



Inclusive Education: Rights, Responsibilities and Realities

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Biographical Notes:

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Introduction

The number of children aged 5 to 14 years with significant disabilities is increasing throughout the world. This is due to increases in the overall world population but also because of medical advances which means that many more of these children survive into their teenage years. The majority of these children (over 80%) will live in less developed regions of the world (Helander, 1993).

The increase in the overall child population poses many challenges to developing nations; foremost of which is the pressure on school enrolments. A recent review paper prepared for the World Education Forum held in Senegal in April 2000, estimated that 113 million children have no access to primary education. Particularly disadvantaged were girls, working children and those with special needs.

Nonetheless world leaders at the end of the Forum aspired to making Education available to all the world's children by 2015.

In many countries however, children with disabilities have been excluded from education systems either by default or by design. Many of these children drop-out of school early as they cannot keep up with the other children or they were refused a place at the local school because of their disability.

A favoured solution in nearly all countries has been to provide special schools for 'different children' and usually for pupils with specific disabilities such as those with hearing impairments, visual impairments and intellectual disability (mental retardation). Often these schools were begun by voluntary and religious organisations in response to needs within a particular locality. Experience has

taught us that this approach can mean that many children with disabilities in less affluent countries get no education at all! Among the reasons are:

- Special schools are a high-cost option which many poorer countries cannot afford as they struggle even to provide educational access for non-disabled children.
- Special schools tend to be located in urban centres and serve more affluent families who can afford the fees whereas the majority of needy children live in rural areas.
- It is not viable in rural areas to provide special schools for all the different impairments that children experience.
- The expertise of specialist teachers based in special schools is not shared with teachers in mainstream schools who have few opportunities to learn how best to teach children who have difficulties in learning.

Equally the value of providing special schools is questioned in more affluent countries for these and other reasons.

- Inclusive schools provide children with more educational and social opportunities than they receive in special schools.
- Parents increasingly opt to send their children to mainstream schools as a special school can stigmatise the child.
- Disabled activists have been critical of the education they received in special schools and argue that it sustains discriminatory attitudes within society albeit with the best of intentions.

UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) issued a final report – the ‘Salamanca Statement’ - following a World Conference on Special Needs Education in 1994. This concluded that children with special educational needs must have access to regular school. They argued that:

Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

However, the UNESCO Statement does recognise that certain children may be best taught in special classes or schools because of their particular needs in communication; namely those who are deaf, deaf-blind or severely intellectually disabled. But as these are but a small proportion of the total numbers of children with disabilities, it is recommended that the majority of children with disabilities should take place their place in mainstream schools.

However inclusive education is not achieved simply by including these children in primary school classrooms. Rather for this to happen, teachers, schools and educational systems need to change so that they can better accommodate the diversity of needs of pupils and to ensure that they are included in all aspects of school life. It also means identifying the physical and social barriers within and around the school that hinder learning and actively seeking to reduce or remove these barriers.

Even then, creating an inclusive school community cannot take place without the wider community, service structures and society being committed to this goal and working to support teachers and education officials in making this a reality. Sadly this dimension to inclusive education has been undervalued to date and this may account for the mixed results in making these aspirations a reality (O'Brien, 2001).

Thus establishing an inclusive educational system within any country will not be achieved quickly. It requires changes of attitude, increases in professional skills and competences, and the motivation to adopt more inclusive approaches throughout the whole of society and not just at the school level. That said, there is much that has been and can be achieved at a local level by community activists, sympathetic teachers and energised parents.

This chapter summarises what has been proven to work in making educational access more available for children with disabilities (see Figure 1).

- We begin by detailing the **rights** of children and families to education and how political action is needed to ensure that legislation is enacted to guarantee the implementation of rights.
- We examine the **responsibilities** of different groups within society in creating inclusive education; notably family members, CBR workers, health and social service staff and educational personnel.
- We explore the **realities** and challenges in making educational systems more inclusive. Among those commonly experienced are unskilled teachers, large class sizes, inflexible curriculum, unsuitable teaching methods and lack of educational resources and supports to schools.

However as the Figure shows, rights, responsibilities and realities are inter-linked in instigating and advancing inclusive education. It is also a reminder that inclusive education is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end in that the outcomes are not solely the benefits to the individual pupils but in creating a more equitable and just society for all.

