of Inclusion in Policy Development

Discussions of the right to education of the disabled are hampered by a lack of up-to-date and reliable global or national level data. However, numerous, smaller baseline reviews and studies are available that can provide a basis for estimating the global situation. According to the estimates of the UN system and the World Health Organisation (WHO) in particular, about 10% of the world's population is disabled. Looking only at developing countries, the numbers are expected to be much higher. Disability affects the lives of more than 600 million people globally, the majority living in developing countries. It is therefore essential that disabled people are included in development efforts, in order to improve the economic and human welfare of millions of poor people in the developing world. (http://www.worldbank.org/disability)

An estimated 40 million of the 115 million out-of-school children have disabilities. The vast majority of these children have moderate impairments that are often not visible or easily diagnosed. Children with disabilities are likely to have never attended school. A 1991 report by the UN Rapporteur on Human Rights and Disabilities found that at least one in ten persons in the majority of countries has a physical, cognitive, or sensory (deaf/blind) impairment. Fewer than 5% of these disabled persons are believed to have reached the EFA goal of primary school completion. This number may be growing, due to global conditions of increasing poverty, armed conflict, child labour practices, violence and abuse, and HIV/AIDS. Because these disabled children are part of a family unit, it is estimated that at least 25% of the world's population is directly affected by the presence of disability. (http://www1.worldbank.org/education/pdf/EdNotesDisability.pdf))

UNESCO and others estimate that the number of children with disabilities under the age of 18 around the world varies between 120-150 million. In terms of school enrolment, UNESCO suggests that more than 90% of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school. UNESCO, the World Blind Union, and others estimate the literacy rate for disabled women at only 1%, compared with an estimate of about 3% for people with disabilities as a whole (Groce 1997 in UNESCO 2003.)

Disability Policies Today

The right of the disabled to education should be addressed in a wider context of human rights. In this context, international organisations play the key role. The human rights argument for equalising opportunities for people with disabilities was expressed initially by the United Nations in its 1971 *Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons,* and again in its 1975 *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons.* The UN General Assembly adopted the *World Program of Action Concerning Disabled Persons* (WPA) in 1982. The 1993 UN agreement on the *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for People with Disabilities* forms the basis for international legal standards on disability to be used in the formulation of programmes, laws and policy on disability. It is the foundation of almost every modern disability policy. An EU Resolution on Equality of Opportunity for People with Disabilities taken in 1996 adheres to the principles of the WPA and the Standard Rules. Most nations have disability policies expressing the principles of equal opportunities for disabled people.

(Metts, 2000; http://www.worldbank.org/disability, see also http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/dpi1647e.htm)

More on the legal and political commitments concerning disability can be found online at: *http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALPROTECTION/ EXTDISABILITY/0,,contentMDK: 20193595~menuPK:419088~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK: 282699,00.html# Contemporary_legal_and_political_commitments)*

Developments on Inclusion

The Third Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005: *Education for All - the Quality Imperative* was published in November 2004. The first EFA report "Is the World on Track?" addressed quantitative targets and challenges. The second analysed equity issues. The issues of disability, special educational needs or inclusion, were hardly touched in those first two EFA reports. The third report has finally reported something on the situation of the disabled in education. One of the background papers for the third EFA report gives an overall picture of what has happened on a higher political and global level. A summary of this background paper is given in brief below.

Among positive efforts on behalf of including children with disabilities in mainstream education, Richler (2004) reports that the OECD had conducted a study of students with disabilities in OECD countries and found a range of 0.6% to 4.6% of students in compulsory education receiving additional resources for defined disabilities. Although the recommendations from the 1994 UNESCO conference in Salamanca are far from having been implemented, there are other hopeful signs that

the concept of inclusion of all students in regular education is taking hold:. Richler (2004) continues describing the situation in the developing countries as follows.

Inclusive education in Africa is gaining momentum across that continent and is now supported by three coinciding and complimentary initiatives that are shaping education reform and provision throughout Africa. These are: *The Education for All Initiative, The New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). and *The Africa Decade for Persons with Disabilities* (1999–2009): all three initiatives require governments to make new investments in education to ensure that all children (including those with disabilities) attend and complete primary school. In Africa, in addition to these initiatives, a multi-stakeholder body, the *Association for the Development of Education in Africa* (ADEA), is working to support a regional movement for education by promoting policy dialogue, developing partnership, and building national capacity to provide good quality education in Africa. There are also several examples of national commitments to inclusive education in Africa in countries including: South Africa, Uganda, Burkina Faso and Mali.

Latin America is continuing to make strides in the movement for inclusive education with a joint civil society and government interest in ensuring that children with disabilities attend their community schools. These efforts are also being supported by the *Organization of American States* (OAS). As Richler (2004) states:

> In developing countries, 98% of children with disabilities still remain out of school and 99% of girls with disabilities are illiterate. With an estimated 150 million children with disabilities worldwide, the EFA goals cannot be achieved unless these children are brought into the education mainstream. Rights, research and resources all point to inclusive education as the only way to guarantee that children and youth with disabilities receive a quality education, and thus that EFA targets are met. If educational reform does not plan for inclusion, there will never be equality for children with disabilities.   (Richler, 2004.)

5. International Work on Education and Disability

As stated above, very little has been said about the education of the disabled in the three EFA Global Monitoring Reports (GMRs), especially in the first two only a little space is given to discussion of inclusive education. However, although the EFA GMRs do not report on the issue of inclusive education in depth, the topic has been on the agenda elsewhere. Perhaps the biggest step ahead was the establishment of the EFA Flagship initiative entitled *The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion.*

The EFA Flagships were begun subsequent to the Dakar EFA World Forum and the issuance of the Dakar Framework in 2000. Several areas were identified which merited special and concerted 'flagship' efforts. The goals of the flagship initiatives are: knowledge sharing, and partnerships towards clearly identified priorities, in nine areas – one of which is disability.

The International Working Group on Disability and Development (IWGDD), an alliance of global disability groups and experts and donors, was established in 1997 to serve as a forum for discussing strategies to make the global development agenda more inclusive. The IWGDD then assisted in establishing a framework for the above Flagship on The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities, which was formally launched in the Autumn of 2002 in Helsinki with the strong support and assistance of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. On 1 January 2003 the Flagship was formally established with a joint Secretariat hosted by UNESCO Paris and The University of Oslo, for a period of three years. A Steering Committee for the Flagship was also appointed.

The aims of the Disability Flagship are to 'act as a catalyst to ensure that the right to education, and the goals of the Dakar Framework, are realised for individuals with disabilities.' To achieve effective results within the overall EFA policy context, linkage between all the EFA Flagships will be essential. But the existence of a Flagship implies special, targeted focus on the key topic of the Flagship and on other, related, concerns which have thus far been unaddressed. Annual EFA meetings have only begun to include disability organisations; disability organisations were included in these meetings for the first time in 2002. So the need to expand outreach to and engagement of persons with disabilities should be paramount at all levels of the EFA effort.

The first three EFA Global Monitoring Reports so far lack any detailed information on access of persons with disabilities to basic education, adaptation of an educational system to accommodate the special needs of the disabled, primary school completion by the disabled, or effectiveness of the education in terms of livelihood outcomes for the disabled. It is recognised that reliable data is scanty, but at the moment there is no separate data on the disabled at all in these reports. The proposed Framework for Action covers global, as well as regional/national activities, and specifies some practical steps to be taken at each level to remedy this deficit. (EFA Flagship Paper, 2004.)

There is positive development elsewhere as well. What is most important is that the countries have begun to address the issues more and more. Many developing countries that previously made no mention of inclusive education in either the national education policy or their implementation strategy for education, have now brought the issue of inclusion into the discussion. In particular, developments in Latin America deserve a more detailed look.

One of the key elements for achieving Education for All (EFA) is to develop effective monitoring systems that can provide accountability for the education being offered to

all children, and can communicate progress in the context of national and international comparisons. These points are fully recognised in the document describing the plan of action for the Americas, prepared for the EFA world congress held in Dakar in 2000 (World Education Forum, 2000). However, as important as they are, such systems remain under-developed even in OECD countries, especially for students with special educational needs. In order to tackle this problem, the OECD has for more than a decade pioneered work in the field of education statistics and indicators. Over the past five years, this work has also focused on students with special educational needs (SEN) as defined in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (UNESCO, 1997.)

The task has begun of operationalising this definition and developing a system for gathering data in order to make valid comparisons between countries on progress toward EFA in general and SEN children in particular. Furthermore, a range of comparative statistics and indicators has been published (OECD, 1998; 2000; 2000a), and the work has progressed to investigation of ways of measuring student outcomes that will allow for both national and international comparisons.

The SENDD-Americas project extends the work developed at OECD into Latin America, following interest expressed at a launching meeting of country representatives and experts held in Mexico City in 2003. This project provides the opportunity of creating a system of indicators on students with disabilities, difficulties and disadvantages, that will apply across the Americas (North America, Central America and the Caribbean Islands, and South America). *(OECD Website: Students with Disabilities: http://www.oecd.org/document/35/0,2340,en_2649_14935397_ 34275875_1_1_1_1,00.html*

ADEA, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, has been instrumental in facilitating implementation of many activities in education: in 2004, ADEA decided to establish a pilot policy development programme to assist African countries in the area of inclusion. One of the causes for initiating the pilot programme was the scarcity of reliable data for planning purposes. However, only one country has so far indicated an interest in working on the theme of "including handicapped children". Nevertheless, it is still expected that a regional conference on inclusive education will be organised by ADEA in cooperation with the OECD in the near future.

Among recent efforts to address inclusive development, the World Bank is supporting research and programmes that tackle the problem of including children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms in the Latin American region, for example, inclusive education projects in Uruguay and Brazil. These two projects use the "Sentinel" approach, which is a method of monitoring upcoming and ongoing projects and programmes to identify opportunities for the inclusion of a disability dimension. In addition, the World Bank

has commissioned a number of studies and other types of research on inclusive education. Thematic studies have produced reports on: "Youth, Employment and Disability", "Youth at Risk, Disability and Access to Social Safety Nets", "Disabled Youth and Sexuality"; and booklets on "Inclusive Early Childhood Development" and "Inclusive Education", among others.

The World Bank has also supported training programmes in Latin America aimed at forming alliances for inclusive development, and at building bridges between the disability and development communities in the region. A series of multimedia resource kits on inclusive development, for use with clients and staff, and which highlight regional examples of good practices (e.g. inclusive education and provision of transport) have been produced and distributed. A training manual on "Media, Disability and Inclusive Development" is also available from the World Bank. (http:// www.worldbank.org/disability)

The World Bank has recruited a full time officer in charge of the disability issue, with part of the input of this officer being directed to education of children with disabilities. The World Bank has also been active and instrumental in setting up a network *Global Partnership on Disability and Development, GPDD.* The Bank's websites have a great deal of material and information on the disability issue and on inclusive education, which has been placed in the public domain and is easy accessible.

The World Bank not only finances development projects involving disability components – such as projects in education, health care, infrastructure, employment, de-institutionalisation, children and youth – but also works in a wide variety of disability-related fields, such as data collection and statistics, research and analysis, technical assistance and knowledge sharing. These activities have an impact upon disabled people or their organisations. Applying a disability lens to all World Bank funded projects, and making them inclusive of everyone, will eventually improve the prospects of poor disabled people in developing countries. (http://www.worldbank.org/disability)

While many communities around the world are ensuring that children with a disability benefit from equity and quality in education, there is currently no mechanism at the global, regional or national levels to capture knowledge of these community efforts in a systematic way; to translate it into resources for learning and for policy development for education reform; and to use it to enable current practices to extend beyond the infinitesimally small number of children with disabilities who now benefit from these practices.

Instead, the knowledge of these practices remains in the community and fails to inform larger processes that shape educational provision at the local and national levels, education planning and prioritising at the regional level, and investments in education at the international level. The UNESCO-led EFA Flagship entitled *"The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion"* has taken some steps in this

direction that could be assisted by the establishment of a sub-Working Group for the purpose of collecting and collating data on best practices and lessons learned in the area of inclusive education. Efforts to create access to education for children with disabilities will remain a school by school proposition unless there is a systematic analysis of education and development efforts and a corresponding development of strategies to draw attention to the implications of these efforts for children with disabilities.

In order to create a process for the systematic inclusion of children with disabilities in the education programmes financed or otherwise supported by the World Bank and other multilateral and donor agencies, the World Bank's Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD), together with its Task Forces, will develop strategies for scaling up models of inclusive education. GPDD provides an opportunity to build a knowledge network on the inclusion of children with disabilities in education. The GPDD should act as an advisory group in the development of strategies to highlight, develop interventions, and monitor the progress of children with disabilities within EFA. It will review existing programmes, projects, and policy dialogue in education (in global regions as well as in the education section of the World Bank and other agencies) and will develop learning tools for World Bank staff, and governments, for inclusive education planning. *(GPDD, 2005.)*

Although the general World Bank policy on education seems to be favourable towards providing educational opportunities for the disabled, interestingly some individual staff members are raising voices of concern. A senior World Bank evaluation officer writes:

> If basic skills are acquired mainly by students performing one or more standard deviations above the mean, donor funds are used principally to educate exceptional students. Is this what EFA donors intended? However, since various local benefactors have supported the 'meritorious poor' for centuries, there is no need to spend scarce international donor funds for them. Instead, the Education for All initiative should finance the amounts necessary to educate at least the students who have no learning disabilities (although EFA is interpreted as including special education as well). The World Bank has conducted detailed simulations to estimate the financing gaps and amounts needed by various countries to reach the EFA targets. These do not include the loss of instructional time or students' failure to acquire basic skills. Thus, the true costs of providing basic skills for 'all' have not been calculated. To offer basic skills just to students scoring one or two standard deviations below the mean (about 85% of those under the normal curve), the real cost might be three or four times higher than budgeted.
>
> (Abadzi, 2004)

The article is interesting in at least two ways. First, it doesn't reflect a human rights approach that sees education as a right for everyone, including those with disabilities, but rather sees disabilities as an extra obstacle to learning. Second, it could be asked where the responsibility of the countries themselves lies. The article gives the impression that all the emphasis for providing funding for inclusive education is on the donor organisations and countries:

> Some World Bank staff argue that their institution is primarily economic in nature and should not have to provide leadership in classroom-level issues; improving quality should instead be a task for agencies with a broad educational mandate, like UNESCO. However, UNESCO is governed by Ministries of Education and requires considerable consensus from governments to operate. Without large amounts of money to finance educational projects or programmes, UNESCO has limited leverage in policy dialogue, and its activities often lack a clear operational focus. Its employees are well intentioned and motivated, but real experts are few, so UNESCO may lack the know-how to change behaviours in the schools of the poor. Bilateral donors, such as USAID, offer more technical expertise, but their focus is determined by national political priorities. Other bilateral agencies may implement excellent projects on a small scale, but their methods are not adopted more widely. The current strategy of providing general budget support may not strengthen quality-oriented interventions. Despite good intentions, therefore, the donor community does not have a clear plan on how to improve the quality of education in countries at risk of missing the Education for All deadline.
>
> (Abadzi, 2004, p. 281)

6. What Has Finland Done?

Finland has contributed to the issue of inclusive education by organising and facilitating the Special Education Needs Roundtable at the Dakar World Education Forum. The Proceedings of the Roundtable were published as a book: *Meeting Special and Diverse Educational Needs: Towards Inclusion* (Savolainen et al, 2001). Although the printed version is out of stock, the text is still available online at: *http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/ julkaisut.php?julkaisutyyppi=8&kieli=3*

Finland also facilitated the launching of the Flagship on *The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion* by organising a multi-stakeholder workshop in Helsinki in September 2002.

The active level of Finnish support to international processes has been, and continues to be based on the wider Finnish development policy. There has always been a strong

emphasis in Finnish development policy on the promotion of the improvement of the living conditions of vulnerable groups, including the disabled. Especially since the *Decision-in-Principle 1996 on Development Cooperation* (MFA, 1996), the issue of disability has been clearly spelled out in every Finnish policy paper on international development cooperation. The policy paper, *Government Decision-in-Principle 2001 on Development Cooperation*, continued along the same lines (MFA, 2001). The most recent policy paper, Finland's Development Policy 2004, defines three cross-cutting themes in Finnish development cooperation, including the promotion of the rights of groups that are easily marginalised, particularly children, the disabled, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, and the promotion of equal participation opportunities for these groups (MFA, 2004a).

Finland's support to the disability issue during the 1990s was evaluated in 2003. The evaluation report, *"Label Us Able"*, is a proactive evaluation of Finnish development cooperation from the disability perspective (Milen et al., MFA, 2003) covering activities of the past ten years in the disability sector. The findings of the report were mixed, in general. However, in the education sector, the evaluators found a number of positive examples. Finland's support to development cooperation in the education sector for the years 1992–2002 was evaluated in 2003. This report (Sack et al., MFA, 2004b) appreciates the work in the areas of special needs and inclusive education, and recommends continuation of work in these areas as a special Finnish niche, a special 'value added' that Finland can supply and promote in the international development dialogue.

The findings and recommendations of the above mentioned evaluation reports have been incorporated into Finnish funded development cooperation activities. Inclusive education has become one of the main themes of Finnish funded development cooperation in the Western Balkans. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, a cadre of high-level experts in inclusive education has been educated up to M.A. level. At the same time, Finland has supported and facilitated curriculum development and teacher education in the direction of inclusive education. In Kosovo, where the entire education system was created after the war, Finland is supporting the establishment of the Faculty of Education in Prishtina University. A separate component in this support is special education teacher training. Inclusive and special education is being incorporated into the school level curriculum and in-service teacher training. Inclusive education is also being included in the Finnish funded development cooperation programmes in Montenegro and Serbia, as well.

In South Africa, Finland supports the implementation of the Government of South Africa Inclusive Education Programme, White Paper No 6. Finland has provided technical assistance in inclusive education to Zambia, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Mozambique.

The Education Sector Guidelines, for use in development cooperation and adopted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in July 2005, underlines education of the disabled as one of the key themes to be promoted. It is seen as an area of expertise and experience that Finland can offer to the bilateral, as well as to the global, development discourse.

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2. The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Reflecting on UNESCO's Role from Salamanca to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Kenneth Eklindh and Jill Van den Brule-Balescut

Abstract

This chapter traces the progress of inclusive education from the adoption of the Salamanca Statement of 1994 to the current work on elaboration of a Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. First, a brief overview is given of the development of inclusion, with an explanation as to why the focus broadened from the disabled to include excluded groups in general. UNESCO's role in promoting the right to education for all children is described, showing how inclusion for persons with disabilities can provide the key for ensuring access to education for all children. The goal of this chapter is to shed light on the elaboration of inclusive education at the international level, and UNESCO's role in this development.

1. Introduction

The debate on how to handle the education of children with disabilities has been raging since educators and policymakers first began questioning the effectiveness of segregated institutions. Today, the struggle for ensuring the right to education for children with disabilities has become an undeniable reality. The belief underpinning this chapter is that education is the bedrock on which to build truly inclusive societies. The claim is made here that assuring the inclusion in mainstream educational institutions of this largely excluded group of children with disabilities can only begin when educational inclusion is practiced and ensured. It is argued that this can only happen through systemic change of the education system which will allow us to move closer to the goal of Education for All (EFA).

Throughout this chapter, it may be helpful to bear in mind the metaphor of a journey, in order to make sense of the articulation between inclusive education, the right to education and EFA. Inclusive education, in this case, would not simply be a map demonstrating the correct path, but rather a guidebook containing a set of

strategies, methods and guidelines for reaching EFA. The right to education would be the set of tools used to construct the vehicle – the car , boat, bicycle etc., depending on the country context, terrain and speed at which the process in a given country could move. The speed of this process would eventually depend on various issues, including knowledge of inclusive education, access to resources, teacher training and political will. Finally, EFA would be seen as the destination or goal of this journey.

Exclusion from education because of disabilities is a widespread problem. Over half a billion persons are disabled as a result of mental, physical or sensory impairment. These persons may face both physical and social barriers which exclude them from society and prevent them from actively participating in the development of their nations. Approximately 80 per cent of the world's disabled population lives in developing countries. There are an estimated 140 million[1] children not attending schools, 30-40 per cent are children with disabilities.[2] The key to unlocking this potential is by ensuring that EFA becomes a reality.

Traditional strategies and programmes have not been sufficient to meet the needs of children and youth with disabilities, who are particularly vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. In the past, efforts have consisted of specialised programmes, separate special institutions and specialist educators. The unfortunate consequence of such differentiation, although well intended, has often been further exclusion. Instead of exclusion, education should play the role of facilitator in everyone's human development and functionality, regardless of barriers of any kind, physical or otherwise. Therefore, disability of any kind (physical, social and/or emotional) cannot be a disqualifier for education. Inclusion thus involves adopting a broad vision of EFA by addressing the entire spectrum of needs of all learners in one classroom.

In recent years, the appropriateness of separate systems of education has been challenged, both from a human rights perspective and from the point of view of effectiveness. The following sections elaborate on inclusive approaches in the education of children with disabilities, explaining the ways in which inclusive education differs from integration, in particular in terms of its human rights perspective. A look is then taken at the implementation of these inclusive approaches through the Flagship initiative activities and other UNESCO work, in order to provide an understanding of UNESCO's role in this domain.

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[1] UNICEF: The State of the World's Children 2005, Childhood Under Threat, December 2004, p. 22. On the Internet: http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_24432.html

[2] World Bank: Education Notes: *Education for All: Including Children with Disabilities*, August 2003, p. 1. On the Internet: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/Education-Notes/ EdNotesDisability.pdf

2. The Concept of Inclusion

UNESCO affirms that inclusion is a *"dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning."* Inclusion is seen as **a process** of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, in cultures and in communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education.[3] It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children.

Inclusion is concerned with providing appropriate responses to the broad spectrum of learning needs in formal and non-formal educational settings. Rather than being a marginal issue on how some learners can be integrated in mainstream education, inclusive education is an approach that looks into how to transform education systems and other learning environments in order to respond to the diversity of learners. It aims towards enabling teachers and learners both to feel comfortable with diversity and to see it as a challenge and an enrichment of the learning environment, rather than a problem. Inclusion emphasises providing opportunities for equal participation of persons with disabilities (physical, social and/or emotional) whenever possible into general education, but leaves open the possibility of personal choice and options for special assistance and facilities for those who need it.

Inclusive education differs from the previously held notions of 'integration' and 'mainstreaming', which tended to be concerned principally with 'special educational needs' and implied learners changing or becoming 'ready for' accommodation by the mainstream. In contrast, inclusion is about the child's right to participate and the school's duty to accept and ensure this right. It is thus about rejecting exclusion of learners for any reason, maximising the participation of all learners, making learning more meaningful for all children, and rethinking and restructuring school policies, curricula and practices so that all learning needs can be met.

Only by removing physical and social barriers to learning can we create truly inclusive classrooms and societies, and speak of EFA in an holistic sense.

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[3] UNESCO: Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education: A Challenge and a Vision. Conceptual Paper, Paris: UNESCO 2003. On the Internet: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001347/134785e.pdf

2.1 The debate within inclusive education

Implementation of inclusive education has made rapid progress in many countries. Some mainstream educationalists[4] have been resistant to the idea of inclusive education and continue to argue for separate, 'specialist' services. Nevertheless, there is overwhelming consensus on the importance of ensuring inclusion in society for persons with disabilities.

As far as educational inclusion is concerned, there has been an ongoing debate regarding ensuring quality education for the deaf, the blind, and the deaf-blind in terms of sign language and Braille acquisition and development. This is a challenge that has been proven possible to be met, as demonstrated successfully in some parts of Inner Mongolia and Uganda[5] as well as other developing countries. Likewise, there are those claiming that only small specialist units located in the standard school environment can provide the specialist knowledge, equipment and support for which the 'mainstream' classroom and teacher can never provide a full substitute. It is important to note that such provisions are not contrary to the concept of inclusive education. Inclusion is about ensuring the participation of all children to the maximum extent possible in the education system. Nonetheless it is recognised, as indicated in the UN Standard Rules and the Salamanca Statement,[6] that in some cases certain children with disabilities may require additional support outside the classroom.

2.2 Inclusive education in practice

Concretely, the move towards inclusion has involved a series of shifts from focusing on the child with disabilities as a problem for the school, to focusing on changes in the management of the classroom, which revealed surprising changes in learning. The results demonstrated benefits to those who were traditionally excluded from learning as well as all the others in the classroom. It has been shown that children learn social skills that cannot necessarily be easily quantified. Today inclusive education or 'inclusion in education' is a conceptual approach aimed at achieving quality education by making

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[4] The term 'educationalist' as it is used in sub-Saharan Africa includes and refers to all professionals in the field of education, including administrators, teachers, researchers, and theorists.

[5] UNESCO: Including the Excluded: Meeting Diversity in Education. Examples from Uganda, Paris 2001. On the Internet: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001226/122613eo.pdf

[6] UNESCO: The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994, UNESCO and the Ministry of Education, Spain, Paris 1994. On the Internet: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

changes to accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, social or psychological differences.

In particular, four key elements have tended to feature strongly in the practices of inclusion.[7] These four elements are as follows:

- *Inclusion is a process.* That is to say, inclusion has to be seen as a never-ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity. It is about learning how to appreciate difference, and learning how to learn from diversity. In this way differences come to be seen more positively as a stimulus for fostering learning among both children and adults.

- *Inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers.* Consequently, it involves collecting, collating and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources in order to plan for improvements in policy and practice. It is about using evidence of various kinds to stimulate creativity and problem solving.

- *Inclusion is about the presence, participation and achievement of all students.* Here 'presence' is concerned with where children are educated, and how reliably and punctually they attend; 'participation' relates to the quality of their experiences while they are 'present' and, therefore, must incorporate the views of the learners themselves; and 'achievement' is about the outcomes of learning across the curriculum, not merely test or examination results.

- *Inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement.* This indicates that there is a moral responsibility to ensure that those groups that are statistically most 'at risk' are carefully monitored; and that, where necessary, steps are taken to ensure their presence, participation and achievement in the education system.

It is imperative that schools and local authorities take the responsibility to ensure that inclusive education approaches are adopted, in order that all children can exercise their right to an education. Concrete steps towards exercising this right involve:

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[7]   UNESCO: Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education: A Challenge and a Vision. Conceptual Paper, Paris 2003. On the Internet: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001347/134785e.pdf

- Initiating debates around how the community understands human rights;

- Generating collective thinking and identifying practical solutions such as how human rights can be made part of the local school curriculum;

- Linking the Human Rights Movement with educational access;

- Fostering grassroots action and strengthening its ties to the policy level in order to promote protection;

- Encouraging the creation of community and children's councils where issues of access can be discussed; and

- Developing a community-school mechanism to identify children not in school, as well as to develop activities to ensure that children enrol in school and learn.

Moving towards inclusion is not simply about conceptual changes, but is rather about processes that couple theoretical changes with legislative and practical changes at the classroom level. Figures 1. and 2. below demonstrate some of the different conceptual and legislative stages that countries undergo on the road to inclusion. It is important to note that certain countries may be very advanced in terms of adopting laws and policies on the issue, but very weak as far as implementation goes; while others may have reached higher stages in the acceptance and application of inclusive approaches but may experience gaps in corresponding legislation.

In addition, adequate resources must be matched with political will, and constituent pressure maintained on governments to live up to their obligations. Ultimately, however, success will be judged by the quality of basic education provided to all learners.

3.   Moving Forward from Salamanca: from Integration towards Inclusive Education

In order to truly understand inclusion as it is defined today, there is a need to return to the historical context. Children with disabilities have always been among the last to be offered access to education, regardless of what country one observes.
The 1993 *United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*[8] was a landmark document, as it required member states to provide

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[8]   United Nations General Assembly: The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities,48th Session, Resolution 48/96, Annex, of 20 December 1993, On the internet, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/dissre00.htm

Understanding the Process of Inclusion

Ensuring the Right to Education for ALL

Knowledge
└─▶ Education for All
(Inclusion in Education)

Understanding
└─▶ Integration/ Special Needs Education

Acceptance (benevolence, charity)
└─▶ Segregation

Denial
└─▶ Exclusion
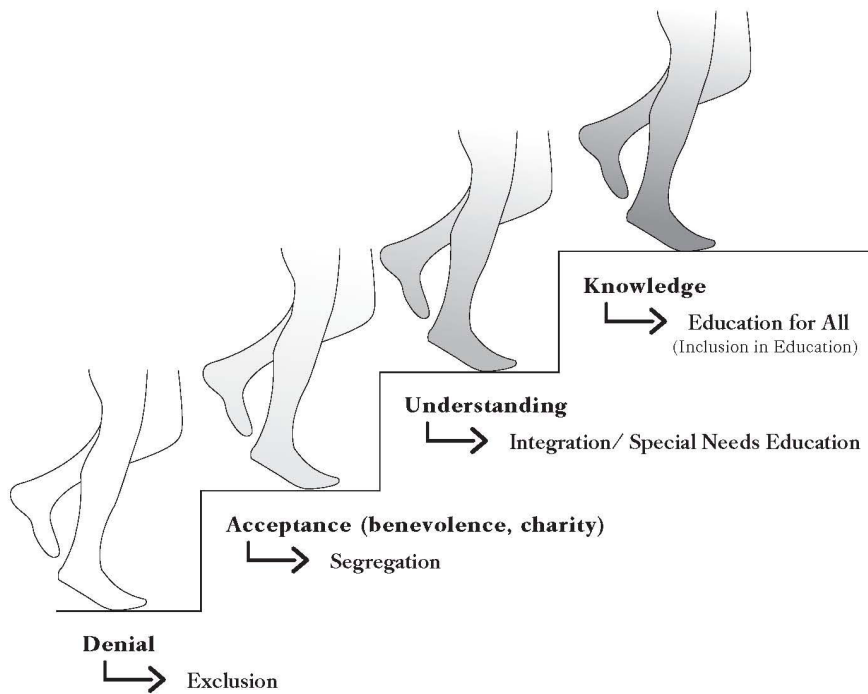
Steps from Exclusion to Inclusion

Figure 1. The Rights Framework for Inclusive Education

The figure traces the stages of understanding in the move towards inclusion. It demonstrates that attitudes in society may direct the actions, level of commitment and services provided to traditionally excluded groups. However, this image is merely an example of a general process which may differ from one country to another.

The Rights Framework for Inclusion

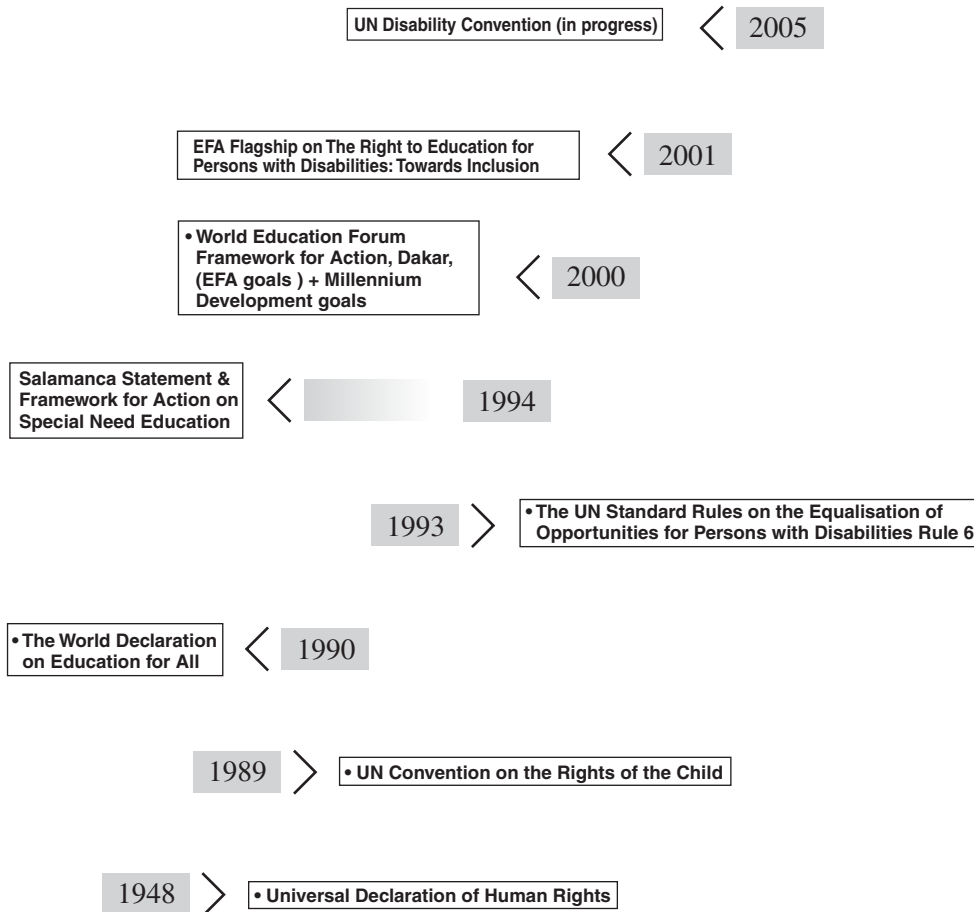|	
UN Disability Convention (in progress)	2005
EFA Flagship on The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion	2001
• **World Education Forum Framework for Action, Dakar, (EFA goals) + Millennium Development goals**	2000
Salamanca Statement & Framework for Action on Special Need Education	1994
1993	• **The UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Rule 6**
• **The World Declaration on Education for All**	1990
1989	• **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**
1948	• **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

Figure 2. Understanding the Process of Inclusion

This figure demonstrates that the concept of Inclusive Education is rooted in various human rights instruments which together provide a framework to support the implementation of inclusive approaches.

education in integrated settings for persons with disabilities, and to ensure that the education of these persons is an integral part of the educational system.

Integration, the first step in the move towards inclusive education, has generally been spurred by a progressive educational ideology. Integration was understood as a gradual reform of the special education system without challenging the ideological underpinning of the system.

Dissatisfaction with progress towards integration caused demands for more radical changes in many countries. One of the main concerns of those opposing integration related to the way students were designated as having special needs. More specifically there was resistance to what is referred to as the 'medical model' of assessment, within which educational difficulties are explained solely in terms of a child's deficits. The greatest weakness of this model is that it prevented analysing why schools failed to successfully teach so many children.

Despite national policies emphasising integration, many countries reported a significant increase in the proportions of pupils being *categorised* in order for their schools to earn additional resources. For example, an analysis of policies in Australia, England, Scandinavia and the United States, carried out by researchers in the late eighties,[9] claimed that the increased bureaucracy that was often associated with special education legislation, as well as the struggles for additional resources, led to an escalation in the proportion of children who came to be labelled as 'disabled'.

The next great leap in the move towards inclusive education was the Salamanca Statement (1994), which called on the international community to endorse an approach to inclusive schools by implementing philosophical, practical and strategic changes.[10] The Salamanca Statement proclaimed:

"Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all." [11]

There were substantial outcomes from the Salamanca Conference at the country level: some thirty countries benefited from technical and financial support for testing

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[9]   Saleh, Lena, *From Torremolinos to Salamanca and Thereafter: A Tribute to Spain*, 2005.

[10] In 1994, 92 Governments and 25 international organisations agreed on this dynamic new Statement which called for inclusive education. UNESCO (1994): The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994, UNESCO and the Ministry of Education, Spain. On the Internet: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

[11] UNESCO (1994): The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994, UNESCO and the Ministry of Education, Spain, Art. 2. On the Internet: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

the new orientations emerging from Salamanca.[12] Among the results of the Salamanca Conference were the development of a number of publications and supporting materials for managers and administrators, as well as an Index for Inclusion[13], which provides indicators to assist schools in creating inclusive cultures.

The significance of Salamanca is that it encouraged looking at educational difficulties in a new light. In addition to challenging the labelling carried out by schools, it also put the issue of diversity at the core of the educational, cultural and social debate. This new direction in thinking is based on the belief that changes in methodology and organisation – made in response to pupils experiencing difficulties – can, under certain conditions, benefit all children. This primarily explains the move away from focusing on children with disabilities to looking at excluded children in general. In this way, pupils who are currently categorised as having special needs come to be seen as a stimulus for encouraging the development of richer learning environments. Inclusion in education is principally about respecting diversity in society and reflecting it in the educational community.

These normative instruments, together with revised thinking, suggested that progress would be much more likely if it were recognised that difficulties experienced by pupils resulted from the ways in which schools are currently organised and from the forms of teaching that are provided. Consequently, it was argued that schools needed to be reformed and pedagogy needed to be improved in ways that would lead schools to respond positively to pupil diversity – seeing individual differences not as problems to be fixed but as opportunities for enriching learning. Furthermore, the appropriateness of separate systems of education began to be challenged from a human rights perspective, as well as from the point of view of effectiveness. The following section will explore the human rights dimension of inclusion.

