

Disability results from the barriers facing people with disabilities – attitudinal and physical barriers that lead to exclusion from society. UK legislation and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognise that disability is about the way society responds. This ‘social model’ of disability is central to DFID’s work. It contrasts with the ‘medical model’ which sees people with disabilities as having a problem that needs to be managed, changed and/or adapted to circumstances (if possible).

2. Why is disability such an important issue for education?

According to the [EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: reaching the marginalized](#), children with disabilities remain one of the main groups being widely excluded from quality education. Disability is recognised as one of the least visible yet most potent factors in educational marginalisation.

Children with disabilities have a right to education.

Since the [UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights](#) was released in 1948, there has been legislation on providing education for all children (see Annex 1). The [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), which entered into force in 2008 and which was ratified by the UK in 2009, has 145 signatories (as at June 2010) including all PSA countries except Afghanistan and Zimbabwe. Referring specifically to education and the role of the international community, it has profound implications for DFID and its work.

[Article 24](#) of the Convention is on education (see Annex 2) and includes the following:

State Parties shall ensure that:

- i. *Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;*
- ii. *Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;*
- iii. *Reasonable accommodation of the individual’s requirements is provided;*
- iv. *Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;*
- vi. *Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.*

[Article 32](#) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities places an obligation on development partners to ensure that international cooperation, including international development programmes, are inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities. This presents a fundamental change to all countries, including the UK, that have ratified the treaty and are now bound by these principles both domestically and internationally.

Achieving the Education For All targets and Millennium Development Goals will be impossible without improving access to and quality of education for children with disabilities. The [EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007](#) estimates that the majority of children with disabilities in Africa do not go to school at all, and of the 72 million primary aged children worldwide that are out of school, one third have disabilities.

Poverty is both a cause of consequence of disability.

In 1999 the [World Bank](#) estimated that people with disabilities may account for as many as one in five of the world’s poorest people. A 2005 [World Bank](#) study also tentatively concluded that “disability is associated with long-run poverty in the sense that children with disabilities are less likely to acquire the human capital that will allow them to earn higher incomes”, but stressed the need for more research in this area. People in developing countries are more likely to be affected by disability caused by communicable, maternal and perinatal diseases and injuries than people in developed countries. These disabilities are largely preventable. Furthermore conflict often occurs in poorer countries which increases the number of people with disabilities and invariably worsens the delivery of basic services which is likely to impact those with disabilities to a greater degree than others.

Inclusion of children with disabilities specifically targets:

- those children who are enrolled in school but are excluded from learning
- those who are not enrolled in school but could participate if schools were more flexible in their responses
- relatively small groups of children with severe disabilities who may require some form of additional support.

Educating children with disabilities is a good investment. A [World Bank paper](#) notes that it reduces welfare costs and future dependence. It reduces current dependence and frees other household members from caring responsibilities, allowing them to increase employment or other productive activities. It also increases children's potential productivity and wealth creation which will in turn help to alleviate poverty. A [CIRJE study on Nepal](#) estimates that rate of returns of investment to education among persons with disabilities varies between 19 and 32 per cent.

Children with disabilities have lower educational attainment than other children which leads to lower economic status. Neufeldt, cited in a World Bank literature review entitled [Poverty and Disability](#), found they are more likely to leave school earlier with fewer qualifications. A World Bank paper, [Disability, poverty and schooling in developing countries](#), argues that the schooling gap between children with and without disabilities starts at Grade 1 and then widens throughout schooling.

According to a [RECOUP Working Paper](#), one of the important exit routes out of poverty is identified as formal education, especially where it improves the quality of labour, but due to discrimination and stigmatisation, the chances to access education and employment are very restricted for people with disabilities. This means that the disabled poor are likely to remain poor, as are their children.

Education can reduce discrimination against children with disabilities and tackle poverty. Education, particularly inclusive education, is able to reduce discrimination through enabling children with and without disabilities to grow up together. Education gives children with disabilities skills to allow them to become positive role models and join the employment market, thereby helping to prevent poverty.

The best way to improve education for children with disabilities is to improve the education sector as a whole. In countries where teachers are untrained, working with large class sizes and few resources in structurally unsafe classrooms, pragmatic context-specific and cost-effective decisions are necessary.

3. What are the barriers to educating children with disabilities?

Perceived barriers to educating children with disabilities may be physical, social or financial. Some barriers identified by A [RESULTS UK survey](#), [Unicef](#) and [The Atlas Alliance](#) include the following:

Policy and system factors

- Discriminatory policy actually segregates children with disabilities and prevents them from attending school or professional training, including teaching
- No specific policy on disability or education of children with disabilities
- Policy is dated and inappropriate or based on a medical approach to disability
- Reasonable policy is in place but not implemented, poor resource allocations to education for the disabled
- Limited training of teachers in working with children with disabilities, no incentives for teachers to do so
- Poor identification and screening services
- Poor school support services, limited or no resources for schools

Social and community factors

- According to [UNESCO](#) "The greatest barriers to inclusion are caused by society not by medical impairments"
- Social stigma and negative parental attitudes to disability which may arise out of religious and cultural beliefs e.g. disability may be seen as punishment
- Parental resistance to inclusive education for special groups
- Normal barriers such as cost of uniforms, transport etc apply equally or more to disabled children, particularly the poor

School factors

- Low school budgets resulting in a lack of appropriate facilities, inaccessible school buildings, high pupil to teacher ratios, limited support for children with disabilities
- Teachers have inadequate training in inclusive methodologies and can not deal with the range of children with disabilities.
- Limited awareness of disability among teachers and school staff