Insert the Figure about here

Nonetheless we conclude that for the foreseeable future many children with disabilities in developing countries will continue to receive a poor education or none at all. Radical changes are needed in widening educational opportunities beyond schools; in enlisting the resources of more educators and redefining the function and methods of education with all citizens – young and old.

Key-points

- All children with disabilities have a right to education
- This should happen as far as possible in mainstream schools - nursery, primary and secondary.
- Certain children because of their particular impairments may require special assistance;
- Teachers and mainstream schools need to adapt their ways of working to meet the children's needs;
- Inclusive schooling must be rooted in communities and service systems that value the social inclusion of people with disabilities and actively support schools in attaining this goal.

Rights to Education

In most countries, disabled people - be they children or adults - often do not receive their fair share of national resources and rarely do they receive the extra help that

their particular needs require, even within those nations that proclaim themselves to be socialist republics! One step towards changing this state of affairs is to ensure that either the country's constitution and/or the legislation is in place to protect and further the rights of disabled citizens. The groundwork for this has been laid in that nearly all world governments are signatories to two important declarations of Rights.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975) states:

“Disabled persons whatever the origin, nature and seriousness of their handicaps and disabilities have the same fundamental rights as their fellow-citizens of the same age, which implies first and foremost the right to enjoy a decent life, as normal and as full as possible”. (Article 3).

Likewise, the Governments of the world have agreed that the same rights apply to all children irrespective of their impairments or environments. Hence the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1990) states that:

“Recognising the special needs of a disabled child, assistance .. shall be provided to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education .. conducive to the child achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development” (Article 23).

Both these declarations make clear how important it is for all citizens to participate fully in their community and for children especially to have the opportunity to grow into their culture, absorb its values and beliefs and contribute to its development.

The age-old problem though is translating the rhetoric into practice. To that end, the United Nations produced a set of 'Standard Rules on the Equalization of

Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities' (1994). The rules are intended to form an instrument for nation states to use in formulating policy and practices that ensure the rights of children with disabilities and their families are upheld. The rules are grouped thematically and cover areas such as medical care, support services, education, employment and economic policies. For example, rule six in the Education section states:

“Education for persons with disabilities should form an integral part of national educational planning, curriculum development and school organization” (p.23).

**In states where education is compulsory, it should be provided to girls and boys with all kinds of disabilities, including the most severe.*

However the Rules go on to note that education is wider than schooling. They state,

Special attention should be given to the following areas:

- a) very young children with disabilities;*
- b) pre-school children with disabilities;*
- c) adults with disabilities, particularly women” (p.24).*

The Standard Rules also make a vital observation that is well attested in practice.

Integrated education and community-based programmes should be seen as complementary approaches in providing cost-effective education and training for persons with disabilities. National community-based programmes should encourage communities to use and develop their resources to provide local education to persons with disabilities” (p.24)

Hence the Standard Rules allied with the Rights Statements provide essential information for lobbyists seeking to influence national legislation and policies.

Yet at a local level, many people will continue to question whether children with disabilities should have the same rights as an able-bodied child. Three answers can be given.

First, if some children are denied the right to education, it opens the possibility of denying others of this right on whatever grounds the more powerful in society may decide – for example, those of different religious persuasion or ethnic grouping.

Second, denying young people the opportunity to improve themselves ensures that they continue to be a burden to their families and the community rather than providing them with the opportunity to become self-reliant and contributors to 'nation-building'.

Third, and somewhat selfishly, disability can arise in any family at some time in future, either through birth or because of an accident to a loved child. Denying education to others means potentially denying it to your own family.

National Legislation and Policies

The need for national legislation and policy directives is well-attested in both the industrialised and the developing world. Without these, the promotion of disabled children's rights to education and of inclusive education is severely impaired. Three outcomes can be sought.

Legal and constitutional provisions State laws and/or the constitution should make explicit reference to all children's right to education. Where this is ambiguous or unspecific, test cases have been brought to clarify the situation. For example in Ireland, parents took their case to the Supreme Court which declared the rights of all children to primary education. Such laws ensure that government officials in

educational systems cannot act arbitrarily in making provision for children with disabilities.