4. Human Rights at the Core of Inclusion

At the heart of inclusive education are principles of human rights. This constitutes a change in approach from previously held notions of integration. It can be said that the Salamanca Statement (1994) put inclusion on the agenda, as well as being the first international agreement that supported a human rights perspective in education, in that it stated: "inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and the

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[12] UNESCO (1999): Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programs, Report 1996-1997, First Phase, Paris 1999. On the Internet: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001176/117625eo.pdf
[13] Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education. On the Internet: http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/indexlaunch.htm

enjoyment and exercise of human rights." However, paving the road to inclusion began during the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All. Here the world's leaders took up the challenge of exclusion from education by stating that *"The learning needs of the disabled demand special attention. Steps need to be taken to provide equal access to education to every category of disabled persons as an integral part of the education system."*[14] This brief mention of disabled groups was made possible through the determination of various NGOs representing disabled persons during the conference.

At the core of inclusive education is the human right to education, pronounced in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 which states:

> Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory (…). Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
> (Art. 26 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Paragraphs 1 and 2).[15]

Equally important are the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989), such as the right of children not to be discriminated against, stated in Article 2 and Article 23. Article 23 stipulates that children with disabilities should have:

> ...effective access to and receive education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development. *(Article 23)*

Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989), on the 'Aims of Education', states that the educational development of the individual is the central aim of education, and that education should allow children to reach their fullest potential in terms of cognitive, emotional and creative capacities. In addition, the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) are other key international human rights agreements that not only emphasise the prohibition, but also the active elimination, of discrimination. A logical consequence

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[14] World Declaration on Education for All, On the Internet: http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ ed_for_all/background/jomtien_declaration.shtml (Article 3.5).
[15] UNITED NATIONS: World Declaration of Human Rights: http://www.un.org/Overview/ rights.html

of these internationally recognised human rights is that all children also have the right to receive an education that does not discriminate against them on any grounds such as caste, ethnicity, religion, economic status, refugee status, language, gender, disability, and etc., and that specific measures must be taken by a State to implement these rights in all learning environments within that State.

In the world today there are numerous examples of situations where children are deprived of their basic human rights, especially the right to education. In addition to estimates stressing the number of children in the world excluded from school, the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education identifies discrimination as a key barrier, found within and working through the education system itself, to fulfilling the child's right to education.[16] By ensuring that human rights are at the core of educational approaches, this barrier can be removed. Putting human rights at the core means that children should be seen as holders of the right to education, which implies not only the right to have access to education, but also that human rights must also be applied in education and promoted *through* education.[17]

However, the question of what is meant in practice by 'human rights' is unclear to most practitioners and especially not to planners and decision-makers in Ministries of Education. In addition, there is not yet an explicit acceptance of using human rights as a framework in the policy and planning process of education. Nevertheless, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of human rights as a prerequisite for sustainable human development. Indeed, there is a growing trend worldwide among the UN agencies, international NGOs and bilateral donors that stresses the need for mainstreaming human rights into development cooperation. The need to mainstream human rights derives from the fact that successful outcomes of development activities and programmes are dependent on participation, ownership, and accountability. Successful outcomes can only be sustained if the beneficiaries feel that they are the owners of the programmes and the outcomes. There is, thus, a clear push towards applying human rights and rights-based approaches as an in-built component of development assistance provided by UN agencies and a growing number of bilateral donors.[18]

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[16] UNITED NATIONS: Economic and Social Council: Commission on Human Rights, 61st Session, Document E/CN.4/2005/50, 17 December 2004: Economic, social and cultural rights. The Right to Education, Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Mr Vernor Munoz Villalobos. On the Internet: http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G04/171/40/PDF/G0417140.pdf?OpenElement Note: this is a link within the UN documents system which may require a password to access.

[17] SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency): Education, Democracy and Human Rights in Swedish Development Cooperation, Position Paper, Stockholm 2001. On the Internet: http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/02/11/34/EduDemHum.pdf

[18] Sandkull, Olof (UNESCO, Bangkok): Strengthening Inclusive Education by Applying a Rights-

While there are very important human, economic, social and political reasons for pursuing a policy and approach of inclusive education, achieving inclusive education would also be a means of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups and nations.

5. The Link between Inclusion and 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 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 in order to move towards the ultimate goal of inclusion in society.

Although the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) provides the most up-to-date frame of reference on EFA, the documents produced as a result of a UNESCO Conference held in Salamanca (1994) continue to provide a valuable reference point for all those involved in lobbying for inclusive education. This Salamanca Statement, and the accompanying Framework for Action, is arguably the most significant international document that has ever appeared in the field of inclusive education. It argues 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."[19]

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based Approach to Education Programming (ISEC Paper, 2005). On the Internet: http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/appeal/IE/Publications_and_reports/OS_ISEC_2005_Paper.pdf

[19] UNESCO (1994): The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994, UNESCO and the Ministry of Education, Spain, page ix. On the Internet: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

It is essential to note that inclusive education is not a parallel initiative to EFA but a principle of the movement. This is explained in the Annex of the Dakar Framework for Action, which states:

> *"The key challenge is to ensure that the broad vision of 'Education for All' as an inclusive concept is reflected in national government funding agency policies. Education for All must encompass not only primary education, but also early childhood education, literacy and life skills programmes. Using both formal and non-formal approaches, it must take account of the needs of the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs…"[20]*

In order for EFA to be realised, children with disabilities, which are among the most marginalised and at risk for exclusion, must be ensured access to quality education. Addressing inclusion in a comprehensive manner is a major challenge to the educational community. It calls for a holistic approach, which addresses the underlying causes of exclusion. UNESCO's role is to ensure that inclusion is adopted as a crosscutting issue, so that the Education for All goals in fact do cover ALL learners.

5.1 Building partnerships for inclusion:
The Flagship on the Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities

UNESCO was given the role at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 to lead the process towards implementing Education for All. In order to facilitate reaching the EFA goals, a number of Flagship initiatives[21] were begun which placed an emphasis on these particular areas.[22] Nine inter-agency Flagship programmes were launched or consolidated following the World Education Forum, as a way to strengthen international cooperation by emphasising the benefits of working together on major cross-cutting themes that are important in achieving EFA. The Flagship established in January 2003 on "The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion"[23] was, as the name indicates, developed to support the education of persons with disabilities.[24]

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[20] UNESCO (2000): Dakar Framework for Action Education For All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments. Text adopted by the World Education Forum Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000. On the Internet: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf

[22] EFA Flagship Initiatives. On the internet: http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/indexlaunch.htmhttp://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/indexlaunch.htm

[23] UNESCO (2004): The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion, Conceptual Paper of the Flagship, December 2004, On the Internet: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001378/137873e.pdf

[24] The Secretariat from 2003–2005 was shared between UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and the Department of Special Needs Education at the University of Oslo.

Since its inception, the above-named Flagship initiative has commenced several noteworthy activities, including:

- Organising meetings of international disability organisations, with the participation of UNICEF, ILO, OECD, the World Bank and UNESCO, at which strategies for the implementation of the Dakar Goals were discussed;

- Elaborating a Conceptual Paper for the Flagship;

- Awareness-raising and capacity building through international conferences, workshops, meetings and seminars

- Coordinating stakeholders in promoting the text in Article 17 of the UN Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities;

- Coordinating contributions to the annual EFA Global Monitoring reports to adequately reflect the situation for children with disabilities;

- Cooperating with other Flagships to broaden their approach to EFA;

- Initiating a Working Group of Experts on Statistics and Indicators in Education, to collect and collate specific quantitative and qualitative statistics, to set and define indicators related to education for persons with disabilities, and to collect data regarding resources allocated towards the implementation of EFA for these individuals.

- Initiating a Working Group on Teacher Education, with the task of promoting education for all children, with a special focus on children with disabilities;

- Initiating networking between and among professionals and other stakeholders with respect to EFA and children with disabilities

- Cooperating with EENET on publications

- Cooperating with The International Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE) on "Rebuilding for Inclusiveness",[25] a resource which provides advocacy and implementation tools for rebuilding initiatives to ensure the right to education for children with disabilities and those newly disabled post- emergency.

The Flagship on "The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities…" has an important role to play in the coordination of activities at the international level; and

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[25] INEE (Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies): http://www.ineesite.org/inclusion/rebuilding.asp

its continuity will depend on the willingness of donors to fund this initiative and the development of additional activities.

5.1.1 Capacity building: development of policy guidelines

In addition to its joint-coordinating role on the Flagship, UNESCO has been working on systemic policy change through the elaboration of a set of Guidelines for Inclusion.[26] These guidelines, which contain a planning matrix, are intended to provide information and awareness, to be a policy tool for revising and formulating EFA plans, and to serve as a basis for discussion among policymakers, educators, NGOs and international organisations impacting policy in both private and public education and concerned with promoting access for ALL learners.

These guidelines, which have been developed together with leading experts in the field from disability organisations and other specialised agencies, are intended to systematise how previously excluded children are planned for in education. They attempt to demystify the notions surrounding inclusion, and to demonstrate that challenges can be overcome through a willingness to change attitudes regarding inclusion. By utilising these guidelines, those working with and analysing National Plans for Education can identify gaps and strategies in order to take steps to ensure that inclusion is achieved within their educational systems, and that every child has access to a quality education.

5.2 Towards a convention for persons with disabilities: UNESCO's normative role

UNESCO's normative role has been reinforced through its advocacy work through the above-mentioned Flagship on the Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion: On the Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. The proposed Convention for Persons with Disabilities now under elaboration contains an Article on education (Article 24)[27] , which includes provisions indicating that persons with disabilities can "access inclusive, quality, free primary and secondary education to the extent possible in the communities in which they live"; and that they "receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education."

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[26] UNESCO (2005): Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All, Paris.
[27] This version represents the Chairman's Draft Text (October 7, 2005) of an article which is presently under elaboration in the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.

Further, Article 24 of the proposed Convention states that: "only in exceptional circumstances where the general education system cannot adequately meet the support needs of persons with disabilities, States Parties shall ensure that effective alternative support measures are provided, consistent with the goal of full inclusion."

This Convention, which will become the newest human rights instrument when it is agreed upon and signed, sends an undeniable message of inclusion to the international community of persons with disabilities. In addition to being an important normative instrument which places a high priority on accessibility, and on mainstreaming disability into the development agenda, it is also a unique participatory process that has involved many NGOs which have contributed their first-hand experience and expertise on disability issues. Some 500 representatives from disability organisations have been involved in the Ad Hoc Committee sessions.[28]

Once adopted, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will seek to transform human society into a new community of stakeholders in disability rights, through the establishment of international legal standards. It will clarify the content of human rights principles and their application to persons with disabilities, provide an authoritative global reference point for domestic laws and policies, as well as provide mechanisms for monitoring, establish a standard of assessment and achievement, and a framework for international cooperation.

Furthermore, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee in articulating the human rights of persons with disabilities as a "lived experience" in the lives of persons with disabilities could be an entry point for realising a society that would value difference and respect the equality of all human beings, regardless of their "differences".

Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated that the goal of this Convention is "to provide a building block for the development of truly inclusive societies, in which the voices of all are heard, including persons with disabilities."[29]

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[28] For further information please consult the website of UN Enable: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/

[29] UNITED NATIONS: Press Release on Kofi Annan's statement on the Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, SG/SM/9323 SOC/4649, to be found at: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sgsm9323.doc.htm

7. Conclusion

UNESCO, over the years, through its active involvement in the elaboration of normative instruments as well as through its programmes and activities, has sought to ensure that children with disabilities are considered, planned for and provided with access to quality education in the school system. It should be emphasised that inclusion benefits not only children with disabilities, but also all those who are effectively marginalised and excluded from education. It is a key to reaching the EFA goals, and an important part of the development process.

Over 800 million adults are illiterate,[30], and large portions of this illiterate population are individuals with various disabilities. We know that today more than 90% of all disabled children in Africa never come to school. For the part of the population that is older then 20 years of age, this figure is even more striking. Despite these alarming statistics, there are several good practices of developing inclusive environments in countries such as Kenya, South Africa and Senegal.[31] These and many other positive experiences must be reinforced and supported in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals. The World Bank, together with UNESCO and its partners, recently called for strengthening global cooperation and partnerships to "unlock" opportunities for the more than 600 million disabled people worldwide, of whom 400 million live in developing countries.[32]

It is simply impossible to conceive of achieving the Millennium Development Goals of literacy, gender equality and education for all, without the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Great strides have been made in this area over the past two decades; however, UNESCO and the international community have an increasing responsibility to ensure that persons with disabilities, as well as other excluded groups, receive access to education, if we wish to ensure peace and sustainable development for all the citizens of the world.

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[30] Please refer to www.unesco.org/education for the Global Monitoring Report on Education for All 2006.

[31] For country examples please refer to: UNESCO (1999): Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programs, Report 1996-1997, First Phase, Paris 1999. On the Internet: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001176/117625eo.pdf

[32] http://www.efc.be/ftp/public/newsline/winterspring2005.pdf

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3. Quality Education for Persons with Disabilities

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1.   Introduction

> "Quality is at the heart of education, and what takes place in classrooms and other learning environments is fundamentally important to the future well-being of children, young people and adults. A quality education is one that satisfies basic learning needs, and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living. It influences what students learn, how well they learn and what benefits they draw from their education." (The Dakar Framework for Action)

The World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) and the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) both refer to quality as a condition for achieving Education for All (EFA). In the Dakar Framework for Action, the term 'quality' is found in the formulations of Goals 2, 5 and 6, quoted below:

> Goal 2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

> Goal 5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

> Goal 6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Quality education was the focus of the 47th Session of the IBE (International Bureau of Education) in 2004.[1] The final declaration adopted at the end of the Session by the

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[1]   IBE is the intergovernmental organization in the field of education, an institution within UNESCO. Website: www.ibe.unesco.org

participants, among them Ministers of Education, heads of delegations and delegates for 137 of UNESCO's member states, reaffirmed the "crucial importance of education for (...) national development policies." It stressed the need to help young people to confront an increasingly complex world, in which many social groups are being marginalised, and in which inequalities among and within countries have increased. One of the discussion papers for the session was concerned with "the need to ensure that learning opportunities contribute to effective inclusion of individuals and groups of youth into the wider socio-economic, civic and cultural fabric of society."

In order to monitor the progress towards EFA and the Dakar goals, annual global reports are being issued. The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 has the sub-title "The Quality Imperative". Although there is a growing consensus about the need to provide access to education of "good quality", "there is much less agreement about what the term actually means in practice" (UNESCO, 2004b).

This chapter presents and discusses different understandings and aspects of quality education in general, and quality education for persons with disabilities in particular. Indicators of quality can be quantitative and qualitative in nature, they can represent outsider and insider perspectives, individual and system perspectives. The implications of the use of these different types of indicators will be discussed below. Factors that affect "what gets done" in the learning environment and at the system and policy level will then be presented, and finally the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report's (UNESCO 2004b) account of progress towards quality education for persons with disabilities will be discussed.

2.   Understanding Quality Education

Schools are expected to help children "develop creatively and emotionally and acquire the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes necessary for responsible, active and productive citizens." (UNESCO, 2004b). The Dakar Framework for Action characterised a quality education as one that both satisfies basic learning needs, and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living. A background paper for the EFA Global Monitoring Report, (Magrab, 2005) highlights these same aspects, with reference to the individual, and states that a quality education implies "an education that is appropriate to the needs of the individual learner in an environment that fosters the healthy development of social and academic development and prepares the child to be included in the larger society."

2.1   Attempts at "defining" quality education

Certain key elements came to light when searching for definitions of the terms 'high quality' education and 'quality education'. One of these key elements for 'quality' is the success with which the education contributes to the learners' cognitive development. Another is the success with which the education contributes to "learners' creative and emotional development, in supporting objectives of peace, citizenship and security, in promoting equality and in passing global and local cultural values down to future generations" (UNESCO, 2004b). The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2004b) also refers to measures of 'quality' in education as being e.g. the success with which the education ensures respect for individual rights, improved equity of access, improved learning outcomes, and increased relevance to the learners' everyday life. Moreover, the Report emphasises that education should be not simply a means but also an end in itself, having intrinsic worth.

The term "welcoming schools" has been used to describe a school environment that: "includes everybody, supports learning and responds to individual needs" (UNESCO, 1999). The "Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments", published by UNESCO Asia and the Pacific Regional Bureau for Education uses the term "embracing diversity" (UNESCO, 2004c). The "Index for Inclusion" (Booth & Ainscow, 2002) presents a dimension of the school environment called "creating inclusive cultures" in school, and explains this as a dimension that "creates a secure, accepting, collaborating, stimulating community, in which everyone is valued as the foundation for the highest achievements of all." Another dimension in the Index is called "producing inclusive policies", explained as policies that "encourage the participation of students and staff from the moment they join the school, reach out to all students in the locality and minimise exclusionary pressures." (Booth & Ainscow, 2002.)

2.2   Descriptive and normative interpretations

Quality can be understood as descriptive or as normative. Descriptive means that the definition of 'quality' is described in reference to characteristics of education, for example how a classroom is managed, how a teacher presents information, how teachers and parents collaborate. A descriptive presentation of quality education includes no indication of what is considered to be 'better'. A normative interpretation, however, refers to how well or how satisfactory something is considered to be according to certain criteria, for example how well learners read, how well the school is managed, and how well learners with communication problems participate. In the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, entitled "The Quality Imperative", 'quality' is sometimes

used in a descriptive sense, but seems most often to be used in a normative sense, meaning 'high quality'.

Even when quality is used in a descriptive sense, it may be understood as if it were normative. It has been said that "what gets measured gets done." The fact that something is being measured indicates that it is considered to be important. In order for a school to contribute to high rankings, resources tend to be channelled to areas that are measured and ranked.

At the IBE's session in 2004, referred to above, UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura concluded that quality education today must "assist young people to acquire the attitudes and competencies of what might be called the 'democratic mind'." This is a normative statement regarding quality education.

2.3   Special concerns for learners with disabilities?

To recognise and appreciate every learner as an individual with his or her interests, talents, personality, ideas, knowledge and special needs, calls for differentiation in the classroom. Many of the aspects of quality education are common to all children in all countries. But there are also some special "issues that emerge when considering children with disabilities" (Magrab, 2005).

One framework for understanding diversity among learners sees some children as having functional characteristics that may cause limitations in activity and participation, depending on environmental and other contextual factors. Mental functions, sensory functions, language and speech functions, and mobility related functions, among others, have an impact on learning, communication, movement, interpersonal interaction and social activities. Certain learners' functional characteristics may call for specific educational approaches, support and services. For example, some learners need more concretisation than others. Persons who are blind and rely on touch for reading must be given the opportunity to learn to read Braille: they need reading material in Braille. A person who is deaf needs teachers or interpreters who have mastered sign language. A person with a movement limitation may need a longer time to perform certain tasks, or may need equipment that helps with writing. Simplified text can enable poor readers to comprehend. Seating support can be critical for a learner with poor balance. All learners should be allowed to show what they have learned. The quality of education for these individuals will depend on whether or not the necessary approaches, support and services are in place.

The 'enrichment perspective' is an alternative or supplementary approach to focusing on functional limitations. This approach is based on the learner's strength and ability, and includes an assessment of what the child can do as well as what the school can do. This information is used as the point of departure in creating or adapting learning

environments (Befring 1997). In this perspective the quality of education could be defined according to how well it manages to focus on each individual's special talents, interests, potential, and creativity.

3   Quality of School Life

'Quality of life' is a concept also used in research. 'Quality of life' studies may focus on which conditions are good and which are bad for citizens in a society; such studies aim at increasing the understanding of an individual's experienced "well-being" in interpersonal relations and in relation to the environment. Objective and subjective criteria are used, as well as the relation between the two. Objective criteria typically include health status, living conditions and economic situation. 'Quality of life research' has, however, increasingly emphasised the need for subjective studies in which persons share their own evaluations of their 'quality of life'. Subjective studies have revealed that persons with disabilities sometimes have service priorities that differ from those that professionals and even close caregivers assume that they have (Lankhorst, 1989; Wormnæs, 1990).

'Quality of school life' is another concept that is being used in education research. Objective aspects concern conditions in the school and educational system, while subjective aspects of the 'quality of school life' comprise the learners' own experiences and the "meaning" that learners attach to their school experience (Tangen, 1996).

Although there are individual variations regarding criteria for experienced 'quality of life', the following factors have been identified that are seen as being of general importance: level of activity (e.g. self-realisation, freedom of choice, possibility to use one's abilities), belonging (e.g. good interpersonal relations, closeness to others, friendship, feeling of membership with a group), self-confidence (e.g. a feeling of mastering life, usefulness, acceptance of oneself, lack of guilt and shame), and a basic feeling of happiness (Næss,1987).

4   Context Dependency

There are contextual differences within societies and among users that lead to different opinions regarding the characteristics of quality education. Contextual differences on the society level that influence quality indicators are described in the case studies presented by Carron & Châu (1996), of teaching/learning conditions in primary schools in four countries (China, Guinea, India and Mexico). The contexts they refer to are characterised according to: living conditions of pupils, what the parents expect from

the school, educational and occupational aspirations of parents for their children, reasons for learners' absenteeism, grade repetition, and drop-out rate.

Perceptions of services provided for persons with disabilities are also affected by such socio-cultural factors as the role and responsibilities of a child in the community and family, how disability is understood and viewed, the value of education in the society, the role education plays for the future of a citizen, political priorities, and economic and material resources (Froestad, 1996; Ingstad & Whyte, 1995).

On the individual level, gender, age, and prior learning, plus functional abilities and limitations among learners, can be regarded as contextual factors that influence how one defines 'quality'. For example, the characteristics of 'quality' education for a learner with severely limited vision may differ from characteristics of quality education for a learner who sees well. Characteristics of quality education for a learner with severe cognitive limitations may differ from characteristics of quality education for a learner with high academic aspirations and performance. Nevertheless, one could argue that high quality education is one that caters for all the needs of the wide diversity of functional characteristics that exists in the population of a society. There is some debate regarding whether each school and classroom should be expected to provide good quality education to all learners regardless of functional ability and limitation, or if it is the school system as a whole that should be expected to provide this.

5.   Measures and Indicators of Quality Education

Despite the various interpretations of what 'quality education' means, certain dimensions and types of indicators have been generally accepted: these are described below:

5.1   Levels of measurement

The quality of educational programmes for persons with disabilities can be characterised according to several different levels.

The first level includes the intentions, content, organisation and methods, as they are formulated in plan documents. According to the Dakar agreement, all states are requested to develop or strengthen national 'Education for All' plans. A plan for achieving high quality education should include policies for ensuring equity in education regarding gender, age, religion, ethnicity, home location and socio-economic status. The plan should also include policies for meeting the diverse needs of a student population.

The second level includes aspects of the practical implementation of the plan in regard to organisation, teaching and learning methods, and teaching and learning material. In analyses and evaluations of quality, the second level may be seen in relation to the first level, as putting "the *descriptive* aspect of the program – what the practice is – in relation to the *prescriptive* aspect – what the practice should be" (Nilsen, 2003, author's translation).

The third level includes the participants' views and opinions about experiences with the programme. Participants comprise students, parents, teachers and school managers.

The fourth level, the outcome level, includes the experiences just described regarding the third level, but it also includes such factors as students' attendance, completion, performance level, skills, experiences, attitudes and knowledge. Often much more weight is given to educational outcomes, especially cognitive achievements, than to other outcomes. Outcomes can be measured according to pre-defined competencies or attitudes or according to learners' values, wishes, opinions, capacities and needs. In assessing quality according to outcome, ignoring differences among learners and contexts is likely to lead to misconceptions in regard to 'quality'. An acceptable outcome for one learner in one context may be less acceptable for another learner in another context.

5.2   Quantitative and qualitative indicators

Quality of education can be measured and formulated in both quantitative terms and qualitative terms. However, as stated in the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, most indicators available to assess quality are quantitative. One example of quantitative measures is 'frequency counts', such as 'number of peer interactions in a session'. Learner skills, e.g. articulation in speech or reading comprehension, can be evaluated in relation to expected performance or pre-defined norms for performance. The relation between e.g. learner performance and student-teacher ratio can also be calculated. Quality is often measured indirectly, by implying that certain characteristics of schools or the education system have an effect on quality. Measuring numbers of teachers with competence in inclusive education or special needs education is an example of an indirect measurement of quality.

Qualitative aspects of 'quality' refer to what something "means" to someone and to a person's experiences, opinions, views, feelings, understandings and perspectives. Qualitative factors are e.g. parents' perception of the performance of the school, and the school's own priorities and perspectives on peer interaction. Processes, patterns, and opinions as well as products and results can also be the objects of qualitative studies. Quantitative and qualitative aspects supplement each other when trying to define 'quality education'.

5.3   Outsider and insider perspectives of quality

Quality of education may be viewed on the basis of objective criteria, from the outside, and on the basis of subjective criteria, from the inside. Objective aspects could include one or several learners' reading skills according to predefined norms: that would be an outcome measure on the individual level, viewed from the outside. Objective aspects could also include measures of available reading material and other learning conditions in school. That would be an outcome measure on the system level, also viewed from the outside. Subjective aspects, on the other hand, could for example include one or several learners' own experience with reading sessions or with reading material, and the 'meaning' then attributed to that school experience. Insider perspectives add to our understanding of what matters in education, as illustrated in the following example:

Important reasons for sending daughters with different kinds of apparent impairments to school were expressed by mothers in a Christian slum area in a Moslem district in Pakistan (Olsen, 2004). The mothers' reasons were interpreted as enrichment, empowerment and protection outcomes of their daughters' education. *Enrichment* outcomes included knowledge and insights of importance for their daughters' future lives, e.g. to know how to count, calculate and write letters, to be able to read for further insights and for reading the Bible, to understand their society better, to get better marriage contracts, to improve their self-image and to be valued more highly by others in their neighbourhood. The mothers considered education as a 'dowry' that would not disappear if the marriage broke up. Improving job opportunities was considered to be of less importance. *Empowering* outcomes included the acquisition of practical skills that would enable their daughters to take care of their personal hygiene and their clothes, to master cooking and cleaning, and to care for their children and elderly relatives. They expected that their daughters would then be met with more respect, not least from a husband and in-laws. *Protection* outcomes were indirect gains from learning good behaviour, and understanding what is right and what is wrong; their daughters' possibilities for participation in society would thereby be increased.

Learners with special needs are in danger of being underestimated and overlooked in studies of what matters in education. Some may not be able to speak for themselves in academic terms, but may nevertheless have experience and ideas of significance for quality of education. In order to obtain insider perspectives also from learners with disabilities, extra care must be taken to make sure that their "voices" are heard and interpreted. The Concept Note for the EFA Flagship Programme entitled "The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion"[2], states that "success

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[2]   An EFA Flagship Programme is a network of organisations and other stakeholders, intended to stimulate the EFA process, with a special focus on one group of learners. The Flagship entitled "The Right

will be judged by the quality of basic education provided to *all* people with disabilities, and such judgement will be appropriately passed by them, not by donors, or even governments." Parents, teachers and other stakeholders are also insiders within their own contexts.

5.4   Individual and system perspectives on quality

Criteria for quality education may relate either to the educational situation for individual learners or to characteristics of an education system. Both individual and system perspectives are useful in descriptions and evaluations of quality education for learners with functional limitations or special learning difficulties. Individual criteria include the relevance to the learner's life of the targeted skills or individual acquired skills and competencies. Systems criteria can include budget management, distribution of resources, file systems, and length of instruction programmes. It is assumed that certain systems factors influence individual outcomes: better management may contribute to better learning conditions and thereby better learning; a child-friendly environment may contribute to more learner satisfaction. Rates of enrolment, participation, promotion and completion can also be regarded as indicators of the quality of a school system. The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report (p. 143) refers to an estimate suggesting that "there are 150 million children with disabilities worldwide and that fewer than 2% of them are enrolled in school." School systems that systematically exclude children with disabilities should not be characterised as being of high quality. There is limited data on the vulnerable group of learners with a disability, as a group, separated from other learners, in data for a given factor.

6.   Factors that Affect Quality Education for Persons with Disabilities

Some of the factors that affect the quality of education for all learners, with a special focus on learners with a disability, are presented below. Factors related to learning conditions include the teacher-learner interaction, as well as 'framework' factors related to availability of resources and the characteristics of the school system. Awareness of such factors can trigger creativity in finding solutions for improving quality.

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to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion" works to promote the right to quality education especially for individuals with disabilities. It draws global attention to the fact that Education for All is a fundamental human right, which cannot be realised without full inclusion of all people who are in any way disabled.

In a discussion paper for the 2004 IBE workshop on quality education and social inclusion, quality education was interpreted as an education that is inclusive. Relevant education of good quality is considered a vehicle for the construction of an inclusive and participative society. The 2005 EFA Monitoring Report (p. 135) states: "Focusing on quality education for enhanced social inclusion implies identifying strategies for overcoming or eliminating the barriers to full participation in quality education for individuals and groups which experience discrimination, marginalization and exclusion or which are particularly vulnerable." Locating the most vulnerable groups is a challenge, according to the report.

Aspects of quality for persons with disabilities are enrolment age, drop-out rates, grade repetition, and completion. Ensuring regular attendance is a key factor for quality education. The quality of a school system is influenced by learner characteristics as well as by a range of contextual factors, such as for example diversity of ethnic groups in the community, involvement of the community, religious influence, and the general health and economic status of the community.

Resources are more important determinants of pupil achievement in resource-poor environments than in richer ones. In many developing countries, length of instructional programmes, use of school library and school meals are important determinants of pupil achievement. However, more economic resources do not automatically lead to better education.

6.1   Teaching style and classroom management

Among the critical factors in ensuring 'quality' in education are first and foremost the teachers' competence and flexibility. Teachers need to know about the variety of ways in which students learn. Many commonly used teaching styles do not serve children well. They are often too rigid, rely too heavily on rote learning and memorisation, and place learners in too passive a role. According to the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, there are even children who drop out of school due to child-unfriendly environments. A combination of direct instruction, mediated experience, and independent studies is often recommended as a teaching style that reaches learners with diverse learning styles.

Teacher expectations regarding what the teacher thinks pupils will learn also affect what they learn. Negative expectations underline the danger of self-fulfilling prophecies, and can have negative consequences for some pupils. High expectations contribute to better performance. Teachers' ideas and knowledge about the impact of a disability on a learner's academic potential and on possibilities for participation are therefore critical.

6.2   Language of instruction

Studies show that students learn better when the language of instruction is their mother tongue. Many teachers teach better in their mother tongue. Learners become more active, participate more, and ask questions more easily (Broch-Utne, 2000). Initial instruction in the learner's first language improves learning outcomes and reduces subsequent grade repetition and dropout rates.

Some learners are forced to learn reading in a second language. Since the language of written texts maps onto oral language, learners need to first develop some proficiency in the second language in order to learn to read. Vocabulary knowledge in the second language is crucial to reading in that language. Bilingual strategies, such as translation and word substitution are conducive to learning to read. Understanding the written text is influenced by the reader's prior knowledge; this calls for culturally familiar topics and examples to be used in texts and illustrations (Pang & Kamil, 2004).

Persons who are blind, and rely on touch for reading, should learn to read Braille in their mother tongue (Okungu, 2005). For a person who is deaf, sign language should be the language of instruction.

Children who begin their education in their mother tongue continue to perform better, than those for whom school starts with a new language. The same applies to adults seeking to become literate.

6.3   Curriculum and exam system

The success of an inclusive school system which serves all children depends on a flexible and relevant curriculum that can be adapted to the needs of each learner. All learners cannot reach the same level of competence, and do not learn at the same pace.

An exam system that does not restrict any disabled learner's chances of promotion and completing school is also a quality factor. A learner who is blind may need to do the exam orally instead of in writing. A learner with a movement impairment may need extra time or access to special equipment. A learner with an intellectual impairment disability should be allowed to show acquired skills even if they lie outside the core curriculum for the majority of learners.

6.4   Textbooks and material

The quality and availability of books and additional learning materials affect what teachers and learners can do. Text and illustrations given in text-books should be interesting and relevant for situations in which the learners live and are expected to apply their knowledge and skills. Information should further be accessible regardless

of a learner's functional limitation. For example: material in Braille is crucial for a person who is blind. Simplified text can enable poor readers to comprehend the information presented. Picture or symbol charts can enable learners with no or unintelligible speech to communicate. Large print can facilitate reading for persons with low vision or reading difficulties.

6.5 Class size and grouping

Reducing class size has had a positive impact on many learners' achievements. Whole-class ability-grouping, with the aim of creating classes that are homogeneous in ability level, is generally ineffective (Slavin, 1996). Teachers should vary their level and pace of instruction so as to be consistent with learners' level of performance. The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 (UNESCO, 2004b) has a box (Box 4.2) about inclusive education versus special education):

> "Studies in both OECD and non-OECD countries indicate that students with disabilities achieve better school results in inclusive settings. Inclusive education also provides opportunities to build 'social networks, norms of reciprocity, mutual assistance and trustworthiness' (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003). Special schools tend to perpetuate the segregation of disabled people, yet, for students with some types of disabilities, provision of high-quality education in special schools may be more appropriate than 'inclusion' in a regular school that does not provide meaningful interaction with classmates and professionals. Ensuring that inclusive education is of good quality entails costs – for adapting curricula, training teachers, developing teaching and learning materials, and providing transport and accessible facilities – that many countries may have trouble meeting. A third option is to reconcile the inclusive and specialized approaches in a "twin track" approach in which parents and learners decide whether to opt for an inclusive regular school or a special school initially, with inclusive education remaining the ultimate goal."

In many countries, former special schools have been transformed into competence and resource centres for the regular inclusive schools.

6.6 Transport, school buildings and equipment

Accessibility to the school site for persons with movement restrictions, due to visual or mobility limitations, can be facilitated by transport, by personal assistance or by equipment such as white canes, sticks, crutches, walkers, carts or wheelchairs. Accessibility to buildings, classrooms and toilets for persons with movement restrictions is a prerequisite for quality education for all. Seating support can be critical for a learner with poor balance. Well-adapted hearing aids and glasses are absolutely crucial

for some learners. Acoustics and light also have an influence on possibilities for learning through activities and participation for persons with hearing and visual impairments.

6.7   School management and external support

Stronger links among government departments responsible for early childhood care and education, primary and secondary education, and health can help improve the quality of education for all.

Relations between teachers and educational administrators are also important, as well as relations between the school and parents.

Head teachers/principals can have a strong influence on the quality of schools. The schools must be given the means to adapt and differentiate education within the class. The planning of adapted and special education should take place in the local environment, and be based on local conditions.

Even if all teachers are well trained to cater for a diverse student population, there is still a need for some experts who know more: they can act as resource persons. They could also work in centres that could be contacted by teachers who need to consider unfamiliar approaches or learn about new material.

7   Developing Quality Education through Teacher Education

Teacher competence is regarded as the key factor in developing quality education (Meijer & Stevens, 1997). Teachers must be prepared to accept, celebrate and handle all children, to handle diversity within an inclusive setting.

Teacher education programmes targeting learners with disabilities were first developed for teachers who worked in segregated settings for pupils with clearly defined disabilities, such as blindness and deafness. Countries that have experienced an increase in the inclusion of pupils with disabilities into general education settings, have also seen increasing support for the idea that both special and general educators need expertise in both fields in order to promote quality education for learners with special needs (Palmer & Hall, 1999). In other words, general educators need expertise in special education, and special educators need expertise in general education.

In order to develop quality education for all, initial teacher education for all teachers must be adjusted to a situation with a greater diversity of learner backgrounds. Topics like differentiation and individualisation, adapted education, and special needs education, must be included in the curricula for all teachers; and awareness about factors that affect quality for persons with disabilities should be created.

Some countries have experienced that competence development has been redirected from mainly being designed for individual teachers towards being more school based, emphasising the importance of developing the whole staff's competence. Colleagues who have participated in a teacher development programme have implemented changes in their schools more easily than have individual participants who were the only representatives of their school (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Ainscow, 1999). One person who contributes new ideas cannot have much of an impact, nor can one person implement changes alone. Topics such as innovation and change should also be considered important in improving the quality of education (Nilsen, 2003).

In preparing teachers for their work in schools, one can distinguish between training for a craft and educating for a profession. To train teachers for the craft of teaching means to give them a practical overview of principles for learning, to train them in practical skills, and to give them a repertoire of teaching techniques and procedures that have been found useful. Professional education, on the other hand, is intended to create a basis for teachers who are open and exploring, reflective and knowledgeable, teachers who have learned strategies for constructing new knowledge, for observing, describing and evaluating learning processes (Schaefer, 1967 in Dale, 1993). Economic, political, cultural and practical factors influence the directions taken in teacher preparation.

Three aspects of professional knowledge have been defined. They have been called factual knowledge (or propositional or formal knowledge), practical knowledge (or skills) and knowledge of familiarity (or tacit knowing) (Göranzon & Josefson, 1988). This distinction is explained and exemplified through an example from Alsterdal (1999): Factual knowledge can be learned from books, for example, information about autism. Practical knowledge or skills refer to the mastering of certain techniques, for example, mastering a technique that stops a physical attack from a client with behaviour problems (Alsterdal, 1999). Knowledge of familiarity is competence that is characterised by being difficult to explain, such as the ability to handle a unique situation or to recognise a face, or the competence a teacher displays by being able to prevent a client with a behaviour problem from pulling another person's hair. The teacher has recognised certain patterns in the learner's behaviour, and has learned a way to stop the behaviour, but is unable to explain exactly what he or she observes in order to make a choice regarding what to do.