4. Segregation, Integration or Inclusion?

There are three approaches for educating children with disabilities:

Segregation

children with disabilities are educated at special schools or at home

Inclusive education

children with disabilities learn effectively in mainstream schools where the whole system has been changed to meet all children's needs

Integrated education

children with disabilities attend special classes or units in mainstream schools

The difference between integrated and inclusive education relates to access and quality. [Save the Children](#) notes that integrated education tends to focus more on disabled children attending school whereas inclusive education focuses more on ensuring children with disabilities are learning. [Save the Children](#) argues that inclusive education is about restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in their locality. This means that all children, including children with disabilities, not only have access to schooling within their own community, but that they are provided with appropriate learning opportunities to achieve their full potential. However, it is also essential that parents, children and communities are supported to change their attitudes and understanding of why inclusion matters, as this is what will sustain change.

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Inclusive education is primarily about restructuring school cultures, policies and practices so that they respond to the diversity of students in their locality. It sees individual differences not as problems to be fixed, but as opportunities for enriching learning and for education systems to embrace change. It is a dynamic, continuing process of facilitating the participation of all students, including those with disabilities.

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Leonard Cheshire Disability

UNESCO's [policy guidelines for inclusion](#) state that in order to move systems towards greater inclusion, there needs to be:

- a recognition of the right of children with disabilities to education and its provision in non-discriminatory ways
- a common vision of education which covers all children of the appropriate age range
- a conviction that schools have a responsibility to meet the diversity of needs of all learners, recognising that all children can learn.

It is important to consider the trade offs between segregation, integration and inclusion.



	Pros	Cons
Segregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can cater for children with profound and complex difficulties who otherwise easily could be isolated in a regular class • Special schools have specialised equipment and resources for looking after children with disabilities. • Teachers in special schools are trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of providing education for children with disabilities is estimated to be 7 to 9 times higher when placed in special schools as opposed to providing for their needs in mainstream education • Distance to school resulting in higher transportation costs • Child deprived of socialisation opportunities and prone to continued exclusion • Reinforces discrimination against those with disabilities • May unnecessarily segregate children with mild disabilities, makes the disability worse
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks down barriers and negative attitudes; facilitates social integration and cohesion in communities. The involvement of parents and the local community further strengthens this process. • The child is able to socialise with other children as part of a school community • Reduced costs for transportation and institutional provision • Reduced administrative costs associated with having special and regular education • Some research states that children in integrated or inclusive settings have higher achievement levels than those in segregated settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to accommodate the learning needs of all • Pressure on limited resources • Requires assistance by parents, volunteers or older children
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools respond to individual differences and therefore benefit all children • Schools change attitudes towards diversity by educating all children together • Less costly alternative to special segregated schools • No additional costs to parents • Reduction of social welfare costs and future dependence • Higher achievement for children than in segregated settings • 60% children with special educational needs can be educated with no adaptations and 80-90% can be educated in regular schools with minor adaptations (e.g. teaching strategy training, child-to-child support and environmental adaptations) • Disabled child is less stigmatised, more socially included • Inclusive education is cost-effective. • Costs can be kept to a minimum by drawing upon local resources, people and facilities • Children with disabilities have access to a wider curriculum than that which is available in special schools. • Practical tips on how to develop inclusive education in environments with few resources are provided in Inclusive Education: Where there are few resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' skills, schools resources, high pupil-to-teacher ratios • Costs of adapting curricula to allow individually-tailored flexibility • Cost of supplying teaching aids and material to improve participation and communication of children with disabilities • Cost of adapting school infrastructure • Requires assistance by parents, volunteers or older children • Investment in specially trained mobile resource teachers

Sources: UNESCO 2009- Policy Guidelines for Inclusion; Jonsson and Wiman 2001 Education, Poverty and Disability in Developing Countries; Social Analysis and Disability: A Guidance Note Incorporating Disability-Inclusive Development into Bank-Supported Projects 2007, Inclusive Education: Where there are few resources (2008)



SECTION TWO: ACTION REQUIRED

The action that is required is very much dependant on the specific country context. The following table, using data from the FTI's [Equity and Inclusion in Education tool](#), provides some guidance on what might be appropriate in four different contexts.

DFID, working with and through other donors and partners, should consider the following goals dependent on the varying context.

In a weak policy and legislative environment

- Support advocacy work to create a stronger policy and legislative environment within broader sector support
- Look at service delivery opportunities through NGOs to reach needy children and provide models for scale up
- Support research and knowledge building

In a weak but improving policy and legislative environment

- Continue to support policy, legislative and institutional development as part of broader sector support
- Move disability more onto sector mainstream agenda
- Look at service delivery opportunities through NGOs with increasing government partnership and ownership
- Support research and knowledge building

In a positive and improving policy and legislative environment

- Support the improved effectiveness and reach of strategies
- Ensure provision becomes part of government responsibility and action
- Support government take good pilots to scale
- Continue to build understanding and knowledge through research

In a strong policy environment

- Less need for specific support, focus on monitoring and evaluation
- Sustain pressure to keep inclusive education part of mainstream sector process