Specific legislation on the education for children with special educational needs. In many industrialised and some developing countries, laws have been passed defining the educational entitlements for children with disabilities and the procedures to be followed in assessing and meeting their needs. Such legislation is often preceded by the publication of a 'White Paper' which conveys the Government's intentions but is open to consultation and change. In South Africa, their White Paper outlines

“what an inclusive education and training system is, and how we (South African Government) intends to build it. It provides the framework for establishing such an education and training system, details a funding strategy and lists the key steps to be taken in establishing an inclusive education and training system for South Africa” (p.5)

Specific laws ensure that common procedures are in place throughout the country and that the costs for these provisions are included in departmental budgets. Examples of legislation from other countries is a useful starting point in proposing new laws within a country.

National policy statements A third outcome are policy directives issued by the government to all schools. Although they lack the force of legislation, they do set down the guidelines which educational personnel are expected to follow. These can also cover topics in more depth and detail than would happen with legislation. Often these guidelines emerge from a 'committee of experts' and interested parties who were assigned the task of reviewing existing provision and to develop strategies for improved educational services. Hence the establishment of such a committee can

be a major step towards change in educational systems. The reports produced by national committees make very informative reading.

One caution must be entered. Laws and policy guidance can become outdated if they are not regularly reviewed and adapted according to changing needs and experiences gained over the years.

Promoting Rights

Disability issues are not a priority for governments in most developing countries.

However this can be changed if there is constant, consistent and co-operative advocacy within countries. This has to be directed at the general public, the media, influential groups in society, governmental officials and most crucially politicians at a local and national level. Among the most effective lobbyists have been:

Disabled person's organisations: People with physical and sensorial disabilities have been to the fore in promoting rights to education as many feel they were unfairly discriminated against in the education they had received within both special and mainstream schools. They assert that this disadvantaged them in accessing tertiary education and job opportunities. In South Africa, the national coalition of disabled people's organisations succeeded in having a Policy Unit set up in the President's office to deal specifically with disability issues. *Are there disabled person's organisations in your country? Are they active in promoting rights to education?*

Parent Associations: Mothers of children with disabilities – and to lesser extent fathers – have come together in local and national associations to give one another mutual support but also to educate their country-folk about the needs of their children. In Lesotho, southern Africa, one of the first actions of a programme designed to promote inclusive education within the country was to encourage the development of a national association of parents – Lesotho Society of Mentally Handicapped Persons.

However they opened their membership to other interested persons, such as professional workers, and they embrace a variety of disabilities. They were most influential in educating local communities about the needs of children with disabilities, in interesting the media in disability issues and encouraging schools to consider enrolling children with disabilities. *Are you encouraging the formation of parent associations? Are they active in advocating for their children's right to education?*

Non-governmental organisations In many countries, educational initiatives for children with disabilities have been instigated by NGOs. These model projects had an important role to play in demonstrating that these children could learn and benefit from education. Their role has also been crucial in expanding educational opportunities both in terms of preschool provision and after formal schooling ends, through vocational training projects for example. NGOs, especially when they come together into National Federations have a key role to play to promoting national policies and new ways of working. They may also be able to access international funding to support educational developments within specific localities. *Are there NGOs in your country who are in a good position to influence national policy in education? Have they developed policy statements on educational provision?*

Effective Methods

All these lobbyists use methods that have stood the test of time and have proven to be effective for in promoting the rights of other marginalized groups.

Use the media: Make sure radio stations and local newspapers are kept informed of your activities. Plan events to increase your public profile and make sure the media are invited. Identify spokespersons who are knowledgeable and can speak with conviction and enthusiasm.

Target influential people: Arrange to meet with local leaders, officials and politicians to brief them individually about your concerns and your proposals for dealing with them. Invite them to open or to speak at public events but make sure they are well briefed about your aims and the role they are expected to fulfil in making change happen.

Work in coalitions: Your impact is likely to be all the greater if you come together with other like-minded groups. Often disabled persons have common cause with other marginalized groups, such as those promoting the rights of women or ethnic minorities. Likewise forging alliances with powerful lobby groups within society can also be effective such as religion bodies, trade unions and professional societies.

Arguing for changes in long-established systems such as education has never been easy. Equally it has never been easier in that there are many examples from around the world where change has occurred and many good examples of effective action.

