Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

WORLD BANK GROUP

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION INITIATIVE
Transforming Education for Children with Disabilities

Contents

Contents
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Contents

Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

List of Figures and Tables

Acknowledgments

ABBREVIATIONS

ADD   Attention Deficit Disorder

ASD   Autism Spectrum Disorder

CBID   Community-Based Inclusive Development

CBR   Community-Based Rehabilitation

DID   Disability Inclusive Development

DPE   Directorate of Primary Education

EdTech   Educational Technology

ERIC   Education Resources Information Centre

FCDO   United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office

GEQIP-E   General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity

GPE   Global Partnership for Education

GPS   Government Primary School

ICT   Information and Communication Technology

IE   Inclusive Education

IERC   Inclusive Education Resource Center

IEI   Inclusive Education Initiative

INGO   International Nongovernmental Organization

LSEN   Learners with Special Educational Needs

MoPME   Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

NGO   Nongovernmental Organization

OPD   Organizations of Persons with Disabilities

PEPD4   Fourth Primary Education Development Programme

RC   Resource Center

REB   Rwanda Basic Education Board

SA   South Asia

SDG   Sustainable Development Goal

SSA   Sub-Saharan Africa

TA   Teacher Assistant

TLM   Teaching and Learning Material

TTL   Task Team Leader

UNCRPD   United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

WASH   Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Executive Summary

This report presents a review of different approaches in service delivery being implemented in the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and South Asia (SA) to ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities in education. The review examines in what ways (and the extent to which) different approaches have been operationalized and contextualized to enable the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education systems, focusing specifically on primary schooling.

The review was conducted using multiple research methods, including a systematic literature review of peer-reviewed publications in English[1] spanning the past 10 years, a survey with international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) capturing their experiences of implementing different approaches across SSA and SA, and follow-up semi-structured interviews with representatives of these organizations and representatives of ministries to gather more detailed insights.

INGOs, in partnerships with government ministries, are the key implementing bodies in many countries where they are both providers of inclusive education services as well as advocates of inclusive education (see Singal [2020] for a detailed understanding of the role of INGOs in disability inclusion). Over the past few years, given the breath of educational reforms in many countries, INGOs play a vital role in working with government ministries. In this report, given the prominence of INGOs in delivering inclusive education, we focus on their perspectives and also draw on the perspectives of government ministries to understand the factors that determine the implementation strategies for inclusive education adopted in different country contexts. Furthermore, this report also draws from publicly available, open access reports published by INGOs that work in this area. Excerpts from these documents provide illustrative examples on how organizations strategize their work on disability inclusion in mainstream schools.[2]

The literature review revealed that while there has been an increase in the number of studies looking at mainstream inclusion in these contexts since 2011, there are very few which capture the effectiveness or impact of different models. The study was initially designed to understand the effectiveness of particular models of inclusive

---

1   We acknowledge that by focusing on English language articles, other language journals such as French or Spanish journals (which might be relevant for some SSA countries) are being excluded. We believe that there is potential for future studies that conduct a similar systematic review focusing on other languages as well.
2   Note that these examples (as reported in Section 4) are only illustrative in nature and in no way provide any evaluation of the work that these organizations are doing.

education in mainstream schools (resource centers, resource units, and community-based networks, see Introduction). However, there isn't enough evidence within the literature review (and later on in surveys and interviews) that could sufficiently answer the specific questions around these models. The literature review found 38 studies in SSA (out of the initial result of 372 papers) and 13 studies in SA (out of 249) (see Figure 2 for inclusion/exclusion criteria). Further exploration of these studies identified that the focus of most of these studies is the child and the school environment; not a single study was found focusing on policy-level interventions.

The following key reflections have emerged from the surveys, along with the insights emerging from the literature review:

- First, inclusive education is implemented using multiple approaches, and organizations adopt a much wider remit in the way they approach inclusion in mainstream schooling. While this suggests actors are innovatively trying to come up with solutions, it often results in a scatter-gun approach where they are trying to do too many things on their own, without seeking out depth or expertise in a given area.

- Second, within the wide range of countries that the studies cover, organizations implementing inclusive education often end up adopting an approach that a given country's government and school community might be more receptive to (for example, teacher training), as they struggle to maintain relevance and provide support within local systems. This is in contrast to advocating for more innovative programs, even though they might be more beneficial for bringing about system-level changes.

- Third, organizations implementing inclusive education are yet to become learning organizations—that is, organizations which have strong feedback loops and reflection points embedded within their programs and structures. Such an approach would support a more robust way of pushing for innovations as well as increase the knowledge base around inclusion. However, some progress is evident as a few organizations have begun to adopt a more learning-focused approach to how they work toward inclusion.

- Fourth, the key challenge identified is related to financing and how often disability continues to be neglected in mainstream education financing, thus limiting the possibilities of what is feasible and the alliances which are possible.

Executive Summary
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

In view of these findings, the following five key recommendations are suggested:

- **Need to incentivize innovation in service delivery of inclusive education:** In the current landscape, as organizations promoting disability inclusion in education seem to be pulled in several directions, a concerted effort for innovative approaches to service delivery in inclusive education seems to be lacking. Organizations continue to be pulled toward quick wins such as teacher training. There is a need for systemic incentivizing to support innovation in service delivery.

- **Need for building capacity of policy implementers:** One of the neglected points of intervention seems to be the policy implementers, especially the low- and mid-level implementers who play a key role in inclusion. There is a need for approaches that focus on them and build capacity and understanding.

- **Need for stronger partnerships between education and disability sectors:** Disability inclusion continues to be seen as something that only disability-focused organizations are responsible for doing and advocating, and it has still not become cross-cutting across different aspects of primary schooling. There is a particular need for greater synergy between mainstream education initiatives and disability-inclusive education initiatives. More resources need to be provided for making disability inclusion integral across sectors.

- **Need for strengthening the twin-track approach:** The twin-track approach, often encouraged in inclusive education programs, recognizes that both mainstreaming as well as targeting and supporting specific needs of children with disability go hand in hand. While the rhetoric for this is evident in this study, there is still a long way to go. With strengthened partnerships between the education and disability sectors and organizations, the twin-track approach will also be strengthened. With regard to financing, this is particularly important as disability continues to be sidelined in mainstream educational financing.

- **Need for stronger evidence:** There is a considerable need for more rigorous and stronger research evidence. In particular, there is a need for high-quality, rigorous research evaluating different inclusive education implementation models, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. This report clearly highlights the scarcity of literature that makes it harder to clearly identify 'effective' inclusive education delivery models. Insights from this report also highlight the importance of systematic knowledge building in this field.

Images Source: World Bank

1. Introduction

Recognition of inclusion as the key to achieving the right to education has strengthened over the past few decades. Inclusive education is central to achieving high-quality education for all children, including children with disabilities (UN SDG 2015; UNCPRD 2007). The global school expansion has led to tremendous gains in promoting school access and enrolment. However, despite the overall success, children with disabilities experience profound challenges in accessing schools, participating in the classroom, and have poor learning outcomes, due to the quality of teaching they experience (Malik et al. 2022).

For children with disabilities, the experience of being excluded from opportunities to learn has been an overarching feature in recent debates in education. Globally, and particularly in low- and middle-income countries, many children with disabilities are unlikely to attend school, and if they do, their school attendance and completion rates are low (Grills et al. 2019; Groce and Bakhshi 2011; UNICEF 2021). Hence, children

with disabilities drop out of school at rates much higher than their non-disabled peers (Zhang and Holden 2022). Contributing to this exclusion are a range of factors, stemming from lack of accessible school infrastructure, adopted teaching and learning materials (TLMs), and also lack of trained teachers, which is highlighted as one of the key contributing factors in the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region. In addition to various push and pull factors within the school settings, a number of external factors such as socioeconomic status, perceptions of the value of schooling, and notions of stigma also have an impact on the schooling of children with disabilities (Rohwerder 2018).

While there is a global focus on the need for inclusive education (IE), there is a more recent acknowledgement (Singal, Lynch, and Johansson 2018; Walton 2018) that its implementation needs to be undertaken in a contextually relevant and appropriate manner. It is in this regard that a significant need exists to understand and document 'what works' at an implementation level. The development of such a knowledge base can help inform evidence-based planning and effective program development.

As countries aim to provide primary education to all children, including children with disabilities, as mandated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), new models and strategies for operationalizing this commitment have emerged. A report published by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), examining the inclusion of students with disabilities in education sector plans in 51 countries, noted that 17 countries are considering a two-pronged (twin-track) approach to the education of children with disabilities (GPE 2018). The focus is on integrating disability in mainstream education initiatives (track one), while also investing in actions and services aimed specifically at meeting the needs of children with disabilities (track two). A 2016 study of 21 African countries[3] concluded that only 10 countries had publicly available relevant information on specialist services or provision for children with disabilities within mainstream education (Riggall and Croft 2016).