Schön (1983; 1987) has argued that factual knowledge cannot 'drive' a practising teacher's practice, since a teacher is continuously faced with unique situations. The teacher defines or conceptualises the situation, selects what will be treated as the situation, sets the boundaries of attention and uses his or her existing repertoire of examples, understandings and actions. A quality education for persons with disabilities requires that a teacher's competence includes all three aspects of professional knowledge: factual, practical, and familiarity.

Provision of services for persons with disabilities and development of the special needs education profession are interdependent. Some would say that the services for persons with disabilities define the terms on which the professions develop, while others would say that the qualifications and training of the professionals influence the development of the services provided.

8.   Economic and Social Benefits of Better Quality Education

High grade repetition, dropout, and non-completion rates reduce the cost-effectiveness of educational programmes. Improving the quality of what goes on inside the classrooms, should increase the rate of completion of education, to the benefit of society and most often also to the individual learner. The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report states that universal primary education, meaning that all children of primary school age participate in the school system and complete primary school, is "possible only if the school system has the capacity to accommodate entire cohorts of children and deliver decent-quality teaching. Timely completion of primary schooling with a reasonable degree of mastery of the curriculum – notably basic cognitive skills such as literacy and numeracy – appears to be necessary for primary education to yield the expected benefits over the long run, and is obviously a condition for successful participation in post-primary education." (UNESCO, 2004b.)

Late enrolment is common throughout the developing world. The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report shows how, in some countries, late enrolment varies according to gender, residence, region and wealth. Irregular participation, grade repetition, drop-out and non-completion are assumed to be more frequent among learners with disabilities than among learners with no disability. Grade repetition can also be regarded to some degree as a sign of insufficient school quality, as it is a measure of the proportion of children who do not master the curriculum. In some countries grade repetition exceeds 10%. This is costly for the country, and can be experienced as a personal failure by the learner.

According to the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, higher cognitive achievements and better skills have clear impacts on subsequent individual earnings for persons in developed countries. In developing countries, most studies indicate that the impact is even stronger. Well-educated individuals can make more informed choices about their welfare

International comparisons across countries indicate that higher average achievement scores also have a strong positive impact on economic growth in the society. Particularly the core skills of literacy and numeracy have been shown to have economic and social pay-offs. According to the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, "Education systems

that are more effective in establishing cognitive skills to an advanced level and distributing them broadly through the population will bring stronger social and economic benefits than less effective systems." (UNESCO, 2004b.) Life skills influence a person's possibility of coping in everyday community life, in family life and at work.

Non-cognitive skills, such as motivation, perseverance, honesty, reliability, determination, and personal efficacy, also affect earnings, according to the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, but measurement problems have discouraged attempts to estimate the effects of such characteristics. Quality of life may also be affected by non-cognitive skills.

The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report refers to the impact of quality education on behavioural change, as it has been analysed regarding HIV/AIDS risk avoidance. It is obvious that knowledge and risk-reducing skills are acquired through a complex network of formal and informal sources. Nevertheless, studies from several African countries indicate that the general cognitive and social gains from a basic education seem to be the main factor in protecting adolescents and young adults from HIV infection

9.   The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005's Account of Progress towards Quality Wducation for Persons with Disabilities

The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report is based for the most part on the most recent global education data obtainable, which is for the 2001/2002 school year.

The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report presents only limited data on the situation in education for persons with disabilities. Regarding the monitoring of progress towards the provision of early childhood care and education for all, the importance of assessing especially how well programmes reach "the most vulnerable and disadvantaged" is emphasised, and there is a reminder of the importance of distinguishing between 'care' and 'education' in the monitoring of services for the preschool age group. The conclusion of the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report states that: "Progress towards the ECCE goal has been slow, especially as it relates to reaching marginalised populations. ... More evidence is required to assess progress towards the goals in terms of quality in low-income countries."

According to the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, monitoring of progress within formal education does not report specifically on learners with disabilities. One challenge in monitoring the progress of disabled learners is related to the indicator issue: indicators for disabilities differ from country to country, and are based on different understandings of disability. One of the tasks of the EFA Flagship Programme entitled "The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion" is to ensure

that the EFA Monitoring Process includes specific quantitative and qualitative statistics and indicators related to education for persons with disabilities, and to documentation of resources allocated to the implementation of EFA for these individuals. As the 2003 EFA Global Monitoring Report states: "Accurate and timely data are critical if education policy is to be evidence-based and the monitoring of progress meaningful (UNESCO, 2003) As a response to this challenge, an ad hoc working group on statistics and indicators has been established by the above-mentioned EFA Flagship Programme.

It should also be noted that, as long as some children are understood as being unable to learn, school systems may not count them as out-of-school children. Insufficient learning conditions may not be recognised because the educational needs of children with disabilities are not always understood.

The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2004b) refers to the challenge of meeting the needs of learners with disabilities, "given the unresolved debate between proponents of a strong inclusive approach and those who argue for special needs provision. In large measure this controversy reflects the many definitions and types of disability. Each type requires learner-specific responses, whether in mainstream or special schools."(p. 145) This reference in the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report to "type of disability" is not in harmony with the WHO's understanding of disability as it is reflected in the International Classification of Function, Disability and Health (ICF).[3] The ICF is based on a so-called bio-psycho-social model of health. Disability is seen to reside in the interaction between the person and the environment.

It is not easy to understand or accept the suggestion in the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report that meeting the needs of learners with disabilities is hampered by the debate about inclusive versus special classes or schools. This debate could in itself just as well function as an incentive to discuss how best to ensure that education for all really means *all* and not *almost all*, and to ensure that that learners with disabilities do not become invisible or left out in these contexts. The quality of the education should be in the forefront, not where the learners are placed. Much can be done without waiting for a – probably unrealistic – global consensus on placement. All schools should increase their capacity to respond to learner diversity, and the aim should be to find indicators and criteria for monitoring this capacity.

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[3]   http://www3.who.int/icf/

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4. Overview of the Development of Inclusive Education in the Last Fifteen Years in Ethiopia

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1. Introduction: Contextualising Disability

In Ethiopia, the presence of various prenatal, perinatal and postnatal disabling factors (such as the health of prospective mothers, difficulties related to delivery, childhood infectious diseases, lack of proper child management, traditional harmful practices, under-nutrition, malnutrition, civil strife and periodic episodes of draught and famine), and the absence of early primary and secondary preventive services in the country at large, has brought with it a phenomenal increase in the incidence of disability. The problem still remains as a serious challenge to the country (Tirussew, 1993).

In Ethiopia, the cause of disability is wrongly perceived as: a) a curse; b) or a consequence of a sin or wrongdoing or evil deeds by parents, ancestors, the persons with disabilities themselves or c) other supernatural presences (Tirussew, 2004). Such thinking can predominantly be ascribed to the traditional (moral) model which associates disability with sin, shame and feelings of guilt. This is historically the oldest model, resulting in general social rejection and ostracism, generating a feeling of self-hatred, dependency and hopelessness (Kaplan, 2004). This sort of unfounded causal attribution creates dismay and psychological shock on the part of the family members at the birth of a child with a disability. The feelings of the family may ultimately generate a psychological distance between persons with disabilities and the community, as well as the society at large.

The erroneous understanding of disability and its association with moral wrongdoing forces parents to hide their children with disabilities at home, to be ashamed of them and to undermine the child's potential to learn and lead an independent life. It is unfortunate to note that most children with disabilities are deprived of a conducive, child-friendly environment in their earliest years of development. That is, children with disabilities experience more emotional and social deprivation, as well as neglect and rejection, early in life than do other children. Lack of acceptance and support from the family, limitations in the range of participation and interaction with peers in the neighbourhood, and exclusion from community activities, all combine to put

children with disabilities at greater risk of developing psycho-social malfunctioning in addition to the disabilities they already have. It is particularly important to underscore the fact that, if the nature of close, warm interaction at the family level is endangered, the ensuing damage to the personality development of the child will have the most critical effects on subsequent school performance and interpersonal relationships. The cumulative results of a false understanding of the reason for disability is the prime cause for persons with disabilities to constitute the poorest of the poor in Ethiopia.

In the last decade and half, there has been a growing, positive, trend in a large segment of the population to perceive disability as a medical problem, a rehabilitation or social issue. Recently, associations of persons with disabilities, community workers, as well as educators, have begun to consider disability as primarily a social issue. It is particularly encouraging to document the increasing understanding on the part of the National Associations of Persons with Disabilities, and the Ethiopian Federation of Persons with Disabilities, that social discrimination is the most significant problem of persons with disabilities in Ethiopia. The associations are coming together and taking the lead in raising the awareness of the general public, as well as the policy makers, to take this issue of social discrimination on board. In this regard, an emphasis needs to be placed on the roles of nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), educators, and other professionals, particularly healthcare professionals, in raising public awareness of the true causes of disability and the results of social discrimination of the disabled.

2. The Education of Children with Disabilities in Ethiopia

In the last four decades, the education of children with obvious sensory disabilities such as blindness and deafness was provided by special schools begun by overseas missionaries. The national baseline survey in Ethiopia estimates that persons with obvious sensory, motor, and cognitive disabilities constitute about 2.95% of the total population (Tirussew et al., 1995). That amounts to about 1,380,000 persons with disabilities, out of which 691,765 are children of school age with disabilities. Of these children, only 0.33% have access to special schools and classes at primary and secondary levels. According to a recent statistical report prepared by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (1997), in the whole country there are only seven residential special schools, eight special day schools and forty-two special classes for children with disabilities. Furthermore, the special schools are generally overcrowded, urban-based and ill equipped, with insufficient human and material resources.

The education of children with mental retardation started in the late 1980s in Ethiopia with the establishment of special classes in Kokebe Tibeha Primary School at Addis Ababa. Since then, special classes for children with mental retardation have

emerged in different, regular, mainstream school settings. However, a good number of children with motor disorders (polio cases and others with neurological problems), reading and/or writing difficulties, low vision, hearing problems, mild developmental disabilities, behavioural problems, as well as other problems, have been going to regular schools alongside children without disabilities. The problems and special needs of most of these children with disabilities most often go unrecognised; and the children are usually left without any special educational support. They often suffer from psychological and academic difficulties, and most of them are destined to leave school early in life. This has contributed to the alarming early school drop-out rate in the country (Tirussew, 2001). In Ethiopia, there has never been a placement service in the school system which would make an assessment at entry point to help identify children who need back-up support, nor are the schools prepared to provide the necessary support to address the children's special needs.

In Ethiopia, expansion of the special day and residential schools has been in a state of stagnation for the last four decades, for several reasons. However, attitudinal barriers which in one way or another affect the government's choices in education policy, and political commitment, could be considered as the main deterrent for the expansion of the education of children with disabilities in the country at large.

3. The Inclusive Movement in the Country

3.1 New Policies

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on December 9, 1991. The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), Article 9(4), states that all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land. Article 13 further elaborates that all legislative, executive and judicial organs have the responsibility to respect and enforce what is embodied in the Constitution, and such enforcement should be done in conformity with human rights considerations. Policy documents on health, education and social welfare articulate statements that uphold the protection, care, health and optimal development of the child within their sphere of influence.

The Health Policy (1996) of the federal government of Ethiopia, as stated in sub-article (10.6), promotes and encourages early utilisation of available health care facilities for the management of common childhood diseases. The need to provide back-up support for the family in health matters, particularly for women and children, is stressed in this document. The Policy has further proposed the establishment and maintenance

of specific health care services, such as: maternal health care (Article 10.1); family planning (Article 10.2); maternal nutrition (Article 10.3); optimisation of access and utilisation of immunisation services (Article 10.5); and encourages the active involvement of parents in protecting and maintaining family health (Article 10.8).

The Education and Training Policy (1996), confirms the importance of early childhood education, stating that "kindergarten will focus on the all-round development of the child in preparation for formal schooling" (Educational Structure No. 3.2.1). While this provision is meant to address the needs of all children, the Policy, with an appreciation of the needs of students with disabilities, has indicated that "special education and training will be provided for people with special needs" (Educational Structure No. 3.2.9). The Policy further confirms that efforts will be made "to enable both the handicapped and the gifted to learn in accordance with their potential and need" (Educational Structure No. 2.2.3). Furthermore, in the new programme of the Ministry of Education (TESO) designed to overhaul teacher education, teacher training institutes and colleges are required to give future teachers a course in special needs education, It is hoped that this undertaking will facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities into the Ethiopian School System.

The Developmental Social Welfare Policy (1996) affirms that all efforts shall be made to implement all international and regional conventions and legal instruments concerning the rights of children, and to which Ethiopia has already acceded (Article 5.1.3). Dealing with specific areas, the Policy (Article 5) declares that protecting and ensuring the healthy development of children deserves special attention. It further elaborates that "appropriate and comprehensive care and services shall be extended to children so as to ensure their all-rounded and harmonious development"(Article 5.1.1). Furthermore, in light of the high prevalence of potentially harmful, traditional practices in the country, the Policy clearly warrants the necessity of directing efforts towards their elimination (Article 5.1.4) and educates the public to this end (Article 5.3.4). The document has also committed itself to addressing the problems of children in especially difficult circumstances, which includes children with disabilities. The Policy asserts that every "effort shall be made to find appropriate and effective ways and means of dealing with these problems" (Article 5.1.9). Similarly, with regard to the needs of orphan children, the Policy clearly aims to facilitate conditions which will "enable orphan and abandoned children to get the assistance they need and to eventually be self sufficient" (Article 5.1.7). Finally, the Policy declares that all efforts shall be made to "provide protection against child abuse and neglect" (Article 5.1.10).

It is important to note the inclusiveness of the policies in terms of their desire and commitment to address the needs of all children, including the needs of children with disabilities, orphans, and homeless and working children. Furthermore, the health, education, and social welfare policies intersect at the point of promoting the holistic

development of the child by protecting the child from any form of disabling diseases, or physical and psychological abuses, and creating an environment conducive to the optimal development of the child. Finally, the policies tend to acknowledge the role of the family and its empowerment towards the harmonious development of children of diverse needs.

The Ethiopian government is also moving forward to address employment issues surrounding persons with disabilities. Proclamations targeted at protecting and securing the rights of citizens with disabilities include: Proclamation No. 101,1994 which focuses on the elimination of discrimination and protects the rights of persons with disabilities to compete for and obtain employment based on their qualifications; and Proclamation No.1,1995 which reinforces the democratic right of every citizen, including persons with disabilities, to be protected under articles 11, 14, 16, 18, 20, 25, 28 and 31 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia (Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2002). These are all encouraging steps, taken by the present government in the last decade, even though there is still a great deal to be done in terms of enforcing the policies and proclamations. Indeed, an attempt to mainstream the needs of persons with disabilities is a step forward towards creating an inclusive society.

3.2. Family and Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR)

With the global human rights movement becoming prominent, many changes have followed in the field of disability rehabilitation all over the world, including Ethiopia. The "Independent Living Movement" was founded, which supports the concept of "empowerment" of persons with disabilities and the planning of interventions directed at the communities where persons with disabilities live. This entails the enhancement of the daily life and activities of persons with disabilities, the creation of awareness in the community of the equal rights and the potentials of persons with disabilities, the provision of a barrier-free environment, and the utilisation of local resources, as well as the active participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in community activities (Thomas & Thomas, 2001).

In Ethiopia, family-based, early psycho-social intervention gained impetus in the beginning of the1990s. In 1989, early intervention in families to ensure the best possible psycho-social development of infants and young children was initiated as a joint enterprise of the Department of Psychology, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, and the Centre of International Health of the University of Bergen, Norway. The early psycho-social intervention programme for children "at risk" was based on the principle of mediated learning experience, which focuses on the identification and enhancement of caregiver/adult-child interaction (Klein et al., 1996). Child-focused international and local organisations operating in Ethiopia expressed increasing interest in different

types of early intervention programmes, particularly those concerned with early childcare and development. In the same period, local NGOs began to come up with community-based rehabilitation (CBR) programmes, which created momentum for undertaking early intervention in the families of children with disabilities in Ethiopia. CBR is part of the inclusive movement towards home–based, school-based and community–based programmes. CBR and early intervention programmes involve family members, children with disabilities, teachers, and mainstream learners, as well as community leaders. The programmes are being carried out mainly in urban areas, focused primarily in the capital city, Addis Ababa. It is important to note that the steadily growth in the number of NGOs catering to the needs of children with disabilities has made a noticeable difference in the lives of children with disabilities as well as in the lives of their families. According to Daniel (2000), despite all the misconceptions and resistance to attitude change on the part of the parents of children with disabilities, as well as community members, the CBR projects appear to have had positive results in Ethiopia.

3.3   Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Generally, the early childhood period covers from birth through the first six years of development. In Ethiopia, children usually begin to go to traditional, priest-taught orthodox schools at age four. This long-standing practice seems to be intact these days, even with the advent of modern, early childhood educational establishments. Modern childhood education, a great and exciting opportunity which forms the basis for the subsequent development of the child, has been a privilege for only a few families in Ethiopia. The low value and priority given to early childhood education by the government has made it one of the most neglected areas in the country. However, in the last 10 years, encouraging progress has been made, and there is fresh interest in early childhood education on the part of the government, the general public, and the private sector.

   With regard to early childhood education programmes for children with special needs, such programmes operate within the premises of special schools for the deaf, and in the National Association of the Deaf in Addis Ababa. The regular preschools do not generally admit children with special needs, such as deaf or blind children, or children with mental retardation. However, it is not uncommon to find children with hidden disabilities. such as mild visual or auditory impairments, developmental delays, or communication difficulties, in these preschool establishments, just as in the regular schools. In most cases, these children remain undetected, and are left without any viable support programme. Quite recently, different NGOs, working in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, have started to provide awareness and training

programmes for preschool teachers about children with special needs, leading towards the direction of inclusion.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that most of the traditional priest-taught preschools have been opened to children with disabilities. Particularly children with visual impairments have been equal beneficiaries of the long-standing traditional education at all levels, including pre-primary priest-taught schools. The nature of the traditional educational system, which has been predominantly oral, was instrumental in facilitating the inclusion of blind children and adults in the system. Consequently, it is not uncommon to find successful and highly honoured blind persons in the Ethiopian clergy. Before World War II, when education was oriented to religious learning in Ethiopia (Library of Congress, 2004), blindness did not create any educational obstacles. The introduction of segregated education, or special education for blind children, only began after the advent of modern education which required reading and writing skills. However, today, with the help of Braille and other aids, we find blind students alongside the sighted in regular schools, successfully pursuing their education at all levels.

3.4 Inclusive Schools

The current trend, which promotes the philosophy of inclusive education as opposed to segregated education, has stimulated public debate and discourse among the stakeholders, policy makers, professionals, CBR workers and NGOs. Overall, there has been a tremendous increase in the scale of special classes in regular school settings for children with visual or hearing disabilities, and children with mental retardation. There are pockets of successful inclusive education attempts with children with mental retardation in Kokebe Tsebah Primary School (Gilnesh & Tibebu, 1999), and children with visual impairment in the German Primary Church School in Addis Ababa (Dagne, 2000). Furthermore, a study conducted of blind students integrated in Mulugeta Gedle School at Sebeta showed positive experiences on the part of the teachers and the sighted students, as well as the blind students themselves. However, a shortage of appropriate instructional materials, an unconducive school environment, and lack of back-up support were considered by the blind students as obstacles encountered in the course of their education (Teferi, 1996).

The widespread nationwide movement toward special classes in regular schools is part of the inclusive education movement. The general dynamics pave the way towards creating schools for all children without any discrimination. The creation of special classes has indeed significantly increased the enrolment of children with disabilities in Ethiopia in the last five years. As inclusion is a process, it requires systematic assessment of the school and the classroom setting in the light of accommodating the special

educational needs of all learners. The contextual analysis of the learning environment should be followed by making the necessary adjustments or interventions so that the special needs of children with disabilities could be properly addressed. This undoubtedly has implications regarding human power and material resources which demand the full commitment of the government to address.

Future strides towards inclusive education will have twists and turns, and there is a long way to go to get everything in place. The attitudinal factor is the major challenge in the journey towards inclusion. In the course of moving forward, it is always important to check whether the necessary preparations have been made or not. In seminars and national conferences in Ethiopia, concerns regarding inclusive education have been raised by the national associations of persons with disabilities, as well as by special educators. They have serious doubts as to the readiness of the mainstream schools to include children with special needs, in terms of the availability of special facilities and resources required, the background of the mainstream school teachers in special needs education, and the large class sizes (70 to 80 students in a class) of the schools which adversely affect the degree of attention that can be given to a child with a disability.

The apprehension most frequently heard from the Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf is about surviving in a classroom setting in which the medium of instruction is the spoken language. According to the Deaf Association, in the absence of sign language use and/or interpretation services, the regular classroom setting presents a strong challenge to deaf children, as well as a threat to their education, language acquisition and social development. This is a legitimate concern which needs to be addressed, and which requires a thoughtful, flexible and balanced implementation strategy from which deaf children can optimally benefit. It is also important to consider that the daily association of the deaf child with hearing students in an inclusive setting gives the deaf child a contextual environment to develop oral and social skills which will possibly maximise his or her vocational and social opportunities in later years. Indeed, the education of the deaf in Ethiopia has not as such shown any significant development in the last four decades. Deaf education in the country is characterised by a high drop-out rate and low educational achievement, and there is a still a great deal to be done to redress the present state of affairs (Berta, 2000).

4. Discussion

In the last four decades, the education of children with disabilities in Ethiopia has failed to reach and serve about 99% of school-age children with special needs. Even worse, the special day and residential schools lack adequate human and material resources to provide necessary services. Furthermore, a substantial number of the student

population in the mainstream schools have special educational needs which go unrecognised and unattended by the school management and/or classroom teachers. This is believed to be one of the causes of unsuccessful school achievement and the high, early, school drop-out rate in the country.

Therefore, the shift towards inclusive education in Ethiopia opens up the opportunity for a greater number of children with disabilities to have access to education in the mainstream schools in their neighbourhoods or nearby communities. That means that regular schools will open their doors for children with disabilities and give them the right to be educated with their peers. This will encourage and motivate the parents of children with disabilities to send their children to schools, instead of leaving them to "vegetate" at home. As it has been argued, special needs provision and rehabilitation would be more effective for children with disabilities if it is given in their immediate environment rather than in institutions or special schools which are inaccessible due to their locations, possibly hundreds of miles away from home (Eleweke, 1998). The opportunity for children with disabilities to be included in boarding schools or to live at home and have access to neighbourhood schools has both psychological and economic advantages for these children and their parents. Furthermore, the impetus towards inclusive education sounds a wake-up call for mainstream school management, as well as teachers, to evaluate the school and classroom conditions, and their capacity in terms of human and material resources to serve the needs of all children. Finally, this exercise will benefit a substantial number of children in regular classrooms who have hidden disabilities, whose needs are currently unattended to and whose potentials remain unrealised.

A review of the literature indicates that two general positions have emerged from the debate on inclusive education. The first position is that all students with disabilities have the right to go to school with their non-disabled peers. The other position is usually labelled as "full inclusion" and is stronger in that it posits that all children with disabilities should go to mainstream schools (Kochhar et al., 2003). The first position is consistent with the principle of educating children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, which argues for the need of varying levels of inclusion, depending on the conditions of the children with disabilities. On the other hand, the second position completely dismisses the need for educational services such as special classes, which are provided outside the regular classroom settings. Advocates of this kind of full inclusion argue that its goal is to achieve social inclusion, but not necessarily academic inclusion (Ibid, 2000).

The present state of the educational system in Ethiopia does not as such lend itself to full inclusion as proposed in the second position. The main reasons for taking the first option are that the class sizes in our school system are large (mostly exceeding 70 students in a class), the teachers do not have training in special needs education, and

schools have not yet been equipped with the necessary resources and facilities. In order to equip the children with the special learning skills they need to acquire a functional academic education, there is a need for an alternative learning environment outside the regular classroom on a part-time or full-time basis, depending on the special needs of the child . For instance, children with severe mental retardation, children with motor and communication disorders, as well as children with debilitating health conditions, may require full-time home–based or community-based educational services. However, other children, such as those with visual impairment, those who are hard-of-hearing or have only residual hearing capacity, those with writing-reading difficulties, and those with mild developmental disabilities, may only need to spend some time to receive special educational support outside the regular classroom.

With regard to deaf children, special arrangements should be made whereby they can receive most of their education in special classes, and take part in other school activities with hearing peers. The signing environment which is the linguistic milieu for the deaf child is equally as important to them as the spoken language is for the hearing child. Therefore, in order to develop and achieve mastery in sign language, the deaf child should have access to an interactive linguistic environment as early as possible. However, this should not encourage the approach that the child must be segregated and isolated from all life in the community. There should be a range of settings where the child can feel included and have opportunities for social interaction (Evans, 1998). Consequently , attempts should be made to make the classroom setting as inclusive as possible through modifying the structure and facilities, changing the attitude of the teachers, providing training for general education teachers, and making resources available for special assistance or aid as well as for instructional and learning materials.

Whatever the future brings, the need for research, and the need for dialogue and discussions among special needs education professionals, mainstream class teachers, school administrators, policy makers, persons with disabilities and parents about quality inclusive education should be underscored. Studies have confirmed that there is no one single "right" way to implement an inclusive programme. Inclusion is a necessary component of a high-quality programme, but it is not sufficient in itself. The bottom line of inclusive education is how it meets the developmental and social needs of children with disabilities (Odom et al., 2001). It is clear from the above that there is no standardised format or recipe for obtaining quality inclusive education. However, useful components for a programme of inclusive education can be constructed based on the present conditions of the education of children with disabilities in Ethiopia and the experiences of other countries in providing inclusive education. There is every reason to believe that a successful programme of inclusive education can be implemented in Ethiopia.

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5. Including special needs education services in the federal level education sector development program in Ethiopia: Process, strategic priorities and implications

Adugna Ayana & Elina Lehtomaki

The Federal Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and its Ministry of Education (MoE) are committed to providing universal primary education of good quality. In 1994, the Ministry defined a new Education and Training Policy (ETP) in order to solve the complex problems of the education system and to make "education an instrument of development and democracy" (Ministry of Education 2002). The policy emphasised that special attention must be given to disadvantaged groups, such as girls, pastoralists and children with disabilities.

The first Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) that outlined implementation of the policy was prepared for the period 1996-2001. It was followed by the second ESDP plan. Both of these plans promoted universal primary education, quality of education and equity. They interpreted equity as referring to gender balance, providing education in rural and urban environments, and distribution of schools in all regions. In the third ESDP plan (for the period 2005/06-2010/11), special needs education (SNE) was defined as one of the crosscutting issues. The national aim is that by 2015 all children will successfully complete eight years of primary schooling, in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the international Education For All (EFA) targets.

This chapter explores the process of including special needs education as a crosscutting issue in the sector program, and then describes strategic priorities and their implications. Finally, the implication of including special needs education in the overall sector program is discussed.

1 Strategy process

In 2004, representatives of the associations of people with disabilities requested the Parliament to ask the Ministry of Education (MoE) to respond to the question of why the universal right to education, as defined in the constitution, was being seriously violated. They stated that most children with disabilities had only very limited access to primary education. The minority who were successful in entering school received no support, and disabled students in secondary and higher education mainly depended on the good will of their peers. The representatives of the disabled people requested that all children with disabilities be included in schools, and that these children be given the appropriate support, materials and devices needed for active learning; in other words, they requested that children with disabilities be ensured the same rights to an education as other children. MoE was given the task of preparing strategies to ensure the education of all, including children and students with disabilities and those who need special assistance in learning. MoE established a liaison committee to cooperate with the associations of persons with disabilities: this committee was assigned the task of maintaining regular dialogue with the associations and the responsibility of following up developments in the education sector from the point of view of the beneficiaries: in this case the beneficiaries were disabled children.

Further, MoE set up other committees, charged with preparing strategies for reaching disadvantaged groups, and strengthening their participation in education. The committees devised strategies to direct the work of the new department of gender and equity in regard to education, and strategies to guide implementation planning at federal and regional levels. One of the strategies was for special needs education.

The first draft strategy for special needs education was discussed and prepared by a group of gender and special needs education experts in MoE. Heads of all MoE Departments then commented on the structure and style of the draft. After that, the aims of the strategy were redefined and the strategy process revised. It was agreed that the overall aims of the strategy were: 1) to include special needs education services in the education sector development program, 2) to create awareness among the decision-makers about exclusion, and 3) to define priorities in order to make the education system more inclusive.

The second draft strategy set special needs education within the frameworks of the Education and Training Policy, EFA and the MDGs (see Daniel 2003; Muthukrishna 2000; Peters 2003; Wiman & Sandhu 2004; Yeo 2003). It addressed the problems of access, repetition, and dropout rates highlighted by the ESDP annual reviews, and by research (Desta 2000; ILO 2004; Mengesha 2001; ESDP II 2005; Ministry of Education 2003 and 2004, Teferra 2005; Tibebu 1995; Weldeab & Endrerud 2004). In addition, a situation analysis of special needs education was carried out (see Section 2, following).

In order to obtain comments on the contents, responsiveness and sustainability, of the second draft strategy, it was discussed with a broader forum of stakeholders and partners. First, the MoE experts consulted the associations of people with disabilities: Ethiopian National Association of the Blind; Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf; Ethiopian National Association of the People with Physical Disabilities; Ethiopian National Association for Mentally Retarded Children and Youth; and the federation of these associations, the Ethiopian Federation of People with Disabilities.

The draft strategy was then discussed with education sector partners, such as the special needs education professionals' association, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and UN agencies that contribute to supporting inclusive education and students with disabilities. In addition, individual teachers and researchers, participated in strategy discussions. Following these discussions, the Heads of the 11 Regional Education Bureaus discussed the strategy, and the division of duties and responsibilities between the Ministry and the Bureaus. Finally, a fourth discussion was held with teacher educators from 10 institutions. The strategy processes, and key comments in the discussions made by stakeholders and partners, are shown in Table 1.

After approval by all stakeholders, partners, and concerned higher officials, the strategy was printed and is now available in two languages, Amharic and English. It will be distributed to all MoE Departments, regional bureaus, district (woreda) education offices, community level education boards, teacher education institutions, organisations representing the beneficiaries, and partners. In addition, copies of the strategy will be provided to the Ministry of Health, and The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Table 1. The Strategy Process: Discussions on the draft strategy for special needs education in 2005.

Stakeholder/partner	Key comments
Associations of People with Disabilities	– Strategy necessary to guide implementation of the education policy and ESDP – Doubts whether REBs and WEOs will implement the strategy – Inclusive approach important but also disability specific support systems and special classes needed: e.g. for Braille training, special equipment and materials; sign language teaching and interpretation; life-skills training – Emphasis on primary education, but support urgently needed in post-primary education – Mainstreaming budget, e.g. teaching materials and teacher training may be a risk: needs of students with disabilities not given priority – Regular monitoring and dialogue very important
Education sector experts and partners (SNE professionals, NGOs, UN agencies)	– Strategy provides guidelines for planning and conducting activities in line with the government policies – Partnerships encouraged – Coordination of cooperation welcome, because it facilitates information sharing, reduces overlapping and helps to identify needs – Joint efforts produce more sustainable results – Interest in assisting REBs and WEOs to implement the strategy – Inclusive approach important but also disability specific support systems and special classes needed – In order to meet UPEC and EFA goals, cooperation with associations of people with disabilities important – Emphasis on primary education but support urgently needed in post-primary education – Regular monitoring and dialogue, and research very important
Heads of Regional Education Bureaus	– Strategy approved but technical assistance, e.g. training and guidelines, needed in order to implement it – Awareness increased: UPEC and EFA goals understood to include children with special learning needs, and repetition and dropout rates being associated with possible needs of assistance – The previous idea that the proportion of children with learning difficulties is insignificantly small changed – Lack of expertise and shortage of staff creates serious problems in bureaus and offices – Increased interest in cooperation with partners – Implementation depends on monitoring and evaluation
Teacher educators	– Strategy defines SNE and improves its status – Teacher education in a key position – Continuous in-service training important – Insufficient number of teachers with SNE knowledge and skills – SNE resource centres should be established in teacher education institutions, and cooperation with schools and WEOs strengthened – Up-dating of teacher educators' knowledge and skills required: workshops, literature, research – Insufficient focus on post-primary education – Parents' motivation and involvement important – More emphasis on status and working conditions of SNE teachers necessary – Career development in SNE has to be planned and coordinated

2 Situation analysis

In cooperation with the Government of Finland (GoF) and UNESCO, MoE carried out a situation analysis of special needs education (SNE) services in the country (Ministry of Education 2005). The analysis was designed and guided by a team of experts from Addis Ababa Regional Education Bureau, Addis Ababa University, UNESCO and MoE. The analysis report assessed both 1) the awareness that SNE was a basic human right as well as a component of overall education sector development, and 2) the capacity that regional education bureaus had available for planning and coordinating SNE services. The data was collected and analysed by SNE experts and university students.

The regional education bureaux (REBs) and district education offices (WEOs) were aware that all children have the right to primary education. They were, however, unaware that young children with special needs were enrolled but often repeated and/or dropped out if they did not receive sufficient support. The WEOs were unaware that it is their responsibility to provide universal primary education, including providing education to children with special needs, and that they could request assistance in order to meet this responsibility. Very few regions reported on awareness raising and integration activities. These regions received support and technical assistance from their partners, usually NGOs, working in the education sector or in community-based rehabilitation.

Four regions (4/11) had experts assigned with the responsibility for SNE, but only one of those had expertise in SNE. Most regions had some data on SNE services (units, schools), but existing data was usually unreliable or outdated. SNE services were not coordinated and developed. Consequently, districts (woredas), schools and teachers received no support.

The number of children or students with special needs who were enrolled and/or attended ordinary schools without any assistance and support was not known. There was no system at either the regional or district (woreda) levels to provide guidance, assistance and SNE materials to teachers, schools, and pupils or students with special needs. Altogether, there were 15 special schools, mostly run by NGOs, and 285 special classes attached to regular government schools. The conditions of the special classes varied from very poor to satisfactory. Supervision tended to ignore these schools and classes.

Special needs education initiatives were few and scattered, and were not systematically integrated in overall education sector development. SNE services were not included in regional and district (woreda) plans and budgets, even when schools had requested support. SNE services and data were not included in reports, because there were no guidelines on how to do it. The lack of SNE services, such as identification of special

needs, itinerant resource teachers, specialised teachers, special units and schools, might have contributed to high repetition and dropout rates, and to exclusion.

Recommendations given in the regional reports focused on the following points:
1) Awareness raising activities are required at all levels in the REBs, WEOs and Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs)
2) Continuous capacity building of REBs, WEOs, school boards and teachers
3) Assignment of SNE experts in REBs
4) Establishment of support systems in WEOs and cluster centre schools to assist schools and teachers
5) Planning, budgeting and reporting of SNE services and activities
6) Coordinated cooperation with stakeholders and partners
7) Regular monitoring, supervision, and evaluation.

3 Towards regional action plans

After the first round of discussions, education bureau experts were invited to analyse implementation of the strategy, and to assess their needs for assistance and guidelines (Ministry of Education et al. 2005). The education bureau experts suggested that the following issues should be included in their own regional education sector action plans:

1. Building capacity through awareness raising, and training of teachers, school boards and directors;
2. Including SNE in planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting;
3. Facilitating active learning by curriculum adaptation; procurement and supply of educational materials;
4. Establishing a support system for students in inclusive settings for children with disabilities, vulnerable/deprived children, and children at risk of repetition and dropout;
5. Meeting Universal Primary Education Completed Goals by increasing access to education, maintaining equity and improving quality, and mitigating school dropout and repetition;
6. Using SNE expertise in education management by structuring from woreda (district) to federal levels, and assigning professionally trained personnel at the various levels;
7. Updating data on SNE by conducting situational analysis at regular intervals, incorporating data on SNE in EMIS and annual statistics abstracts, and sharing experiences (at woreda, regional and federal levels);

8. Mobilising community by strengthening parent-teacher associations (PTAs), and working with community leaders;
9. Networking with partners by providing resources and sharing knowledge and skills.

As mentioned above, the broader frameworks of poverty reduction and ESDP guided the process. Discussions, situation analysis, and workshops with stakeholders and partners were very important in formulating the strategy so that it could be practical and easy to apply. The responsibilities for facilitating further discussions, formulating practical action plans, and actual implementation lie with the stakeholders and partners.

4 Ethiopian Strategy for the Special Needs Education Program

The Ethiopian SNE strategy is described in the following five sub-sections. First the foundations and the background of the strategy are presented; second, the objectives are defined; then the strategic priorities, activities, duties and responsibilities are set forth; fourth, the constraints and risks and possible solutions for overcoming them are discussed; and finally monitoring and evaluation measures are laid out in the fifth sub-section.

4.1 Background for the SNE strategy in Ethiopia

Education is a fundamental human right and one of the main factors that reduce poverty and improve socio-economic conditions. There is an increasing awareness of education as a human right and, consequently, a demand to provide education for all citizens. Ethiopia has a national constitution and a policy that are in line with international principles related to persons with special needs.