Key-points

- The rights of disabled children to education are not bestowed willingly by society, they have to be actively sought.
- Laws and policy statements are essential to safeguard children's rights and ensure they are implemented.
- Disabled people organisations, parent associations and NGOs have been effective in promoting rights.
- Targeting the media and influential people locally and nationally, and working in coalitions has produced change.

Responsibilities for Education

Enacting laws or issuing policy statements are but a means to an end. The more pertinent issue is whose responsibility is it to ensure that children with disabilities get

educated? We will name four groups – parents, communities, disability specialists (including CBR personnel) and teachers – who share this responsibility. But more crucially they have a responsibility to work together in partnership to make education an effective experience for children with disabilities. As Figure 1 shows, these groups have the dual function of both helping to initiate inclusive educational opportunities within their local schools and also of sustaining and advancing the children's education.

Parents and families

All over the world it has been parents who have instigated improved services for their children. Their advocacy has involved self-sacrifice as they braved the stigmas associated with their child's impairments but often they won through, as their bravery and determination faced down the apathy, if not the opposition of officials and politicians. That power is often still needed at a local level if change is to come about.

Parent involvement is also needed to sustain inclusive education. A common finding from educational research in industrialised countries is that the influence on families on children's educational progress often outweighs the contribution made by schools. Many factors account for this including parental interest in the child's learning and their involvement in assisting with homework. It is likely that family influences are equally if not more pronounced with children who have disabilities. Thus it is crucial that all members of the family living with the child including grandparents, siblings, aunts and cousins are mobilised to continue supporting the child's learning at home. Indeed there are essential life-skills that all children need to acquire but which schools rarely teach given that the curriculum tends to emphasise academic skills

such as reading and number work. Hence it is families who support children as they acquire the skills of daily living, socially acceptable behaviours and relating to other people.

Disability specialists

Children with disabilities benefit from receiving special assistance to minimise their disabilities and overcome their learning problems. This knowledge is not widely available to teachers and the general public. Rather specialist workers in health services such as therapists, or specially trained community personnel, such as CBR workers, have a particular responsibility to share their knowledge and expertise with families and schools. Indeed in many countries it has been CBR programmes which have taken the lead in promoting education. For example in Guyana, South America, the CBR volunteers who worked with families in their villages were later trained to organise workshops for local teachers to introduce the concept of inclusive education. This helped to build relationships with interested teachers which was further reinforced as the volunteers undertook to support the teachers who had children with disabilities enrolled in their classes by visiting schools to give individual advice and guidance and in some instances to provide individual tuition for the children.

CBR workers can promote the child's education in many diverse ways; assessing the child's strengths and weaknesses; providing assistive aids; advising on adaptations to schools, working with teachers and families in drawing up individual educational plans for the pupil and undertaking individual tuition with the child or training other volunteers to do this. There are as yet few examples internationally of CBR schemes being integrated with inclusive education but they are growing in number.

Communities

Within many developing countries, schools are rooted in local communities who have an ownership and stake in them because community representatives have constructed the schools and appointed the staff. Also the management committee of the schools will be made up of local people from different sectors such as the professions, business, religion and artisans. Hence the local community can have a profound influence on what happens within schools. This may even outweigh the influence of education officials at district and national level.

The support of community leaders is crucial in making educational access available to those children who may have been excluded in the past. Moreover the attitudes of other parents and pupils will be shaped by the community reaction. Hence in Malawi, a local NGO organised village gatherings to increase awareness of disabled people's rights through traditional drumming, songs and drama.

Once the support of the community has been enlisted they can become powerful allies in overcoming reluctance among school staff. In one district in Kenya for example, the 'community disability committee' set up by an NGO in a local community worked with the school management committee to successfully improve access to all children in the community. The committees can also have a role in assisting with post-school placements for young people with disabilities when their schooling ends.

Schools

We come to schools last to emphasise that inclusive education cannot succeed if left solely to teachers. Indeed there is plenty of evidence from many countries to

suggest that teachers in mainstream schools are largely antagonistic to having children with disabilities in their classrooms. Among the most commonly given reasons (McConkey, Mariga and O'Toole, 2000) are:

- I do not have the equipment needed to teach these children
- The classrooms are not suitable for them
- These children are better off in special schools

It is the responsibility of the education system to ensure that teachers are trained and given the necessary resources to do the job and we will come back to these issues in the next section. However another common finding is that the attitudes of teachers change if they have a successful experience of having children with disabilities in their class. Often initial reactions are based on what they think are problems and these may not materialise in practice.