This research study aims to explore in-depth the nature and effectiveness of different service delivery approaches being adopted in countries of South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa in relation to increasing school participation of children with disabilities within mainstream schools. The report addresses two key research questions:

---

3 These countries included Angola, Botswana, Burundi, the Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Eswatini, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

- What is the nature of different service delivery approaches to ensure inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa?

- What are the enablers and challenges in the implementation of these approaches from the perspectives of the implementers?

At the outset of this study, drawing on insights from the field and the available body of literature in the field of disability and education, three overarching approaches were identified. This report is therefore focused on examining effectiveness of the following approaches:

- **Resource Centers:** Many countries have worked on or are planning to transition their special schools into resource centers, or indeed set up new resource centers to service a cluster of mainstream schools, which include children with disabilities. Over time, the resource centers have been contextualized and adapted to support the local education systems (Gedfie and Negassa 2019). The resource centers (also known as Inclusive Education Resource Centers [IERCs] or Special Needs Resource Centers, in some countries) serve a variety of functions such as,

  - Providing support to teachers in classroom management

  - Developing and adapting curriculum

  - Providing in-service teacher training

  - Screening identification, and referral of children with disabilities

  - Providing support for the education of children with disabilities

  - Linking parents/caregivers and teachers to community resources and services.

- **Resource Units/classes in mainstream schools:** In many countries, children with disabilities attend a separate class situated within the mainstream schools for most of the day (Bouille 2013). Often, they are included with non-disabled peers for extracurricular activities. Resource units/classes sometimes have a wide range of disabilities represented or are disability specific (a class for deaf learners, a class for blind/low-vision learners, a class for children with

intellectual disabilities) and often cover a wide range of ages/grade levels in one classroom. In Nepal, for example, the resource classes are intended as preparatory environments for young children with disabilities who should move to mainstream classrooms around grade 6 (Human Rights Watch 2018). Children with disabilities learn braille or sign language in segregated classrooms/resource units from special education teachers, which supports their transition into mainstream classrooms.

- **Community-Based Networks:** Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID)—previously and still often known as Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR)—networks can assist schools in ensuring enrolment and support for children with disabilities. Assistant teachers, sometimes referred to as 'paraprofessionals', can be part of the broader CBID/CBR networks, and often support teachers in inclusive classrooms in many countries. The nature of the role and qualifications of the assistant teacher may vary significantly depending on the context. Assistant teachers can play a vital role in promoting inclusion if assigned to support classrooms rather than individual students. Besides ensuring children with disabilities enter and stay in schools, assistant teachers can also motivate parents, communities, and families to support children's education and provide the necessary support to teachers.

Images Source: World Bank

2. Methodology

Given the aims of the study, multiple research methods, drawing on a phased approach, were adopted. This enabled a wide scoping of the existing literature and a deep dive into specific interventions being undertaken by various organizations working in the region to support the education of children with disabilities (see Figure 1 for details).

2.1. An overview of the methods of data collection

2.1.1. Systematic review of literature

The systematic review of literature was undertaken for research studies published during 2011–2021 in English language peer-reviewed journals to ascertain some notion of quality of research based on the assumption that all such articles go through a strong review process. The decision to focus on studies from 2011 onwards was driven

Figure 1: Three-pronged approach to data collection: systematic review, stakeholder online surveys, key informant interviews

Method 1: Systematic review of the published literature
This includes review of published journal articles between 2011 and 2021.

Method 2: Stakeholder online survey
Gather insights into the type and nature of models operating to implement disability-inclusive education.

Method 3: Key informant interviews
Gather in-depth perspectives on the effectiveness of different models being implemented by INGOs and *government representatives.* Impact evidence reported in policy documents, M&E reports of INGOs.

Source: World Bank.

by the existing literature reviews in the period prior to that. A review by Srivastava, De Boer, and Pijl (2015) on primary school inclusive education service delivery models covering 2001–2011 was published in the *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. They found limited number of studies that met their criterion (11 papers), and only 16 out 140 countries included (both in the South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa regions) in the review had projects on inclusion of students with disabilities, clearly indicating that there was a lack of research till 2011. On the other hand, the evidence gap review published by Saran, White, and Kuper (2020) states that in the past 10 years (2011–2020), there has been a growing emphasis on issues of provisioning in relation to inclusive education, hence providing us an important window to focus our attention on studies published between 2011 and 2021.

Using a systematic approach, two internationally well-regarded databases, ERIC and Web of Science,[4] were used to identify peer-reviewed publications addressing different approaches to inclusive education. As shown in Figure 2, a clearly laid out process of

---

4   ERIC (Education Resources Information Centre: https://eric.ed.gov/) is a database that indexes a wide range of educational journals (almost 1,284 journals are listed). Web of Science is a research tool that enables the users to acquire several different database information (https://clarivate.com/webofsciencegroup/solutions/web-of-science/).

Figure 2: Steps followed for the systematic review of peer-reviewed literature

Identification Records identified through database search SSA (n=372) SA (n=249)	**Data base:** ERIC and Web of Science **Method:** Boolean **Link words:** AND, or **Key words:** Inclusion AND primary schools and region
Screening Title and abstract screening stage SSA (n=79) SA (n=53)	**Exclusion criterions** a. Region b. non-mainstream schools c. non Primary school setting d. non-academic reports
Included Articles included in the review after full text reading SSA (n=38) SA (n=13)	**Exclusion criterion** No intervention identified **Inclusion criterion** Inventions identified at four levels: Level 1: Child Level 2: Teacher Level 3: School and community Level 4: Policy

Source: World Bank.

identification, screening and inclusion of studies in the review was implemented. The search remained focused on English language journals. We acknowledge that this meant we could not review articles/report published in other languages (for example, French, Portuguese, and Spanish)—this remained beyond the scope of this report.

To assist in the systematic identification of peer-reviewed publications, a Boolean combination of key words related to 'inclusion', 'primary schools', and 'regions'[5] was used and 372 articles for Sub-Saharan Africa and 249 for South Asia were found.

---

5   For Sub-Saharan Africa, the key word search was as follows: (inclusive education or inclusion or mainstreaming or integration) AND (disability or disabilities or disabled or impairment or impaired or special or special needs or accessibility) AND (primary school or elementary school or primary education or elementary education) AND (africa or sub saharan africa or african countries). For South Asia: (inclusive education or inclusion or mainstreaming or integration) AND (disability or disabilities or disabled or impairment or impaired or special or special needs or accessibility) AND (primary school or elementary school or primary education or elementary education) AND (south asia or india or bangladesh or pakistan or nepal or srilanka or afghanistan).

Out of these papers, reading through the abstracts and titles, papers which were (a) not from SSA or SA region; (b) not based on mainstream schools; (c) not in primary school settings; and (d) not peer-reviewed academic papers were excluded from the selection. This resulted in shortlisting 79 papers in SSA region and 53 papers in SA region. Finally, only papers which mentioned interventions that are attempting to implement inclusive education services were included, which drastically reduced the number of papers to 38 in SSA region and 13 in SA region.

2.1.2. Stakeholder online surveys

A decision to conduct stakeholder surveys was shaped by a realization that while there is a push for more published research on inclusive education, there is still not enough that captures the wide range of efforts on the ground. There are several players involved in inclusive education implementation—including international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), government ministries, local grassroots/rural nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), or organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs); however, this report focuses on INGOs for several reasons. First, there is an understanding that a considerable amount of 'evidence' is available for the work undertaken by INGOs which are actively involved in implementing various inclusive education programs and also regularly undertake efforts for monitoring and evaluation (this is unlike some smaller local NGOs on which there is scant literature). Second, Singal (2020) elucidates how many INGOs working in this area function both as providers of education and also advocates for inclusive education. There is an understanding that a considerable amount of 'evidence' is available for the work undertaken by INGOs which are actively involved in implementing various inclusive education programs and also regularly undertake efforts for monitoring and evaluation. Majority of the large-scale programs in inclusive education are implemented by such civil society actors in partnership with the government and international donors. Hence, a considerable wealth of implementation insights remains with these organizations which may or may not get captured systematically during monitoring and evaluation, and considerable amount of evidence of practice often remains anecdotal. Therefore, in this report, to get deeper insights into the how of the implementation of inclusive education, we used surveys, followed by interviews with key informants.

An online stakeholder survey (available in English) was developed to get an overview of the nature of the implementation models being adopted in the field in to relation disability-inclusive education at the primary school level by key INGOs. The survey was hosted online (by IEI Knowledge Hub), and information was collected along the following themes (see Appendix A):

Methodology
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

- Nature and type of programs being implemented by the organization

- Regions in which it was implemented

- Impact of the implementation

- Challenges to implementation

- Any further details of the programs.

Using purposive sampling, the survey was directly sent to 12 INGOs with a track record of undertaking significant work in the area of inclusive education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. It was sent to the inclusive education expert working in the INGO, who was asked to identify the person(s) most suited to answer the questions in the survey. We received responses from nine organizations.

2.1.3.Key Informant Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with the members of eight different organizations, which provided a useful opportunity to reflect on some pertinent themes emerging from the survey data, for example, decisions underpinning which approaches to adopt, and so on, and use this as an opportunity for reflecting on the findings from the systematic review.