The Ethiopian Constitution establishes the right to equal access to publicly funded social services, urges all Ethiopians to have access to public health and education, and emphasises the need to allocate available resources and provide rehabilitative assistance to the disabled and other disadvantaged groups.

The Education and Training Policy (ETP, Ministry of Education 1994 and 2002) requires expansion of basic quality education and training for all, and the development of physical and mental potential and problem-solving capacity of individuals, including those of children and youth with special needs, in accordance with their potential and needs. According to the ETP disadvantaged groups will receive special support in education. The ETP, however, lacks clarity in terms of SNE and, therefore, SNE has not been included in education sector development programs. The special support

mentioned in the Policy requires strategic planning, definition of priorities, objectives and responsibilities to be realised in practice.

The ETP is to be implemented in order to give due attention to the enormous number (10-20%) of children and students with special needs, if the goal of universal primary education by the year 2015 is to be achieved as stipulated in ETP. Substantial efforts should be made to expand and strengthen SNE and the provision of SNE training, in order to enhance inclusive education and enrich the regular education curricular materials, as stated in the first Education Sector Development Program, and in ESDP II and III.

MoE is committed to achieving access to primary school education for all school age children by the year 2015, successful completion of primary education by all school-age children, and provision of a sufficient number of trained and skilled human resources at all levels to promote democracy, good governance and developments in the country by making the education system and its management professional, decentralised and participatory (Ministry of Education 2003). MoE strives to provide quality and relevant education and training to all citizens of Ethiopia. Specifically, MoE is committed to:

- Extending standardised, high quality and relevant education and training at all levels that meets the manpower requirements of the development needs of the country, with increased involvement of different stakeholders (community, investors, NGOs, etc.)
- Creation of an efficient, participatory and cost effective education and training system by improving its organisation and management.
- Ensuring equitable participation of females, pastoral and semi-pastoral children, and children with special needs, in all education and training programs, and increasing their role and participation in development by taking affirmative actions.
- Building the capacity of teachers by improving the pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.
- Building the capacity to administer and manage the education system.

Practical implementation of these commitments, however, requires due attention to be given to the enormous number (10-20%) of children and students with special needs. Recognising the de facto exclusion of this enormous number of children due to existing barriers to active learning and participation, and in order to produce the required changes in the education system, MoE has designed a SNE strategy (2005) that:
- Provides an overview of the current situation of SNE;
- Defines national objectives, strategic priorities and division of responsibilities;
- Identifies resources and possibilities for cooperation;
- Proposes key elements for development of an inclusive education system;
- Analyses favourable factors, constraints, risks, and possible solutions.

4.2 Objectives of the SNE Strategy

The main objective of the Ethiopian SNE strategy is the promotion of universal primary education, including education of children with special needs. The SNE strategy is meant to ensure equity and the participation of all marginalised families, which means the inclusion of children with special needs, systematically integrating SNE initiatives into overall education sector development, and increasing access to primary education for children with special needs in accordance with UPEC requirements. More specifically, the SNE strategy aims to:
- Develop and implement guidelines for curriculum modification and support system development in schools for learners with special needs;
- Facilitate the participation of learners with special needs in technical and vocational education and other higher education institutions;
- Strengthen SNE programs in TEIs; and
- Improve the supply of trained manpower and appropriate materials to schools, vocational training and higher education institutions, for effective implementation of the ETP, adhering to the International Principles endorsed by the GoE to honour the rights of Ethiopian citizens to education.

4.3 Priorities of the Ethiopian SNE Strategy

The Ethiopian SNE strategy emphasises that all children and students can learn, although many of them need some form of support in learning and active participation. Providing education for all requires identification of barriers that hinder learning, and reduction and removal of these barriers in early education, schools, technical and vocational training, teacher education, higher education, and education management and administration. Education leaders at all levels, including teachers, school managers and administrators, have to be aware of the need for, and be able to provide, support to learners according to their needs. Therefore, definite actions are to be taken in curriculum development, the production of teaching and learning materials, and in school management and administration. Provision should be made to orient and educate education officers, including school directors and supervisors, in SNE with an emphasis on organising inclusive schools to meet the diverse needs of all children in the mainstream classrooms. Thus the following three strategic priorities have been identified and defined:
1. Including SNE in national and regional education sector planning and reporting systems,
2. Developing guidelines and providing technical assistance to regions, and
3. Strengthening the capacity of the education system.

4.4 Activities, Duties and Responsibilities in the Ethiopian SNE Strategy

The Ethiopian SNE strategy shows the direction to be taken for development of inclusive education and SNE services that are open to all learners. In addition, the strategy identifies activities and defines duties and responsibilities within the education system structure (between MoE, REBs WEOs, and TEIs). In order to strengthen the existing educational structure to include SNE, MoE provides technical assistance in the form of federal guidelines and capacity building in the regions, and compiles federal level progress reports. MoE also takes the initiative in coordinating collaboration and cooperation between and among the concerned ministries, governmental and non-governmental organisations, beneficiaries and other civil society stakeholders, and the combined resources and expertise of all parties involved.

The REBs are to assist WEOs in including SNE in their action plans, budgets and reports. The federal strategy, guidelines and regional and district (woreda) level implementation plans are to be reviewed along with the progress made by regions and districts in SNE.

MoE, REBs, WEOs, and TEIs should work together to orient and educate teachers for inclusive schools by incorporating SNE in all major initial (pre-service) and in-service teacher education programs. SNE program are to be strengthened in all TEIs to provide training in disability-specific skills for teachers in special schools/classes and to support teachers in inclusive schools as well. The following table shows the activities of MoE in implementing SNE strategy for the next five years.

Table 2. Time frame for activities in implementing SNE strategy in Ethiopia

Activities in SNE Strategy	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
1 Federal SNE strategy drawn up	X				
2 Preparation of regional SNE strategy plans	X	X	X		
3 Preparation of guidelines for data collection, reporting, planning and budgeting for SNE	X				
4 Development of guidelines for support systems for all facets of SNE		X			
5 Strengthening of SNE teacher education		X	X	X	X
6 Preparation of guidelines for curriculum modification to include SNE in mainstream classrooms		X			
7 Establishment of SNE support systems in regions		X	X	X	X
8 Identification and sharing of good examples	X	X	X	X	X

Activities to be carried out to implement SNE strategy, which are not listed in Table 2., include regular capacity building for REBs, WEOs, and TEIs. All SNE capacity building should strengthen cooperation between REBs, WEOs, TEIs and other partners, so that they identify their resources and needs. Follow-up of capacity building is to be carried out in cooperation between these stakeholders and partners.

In one of the 11 regions, that of the capital Addis Ababa, the education bureau began implementing the SNE strategy by organising awareness raising workshops and training for sub-city education offices, school boards, school management, and teachers. In four other regions, the education sector partners have begun assisting education bureaus and offices in including SNE in planning, and in providing SNE training for school officers and teachers.

4.5 Issues to consider

Lack of economic capacity, lack of awareness of SNE, and a shortage of trained manpower in the field may challenge the implementation of the Ethiopian SNE strategy. However, these challenges can be overcome, to some extent, through effective use of existing national expertise and resources, and by coordinating the contributions of partners and donors to the capacity building of TEIs at all levels.

To insure the implementation of the SNE strategy, continuous support, and monitoring and evaluation activities should be in place and running at each level (federal, regional, woreda and school levels). In addition, representatives of the beneficiaries should also participate in monitoring and evaluation. The woredas and regions will set their objectives and report on changes in education, including those in the provision of SNE services. On its part, MoE is to: provide technical assistance in annual SNE data collection and reporting, analyse SNE data at the federal level, and make future SNE plans accordingly. Indicators of change in inclusive education include data on achievements at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education

5 Special Needs Education in the Education Sector Development Program

The priorities defined in the SNE strategy are aimed at contributing to the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP III) and to the overall five-year plans of MoE, and at being included at all levels of the education system. Once it had been approved by the bureaus and MoE, the SNE strategy was presented to the Annual Review Meeting (ARM 2005) of the ESDP. This meeting involved department heads of MoE Departments, and the heads and representatives of REBs, WEOs, and TEIs, NGOs,

and donors. The ARM planning team decided that one of the working groups in the meeting should focus on SNE. In this SNE working group, participants were briefed on the SNE strategy, the SNE situation analysis, and the related discussions held with stakeholders and partners. The recommendations of the SNE working group were then presented to the ARM plenary.

The ARM recommended that SNE should be included in all components of the ESDP III as a **crosscutting theme**. In addition, it was agreed that, in order to become an integral part of the education system, SNE requires **focussed attention and specific activities** during the next five years. The ARM agreed that costs of SNE activities should be included in the overall ESDP III budget. It was emphasised that the REBs and WEOs have to be made aware that planning, budgeting and implementing SNE activities should all aim at making the education system more inclusive, and at improving the quality of education for all.

It was agreed in the ARM that expansion of monitoring activities and improvement of SNE services within the education sector requires the definition of indicators. Due to the lack of basic health check-ups and ability screening of all children enrolled in the first grade, and insufficient capacities in education management, the present statistics concerning children with learning difficulties or disabilities are unreliable. However, in future reports must be made of the numbers of teachers trained in SNE, and the type and quantity of SNE services provided, in regular schools as well as in special classes and special schools.

The SNE strategy process was successful in including SNE in the ESDP III and in the overall five-year plan of MoE. The next phases of implementation, integrating SNE in regional plans, and in monitoring of SNE indicators in schools require trained SNE experts and teachers. One by one, the regions have begun adding SNE activities into their action plans, depending on each region's current situation, priorities and resources. As stated in the final SNE strategy, the main focus of MoE in the implementation of the SNE strategy will be on providing technical assistance, such as guidelines and workshops, mobilising funds for effective implementation, and developing monitoring, assessment and reporting systems that include SNE results and challenges.

In our opinion, capacity building that aims at policy implementation is best carried out through continuous dialogue and guided practical tasks. We ourselves have planned to undertake coordinating the screening of children enrolled in and attending first grade throughout the country, in cooperation with REBs, WEOs, and TEIs, and education sector partners and stakeholders, e.g. community-based rehabilitation programs, parents, NGOs and associations of people with disabilities. Furthermore, children enrolled in the first grade will be asked about their siblings, friends, and neighbours who have not been enrolled in school. The process will start in those

regions that have identified their expertise and have planned to expand and improve SNE services. An essential factor in successfully carrying out this endeavour will be efficient cooperation, and sharing of information and resources among REBs, WEOs, and TEIs.

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6. Towards Special Needs Education as a University Discipline: An Important Link on the Way to Education for All (EFA)

Ethiopian Development and Cooperation

Berit H. Johnsen and Alemayehu Teklemariam

Introduction

Providing basic Education for All (EFA) has been a stated aim of the national educational policy of Ethiopia since 1994 (TGE, 1994), in accordance with the UN principles of the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), the later Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 1991) and the UNESCO Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994), formulated the same year as the above-mentioned Ethiopian policy document. Thus, all children, both with and without disabilities and special needs, are included in the huge national task of developing educational possibilities in all parts of Ethiopia. The task requires professional skills in adapting education to the plurality of different individual needs in the diverse population of pupils.

Special needs education is the professional and research discipline which generates knowledge about and the skills needed for teaching children with different kinds of special needs. Contemporary enrichment and resource based approaches to special needs education focus on meeting the special and diverse educational needs of all children in the school. Such approaches also shed a critical light on socio-economic, cultural and professional barriers and dilemmas in the process towards the inclusive school and classroom (Befring, 2001; Belay, Daniel & Teka, in press 2005; Chernet & Endrerud, 2004; Johnsen, 2001; Rye, 2001; Savolainen & Alasuutari, 2000; Tirussew, 2000). Developing special needs education as a resourceful university discipline, producing professionals, and doing research with a cultural inside perspective which is at the same time open and internationally comparable and reproducible, is therefore a necessary part of making EFA and inclusion a reality.

This chapter provides an overview of teacher training, higher education and research within special needs education in Ethiopia, with a view to cooperation with universities

in Finland, Norway and other countries, starting with a brief history of the development of education in Ethiopia.

Development of modern education in Ethiopia[1]

Education has a long tradition in Ethiopia through the education of boys offered by the ancient Orthodox Christian Church. Modern education began with the first project to modernise society, initiated by Emperor Menelik II (1889–1913), and developed further in the reign of Emperor Haile Selassi (1913–1974). The main purpose of this thrust was to educate boys for future tasks emerging within the modern military and civil services of Ethiopia, as well as in international communication, with English and other foreign languages as important educational components. Beginning in 1963, Amharic replaced English as the medium of instruction. Throughout the twentieth century, official Ethiopian education policies were inspired by different external models, such as those of the British, North American and Soviet education systems. In 1991 The Transitional Government of Ethiopia inherited an educational system with about 9,000 government, private, missionary, Christian Church and Muslim Koran schools. Current educational policy in Ethiopia aims at developing a decentralised educational system, with elementary education based on the main language spoken in the different regions of the country. The eight years of primary education are divided into two cycles. In the first cycle, from grades one to three, one teacher has the responsibility of the class in all subjects in the so-called self-contained classroom, and all pupils are automatically promoted from class to class without repetition (Alemayehu, 2000; Belew, 2005; MOE/FINNIDA, 1993). In spite of efforts to develop sustainable education all over the country, a large part of the population is still without basic education. According to UNESCO statistics for 1994, 80.1% of the population of Ethiopia was without any schooling (UNESCO, 2002).

Development of Special Education

A few years after the beginning of the modern education project, the first special school for persons with disabilities was opened in 1917 in Denbidollo, in the western part of the country. The first schoolmaster was an Ethiopian priest who was functionally

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[1] Mamo Mengesha (2000) has presented a systematic overview of the educational policy of the 1990s. The intention of this section of the chapter is to add to his presentation some cultural-historic aspects, as well as to provide facts on further developments from the beginning of the twenty-first century.

blind, Rev. Gidada, the father of the former President of the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1995–2000), Negaso Gidada. Rev. Gidada had been trained in Braille by Swedish missionaries (Alemayehu, 2000). Thus, Rev. Gidada may be considered the first Ethiopian special teacher. This was followed by the establishment of special schools by missionaries, particularly from the USA, Sweden and Finland.

The Government of Ethiopia took some interest in the special schools in the 1980s, occasionally observing missionaries' activities in the area. Today there are about 15 special dayschools, 5 residential schools, and about 285 special classes in regular schools (Alemayehu, 2000).

Educating teachers in special education:
Ethiopian development in view of international historical trends

The missionaries brought their own teachers, who offered informal, short-term training courses to their Ethiopian colleagues. These courses often lacked clear objectives and thus failed to bring sustainable benefits to the special schools. Many teachers of that time took up their teaching position without any pre-service training in special education. The training in special education that was available was limited to the kind of disability that was in focus in the existing special schools. Teachers of the visually impaired were trained through daily cooperation with teachers in schools for the blind, with some additional shorter courses; and the same was the case in schools for the deaf. Thus Ethiopian training of special education teachers started in similar ways as for their European and Scandinavian colleagues, through an apprenticeship within the walls of the single special schools.

In the following, selected historical trends in the development in the North of the discipline of education for children with special needs, are briefly described, with special mention of the Nordic countries, before the focus is turned back to historical trends in this field in Ethiopia. Two main trends may be observed in this international history. The first was that the most prominent special schools for the visually impaired developed their own teacher training; and the same happened for special schools for the deaf, for children with mental retardation, for children with difficulties in speech and language, and for children with other specific difficulties or disabilities. In accordance with this trend, new schools and institutions continually popped up, claiming expertise in steadily more limited niches of teaching children with special needs.

The second trend may be traced back to Russia in the early twentieth century. The development described above, with a small group of traditional experts on sensory and developmental impairments occupied with less than one percent of children in

the larger cities, was interrupted in the aftermath of the First World War and the Russian revolution. After 1917, the Russians were confronted with a huge number of homeless, orphaned, and abandoned, neglected and vagrant children as a consequence of wars, internal turmoil and famine. In the period 1919–22, the number of such vagabond children was estimated at about seven million. The special educators saw the necessity for an extension of the target group for their work beyond those children they had traditionally worked with. Housing and food, together with the education of large groups of children became new key issues. As a part of this emerging tradition, Moscow State University II founded a scientific research institute for studies in education, with Lev Vygotsky, the developmental psychologist, as its first Director in 1926–27 (Johnsen, 1998/2000; 2001; Knox & Stevens, 1993). Another branch of this second main trend was characterised by generalisation of the field of special education to include all vulnerable groups and individuals. This generalisation had roots going back to Edward Seguin's (1812–1880) theories, which had contributed to a holistic special education approach. One of Seguin's main goals was to show that children with intellectual challenges or mental retardation were "educatable" – that they could learn, and that the special attention needed by children with disabilities was not fundamentally different from the needs of all children (Askildt, 2004).

Both trends have contributed toward developing positive knowledge and skills applicable to education of children with special educational needs (SEN). However, there have also been negative trends in the history of special education, such as the building of large institutions segregating persons with disabilities from family and local society.

In the Scandinavian countries, the first training of teachers for children with sensory, physical and intellectual impairments followed in the footsteps of other European countries, with training in the daily work in the special school supplemented by seminars, reading groups and study visits to similar schools in other countries. From the beginning there was cooperation between the Nordic countries, with joint meetings and publishing of a professional journal. In Norway, education of teachers for the special schools had already been discussed in connection with the preparation of the first law on special schools (1881); but it was not until 1961 that the Norwegian Institute for Special Education (NISE) was founded. At the time of its founding, the training of teachers for special education was seen as a holistic discipline based on general teacher training and practices, focusing on children with all kinds of disabilities and special needs. Today NISE is a research department at the Faculty of Education of the University of Oslo, offering education and training in special education at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels. (Johnsen, 1998/2000; 2001). Finland and Norway seem to be the two Nordic countries that have explicitly chosen to develop the trend in special needs education towards a holistic discipline in their higher

education and research institutions, covering a wide range from multiple and explicit, to concealed, special education needs.

In Ethiopia, the first effort to provide systematic training of teachers for special schools was the development of a six-month programme funded by UNICEF in the Nazareth Teacher Training Institute (TTI) (currently called Adama Teachers Training College) in 1993. The programme lasted for two years, and graduated 62 participants, before it was suspended due to lack of an organisational set up and the absence of governmental budget allocations. Nevertheless, efforts at teacher training for special education needs were continued, and after some years sufficient recognition and due attention was gained from the government to develop special education programmes, facilitated by support inputs from abroad. . A new centre for special teacher education was founded as a division within a special school for the visually impaired at Sebeta beginning in the academic year of 1995/96. The centre will have the additional responsibility to serve the whole country as a resource, and as an assessment centre, and will support the development of special needs education programmes. The centre at Sebeta is now offering a one-year supplementary, in-service training course for teachers in special needs education (MOE/FINNIDA, 1993).

Some of the scholars coming home to Ethiopia with M.A.s and Ph.D.s in education from Germany, India, Greece and other countries at the turn of the millennium focused their attention on the difficult situation for the vast majority of children with special needs, and implemented the first important studies documenting the prevalence and need for education for these special children. This happened at the same time as the international community was focusing on education for all (EFA) and on opening up the regular school system for all children, with and without disabilities and special educational needs. The Salamanca Statement (1994) signalled a shift in perspective from separate, special schools and units towards offering special needs education in the regular, mainstream schools and classes. The concept of special <u>needs</u> education became symbolic for this international trend (UNESCO, 1994). That same year the Ethiopian Government pronounced Education for All (EFA) as one of their main aims, as earlier mentioned.

Higher education in special education was offered in Ethiopia at the B.A. and M.A. level in cooperation with the University of Joensuu, Finland. In 1998, a degree programme leading to a Master of Arts in Special Education was founded at the Department of Psychology of the Faculty of Education in Addis Ababa University, in cooperation with the University of Oslo. In this way, Ethiopia took the first steps away from minor, isolated training of teachers in an apprenticeship programme within different special schools, towards a holistic teacher training programme and the higher education of special needs educators.

As indicated above, Ethiopia is cooperating with a wide range of countries and universities in developing this field of research and higher education. However, the cooperation with Finland and Norway will be used as examples in what follows below, as the authors are most familiar with bilateral cooperation in this field between Ethiopia and these two countries.

Ethiopian activities in cooperation with Finland

Ethiopia has participated in cooperation with the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (whose development cooperation department was earlier known as FINNIDA), in a series of projects concerning special education. The first outcome of this cooperation was the graduation of six Ethiopian students in a special education training course on the B.A. level offered to 51 African students, the so-called STAFRICA Project at Jyväskylä University, Finland, in the early 1980s. Some of these candidates were also involved in the above-mentioned program in Nazareth, Ethiopia. Between 1994 and 1998 the project *Support to Special Education in Ethiopia* was implemented. This was a mainly Finnish-financed programme between the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MOE) and the University of Joensuu, with a series of interrelated projects: 26 B.A. students and 18 M.A. students from Ethiopia were awarded degrees from the University of Joensuu, in study programmes that were mostly located in Ethiopia. The above-mentioned centre at Sebeta was founded, and equipped with a textbook library, and with assessment and study materials. In addition, huge in-service and awareness-raising programmes, reaching out to teachers and headmasters country-wide, were implemented. Part of the bilateral development programme was a project to gather base-line data concerning enrolment, conditions, and the need for further development of education for children with disabilities. Further, one research fellow has successfully completed his PhD in special needs education at the University of Joensuu, and another has started as research fellow at the University of Jyväskylä; both are affiliated with Addis Ababa University (Alemayehu, 2004; Daniel, 2000; MOE/FINNIDA, 1993). Thus the contribution of the Government of Finland has brought radical changes in the history of special needs education in Ethiopia.

Today a new cooperation agreement has been made between the Government of Finland and the Ethiopian MOE. The support to the education sector is mainly to the Teacher Education Development Programme. In addition to financial support, Finland has provided one senior adviser to the MOE, whose task it is to facilitate and advise on the inclusive education policy and strategy process. In addition to these provisions, there is a small sum earmarked for focussing on immediate activities such as awareness raising, advising, designing strategies, producing guidelines, and carrying out small

scale survey research, as well as providing support to the regions and the MOE concerning materials and financing of special needs education.

Ethiopian activities in cooperation with Norway

From 1990 Addis Ababa University has participated with two Norwegian universities in three projects within the field. The first project was with the Centre of International Health, University of Bergen. It started with joint planning in 1989 and was financed through the Norwegian Research Council and the universities. The main research topic was early intervention in psychosocial development, implemented through study and innovation activities. The project also resulted in two Ethiopian Master's degrees and three Ph.D. degrees (NUFU application, 1995; Rye, 2001a; Teka, 1996; Zelalem, 2001).

In a follow-up project, *Competence Building in Special Education*, the Norwegian partner was the Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo, and the main financial source was The Norwegian Council for Higher Education's Programme for Development Research and Education (NUFU). The main goal of this project was to establish a two-year graduate study programme in special needs education at the Department of Psychology, Addis Ababa University, and to follow up on the former early intervention project (Endrerud, 2000; NUFU application, 1995; NUFU Annual Report, 1999).

One of the goals of the third, bilateral development cooperation project between Norway and Ethiopia was to secure the sustainability of the Master's degree programme which had been established in the previous project. The M.A. programme had begun with an annual intake of c. ten students, but is now open for a maximum 30 students every autumn. At the time this is being written (Autumn Term 2005) some 50 students have graduated, and 39 are currently participating in the degree programme.

Table 1: The Two-Year Master of Arts Programme in Special Education, Addis Ababa University

Year	Enrolment			Graduated			Remarks
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1998/99	6	3	9	———	———	———	Starting year
1999/2000 Year 0	7	3	10	6	2	8	
2000/2001 Year 1	6	1	7	8	3	11	
2001/2002 Year 2	7	3	10	8	3	11	
2002/2003 Year 3	14	2	16	6	3	9	
2003/2004 Year 4	16	5	20	9	2	11	
2004/2005 Year 5	15	12	27	14	4	18	Prospective graduates in July, 2005
2005/2006 Year 6	———			13	8	21	Prospective graduates in July 2006
Total to date	61	29	90	37 +27*	13 +12*	50 +39*	

Source: Registrar's Office, Addis Ababa University

* Prospective graduates

A critical factor in the securing of sustainability, is the production of lecturers on the Ph.D. level with research-based knowledge within all main fields of special needs education. In addition to the already mentioned scholars with a Ph.D. degree at Addis Ababa University, the research fellows are in the study process, and one candidate has successfully completed his Ph.D. work (Seleshi, 2004) at the University of Oslo. Thus the Master's degree programme at Addis Ababa is near to obtaining the necessary number of lecturers within their own university. However, there is still one important lecturing topic that is not covered through the research undertaken by the Ph.D. students, and Addis Ababa University and the University of Oslo are cooperating in preparing the ground for a future Ph.D. student to cover this field.

Another part of Ethiopian-Norwegian bilateral development cooperation is support for a smaller number of Ethiopian students working toward the degree of Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education at the University of Oslo. So far 13 Ethiopian

students have successfully completed this Master's degree programme, and five are in the process of completion. Five of the completed Master theses are related to a joint research project in an inclusive, regular school in Addis Ababa which was selected as a case-study school for the project: five further students are now, or are expected to be, implementing their field studies in this school, along with one Norwegian student. The Ethiopian students are being financed through two different Master's student fellowship programmes: the Norad fellowship programme (NFP), administered by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation; and the Quota Programme administered by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. The selection of students for inclusion in the programme is coordinated between the two countries, and is related to the ongoing NUFU 35/2002 project *Research and Innovation towards Inclusion,* which is a development cooperation project in research and higher education, involving five researchers at Addis Ababa University and two at the University of Oslo. The goal is to shed light on a series of different key aspects in the teaching and learning practices in one school, with an eye to future possibilities and barriers in the development towards inclusion, and to present suggestions for further concrete, practical development based on the resources already found in the school. The research group from Addis Ababa University also works to implement and evaluate an intervention programme adapted to the needs of the school (NUFU application, 2002).

Estimated Impact of Ethiopian Development Cooperation with Finland and Norway on Special Needs Education in Ethiopia

As described above, Ethiopian-Finnish and Ethiopian-Norwegian development cooperation in the area of special needs education represents two different bilateral activities – perhaps better described as longitudinal processes – linked together through a core of researchers at Addis Ababa University involved in both processes. This development cooperation also saw the beginning of a growing, informal exchange of information among Finnish, Norwegian, and Ethiopian researchers. Looking back at the two lines of cooperation, they may be said to have had positive coordinating effects, especially in the field of the higher education of special needs educators and teachers, in spite of the lack of co-planning between Finland and Norway. Thus, a number of candidates with a B.A. from the Finnish projects have continued at M.A. programmes at the universities of Addis Ababa or Oslo; some of them have continued their professional careers as lecturers with the Finnish-facilitated centre at Sebeta, or even as Ph.D. students in either of the two Nordic countries. However, no systematic evaluation has been implemented yet of the impact of the two development cooperation processes on higher level education in particular, or on increased access and quality of education

for children with special needs in general, except for internal annual reports to the different research and fellowship programmes.[2] The reasons for this lack of systematic impact evaluation may be that, although the cooperation may be traced back to the late 1980s, it still is best viewed as being only in the small-scale beginning phase of a possible, near-future, larger implementation process of EFA and special needs education in Ethiopia. Another reason is the lack of clear and measurable criteria for the evaluation of the different programmes, as has also been mentioned in the Norad Fellowship Programme Evaluation (2005). The following attempt below to estimate this impact must therefore be viewed as informal, and based on unsystematic impressions.

One of the main questions related to positive impact is whether former undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students of special needs education degree programmes are now working in professional and research positions that focus on increased access and quality of education for children with special needs in Ethiopia. Our impression is that such former students can be found in five different areas:

• Since 2003 a majority of the former degree candidates seem to have become lecturers in teacher education institutions (TEIs) at college and university level. Addis Ababa University, as the largest contributor, has employed four persons with a Master's Degree in Special Needs Education obtained from the universities of Addis Ababa or Oslo, and three researchers with a Ph.D. from Finnish and Norwegian universities.[3] The lecturers are providing courses at undergraduate and graduate level, as well as in-service courses for teachers and other educators. Sebeta is another institution where a number of former degree candidates have found work. Some private teachers' colleges have also hired Masters in Special Needs Education to lecture on psychology, education, and related topics. Some regional teacher training colleges have had the practice of sending two teachers from their academic staff to study together in the Master's Degree Programme at Addis Ababa University, in order to secure future cooperation with Addis Ababa and thus improve the sustainability of the special needs education element in lecturing and innovation. However, there is still a serious need for lecturers within this field at the teacher training colleges, as will be documented later in this chapter.

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[2] An overall evaluation report of the Norad Fellowship Programme, including the students from Ethiopia in the Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education programme, has recently been published (2005).
[3] A broader picture of international cooperation is obtained by including the facts that the main Ethiopian coordinator for both the Nordic countries, Professor Tirussew Teferra, obtained his Ph.D. in Psychology from Germany, and that lecturers in the Master's Degree Programme at Addis Ababa University were educated in a number of different countries.

- Six persons with an M.A. in the field of special needs education are working as experts in Ethiopian government bureaus and in the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Education. Some are working in educational offices at the regional and sub-regional level, assigned to such tasks as consultation, development of guidelines and working manuals for teachers, and adapting curriculum for the diversity of educational needs. Unfortunately, the Addis Ababa Education Bureau seems to be the only regional bureau that has employed professionals in special needs education. For unknown reasons, persons trained in special needs education are not being utilised in a number of regions.
- More than 400 undergraduates from Sebeta (certificate level) in special needs education are teaching in special schools and special classes on the primary level or the first cycle.
- Professional special needs educators are sought-after in different humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and thus a number of them are working there as rehabilitation workers, mangers and programme officers.
- Unfortunately, a number of professional special needs educators have also found posts within other disciplines, or have been ordered to work within the confines of their initial training. Thus we may find them teaching chemistry in high school, to take one example.

In total, over the last 10 years, an estimated 60 out of 81 special needs educators with an M.A. (circa 18 of them are former undergraduate students in the development cooperation programmes), and three researchers with Ph.D.s, are working directly or indirectly within special needs education.

As mentioned above, the M.A. Degree Programme in Special Education is very near to being self-sufficient in lecturing capacity, and is thus a sustainable part of Addis Ababa University. However, no undergraduate education is offered in continuation of the above-mentioned Finnish initiative. An important question is therefore from where the M.A. students at the universities in Addis Ababa and Oslo are to be recruited. The answer is that, when this was written, there were still candidates with the former Finnish-Ethiopian B.A. in both study programmes. Other M.A. students have undergraduate degrees in psychology, education or related studies. The majority of the M.A. students also have some years working experience, often highly relevant, such as from government ministries and educational offices at regional and sub-regional level, universities, teacher education institutions (TEIs), schools and relevant NGOs. Many of the young students recruited with a B.A. in psychology from Addis Ababa University have proved to be excellent M.A. students, with a solid knowledge background suitable as a foundation for further studies into special needs education (SNE). Still, undergraduate studies in SNE is needed, and it is expected that it will be arranged, as will be discussed in more detail below.

A small number of the M.A. students in SNE had managed to upgrade their initial teaching certificate, obtained from a teacher training institution (TTI), to a B.A. through a series of in-service studies. With their teaching experience from lower and upper secondary level, they can make a very important contribution to the field. However, primary school teachers, or teachers from the first cycle of regular education, are still absent from the M.A. in SNE programme. This is probably because the gap between the primary school teacher's certificate and the B.A. degree is even larger than for lower secondary teachers. This is a serious challenge, as SNE knowledge and skills are of crucial importance for children at this level of education. The same challenge relates to children with special needs at preschool age. There is also a serious bias between the number of female and male students in both university programmes, in spite of efforts to equalise it. This problem is also mentioned in relation to Ethiopian participation in all university study programmes represented in the Norad Fellowship Programme Evaluation (2005).

Another core question may be asked with a slight reformulation of Tobin's (1999: 113) words related to comparative education studies: what are the effects (if any) that development cooperation has had on policy and practice; in this case, we wish to know if the upgrading of individuals has led to changes on the system level. Underlying these questions is the wish to know whether and how upgrading "from above", from the ministerial level and higher education, has an impact on the microlevel, in the schools. Another implicit concern is the possible impact of "imported" knowledge from highly different cultures. To us, it would seem to be more a question of how and at what pace there will be an impact, rather than if there will be any impact at all. Educational activities from primary to higher education belong to a common global discourse, and thus seem to contain several recognisable traits across cultural boundaries and time zones (Alexander, 2000). Again, we have to admit that the criteria for the evaluation of the development cooperation processes may have been too general and therefore not well suited to measure impact, and the cooperation processes may have been too small-scale to expect major system changes to result at this point in time. However, some concrete changes have been made which may be mentioned.

A project concerned with early intervention in families with children with special needs, with the goal of resource-based support of primary care persons in their communication with their young children, in a socio-economically deprived part of Addis Ababa, showed significant results concerning more favourable interaction practices and significantly more favourable linguistic development in the children. The Mediational Intervention for Sensitising Caregivers (MISC), developed by Kline (2001), proved to be easily integrated into the existing child rearing practices in Ethiopia (Rye, 2001a; Tirussew, 2001; Zelalem, 2001a). The MISC approach is being taught at Addis Ababa University and in TEIs in Ethiopia.

The Norwegian influence on the M.A. Degree Programme in SNE in Addis Ababa University can be documented through following the close cooperation with Oslo University, which led to the choice of courses and the study structure of the programme that has mainly remained the same since its foundation. The lectures given by staff from the University of Oslo in two of the fifteen courses of the programme, also represent a direct influence on Ethiopian knowledge within the field. The question of how the content of these two courses is interpreted and applied by Ethiopian students is difficult to answer even for this author, who was one of these lecturers. However, examination assignments and informal individual and group course evaluation gives some impressions. A short answer would be that examination assignments as a rule indicate that students have at least a theoretical understanding of the subject, often shown in practical application to relevant Ethiopian examples.

For the lectures given by the Norwegian staff, the results of the evaluation by the students themselves of the course have been different between groups and individuals. Some students with a B.A in psychology have expected a more clinical and deviation-focused course content. The overall impression is, however, that the student groups appreciated the content of the course, and perhaps even more the informal lecturing style of the Norwegians, with its possibilities for active dialogue when discussing the relevance of the main course topics to Ethiopian education. It is, however, important to keep in mind that it is a long way from agreement in the lecture hall to the integration of "imported" ideas and traditions in professional activities. On the other hand, the development cooperation project also added significant new knowledge to the Norwegian participants in the project, through their repeated discussions with student groups, field visits, and supervision of a number of M.A. theses. This transfer of knowledge northwards is an important aspect of the knowledge generation in development cooperation that receives too little attention in South-North cooperation.

A realistic assumption concerning impact is that the development cooperation activities in higher education have achieved positive results in the form of a steady increase of special needs education professionals and researchers. There have also been positive impacts on small scale research and innovation. However, the development cooperation activities have not yet had a positive impact for the vast number of children with special needs in Ethiopia. There, things are still at the initial phase. However, the number of special needs education professionals and researchers now working at the ministerial, district and higher education levels may be sufficient to expect coordinated initiatives concerning large scale activities. Such initiatives have already been introduced at ministerial level. In the following section, these fresh initiatives will be described in the light of the history of special needs policy development during the last decade. Political will on all levels, economic priorities, and professional knowledge are three crucial components for the development of increased access to and the good quality of

Education for All. The development cooperation processes described here have been of importance to the professional knowledge component.

Trends and Prospects Concerning Higher Education and Teacher Training in Special Needs Education: Working towards Inclusion

As discussed above, it is fair to say that the development towards providing a school place for all children, and inclusion in school of children with special needs, is still in the initial phase. Provision of special needs education is still insignificant; and the student participation rate is very low (less than 1%) at all levels, which is mainly a reflection of the very low number of schools available. There is a lack of appropriate and sufficient educational materials, limited teacher training, and poor financing of the education system. Although culturally based qualities in care and support, that are well suited for further development, can be found among parents and teachers, studies also reveal negative attitudes and ignorance, not the least concerning the intellectual and other capabilities of children with disabilities (See: Andenet, 2005; Belew, 2005; Edna, 2003, Endalkachew, 2001; Klein, 2001; Shimeles, 2002; Teshome, 2004; Tsige, 2004). Only some disabilities are recognised as causing special education needs, namely sensory and developmental impairments, while other disabilities tend to be ignored. Children with special needs in regular classes have limited support. As a result, many children repeat classes after the first three years in school, and drop out of school. To take an example, in the academic year 2003–04, the total repetition rate of primary school levels (grades 1–8) was 4% for all grades combined, whereas the dropout rate from grade one was 31.4% at the national level (Annual statistical abstract of MOE, 2005).

However, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, since 1994 a comprehensive education and training policy has been formulated, and education is now accepted as a very important factor in human development. It is therefore of high priority in the overall development endeavours of the Government of Ethiopia (GoE). Current education policy emphasises the development of children's problem-solving capacity and the transfer of Ethiopian culture in the content of education, and in the curriculum structure and approach, while focussing on the acquisition of scientific knowledge and practice with the following general educational objectives (GoE 1994). In brief, education in Ethiopia should:

• Develop the physical and mental potential and the problem solving capacity of individuals by expanding education and in particular by providing basic education for all

- Bring up citizens who can take care of and utilise resources wisely, and who are trained in various skills, by raising the private and social benefits of education
- Bring up citizens who respect human rights, stand for the well-being of all people, as well as for quality, justice and peace, and are endowed with democratic culture and discipline
- Bring up citizens who differentiate harmful practices from useful ones, who seek and stand for truth, appreciate aesthetics, and work towards the development and dissemination of science and technology in society
- Cultivate the cognitive, creative, productive and appreciative potential of citizens by appropriately relating education to environmental and societal needs

This shows that the education policy already contains a favourable view of the further development of special needs education, as it deliberately states that all children and youth, including those with special needs, should have the possibility to learn in accordance with their full potentials and needs. This reflects the worldwide changing concept of the place of special needs education (SNE) and the trend towards inclusion referred to above (UNESCO, 1994). In line with this education policy, there has been a focus on taking concrete measures which are directed towards equal access to universal basic education for all, improvement of instruction through teacher education programmes, development of flexible and meaningful textbooks and other educational materials, and increased access for parents and the local communities to participate in school activities.

Furthermore, the new organisational structure demands that two teachers specialised in SNE be placed in each of the currently existing 13,000 regular schools (MOE, 2002). Consequently, at present there is an unfulfilled need for approximately 26,000 SNE teachers in the regular schools, and only a limited number of trained teachers (about 400) for both special schools and special classes at primary level. Without considerable efforts to develop training for the estimated number of SNE teachers, the fulfilment of the government's plan to achieve the goal of Universal Primary Education in 2015 will be endangered. Successful efforts will contribute to save children and youth with special needs from segregation or isolation, and turn them into useful, contributing members of society.

Teachers and future teachers require the relevant training and education in order to provide appropriate support for children and youth with special needs. As stated in the Education Policy of the Government of Ethiopia (Transitional Government of Ethiopia TGE, 1994), that includes endowing them with:

- Basic understanding of the philosophy and ethical obligations behind the internationally declared principles of human rights, the rights of the child and of the disabled, as well as the positive goals towards the development of a school for all (EFA) and inclusion – all declarations ratified by the Ethiopian government

- Awareness of possibilities and barriers to resource-based teaching and learning that may be found in the society, culture, frame factors, the school, the individual child and in interaction between two or more of these factors

- Knowledge and skills in how to plan, implement, assess and revise the teaching and learning process for the plurality of children with different individual needs in the school, practicing Universal Primary Education

- Knowledge of different strategies and skills in order to adapt the teaching to specific educational needs, such as Braille reading and writing, mobility, sign language and specific approaches to reading acquisition

- Skills in creating a positive socio-emotional atmosphere in the school, and in resource- based and individually adapted communication and mediation.

Current education policy indicates that teachers will be prepared for providing special needs education within the existing Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) in an integrated manner. Accordingly, in 1994 an introductory course in special needs education (SNE) was added to the curriculum of TEIs for the purpose of orienting all first cycle primary school teachers. However, this was not enough. Therefore, similar introductory courses were included in colleges and universities from the beginning of the academic year 2003–04 to cover schools at all levels.

Despite the positive trends toward the inclusion of SNE in teacher training and education just described, similar SNE initiatives have not been integrated into the previous Education Sector Development Programmes that have been applied in two periods of five years each (ESDP I and II). In ESDP I, the issue of SNE was totally ignored. Similarly, in ESDP II the only SNE topic mentioned was the construction of special classes in regular schools. In the end of the ESDP II period, a large conference was held in March 2005 to discuss the design of ESDP III. Here was a chance to emphasise the SNE issue for inclusion in the next ESDP period. SNE strategy was also designed and discussed in the eleven Regional Education Bureaus in February 2005.

An official SNE strategy for the next five-year period has now been developed and included in a revised draft of ESDP III, containing objectives, activities and expected results (MOE, 2005a). The major objectives stated in this draft ESDP III are:

- To implement the education and training policy of, and the international principles endorsed by, the Government of Ethiopia to guarantee the right of citizens to education
- To develop and implement guidelines for curriculum modification, and to support system development in schools for learners with special needs
- To facilitate the participation of learners with special needs in technical and vocational education and other higher education institutions
- To strengthen special needs education programmes in teacher education institutions
- To improve the supply of trained SNE teachers and appropriate materials to schools, training, and other higher education institutions.

The following activities in the SNE strategy are scheduled for the coming five years:
- Raise SNE awareness at all levels of the education system
- Inclusion of SNE in national and regional sector planning, budgeting and reporting systems
- Establishment of SNE support systems in regions
- Improve SNE programmes

The final results, as indicated in the SNE strategy, will be:
- Increased number of trained SNE teachers
- Increased participation rate of children with special needs
- Decreased number of repetition of a grade, and lower dropout rate, of children with special needs

The plan is to establish SNE support systems at all levels of the education system: primary (1–8), high school (9–10), preparatory for higher education (11–12), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and other higher education. For all levels, the need for graduate educators and teachers in special needs education is estimated to be about 2000 B.A. and/or M.A. graduates for 11 regional education bureaus, 600 district education offices, 600 high schools, 30 teacher training institutes, 156 TVET institutes, and other relevant government and non-government welfare organisations operating in Ethiopia. These numbers represent a challenge to all higher education institutions in Ethiopia.

Concluding remarks

As described, the Ethiopian Government has ambitious plans concerning the realisation of Education for All (EFA). However, the realisation of these plans is highly dependent upon successfully implementing a similarly ambitious plan to increase the number of graduates from higher education, on the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels, as well as increasing the number of graduates from TTIs. Addis Ababa University is a pioneer in the Ethiopian context within the field of special needs education: this university now has a sustainable M.A. programme for SNE scholars, and an SNE research centre with an active group of SNE scholars. Consequently it is natural to now focus on further possibilities for developing undergraduate as well as postgraduate education programmes in SNE at Addis Ababa. This is also in accordance with the explicit plans of Addis Ababa University and its Department of Psychology within the Faculty of Education.[4] It is also highly recommendable that SNE is introduced as a discipline at universities and colleges in all regions of Ethiopia, starting with undergraduate study programmes and innovation projects related to existing and new schools.

As has been shown here, Ethiopia in general and Addis Ababa University in particular have a 15-year history of cooperation with other universities in other countries in the field of special needs education. Such international cooperation is of great importance in the necessary and continuous process of renewal in any field. Membership in networks in research and higher education are "give-and take" relations, developing through joint conferences, study visits, joint publications, such as this book, and participation in studies at other universities. Students get inspiration from lecturers domestic and foreign, and from each other, whether they are studying in their home country or abroad. Lecturers and researchers learn from colleagues in the countries they visit. Thus the work done by Ethiopian students on their Ph.D. and M.A. theses is applied by students from other countries, and vice versa. In this way, Ethiopian educators participate in a truly global development towards increased knowledge in special needs education, and work with colleagues all over the world to achieve the goal of Education for All.

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[4] A joint application for development of a Ph.D. degree programme in SNE was delivered by the Department of Psychology in Addis Ababa University together with the Department of Special Needs Education in the University of Oslo to the Norwegian NUFU Board in 2002, but was not accepted at that time (NUFU Application, 2002a).

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7. The Challenges of Supporting Educators in the Inclusive Classroom: Development of inclusive education in North Western Province of Zambia as part of an Education Sector Development Programme

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Background

Education has not been plain sailing for every child in Zambia, let alone those found in such rural provinces as North Western. Disadvantages have from time immemorial besieged the disabled, and those children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in this Province.

Inclusive schooling is a step towards extending the scope of the ordinary school so that it can respond to a greater diversity of children. The philosophy of inclusive education is based on democracy, equality and human rights. It sees education as a right of all children and believes that all children can learn. The main premise of inclusive education is that all children belong in the mainstream of school and community life.

This is basically a move away from the differentiated principle seen in the Educational Reforms of 1977 of Zambia, where there was a clear distinction between those children labelled 'handicapped', and the so-called 'normal' children.

A reading of the 1966 Education Act reveals that special education was not mentioned; and the Government left it to philanthropic organisations such as the church missionaries, the Zambia Council for the Disabled, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Services to provide education for children with special needs. Indications were that special education was not as appreciated as it should have been: it was not listed as a priority area.

In 1996, the Ministry Of Education of Zambia drew up a policy document "Educating our Future" on education which came as a result of the 1977 Education Reforms and the 1992 Focus On Learning documents. The "Educating Our Future" (Ministry of Education, 1996) policy document boosted the need to provide equitable and quality education for children with special educational needs (CSEN).

The current Government policy and strategies include the following:

1. The Ministry of Education will ensure equality of educational opportunity for children with special educational needs(SEN).
2. The Ministry is committed to providing education of particularly good quality to children with SEN.
3. The Ministry will improve and strengthen the supervision and management of special education across the country.

To meet these goals and commitments, strategies were put in place. Among them were:

1. Working closely with the Ministry of Health. the Ministry of Education would decentralise services for the identification, assessment and placement of children with SEN.
2. The Ministry would integrate learners with SEN into the mainstream and provide necessary facilities, although the severely impaired would still need segregated learning institutions.
3. Adequate training of educators would be carried out to meet the demands for SEN educators in the schools.
4. The Ministry would improve and enlarge the inspectorate wing of the Ministry to ensure proper supervision.
5. In the area of special and inclusive education in Zambia, children with special needs were chosen as a core group that needed attention; this move had been recommended in the existing policies and strategies. However, taking the special needs into account in the mainstream was considered to support the overall learning of **all children.** In Zambia. four so-called 'traditional' disabilities (intellectual barriers to learning, physical disabilities, and the sensory disabilities of the deaf and blind) were long considered the centre of attention. Supporting learners with these disabilities is still considered very important; however, also support for those with learning difficulties, as well as support for the gifted, have now entered the discussion in the area of special needs in Zambia.

The Ministry of Education of Zambia has worked with the issues of special needs in cooperation with especially donors from Denmark, Ireland and Finland. There have

been longer and shorter projects and programmes that have been active on the national as well as on some provincial and district levels. The Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP) III was a bilateral, four-year programme facilitated jointly by the governments of Finland and Zambia in 2000–2003. ESSP III had activities mainly in the Western and North Western Provinces of Zambia. The ESSP III Programme worked through the provincial offices in providing funding for the districts involved in inclusive education activities, and also worked in cooperation with Ministry of Education Headquarters and the Teacher Education Department in Lusaka. This chapter describes the process of developing inclusive education as part of ESSP III in North Western Province (NWP), with a particular focus on the support provided to the educators in the classrooms.

In order to plan relevant interventions effectively, ESSP III facilitated collection by the Ministry of Education of accurate information on children with SEN, both those in and out of school, vis-à-vis other children without disabilities. To provide this essential data, a Baseline Study was carried out in Western and North Western Provinces (Ministry of Education 2001), which revealed the following (see also Tables 1–3):

The baseline study found that the share of learners with SEN was 7.6 % of all learners in the schools. The low number of learners with SEN indicates that the respondents of the study have differentiated between two concepts "learners with disabilities" and "learners with SEN". In addition, most of the ordinary class educators (70%) commented that they have learners with special educational needs in their classrooms and that they are working as inclusive education educators in mainstream classrooms. This means that in every classroom there is at least one learner with SEN who needs individual educational services to meet his or her educational needs in order to overcome barriers to learning. This also further means that there is an enormous gap between the learners' needs and the ability of the educators to meet these needs. Educators know who the learners with SEN in their classrooms are, but they have neither the knowledge nor the tools to assess the children and make individual education plans for them.

Table 1: Numbers and percentages of learners with special educational needs (SEN), and other learners in the schools in North Western Province, Zambia, in 2001.

	North Western Number of (N)	Percentage (%)
Learners with SEN	8,397	7.6
Other learners	101,741	92.4
Total	**110,138**	**100.0**

The provision of education in North Western Province, Zambia, for learners with SEN in 2001 is described in Table 2. Provision of education in physically integrated classrooms (i.e. learners with SEN in ordinary schools) was common. Learners with SEN were primarily receiving special educational services in special classes. According to the Baseline Study results (Ministry of Education 2001), the type of education provided is related to the learner's abilities and limitations, but the relation is not very strong. In practice, this means that learners with severe disabilities are placed quite often in ordinary classes, and similarly learners with only rather small limitations are placed in special classes.

Table 2. Educational environment of learners with SEN in North Western Province, Zambia, in 2001.

Educational Provision/Environment	North Western
Full time in mainstream classrooms	35%
Most time in special schools	4%
Full time in special schools or units	49%
Full time in special schools 1%	
Full time in special institution	11%
Total	100%

Many school age children, not just children with SEN, are excluded from school. In North Western Province, 32% of all children of school age were not attending school. The reasons for exclusion of children from school which emerged from the Baseline Study were: poverty, long distance to the school, disability, and debilitating illness. North Western Province is the victim of high levels of poverty, so much so that education is not high on a family's priority list, particularly for girls and children with disabilities (Kelly, Msango & Subulwa 1998). In North Western Province the situation is compounded by geography. The average school is at the centre of a circle with a radius of more than 11 kilometres. This means long distances between home and school, constituting a barrier that hinders children from participating in school. (Ministry of Education 2001)

Table 3: Children not attending school in North Western Province.

Main reason for not attending	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Economic	21,347	40.9
Illness	3,158	6.1
Disability	11,699	22.4
Long distance	12,476	23.9
Other	3,488	6.7
Total	52,168	100

The Important Role of the Educator

The importance of teacher education in making inclusive education a reality has been emphasised over and over in many studies (see e.g. Farah 2000; Illagan 2000; Mengesha 2000; Savolainen & Alasuutari 2000; Väyrynen 2000). Many point out the importance of including issues of special education and inclusive practices in both initial and in-service teacher education. However, in addition, the day-to-day practices of educators at schools and in the classrooms have to be supported. Those are the situations where learners are either supported or ignored by the educator. In basic education, a class educator is the one that meets all the learners daily, gets to know them at school, and is supposed to support their learning. Identification of special needs, assessment, and interventions can all be done through the class educator. The educator can either ignore the special need, or take note of it and act accordingly. But the class educator should not have to carry all the responsibilities alone; there should be cooperation with other professionals. At school, special educators and other educators should cooperate with the class educator. The school administrators should also be at least aware of the activities taking place in their school. Furthermore, multi-professional teams and committees should act as support teams, and when possible also as resources in their own area. Such professionals can also be found outside of the Ministry of Education to act as resources, for example, health professionals and social welfare officials. Cooperation between families and schools is essential. As Farah (2000) points out, sometimes the family's role can be crucial in finding support for a child with special educational needs. In some cases, however, families might also be a challenge. In any case, an educator has a large share of the responsibility, as it is an educator's task to support learning by all the children.

Still, one cannot forget the role of the different levels in the Ministry of Education that can all either support the work of educators in the process of inclusion, or make their work more difficult. People working in national, provincial, district, zone and school levels in the Ministry of Education are all supposed to support the work of educators in order to support the learning of all learners at school. That is why they also have a role to play in supporting the educator.

It can be claimed that all the activities of inclusive and special education implemented within ESSP III, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education in Zambia during 2000–2003, were carried out by first thinking how the work of the educators in class-rooms could best be supported during that time and in the future. This article looks in detail at what happened in the process: the developments, the challenges, the best practices, and the lessons learned.

Introducing Inclusive and Special Education in North Western Province: Administrative Considerations

INSPRO as Approach

The aim of the Inclusive Schooling Programme (INSPRO) was to introduce inclusive education through pilot schools in North Western as well as in Western Provinces in ESSP III. This approach had been used by the Ministry of Education and Danida when beginning work on inclusive education in Central and Northern Provinces earlier. However, in INSPRO the approach was modified based on previous experiences and on new ideas for implementation. In North Western and Western Provinces the provincial office ended up playing a crucial role in the process. Initially, in the Copperbelt for example, INSPRO did not take the provincial level very much into consideration, since the flow of communication and funds, and capacity building, went straight to the districts from the national level. However, the provincial level remains one of the levels in the system of the Ministry of Education, for which reason it cannot be bypassed. It is also a shorter distance from Solwezi, the Provincial Capital to Kasempa, or Zambezi in North Western Province, than it is from Lusaka, the National Capital (600 km more by road), making practical issues much easier to handle from the provincial level.

The Ministry of Education in Zambia was recently restructured; and now there are also personnel on the provincial level linked to the special and inclusive education. These provincial Senior Education Standards Officers for Special Education make the role of the province even more supportive in the process of special and inclusive education.

In the sector wide approach, funding is applied for and received by the districts. However, the provincial level has the monitoring role, why it is essential that provincial officials know about the activities of inclusive and special education, both in order for them to support these activities, and to guide the districts accordingly

Establishing the committees to coordinate activities on different levels

The special and inclusive education component of INSPRO was first guided by the national level sub-committee that met in Lusaka, the Capital of Zambia. This committee was responsible for the initial planning of activities and their implementation. However, new committees were later established at provincial, district and school levels in North Western Province. This was an effort to take power closer to the implementers of INSPRO – the districts and the schools. The province conducted capacity building workshops for provincial and district committee members to acquaint them with activities in inclusive education.

Pilot district as a means "to try it out"

According to the data that was collected as part of the initial activities of ESSP III in North Western Province, the estimated numbers of children with special needs varies a great deal among the 7 districts, from 0.4% to 18%. The data in the Baseline Study (Ministry of Education 2001) formed the basis for activities in inclusive education, and geographical considerations for implementation of INSPRO within the province. A decision was made to choose one district to act as pilot district, and then to expand the programme to other districts in subsequent years. The first pilot district chosen for North Western Province was Kabompo, on the basis of the Baseline Study statistics, its geographical position, and the attitudes and motivations of the key officers of the Ministry of Education District Office in Kabompo. Within Kabompo District, 10 pilot schools were chosen to be first to take part in the activities of inclusive education. Kabompo was an average district, which well represents all seven districts in the province. It had a special unit headed by qualified special education educators, but it also had a large number of learners with SEN already integrated in the ordinary classrooms. Officers on the district level were highly motivated to introduce the INSPRO programme and actively join in implementing it.

Although only one pilot district, Kabompo, was chosen in North Western Province, sensitisation workshops for the Ministry of Education District Officers were held as part of the capacity building activities in all seven districts in the province. The purpose of the workshops was to introduce the idea of inclusive schools. Additionally, during the workshops the districts cooperated in setting up a multi-professional committee at

the district level to coordinate inclusive education activities and to begin the sensitisation work in the district and lower levels (i.e. zone and school levels).

During 2001 and 2002, only Kabompo received funding to implement their work plan for inclusive education activities. This was one of the reasons why other districts did not begin their activities so intensively However, it was thought that "the seed had been sown" as all the districts knew something about the idea of education in inclusive schools. Some districts did form committees on the district level, as formation of the committee did not require any funding. The provincial office encouraged the districts to cooperate together in the different programmes, so that if the provincial officers went to the schools with PAGE (Programme for the Advancement of Girl Education) or a health and nutrition programme, the district committee could also look at the situation concerning children with special educational needs and inclusive education. However, such cooperation did not take place often, as different programmes had their own demands and were not easily seen as supporting the same entity, i.e. the education system as a whole, even though this was supposed to be the case. This lack of cooperation and coordination is certainly one of the disadvantages of the programme and project approach in the education sector in Zambia. Different programmes were treated separately on the different administrative levels, and there were few joint efforts, even if this would have better served the situation and indeed the whole education system.

Expanding to four more districts

In 2002 the Provincial Committee for Inclusive Education in NWP decided to involve four more districts in the activities of inclusive education. These districts were Solwezi, Kasempa, Mwinilunga and Zambezi. Multi-professional district committees were formed and 10–15 pilot schools were chosen in these districts. The district committees were responsible for planning and implementation of the activities in 2003. Naturally there was a budget limit that had to be taken into account in the planning process.

In the end of 2003, Mufumbwe and Chavuma districts began their activities in inclusive education with a capacity building workshop organised for representatives of the district personnel, and the head teachers and educators responsible for in-service training of other educators in the first pilot schools selected. The capacity building workshop took place with the support of the provincial office and the nearby districts, with Zambezi supporting Chavuma, and Kabompo supporting Mufumbwe. This was a critical time for the special and inclusive education component of education as a whole, since in the beginning of 2004 a sector-wide programme was to begin which would involve this component as well. This meant that the districts no longer made separate work plans for all the different education programmes, but only one work

plan which included activities they decided to prioritise. This means that now, if the districts wanted to carry out any activities in special and inclusive education, they simply need to mention them in their annual work plan. The shift from a programme and project approach to a sector approach involved a great many changes, e.g. in financing as well as reporting formats, that were not easy to overcome quickly.

ACTIVITIES

Sensitisation and materials development

Community sensitisation was considered a major activity throughout ESSP III: it was carried out extensively. The aim of these sensitisation or awareness-raising meetings was to help participants to understand the inclusive schooling programme, to assist in child identification, which is important for education of all children, and to support an attitude change in a positive direction towards persons with disabilities. In many of the community sensitisation meetings in North Western Province, drama was considered to be one of the most effect methods used.

The Ministry of Education produced some sensitisation modules on inclusive education, designed to be used in the sensitisation activities on different levels (national, provincial, district, school, community and family levels). Sensitisation Module 5 (community and family level) was translated into 7 of the official languages of Zambia: Silozi, Kikaonde, Lunda, Luvale, Icibemba, Chitonga and Chinyanja. Currently this module is being used in the community sensitisation activities throughout the country.

As part of the sensitisation activities, presentations were given by the staff in the provincial office to the graduating educators at Solwezi Teacher Training College, who had a wrap-up meeting after a one year practicum in a school. These presentations were given in 2002 and 2003 as sensitisation meetings, covering a total of 500 graduating educators in NWP.

Training (Capacity Building)

The areas covered during the capacity building workshops were: policy issues of special education, concepts of inclusive education, administrative structures of inclusive education in Zambia, identification of children with special needs, preparation of annual work plans, and budgets and financial management.

In addition to the steering committees formed at provincial and district levels, the districts and schools formed their own committees and teams for the implementation of inclusive education activities. The formation of these committees and teams included:

- District Steering Committees with a multi-professional composition
- Committees and teams at school level:
    - Assessment Teams
    - Child-finding Teams
    - Implementation Committees

These committees and teams facilitated the implementation of INSPRO at grassroots level in the districts. The establishment of committees at provincial and district levels created a firm base for sustainable coordination and cooperation. The line ministries such as the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare showed interest and high levels of commitment to INSPRO. It is also important to note the intersectoral coordination and cooperation that took place with other community and traditional leaders through extensive sensitisation programmes.

Assessment tools, and ideas for providing support for educators

Various assessment instruments and systems were developed with the support of ESSP III in collaboration with the Teacher Education Department of the Ministry of Education. This work was done to provide educators in the classroom with simple tools for use in dealing with children with special educational needs (SEN). The different materials developed, such as assessment tools, ideas for interventions, and teaching and learning strategies included: Basic Skills Assessment Tools (BASAT) to assess learners' reading and writing skills in grade 1–2; Intervention Guidelines for reading and writing difficulties (IGU); Basic Numerical and Calculation Abilities test (BANUCA); Modules for Monitoring and Evaluation; Individualized Education Plans; and Common Teaching and Learning Strategies in Inclusive Classrooms. Both local and international short-term consultants were contracted to facilitate development of these instruments.

Based on the results of the Baseline Study, a multi-professional team began development of assessment instruments, starting with an assessment tool for reading and writing skills in the lower grades. It was thought that this would support the learning of all the children and help prevent them e.g. from dropping out due to difficulties in reading and writing, skills that it is essential to master in order to be able to continue at school.

The Basic Skills Assessment Tool (BASAT) was designed to assess learners' reading and writing skills in grades 1 and 2 in basic schools. However, the BASAT tool has also been used in other grades to discover the reading and writing difficulties that might be preventing learning in general. BASAT was considered to be a tool for assisting class educators to detect language difficulties and to plan teaching activities on the basis of the results from assessment.

During the year 2001 the consultants developed, field-tested and retested the assessment tools and instruments, and began to develop the users' guide for the English version of BASAT. The analyses of the results from the field trials and retests were completed by the end of January 2002, and the final version of the instrument and users' guide was issued in March 2002. A dissemination workshop was organised for representatives from all 9 provinces and held in Lusaka.

BASAT was first developed in English; however, Zambia changed the language of instruction back to the local languages in grades 1 and 2, as a result of the New Breakthrough to Literacy within Primary Reading Programme, and the tool had to be modified and translated into the languages which were the mother-tongues of the children.

The modification and translation of BASAT into the 7 official local languages (Silozi, Kikaonde, Lunda, Luvale, Icibemba, Chitonga and Chinyanja) began in October 2002. A local consultant specialised in assessment was hired to coordinate the process. The experts of the local languages working within MoE in CDC[1] were chosen to carry out translation and proofreading. The tools in all the languages were pilot tested in Southern, Eastern, North Western, Northern, and Western Provinces, in areas where the specific language is most widely spoken. At present, schools in all the provinces of Zambia have BASAT available to them in both their local language and in English.

Following assessments, interventions should be carried out as needed. For interventions in the area of problems with reading and writing difficulties, it was decided that an intervention guidelines was needed, particularly for BASAT. This led to the development and distribution of the Intervention Guidelines for Reading and Writing Difficulties (IGU), which did not become an endless "book of recipes" but is rather a guideline that includes some examples of interventions and some spare, blank pages for educators to fill in with the good ideas and practices they themselves have designed and used.

It was also considered important to assess learning difficulties in the area of mathematics. Since it was now known that assessment alone is not enough, ideas for interventions were included in BANUCA (Basic Numerical and Calculation Abilities Test).

The use of individualised educational plans (IEP) was considered important in the process of monitoring and evaluating inclusive and special education. For this reason, a booklet was developed about Monitoring and Evaluation, and the Individualised Educational Plan (IEP). In addition, a booklet about "Common Teaching and Learning Strategies in Inclusive Classrooms" was developed to give educators ideas for teaching,

[1]   Curriculum Development Center of the Ministry of Education of Zambia

as well as for learning, in different inclusive situations. The context, the learners and the educators themselves are always the most essential factors when creating inclusive teaching and learning methods. However, it was thought that this booklet, linking assessment and interventions to teaching and learning strategies, would be of help in practical situations for discovering the best possible solutions for problems and challenges that arose in that particular context.

During the years 2002 and 2003, teacher training was one of the main activities in the implementation of inclusive education. This training was carried out directly by the provincial teams through the training of trainers. The content of training focused on sensitisation, assessment instruments, and INSPRO practices in the classroom. In addition specialists from the University of Zambia helped in the training of trainers. However, it should be noted that INSPRO districts were responsible for carrying out teacher training in their respective districts. Specific materials were developed for the in-service training, based on existing documents. Materials produced under INSPRO were adapted for use in NWP with some examples typical of the province.

Monitoring and Evaluation

INSPRO activities in all INSPRO districts were monitored at school and community levels. Provincial Committees were also usually represented on these field trips. District Committees also conducted monitoring visits and reported to the Provincial Committees. Each district was monitored at least twice per term of three months, that is, approximately every six weeks.

Provincial Committees held meetings on a monthly basis. All the District and Provincial Steering Committees had about ten members, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare, and interested NGOs.

Cooperation with other INSPRO stakeholders has been very fruitful. There have been a number of national INSPRO consultative meetings involving ESSP III, the Teacher Education Department (TED) of the Ministry of Education, Ireland Aid, and DANIDA (Denmark). In these meetings there were discussions on the contents and production of materials, activities undertaken, and other means of cooperation. ESSP III, TED and DANIDA produced consolidated, quarterly, national reports on the equity and gender component of the general activities of the Ministry of Education in Zambia.

Conclusions: Achievements, Challenges, and Considerations for the Future

The process of implementing inclusive and special education (INSPRO) in North Western Province as part of Education Sector Support Programme (EESP) III included both achievements and challenges as such processes always do. By the end of 2003, INSPRO was established in all 7 districts in the province, and conditions were good for the continuation of activities. Some issues in the process of inclusion can be handled locally with hardly any additional resources or investment, but a great deal depends on the commitment of educators. However, the roles of the headmasters, deputy heads, or multiprofessional teams can not be overemphasised. In addition, the Ministry of Education can also help the process by supporting and monitoring the activities taking place in the school.

The role of the provincial as well as district Ministry of Education offices are essential here, as they are closer to the schools and share their responsibilities accordingly. The INSPRO programme experienced that none of the levels in the local structure should be bypassed, but rather each level should be used fruitfully. Due to the restructuring of the Ministry of Education, there are now personnel in the Ministry on the provincial and district levels that are responsible for tasks in the area of special and inclusive education, effective from the end of 2003. So when the INSPRO programme phased out, there were people in place on different levels of the Ministry of Education to continue activities in the process of implementing special needs and inclusive education. Yet, the transfer of 'key' persons in some districts and schools as result of the restructuring process, almost threatened the progress of INSPRO.

The lack of a coherent strategy and the legal framework to support the provision of special education remains a challenge in the implementation of special and inclusive education in Zambia. When clear strategies and the legal framework are in place, the implementation of activities will be much easier.

It should be considered an achievement that sensitisation was carried out on a large scale in various communities among various identified stakeholders. However, attitudes do not change overnight, which is why sensitisation has to be seen as an ongoing activity. Slowly, negative parental attitudes were seen to change. There is more openness as parents have started bringing their children with special educational needs to school. However, although a great deal of sensitisation has been done in work with administrators, educators and parents, negative attitudes towards children with special educational needs are still there. There are still parents who do not believe that children with special educational needs could or even should be included in mainstream schools.

The collaboration between the Ministry of Education, line Ministries and NGOs has strengthened in North Western Province. This multisectoral approach, with high

levels of commitment from a wide spectrum of stakeholders, has been very successful. In fact most of the committees were chaired by people from line ministries. This created a sense of ownership among committee members. Most committee members had taken the concept of inclusive education back to their respective organisations with examples of these issues being presented in training courses and workshops which the committee members organised and ran or attended.

The important role of the educator was considered the cornerstone of teacher training, one of the most important activities in the implementation of INSPRO. Partly as a result of this teacher training, educators have identified children with special educational needs who were not in school, and some of these children have been enrolled in the schools. Others are being met through outreach programmes in their homes. Very special cases are referred to Cheshire Homes in Solwezi where they have boarding facilities for children with physical disabilities from distant areas. This illustrates the important role in the process of inclusion of the special schools and institutions; these special schools could also play a supporting role as resource centres. However, such schools are missing from North Western Province.

The INSPRO programme also attempted to support the educators in the area of learning disabilities. It was clearly seen that different assessment instruments such as BASAT and BANUCA (both are described in detail above) helped educators to identify learners with difficulties in reading, writing, and basic numerical skills.

Educators were willing to participate in the training in inclusive education, and considered it fruitful. Yet, it took time for the contents of the training to become part of the routine at school. Sometimes this was explained as being due to the teaching material not arriving at the school in time. Some educators still made the effort by making the missing material by themselves, which was possible because they had their own copies from the training, so that it was possible to at least start e.g. assessment with BASAT.

However, continuation of the use of these assessment instruments as a tool in planning and carrying out better teaching has not yet shown up in any data. It would help considerably to support the process of inclusion in Zambia's North Western Province to investigate if learning difficulties are being identified and assessed either with or without the tools that were developed, the extent to which these tools are actually being used, and if as a result of assessment different interventions are taking place to support learning in the best possible way. It would be essential to know if the assessment teams are supporting the work of the educators and if interventions are being carried out to support the learning of children with special needs. Naturally, both in-service and pre-service teacher training should be organised on inclusive practices, to support the process of inclusion. In North Western Province, as well in Zambia generally, the linkages between the teacher training colleges and the Ministry of Education offices require strengthening.

Some classes are over-enrolled, which means that handling children with special educational needs can become a nightmare for the educator, especially if there are e.g. no assistant teachers or cooperation with special educators, other professionals or with other class educators. The changing role of the special educator still seems to be one of the challenges in the process of inclusion worldwide, and Zambia is not an exception. Cooperation with special educators is still lacking in Zambia, due to the failure of many special educators to accept the concept of inclusion, which is still looked upon by many of them as a threat to their profession.

The educators and other professionals in the Ministry of Education and the line Ministries might be very committed, but they are unable to carry out the workplans they have made because of the delays in funding. Since the beginning of 2004, the programme and project oriented funding has been changed to sector pool funding. This has been a challenging process, and there have been serious delays in funding at district and school levels due to administrative barriers. One could ask, if one type of support for such a challenging process as that of inclusive education should not be to retain funding separately for projects and programmes such as INSPRO before moving totally to a sector approach to funding and policy formation.

The INSPRO programme provided funding for procurement of some equipment. which was always procured locally if possible. It was considered that the maintenance of equipment would be easier if it was procured locally. However, some equipment, such as audiometers and hearing aids, was simply not found in Zambia at that time, which is why those were bought from Botswana and South Africa. In the programme, the small amount of equipment procured, and the small numbers of teaching and learning materials produced, was naturally able to help only a small number of children with special educational needs in North Western Province, and there is still a severe lack of appropriate learning and teaching materials and equipment in most schools. In addition, infrastructure modification to accommodate a diversity of children at schools has not yet been done: for example, ramps or brighter lights for classrooms are not a reality in most of the schools. One of the biggest barriers keeping children with special educational needs from coming to school is still the long distance between the school and their home.

What is the future of the inclusive and special education, can naturally be speculated.

It is hoped that in-service training of educators will continue through workshops and educator group meetings, and that more educators will be trained further in the identification of special needs, the assessment of children with special educational needs, and interventions to help support these learners.

It is also hoped that the future will see the strengthening of collaboration among stakeholders, for example, among the Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare, NGOs, churches, and

communities. Such cooperation is necessary and still needs to be taken into consideration, particularly in planning strategies and activities.

Inclusive schooling has come to stay. It is hoped that the efforts which have been put into INSPRO and the efforts being put in to current implementation of inclusive education would bear fruit. The fruits might not be seen now, but hopefully they will ripen in the near future, so that both the social and academic inclusion of the learner with special educational needs would become a reality.

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8. Development of Special Needs/Inclusive Education as a Part of an Education Sector Development Programme In Western Province, Zambia

Progress Muhau and Pasi Siltakorpi

Introduction

As the Zambian Education Sector Support Programme, Phase III (ESSP III), and the country's Inclusive Schooling Programme (INSPRO), have already been widely covered here in a previous chapter of this book, this chapter will concentrate mainly on the results and experiences gained in the Western Province of Zambia, one of the two provinces where the inclusive/special education component of ESSP III was implemented. Although the project had the same structure in Western Province as in North Western, the other province where it was implemented, there were also some differences. One such was that during the two first years of ESSP III in Western Province, activities were focused mainly in a pilot district, Senanga. Three other districts came on board later. The remaining three districts in the province, Sesheke, Kalabo and Shangombo, were sensitised at the very end of the programme. The structure of the programme followed that of the INSPRO model. In both provinces there was an Associate Advisor for inclusive/special education and a local counterpart at the Provincial Education Office. Naturally Western Province had a great deal of communication and cooperation with colleagues in North Western Province, but everyday activities were implemented locally and problems solved on an individual basis as they came up.

Western Province

Western Province shares borders with Angola in the west, Namibia in the south, and Central and Southern provinces in the east. The distance from the provincial capital Mongu to the national capital Lusaka is 600 km. The province covers an area of 126 386 square kilometres. There are seven administrative districts in the province. The primary characteristic soil in Western Province is sand. Off the tarmac roads in Western Province

the transport routes are very sandy. This is very challenging for physically disabled children, thereby affecting mobility and access to schools.

The majority of the people living in Western Province are Silozi-speaking Lozi people, with a minority of other ethnic groups. In Western Province, the Paramount Chief (Litunga) has a great deal of influence in society. Therefore, at the Royal Palace, the Paramount Chief and the Indunas (Members of the Cabinet) were sensitised regarding the issue of inclusive and special education. The ESSP III component on inclusive/special education was very well received by the Litunga and his Cabinet. Implementation of the inclusive/special education programme would have been very difficult, if not impossible, without the involvement and patronage of the Paramount Chief.

There are 523 schools in Western Province, 15 of them are high (secondary) schools. The special education system in Zambia comprises mainly special residential schools, special units in the mainstream schools, hospital teaching units and day care centres. Western Province has special residential schools for the visually impaired and the deaf, Cheshire Homes for persons with physical disabilities, and units for mentally challenged children in the ordinary streams, as well as hospital teaching units. Although slowly changing, special education in Zambia is still mainly focused on traditional disabilities, i.e. hearing, physical, visual and mental impairments.

Primary Reading Programme (PRP)

At primary school in Western Province, children learn to read and write in the Silozi language, a native vernacular language used as a medium of instruction in the initial grades. English is the official language in Zambia.

Through the Ministry of Education, the Government of Zambia (GoZ) has introduced a system in which children begin to learn to read and write in their native language in the initial grades. Western Province was one of the pioneering provinces in the introduction of this Primary Reading Programme (PRP), which emphasises learning to read in the child's own, home language. PRP has three main projects to support literacy: ZNBTL, ROC and SITE.