But perhaps the most influential factor is that the head teacher is willing to take on the responsibility of enrolling children with disabilities in the school. This will ensure that teachers who have these children within their class will have an ally when things do not go smoothly or in the face of criticisms from other teachers. It is important for activists wishing to promote educational opportunities to open dialogues with head teachers and put them in touch with colleagues from other schools who have successful experiences of inclusion.

Working in partnership

These four groups need to work in partnership. Table 1 gives practical and specific suggestions as to how schools in particular can work in partnership with families, health workers and communities. Indeed the schools can provide a focal point for bringing these groups into contact with each other.

Insert Table 1 about here

As you will read, none of these ideas require special skills and they cost little or nothing to implement. Rather they involve a changed perception of the relationships that schools have with others in the community and a willingness to open the doors of the schools so that alliances can be built in order to further the education of all the children.

Key points

- Inclusive education is not the sole responsibility of schools and teachers. Families, CBR workers and the wider community are key players in initiating and sustaining inclusive schools.
- Partnership working among these stake-holders is essential in order for pupils with disabilities to benefit from their education.
- These responsibilities must be fulfilled at a local level but under-pinned by national initiatives. Schools have a key role to play in inviting others to join with them in widening the learning opportunities for their pupils.

Realities of Education

In most developing countries, education is under-resourced for all children and teachers have to battle against many adversaries – wars, refugees, famine and disease. The argument that inclusive education has to wait until the overall education situation improves is untenable as it will likely mean waiting for ever! The counter-argument is that the actions required to make education accessible to children with disabilities will improve the educational opportunities for all pupils. So what are the realities facing schools and how might they be changed for the better?

Teacher training

Many teachers are ill-prepared for the new challenges they face in classrooms. The training they have received, if any, has focussed on teaching academic skills in a directive style to whole classes of pupils. But children all learn at their own pace, both those with and without disabilities. Thus teacher training needs to be reviewed so that teachers can better assess the learning needs of individual pupils, devise and manage more individualised learning programmes and acquire a wider range of teaching techniques and methods. And as we have already seen, teachers need to be able to mobilise support from families and communities to assist them in this task. Thus teacher training needs to be reviewed so that teachers can better assess the learning needs of individual pupils, devise and manage more individualised learning programmes and acquire a wider range of teaching techniques and methods.

Change is occurring in pre-service teacher training programmes but these need to be complemented by in-service courses so that the existing cadre of teachers can become re-skilled for a changing education system. In Lesotho, the Ministry of Education organised weekend training courses for groups of local schools on different aspects of disability. These were led by 'master teachers' who had been sent on specialised training courses – for example on teaching children with visual impairments - and they in turn passed on their learning to teachers in mainstream schools.

School curriculum

How relevant is the existing school curriculum in preparing children for modern life? This issue is hotly debated in many countries but there is no doubt that an emphasis on a wholly academic curriculum excludes many pupils and not just those with

special needs. This is particularly so when children have to pass examinations before they can move on to the next grade.

Among the developments taking hold are the provision of a more diversified curriculum in schools that includes practical skills such as animal husbandry; greater freedom for teachers in adjusting the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils – for example for those who are at the early stages of acquiring literacy or numerical skills; and using alternatives to examinations to assess pupil's competence, for instance through completion of practical tasks.

Once again, teachers need to be trained in these new approaches but educational authorities need to redesign the curriculum and examination systems to make them inclusive. The pressure for these reforms increases by enrolling children with special needs in mainstream schools. Excluding them means that the status quo is more likely to be retained.

Support for teachers

Large class sizes, poorly equipped classrooms and inadequate buildings can conspire to sap teacher's morale and make their best efforts largely ineffective with those pupils who have special needs. Class teachers need support. A key influence is the leadership provided by the Head Teacher but the tangible support provided by the Management Board and the wider community is also vital as is the backing of colleagues through staff meetings and informal advice. However teachers who have children with disabilities in their class benefit especially from two forms of extra support.