To help ensure robustness of the research process, an expert roundtable was convened in November 2021. The preliminary findings from the systematic review and the survey were shared with World Bank staff.[6] A key theme emerging during the discussions at the roundtable was a clear acknowledgement that the results of the systematic review were indeed very powerful as they not only validated people's concerns about the lack of robust evidence in the field but for some it highlighted certain research studies which could further inform their understanding. Feedback received from this roundtable (along with findings from the surveys), informed the key informant interview guides which were conducted with individuals working in selected INGOs (see Appendix B) as well as government officials from three case study countries (Appendix C).

---

6   Ghana, The Gambia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zambia, Nepal, Liberia, Pakistan, and Inclusive Education Thematic Group.

In total, eight interviews were conducted with INGO representatives, and three interviews (involving 1-2 officials each) with government representatives from Rwanda, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia. In selecting these country case studies, the aim was to capture a diversity of approaches toward the implementation of inclusive education and delve further into the survey information and to gather more comprehensive data on the effectiveness of the programs and factors which have shaped its implementation from two different stakeholder groups: government and INGO representatives. The key themes that were discussed during the interviews were the following:

- Rationale for adopting a specific approach

- Expectations from the approaches used

- Impact and challenges of these approaches

- Views on the different approaches to IE and funding patterns.

2.2. Data Analysis

All the data collected were collated and, through a continuous and iterative process, analyzed. Using Braun and Clark's (2006) approach to thematic data analysis, the data from surveys and interviews were coded thematically. First, the survey data analysis helped identify four key themes: types of models, impact, challenges, and financial determinants. In turn, these themes informed the data analysis for the interviews. To further develop these themes and triangulate the claims made during the interviews and surveys, organizational literature was also studied. These documents included publicly available, open access INGO impact reports, case studies, and theory of change documents. These documents are reviewed only for illustrative purposes and must not be interpreted as an evaluation of these organizations. The data from the country representatives have been developed as case studies to triangulate analytical themes and findings from the other data sources.

Images Source: World Bank

3. Key findings from the literature review

● 3.1. Limited evidence on effectiveness of interventions

One of the clear findings from the review was the fact that while there are studies that focus on inclusion in mainstream schools in these regions, most of them do not explicitly study any models of intervention which attempt to strengthen inclusive education provisioning. Most of these studies focus on attitudes or challenges for inclusion from the perspective of different stakeholders (Donohue and Bornman 2015; Morelle and Tabane 2019; Motala, Govender, and Nzima 2015). This suggests that there is still a significant lacuna in the generation of robust evidence on the effectiveness of interventions that are currently being implemented.

3.2. Imbalance in country coverage

Interesting trends are evident in relation to the breakdown of the geospatial spread of these studies. Figures 3 and 4 show the distribution of the literature across different countries. In the South Asia region, while majority of the articles are based on India, we still found a somewhat balanced representation of Bangladesh and Pakistan. However, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal had no results. This is interesting, since we know these countries do have active inclusive education projects currently being implemented. For example, Nepal has introduced resource classes as preparatory environments for young children with disabilities (Human Rights Watch 2018). This exemplifies the imbalance between field-based interventions and associated evidence generation.

Figure 3: Country spread of peer-reviewed published articles in South Asia

Country spread-South Asia
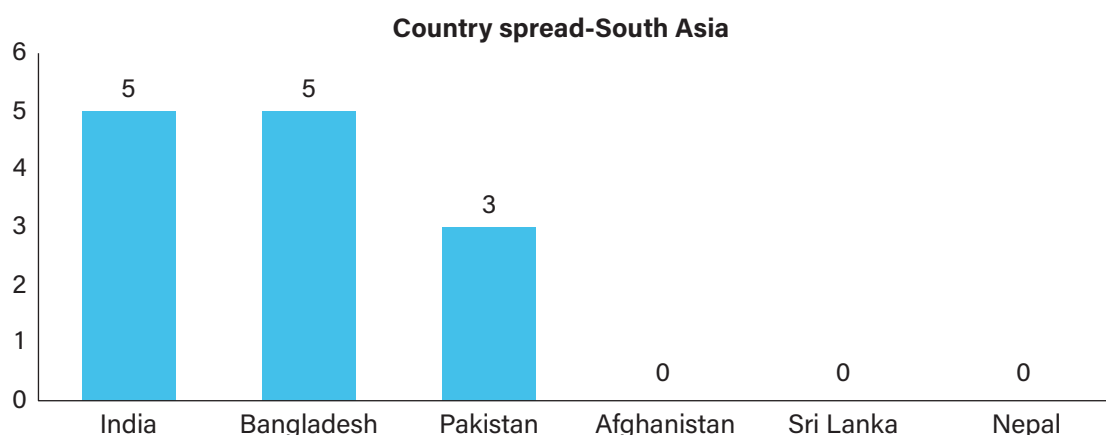
Source: World Bank.

On the other hand, in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, South Africa dominates the literature base (see Figure 4), with one-third of the studies being based here. Only 16 countries from the Sub-Saharan African context are covered in the studies reviewed, with many not even generating a single study.

3.3. Qualitative methods are the preferred research approach

Both in SSA and SA, use of qualitative methods dominated the evidence base. In SSA, 82 percent of the studies were qualitative in nature. The most common research design was case studies using methods such as interviews, classroom observations, and documentary analysis (19 studies). However, some alternative methods such as

Key findings from the literature review
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Figure 4: Country spread of peer-reviewed published articles in Sub-Saharan Africa

Country spread-Sub-Saharn Africa
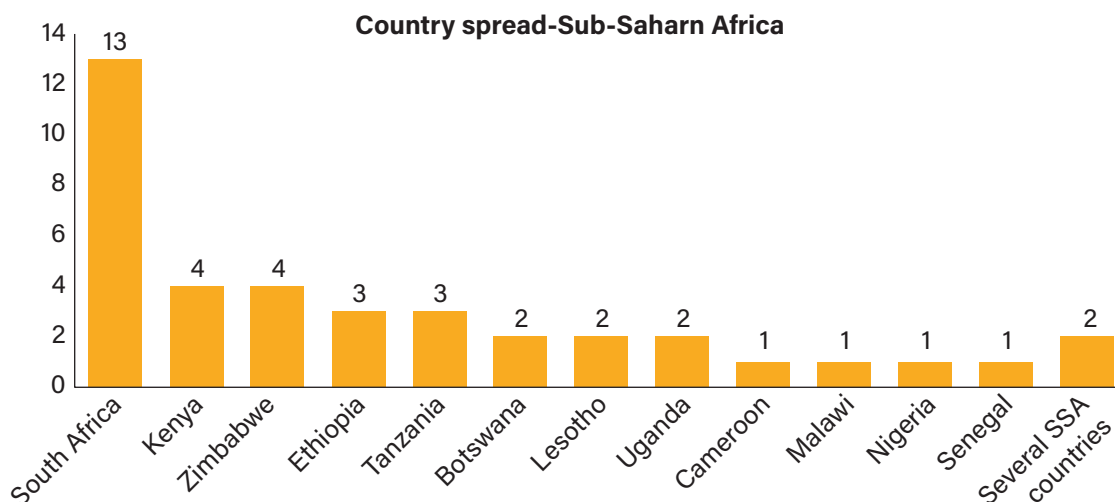
Source: World Bank.

collaborative action research, participatory research, and narrative approach are also evident (4 studies). There are only a handful of studies which adopted a mixed-methods approach (4 studies) and three exclusively use quantitative methods (two randomized control trials and one study using pre- and post-surveys). These findings are very similar to those observed by Jolley et al. (2018), who found prevalence of qualitative studies focusing on disability and social inclusion. In the South Asian context, 87 percent (11 out of 13) of the studies were qualitative in nature, majority of the studies undertook document analysis or literature review (8), while four studies used interview-based data. In SA, only one questionnaire-based quantitative study and one mixed-methods study was found.

● 3.4. Overwhelming focus on teachers, schools, and communities

To develop a deeper analytical understanding of the point of focus for these interventions, a systems-based approach was adopted, where the interventions were identified at four different levels (Figure 5).

> ***Level 1:*** Child-focused service delivery models are interventions which directly support and aid the inclusion of a child with disabilities in mainstream schools. These include both school-based infrastructures as well as aids, appliances, and other personal devices.

Key findings from the literature review
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Figure 5: Conceptual framework used to analyze peer-reviewed literature

School and Community Focused
Interventions which focus on supporting the schools - including collaborations with head teachers, others educational organisations, parents and communities to archieve mainstream inclusive education.

Policy Focused
Interventions which focus on supporting policy makers and advocacy for mainstream inclusive primary schooling.

Child Focused
Interventions which focus on supporting and aiding the child with disabilities within mainstream inclusive primary schools. this includes technological support, aids, appliances and even infrastructural support designed to make inclusion possible.