- ZNBTL - Zambian New Break Through to Literacy **works** in Grade 1 to develop literacy skills in the learner's own vernacular language
- ROC - Read On Course **works** in Grade 2 to apply the basic literacy skills acquired in a vernacular language in Grade 1 to the acquisition of English as a second language, with English being introduced as a subject in Grade 2
- SITE - Step Into English **works** in Grades 3 to 7 to help learners develop the basic literacy skills acquired in Grades 1 and 2 up to the levels needed for the

higher grades. Instructions are given to learners in both their own vernacular and in English.

PRP (ZNBTL, SITE, ROC), in which children begin to learn to read and write in the local vernacular languages, should be compulsory at all levels of learning, that is, for adult learners as well as children. It has proven to be the most effective method to teach children how to read, which is reflected in the good results that children in the 2nd and 3rd grades have achieved. These younger children can read better than the 5th graders who began learning to read in the English language in Grade 1. The conclusion here is that efforts must be made in the early years of a child's language development toward building the linguistic concepts necessary for literacy, since language patterns are firmly implanted by the time a child is six or seven years old. To this end, all children need help from the adults in their lives to develop their language skills, beginning with family members on up to the teacher in the classroom.

Inclusive Schooling Programme in Western Province

In Western Province, four of the seven districts were chosen to implement the Inclusive Schooling Programme: Mongu, Senanga, Lukulu and Kaoma. Implementation activities were carried out in rural, peri urban, and urban settings, although by some definitions the whole of Western Province could be considered as rural. Lukulu is one of the poorest of Zambian districts.

Senanga District was a pilot district. It was chosen mainly because it covered all previously mentioned settings. Implementation of programme activities began two years earlier in Senanaga (2001) than other districts in Western Province. Following the INSPRO strategy, the first step was to sensitise all the key stakeholders at national, provincial, district, school and community levels, using the cascade method. This means that trained special education teachers trained teachers, and these teachers trained other teachers.

The first sensitisation meetings involved facilitators from the national level, including the University of Zambia (UNZA) and the Teacher Education and Specialised Services Department (TESS) of the Ministry of Education Later the trained special education teachers were used as facilitators to train others. Modules for sensitisation were produced in English for national, provincial, district, school and community levels, and translated into Silozi. These modules, prepared as books, gathered together very basic information about special education and inclusive schools, and were modified for the different levels. The main message in these books is that children with disabilities should and can learn together with their peers.

The general observation was that many special education teachers were very suspicious of the new programme and had considerable reservations as to what would happen to them when/if all schools become inclusive. Because of their skills and knowledge, special education teachers were used as trainers. This was also a way to get them more involved in the programme, as well as to motivate them to implement Special Needs/Inclusive Education activities.

Materials Production/Radio Programme

In addition to the material that was produced jointly with North Western Province, and which is described in more detail in another chapter in this book, Western Province produced a series of ten individual radio programmes on inclusive education. The programme, "We too want to learn", was broadcast in both English and the local language, aimed at local community members through the local radio station, Radio Lyambai, in Mongu. This radio programme was about inclusive schooling; it presented different aspects of inclusive school and special needs. The overall message of the radio programme was that all children, including children with disabilities, can and should learn together. At the end of the Education Sector Support Programme, ESSP III procured some hearing aids, audiometers and wheelchairs for the districts that participated in activities.

Developments

At the end of the programme there should be an evaluation of how well the final goal was achieved. Figures are one way to examine results, but quality of teaching and learning need more precise evaluation. The overall objective of the Special Needs/ Inclusive Education Component of ESSP III was to improve equal study opportunities for children with special educational needs, by increasing access to education, improving the learning performance of these children, removing barriers that hinder their participation, and establishing links with line Ministries, NGOs and institutions in order to improve special needs services. An evaluation was also made of how well these objectives had been achieved.

As a result of sensitisation and teacher training activities, a total of some 820 teachers were trained in special needs/inclusive education in the four districts which were involved in ESSP III in Western Province. Almost 3000 participants attended sensitisation meetings (ESSP III Final Report, 2004). It is important to notice that sensitisation also touches the children with special educational needs: they become aware that schools are for them, too.

Naturally, these figures reflect only a quantitative analysis that may not indicate a qualitative change in attitudes, because attitude change needs to be measured over the long term. It takes a long time for attitudes to change. Another factor that was difficult to measure was how many people had the opportunity and how many actually listened to the radio programmes. The local broadcast coverage was about 10 000 people. There was some evidence in the interviews that people had listened to the radio programmes: for example, one mother visited the Provincial Office of Education after the radio programme, in order to seek advice on how her deaf child could continue schooling.

In almost all the schools visited, it could be seen that at least the idea of identifying children with special educational needs was there. In head teachers' offices there were INSPRO corners included, with "talking walls". These posters revealed the number of children with special educational needs according to disability areas, an indication that head teachers and teachers at their schools were thinking about and had been considering children with special needs in the day to day activities in the school system. One aspect of sensitisation and training was ensuring that teachers could identify some children with special needs that were already included in the mainstream classrooms. In some schools, we learned that some parents had already brought children with disabilities to school. The situation revealed inclusion in practice.

At the end of the ESSP III Programme, the question still remained of what to do next. Teachers in many schools asked for special equipment as well as special training, among other things Various special materials and equipment that could be used in special schools are available. However, while these can be provided, the key element in teaching children with special needs is the teacher's attitude. If the teacher is ready to accept children with special educational needs into the classroom to learn alongside their peers, then this teacher can find ways to support the learning of such children. Naturally, we cannot be too idealistic even though we learned of some schools that were not in the Programme, but where children with special needs were learning alongside their peers. Teachers in these schools had not been sensitised or trained. The inclusion of the children with special needs was possible because of the willingness of teachers in these schools to teach all children.

Teachers need support to display professionalism. Hence, sensitisation and training modules were produced to help them efficiently address problems of children with diverse needs in the classroom. In the districts where INSPRO was introduced, some teachers attended one week long workshops on inclusive education practices to orient them to the newly developed and produced material. Districts arranged shorter workshops by themselves, but according to participants these workshops were not adequate to equip teachers with all the necessary knowledge and skills on inclusive education practices. Time ran out within the programme time frame, and enough

teachers could not be trained on how to use the materials that were produced. There is a fear that materials that are distributed without training support may not be effectively used. Even the distribution itself is not an easy task in a country where distances are long and not all the schools are by the roadside.

Cooperation with the line ministries and NGOs was strengthened by the active participation of the committee members. This participation became very effective and fruitful in many ways. The three line ministries, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Social Welfare, shared views and experiences working towards the same goal of holistically assisting and supporting children with special needs. There were many examples of how this cooperation worked in practice; for example, when officers from the Health Sector conducted their field trips, they travelled together with representatives from Education to monitor inclusive education practices in schools where it was introduced. The Ministry of Health would provide a vehicle, and Education would support the trip with fuel. This is a cost effective method of working together; and it is important for line ministries and leading NGOs to work collaboratively. Despite the fact that, at the District Level the inclusive education committee chairpersons were from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education had the leading role in the implementation of the ESSP III Programme.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Senanga District, which piloted the special/inclusive education component in the ESSP III Programme carried out INSPRO activities for three years, and got furthest. During the years from 2001 to 2003, almost all the teachers in the district were sensitized and trained. The total number of teachers sensitised and trained in Western Province was some 820. INSPRO was well known throughout the district. Despite this relatively high number of teachers being exposed to special/inclusive education activities, training should be an ongoing activity because of the high turnover among teachers (due to i.a. retirement, death, resignation, etc.). What is needed now and in the future is further in-service training of teachers in the area of special/inclusive education.

In any case, training of student teachers in the teacher training colleges on special needs and inclusive education should be intensified just as has been done for other special issues, such as HIV/AIDS, school health, and nutrition. This will be important because teacher training colleges are the places where the whole process should start. It will also be cost effective to train student teachers in colleges, rather than organising in-service training after they have graduated. Thus, more time should be allocated to courses on special needs and inclusive education in the curriculum. Special/inclusive education should be a crosscutting issue mentioned in all courses in the teacher training colleges.

Teachers who were trained appreciated the materials they were provided with. Thus, a great deal of emphasis should be put on the quality of the material. All materials produced should be as straightforward and as simply put as possible to avoid any possibilities for misunderstandings. This is crucial when using the cascade model. There is always a risk that the message can change as it is transmitted from one level to the other, down to the grass-roots level. There is a great deal of variation in the educational background of teachers. This creates a challenge, because some of the issues in special education are not simple, and do not have simple answers, but still they can have easy solutions. This is an important question when producing training materials. It is not possible to go very far, nor into very much detail, in a one-week workshop, even though there might be a need for much more information in more detail. In ESSP III a great deal of emphasis was put on identification, because in Zambia there are no school psychologists and therefore assessment is done by teachers. There are two national assessment centres, one in Lusaka and one in Senanga; but queues are long, and for some parents, sending their child to Lusaka for further assessment was impossible due to the family's financial situation.

The INSPRO model worked well at the provincial level. Members of the Special Needs/Inclusive Education Committee were very committed to implementing the Programme. It is important to include in the Programme stakeholders from all levels of the ministries and the society, as well as the traditional leaders. Because they are closer, advisors and their counterparts at the provincial level coordinated activities among the local stakeholders much more effectively than if activities had been coordinated from national headquarters in Lusaka. The INSPRO model itself was effective because, as is stated in the implementation guidelines: "INSPRO attempts to include all school age children in ordinary schools no matter the ability of the children."

Currently only some children with special needs are included in the schools, and even for them the challenge remains as to what will actually happen in the classroom. It remains to be seen if the teachers will be willing to teach and help them, and what kind of support these teachers need to encourage them to support the learning of these special children.

One of the challenges observed was that all the material produced for both sensitisation and training have not yet been transcribed into Braille, even though children with visual challenges are also part of the education system and the community that is to be served.

There should be links of all ongoing activities within the same field from one programme to another. The flow of information is essential. Information is not always easy to get, yet workers in one programme should be aware of and thoroughly understand the contents of other programmes to avoid over-laps. Good information flows are also important in order to synergise activities. This is a challenge for capacity

building. Many times, the same officers are involved in several programmes, which they represent on several committees. Therefore, all stakeholders should be aware of other activities in projects and programmes where they all fall within the same field. Officers who are on several committees could be one channel for this information flow. This challenge of keeping the information flow open also manifests in training activities. This is one problem that is common all over the world: participants tend to keep to themselves the information and materials they get in workshops, and thus it is not always shared with the other teachers at the school.

By the end of the ESSP III Programme, cooperation with Danida and other cooperative partners was strengthened. Workshops and meetings were held together with representatives from the Ministry of Education, always aiming towards the same goal of supporting the 'child with special needs'. A great deal of collaboration took place in the planning and implementation of activities, and in materials production.

Sustainability

Despite recent changes in the administrative structures within the Ministry of Education in Zambia, the special needs/inclusive education committees still exist at all levels. However, one obstacle perceived by local stakeholders is poor flow of funds from the sector pool. This means that the whole education sector gets a lump-sum of money, and each districts gets an allocation according to its budget for activity implementation. Special needs/inclusive education is also funded from the same budget, that is if it has been budgeted for. Members of the Special Needs/Inclusive Education Committee at provincial, district, zone and school levels, and some community members, all felt that funding for special needs will fade away after the end of the INSPRO Programme because special education is not a priority when budgeting. Sector funding is a huge challenge, as it demands numerous skills, and a great deal of responsibility, knowledge and expertise on the part of the planners to plan and budget for the all district activities, including special education. There is a need for a 'voice' to speak up about the rights of disabled persons, and to remind those who are doing the budgeting that special/inclusive education should not be left out. Certainly if these activities are not budgeted, there will be no money available. If it seems that support for special needs is dramatically being cut, perhaps donors should consider if there is a need to 'earmark' funds directly for special needs/inclusive education.

The Committees were still in place after the end of the Programme, but up to the third quarter of 2004, there was no funding received for inclusive schooling activities. Fortunately sensitisation and training of a good many teachers had already been done before this development occurred. Sensitisation and teacher training are the most

expensive components of the Programme. Therefore INSPRO activities can still be conducted in ordinary schools; but naturally only if there is a will to do so.

In a developing country like Zambia, there are many different kinds of workshops and seminars going on all the time. While trying to assist, it seems that donors have created a system whereby attending a workshop can be economically very rewarding for participants, as very often they are paid subsistence allowances according to their conditions of service, depending on the organisation. These allowance are quite high compared to the often very low salaries. For a two-day workshop, a participant may receive the equivalent of one month's salary. This may affect the implementation of the activities. Workshops may last for days, and they are very expensive to arrange. During the last year of the Programme, allowances were suddenly doubled by the government. This did not, however, improve the effectiveness of the workshops. It might be asked if this kind of criticism is justified, especially if the situation where the teachers live is kept in mind. Without the allowances, many teachers might not have been able to attend the workshops at all. It was not uncommon to hear that teachers had not been paid for months. Still, surprisingly, they had kept on working! This seems impossible in the Western world. The problem with the allowances is that more teachers could be trained, funds for training would go further, if participants were ready and willing to attend training sessions even if they only received a much smaller allowance.

There is a need for further study on the impact of the INSPRO Programme, especially at the school level: the question needs to be asked as to when the ultimate beneficiaries – the children with special needs – will actually benefit from inclusive schooling. In the field of special/inclusive education, there are many questions still to be answered as regards provision of education for children with special needs, such as: how "special" these children and teaching methods are; how "special" the teacher has to be; what are the training needs for the teacher to be able to handle these children, and so on. Another question is that of attitude: should we think that these children should be part of every teacher's everyday work, and that every teacher should be trained to meet diverse educational needs in the classroom? If there is a need for special training, the teacher should be able to get that (Braille, sign language), but in many cases there is no need for anything very special. Idealistically we can state that a good starting point would be for teachers to discover that every child is special and every child is able to learn.

A tiny step forward towards the development of inclusive schools has been taken in Zambia. However, to see inclusive schooling a reality, there is still a long way to go. There is a strong feeling that, in countries where the special education system has not been in existence for a long time and where it does not have a strong structure with special units, schools and classes such as there are in countries like Finland, inclusive

schooling is the only way to provide learning opportunities for all children, because inclusive schools consider and include all children, including those with special needs. Inclusion itself is an attitude, a philosophy, a way to think and to do things. It is the will of the teacher, and where there is a will, there is always a way.

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9. From Policy to Practice: A South African perspective on implementing inclusive education policy

Dr Sigamoney Naicker

Introduction

The advent of a democracy in South Africa ushered in refreshing changes within the South African context. Given South Africa's dark apartheid history, every policy intervention has to ensure a human rights ethos prevails. In the area of Inclusive Education, the aim is to create a single education system for all learners within a twenty-year period, as set forth in the policy document Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (2001). This Special Needs Education White Paper came into effect in July 2001.

Four years after the implementation of the White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education began, policy developers and implementers have arrived at the realisation that there are several challenges and possibilities associated with the implementation of Inclusive Education in the Republic of South Africa (RSA). Whilst there is enough reason to be highly optimistic about the future of inclusive education in RSA, the caveat is not to underestimate the challenges and complexities of developing a single education system for all learners within the RSA context.

In what follows, the challenges of Inclusive Education in South Africa will be presented, highlighting the following issues: (i) epistemology, (ii) entrenched special education theory and practices, (iii) curriculum 2005, and (iv) ideological and political factors.

1.   CHALLENGES FOR INCLUSION

1.1   Epistemology: where we have been and where we want to go

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge (Heyligen, 1993). Heyligen goes on to say that the first theories of knowledge stressed its absolute, permanent character, whereas later theories put the emphasis on the relativity or

situation dependence of what constitutes knowledge, its continuous development or evolution, and its interaction with the world and its subjects and objects. The current trend is away from a static, passive view of knowledge towards a more and more adaptive and active one. Previously, South African apartheid education doctrine focussed on control, absolute understanding of the world and a very authoritarian approach. Arguably this type of approach impacted on thinking, teaching and practice in classrooms. In order for those involved in education at all levels to be more adaptive and active, they should have a clear understanding of epistemology, of the theories of knowledge underlying the practice of education in RSA.

One would assume, given the revolutionary nature of the political change in South Africa, and with education policy emphasizing non-racism, equity, non-sexism, access for all, and non-disabilism, that the pedagogical content of the school curricula would be a radical departure from that of the past. The trend from static to adaptive and active is obviously guided by different background knowledge and different theoretical frameworks. Ten years after the introduction of democracy, it appears that South African policy relating to inclusion and access to a single Revised National Curriculum Statement has stopped short of a pedagogic revolution. Policy changes in Inclusive Education apparently remain stuck at a political level, since epistemological issues have been ignored in the training of teachers and those responsible for planning curricula. The following discussion attempts to explain this shortcoming.

At an international level, the issue of Inclusive Education seems to be problematic. David Mitchell (2005) cites Emanuelsson, Haug & Persson and argues that even in Sweden and Norway, which are often held up as the pioneers of inclusive education, education policies are based upon thinking with roots in the relational perspective, while the traditions within the school systems are essentially categorical and assume a two-track organisation, with special education as one track and regular education as the other. Mitchell (2005) refers to an Australian study, of Queensland in particular, which states that there is tension between the implementation of new Inclusive Education policies, and the adherence to old special education perspectives. The latter is particularly evident among advocates for the large and resilient special school sector in Australia.

Within the South African context, it is common knowledge that bureaucrats and public service government officials pay scant respect to disciplines that examine knowledge itself, its origins and nature. However, it must be noted that the majority of personnel who join government departments are not employed to train others. Those working in the education sector in South Africa, mainly those in the employ of government, were forced to train others in the new policy for several reasons. Firstly, the new policy had a transformative agenda and the emphasis was on creating the conditions for transformation. In general, government was sceptical of bringing on

board university academics, since many of them had emerged from very conservative traditions as a result of the apartheid era. In some cases, universities had limited resources and as a result could not participate in the "retraining" process. On the other hand, there were academics who existed merely to criticise and who did not have a sense of social responsibility. These academics contested any new development, with a view to raising their own profiles, and offered no solution to the complex challenges that faced the country. Further, many academic institutions in this country did not apply themselves to making radical paradigmatic shifts at either a theoretical or a practical level. This becomes obvious when one peruses the course content of the curricula in many of the education faculties at universities.

In the light of the above, it is easier to understand why the conceptualisation, production of knowledge, and planning of teacher training and orientation, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation in the area of Inclusive Education and the Revised National Curriculum Statement of 2002 (2002 RNCS), were all left to government bureaucrats. It is extremely difficult to train or provide orientation for others, if one does not possess a sound understanding of the underlying epistemological issues, and how they impact on thinking, practices and transformation in general. In many cases, insecurity concerning training and lack of knowledge led to routinising and control in education, instead of teachers being open, reflective, critical, and willing to create new meanings.

South African educators in general have been influenced by fundamental apartheid pedagogics. Many of the current trainers and leaders in education were indoctrinated by this philosophy. Moll and Naicker (2001) argue that then (in apartheid times), as now, teaching practices do not emerge from just anywhere: they are informed and shaped by theories of learning. In RSA, the problem has been that education departments and teacher training institutions adopted or developed theories of learning that supported the idea that teachers should be controllers, not facilitators, in the classroom. The following example illustrates this point:

Psychopedagogics was a "sub-discipline" within the broad tradition of *fundamental pedagogics*, which is widely acknowledged to be the educational theory of apartheid. In relation to learning, psychopedagogics as practiced in RSA placed a great deal of emphasis on innate ideas (in the most extreme versions, blacks had fewer innate ideas than whites!). Teaching was thus seen as providing in a classroom setting only the well-established facts, through the exercises and mental drills which would activate these innate ideas. Knowledge came to be seen as fixed and innately known, and learning involved the repetition of facts in order to get this innate knowledge fixed in the minds of students. Inclusive Education as well as the 2002 RNCS are both learner-centred and can be placed within the framework of such learning theories as constructivism. Constructivism assumes that the subject of the knowledge transferral

builds up all knowledge from scratch. There are no givens, neither objective empirical data nor facts, inborn categories or cognitive structures. This is a radical departure from theories most South Africans are familiar with (Moll and Naicker, 2001).

In the light of the above, it can thus be seen why bureaucrats did not train teachers on how to implement the new policy on Inclusive Education, but simply presented them with the policy goals and aims of the 2002 RNCS. There was a complete absence of information on the epistemology, the theories of knowledge, underlying the new policy of Inclusive Education. Teachers were not given the conceptual tools to enable them to navigate the policy and the new pedagogy. This lack of knowledge about knowledge has hindered innovation, creative thinking, and imaginative and conceptual developments.

1.2   Entrenched Special Education Theory and Practices

In order to move towards Inclusive Education in terms of thinking and practices, many of those working in the education sector in RSA will be required to shed entrenched Special Education theory and practices.

The author has argued elsewhere (Naicker, 1999) that the 1948 Special Schools Act in white education in South Africa introduced into Special Education a medical and psychological model for diagnosis and treatment. This model, which focused on the individual deficit theory and viewed the disabled person as a helpless being, was firmly entrenched in the charity and lay discourses (Fulcher, 1989). The medical discourse shaped and largely influenced exclusive practices in the field of education, which continued for decades after their introduction. According to Fulcher (1989), the medical discourse suggests, through its correspondence theory of meaning, that "disability is an observable or intrinsic, objective attribute or characteristic of a person, rather than a social construct." Through the notion that impairment means loss, and the assumption that impairment or loss underlies disability, medical discourse on disability has deficit individualistic connotations. Further, through its presumed scientific status and neutrality, it depoliticises disability: disability is seen as a technical issue, and thus beyond the exercise of power. Medical discourse individualises disability, in the sense that it suggests individuals have diseases or problems or incapacities as attributes.

Thus, disability was associated with an impairment or loss. The entire focus was on the individual, who was then viewed as helpless and dependent. The individual deficit theory viewed the disabled person as being in need of 'special' treatment and assistance outside regular education. No attempt was made to establish the effect on the disabled of deficiencies of the system: for example, a physically disabled person using a wheelchair required a ramp to gain access to a mainstream school, but ramps were not provided

for by the system. Access to education could thus be prevented as a result of barriers: such a lack of access is the result of a deficient system and not a deficient person.

Given the underestimation of epistemological issues, it is increasingly difficult to shift thinking and practices. South African educators need to be exposed to epistemological issues in order to understand the type of changes that need to take place in teaching and learning in RSA. In the past, the medical model underpinned a fundamental pedagogical way of thinking that excluded certain 'special' learners from classrooms. The new epistemological framework for thinking and practices in Inclusive Education requires teachers to be dynamic, creative and reflective. In other words, anything is possible in classrooms where universal laws do not apply to the specificities of diverse contexts. But these creative and dynamic responses to diversity do not emerge if your "training" and orientation is restricted to facts about policy goals and aims. Training in Inclusive Education should be of an in-depth nature that takes on board theories about knowledge, and the relationship between theory and practice

1.3   Curriculum 2005 And the Revised National Curriculum Framework

Curriculum 2005 was introduced in RSA in 1996 as a counter hegemonic strategy to the then prevalent apartheid curriculum which, as described above, was dogmatic, authoritarian, teacher based, racist, and sexist, and perpetuated the old status quo. There was no room for being interventionist, context specific and adaptive. Learners within the old curriculum were separated into two streams: 'regular' education and 'special' education. Curriculum 2005 was described as a single curriculum that was leaner paced, learner based and of an inclusive nature. Therefore one would assume that the retraining would foreground epistemological issues, since different theories of knowledge informed the old and new curriculum. This emphasis on epistemological differences failed to materialise, and most knowledge production and training packaged practical classroom activities in the absence of a theoretical framework.

It has been widely documented that the curriculum is the vehicle to create the conditions for inclusive education. Widespread criticism of the school curriculum led to its revision in 2002: The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002 RNCS) highlighted the principles of inclusivity, human rights, a healthy environment and social justice. However, the orientation or "training" of teachers into the 2002 RNCS did not include any explanations of the differences between the old and the new curricula in terms of theories of knowledge. The "training" or orientation concerning both Curriculum 2005 and the 2002 RNCS focussed on the differences in the curriculum, and its principles, aims and goals. Based on the principles outlined in the 2002 RNCS, one of its central thrusts of the RNCS related to inclusivity and access to education for all. The "training" or orientation into the new curriculum did not

sufficiently contrast the radical departure of 2002 RNCS from the traditional curriculum at the theoretical level.

Curriculum 2005 and the 2002 RNCS comprised theoretical frameworks, assumptions, practices and tools that were all different from previous curricula drawn up under apartheid. The framework of thinking in both Curriculum 2005 and the 2002 RNCS is consistent with learner-centred theories such as constructivism; thus both could also be located within a critical theoretical paradigm that focuses on liberation, empowerment, and emancipation. Constructivism as a learner-centred theory is compatible with the key principle of inclusion contained in both Curriculum 2005 and the 2002 RNCS.

Upon the introduction of the RNCS in 2002, classroom teachers were given a week of "training" or orientation into the new curriculum. Exposure to various theories of knowledge, and engagement with epistemological issues, are time consuming, and their inclusion in the training would have required that it be more than one week long. However, if the conditions are created in training sessions for achieving greater understanding of the knowledge that informs practices, then teachers may also be able to achieve greater success in dealing with the specificities of their different classroom contexts. Exposure to new theories of knowledge will have also encouraged teachers to move away from the previously dominant culture, which promoted universal norms and forms of knowledge that were seen to exist independent of any person trying to apprehend them.

1.4   Political and Ideological Factors

The change to a democratic government in South Africa was the dream of every oppressed South African. After ten years of democracy, much has still to be done to change the old, entrenched ideology, to change the idea of pedagogic liberation into a programme of action. South African teachers and theoretical educationists must work together with universities to transform education. In order to create the conditions for inclusion, and a curriculum that is accessible to all, educationists need to arrive at a common understanding with teacher trainers and other educators, concerning the ideological issues underlying education. A critical mass of educationists, teachers and other educators, must emerge armed with the necessary intellectual tools for working with the new curriculum, not just the nuts and bolts of the new curriculum's principles, aims and goals. In the final analyses, principles, aims and goals are only rhetoric, the raw material which needs to be shaped with the proper intellectual tools in order to become the new practice of education in RSA.

2.   CONCLUSION

South African educationists, academics, teachers, textbook publishers and other stakeholders run the risk of continuing to reproduce the status quo. At a time when a developmental and interventionist state provides a wonderful opportunity to create space for creativity, imagination, and minds adapted to the specificities of diversity, training and knowledge production in the field of education lack a sound theoretical framework. Sound theoretical frameworks provide the intellectual tools necessary for understanding the assumptions, models, practices and tools of the new educational policy. Such an understanding of the theory would allow educators to develop practical classroom activities that learners can understand. Simply asking teachers to implement already packaged activities contradicts the Teachers Guide on the Revised National Curriculum Statement, issued by the National Department of Education (DOE), which calls for teachers to become curriculum leaders. Being curriculum leaders is an intellectual task for which the necessary intellectual tools, including an understanding of the underlying theories, must be provided.

The curriculum is the single most important vehicle for insuring that Inclusive Education takes hold in RSA, since it was the old, traditional curriculum that alienated and excluded certain learners from mainstream classes. If the old frameworks of thinking can be broken down, and the new ones provided are understood, and given that the necessary resources are provided, it is entirely possibly to achieve a system of Inclusive Education in the Republic of South Africa.

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10. Educators in SCOPE: Educators' Experiences in the Inclusive Education Programme in Mpumalanga, South Africa

Nelly Lekgau and Marja Matero

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the educators' experiences working in an inclusive education programme which was implemented in South Africa in 2000–2003. Twenty-seven educators (primary school teachers) from 10 pilot schools in Mpumalanga Province were interviewed in April-May 2004, just a few months after the programme finished. In the interviews, the educators expressed their thoughts about and experiences in the South African-Finnish Cooperation Programme in the Education Sector (SCOPE). The educators describe changes in their attitudes towards inclusive education, list factors they see as supporting or hindering implementation of inclusive education, and relate how they see the future of their school.

SCOPE

SCOPE was a four-year programme (2000-2003), which was based on the bilateral agreement between Finland and South Africa. The overall objective of the programme was to increase the capacity and to enhance the quality of educators in the education system of South Africa, in the transformation process towards a peaceful, prosperous and democratic society. One of the SCOPE components aimed at introducing inclusive education in 21 mainstream pilot schools, 10 in Mpumalanga Province and 11 in Northern Cape Province. This process began before the South African policy on Inclusive Education, White Paper 6 was issued.

The purpose of this inclusive education component in SCOPE was to support and facilitate the pilot mainstream schools in introducing inclusive education; to develop the capacities of provincial departments and schools in inclusive education; and to develop the capacities of teachers in including the learners with special education needs in mainstream classrooms.

The expected outcomes of the component were the following:

- Learners with special education needs achieve optimally in mainstream schools.
- Educators adapt teaching methods and materials, which support the learners with special education needs.
- Education support staff is able to support educators and learners with special education needs.

Baseline study

In order to determine the needs and resources of pilot schools and to plan further the activities for the training of educators and support staff, a baseline study of the needs and resources of SCOPE pilot schools was conducted in 2000. The objectives of the baseline study were:

- To determine the type of support required by various role players (i.e., principals, educators, parents and education support officials) to facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education in pilot schools,
- To provide baseline information against which the effectiveness of the intervention can be evaluated. (SCOPE, 2001)

According to the results of the baseline study there were:
- Deficiencies in the capacity of educators and principals to handle the diverse needs of learners;
- Negative attitudes toward learners with special education needs;
- Poor parental involvement in the education of their children;
- Shortage of resources, including teaching and learning materials, physical resources (e.g., classrooms), equipment, and basic amenities (such as toilets and water)
- Inadequate provision of support to educators and principals by the Department of Education.

The recommendations of the baseline study (2001) were the following:
- Creating a change in attitudes among role players towards inclusive education and learners with special education needs (LSEN) through concerted education campaigns and discouraging prejudicial behaviour in schools;
- Training key role players in the implementation of inclusive education.
- Establishment of the means to provide adequate support to LSEN, educators and principals.

- Empowering parents to effectively participate in their children's education.
- Improving access to teaching and learning resources.
- Reduction of class sizes and improvement of classroom organisation.
- Establishing close ties between schools and social welfare officers.
- Changing school organisation, routines and practices.
- Improving access to the buildings and the manmade school environment.

Among educators, the following training requirements were identified. It was felt that educators need facilitation in:
- Identifying learners with special education needs and learning disabilities;
- Using a variety of teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of learners;
- Assessing learners to determine their capabilities and competencies; and reporting on the individual progress of learners;
- Selecting learning activities suitable for the competency level of each of learner;
- Using a variety of classroom management strategies;
- Organising and planning to teach LSEN, including practical demonstrations; and
- Developing individual programmes for learners.

Activities at the school level during SCOPE

The activities of the SCOPE programme were planned based on the recommendations of the Baseline Study Report. During the SCOPE years, pilot schools were supported by the SCOPE programme and the Department of Education of South Africa. Advocacy campaigns were organised not only for the educators, principals and school management teams, but also for the parents, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), community members and education officials from different levels of the Department of Education. Collaborative workshops with other stakeholders (Department of Health and Transport, social welfare services, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), etc.) were organised to find ways for cooperation with a view of promoting inclusive education and society.

One of the key areas of capacity building in the SCOPE programme was human resource development. One of the main training activities educators were involved in was the in-service training programme conducted by the Remedial Teaching Foundation (RTF). This training focused on educators' skills to identify barriers to learning, and their ability to use a variety of teaching and learning support strategies and classroom management skills. Two educators from each pilot school participated in the Teacher Development Course and in the Facilitator Training Programme, so that they could return to their school to further train other educators, including other educators from

neighbouring schools. This cascading model was used in the hope that it would ensure that all educators in the pilot schools, and even the educators of the neighbouring schools, could be trained; but unfortunately after all there were several challenges in this cascading system. Some of the educators who participated in the RTF training were incompetent in cascading, and on their part the process eventually resulted in the dilution of information and a failure to complete the activities as initially planned.

Some of the schools were very active in cascading the RTF content and further organised workshops depending on their own needs. In some of the schools, there was and still is ongoing training in sign language, diversity and classroom management, counselling skills, and fund raising. Another school was prepared to have a blind learner in the classroom, just to name few successes. Educators were encouraged to further their studies by providing them with bursaries. All pilot schools received computers from SCOPE, and educators were trained in computer literacy. Some of the educators participated in a study tour to Finland, and some hosted the visit of Finnish and Tanzanian educators. Schools made their own development plans, which they followed with various degrees of success. Schools further developed the vision, mission and value system of their school. Some schools continue to produce newsletters as a means of advertising the school, marketing the school's inclusive education, and sharing their success stories with other schools.

Evaluation of the progress

There were three evaluations in the inclusive education component during the four programme years. The first was the baseline study, which is described earlier in this article. The second was the internal evaluation carried out in the end of 2001, and the third was the external evaluation done at the beginning of 2003. The findings of these evaluations provided valuable data which could be used to review general developments of the programme on school, district and provincial levels, and to further plan the implementation of the programme, and future and continuous capacity building sessions for each school in the province, to help ensure sustainability.

The external evaluation of the programme was done in 2003 on the basis of documentation from all the pilot schools, a site visit, and interviews of the participants in the programme. As was to be expected, the findings differ from one school to another. Taken broadly, it would seem that the introduction of inclusive education certainly increased awareness regarding inclusive education. Educators involved all learners and adapted the curriculum to accommodate learners who experienced barriers to learning. Furthermore, educators adapted teaching methods to accommodate the learner's level of development.

As was mentioned earlier, a study was conducted in the pilot schools of the SCOPE programme, which were introducing inclusive education. The study was conducted as an evaluation process to establish the impact made in the implementation of the pilot programme. Parents, educators, principals, and School Governing Bodies were interviewed on a voluntary basis. The evaluation findings have shown that participants had mixed feelings. Some of the schools fulfilled the obligations while others encountered challenges that hindered the process of implementation. Some participants interpreted the situation as "a replacement of special schools or semi-special schools", while "others felt that schools were turned into dumping areas."

On a positive note, schools could develop the mission and vision and ensure that these contained inclusive education values, but there was still a problem with admission policies. As one participant said: "The Constitution, the South African Schools Act, and many more state that no learner should be denied access to education. Therefore who should be admitted in the inclusive pilot school? This is a challenge and the Department of Education should clarify [for] us educators whether our schools are adult centres or special schools or what."

It is the belief of the authors of this chapter that the above statement was the result of the participant's familiarity with the referral system to special schools. Traditionally, all learners with learning barriers went through testing for placement in special schools. Therefore, educators still want that to be done despite the inclusive education initiative; for example, in some schools, a medical deficit approach is still apparent and the learners who have "problems" of some kind are still referred to as those who have "special needs", and require specialised intervention in a separate setting to enable them to eventually participate in the mainstream system. Infrastructural barriers, insufficient space in the classroom, and large classes, limit the possibilities for group work and the amount of group work actually done.

Lastly, also on a positive note, the evaluation found that the advocacy campaigns that were conducted in all the schools managed to reinforce the involvement of parents and other role players. Educators, and principals clearly understood what was expected of them, as stipulated in the regulations set forth in White Paper 6.

Educators experiences as reported at the end of the programme

In April – May 2004, some months after the SCOPE programme was finished, 27 educators from Mpumalanga pilot schools were interviewed in order to discover their thoughts on inclusive education and to get them to describe their experiences during the SCOPE years. These interviews were held after school hours, and educators volunteered to be interviewed, so that participants in the interviews were self-selected.

In what follows below, these educators describe changes in their attitudes towards inclusive education, factors that they think support and hinder implementation of inclusive education, and how they see the future of their school.

Changes in attitudes towards inclusive education

In the beginning of the SCOPE programme, educators could not imagine their schools implementing "something so difficult". Educators were afraid of the unknown and they were not sure of themselves, they did not think they could change from one system to the other. However, through workshops, training, and awareness campaigns their attitudes changed.

> E (Educator)23: "... the change in our school is that we have moved from a monocultural to multicultural education... because what is important concerning inclusive education is that you must have a good attitude... or positive attitude and you must also be flexible."

An educator describes changes compared to the past:

> E12: "... before this inclusion ..., I was not taking much effort in making sure that the learners really participate and understand what is expected from them as I teach. Because of the concept in my mind that there is a special school, I didn't take more effort and more preparation that they understand. But the introduction of... inclusion in our school, when SCOPE started with us, really opened my mind because they trained us on different learning strategies and teaching strategies to ensure that the learner really understands, whereby I learned so many methods..."

Schools are accommodating all learners. Another educator (E1) said: "we understand them, we negotiate with them... , we do everything in our best to accommodate these learners. It was difficult but now I wouldn't change this attitude." Changes in the educators' attitude helped learners to accept one another, too.

> E21: "It is working, we changed our attitude first, then we preached the gospel to the learners to accept one another, to love one another, to respect one another, not to tease others about their disability because inclusive... anyone can be... you can be hit by a car then you are on a wheelchair. You can be sick and become disabled. Their attitude is very positive. They are respecting one another, they love one another, they no longer tease one another... I mean the paradigm shift has shifted them. Then they are happy, they are accepted as equals."