Advice from specialists: Making an accurate assessment of a child's learning difficulties and devising teaching programmes for overcoming them is a skilled task that can challenge the most experienced specialists. Hence teachers can benefit from the help of others in assessing children and advising on teaching approaches. CBR workers can have a particular contribution to make here as will therapists and psychologists if they are available. In those countries with a tradition of special schooling, teachers from these schools can be redeployed for this purpose. In the Philippines, a former residential school for children with severe visual impairments was closed and instead the teachers provided a peripatetic training and support service to local schools through which many more children were assisted. In Sri Lanka, a cadre of 'master teachers' have been recruited and trained in special educational needs. They visit a group of schools regularly to guide and support teachers. In Thailand, teachers from schools for children with intellectual disabilities make regular visits to mainstream schools and spend time in classrooms, supporting teachers in their work with children who need extra help with learning.

Classroom assistance: The individual needs of pupils are easier to meet when teachers can call upon assistance from another person. In many industrialised countries, 'learning support' assistants are employed to fulfil this role. 'No-cost' alternatives in developing countries include volunteers recruited from families and communities; peer-tutoring by more able pupils in the same class or the use of senior pupils to assist slower learners in junior classes. In all these options the teachers have a key role to play in ensuring that the 'assistant' is properly taught and in monitoring the standard of their work with the pupils.

These three issues – teacher training, curriculum and support for schools – are central not only to making inclusive education a reality but also to ensuring that it achieves its goals, namely:

- National coverage of education.
- Equality of opportunity for all citizens
- Respect for diversity
- Creating empowered citizens who can contribute to society.
- Producing effective schools.

Thus inclusive education is NOT just about children with disabilities going to school. Rather it recognises that education is a force for social change and in creating a more equitable society in which people with disabilities can become full and active members.

Key points

- Inclusive education has hardly been tried internationally. We need to learn how it can effectively meet the needs of children with disabilities. A major need is improved teacher training and ongoing support for teachers.
- Many of the difficulties experienced from including children with disabilities stem from the realities of educational systems rather than the characteristics of the children with disabilities.
- The practical difficulties facing teachers can be addressed in creative ways but they do require extra efforts and changes in traditional practices in schools and classrooms.
- The only alternatives to inclusive education is to accept that disabled children do not need to be educated or to set up an alternative system for their education and training. The former is unjust; the latter is untenable as it will never meet the need nationally or achieve the social inclusion of people with disabilities.

Reflections

Inclusive education will not come quickly and sadly in some countries or parts of countries it may never come within our generation. It requires changes to a national system that is long established; that has always been slow to alter and which challenges the vested interests of powerful groups in society. But more than that, inclusive education requires changes in the attitudes and practices of families and communities and of other systems such as health services and community work. Against all these forces, it is perhaps remarkable that the concept of inclusive education has advanced as much as it has.

Nor can we say with any certainty what a new inclusive education system will be like. The transformations we have identified in schools need not stop there. New forms of 'learning centres' may be established outside of educational systems to provide particular forms of education and training according to pupils needs – for example, artisan schools, vocational training, creative arts. Learning will not stop at an arbitrary school leaving age but life-long learning opportunities will become more available to all. The teaching workforce will be augmented by enlisting the expertise of experienced practitioners across many disciplines and professions. Computers and the Internet will make knowledge more accessible to everyone even in the remotest areas thanks to battery power and satellite phones.

The future holds much promise. New solutions beckon to old problems. Yet today we stand at the cross-roads betwixt the old ways and the hope of the new. The choice is simple - what sort of future do we want for children with a disability? If it is one of social inclusion and equality of opportunity then we need to work for it from the

earliest years of the child's life and ensure that their schooling reflects these twin values. Mountains can be moved, a rock at a time!

References

Helander, E. (1993) *Prejudice and Dignity: An introduction to community-based rehabilitation*. New York: UNDP

McConkey, R., O'Toole, B. & Mariga, L. (1999) Educating teachers in developing countries about disabilities, *Exceptionality Education Canada*, 9, 15-38.

United Nations (1994) *The Standard Rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities*. New York: UN.

UNESCO (1994) *Final Report of the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality*. Paris: UNESCO

Further Reading

The following publications are available free-of-charge from UNESCO.