Teacher-Focused
Interventions which focus on supporting the teacher within mainstream inclusive primary schools. This includes inclusive pedagogies, curriculum materials supporting inclusion and teacher training programmes.

Source: World Bank.

Level 2: Teacher-focused models are interventions which support teachers in mainstream primary schools to become more inclusive in their practices. This can include providing teacher training, curriculum adaptations, and pedagogical development.

Level 3: School- and community-level interventions are those which are focused on supporting schools including collaborations with head teachers, school management, educational organizations, along with parents and communities.

Level 4: This final level focuses on policy-based interventions, which support policy makers in designing, implementing, and advocating for inclusive education.

As shown in Table 1, the majority of studies focus on teachers and schools, with only 20 percent focused on the policy level. While child-focused studies are also scarce, it is important to highlight that screening and identification studies were not included in this literature review.

Table 1: **Number of studies found for each of the level of interventions**

	SSA	SA	Total
Level 1: Child-focused	8	1	9
Level 2: Teacher-focused	12	4	16
Level 3: School- and community-focused	12	4	16
Level 4: Policy-focused	6	4	10

3.5. Child-focused approaches

Child-focused interventions prioritized the child with disability and, in many cases, adopted a multifaceted approach, such as making available various important provisions within mainstream schools, for example, accessible water, sanitation, and infrastructural facilities; providing the child with aids and appliances; and so on. Others focused on capturing students' voices and experiences of being included in mainstream schools and a few explored the impact of multi-intervention approach on children's well-being and learning outcomes.

Only one study was found to focus on such issues in the South Asian context (Khan and Behlol 2014). This study, based on the government schools of Islamabad, found (based on surveys with 196 children with disability) that students with disability were able to build friendships with their peers who were able to provide support for their learning and other needs. However, the schools' infrastructure still caused barriers for these children as schools did not have accessible toilets, playgrounds, or library facilities.

For the Sub-Saharan Africa region, 8 studies focused on child-level interventions. Zaunda et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study of the water and sanitation infrastructure put in place in 10 primary schools in Malawi to support children with disability attending mainstream schools. The study found that while the government policy mandated these changes, the schools were still struggling. For instance,

accessible water facilities were difficult to provide in schools as they were already dealing with issues of water source and quality. Two schools had no water source available, while the majority had hand pumps. The study also found that while special education teachers were available in these schools, they had a wide mandate and very little training on inclusive WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) facilities. This study finds similar results as Erhard et al. (2013), who found that in both Uganda and Malawi, despite having robust policies on inclusive WASH facilities, provisions in primary schools were minimal.

Ironically, even though there has been a significant push toward inclusive education over the last few decades, Lynch, Singal, and Francis (2021, 2022), in a recently completed systematic review of the literature on educational technology (EdTech) and children with disabilities, concluded that the majority of studies are situated in special schools, and that mainstream schools are often not the sites for these innovations. They only found seven articles that examined EdTech intervention in mainstream schools (out of 51 studies in their literature review). This indicates the need for more research on (a) current infrastructural interventions that are happening at state level and (b) introducing the use of EdTech informed aids and appliances that can be integrated within mainstream schools.

Within the Sub-Saharan African child-focused literature, four studies explored the voices of children with disability and their experiences of inclusion (Mukhopadhyay, Mangope, and Moorad 2019; Ramatea and Khanare 2021; Walton 2011; Wegner and Struthers 2011). Ramatea and Khanare (2021) studied an asset-based approach[7] used to improve the well-being of learners with visual impairments within two rural schools in Lesotho. The study used an arts-based research method (a combination of focus group discussions and collage making) as a means of collecting data. The study found that enabling factors within an asset-based approach which improve children's well-being are their active involvement in decision-making and strong relationships between learners and teachers. However, the study also identified some constraints such as shortage of qualified specialist teachers, unavailability of appropriate support materials, and inaccessible classrooms. In a study in South Africa, Wegner and Struthers (2011) use a survey to explore the experiences of children with physical disabilities and their participation in physical education. They found that only 32 percent of learners (28 percent of the boys; 36 percent of the girls ages 7–11 years) with physical disabilities participated in sports, and there were no adapted sports

---

7   Asset-based approach uses the resources that the children (with disabilities) and their communities bring with them in supporting children's learning. This approach challenges deficit-based teaching which assumes that children have something lacking, thus recognizing the children's strengths and valuing them in learning processes.

Table 2: Understanding enablers and challenges of child-focused interventions

Type of intervention	Enablers	Challenges	Study reference
Accessible water, sanitation, and infrastructural facilities	Robust government policies on infrastructural facilities	Accessible water for children with disabilities, accessible playgrounds, inadequately trained teachers (especially on infrastructural issues)	Khan and Behlol (2014); Zaunda et al. (2018); Erhard et al. (2013)
Educational Technology and appliances for children with disabilities		Continued focus on special schools	Lynch, Singal, and Francis (2021, 2022)
Student voice and experiences	Use of asset-based approaches to support well-being, focus on peer relations	Shortage of qualified specialist staff/teachers, unavailability of appropriate support materials, and inaccessible classrooms, lack of adapted sports being offered	Khan and Behlol (2014); Mukhopadhyay, Mangope, and Moorad (2019); Ramatea and Khanare (2021); Walton (2011); Wegner and Struthers (2011)
Multi-dimensional interventions	Improvement in learning outcomes of girls with disability		Carew et al. (2020)

offered in mainstream school. Similar constraints around shortages of specialized staff (for example, physiotherapists), along with lack of financial support were reported.

In the review, only one study on the impact of an ongoing multi-dimensional intervention was identified. Carew et al. (2020) working in Kenya explored the impact of a holistic intervention on learning outcomes of girls with disabilities attending a mainstream school. The intervention worked on six dimensions: (a) identification, assessment, and support; (b) teacher/school management committee/head teacher support; (c) creating accessible learning environment; (d) parents, family, and community awareness; (e) working with civil society and governments; and (f) child-to-child (peer-to-peer) activities. In their quantitative analysis of impact on learning outcomes, the researchers report significant improvements among girls with disabilities in their English, Kiswahili, and numeracy scores.

Note that our review did not include studies focusing on screening, identification of disability, and rehabilitation studies (which many interventions focus on) (see Karande, Sholapurwala, and Kulkarni 2011; Luger et al. 2012). While physiotherapy and other such medicalized interventions are very common in many contexts where schools are important sites for primary health care provisions (see Osisanya and Adewunmi 2018), there remains a dearth of such literature within the education journals.

3.6. Teacher-focused approaches

Teacher-focused approaches included interventions such as the development of inclusive pedagogies, curriculum, and training to support mainstream teachers.

For SSA, 12 studies focused on teacher-level interventions. The studies which document classroom-based interventions indicate that there are pockets of good practice, which can be built upon. For example, the study by Adewumi and Mosito (2019) shows how teachers in eight primary schools in South Africa find innovative ways of implementing inclusive education (despite not having former training). The good practices identified in this study include remedial work, use of teaching aids, giving individual work, and informing parents of children's challenges. The paper also recommends a collaborative approach between different stakeholders (teachers, head teachers, parents, and district officials) for successful implementation of inclusive learning. These teachers were reported as being open to innovation and, despite barriers (such as heavy workload, inadequate training, and so on), were able to find ways of accommodating the needs of individual learners. Another paper showcasing good practices in 18 schools in rural Kenya (Elder, Damiani, and Oswago 2016) found that using a culturally responsive pedagogy was particularly beneficial. Much like the asset-based approach, culturally responsive pedagogies focus on the knowledge and understanding that the children, their communities, and cultural backgrounds afford them, and integrate this in the teaching and learning (for example, Biraimah 2016).

Only two papers were found which focused on curriculum adaptation. Adewumi et al. (2017) reported that the main ways in which teachers adapted the curriculum in the rural South African context was by adjusting to individual work which might require understanding their learning levels, dedicating more time, and adapting teaching within multi-grade setting. However, they recommend the need for more training on inclusive practices to equip teachers to better adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. Otukile-Mongwaketse, Mangope, and Kuyini (2016), in their work in Botswana, noted that often curriculum adaptation is limited to remedial education, where learners are assisted outside their scheduled lessons (that is, more segregated

practices). This evidence highlights the many pressures that mainstream teachers work under, including the pressures to complete the curriculum for examinations, while also meeting the needs of children with learning disabilities. However, not all countries take a similar approach. Tanzania comes out as a particularly interesting case study, compared to other countries in SSA (Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, and Uganda). In a comparative study, Westbrook and Croft (2015) found that teachers (both new and experienced) in Tanzania use innovative strategies unlike teachers in other countries. Unlike focusing on more segregated practices (as found by Otukile-Mongwaketse, Mangope, and Kuyini 2016), these teachers found ways of including all children instead of categorizing children on the basis of ability or disability. For example, the teachers gave examples of their practices which focused on using 'real objects' to make the curriculum more meaningful to all children (while some teachers identified the difficulties of acquiring these objects, they also expressed this as a key strategy for inclusion). The teachers also gave opportunities to both 'higher achievers' as well as those who are likely to make errors to showcase their work in front of everyone (in a judgement-free environment), so that all children could learn from each other (rather than classifying them as lower or higher ability and separately teaching). This paper makes a strong case for inherent assets that primary teachers have which they can draw on to make their teaching more inclusive.