	Strong			Weak
Legal and policy environment	<p>Comprehensive inclusive education policies linked to wider policy and commitment</p> <p>Strategies within sector plans and budgets</p> <p>Responsibilities allocated within government systems at all levels</p> <p>Disaggregated data available in EMIS targets and indicators for children with disabilities</p> <p>Focus on disability in sector review</p>	<p>Commitment to change, policies developing for children with disabilities</p> <p>Some dedicated units in place at ministry and district level</p> <p>Some disaggregated data available. Attempts to mainstream</p>	<p>Broad commitment to basic policies e.g. UPE Signatory on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</p> <p>Few and weak "add on" strategies or national programmes to address needs of children with disabilities</p> <p>Disability not captured in EMIS</p> <p>Government capacity weak generally and disability concerns reliant on NGO resources and projects</p>	<p>No serious commitment to basic policies e.g. UPE</p> <p>Not a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</p> <p>No or very weak and dated policies around disability. "Too many other priorities"</p>
Level of provision and resources	<p>Effective screening and referral systems; Teacher training and support in place</p> <p>Curriculum adaptation</p> <p>Resource needs identified, emphasis on nance systems to make schools more inclusive and funding for special innovative activities</p>	<p>Screening and referral system in place but weak</p> <p>Improving awareness of inclusion. Supportive and active communities around education generally including disability</p> <p>Some limited teacher training</p> <p>Resource needs identified but inadequate</p>	<p>Some allocations for separate/specialised provision and training needs.</p> <p>Low quality of teaching. High PTR.</p> <p>Learning outcomes not addressed. PTAs/SMCs in place.</p> <p>Some specialised separately managed provision available</p>	<p>Low levels of budgeting to the education sector.</p> <p>Very low quality of teaching. Extremely high PTR</p> <p>PTAs/SMCs are rare.</p> <p>Schools are very poorly resourced</p>
Suggested activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve linkages between education sector and other sectors • Ensure DPOs and other stakeholders have an active role in decision-making around education • Further training for teachers, headteachers and district officers • Increase grants to schools and accompany it with continued support in financial management • Develop disaggregated data on access to ECE, primary secondary and tertiary levels • Co-locate special units within regular schools to support mainstream schools • Increase range of instructional materials and equipment • Monitor and evaluate training on disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement training for headteachers and district officers to make schools more inclusive • Develop guidelines on curriculum adaptation • Extend ECCE provision • Continue improving pre and in-service teacher training • Provide training for one teacher per school to become a focal person for learning support • System of grants to schools for specific purposes and provide financial management training • Develop EMIS system to include data on children with disabilities • Implement special schools supporting mainstream schools • Increase range of instructional materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies and identify priority areas for planning • Implement measures to reduce PTRs • Identify focal people for disability • Encourage government to form partnerships with NGOs, DPOs etc. • Set targets for initial disability training • Initiate training for ministry officials/ district education officers. Build capacity to collect and analyse data • Set targets and related indicators for enrolment of children with disabilities and appropriate educational provision. • Develop EMIS system to accommodate disaggregated data • Set up SMCs, draw upon local community and parental resources • Implement teacher training curriculum • Advocate use of Disability Rights Fund • Undertake studies on disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage government towards signing up to international conventions on disability, EFA etc. • Change public perceptions through support for awareness raising activities for inclusive education. Work with the press and civil society as well as government • Consider whether mainstream education for children with disabilities should be a priority under such circumstances • Develop EMIS system • Undertake research and knowledge building

5. The legal and policy environment

There are two basic options for tackling disability issues—through mainstreaming the issues across our work and through targeted projects that specifically aim to increase the number of children with disabilities completing school.




At the outset it is important to assess the country context and develop programme options that are sensitive to that context. An early appreciation of existing laws, policies and plans, as well as accurate data, will form the basis for subsequent interventions, providing better value for money. This section outlines some practical, related steps.

Ensure compliance with international conventions

In countries where governments have signed up to international conventions, advisers can use these obligations to influence change in country. As stated above, 145 countries are signatories to the international Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and many more have signed up to the Millennium Development Goals, Dakar Framework for Action and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. All of these emphasise the need to educate all children including those with disabilities. The [UN Enable's Frequently Asked Questions](#) is a useful resource for advisers wanting to know more about the Convention and how it is monitored.

Policy development needs to be based on a thorough situation analysis outlining the country context, which identifies the prevailing needs and states clear policy requirements to achieve the inclusion of children with disabilities. This could be done using one of the tools outlined above ensuring stakeholder involvement.

The [European Disability Action for Mainstreaming Assessment Tool](#) helps policymakers to make policies inclusive. It contains:

-  a framework for planning, developing and implementing disability mainstreamed policy
-  a checklist for assessing the mainstreaming of disability in laws, policies and programmes
-  advocacy guidelines to promote effective compliance on mainstreaming policy and practice.

Technical assistance can be provided to support governments in preparing a situation analysis and in identifying policy requirements. It is important to draw on expertise within country, not just external consultants. In such cases, it is important to establish a cross-sectoral working team who are kept involved and engaged in the entire process. This will mean that the policy should include references to cross-sectoral planning to develop a holistic approach and ensure all resources available are utilised to the full.

Develop and implement effective policies It is important at the outset to ensure that there is not any legislation which prohibits children with disabilities from participating in mainstream education.

Draw upon checklists for policy development. The [UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education](#) provides checklists which focus on issues such as attitudinal change, creating an inclusive curricula and teachers. For each policy concern it offers policy questions, gaps to be resolved and suggested actions. Although developed for inclusive education as a whole, the questions are relevant for planning for children with disabilities. A [World Bank tool](#), located in Annex 1 of the linked document, is based upon the Salamanca Statement and Framework for action and asks a number of questions to aid planning specifically for children with disabilities.