- Understanding and responding to children's needs in inclusive classrooms: A guide for teachers (2001)
Provides practical tips as to how teachers can make their classrooms more inclusive.
- Open file on Inclusive education: Support materials for managers and administrators (2001).
Practical guidance for developing more inclusive schools
- Inclusive schools and community support programmes: Report on phase two: 1998-2001. (2002)
Details are given of inclusive education initiatives in Cameroon, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ghana, India, Madagascar, Mauritius, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Vietnam and Yemen.
- Welcoming schools – students with disabilities in regular schools (1999).
Case studies are given of schools in Ghana, Palestine, Peru, Uganda, Mongolia, Germany, Hungary, Australia, China, Portugal, India, Lesotho, Chile and Canada.

These publications can be down-loaded at the following web-site:

<http://www.unesco.org.education/educprog/sne>

Or write to:

UNESCO
Combating exclusion through education
Division of Basic Education,
7 place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP France

Other resources

Preparing Teachers for Inclusive Education. A video-based training course

produced by Special Education Unit, Ministry of Education, Lesotho, 1996
Available from Eenet, School of Education, University of Manchester, Manchester, England M13 9PL.

The Journey to Inclusive Schools.

Produced by Inclusion International, 1998

Available from: Inclusion International, c/o IDC, 13D, Chemin du Levant, F-01201 Ferney-Voltaire, France.

Index for Inclusion

The Index is a set of materials to support schools in a process of inclusive school development, drawing on the views of staff, governors, school students, parents/carers and other community members. It has been developed in England by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow.

Further Information: <http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/csiehome.htm>

Useful websites:

www.eenet.org.uk

Promotes the sharing of easy-to-read information amongst people interested in improving educational opportunities for marginalized groups of learners.

www.daa.org.uk

Disability awareness in action (DAA) aims to promote the rights of disabled people, including children.

<http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/csiehome.htm>

From its base in Bristol, UK, the Center for the Studies in Inclusive Education provides information and advice about inclusive education and related issues.

Figure 1: The processes influencing the development, advancement and outcomes of inclusive education