Changes in the attitude also helped to change other things, such as teaching methods. Many of the educators say that a real eye-opener for them has been their own experience. There are good experiences of teaching e.g. deaf and blind.

E12: "... I started to understand that learners with special needs are just like us, like other ordinary children that we use to think that they are just average learners. But then I really was amazed to see how this learner just was able to associate with other learners without difficulty where she would go on the board on the sound chart and read by pointing and showing the signs with fingers while the learners sitting there were saying it aloud and at the same time learning the sign that the learner is showing as he points at the sound chart. And ultimately the learners in the class were also knowing and learning the sign language and understanding it."

Educators should be dedicated, have the right attitude and have love for their learners, and the educators who were interviewed seem to be very committed. Awareness campaigns in schools helped also learners to accept one another. Educators do not report cases of teasing. On the contrary, they emphasize the importance of being together because in that way "you learn to accept, help and support one another," learners have "this what is called social understanding, they can understand themselves..." (E23). In many schools during the breaks (e.g. lunch) in school hours, it is the duty of other learners in the class to push learners in wheelchairs around, and even to take them to the toilet. The attitude amongst the learners is excellent.

An educator mentions the good qualities of an inclusive educator:

E1: "... he or she must be patient… responsible, reliable, have good self-esteem, be confident, … because those learners.. they don't.. when they came to the school for the first time they didn't understand that it is a full day – you know - because they've been home for so many years, five years, ten years, in their rooms – you know - so some of them are bullied.. so I would tell the educators that no, we need to come down and understand these learners and I'll teach some strategies to do this and do that so that you can manage the classroom."

Factors that support and hinder implementation of inclusive education

A supportive school management, especially the principal, play an important role in the successful implementation of inclusive education. "Whenever we go to the [principal's] office we get support immediately." Educators listed specifically what was provided by the principals that supported their work:
- collaboration with stakeholders from other departments (health, social welfare services, etc)
- collaboration with parents, home visits with educators
- collaboration with special schools
- provision of teaching and learning materials in the classroom
- provision of learning aids, devices and equipment for assisting learners with special needs

- accommodating learners by providing time for individual attention, observation and evaluation in the principal's office
- financial support, fund raising e.g. for building ramps, more classrooms
- positive attitude
- "anything we ask him, we just get them", "whatever support when needed" .

Educators collaborate regularly with one another, peer teaching each other as recommended within the National Curriculum Statements. There seems to be a strong teamwork culture in many of the pilot schools. Consultation with colleagues is an important way to support one another. Development of the school is a common aim.

Remedial teachers are assisting when there are problems in the classroom.

> E1: "Yeah, they (remedial teachers) assist us vee-ry much because when I do have a problem I did go to them and ask them how [to] go about this problem, so we sit down and discuss this matter, even they did come and visit us in our classroom to ask us what are you thinking, where is the problem and how can we help you."

Schools with a supportive School Government Board (SGB) seem to be especially successful in finding funds to build toilets, ramps, or new buildings, and to get materials etc. In the interviews, the educators also mentioned the importance of parents. Parents, especially those who are literate, support educators.

> E9: "Well, I think the school is lucky to have the SGB, which is so supportive and the parents because each time we have a problem we write letters to them calling them to the school to try to solve the problem and we constantly have meetings, we call them in the evening and they attend in large numbers. So that's where we, we, we communicate their children's problems and how they can help us, you know, support their children with their education."

The problem, however, is that often there are no parents available. There are parents who work in towns whose children stay with the grandparent(s). There are also many children with just one parent, or with no parents or guardians. Some of these orphans even have to take care of their little sisters and brothers.

The parents come to the school to see the work of their children. If there are any challenges in learning, educators try to give parents a method for providing support.

> E11: "...when you were in the classroom you have seen those bags… every learner has the book, the material in the bags and when the parents come in the classroom we don't waste time to look for the, each learners' books. She just comes to the, next to the child and then she takes the bag and takes the work of the child. And then after that we help each other."

Even though most of the schools are struggling with limited staff and insufficient support, most of the educators seem to be satisfied with the support they receive from the regional office. Special Education Needs (SEN) officials from the region have organised workshops and provided materials that are needed in schools. The level of support provided by the departmental officials to the schools differs, and this is one of the reasons why schools cannot all perform in the same way. There are those SEN officials who consistently support the schools and those who hardly support them at all.

> E26: "…this support system, we hardly ever see those people. Even if you ask them to come and assist you, they say: 'Yes.. so much work and we need to go to other schools.' We don't get support from them."

One of the educators from a school which didn't get support, thought that it was due to the "lack of knowledge… or they (SEN officials) don't know, most of them they don't know anything, they don't understand or they are not interested."

The Department of Education in general is mainly accused of not providing sufficient support, and being too slow in responding to the needs of schools. Sometimes even when support is clearly needed, there is no response at all.

In some schools, collaboration with other departmental officers, such as therapists and social workers, seems to have become a supportive practice. Schools send learners who seem to have barriers to learning to the hospital to be tested, therapists and nurses visit schools to assess learners, and sometimes run workshops on how to support learners with special needs.

Collaboration with the police is something new, but educators see this cooperation as being very fruitful. As one educator says: "...we never exclude them, because our knowledge is limited only to education. So include people who can give us support and help us with problems that are outside…"

NGOs have been helping in cases when e.g. computers, Braille machine etc have been needed. For example, representatives of DEAFSA (Deaf People of South Africa) have helped some schools by offering workshops with teachers who are teaching the deaf learners. Members of NGOs have supported schools in other ways, too, e.g. by telling educators what certificates are needed so that the learner could get a social grant. NGOs have also been involved in finding those learners that have been excluded from the school.

Some educators have realised that friends can be supportive too. One educator is learning sign language with the help of a friend, and is cascading the information to the other educators, too.

According to the results of the baseline study, educators and principals expressed the need for additional resources to enable educators to effectively handle diverse needs. The needed resources were

- educators that are skilled in managing diverse needs in their classrooms;
- additional classrooms to reduce overcrowding in classrooms; and
- teaching and learning materials, such as reading books, text books, stationary, writing materials, worksheets, educational toys, wall charts and pictures and magazines.

According to the results of the external evaluation, it would seem that the introduction of inclusive education increased awareness regarding inclusive education. Educators involve all learners and adapt the curriculum and teaching methods to accommodate learners who experience learning barriers. This is something educators themselves mentioned in these interviews, too. During the SCOPE programme educators were trained, and most of them have the feeling that they really gained a great deal. An educator (E23) says: "... I have received a lot of training and this results in what is called an enthusiasms and empowerment ." These, mainly provincial, training workshops helped educators to "get ready for any challenge to come across." In the meetings with the teachers from other pilot schools, educators were encouraged to hear what and how they all were doing.

Time seems to be "a big enemy" for implementation because there are many programmes (e.g. OBE, Life Skills, HIV/AIDS, etc.) running at the same time, and educators are expected to attend various workshops.

> E12: "Right now we are with the new curriculum, the revised national curriculum statement... so, many workshops... — and the OBE is still running from grade four to grade seven. You find at the same time two teachers went for Life Orientation, the others went for Natural Sciences and … (laughing..) … there are not so many (educators) left... And there is another, a whole school evaluation... (laughing..)"

This was indicated in the internal evaluation, too, which revealed that the increased workload of educators was having a negative impact on various capacity building activities. The workload related to a number of other training initiatives organised by the provincial departments of education, which meant that the educators had difficulty in managing all these training initiatives. (Engelbrecht et al. 2003)

The system for providing physical resources to education is still in a crisis. During the SCOPE programme some of the pilot schools had extra classrooms built, but this happened mainly through the efforts of the active SGB members and the community. Many schools are still struggling with overcrowded classrooms and/or a lack of classrooms. In some classrooms they have to accommodate up to more than a hundred

learners (in this case there are two educators). Despite the overcrowding in the classrooms, educators are trying their best to support learners coping with barriers to learning, but it is a challenge to involve all learners in the learning process.

The surroundings of many of the pilot schools still need more developing. Schools have been building ramps, and strong rooms for the computers; but there is still a need for more ramps, and in some schools they are still in the process of making strong rooms. There are also not enough suitable teaching materials and aids for meeting the various needs of learners. More financial support is expected from the national Department of Education for these issues; however, even though educators are still hoping to get funds and support from the Department, many of them are sceptical. "We must depend on the funds that we can raise ourselves and the principal…(E27)".

How educators see the future of their school

Educators were asked to predict where they see their school as being in ten years.

> E6: "This school is a school that absolutely tries to give opportunities to each learner in this school. They go out of their way to accommodate each learner... so I think this school is going to be one of the best schools in South Africa in ten years, and with teachers that do their utmost best to help learners, to teach learners, to accommodate them... in full aspects."

Most of the educators seem to have a strong belief that their schools would be far ahead compared to other schools in implementing inclusive education. "The bright future" is due to the many different kinds of training on inclusive education that educators have undergone.

> E10: "Say for instance like we know that we are living in a world of HIV and AIDS nowadays, so we have already been trained as educators how to handle a learner with HIV and AIDS, and an educator, how should we handle each other.

Some educators have a vision of a fully inclusive school, which will cater for all types of learners. In such a school, educators will be well-trained, skilled and experienced to teach all kinds of learners, and there will be enough materials and skills.

The school will work as an example to the parents and to the neighbouring schools. The enrolment in many of the pilot schools in the SCOPE programme has already increased due to the fact that the school has become more famous in the surrounding community. There is one school where the enrolment increased within a year from about 700 to 800. Parents of children with special needs bring their children to pilot schools even from far distances, and some educators fear that their school will end up

being a special school. When parents see that their children are learning, they spread that information to other people, other parents.

Educators see their school in ten years as a resource centre where other local schools come for more information. Educators in the school are well trained and prepared to act as consultants for educators from other schools. This is due to their experiences of teaching all kinds of learners. The issue of the teacher-learner ratio has been addressed by the Department of Education to the end that educators are able to give more individual support to learners.

In ten years, educators see that the buildings and school ground will be improved, there will be more classrooms, and enough and accessible toilets. The school will be renovated in a way that learners in wheelchairs can be accommodated, too.

Outcomes

It may be concluded from the educators' experiences that the SCOPE programme contributed a great deal to kickstarting the implementation of inclusive education, even though there are differences among SCOPE pilot schools in the progress they have managed to make during those four years. There are some factors that seem to explain this, one of which was the role of the principal. If the attitude of the principal was positive toward the whole process, then a good attitude seemed to spread into the school. The school principal makes resources, materials, and other support possible. Educators feel that they are being supported and that they are not alone even if they do not get support from anywhere else but the school principal. Therefore it is important that the principals are well-trained and motivated before the process of building an inclusive system in and around the school starts.

Surprisingly, despite the fact that all the educators in the SCOPE programme attended the same workshops and school development programmes, some educators still cannot identify the less obvious barriers to learning, and are in desperate need of information and support.

Support from the departmental officials on the regional level varied considerably, and it cannot be said that schools receive sufficient and equal support from the departmental officials. There are those officials who consistently support the schools, and those who do not. The level and the amount of support schools receive seem to depend on the region where the school is located, and on the regional departmental official's personal commitment to support the schools. Some of the officials seem to be very active and supportive in various ways, while unfortunately, some others don't seem to find their ways to the schools. Some of the educators were sceptical of the level of knowledge and skills, and even the interest in supporting them, of their officials.

Hopefully more attention will be paid in the selection of support service officials. In addition, it is important that these officials get up-to-date training.

A huge impetus to get children enrolled in school has been the provision of a feeding scheme, which most of the schools received during the programme years. The lunch provided at school is the only meal of the day for many children, and therefore a good reason to come to school. Some learners are without parents, or where there are parents there is a high rate of unemployment. In some instances, the first child becomes the head of the family.

Some of the educators worry about the sustainability of the project. They fear that now that SCOPE is no longer on board, their school will be left without funding and support. "But we will try to keep it sustainable but we really need funds." (E9) Educators became used to the arrangement that whenever they needed assistance, support or equipment, they got all that from SCOPE. But now they are confused about who is taking over, and where to get support in future.

> E27: "So the people who are left in charge... they don't come to assist us even if you ask them to come, they don't come. So that is why we say that SCOPE left with everything.. so inclusive education.. although on paper it is still there but practically I don't see it going, being any successful if we don't get support."

Outreach programmes are being carried out by the schools in which educators, parents, and all interested parties, visit the inclusive schools for purposes of further learning. This is arranged free of charge by the inclusive schools after school hours or during weekends and holidays. Some schools have won the Provincial teacher awards, for the excellent participation of their teachers in implementing inclusive education. Five educators from one inclusive school received national attention for their excellence in teaching and their work in Early Childhood Development and Inclusive Education.

Current Status

The development of inclusive education in Mpumalanga Province as one of the education districts in South Africa is embedded in the country's Constitution and various education policies. The Mpumalanga Education Department is divided into three regions, Ehlanzeni, Gert Sibande, and Ekangala. Inclusive education has begun in different formats in all the pilot inclusive schools in the SCOPE programme. Educators were challenged to accommodate and efficiently support learners with barriers to learning, since it is felt that such learners should not be placed in special schools. Learners also placed themselves in the schools (default) because parents had only one option: taking their children to the schools in the community where they live. This

was never realised as being a good practice, because of the traditional thinking that all learners with disabilities should be placed in special schools. The Constitution of South Africa and other related legislature, including the White Paper 6, and the South African School Act, (SASA) brought with it the right to education and the emphasis on the level of support that should be provided to the learner in order to enable effective and efficient learning.

The National Department of Education's policy paper, *White Paper 6: Building an Education Training System*, laid a proper foundation for the promotion of inclusive education. Every effort has been made by almost all role players to implement the guidelines recommended in the policy. Implementation is promoted by the provincial department and regional offices, at the circuit level and in the schools themselves, including the entire community. Each department and level produces a strategic plan, (5 year plan) and an operational plan, (annually) on how the implementation of inclusive education is to be done.

The National Department of Education (NDOE) introduced a model for rolling out the policy. Thirty, ordinary, mainstream schools in the country, including three in Mpumalanga, are going to be well resourced so that they can serve as full-service, inclusive schools. The same model is being followed in each of thirty special schools: they are identified and an audit made in order to determine what needs to be done to further capacitate the these special schools to serve as resource centres for the inclusive schools, and also to form part of the district support team. Thus, there will be 30 full service schools serving all kinds of children, and 30 special schools which will function as resource centres to serve other schools when needed, for a total of 60 schools.

The three full-service schools in Mpumalanga have already been identified, and are to form part of the regional support team, since the province uses regions and not districts as administrative divisions. The changing role of educators in the current special schools is also acknowledged, whereby after proper consultation such educators because of their expertise will play a vital role in capacitating the inclusive schools. The model is still to be field tested to see whether it works.

The Mpumulanga Department of Education (MDOE) embarked on further identification of a hundred schools across the province where inclusive education will be introduced without waiting for the NDOE to field test their model. The reason for such a move is that learners who are experiencing learning barriers are already there in the system, and the Provincial Department cannot afford to wait without providing support to the community when it is so obviously needed. One outcome of the SCOPE programme has been providing information on the implementation of inclusive education in the 100 identified schools. A needs analysis of each school has also been done to identify the type of capacity that needs to be provided to each individual school. Provincial funding and operational plans are in place to support the schools.

Advocacy campaigns are being organized to support the implementation process on different levels, namely, NDOE, MDOE, Regional Department of Education, (RDOE), and at schools. Advocacy is being done within the system to inform officials, and the officials are doing advocacy as an outreach to the community at large. The emphasis in the advocacy and sensitisation programmes is on assisting all role players and stakeholders to have a common understanding of the concept of inclusive education, and on lobbying for critical support of the process.

Workshops were arranged for education officials, educators, SGBs, School Management Teams(SMT), and School Based Support Teams, (SBST) on the following:

- Overview of White Paper 6,
- Organisation and Management of an Inclusive School,
- Establishment of School Management Teams and their roles,
- Establishment of School Based Support Teams and their roles,
- Fundraising for inclusive school,
- Classroom Management, and Teaching and Learning Strategies,
- Early Identification of Learning Barriers and Provision of Adequate Support, Developing learner support programmes,
- Curriculum adaptation and flexibility,
- Counselling and Life Skills,
- Computer literacy,
- Team building and conflict management,
- Change and Stress Management,
- Collaboration and cooperation with other Provincial Departments, for example, Department of Health and Social Development.

The workshops are arranged in a practical manner, with on site visits to enable role players to observe various teaching strategies available for use in diverse learning.

National and regional Department of Education officials are expected to support the schools on an ongoing basis, by providing the strategies and skills necessary in an inclusive environment. Furthermore, officials should closely monitor the implementation process of inclusive policy, paying special attention to management, collaboration, and support to the school in general. The implementation of the support strategy by department officials differs from one region to another. Some regions are supporting the schools full force, whereas some are struggling to provide support; and it would appear that some education officials are still unsure of their roles and responsibilities, despite the exposure to inclusive education processes, or they still have a negative attitude toward inclusive education.

The principals of schools, SMTs and SBSTs, and educators are all implementing the inclusive policy in terms of assisting learners and parents in an inclusive education environment. Principals and the management teams take the lead in providing guidelines for the classroom activities, including arranging meetings at the schools for all interested parties, where common issues are discussed with a view to improving service delivery for the entire community.

Those educators who attend the workshops organised by the Provincial or Regional Education Office have a further responsibility, because they should arrange and conduct workshops for the remaining educators who did not attend the workshops. Monitoring mechanisms should be put in place to collect data concerning educators who were trained in different workshops, and also to track the progress of inclusive policy implementation. Such monitoring is done by involving education officials (internal evaluators) and external evaluators.

The way forward

The Mpumalanga Province Department of Education is committed to Quality Education for All. The introduction of inclusive education in the province through the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland has opened doors for learning to various role players in education. One cannot afford not to acknowledge these role players in their endeavour to make education accessible to all learners. Following the end of the SCOPE programme, which involved thirty schools, an additional hundred schools across the province have been identified so that they can be supported to implement inclusive education. The mission is to make all schools inclusive in so far as possible, to avoid learners having to travel to special schools when support can be provided for them in their own neighbourhoods.

Future plans for the implementation of inclusive education in Mpumalanga Province include the following:

• The success of the future plans for the implementation of inclusive education depends on the attitude of all the role players, those in the departments, the educators, and those working in the schools in general. So far, the policy has been implemented according to the guidelines given in the policy itself. The model of the 'thirty plus thirty' schools as proposed by the NDOE will be followed and supported. The provincially identified schools, including the SCOPE inclusive schools, will be supported and continuously provided with the necessary capacity by the province.

- Ongoing and continuous support will be provided to the schools for different programmes that are seen to be promoting inclusive education, for example, training of educators in practical implementation strategies of inclusive education, learning-support skills, and curriculum adaptation, and stress management.
- Training of school principals, educators, learners, and all relevant stakeholders to put an emphasis in education on widening the focus from 'some' learners to 'all' learners: inclusion is about enhancing the quality of education for all learners.
- Further capacity building of school principals to enhance their management, administration, leadership, and organisation skills, including conflict management and problem solving.
- Capacity building of Educators Support Teams and Regional Education Support officials on counselling skills, learning support skills, leadership skills, and collaborative skill.
- Advocacy campaigns and sensitisation of circuit managers, principals, and other stakeholders.
- Collaboration with special schools/resource centres to assist inclusive schools in strategies that are needed.
- Sensitisation of secondary schools as recipients of learners from neighbouring feeder inclusive schools.
- Providing financial support to the regions and schools.
- Monitoring and continuous support of schools to cap overcrowding. The South African government has made a commitment to building more, and more adequate classrooms, and improvement of the infrastructure in the existing schools.
- Continuous collaboration with other departments, including signing of Service Level Agreements.
- Continuous cascading of inclusive education to the identified school and their neighbouring schools.
- Continuous cascading of the Canadian-South African Teacher Development (CSATD) project to the remaining regions. This programme was implemented in the Gert Sibande region, one of the three regions in Mpumalanga Province. The programme targets the capacity building of educators to be competent in inclusive education.
- Consistent and continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- Continuous working with parents.
- Collaboration with other provinces to exchange information and learn best practices from each other.

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11. Inclusion and Notions of Participation

Sai Väyrynen

Introduction

This chapter reflects on the notion of 'participation' as the core of inclusive education. It is based on ethnographic research on inclusion and exclusion in education in a primary school in Finland and another in the Republic of South Africa (RSA), with a specific focus on learners' experiences. The notions of 'participation' presented here are then reflected upon in the light of observations of classroom interactions – what happened in the classrooms and what were the implications of different perceptions of 'participation' in learning. The need for an in-depth understanding of cultural perceptions and norms when planning development cooperation projects in education is then discussed.

Background

Based on my several years of working experience in development projects in inclusive education, both in countries of the South and the North, I concluded that, despite education policies in these countries that at least gave a nod to pro-inclusion, there were nonetheless problems with the way in which actual projects were being conceptualised, implemented, monitored, and evaluated. There appeared to be huge gaps in implementation in the field. Many of these gaps could be attributed to lack of resources (both human and financial) or to negative attitudes towards inclusive education (see comments in e.g. UNESCO, 2000; UNESCO, 2001). However, there were also gaps between policies and practice even in contexts where sufficient resources were available. The question arose as to why schools were not becoming more inclusive.

To attempt to find at least a partial answer to this question, I undertook an ethnographic study, in two different contexts so as to better understand the processes of development towards more inclusive schools. Two school communities were chosen, one in Finland and one in the Republic of South Africa (RSA), which both had been involved in developing 'inclusive education'. The starting point for the study was the definition of inclusion as "a process of increasing participation in curricula, cultures and communities, and reducing or removing exclusion from curricula, cultures and

communities" (Booth, 1996; Booth & Ainscow, 1998). This definition is the basis of inclusive education policy in South Africa (Department of Education, 2001), and is also the definition that the National Board of Education in Finland is promoting (Saloviita et al., 2002). In light of the emphasis on 'participation' in this definition, I wanted to explore the concept of 'participation', how this concept was understood and how it was manifested in teaching and learning in the schools. I sought an understanding of what was actually going on in the two schools, rather than focussing on what 'should' be going on in order for the schools to be inclusive. Therefore, learners were queried about their own experiences, observations were made in several classrooms, discussions were held with teachers, and the relevant policy documents in both countries were reviewed.

The schools and their contexts

Laakso[1] is a typical Finnish block-of-flats suburb constructed in the 1970s, situated in the middle of a forest, close to a town in central Finland. In the suburb, there is a small shopping centre with a supermarket. Local social services, a daycare centre for children between 3 – 6 years old, a public library and the primary comprehensive school are all close to the block of flats. There is a local beer pub and a pizza restaurant. The suburb has lately gained the reputation of being 'difficult' and 'a refugee suburb'. There is a relatively large number of foreigners (many of them have a 'refugee' status) living in the suburb, but they still represent a very small minority of residents. The average family living in Laakso, whether Finnish or 'foreign', is from the low or lower-middle income groups, and many families live in subsidised flats.

The Laakso Primary School[2] serves as a neighbourhood school for about 350 learners in grades 0 - 6. At the time of the study (October 2001 – January 2002), there were nine 'foreign' learners in the school, representing about 3% of the total learner population. On average, 'foreigners' constitute about 1.8% of the total population in Finland (based on statistics for 2004 from the Finnish national statistics agency, Statistics Finland) but they are concentrated in major towns. Learners in primary comprehensive school are allocated to grades according to their age-group, beginning in the autumn of the year in which they turn 7, and they proceed to the next grade every year. In addition to mainstream classes, there are two special classes in Laakso Primary School for learners with learning and emotional / behavioural difficulties, and two special classes for children with moderate intellectual disability.

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[1]   The name of the suburb has been changed. '*Laakso*' means 'a valley'.
[2]   The name of the school has been changed.

The school has been involved in various development initiatives, and is open for researchers and university students. A number of student teachers do their teaching practice in the school every year.

The school has reasonable resources, including a sports hall, a small swimming pool, computer facilities for about 20 learners, and basic telecommunication and audiovisual aids for using and disseminating various learning materials. All learners have textbooks (although the books may not be new, and learners may not be allowed to keep them) workbooks (containing set tasks, learners are allowed to keep the workbooks), notebooks, pens and pencils and other such materials, all provided by the school.

Siyafunda Primary School[3] is situated in a village just outside a rural township[4], in the south-east of South Africa. Most dwellings in the village have been built of scrap materials. Some houses are traditional mud houses. There is tap water in the village, available at some central points but not in the houses. There is a secondary school in the village, as well as the primary school. The only 'services' in the village are a couple of small, informal general stores ('tuck shops'). The community lives in poverty, and many community members earn their living by doing odd jobs, including marijuana growing and illegal liquor selling. There are a number of learners in the community who do not attend the school, for various reasons, such as having to work or take care of younger siblings, or because of substance abuse. Many learners live with their grandparents since their parents (usually a single mother) have had to go to the big cities to earn a living.

The school has about 350 Zulu-speaking learners in grades 0-7. Learners are allocated to year grades according to their achievement: progression from one grade to another requires 'passing' a year exam. In all classrooms, learners are of mixed age because of grade repetition, temporary dropping out of school, late enrolment in school, and so forth. Siyafunda School has been a part of an inclusive education project through which the staff have acquired new skills, e.g. in second language teaching.

The school has some material resources to give to learners, such as text books and notebooks. Most textbooks are shared among several grades; and when using them, two or three learners share one book, as there are not enough copies. The school does not have electricity, but the teachers can copy worksheets in the office of the coordinator of the inclusive education project activities, located at the District authority offices close to the school.

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[3] The name of the school has been changed. '*Siyafunda*' means 'we learn / read' in the Zulu language, isiZulu.
[4] 'Township' refered to a residential area for black people under apartheid. Although apartheid has been overcome, 'townships' still remain 'black' areas.

Both schools appear to have taken a relatively active role in various development initiatives, including various initiatives in inclusive education. These initiatives have been introduced from 'outside'; and the schools have benefited from their participation. Involvement in the educational development projects have led to staff capacity building and the acquisition of some additional resources, including new school buildings, for Siyafunda School. Laakso Primary School enjoys a good reputation among other schools in the town where Laakso suburb is located, particularly in regard to educational innovations.

I spent two months in each school, observing classroom interactions in all classrooms and grades, and finally focusing on half of the classrooms for in-depth observations. Observations were gathered in written field notes, recorded on video and captured in photos; 40 group interviews with learners were carried out, covering about half of the learners in both schools.

Notions of 'participation'

'Participation' is one of the key concepts in education policies in both Finland and the Republic of South Africa. However, the government policy documents are not particularly enlightening regarding the definition of what constitutes 'participation'. Through learners' stories, and observations I made in the two schools in the study, three major conceptualisations of 'participation' were identified: participation as 'respect', participation as 'visible acts', and 'conditional' participation. These three concepts are discussed in what follows below.

Participation as 'respect'

In Siyafunda learners' stories, there was a strong emphasis on 'respect'. In their accounts, 'respect' was shown to one another, and especially to teachers. 'Participation' was about showing respect, helping one another and taking care of others, which is illustrated in the following extract from an interview with a learner, a child of unknown age:

> SV: What do you want to tell about your school?…
> Mlungisi: Learners do not misbehave at school.
> SV: What else can you tell?
> Nobuhle: They love school… …
> SV: Tell me… about the people in this school. What kind of people there are in this school?... …
> Sifusiso: They like to live with other people.

Sipho: They are smart and clean.
Nobuhle: They respect each other ('baya-hlonipha').
Sipho: They respect teachers and take care of other learners.

'Respect' is a core part of Zulu identity. It is about any practice of respect, be it behaviour, action or speech. 'Respect' is to be shown to anybody who is older than oneself. Therefore, an element of respect is expected from a younger person even in the interactions of small children. It is expected that where two people of different ages are involved, the younger person will back off and the older person's statement will be the last. This does not necessarily mean that the older person is right; it is simply interpreted as *'hlonipha'*. Situations in which a younger person argues with an adult are always interpreted as disrespect, no matter how correct the younger person might be (Dlamini, 2001).

'Respect' was tied to certain formal codes of behaviour. For example, learners very seldom looked at the teacher's eyes, eye contact would have been considered cheeky. Sometimes the body language in child–adult interactions indicated a physical distance, a code position, whereby 'respect' was shown: a learner and a teacher discussed a matter not face-to-face but side-by-side, each of them looking straight ahead. This code of behaviour was further observed in classrooms where 'respect' manifested in learners waiting for the teacher's prompts for 'participation', given in the form of questions, instructions, or orders.

Participation as 'visible acts'

In Laakso School, 'participation' was usually perceived as a 'visible act' in the minds of teachers. 'Participation' was something that could be seen and observed in the classroom situations. Most often for the teachers observed in this study, 'participation' evidently meant that learners were expected to raise their hands in question-answer sessions in classes: "I want to see everyone participating," said one teacher when she was waiting for learners to respond to her question. In other words, the idea of 'participation' in the minds of most teachers observed at Laakso School involved visible acts: vocal or physical expressions of skills and knowledge, being vocal and productive, being involved in group work, showing interest in the work. The curriculum assessment guidelines emphasised that 'participation' should be one of the criteria for assessing learners' performance. 'Visible acts' were clearly manifestations of 'participation'.

In Laakso classrooms, the perception of participation being a 'visible act' had created a number of routines in teaching. The following example illustrates a common classroom situation in the school:

> The teacher asks the learners to take out the workbooks in which they had done their homework. The teacher goes around and puts a mark in each book. Then the class goes through the work together: each learner in turn is asked to read what they have written in their homework. They are asked to correct their books if they have any mistakes. Then they move on to reading: the teacher asks the learners to read three sentences by turns, and asks them to be attentive so that they can follow along and know when it is their turn to read.

For learners, this kind of participation was not necessarily very fulfilling. Some learners felt that the questions or tasks were not challenging enough, or that they had to wait too long for their own turn to respond and, therefore, the whole learning situation became rather frustrating:

> Krista-Maria: Usually I listen to the teacher a little and then I think about this and that…
> Milla: I draw sketches on the margins of my book.
> Krista-Maria: Yeah... …
> Krista-Maria: When you know [the answer] already, it's annoying to raise your hand. When the teacher explains the easy problems, it's really annoying to raise your hand. Even though you'd know [the answer].
> Milla: Although you'd know the answer, it's just too boring to keep on raising your hand because it's too easy.

Learners knew that they were expected to show their 'participation' by raising their hand, following along in reading sessions, and similar routines. Such routines that aimed at allowing 'all' learners to participate were eventually not participatory, but could even create stress, since learners had to deal with their frustrations at not finding learning interesting. Furthermore, several classroom observations revealed that practices in which participation was only seen as being a 'visible act' seemed to have created a situation in which learners pretended to be 'busy' all the time, even if they were just scribbling notes to each other.

Conditional participation

Another emerging conceptualisation in Laakso School is what I call 'conditional participation'. The 'participation' of some learners in the school community is determined mainly by their behaviour in classrooms, but also by how well they keep up with the perceived 'mainstream level' of education.

Learners in Laakso School who were placed in special classes could participate in the mainstream education activities provided that they were 'ready' or 'coping', i.e. that they could 'cope' with the (mainstream education) objectives. The school curriculum maintained:

> Integration means that learners who are [taken or transferred to] special education can learn social skills, among other things, in the mainstream classrooms, in accordance with their individual education plan. (Laakson koulun opetussuunnitelma, 2000).

This definition of 'integration' made participation in mainstream classes conditional for those learners who studied primarily in special classes. According to this definition, there will be learners in segregated special education who could learn only certain prescribed skills in mainstream classes. Furthermore, the curriculum continued that the prerequisites for 'integration' were that teaching and other conditions in the mainstream class were favourable for a particular learner's participation through her or his individual education plan, and that the necessary support could be provided.

Some learners in the special classes indicated that their aim was to 'get into' a mainstream class; and they were aware that in order to reach that goal, they were expected to behave in a particular way;

> SV: I noticed that, Jukka, you are most of the time in Tarja's class [mainstream class]. Why aren't you there all the time?
> *Jukka: I haven't got in there yet [he uses the word* 'päästä'*, 'to be let in/to be accepted'].*
> *I will get in there.*
> SV: What do you have to do so that you will get in there?
> Jukka: To be somehow… somehow… I will somehow get in there. I don't know. Ask Marja [the special teacher]. She knows.

Learners who were placed in special classes had to adapt themselves into what was on offer, such as academic objectives or certain behaviour, as well as to what the teachers themselves felt about participation in their classes by these learners. If these conditions were favourable, special class learners were allowed to participate in certain lessons:
(Observation in a special class) At one point in the lesson, one of the boys who has gone 'for integration' in the mainstream music lesson comes back saying: "I didn't behave. I was sent back." The teacher is about to say something before the boy continues: "I'm joking. I just forgot my notebook." He fetches his notebook and goes back to the music lesson.

The core of inclusive education is the adaptation of the learning environment rather than making the learner change. What the above observation from a Laakso special class suggests is that this learner had at some time in the past either personally experienced exclusion or had seen another learner excluded from the 'integration class' and 'sent back' to special class. From an inclusion point of view, he was excluded twice – firstly by placement in a special class, and secondly through exclusion from his 'integration class'.

Implications for learning in the classroom

As 'participation' was chiefly understood as certain behaviour, rather than engagement in the curricula and cultures of the schools, it was hardly surprising that 'coping' was the catch-word in both the Finnish and the South African school, although it manifested in different ways in the two schools.

Coping or overcoming obstacles?

In Laakso, 'coping' was a catch word mainly applied to 'integration learners', who had to show they could 'cope' in order to participate in the mainstream education lessons. On the other hand, learners placed in mainstream classes but who experienced barriers to learning and participation had to show they could 'cope' in the mainstream setting with the support provided, otherwise they might find themselves 'transferred' to special classes. This resulted in a situation in which 'support' in mainstream classes also seems to have been perceived rather narrowly. Formal support was provided through organisational arrangements, such as extra tuition given by the class teacher after school hours (with the teacher receiving extra pay), or small group tuition given by special teachers. Small group tuition was organised on a part-time or full-time basis; in both cases, it was exclusionary in the sense that it required learners to be taken out of mainstream classes. On-the-spot support during a mainstream lesson was also provided, however, in order for a learner with difficulties to be able to complete within the time allowed the same task that was assigned to all learners. Learners supported one another in the classes; they explained the tasks and encouraged their peers if the teachers let them do that. Some teachers encouraged learners' co-operation, while other teachers preferred that learners asked for help from them. Nevertheless, modifications or adaptations of tasks, other than providing extra time for completion, were scarce.
    Curriculum differentiation is a commonly cited method used in providing inclusive learning environments (e.g. UNESCO, 1993); but in the Laakso curriculum, differentiation was specifically stated as a method to be used to support learners who

were transferred to 'special education'. This policy, and the practice of put-in-pull-out of mainstream classes, along with permanent special education, reinforced the gap in Laakso between 'ordinary' and 'special' education: instead of making curriculum differentiation a daily practice for facilitating or enriching learning for all learners, it was used as only an exceptional measure in mainstream classes.

Culture of failure?

In Siyafunda, 'coping' was the only option for not 'failing'. There was a persistent 'culture of failure' that emphasised passing tests, memorising, and getting answers right. Although the new South African curriculum promoted a view that each learner can succeed in her own way, all teachers in Siyafunda assessed learners through traditional tests. These tests caused learners considerable distress, anxiety and even fear because of the likely consequences of 'failing'. Because failure and mistakes were undesirable and considered as a waste of money by some families, learners who failed the tests might expect corporal punishment or denial of food at home. Learners therefore developed coping mechanisms in classes which helped them pass the test by e.g. copying answers from peers – but this did not necessarily help them to learn. This kind of 'coping', while it helps learners to survive for the moment, probably does not increase their skills, knowledge, or potential for further studies.

The culture of failure has its roots in the apartheid legacy: In an inclusive education workshop, a teacher reflected on the current, complex situation in education: *"We are living in transition. Things are changing but we also live with our history. We cannot blame teachers if they are not doing the right thing. They are doing things that they were taught to be the right things."* The classroom observations and learners' interviews in the present study, however, have illustrated that while some teachers were carrying on with the "things they were taught to be the right things" others had adopted the 'new thinking' at least to some extent.

'Support' to learning in Siyafunda was characterised by learners' stories about 'helping' each other and working together in groups. My observations made in the school during this study suggest that 'helping' was merely aimed at getting by in the lesson rather than actually learning, as mentioned above. Academic ability was not a basis for formal ability grouping in the school, although at least one teacher used it. This created sub-cultures in some classrooms where 'clever' learners seemed to be given more of the more desirable assignments and tasks (e.g. passing teacher's messages and thus leaving the classroom for a moment) than those whose academic achievements apparently did not entitle then to do. 'Clever learners' were also appreciated in various group work as they could 'help' other learners by providing correct answers.