Ensure the education of children with disabilities is under the authority of the mainstream education ministry and not seen as a separate issue or charitable act. Major constraints to inclusion can arise where the education of some groups comes under the responsibility of different ministries, which can increase segregation according to medical classifications of disability. This is not to say that education, health and other ministries should not work together. Children with disabilities in community schools and private sector schools also need to be considered.

Work with government partners to ensure people with disabilities are specifically addressed within Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). [Making PRSP inclusive](#) cites a number of examples of countries which ensure that disability is a component in relevant parts of the paper, including education. Further reading is available in the [Making PRSP inclusive](#) report and on the [disability and education pages](#) of the related website.

Tanzania's PRSP aims to ensure equitable access to quality primary and secondary education and specifically addresses children with disabilities at various points. It states that "the proportion of children with disabilities that are enrolled in, attending and completing school should increase from 0.1% in 2000 to 20% in 2010" and that "reforms should be undertaken in primary, secondary and teachers' education curricula, teacher training, teaching materials, assessment and examination, and school inspection to promote critical, creative and skill-based learning, and to incorporate gender, HIV/AIDS, disability and environment issues." (United Republic of Tanzania, Vice President's Office, 2005). **Ghana's** PRSP made specific reference to access: "ensure that buildings and other physical infrastructure in schools are made accessible to the people with disabilities."

Advocate use of the Disability Rights Fund. DFID contributes to the [Disability Rights Fund](#) which aims to advance the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Fund provides grants to disabled persons organisations in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe which then lobby for rights for people with disabilities. Advisers can ensure that relevant DPOs are aware of this and submit applications for funding.

6. Information and data

Encourage the collection of disability-disaggregated data for use in planning. Lack of reliable data is consistently one of the major weaknesses in providing the evidence to governments for the need to increase their educational provision for children with disabilities.

Strengthening the capacity to effectively screen, identify and classify children with disability is an important first step. This will involve working closely with health and social welfare departments. Examination of the registration and referral process is also essential.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and World Health Organization's (WHO) [Training manual on disability statistics](#), although not specifically about education, provides implementation guidelines on disability data collection, dissemination and analysis. Robson and Evans' 2005 paper, [Educating Children with Disabilities: the Role of Datasets](#), reviews the pros and cons of the main approaches to collecting data. It recommends that a simple tool, such as the Ten Questions tool, is adopted and that censuses and national surveys collect data on children with disabilities.

It is not easy to collect data on children with disabilities

The World Bank's 2007 paper, [Measuring Disability Prevalence](#), shows that question variation in surveys produces wide-ranging results. Nidhi Singh's paper, [Forgotten Youth: Disability and Development in India](#), highlights how data may be skewed due to a lack of trained enumerators and unwillingness of parents to admit to having a child with disabilities due to social stigma.

It is important not to rely on national averages to portray the situation, as there may be geographical pockets of increased numbers of children with disabilities. These could include hearing problems caused by rubella outbreaks during pregnancy or visual impairments due to a measles epidemic in areas where access to vaccinations is restricted.

Develop, track and report on indicators for disability.

When designing programmes, disability-disaggregated data and indicators could be used and reported on. Although none of DFID's standard indicators relate to disability at present, one of DFID's suggested indicators is relevant: "Drop-out rate by grade and gender, disability and regions (where available)".

The ESCAP and WHO's [Training manual on disability statistics](#) and may be useful in this respect. The [INEE pocket guide to Inclusive Education handbook](#) is also a useful reference for countries affected by conflict or emergencies.

7. Planning and resourcing

Relevant planning is dependant on accurate and reliable data. Many countries continue not to collect data on children with disabilities and this makes it difficult to know the extent of the problems, to plan for appropriate interventions or to measure progress. Even where data exists, there is systematic under-reporting of disability due to stigmatisation and problems with identification. In other places, over-reporting may occur too. [RESULTS UK](#) points to an example in [Cambodia](#) where EMIS statistics for 2008/9 included children with disabilities for the first time. VSO Cambodia believes that the data may be inaccurate, based on some children being counted more than once if they have more than one disability. Assistance to identify the numbers of children with disabilities out of school and to routinely include disaggregated information including enrolment, attendance and achievement within EMIS and other school information systems, would be very beneficial. DFID funded the Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children (PEDC) project in [Viet Nam](#) to develop a Child Development Record (CDR) to identify children requiring support in their learning and to target resources

A strategic action plan for implementation is also necessary and should outline strategies, activities, budgets and indicators of success for monitoring its implementation. Example action plans are provided for [Cambodia](#) and [India](#).

Use existing tools for planning – do not reinvent the wheel. A number of simple tools and checklists for planning exist which can be reviewed and, if necessary, adapted to meet local circumstances. They offer a three-step approach to collecting and analysing data as well as providing suggestions on how to prepare and revise the education sector plan around access, quality and management.

// *Governments need to develop national plans to extend inclusive education for children with disabilities, including detailed targets, strategies for improving access and learning achievement, and comprehensive plans for providing financing and training teachers. The starting point for such a plan is a credible needs assessment based on a national survey of the prevalence of disability.*

EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010

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Encourage a partnership approach to planning.

Encourage stakeholder participation across all those involved in education (and other sectors) including organisations that agree to build capacity to set and implement government standards rather than operating separate programmes. CSOs and DPOs have developed expertise in their specialist area which can be used to enhance and support government provision. Charitable/religious organisations may be working as part of government systems to support inclusive education, including tackling negative attitudes. The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010 claims that integrating successful interventions by NGOs within national education systems can help achieve a higher level of effectiveness.