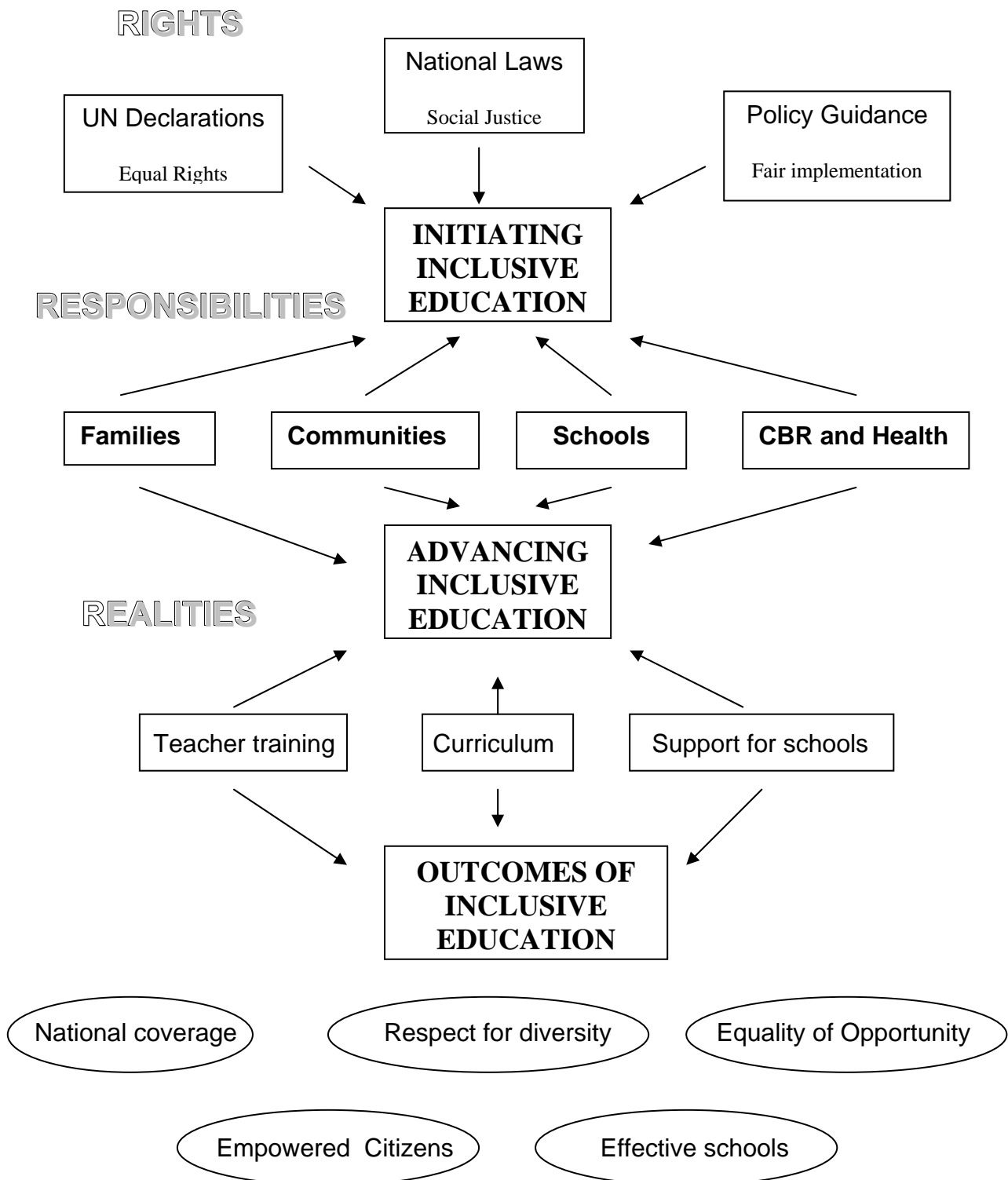


Table 1: Ideas for partnership working between school and families, CBR and Health personnel and communities*

Families	CBR and Health Personnel	Communities
Teachers are willing to visit the family at home. This lets them see how the child gets on there and the family circumstances.	Schools should keep a list of health personnel and where they can be contacted. This list should be given to all teachers.	Community groups could make the school buildings and toilets more accessible for people with disabilities. They can build ramps and widen doors so that wheelchairs can be used more easily.
Parents are invited to visit their child's class. They can see the teaching methods used in the class.	Schools should invite these persons to visit so that they can meet the Headteacher and teachers.	Community personnel are invited to visit the school and talk to the children about their work.
Parents are invited to meet the child's teacher at least once a term to discuss progress.	Schools can offer space in their premises for 'clinics'; for example, to carry out health checks on children in the pre-school years. In this way, parents and pre-school children become familiar with the school. If teachers suspect children of having a health problem, they should refer them to these clinics.	Youth organisations and sports clubs can be encouraged to enrol children with disabilities for after-school activities.
Parents are involved in drawing up the individual educational plan for the child with special needs.	Health personnel already involved with the child and family, such as CBR workers, can be invited to the school. They can contribute to a shared Individual Educational Plan for the child.	Volunteers could make play equipment and teaching aids for use in schools or in the homes of children with disabilities.
Short training courses can be organised for parents. These should focus on practical activities that parents could use at home to help the child learn new skills. Teachers can arrange for visiting speakers to come to these courses.	Health personnel can be invited to speak at parent meetings or on training courses for parents or teachers. Likewise, teachers may get invited to training courses organised for health personnel.	Young people can be referred for vocational training to various businesses and employers as they prepare to leave school.
Parents are encouraged to assist children with their homework. They sign the child's work.	Retired health workers may be willing to offer their services to the school on a voluntary basis. They could assist with developmental checks and screening for disabilities.	Volunteers can be recruited to help provide one-to-one help in the classrooms.
Parents who have children with disabilities are assisted to form a local association. Parents can learn from one another. Visiting speakers can talk to the group and answer their questions. The group can lobby politicians for help.	Health workers can advise and support teachers making health promotion part of the curriculum and school life.	Reporters from the local paper and radio stations are invited to any events that the school organises with community workers. This can encourage more people to volunteer.

* Taken from McConkey, R. (2001) *Understanding and responding to children's needs in inclusive classrooms: A Guide for Teachers*. Paris: UNESCO