Emerging practices

An important finding in both schools was that 'support' to learning does not necessarily depend on resources or the availability of special teachers. Class teachers could support learning by developing peer support, using groups with differentiated tasks, designing activities that allowed them to liberate themselves from 'talk-and-chalk' and use that time for supporting those who needed help. In both schools, there were a few innovative teachers who used learner-centred approaches in their teaching, and thus provided motivating learning opportunities for learners. These teachers shared a practice of reflection: they analysed and evaluated their own teaching and its impacts, observed learners and their reactions, and then adjusted, modified and changed their way of working. They also shared a trust in learners: they believed that learners are capable of carrying out their assigned tasks, choosing from different options, and learning in and through interaction. In observations of the classes of these innovative teachers, it was obvious that most of the learners in these classes were interested in their work, self-motivated, and independent through interdependence.

Teacher attitudes: power positions or quiet resistance?

Teacher behaviour and teachers' attitudes seemed to be crucial in directing the extent to which inclusive practices were developed.

In the Finnish school, the reluctance of teachers to take on inclusive approaches in education reflected the statements made by the teachers' union, which saw inclusion as adding to the workload of teachers without increasing their pay, and the conditions that the union had set for inclusion in the mid-1990s. This was further accentuated by the strong division between 'mainstream' and 'special education' in the schools, as illustrated above. The 'mainstream-special' duality contributed to the idea that it was not possible to cater for the needs of all learners in diverse learner population within mainstream education, and that teachers could not – or did not want to – change their professional repertoire. Therefore, learners who could not 'cope' were referred to pull-out support or 'transferred' to become clients of 'special education'.

Informal discussions with mainstream teachers in Laakso School further revealed a perception that teachers' skills and knowledge of teaching and learning would not be adequate to cater for the needs of all learners. Mainstream teachers seemed to hand over their professional competence to special teachers to respond to 'more challenging' learning needs. Mainstream teachers claimed that they were not trained to deal with learners who were more challenging than 'ordinary' learners. However, my classroom observations in this study did not support this perception. The teaching and learning approaches that were used in the special classes could have been applied in mainstream

classes as well; the difference was that there were fewer learners and more adults in the special classes.

Moberg (2001) has studied Finnish teachers' attitudes toward the 'integration of learners with special educational needs'. His findings reveal that although there is variation between positive and negative attitudes, the general attitude is very critical of 'integration'. It is obvious that teachers' negative attitudes are related to teachers' idea of 'difference' and to their fears of being unable to respond to the difficulties arising from the diversity in mainstream classes. Teachers seem to think that diversity among learners is in an integrated classroom would be so wide that it would be difficult or impossible to respond to all learners in an 'integrated' mainstream class, and therefore segregated special education is the best option. Segregation is perceived as beneficial to learners 'with special educational needs'. The way in which teacher education in Finland is structured (separate education for future teachers of 'mainstream' education and for 'special' education teachers) further supports this view.

Naukkarinen (1999) looks at the situation from the point of view of schools. He suggests that a 'traditional' Finnish school 'produces' 'special learners' and their segregation from mainstream education through a school culture which responds to learners' individual needs through a behaviouristic learning approach, technical-rational professionalism, and individual-focused diagnostic problem-solving. These approaches do not suffice anymore in contemporary Finnish society in which the school is expected to be more diverse and flexible. When the traditional 'mainstream' approaches are insufficient, mainstream education 'produces' a need for segregation by transferring learners to 'special needs education'. Because of this perceived (and implemented) need for segregation in Laakso School, 'integration of learners with special educational needs' was considered an exceptional measure. This led to a situation whereby mainstream teachers were in a position to decide whether they would be willing to 'take in' 'integration learners' from special classes into their lessons, or not. 'Integration' or 'inclusion' were not considered as rights of the learners, but as actions that were taken by teachers if 'special learners' could 'cope', i.e. behave 'appropriately', in mainstream classrooms.

In the South African school, teacher behaviour was different. Some teachers openly stated, and some might have agreed with them, that they perceived the new education policies as having been made by 'the Whites'. The policies were 'Eurocentric' and thus not relevant to South African teachers because the policy documents did not reflect the reality of their classrooms, or of issues such as illiteracy and poverty. Furthermore, these teachers claimed that they were not consulted about any aspects of the curriculum. Jansen's (2001) study confirms that teachers' participation has indeed been limited in the curriculum design process in RSA, as no teachers were involved in the decision to adopt outcomes-based education as the preferred policy approach for a post-apartheid

curriculum. Teachers' claims that education policy documents were made by 'the Whites' are not far wrong, either, as Jansen further shows the undeniable role of 'overseas consultants' in shaping educational thinking in RSA.

Consequently, Siyafunda teachers adopted the new vocabulary (because they were being monitored by education authorities), seated learners in groups (because it looked like a learner-centred approach) and continued much along the lines they had always followed. They did not have to change their professional repertoire much, either. Through rote-learning, those learners who could 'cope' progressed, whereas those who did not, repeated the grade.

Regardless of the different contexts, differences in levels of qualifications of teachers, and enormous disparities in resources available to teaching and learning in the two schools, these reluctant teachers in both countries shared a narrow idea of teaching and learning as task completion resulting in 'learning'. While this approach worked for some learners, it disadvantaged and contributed to the failure of others. Across these two very different cultures, teachers were themselves 'failures' in that they failed to see how the practices they adhered to both contributed to and reproduced the culture of failure: in Finland, the failures were 'transferred' away to 'special education' while in South Africa, failures eventually dropped out. By attaching 'failure' to individuals, rather than to the system, teachers did not have to change.

Some conclusions

Insufficient knowledge of the development contexts

The present study emerged from my dissatisfaction of outcomes of inclusive education initiatives in which I had personally been involved during my career as a teacher, special teacher and later, an international education adviser. Grassroots initiatives demonstrated enhanced professional skills in classrooms through increasing focus on group work and apparently collaborative learning methods, but still very little seemed to happen in terms of providing appropriate learning opportunities for all learners. Notions of 'coping' and an emphasis on academic attainment prevailed – and challenges in teaching and learning were related to these. On the other hand, at the national level of policy making, progressive and high-spirited policies were designed. Nonetheless, very little happened on the ground. This study was done in an attempt to explain the gap between the national policy and its implementation in the schools.

This ethnographic study, supported by critical educational research, suggests that school development initiatives, both in countries of the North and the South, seemed to be typically conceptualised and designed outside the school without the participation

of the various partners concerned. It is obvious that quite often, too, there is rather a limited understanding of what is actually going on in the school.

In observing the two school communities as an outsider for two months each, I started to understand some of the complexities involved in daily lives of the schools. The observations in the two schools led to the conclusion that a number of development initiatives had seemingly been designed from the point of view of what *ought* to be happening in a classroom rather than building on what is happening. Although education policies outline the directions where schools should head, implementation cannot start from a hypothetical situation of schools.

Technical intervention or changing cultures?

A review of various (inclusive) education project reports (e.g. UNESCO, 1999; 2001; Da Costa, 2003; Karangwa, 2003; SCOPE, 2003) gives the impression that there is an emphasis on technical intervention in educational development initiatives both in countries of the South and the North. Activities such as policy development in education, human resource development (teacher education, workshops, etc.), and activities that aim at facilitating the acquisition of new skills that would eventually lead to new practices, production of new learning materials or new technology, seem to take the main role in development. From the point of view of donors (be it additional governmental funding for schools as in Finland or donor governments for the countries in the South), or project monitors, this is understandable. Using these activities to supply indicators, it is easy to count or measure whether the project is actually being implemented, and how 'successfully'. Although all these components are, and should be, an integral part of development initiatives, they alone will not be sufficient to bring about change . The observations made in the two particular schools of this study clearly indicated that activities taking place only on the *surface* of school cultures will not advance inclusion. The school culture itself needs to change, so that inclusion becomes an integral part of the culture. Changing the cultures of schools relates closely to the quality of education; logically, then, to improve the quality of education for all, the school culture has to change (Education for All, 2004).

The literature of the management of change (e.g. Fullan, 1999; Hargreaves, 1999) suggests that organisational change has to deal with the deep structures of an organisation's cultures. Schools, with their established structures and differentiated roles of the various school community members, are first and foremost organisations. Schools develop their own cultures, which partly reflect the surrounding general culture. However, school cultures are primarily reflected images of the beliefs, attitudes and values that are embraced by the members of the school organisation. Sometimes these images are determined by most dominant of the members, sometimes they have

developed through more democratic processes. Against this cultural framework, it is easy to see why many well-intentioned innovations or education policies fail to change what is actually happening in schools.

In Laakso School, most teachers adhered to the belief that 'special education' and segregation are justified, and that their skills as teachers would not be adequate to cater for diversity. Therefore, the school held tightly to the dual system of 'mainstream' and 'special' education – a division which was not challenged in the school. Despite the rhetoric on inclusion, very little happened to concretely implement inclusive policies, because inclusion was conceptualised as a conditional and exceptional 'measure' rather than a principle that would guide all school activities. In Siyafunda Primary School, many of the teachers regarded the curriculum as something alien and imposed on them from the outside. This led to a token implementation of the curriculum principles in the new policy: a new vocabulary and some new teaching and learning practices were used in order to make a convincing show for visiting officials and project monitors.

As Booth and Ainscow (2002) outline in their work on school development for inclusion, creating inclusive cultures is the foundation for school development. The development of shared inclusive values and collaborative relationships is more likely to lead to changes in policies and practices. Inclusive cultures are all about a secure, accepting, collaborating and stimulating community, in which everyone is valued. Observations in the two schools in this study unfortunately did not reveal such a community.

No blame should accrue to the leaders of the inclusive education initiatives in the schools, or to the administrators or teachers of the two schools in this study for the stalling on the adoption of inclusive policies in the schools. The teachers and administrators were in many regards serious and honest in their intentions – they thought that they were doing 'the right thing'. At least, they were implementing activities that had been outlined in the development initiative documents. Education advisers, and others working in development cooperation in education, might however be encouraged to take a more critical look at what is actually going on in schools in regard to inclusion. It might be a good idea if each development project put a short-term TA (perhaps a JPO, or even a research candidate from a university) in the schools in the project as an observer on a daily basis for a period of eight to ten weeks, as was the case in the present study. Being involved for a lengthy period in the daily life of a school puts the observer in a better position to see the dynamics of the school community and the evolving situations in the classrooms. Having an outside point of view would also open the eyes of those working within the system: literally seeing themselves and their school with 'new' eyes. Such a period of observation might enable planners to relate development goals and objectives to the realities of the schools, and

work with school administrators and teachers to develop a common understanding of what needs to happen. At the very least, such a procedure would give teachers the feeling that they have an input into planning and that the policies are not coming from 'outside' the school.

Toward a definition of 'participation'

The notion of 'participation' was inbuilt in the definition of 'inclusion' cited above. Initially, 'participation' was understood here as a multidimensional and dynamic process, which could be characterised from the point of view of the learner as belonging, joining in, being taken in, being accepted, with differences and the specific characteristics of each individual. Participation also implies a possibility of choice: to participate or not. Often the process of participation can take the form of an activity that the participant can contribute towards and benefit from. This might require negotiations between and among participants about the way in which the activity is conceived, processed and evaluated; therefore, it requires participants to be motivated and to play an active role. If 'participation' is understood as a multidimensional process, it also might suggest some kind of emotional attachment to the group or towards the activity, as opposed to 'attendance' which could be understand as simply 'being present', without necessarily 'participating'.

A concern with 'participation' emphasises the learner's experiences of school and learning; how she participates in the learning process, whether she can have a say about how she studies, whether her skills and knowledge are used in the learning process, etc. Participation is a learner's – and equally a staff member's – experience of being a part of the school community where they are respected as a members of that community and have a meaningful role to play. It is about being an active builder of one's own life rather than being a mere spectator.

This study revealed that, in the classrooms, 'participation' was usually defined as something outside individual persons in both schools. Participation was defined through structures (e.g. the dual system of education in Laakso), through practices that did not provide an opportunity for success for everybody. Participation was allowed according to age or gender (different opportunities or responsibilities for learners of different ages or gender) or position in the hierarchy or professional status. In learning activities, teachers usually decided what, at what level, how and with whom activities were to be carried out, thus effectively restricting learners' participation to the execution of teacher-directed activities.

The observations made in this study clearly answered the question of '*who*' defines participation: in Laakso, formal 'participation' was implicitly defined by mainstream teachers through their actions or notation; in Siyafunda, 'participation' was related to what was considered culturally appropriate for learners. In both schools, learners were expected to fit this definition of 'participation', although the definition of the concept was never made explicit.

The answer to the second question, the *'what'*, is more problematic. It is unclear just 'what' is the 'participation' being promoted by the education policies of Finland and RSA. The implicit, narrow definition of 'participation' as revealed through the actions of the school communities in the study does not allow all learners to 'participate' in the way that it was initially conceived and described above. There was no sense of everyone 'belonging', of everyone 'taking part'. The justifications for, and the manifestations of, this non-participation were different in the two schools, but the basis was the same in each case: the school cultures contained rigid notions of learning, teaching, learner behaviour, and individual differences. To be fair, this might be because the policy planners might not have been very clear in their definition of 'participation', either.

This study has made it obvious that the definition of 'participation' has to be at the core of creating more inclusive schools. To that end, we need to ensure that everyone concerned agrees on a definition of 'participation' that is more like the one first stated above: belonging, joining in, being valued regardless of differences, being accepted, taking part. If we are to move forward with inclusive education, the participation of each and every learner has to be at stake. Inclusive education cannot come about so long as there are practices that restrict or limit the active participation of some learners or groups of learners in the activities of mainstream education.

To conclude, I would like to quote one of the findings to the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century:

> Education policy must be sufficiently diversified and must be so designed as not to become another contributory cause of social exclusion. (UNESCO 1996. p.67.)

This is the true challenge for educational development work.

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Education for All:
Where are the children with disabilities?

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Introduction

Achieving Education for All (EFA) by the year 2015 is an ambitious goal. This goal, the second of the UN Millennium Development Goals, was stated by the Dakar Framework of action (UNESCO, 2000) as "*ensuring that by 2015 all children … have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.*" The challenge is twofold. First there is the question of quantity: how to guarantee that not only do all children have access to, but that they will also complete, primary education. The other side of the coin is quality: how to ensure that all children have access to good quality education. With regard to the current enrolment rates and existing resources for education, the situation is very different in the North and in the South. Most Western European countries report that their financial resources are sufficient and that the EFA goals have almost been met; whereas in contrast most developing countries clearly indicate that they will need external financial assistance to achieve their EFA goals, and that many of them are very far from reaching the goals (UNESCO, 2004). The biggest challenge now is to find ways for those countries in which a large proportion of children are still outside the reach of primary education to simultaneously increase both their enrolment rates and the quality of the primary education being provided. Enhancing quality of education is a complex issue, and the lack or additional provision of resources does not alone provide either easy excuses or easy solutions. Studies have indicated that there is in fact only a weak link between resources and educational outcomes, and that countrywide and local contextual factors and processes also play an important role (see e.g. Al-Samarrai, 2002; Teddlie, 2003).

Both of these challenges, increasing enrolment and improving the quality of education, become even more urgent when we look at how the EFA goals are being realised for children with disabilities. As implied by many chapters in this book, and much previous research, the inclusion of all children with disabilities in education is an idea for which there is a clear universal consensus in principle, but the practical implementation of this idea of including children with disabilities in mainstream education remains wanting in terms of viable strategies, practical solutions, and even

political will. Here in this final chapter, I would like to make some observations regarding the challenges currently faced by EFA, basing my comments on the experiences and information presented by the authors of this book, and on a few examples taken from recent studies.

Global developments

This book starts with a look into major global developments in increasing the chances of children with disabilities to obtain a basic education. Many positive developments can be observed, such as those reported by Heikki Kokkala and by Kennneth Eklindh and Jill Van den Brule-Balescut. The Dakar Framework was perhaps not the best possible place to start tracking developments, since disabilities were not specifically mentioned either in the Dakar Framework itself, nor in the Commentary. This lack becomes interesting when viewed against the background of the comments on the education of children with disabilities that were made by the Sub-Saharan, Asia-Pacific, and Arab States in their regional EFA frameworks. The Latin American, Caribbean, European, and CIS countries also addressed these issues, but in more general terms within the conceptual themes of inclusion and poverty. (Lawrence, 2004). Despite these comments and remarks, the global framework failed to explicitly address the question of learners with disabilities. However, at present, five years after Dakar, we may observe that there are many new initiatives underway for including disabled children into mainstream education. As Heikki Kokkala reminds us in this book, vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities, are well mentioned in the Millennium Development goals. Disability issues have been put on the EFA agenda by groups such as the "International Working Group on Disability and Development" and more recently by the Flagship programme "The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion". Recent initiatives of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the World Bank (see e.g. Peters 2004; Lawrence, 2004) also raise hopes for keeping disability issues on the agenda of the international education community. Important discussions also continue under the auspices of the United Nations, e.g. within a Working Group to the UN Ad Hoc Committee, which recently concluded meetings to draw up an international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Article 17 of the draft text of this "Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities" deals specifically with education issues.[1]

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[1] See draft text in www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/ahcwgreportax1.htm

However, despite these promising steps taken at the global policy level, very little has thus far been documented on concrete improvements regarding access to education for children with disabilities in the developing countries, where the majority of children with disabilities remain excluded from education.[2] EFA monitoring reports mention the situation of children with disabilities only in passing, and although some important contributions to discussions of the issue of quality of primary education have been made in background papers prepared for the UNESCO 2005 EFA monitoring report, these mainly only make a review at the general level of the situation in regard to the quality of education for children with disabilities (see e.g. Nordström 2004; Wormnaes 2004; Magrab 2004; Richler 2004). Although five years have passed since the Dakar Framework was presented in Senegal, the fact is that today we know very little more than we did then about the extent to which education reaches children with disabilities in developing countries.

The major reason for this lack of information on the education of children with disabilities is that none of the global institutions collecting statistics have included persons with disabilities in their data collecting schemes, or if they have, these persons have not been separated out from total numbers. As stated by Robson and Evans (accessed 2005) the EFA 2000 assessment said nothing about the education of children with disabilities, and none of the 18 indicators used to assess the extent to which the EFA objectives are being met include any mention of disability. The same lack of data on children with disabilities holds for the Millennium Development Goals initiative, and Robson and Evans (accessed 2005) conclude that we simply do not have good data sets on children with disabilities from developing countries. Existing data sets are fragmentary and inconsistent in their definitions of disability, both in data relating to the prevalence of disability and in statistics on the participation of children with disabilities in primary education. What is even more worrying, is that at present, five years after Dakar and with ten years to go to the MDG, neither EFA nor MDG initiatives show a clear commitment to including data on disabilities in their monitoring schemes.

It remains to be seen how much the Flagship programme on persons with disabilities can promote a change in this situation. At least this immediate need for collecting new data has been recognised by the Flagship, and an ad-hoc group has been formed around the issue. Hopefully collection of data on the status of people and children with disabilities will also be included as one important strategic action for the Flagship to promote (Lawrence, 2004). The existence of this discrepancy between stated goals

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[2]   The World Bank (2003) has estimated that 40 million of the 115 million children out of school have disabilities.

and the lack of monitoring mechanisms mirrors general attitudes towards disabilities or inclusive education: we are ready to accept the idea of inclusion in theory, but fall short of having the political will to make things happen in practise.

EFA and the quality of education – trends and challenges

From the perspective of quality of education, the issue of data collection is even more complex. We know even less about the quality of education provided for children with disabilities than about their access to education in developing countries. However, general findings on the current quality of education in many poor countries clearly points towards the conclusion that the quality goal will be much more difficult to reach than the quantity goal of mere access to education. The position of children with disabilities does not look especially good in this light (see Kokkala in this book and Abadzi, 2004). Quality of education is an important issue which requires careful analysis if it is to be to be fully understood, as indicated by Siri Wormnaes here. Understanding quality requires agreement on what the definition of quality is, and how and with what indicators it can be measured in a given educational context. Several different factors which affect the whole education system also affect the quality of education for persons with disabilities. Wormnaes criticises the position presented in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 according to which "meeting the needs of learners with disabilities is hampered by the debate about inclusive versus special classes or schools." Wormnaes suggests on the contrary that this debate could function as an incentive, to create discussion on how access to education can be guaranteed to all children, not just 'almost' all. I fully agree with this criticism and will use the debate on inclusive education in the analysis of the quality issues below.

At a general level, the question of the quality of education is linked with both the question of education as a **human right** and with questions on the **efficacy of education**. Both of these perspectives have been most clearly voiced in the debate on inclusive education. (see Eklindh & Van den Brule-Balescut in this book). This debate has far too long a history, and too many dimensions and stakeholders to be dealt with here to any extent. Instead I rather want to raise some critical issues in this debate that still remain as challenges for future work toward reaching the goal of EFA.

I want to start off by agreeing with many authors that defining 'inclusive' education is difficult, as is defining 'special' education. Education systems in different countries vary so much, even within the group of OECD countries, that comparative research is difficult (see OECD 1999). This undoubtedly also holds true for the diverse systems of education in the countries of the South. This means that the practical solutions for the provision of education services vary, and so does the understanding of what

constitutes 'special needs education' or 'inclusive education'. Regarding inclusive education, I am therefore willing to agree that it would be sensible to understand that there are in fact different types of 'inclusion', as Dyson (1999) suggests in his analysis of different discourses of inclusion to be found in the international debate. Norwich (1999) illustrates different ways of balancing inclusiveness with differentiation-individualisation, and distinguishes four types of inclusion on this basis: full non-exclusionary inclusion, focus on participating in the same place, focus on individual needs, and choice-limited inclusion. Norwich's four versions are an interesting conceptual tool, as they make it possible to define in new ways the relation of inclusion to special needs education services. This is important, as one major weakness in much of the debate on inclusive education is the implicitly or purposefully oversimplified understanding of special needs education as a type of service provision done only in strict segregation from the mainstream. Such an understanding clearly ignores many useful ways of providing learning support that exist today both in the North and the South, and which can be an important resource in making a more inclusive education a reality.

Quality of education as a human right

From the human rights and ethics perspective, EFA is an important goal, since education has been accepted as a universal, basic human right. The most important global developments on this issue have already been discussed above and need not be repeated. There seems to be a clear consensus that no children should be excluded from schooling because of their disability. However, there is some controversy within the inclusive education debate on what is the best way to realise this right. The crucial element here is whether the emphasis should be on the right to education and social belonging (full inclusion), or on the right to choose the best possible education in a given situation according to individual needs (inclusion with a continuum of specialised services). The best recent example of this debate can be found in the discussion around the draft convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: a burning issue was the question of whether parents of children with disabilities, and persons with disabilities themselves, have the right to choose between inclusive education, or specialised educational services that to a smaller or greater extent segregate them from the mainstream education system.

 To present their side of this debate, three global organisations of persons with disabilities (The World Federation of the Deaf, the World Blind Union and the World Federation of the Deafblind 2005) have jointly commented on the draft convention text, supporting "*inclusive, barrier-free quality education for all*" but recognising at the

same time that: "*Attendance at a mainstream school does not necessarily result in social inclusion for people who are blind, deaf or deaf-blind. There is evidence that many of them are socially isolated in mainstream schools. A quality education, regardless of its setting, facilitates the full development of their potential and is the best means of ensuring full participation and inclusion in the community.*" For this reason, these organisations further stated that: "*Ending the right to choose learning centres with one's peers who share the disability would be to create de facto segregation in public schools where children who are deaf, blind and deaf-blind would be physically present but mentally and socially absent.*" Finally, these organisations recommend that: "*Therefore the states must assure quality education and spectrums of settings.*"

In contrast, different voices have been raised, especially by the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE 2005), which has commented on draft Article 17 by noting that: "*Article 17 of the new Disability Convention should be the key to ending segregated education for disabled children and making properly supported and adapted inclusive education a right for every child.*" CSIE disagrees with the justification of segregation of children "*on the grounds of disability into separate 'special' schools on the basis of principles of autonomy and choice.*" CSIE sees that, for example: "*parents' choice in relation to their children's education is understood not as a free choice but one that must be made in the context of the responsibility to respect the human rights of children and within the constraints of standards set by Governments which should reflect the human rights treaties they have ratified.*" For these reasons CSIE urges the international community to "*set a lead by removing choice of separate 'special' schooling from Article 17 in the Disability Convention and obliging Governments to develop properly supported and adapted inclusive education for all. Choice by adults of segregated 'special' schooling for children has no place in a human rights convention. Children's rights to properly supported and adapted inclusive education must be the priority*." The fear of CSIE is that, if the choice of segregated education remains in a document on human rights, that will give governments an excuse to continue segregated education practices which CSIE sees as a direct violation of human rights.

The differences in these opinions come on the one hand from differences in the understanding of the role played by the concept of autonomy of choice as a human right. Then, there are differences in the opinion of whether or not the provision of segregated educational services for school age children can be accepted, and justified as a way of facilitating, especially in the long run, the inclusion of persons with disabilities into the community at large. It is evident that there are no simple answers that would take into account all of these views. Finding a solution is, however, crucial for the EFA process.

Quality as efficacy

The second major issue related to quality is seen in the discussion on the efficacy of inclusive education: the question of efficacy is perhaps more controversial than many documents produced as a part of the EFA movement show. Nevertheless, different notions of efficacy have become perhaps the most widely used rationale for moving towards inclusive education (see e.g. UNESCO 2005). In fact most documents related to EFA seem to take it as a basic premise that inclusive education brings more social benefits, is more effective educationally, and is also more cost-effective, than special education services. However, even a brief review of the existing literature shows that research findings are not that straightforward and, therefore, both the social or educational outcomes, and the cost-effectiveness, of inclusive education deserve some comments here.

First, if we look at the concept of the 'efficacy of education' from the outcomes perspective, we find that there exists a quite large body of empirical research on the outcomes of inclusive education. Some of these studies even compare the outcomes of inclusive education to those from other models of education provision that include specialised support. However, the findings are to say the least contradictory. I do not intend here to make an extensive review of this literature, but rather to make the point that such, more critical reviews of the literature, and more research on outcomes, might also be useful in the EFA discussion. For example, two reviews of the literature published in the same year (Lipsky and Gartner,1997; Hornby, Atkinson & Howard, 1997) come to opposite conclusions in their analysis of the conclusions and findings of the research under review. Lipsky and Gartner (1997) report mainly on the advantages of inclusive education; while Hornby et al. (1997) suggest that "policies of increasing levels of integration for all children with SEN and of eventually including them in their local schools should be abandoned." A more recent review by Dyson et al. (2004) comes to a conclusion that falls somewhere between these two opposites, noting that there are no major adverse consequences for the children's academic achievement, behaviour, and/or attitudes as the result of placing students with special needs in mainstream schools. They further point out that there may be positive benefits for mainstream children's attitudes and understanding of diversity. Lindsay (2003) has also made a review of the literature in which he acknowledges that previous studies provide only weak support for the superiority of the inclusive education approach, when the achievement outcomes of students are kept as one of the criteria. It is important to note that, although the research might not as yet have shown the superiority of inclusive education in providing academic and social gains, most research findings seem nevertheless to indicate that inclusive models are roughly at least as effective a way of providing education services as other existing models.

One problem with many previous comparative studies is that they are mainly based

on small scale experiments; and few if any studies exist that would look into educational outcomes on a large scale, let alone on the level of national level policy initiatives. The vast majority of the studies reviewed are from the Northern countries, most notably from the USA (Dyson et al., 2004). Although there is an increasing number of reports of small scale inclusion projects in the South – some of which are generally very successful – there are very few if any studies on the outcomes of inclusive education in these countries (see Peters 2004 for a review).

Perhaps the largest national level analysis is the study of Dyson et al. (2004), who set out to analyse a national scale sample from the U.K and found that the number of special educational needs (SEN) students placed in the mainstream classes has no significant negative effects on the achievement of students when the relevant socio-economic variables are controlled for. Although the indicators of inclusion used by Dyson et al. are quite rough (measured as the number of SEN children within mainstream education), the clear implication of the findings is that the level of inclusion does not seem to have adverse effects on the quality of education.

Some reasons for the contradictory findings can perhaps be suggested here. One logical argument is that perhaps we do not as yet have educational settings that would be inclusive enough in the real meaning of full inclusion. A quick look at the references of the above mentioned and other reviews shows clearly that many of the studies carried out are studies about integration, rather than inclusion, which is a demarcation between two different approaches that the inclusive education movement clearly makes (see e.g. the chapter by Eklindh and Van den Brule-Balescut in this book). From this it is obvious that even if the studies are about inclusive education, they are about different types of inclusive settings. This same problem of diversity of educational settings also holds true for the special education settings analysed in the studies, as the practises in this regard vary across countries. Although we talk about special education as a clear entity, and some authors make it synonymous with segregation, it is not. The approaches found in different education systems vary enormously from the diagnosis-based, special class system to the more flexible support mechanisms that function essentially within mainstream education. Although special education is separate from mainstream education, it is not necessarily the other part of the dual system of education. (see e.g. OECD 1999)

One illustration of how special education can be understood as being rather a part of the mainstream system than a segregated service, is given in an analysis by Kivirauma and Ruoho (2005), who suggest that the Finnish success in the OECD PISA-studies could be partly explained by the intensive, part-time special education support exercised in the Finnish school system as a part of mainstream education. This argument is based on the fact that, in Finland, the lowest performing students, who most often receive part-time special education, score more percentage points above the OECD average for the lowest percentiles, than the highest Finnish performers score above the

OECD average for the highest percentiles. The authors make the claim that part-time special education support could be one reason Finnish poor performers score so much better than the poor performers in other OECD countries.

So, the question of efficacy still remains open, with a clear need for further research, both for comparative studies of the outcomes (academic and social etc.) of different educational arrangements, and for studies of the processes by which the best results can be reached with a diversity of learners.

Quality and cost effectiveness

The question of efficacy, from the point of view of cost effectiveness, also requires a critical look. Evidence that inclusive education would be less expensive is, like the evidence that inclusive education leads to better outcomes, also less convincing than many EFA documents lead us to assume. For example, the 1999 OECD study produced somewhat mixed findings. Whereas it is clear that special education costs per capita are generally higher than in regular schools, a detailed comparative case study of costs of all educational services given in special education or mainstream education settings in the U.K (Beeccham & Knapp 1999) showed that the inclusive school arrangement was more costly. Owing to perhaps the mixed nature of the overall findings in the OECD study (OECD 1999), the authors of this important study note that their "findings can only be treated tentatively and they need replication both within and among countries." Similar inconclusive findings have been reported by Crowther et al. (1988), who also note the lack of well constructed studies linking outcomes to costs, and conclude that the evidence does not point to the overwhelming economic advantage of any system of education provision, although there may be a marginal balance in favour of mainstream placements.

Perhaps the controversy found in previous research on the efficacy of inclusive education is an indication of vested interests also amongst the researchers, but the fact remains that we do not have conclusive evidence on the efficacy of inclusive education at least in the sense that it would be superior to other existing approaches either in terms of outcomes or in terms of costs. A topic of a separate debate is whether we should be asking for evidence for efficacy in the first place, because, as some authors and stakeholders claim, inclusive education is a human rights issue that should perhaps not be questioned or does not need research evidence to justify it. It is not the goal of this commentary to go into this debate[3] , but simply to exemplify how complex the

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[3]   For related discussions see e.g., Dyson, 1999; Farrell, 2000; Lidsay, 2003; Norwich, 1999; Paul & Ward, 1996.

discussion on inclusive education is, and that perhaps this complexity should be better reflected in the research revolving around EFA. Relying blindly on notions of efficacy can be risky, especially if an analysis of the costs is not connected to the analysis of outcomes. In a situation where the available resources are scarce, there may be a temptation to seek the most cost-effective or – put in other words – most inexpensive ways of providing education, but this should not be done at the cost of quality of education. The literature on special education shows many examples of how the ideology of integration was used to legitimate the factual cutting down of support services. Inclusive education faces the same threat, if the critical analysis of the social and academic outcomes of education is not kept as a part of the efficacy discourse.

Conclusion

In conclusion, what we have learned is that EFA presents a huge challenge, especially from the perspective of children with disabilities. The difficult task is to increase access and while simultaneously guaranteeing the good quality of education. Although there have been many positive developments in the international acknowledgement of children with disabilities as one group of vulnerable children requiring special attention in EFA, after five years we do not know much more about the actual situation of children with disabilities in developing countries. There are no indicators for either the prevalence of disabilities, or the access to education of children with disabilities, in any global monitoring mechanisms. Changing this situation is a real challenge for the international community: without more knowledge of the real situation of children with disabilities, the EFA goals will never be reached.

Secondly, the right to education is universally accepted, but debate continues among different stakeholders as to whether this right includes the right to choose the type of education that is best for the child. The background of this debate on choosing a system is in that, although almost everybody agrees on the principle of inclusive education as a goal towards which the world education community should aim, many see obstacles to its practical implementation. The challenge here is to create an understanding of the different types of inclusive education that we could develop, and the new roles special education, as a less-segregated type of support service, could take. This is important, because although the most central EFA documents produced and disseminated by UNESCO speak about inclusive education at a general level as the road towards EFA, in many if not most cases the national EFA-plans of many countries start from a more grassroots perspective, and only engage in developing education support services (i.e. special education) for children with special needs. Neither the traditional understanding of what is meant by 'special education', or any of the other

terms used in the EFA discussion, should be allowed to become barriers for developing innovative local solutions. These solutions could combine what is best in the traditional expertise available within special education with the best of the new thinking in the 'whole school' approach of inclusive education.

Thirdly, we should perhaps alert ourselves to the fact that, although the superior efficacy of 'inclusive education' over completely separate, 'special education' is used as a basic premise or rationale for the promotion of inclusion, international research findings on this topic are inconclusive as yet. This holds both for the outcomes of education measured as academic or social gains for all children, and for the cost-effectiveness of inclusive education. The challenge for the international community is to keep on doing research on the best practices, while also including larger, perhaps nationwide, analyses of the costs and outcomes of different systems of education for children with disabilities. The most pressing need is to obtain information about the situation of children with special needs living in the South, but the same need to learn more also exists in the North.

In the end, EFA is about non-exclusion, and is thus a rights issue for children with disabilities. If we accept this, it follows that the necessary resources should be allocated to make education systems work, and respond to the needs of all students, including children with disabilities, even if this means higher costs due to making the necessary support arrangements. Using economic rationales may be counterproductive to the intended purpose and lead to token inclusion and the denial of the necessary arrangements and support required for children with disabilities. In addition to making financial and human resources available, reaching the goal of Education for All will require a flexible understanding of inclusive education in which different local solutions will be accepted.

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Dr. Savolainen currently works as a researcher in the University of Jyväskylä. Major research interest areas include: learning disabilities and marginalisation and situation of children with disabilities in Sub-Saharan African countries and inclusion. Earlier working experience includes different academic positions in the University of Joensuu and an appointment as the executive director of Niilo Mäki Institute. In addition to this Dr. Savolainen has actively participated in development co-operation work in special needs / inclusive education both by a long term appointment as a project coordinator (Ethiopia) and as short term consultant in several countries. He also was the coordinator of the special needs education round table session at the EFA World Education Forum in Dakar in the year 2000 and has participated since in the work striving towards building the EFA flagship programme: Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: towards inclusion.

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Mr Pasi Siltakorpi is working as a Special Education teacher in a special school in Porvoo, Finland. The school system is moving a bit towards inclusive practicies in a wider scale that before. He has been working as an Associate Advisor on Special Need & Inclusive Education in Zambia in years 2002-2003.

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Ms. Jill Van den Brule has a background in human rights and humanitarian policy and a Masters degree from L'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po) and from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy as well as a Bachelor's degree from Columbia University. She has worked with the U.S. Fund for UNICEF as well as with numerous non-governmental organizations on education and children's rights issues in the United States and Latin America. She has participated in various regional and international conferences in the field of Inclusive Education and will begin teaching in Masters programme at Sciences Po in 2006. Ms. Van den Brule has been working in the Education Sector at UNESCO since 2002 where she has been integrating a rights-based perspective in Inclusive Education.

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Currently, Ms Väyrynen works as an educator in a comprehensive school, catering for children of 6 to 15 years old. The school policy promotes a 'school for all' which means that children with various abilities, ethnic backgrounds, challenges and talents learn together in mainstream classes. Her research interest is closely related to school development towards inclusion and deconstruction of 'special education' legacy in education and development. This involves a shift of focus from learner-based 'deficits' to changing the culture of teaching and learning. She is also interested in developing education in 'low-resource' contexts in the countries of the South as well as in the countries of the North.

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Ms Wormnæs is an associate professor at University of Oslo, where she teaches and is doing research on education for persons with disabilities and inclusive education. Ms Wormnæs has supervised Master students from six African countries and from countries in the Middle East. Many of the theses focus on inclusive education. She has presented at many international conferences. For three years she has been the Head of the Norwegian part of the secretariat for the EFA Flagship entitled "The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion".

This book is useful for all workers in inclusive education, wherever they are seeking to advance projects and programmes in this field. It is hoped that it will also be of benefit to education policy makers, administrators, and all others who make decisions on inclusive education and special education. As we strive together to implement EFA and work toward attaining the Millennium Development Goals, let us always remember to include all children in primary education, in order that it may truly be Education for All.

ELEMENTS for DISCUSSION