Many NGOs already work closely with education ministries; in Kenya, Sightsavers is supporting the Ministry of Education's Kenya Integrated Education Programme which is working to build capacity in the government education system to identify and include children with disabilities in mainstream education amongst other activities. In Bangladesh the DFID-funded Leonard Cheshire Trust project works with 16 districts of Rajshahi Division to promote inclusive education in 200 primary schools, train 400 primary school teachers and reach out to 2,400 children with disabilities.

Initiate **dialogue with DPOs** at the start of the project cycle and ensure it continues throughout. DPOs may have information on disabilities and education in each country. A starting point for identifying national level DPOs is the [UN enable website](#) which has a list of CSOs related to disability. Teacher training colleges working on special educational needs (SEN), NGOs and government teams in other ministries are also good sources of information. [Make development inclusive: how to include the perspectives of persons with disabilities in the project cycle management guidelines of the EC](#) is a useful reference tool which contains ideas which could be adapted for DFID-funded and joint-funded projects.

Insist on country-specific research reviews before any further research is carried out. The 2005 Disability Knowledge and Research Programme's [Research gap analysis report](#) noted that many DPOs and international organisations had education and disability on their agendas. A quick review can be undertaken to identify any gaps before commissioning new research.

Finland supports Zambian children with disabilities through SWAp

Zambia has put high priority on the improvement of the education system and is engaged in a major reform of the education sector. One part of the reform is the Basic Education Sub-sector Investment Programme (BESSIP), which has a number of components from upgrading school buildings to improving the quality of teacher education and school management. Another component of BESSIP is inclusive education, which aims to improve the quality of provision for special educational needs in mainstream schools and increase access to mainstream schools for children with special educational needs (SEN).

The Finnish experiences of sector-wide support in education, including special education, are positive. The results are the fruits of long-term commitment and capacity building in the field. However, donors need to be aware of special issues, such as special education, since experience shows that funding for them is easily cut when other needs appear. Reviews and negotiation systems in SWAp offer excellent opportunities for raising important issues and influencing strategic plans.

This case study is from [Label us able: a pro-active evaluation of Finnish development co-operation from the disability perspective](#)

8. Making interventions effective for children with disabilities

Interventions need to be effective for children, offer good value for money and be sustainable. This section highlights a range of approaches that can be undertaken to improve education for children with disabilities.

There is limited research into the cost-effectiveness of interventions which include teacher training, infrastructural development, advocacy, procuring assistive devices, resources and offering financial incentives. However, interventions which can be integrated into existing structures and practices are likely to be most cost-effective.

Support general advocacy activities

Support awareness-raising activities. There is likely to be a huge variation in social attitudes towards children with disabilities. In order to implement any policies or interventions there needs to be a huge change in mind-set before there will be any chance of equity and equality. A sustained and targeted awareness campaign can increase understanding that education is a basic human right, not only to encourage parents to send their children with disabilities to school, but to make the wider community aware such children should attend school, and should be part of mainstream classes. This is important to begin to break down the discrimination and division within society. Creating parent groups within schools, child-to-child groups and activities and community groups will also make inclusion more likely to happen and to be sustained.

Develop an evidence base. All programmes need to be based on a robust research. Where that is lacking, commission research to explore what has worked in other similar contexts and what may work here. This research may feed into advocacy activities.

Ensure the education sector adopts a holistic mainstreaming approach

Ensure access and equity for children with disabilities is mainstreamed within all education sector programmes and across all sectors. Issues of access and inclusion are frequently seen as a separate component in projects and programmes and this leads to the work being seen as something extra, an added burden, or even something that can be done when other components are in place or completed.

Mainstreaming inclusive practices needs to become part and parcel of all initiatives, including emergency responses. More information on this is available in [INEE's Pocket Guide to Inclusive Education in Emergencies](#). This means specifically targeting the inclusion of children with disabilities to enable them access and, more importantly, to participate meaningfully in education. For example, DFID-funded research on disability in conflict and emergency situations found people with disabilities were widely excluded from immediate humanitarian relief programmes in Sri Lanka following the tsunami of December 2004, which demonstrates the need for specific targeting.

Advocate mainstreaming within other sectors. Ensure children with disabilities are considered at all school-related projects. A recent DFID-supported school-based water and sanitation project in Nepal built separate toilets for girls and boys, however accessing the toilets would be very difficult for children with disabilities as they would have to climb steps to use them. More positive work is being done through the [Water, Engineering and Development Centre](#) on accessible water and sanitation facilities.

Build links outside the education sector

Schools are affected by activities outside the education sector and these can influence whether children with disabilities go to school and the quality of education they experience. This section summarises some possibilities for multi-sectoral collaboration.

The provision of health checks and screening, at least on entry to school, would alert teachers to learners' special needs, such as poor eyesight, poor hearing, mobility problems, malnutrition, or developmental delay, and may offer solutions to the problems. However it is also necessary to work together with early childhood services to ensure early interventions to minimise the impact of impairments. Priority for school eye health screening should ideally be given to children on entry into primary school (1st grade), the top class in primary school (5th grade) and in secondary school (8th grade), but if resources are limited, priority can be given to the 5th grade in primary school.

Children often need disability certificates to prove their eligibility for assistive devices. Services to provide a disability certificate can be bureaucratic and with poor governance – donors can work with DPOs and government to make them more accountable and make application for a disability certificate easier.