These teacher-oriented studies also often provide insights into the realities and challenges around implementing inclusive education. Materechera (2020) finds a mismatch between aspirations of teachers for inclusive education and the realities within which they work in South Africa. Impediments such as time constraints, limited professional training, as well as large class sizes lead teachers to feel that implementation is 'impractical'. Thus, despite believing in the ideals of inclusive education they struggle to practice it in their everyday teaching, taking a 'middle-of-the-road' approach in deciding whether to advocate for it or not (p. 776). Similarly in Ethiopia, Ginja and Chen (2021) find that while 81–85 percent of the teachers had a positive understanding of inclusive education, their key concerns about the implementation were around very little teacher readiness (to support inclusion), inadequate teacher preparation, and lack of instructional materials. Majoko (2016) explored the social barriers and enablers primary teachers faced in implementing inclusive practices in Harare, Zimbawe. She found that learners with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) often faced issues such as social rejection, communication difficulties, and behavioral challenges which made inclusive practices difficult.

Documenting inclusive education practices in Tanzania, Westbrook, Croft, and Miles (2018) find a similar 'uneven' (p. 73) path toward achieving inclusive education. However, unlike the studies above which often adopt a deficit discourse both for teachers and

students with disabilities, they find that in many contexts, teachers overcome attitudinal, structural, pedagogical, and curricular barriers by using their own autonomy, agency, and reflective and imaginative practices. The authors highlight the opportunity that inclusive education provides for both reimagining education in school contexts which are inherently unequal, as well as the need for using the experiences of teachers (and their ingenuity) to inform teacher education as well as policy.

Almost all the studies mentioned above identify the need for professional development and the importance of both pre- and in-service training. Two papers (Juma and Lehtomäki 2017; Potgieter-Groot, Visser, and Lubbe-de Beer 2012) in the literature review focus on the process of developing pre- and in-service teacher education programs. Potgieter-Groot, Visser, and Lubbe-de Beer (2012) using an action research approach in South Africa, developed an in-service teacher education program to train teachers in supporting learners experiencing emotional and behavioral barriers in mainstream classrooms. They found that the training not only had an impact on classroom practices in terms of behavior management strategies, but also a positive impact on teachers' attitudes, teacher-learner interaction, learner behavior, and school organization. Thus, the study found that action research oriented professional development can have a positive impact on inclusive practices. In the context of Zanzibar, Juma and Lehtomäki (2017) similarly developed a collaborative action research to examine teacher insights into teacher education programs. They found that teachers felt a need for both pre- and in-service trainings focusing on inclusive education; in addition, they also emphasized the role of school-based learnings as well as school and community roles in teacher education courses. The study also highlights the role of teacher voice in creating these education courses.

Lewis et al.'s (2019) paper points to the fact that in the last decade with the stress on inclusive education, there have been several teacher education initiatives that have come in. They go on to critique these efforts as often being short-term 'project-based' (p. 724) initiatives that often don't have sustainable impact. The study reviews several unproductive assumptions these approaches make about teachers and inclusive education, which run the danger of becoming tokenistic. However, a few of the studies in the review also show successes in teacher-focused initiatives. Lewis et al. (2019) document two initiatives in Zambia and Zanzibar, which take a longer-term holistic approach to teacher training, which reportedly have greater impact in inclusive learning.

In the South Asian context, all four studies focusing on teacher-level interventions looked at teacher education and training (developing pre-service and in-service teacher capacity). Unlike studies found in Sub-Saharan Africa, there was no engagement with

interventions focused on curriculum and/or teaching-learning materials (Das, Gichuru, and Singh 2013; Malak 2013; Naraian 2016; Siddik and Kawai 2020). Among these four studies is a review of 25 studies published in the last 15 years to explore what a 'good' teacher education for inclusive education in Bangladesh should look like (Siddik and Kawai 2020). The authors of this review conclude that alongside professional training, teachers also need to build skills of collaboration with children with disabilities, their families, and communities. They also recommend longer-term pre-service teacher training for inclusive education. Interestingly, in India, a quantitative study to explore regular teachers' preferred modes of training (Das, Gichuru, and Singh 2013) for inclusive education shows a preference for conference-based short-term training approaches. As Das, Gichuru, and Singh (2013) discuss, this could be because teachers are traditionally used to such approaches and other formats (such as school site-based training, university courses, part-time courses) are less common. This indicates that a shift to sustainable long-term innovative ways of teacher training, while important, is not currently being supported.

3.7. School- and community-based approaches

Apart from the studies focusing on the child or the teacher, we were also keen to include studies which adopted a wider lens to reform efforts at the school and community levels. The interventions here focused on the larger school environment, community, and other organizational stakeholders. For instance, studies here included the role of IERCs, special educators, and whole school reform efforts.

Several of these studies looked at school-level implementation of multiple aspects that interacted with each other to enable successful (or unsuccessful) inclusive practices (Mncube and Lebopa 2019; Ngcobo and Muthukrishna 2011; Pather 2011; Wiazowski 2012). Pather (2011), using a case study, demonstrates how a successful mainstream inclusive school works by putting 'values in action'. She argues that while considerable attention is focused on failures of systems to create inclusive practices, there are pockets of good practice where schools and communities have embraced inclusive practices by working together. Researching in an inclusive rural school in South Africa, focused particularly on supporting children with visual impairments, Wiazowski (2012) finds that the school undertook a series of in-service on-site professional development initiatives, along with integrating specialized equipment in classrooms, and collaborating with an existing nearby special school. Thus, using existing expertise along with gaining new professional and technological skills (this included learning braille) the school created an inclusive setting where children with visual impairments could successfully learn with their non-disabled peers.

Table 3: Understanding enablers and challenges of teacher-focused interventions

Type of intervention	Enablers	Challenges	Study reference
Classroom-based interventions	Collaboration between different stakeholders, remedial work, use of teaching aids, giving individual work, and informing parents of children's challenges, culturally responsive pedagogies	Lack of parental participation, heavy workload, inadequate training for teachers, multi-grade challenges, and lack of resources	Adewumi and Mosito (2019); Elder, Damiani, and Oswago (2016)
Development of inclusive pedagogies	Adjusting to individual student work, dedicating more time, and adapting teaching within multi-grade setting, using practices that do not segregate students in terms of 'ability' using 'real-life' examples, draw from strengths that teachers have, teachers' use of their own autonomy, agency, and reflective and imaginative practices	Time constraints, limited professional training, as well as large class sizes, very little teacher readiness (to support inclusion), inadequate teacher preparation, and lack of instructional materials, issues such as social rejection, communication difficulties, and behavioral challenges	Adewumi et al. (2017); Otukile-Mongwaketse, Mangope, and Kuyini (2016); Westbrook and Croft (2015); Materechera (2020); Ginja and Chen (2021); Majoko (2016); Westbrook, Croft, and Miles (2018)
Teacher training and professional development	Has an impact on classroom practices in terms of behavior management strategies, positively impacts teachers' attitudes, teacher-learner interaction, learner behavior, and school organization	Need for focus on school and community roles in training, need for teacher voice in designing training, need to build skills of collaboration with children with disabilities, their families and communities, need for long-term innovative ways of teacher training	Juma and Lehtomäki (2017); Potgieter-Groot, Visser, and Lubbe-de Beer (2012); Das, Gichuru, and Singh (2013); Malak (2013); Naraian (2016); Siddik and Kawai (2020)

Other studies highlighted the importance of working with head teachers (Gous, Eloff, and Moen 2014), district education officers or administrators (Majoko 2020), and itinerant teachers within resource centers (Lynch et al. 2011; Pather, Tadesse, and Gizachew 2021; Šiška et al. 2020). This focus on the effectiveness of resource centers and itinerant teachers is evident in the literature. Both Pather, Tadesse, and Gizachew (2021) and Šiška et al. (2020), explore the impact of IERCs in Ethiopia. Pather, Tadesse,

Key findings from the literature review
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

and Gizachew (2021) describe the key role of the resource centers (RCs), and also discuss their accomplishments. They find that with the support of itinerant teachers, RCs have been able to provide assistive devices, support identification and assessment exercises, and bring about attitudinal changes among parents of children with disability as well as mainstream teachers. In addition, Šiška et al. (2020) found that the RCs help in increasing enrolments of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. Both the studies identified different challenges to the implementation. While Šiška et al. (2020) emphasized the need for careful selection of satellite schools associated with each IERC (which have some geographical, linguistic, and resource similarities so that itinerant teachers can gain expertise on how to deal with context-specific needs); Pather, Tadesse, and Gizachew (2021) highlighted the need for more formalized job descriptions and career trajectories for the itinerant teachers so that the centers can become more sustainable.