To support health services, **resources can be targeted through NGOs or INGOs to provide aids, surgery or mobility training**. This is not to replace assistance through government channels. Donors can engage with Ministry of Health/Community Development on this, in partnership with NGOs and other stakeholders. The forthcoming [WHO/ILO/ UNESCO guidelines on community based rehabilitation](#) will be a useful resource for this.

In **Bangladesh**, BRAC's Children with Special Needs programme provides interventions, such as physical therapy, hearing aids, ramps to school buildings, wheelchairs, crutches, glasses and surgery, to ensure access of children with disabilities to education. It is important not to just rely on NGOs for health services and that government health services/systems include support for rehabilitation services, assistive devices, as well as identification and medical interventions. In Kenya the Education Assessment Resource Centres play a role in providing these services and in other countries NGOs work to build government capacity to provide assistive devices, surgery etc.

A Sightsavers-supported programme for community based rehabilitation in southern **India** worked with government to provide a 'one stop shop' for access to disability certificates and other benefits, supported development of DPOs/ self help groups which help members to access disability certificates, and lobbied government to give disability certificates to people with low vision, not just those classified as blind.

Advocate the inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes

Children with disabilities are least likely to participate in ECCE programmes but some progress is evident, as this case study from UNESCO's [Inclusion of children with disabilities: the early childhood imperative](#) report demonstrates.

In inner city slums of Mumbai, **India**, community-based nurseries were set up for 6,000 families living in extreme poverty. The nurseries enrolled all children aged 3 to 6, including those with disabilities. They were staffed with locally-recruited and -trained high school graduates, and received support from education specialists. This approach demonstrated real gains in the children's developmental scores, and enabled more than 1,000 children with disabilities to move into inclusive classrooms in state schools. Teachers may need additional support to ensure they include children with disabilities in a meaningful way. Save the Children in **Sri Lanka** developed a [resource book for teachers](#).

Support **school mapping exercises** of all children in a locality, including mapping which school they attend, or could attend if they were enrolled. When combined with health screening this would reveal 'hidden' children and increase the success rate of educational access strategies.

A recent [World Vision](#) report points to a case study in **Cambodia** where the Education Sector Support Project used school-led community mapping to give schools ownership and responsibility for collecting and responding to data.

Support **school improvement and include indicators for inclusion**. Incorporating the principles of inclusion into school development planning ensures the issues are considered.

The Basic Education programme in **Indonesia** developed a tool for school self assessment based on the national standards and incorporating the Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education's [Index for inclusion](#). Save the Children's [Making Schools inclusive](#) details how they have used the index for inclusion as a tool for inclusive school development.

How to improve the quality of education for children with disabilities?

There are a range of interventions which could improve the quality of teaching and learning for children with disabilities. The extent to which these can be implemented will be dependant on the overall education context in terms of school resources, teacher training, curriculum development.

Develop a staged system for the identification and support of children with disabilities. Include support for the preparation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs). VSO's [handbook on how to mainstream disability](#) provides a case study of its work in **Kenya** which is supporting education assessment and resource centres. In each district they are responsible for assessing children with disabilities' educational needs, supporting schools to provide appropriate teaching and for referring children for clinical or other services if required. The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010 cites an example in **Ethiopia** where, with the support of Handicap International, a school for deaf students operates as both a special school and a resource centre, supporting education for deaf learners in other schools and the development of sign language. Handicap International is also supporting over 85 resources schools in **Rwanda** through projects funded by Unicef and the EU.

Review and adapt where necessary the curriculum, textbooks, examinations and assessment procedures to ensure access and inclusion of all children. Textbooks should be prepared which are clear and contain large writing and short sentences to ensure as many children as possible can use them. Accessible formats such as Braille are needed to enable literacy and access to the curriculum for children who are blind.

Train itinerant teachers or resource persons to work within a group of schools. Susan Peters' 2004 paper, [Inclusive Education: An EFA Strategy for all Children](#), highlights how schools can link to community-based rehabilitation programs in Kenya, Tanzania and Vietnam. In such schools itinerant teachers can cost-effectively assist to produce teaching and learning materials, meet teacher shortages and helping children to develop skills such as Braille literacy, orientation and mobility.

Support global learning on inclusive pedagogy. Alison Croft's paper, [Including disabled children in learning: challenges in developing countries](#), examines how to ensure that pedagogy is suitable for children with disabilities. It argues that pedagogy can be more inclusive if children with disabilities are involved in planning, that teachers are encouraged to participate in action research and reflective pedagogy and that pedagogy is shared between teachers across contexts.

Support teacher development programmes by revising pre-service training or developing in-service modules. Teachers need to be provided with practical information on what they can do in the classroom, how they can identify children with disabilities and who they should refer the children to. David Werner's book, *Disabled Village Children*, written for rehabilitation workers offers guidance on identification of children with disabilities which could be shared with teachers and their counterparts.

In **Ethiopia**, the move to inclusion has led to training provision including:

- an input on special needs education in all pre-service courses
- specialist pre-service training in four institutions including: disability and society; assessment; early intervention; responding to different impairments; teaching strategies; vocational education; counselling; statistics; planning and management; community-based rehabilitation
- short in-service training courses
- a new masters' programme.

Vietnam's Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children has a specific focus on inclusive education for children with disabilities. In 2009 DFID support included a second round of training for the part-time support teachers from three districts; production and showing of a documentary television program; training for outreach support teachers; and further development of materials to use for support training in the service network.

In **The Gambia** through DFID's Basic Education Support for Poverty Reduction project, **VSO** assisted the College of Education to include inclusive education in its curriculum. It developed training modules to help primary school teachers develop skills to include children with disabilities in their classrooms.

In **Sri Lanka** in 2009, international consultants worked with teachers to develop needs-based toolkits providing strategies for including children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. This was seen as a stop-gap measure until teacher training can be reviewed and revised, to provide teachers with specific information and training on inclusive education.

There are often existing teacher training colleges specialising in disability (e.g. Kenya Institute for Special Education, Kyambogo University in Uganda). Susan Peters recognises these as an under-utilised resource. Donors could play a valuable role in helping to strengthen these institutions and supporting their role in mainstream teacher training and development of skills for supporting children with disabilities as these are more sustainable to use and strengthen these institutions for ongoing training/ continuing professional development than short in-service workshops run by international organisations.

Provide training for one teacher in every school to become a focal point for learning support. This teacher offers guidance and help to other teachers relating to strategies for teaching children with learning difficulties particular learning needs? – children with visual impairment don't necessarily have difficulties learning. As the EFA

Global Monitoring Report 2010 shows, some NGOs and governments have supported itinerant teaching approaches, which enable specialised teachers in central primary schools to reach a larger group of pupils in satellite schools and to support and train teachers. In Kenya Sightsavers is now working to train a contact teacher in each school – there are existing resource/contact teachers with some special educational needs training in some/most schools, we're giving them additional support on Braille skills.

Provide short training inputs for teachers to use a variety of assessment techniques to inform planning of teaching and learning. Recent research indicates that training at least two members of staff from each school greatly assists the adoption of new ideas in the establishment. School-based training and support from mentor teachers within a cluster of schools can ensure local needs are taken into consideration. This can be done by national or local institutions.

How to get children with disabilities into schools?

As noted earlier there are a number of physical, financial and attitudinal barriers which prevent children with disabilities from attending school. In this section, interventions to these barriers are below.

Support a whole-school development approach to inclusive education. Improvements in the education as a whole will benefit children with disabilities.

Ensure new and refurbished buildings are accessible for teachers and children with disabilities. This could include the provision of accessible sanitation facilities within schools as well as low-cost adaptations such as widening windows to allow more light in the classrooms, painting white lines across walkways and building ramps. These adaptations will need to be accompanied by investments in low-cost sustainable local transport systems. Before commissioning any school infrastructure project, ensure that a **disability review** is included as part of a social and environmental impact assessment. Tools to use on this are available from [GTZ](#), [Motivation](#) and the [UK government's planning portal](#).

Provide classroom assistants to support children with disabilities accessing buildings and learning. It may be more practical and cost-effective to employ helpers in schools rather than investing in new equipment or rebuilding parts of the school. There is a potentially strong role for Parent Teacher Associations or Councils in a range of support activities from identification, advocacy as well as in-school voluntary support. These bring added-value in drawing communities together around disability and inclusion and may give a positive role to parents children with disabilities.

Support community groups which work to improve schools' accessibility and inclusiveness. This may mean working directly with community groups or supporting schools to recruit community helpers to assist children with disabilities.

A [Leonard Cheshire Trust project](#) worked with the community, pupils and teachers to make environmental adaptations at five schools in **Kenya** which led to a 113% increase in enrolment rates.

In **Uganda's** Bushenyi District, work through VSO identified a high proportion of deaf children whose educational needs were not being adequately met. To meet the shortfall, parental involvement in the education of their deaf children was encouraged and developed. Parents have become involved in awareness raising, in supporting teachers and other educationalists and in lobbying for more inclusive education. They have now set up their own community-based organisation called 'Silent Voices' to ensure the work continues.

How to get best value for money?

Development partners and national governments have limited budgets and therefore need to ensure that interventions offer the best value for money. At present there is limited evidence on how to make decisions on cost-effectiveness. In [Inclusive Education: An EFA Strategy for All Children](#), Susan Peters provides some cost-saving strategies which centre on teacher training, centralised resource centres, parents' motivation and skills, children and CBR. More research is needed to conclusively state what constitutes best value for money.

The [World Bank](#) notes that "growing evidence suggests that **the most cost-effective approach is not to build special schools for children with disabilities** more promising are the innovative and relatively low-cost "inclusive education" approaches being adopted in China, Nepal, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and elsewhere to mainstream the participation of children with disabilities into the regular school system by reducing physical and other barriers to their participation"

In **Kenya**, VSO works in partnership with Education Assessment Resource Centres (EARCs), belonging to the Ministry of Education, in 28 districts. The EARCs support schools in becoming inclusive. As part of the inclusive education strategy, EARCs facilitate the creation of parents' groups. With VSO's support, parents' groups now include parents of disabled children. Most groups are now registered at the EARCs as Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) groups. Groups meet regularly in school premises and are actively involved in improving schools' accessibility and inclusiveness as well as referring children out of education in the community to schools. ([VSO and Disability 2008-2013](#))

The cost of accessibility is generally less than 1% of total construction costs according to a World Bank's report: [Education for All: The Cost of Accessibility](#). It notes that these costs are often developed and overstated by people who know little about accessible design. The report suggests savings can be made through addressing design, construction and social factors.

Consider helping meet the additional costs associated with the supply of specific resources to enable inclusive education. This might be in the form of grants to schools or procurement support and advice to governments to access specialised "assistive" equipment. A recent article in the Lancet, [Assistive Technology in developing countries: national and international responsibilities to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), states that "Appropriate assistive technology should meet users' needs and environmental conditions, fit properly, be safe and durable, be available in the country, and be obtained and maintained, with services sustained, at the most economical and affordable price." The article states that there is limited research into what works in developing countries and that more needs to be done so that national governments can make informed decisions on assistive technology. NGOs often have experience in this area and can provide guidance for governments and donors.