Finally, two studies used community-based initiatives which forefront the knowledge and expertise of the community participants, rather than relying on external 'experts' (Elder and Odoyo 2018; Miles, Wapling, and Beart 2011). Elder and Odoyo (2018) use a community-based research method in Kenya, focusing on creating a committee which represents different stakeholders and find a grounded way of increasing enrolments of children with disabilities. They focus on working within social constructs of disability to tackle the issue of non-enrolment. Both the studies critique the unreflective transfer of Northern policies in these contexts and highlight the need for community-based interventions.

For South Asia, this category included four studies with different foci. Jaka (2015) explores the perceptions of school heads as well as teachers as they try and include children with dyslexia in four mainstream Pakistani elite schools. The study highlighted that the schools seem to be struggling with integrating children with dyslexia and were confronted with several academic and emotional issues related to their learning. The schools also did not have any policy in place or training programs; however, they provided remedial teaching services.[8] Kramer-Roy et al.'s (2020) study, also based in Karachi, Pakistan, focused instead on the role of occupational therapists in five mainstream schools with a range of socioeconomic backgrounds (unlike Jaka 2015). The action research study found that collaboration is key to the success of occupational-therapy-based school interventions. Prior to the intervention, teachers had almost no interaction with occupational therapists in these schools and, thus, there

---

8   Note that these were elite private schools and they were able to access private services such as Remedial Education and Assessment for Dyslexics (READ) Institute, Karachi, Pakistan. The study does not report on government schools, which might not have the resources or autonomy to bring in private services.

was neither an understanding nor respect for each other's role, leading to discomfort when these therapists entered classrooms. Through joint reflection, collaboration, and capacity-building workshops with a common agenda, these barriers were slowly overcome. This finding is especially crucial, as inclusive education services often include 'external' experts (itinerant teachers, or specialist teachers, or in this case occupational therapists). This study highlights that this brings with it issues of power and relationality which need to be carefully addressed.

One important study which looked at community-based approaches was based in Bangladesh (Miles et al. 2012). This documents a community-led approach of advocacy via networking to support children with disabilities to access local schools. A self-help group of people with visual impairment (linked with a CBR program in rural Bangladesh) supported this advocacy. While the study highlights the increased commitments and need for networking and information sharing for successful implementation of inclusive education (especially in advocacy), they also recognize that there can be insufficient coordination between stakeholders on inclusive education, as some organizations might not be as keen on collaboration (see Munir and Zaman 2009).

3.8. Policy and overview studies

At this level of intervention, we were particularly interested in identifying policy innovations, interventions focused at changing the mind-set of officials/other stakeholder groups, and indeed aimed at capacity building. However, in the literature we predominantly found studies that undertook an analysis of existing policies, rather than directing any interventions toward changes at the policy level. But some studies usefully mapped the impact of legislative and other policy changes on student enrolments.

In the SSA context, six studies were identified which looked at national policies and government interventions for inclusive education, including Senegal (Drame and Kamphoff 2014), Lesotho (Mosia 2014), Western Cape - South Africa (McKenzie et al. 2017), and Cameroon (Cockburn et al. 2017). Two studies conducted comparative studies to understand the different approaches to policies in different regions of SSA (Bose and Heymann 2020; Chuma Umeh 2018).

Bose and Heymann (2020) conducted a quantitative comparison of the impact of legislation in enrolments and outcomes in Uganda. To estimate any causal impact of legislation on outcomes, they compared changes in Uganda's learning outcomes before and after legislation (considered as a treatment country where legislative

Table 4: Understanding enablers and challenges of school and community-focused interventions

Type of intervention	Enablers	Challenges	Study reference
School-based inclusive practices	In-service on-site professional development, integrating specialized equipment in classrooms, collaborating with an existing nearby special school	Need for school-based policies on inclusion	Mncube and Lebopa (2019); Ngcobo and Muthukrishna (2011); Pather (2011); Wiazowski (2012); Jaka (2015)
Role of itinerant teachers and other external support (for example, administrators, occupational therapists)	Support in providing assistive devices, support identification and assessment exercises and bring about attitudinal changes among parents of children, with disability as well as mainstream teachers, increasing enrolments of children with disabilities, collaboration between different stakeholders	Need for careful selection of satellite schools, more formalized job descriptions and career trajectories for the itinerant teachers, stronger understanding of everyone's job roles	Gous, Eloff, and Moen (2014); Majoko (2020); Lynch et al. (2011); Pather, Tadesse, and Gizachew (2021); Šiška et al. (2020); Kramer-Roy et al. (2020)
Community-based initiatives	Creating a committee which represents different stakeholders, engaging with parents, and need for networking and information sharing	Insufficient coordination between stakeholders on inclusive education	Elder and Odoyo, (2018); Miles, Wapling, and Beart (2011); Miles et al. (2012)

changes had been brought about) with changes in Chad and Ghana's learning outcomes (considered control countries where no legislation on inclusive education existed) - employing the method of difference-in-difference. Through this analysis, they found that Uganda saw an increase of 56 percent in enrolment for learners with visual, hearing, and physical disabilities as a result of the legislative change. The study shows that legislation can affect learning outcomes, yet authors report a lack of data on learners with disabilities, which makes this sort of comparison very rare and difficult (but much needed).

While comparative data on learning outcomes for children with disabilities are rare, policy document comparisons are more common. For example, Chuma Umeh (2018) compares constitutions, laws, and policies in three nations - Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone - with Article 24 of Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In particular, the study explored these in relation to 24(2) (a) ensuring that children with disabilities are not excluded from compulsory free education and (b) obligation to provide reasonable accommodation. They find that none of the countries fully meet the standards set by Article 24, thus highlighting gaps within national policies. For example, within the constitutional provisions, none of the countries list disability in the general prohibition of discrimination. Within education laws, not one document or combination of laws comprehensively supports Article 24 across the three countries. It is also disconcerting that within laws, statements such as 'wherever possible' or 'within available resources' are included when discussing inclusive education. Reasonable accommodation of children with disability within schools is also missing in these documents across the countries. On the bright side, the African Union has adopted the African Disability Protocol which meets the standards of Article 24, providing the hope that countries will also start to make changes in their national policies. The authors also recognized the recently launched Sierra Leone's free education program, which promises to bring more changes toward inclusive education.

In the context of SA, the four studies identified similarly focused on analyzing the policy landscape, rather than looking at any interventions or indeed drawing any implications from policy changes (Antony 2013; Malak et al. 2013; Singal 2019; Taneja Johansson 2014). Unlike the pessimistic view of Chuma Umeh (2018) listed above, these studies show that the policy documents in South Asia are progressive with regard to their vision for inclusive education. For example, Singal (2019) highlights that India is a strong example of how the global commitments of the Salamanca Statement[9] can be contextualized and realized within country-specific policies. While she recognizes that teaching and learning for children with disabilities still have a long way to go, the legislative changes brought about in the last decade have meant an increase in enrolment of children with disabilities in Indian schools.

---

9   Salamanca Statement in 1994 reaffirmed the right to education of every individual including people with disability (https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000098427).

Table 5: Understanding policy-focused studies

Type of intervention	Enablers	Challenges	Study reference
Linking policy to learning outcomes	Uganda sees a positive relationship between legislation and outcomes	Very few comparative studies available; need for more quantitative studies on outcomes and policies	Bose and Heymann (2020)
Comparative policy studies	African Union has adopted the African Disability Protocol which meets the standards of Article 24	Gaps found across countries that are yet to follow Article 24 CRPD	Chuma Umeh (2018)
Other policy analysis studies	South Asia		Antony 2013; Malak et al. 2013; Singal, 2019; Taneja Johansson 2014
	Sub-Saharan Africa		Drame and Kamphoff (2014); Mosia (2014); McKenzie et al. (2017); Cockburn et al. (2017)

4. Insights from the primary data

In addition to the literature review, this report also draws from the analysis of data from surveys and interviews of members of INGOs working on inclusive education as well as their organizational reports and impact evidence. Interview data gathered from country-specific case studies have also been included to further illustrate the findings. The purpose of this was to understand deeply how interventions (cited in the literature above) are developed, implemented, and ultimately impact disability inclusion in primary schools in these regions. We present findings emerging from the analysis of these multiple sources of data under four overarching themes.

4.1. Adopting multiple approaches to inclusive education

In the stakeholder surveys, one of the key themes for exploration was how organizations positioned their work in inclusive education and if they adopted a particular theory of change, especially in relation to the nature of interventions adopted in different contexts. In the online surveys, we asked if they would be able to map out their interventions under any of these following themes: resource centers, resource units, CBID, and other. Five of the nine respondents chose the 'other' category, three chose 'CBID', one chose 'resource centers' (see Table 6), and none of them chose 'resource units'. When asked to specify what 'other' categories they would identify more accurately as being aligned to their program design, organizations focused on highlighting a 'twin-track' approach or a 'two-step' approach (home and school), or were more inclined to state that they were focused on strengthening the educational system as a whole. This seems to suggest that organizations did not show preference for a specific intervention model, rather they preferred to use a mix of different approaches.