Consider all costs when purchasing assistive devices and making other investments for children with disabilities. These may include whole-life costs, maintenance, delivery, availability as well as additional costs including transport and storage and the cost of procurement itself i.e. time spent on the purchase. Deciding on the most appropriate items to purchase will depend upon the physical and technical infrastructure, availability of trained maintenance technicians, and availability of funds. It is often more cost-effective to start with low cost items and to move towards higher cost items as needed. An IMFUNDO paper, [A Review of Good Practice in ICT and Special Educational Needs for Africa](#), outlines the issues that need to be taken into account when procuring high-tech assistive technology.

What is assistive technology?

Assistive technology includes a range of technologies which enable people to build upon their abilities and participate as fully as possible at home, school and in their community. According to the [Ghana Education Services Special Education Division](#), such types of technology vary from low-tech options that can be easily accommodated into one's life, to those that are high-tech and depend upon sophisticated communication and environmental systems. Examples of each are given below:



Low cost

pencil grips, book holders, reading stands, sign language, gesture, Makaton, book overlays, white cane



Medium cost

hearing aids, Braille paper and styluses, magnifying glasses, talking calculator



High cost

computer-based technology, including large keyboards, screen readers, Braille display and scan/read software, Dolphin pen.

Cash incentives and grants

Provide transport subsidies for children with disabilities. In many countries public transport is inaccessible to children with disabilities. In [Bangladesh](#), a [USAID-funded study](#) found that parents saw the lack of subsidised support for rickshaw transport as a major constraint in sending children with disabilities to school.

[Disability, poverty and development](#) cites an example where, with DFID support, [Uganda](#) adopted a Universal Education Policy which provided free primary education to four children per family. The policy stated that at least two of the children should be girls (where there are girls) and any children with a disability. This is an area which could benefit from longitudinal research as specific research in this area is absent.

Provide stipends to encourage enrolment, attendance and achievement of children with disabilities. These can be financial or in the form of uniform, textbooks or stationery for example. Prioritise resources to ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities.

Provide cash transfer schemes to those with disabilities and ensure that people with disabilities can access such assistance. A [Disability Scoping Study](#) commissioned by DFID Uganda cites research by Mitra which hypothesised that social protection provision has three positive benefits for people with disabilities. Firstly by reducing chronic poverty, secondly by reducing income inequalities and thirdly by preventing long-term disabilities.

A study by [Gooding and Marriott](#) found that while several disability organisations suggest that transfers have could help improve access to education, on their own they are not enough and need to be part of a comprehensive programme that addresses attitudes and school facilities too.

Consider providing cash incentives to schools to provide a higher quality learning environment for children with disabilities. In Kenya and the Czech Republic schools are provided with a higher capitation grant per child with a disability.

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Annex 1

Key international initiatives supporting inclusive education for children with disabilities

Date	Title	Key statements
1948	UN Declaration on Human Rights	Article 26: Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.
1989	UN Convention on Rights of Child	Article 28 (Right to education): All children have the right to a primary education, which should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this right. Article 29 (Goals of education): Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest.
1990	World Declaration on Education For All (Jomtien)	Article 3: Basic education should be provided to all children, youth and adults. To this end, basic education services of quality should be expanded and consistent measures must be taken to reduce disparities. For basic education to be equitable, all children, youth and adults must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning.
1993	UN Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons With Disabilities	Rule 6: States should recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system.
1994	Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education	Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.
2000	Millennium Development Goals (set for achievement by 2015)	Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education. Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling.
2000	World Education Forum for Action, Dakar (restated the urgency to reach marginalised groups)	(Restated the commitment of the Salamanca Statement) and: All children, young people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be.
2001	EFA Flagship on Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities	The goal of Dakar will only be achieved when all nations recognize that the universal right to education extends to individuals with disabilities, and when all nations act upon their obligation to establish or reform public education systems that are accessible to, and meet the needs of, individuals with disabilities.
2007	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Article 24: Education States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity; • The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential; • Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

Annex 2

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Article 24, Right to Education:

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:
 - a) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
 - b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
 - c) Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.
2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
 - a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
 - b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
 - c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
 - d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
 - e) Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.
3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:
 - a) Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;
 - b) Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
 - c) Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.
4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.
5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

Annex 3

Where to buy assistive devices

There are many companies making products that will be useful for children with disabilities.

A few are highlighted here:

[Royal National Institute for the Blind](#) – accessible books and more, including the organisation of international Techshare conferences for companies and NGOs

[Worth Trust](#) – a not-for-profit manufacturing company offering equipment for the blind and assistive technology. Its workers have disabilities and it offers training, counselling and has a school for children with disabilities.

[Dolphin Pen](#) – accessible IT products for people who are blind or have low vision, including products aimed at developing country contexts

[HKSB](#) – an extensive range of low vision devices and assistive technology

[Humanware](#) – a British company offering a large selection of assistive technology

[Read How You Want](#) – an Australian not-for-profit, with a software conversion programme used to convert publishers' digital files into Braille, large print and Text to Speech formats

[Freedom Scientific](#) – a US-based company selling products for the visually impaired

[Whirlwind Wheelchair](#) – a US-based not-for-profit which designs wheelchairs for people in 40 countries across the developing world

[WHO Disability and Rehabilitation Team](#) – further information and guidelines.

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