Table 6: Participant response to survey question on service delivery model

Which service delivery model of inclusive education do you think your program is closely aligned to?	
CBR/CBID	3
Other (please specify)	5
Resource centers	1
Total	9

Consequentially, it was not surprising to see that these organizations reported using multiple types of interventions within their programs. As evident in Table 7, almost all of the nine participating organizations expressed providing training to mainstream primary teachers along with developing TLMs; training for head teachers; training for specialist teacher; providing aids and appliances to children with disabilities and also working with community-awareness campaigns. Case Study A showcases how such a multi-approach has been adopted at an education system level in Rwanda.

Table 7: Participant response to survey question on main activities of their intervention programs

Please tell us about the main activities that the program covers:	#
Providing training to mainstream primary teachers	8
Developing inclusive teaching and learning materials	7
Providing training to head teachers	7
Providing training to specialist teachers	7
Providing aids and appliances to children with disabilities	7
Community-awareness campaigns and programs, CBR/CBID	7
Creating community networks for supporting inclusive education	6
Managing existing community networks for inclusive education	6
Research activities in understanding inclusive education including policy advice to governments	6
Providing teachers with technological support	5
Health care services for children with disabilities	5
Capacity building of local NGOs and OPDs	5
Setting up resource centers to work with mainstream primary schools	4
Setting up of resource classes/units in mainstream primary schools	4
Supporting special schools catering exclusively to children with disabilities	3

Case Study A: Example of multi-approach toward resource centers

Rwanda - Multi-approach toward Resource Centers

The representative from the Rwandan education ministry interviewed for the study identified 'resource centers' (both within inclusive schools and outside schools) as the primary approach to providing inclusive education service for mainstream primary schools. However, it was highlighted that there were also parallel initiatives (at a smaller scale) such as itinerant teachers, which are also being implemented and are supported by international agencies.

"I would say that the main approach is the resource centre, both within the inclusive setting and also special schools supporting inclusive schools. This is the main approach that Rwanda is using, and the Minister of Education has adopted. But to some small extent we are also using itinerant teachers. We have a small project with FCDO - the Building Learning Foundation where they have a special needs Education coordinator, who supports some select schools some schools as itinerant teachers, not all the schools in the country. But the main model, I would say that it is a resource centre." **(Respondent 3)**

It is also important to note that there was no 'one type' of resource center but several types:

- **Special schools** funded by the government, private as well as government-aided schools are being transformed into centers that support neighboring schools. This is the most important approach identified - and there are currently 52 such resource centers/special schools.

- **Resource rooms** within inclusive schools are also being created to support children with disabilities attending inclusive schools. These rooms also have a designated resource room manager (who is a teacher) who maintains the room within the school setting.

- **Resource centers** created by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities for secondary or out-of-school students.

Insights from the primary data
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

- Community-based resource centers to accommodate children with disabilities, which do not yet have the designation of proper schools.

Thus, Rwanda not only uses multi-approaches to inclusion but also uses multiple ways of implementing a particular type of approach - in this case, resource centers.

[See Case Studies section for more details and full case study]

In other documents accompanying the work of these INGOs, such as impact reports, case studies and theory of change documents, it was clear that the points of intervention for providing inclusive education seem multi-dimensional rather than adopting one point of intervention. For example, in a case study report by Educate A Child and Humanity and Inclusion—on their intervention across 10 countries in West Africa and Madagascar (EAC and HI 2021)—they map out the different points of intervention for inclusive education (EAC and HI 2021, p. 22). As shown in Figure 6, they take several approaches to inclusive education in this particular project including (a) identification and needs assessments; (b) support to children and families, teacher training,

Figure 6: Humanity and Inclusion's strategy for inclusive education in 10 African countries
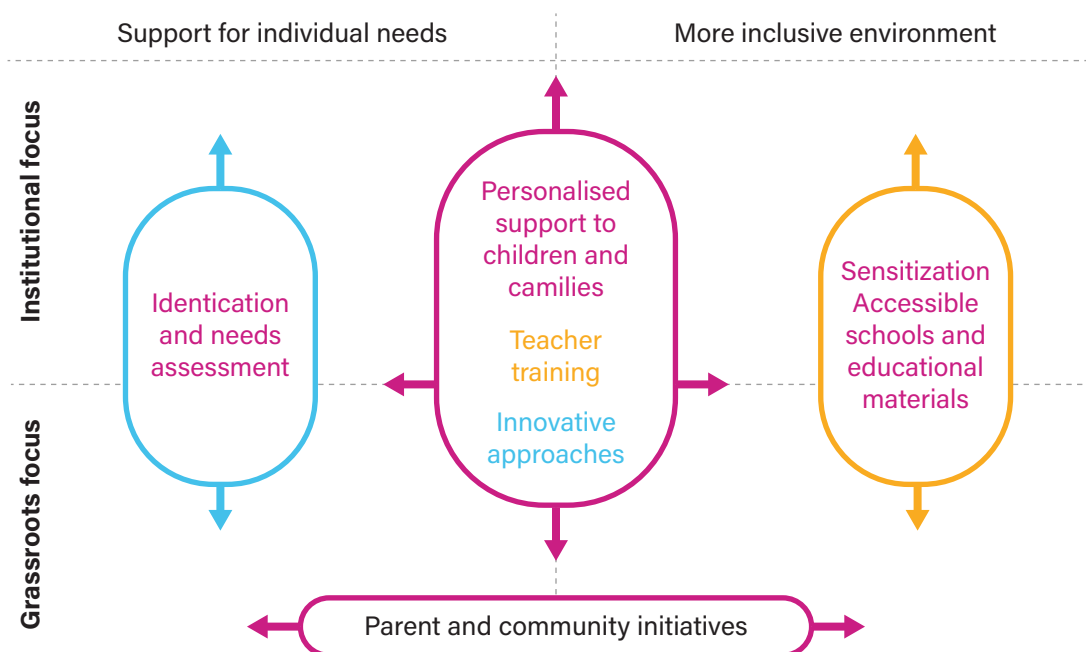
Source: EAC and HI 2021, p. 22 (open access link here)*:*

Insights from the primary data
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

innovative approaches; (c) advocacy, creating accessible schools and educational materials; and (d) parent and community initiative.

Similarly, a report by Leonard Cheshire (2017) documents their intervention in Kenya to support education for girls with disabilities, a program with several intervention streams (as shown in Figure 7). The report continues to outline a "range of interdependent interventions" (p. 8) to address barriers to education that girls with disabilities face at different levels. They argue that this approach creates a more sustainable model for inclusive education. Carew et al. (2020) positively document the impact of such an approach to overall learning outcomes of girls with disabilities in Kenya (see Section 3.1).

Figure 7: **Centering the child**
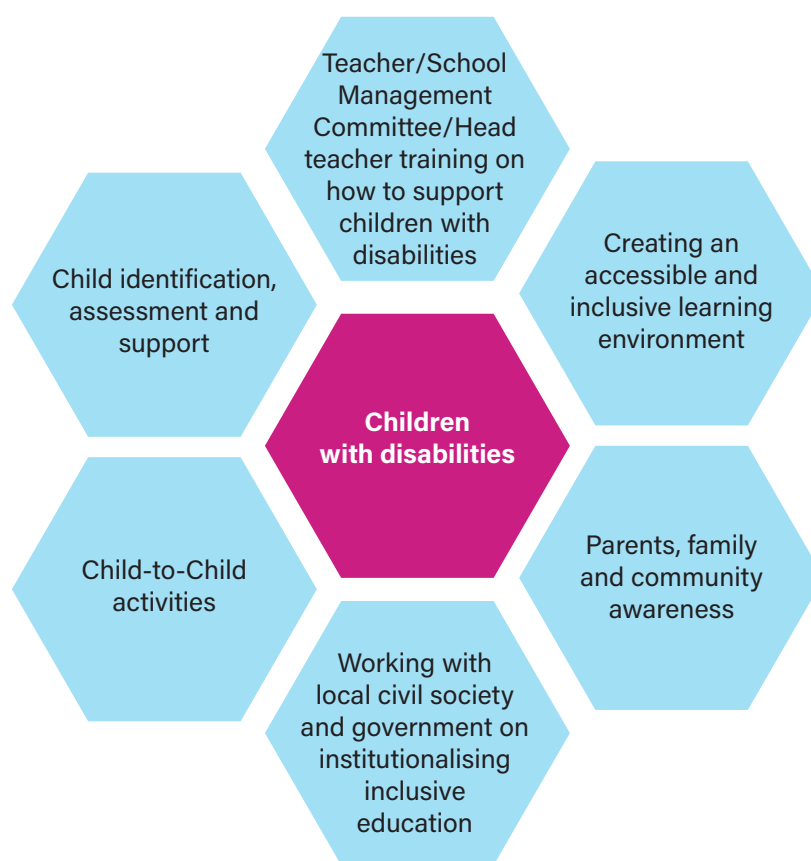
Source: Leonard Cheshire (2017, p. 5) (open access link here)

In both these examples, the central point is the 'child', and the interventions then strategize ways of overcoming barriers that hinder the child's learning participation in mainstream schools, through multiple activities.

A slightly different focus was seen in the strategy of Sightsavers (2021), where the starting point was to adopt a "holistic system-strengthening approach." Nonetheless, in this approach too, we see multiple and simultaneous approaches of intervention. Thus, the lens shifts to the 'system' (see Figure 8) with a focus on promoting disability-inclusive education through (a) strengthened policy frameworks, (b) increased capacity of ministries and organizations, (c) increased capacity of schools and communities (Sightsavers 2021, p. 6). In either case, be it centered around the child or the system, organizations choose to have multiple points and a range of interventions.

Figure 8: Systems-focused approach of Sightsavers

Sightsavers will apply this system-strengthening approach to all three levels of education systems:

1 **Institutional level**
The regulatory frameworks (laws, policies, plans, guidelines, budgets and so on) that govern education systems.

▼

2 **Organisational level**
The various agencies and institutions, spanning the government and non-government sectors, that are responsible for providing schools and other centres of learning with the necessary support.

▼

3 **School and community level**
The direct providers and facilitators of educational services for children with disabilities.

Source: Sightsavers (2021, p. 19) (open access link here).

Insights from the primary data
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

During the interviews when stakeholders working in these INGOs were probed for the rationale for these multi-approaches, a range of reasons emerged. Interviewee B noted.

"I think there are obvious benefits of a multi-intervention approach because inclusion is not just something that happens in the school, [it is] something that happens in the community [as well]. So, I can absolutely understand why organizations do that. If your focus is on inclusive education for children with disabilities, then I think there's a very strong rationale for a multiple approach, not only at community and school level, but also to work with the education systems at different levels." **(Interviewee B)**

This sentiment for the need for a more holistic view of inclusive education was shared by all other respondents too. Focusing on inclusive education meant being committed not only to mainstreaming, but also on identification processes, community awareness building, and advocacy, all of which are deemed central in getting children with disabilities to schools. This approach of inclusion for all is being used in Bangladesh (see Case Study B example).

Case Study B: Using a holistic approach to mainstreaming children

Bangladesh - A case of mainstreaming all marginalised children

Under the Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEPD4), each of the 65,566 primary schools in the country are mandated to provide mainstream inclusive education for all children in the catchment area—including children with mild to moderate disabilities. The inclusive education plan extends to addressing issues of inclusion beyond disability and includes underserved children due to multiple factors such as poverty, child labor, linguistic and ethnic marginalization. Thus, the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) not only provides special education provision but other provisions such as multilingual education programs, financial aid programs, and so on.

> *"We have a safety net program addressing inclusive education. So, it is not only for children with disabilities, but we also provide stipends for other marginalized children, including working children, homeless children, vulnerable children, and children from marginalized ethnicities. For example, we have a multilingual education that is provided. So, we provide all sorts of support throughout the country in our primary schools for inclusive education."* **(Respondent 2a)**

Within this larger inclusion policy, for mainstreaming of children with disability (particularly mild to moderate disabilities), the focus is on the following aspects:

- *Teacher training:* DPE has planned to train 1,30,000 teachers under PEDP4 on inclusive education. The ministry aims to train two teachers from every Government Primary School (GPS) regarding inclusive education. The DPE has also developed training manuals by consulting experts in the field—focusing on pedagogical issues.

- *Identification and mainstreaming:* Teachers work closely with communities and parents within their school catchment area to identify (using the social model of observations) children with mild or moderate disabilities and encourage them to enroll in schools. It has also taken initiatives to include vulnerable and other marginalized children.

Insights from the primary data
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

The focus taken by the Bangladesh government is to develop its capacity for mainstreaming all marginalized children within the primary school setting. Thus, the emphasis is on creating a comprehensive plan that supports identifying the most vulnerable children within each catchment area and creates ways of bringing them to mainstream schools. Children with special educational needs and other disabilities are included within this larger mandate. Thus, their approach toward children with disabilities is also the same as those they take for other marginalized children.

[See Case Studies section for more details and full case study]

However, the flip side is that organizations which implement inclusive education are required to have all these additional structures and systems within their operations, which could possibly mean operating at breadth (doing lots of little things), rather than deepening focus on a few areas, which could ensure the organization invests in more quality-of-service delivery provision.

It also resulted in instances where respondents noted that given the breadth of services on offer by the INGOs, the state absolved itself of those responsibilities. For example, in the quote below, Interviewee I talks about how despite being present in a country for several years, and working along with governments, responsibilities such as acquiring new equipment or training new staff falls on the organizations:

"We have helped refurbish an existing government Resource Center, so that they have new equipment, like audiometers which have been there for 15-20 years and never been serviced and then new staff has come in and they don't even know how to use the equipment. So, training the new staff to use brand new equipment, refurbishing the resource center... so we do that, and that isn't sustainable. Until a government can fully maintain its facilities, I think it's [not sustainable]. We should not be relying on that as a way forward. And we should not be doing what governments should be doing. But sometimes we must strike a balance." **(Interviewee I)**

4.2. Seeking 'Quick wins' or being committed to innovations?

Another key finding emerging from both the survey and interviews was that along with multiple types of interventions, different strategies are adopted across countries of operation. For example, when examining the nature of interventions undertaken by Humanity and Inclusion across 10 countries, it is evident that while they adopted the teacher training programs for inclusive education in all countries, in four countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Sierra Leone, and Togo) they introduced itinerant teachers; in Senegal, they introduced school life assistants; and in Madagascar and Burkina Faso they attempted to introduce bridging classes (EAC and HI 2021). Thus, the more innovative approaches to inclusive education were rarer compared to more traditional teacher training programs. Studies show that teacher training programs are important, but as Lewis et al. (2019) point, there is a danger for 'quick-and-dirty' teacher education programs, rather than thoughtful and sustainable efforts (p. 722). It becomes pertinent to investigate the rationale for choosing different approaches.

From the interviews, it emerged that the adoption of a particular strategy was largely determined by the existing expertise of the organization, and national policy landscapes within the country. Some of the key determinants that emerged were as follows:

Using existing organizational expertise and country specific pathways

An organization's previous work (its history) and existing networks are crucial in relation to what they did or can do. For example, the quote below shows how 'adaptations' end up happening as the organizations are reliant on what they and countries are already doing in disability and inclusion. In this case, the organization started their 'education' program after they had already done some work in the context of CBR, thus education was being accommodated within that.

> *"In some places [countries] there might be existing community agents or CBR [community-based rehabilitation] workers that were already trained up through another intervention, which is something we might have done before the education programs. But then when education came along, we wanted to make use of that structure. [] So, we wanted to then say what else can we do, in a structure that already exists, but maybe doesn't have an education lens yet."* **(Interviewee H)**

Case Study C: Building on existing systems to implement inclusive education

Ethiopia - Rationale for developing IERCs:

As identified by the Ethiopian Ministry representatives, the key approach to implementing inclusive education in Ethiopia was Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERCs). This approach has been adopted because it is built on existing established school network systems. Ethiopia already had around 7,000 'cluster schools'—which are better-resourced, bigger schools. Additional special provisioning is being provided within these cluster schools so that they can be designated as IERCs.

Special provisioning includes recruiting and training skilled teachers (itinerant teachers), providing training to mainstream teachers, creating physically accessible centers, bringing more teaching and learning materials (TLMs), assistive technologies, and so on. Through such an explicit effort to create these spaces, the ministry officials reported that there are now almost 800 IERCs. They aim to convert all the 7,000 cluster schools into IERCs, so that they can adequately support all the primary schools they cater to. The above example illustrates how existing resources, networks, and structures can be used to develop a contextually appropriate approach for inclusive education.

"The satellite schools are the smaller schools; they used to be called feeder schools - with less materials and less experienced. These satellite schools or feeder schools get support from the cluster schools, which are larger primary schools with more experienced teachers who have more materials and resources. So, these links were already created, and we used this system to establish Resource Centres." **[Respondent 1b]**

[See Case Studies section for more details and full case study]

However, their expertise was not the only determinant in defining the approach. The country's ongoing efforts for inclusion also played an important role. For example, in the quote below we can see that the organization's capacity to work with education systems is highly constrained by the country's level of commitment for inclusion. This

dilemma gets heightened in countries which do not have political commitments around undertaking disability-specific interventions, and organizations have traditionally had more expertise on community-based approaches rather than working with school systems and strengthening them.

"To be honest, some countries have done a reasonable job of including children with disabilities and others have almost ignored them because they don't know how to manage them so there's a tremendous range. So, when we do have inclusive education programming, we rarely see something that is around creating those inclusive learning environments so really, we only have I think, probably like four [countries where we do so]. But the majority of our programming is using our strengths, which are community-based." **(Interviewee C)**

Thus, organizations seem to struggle with the extent to which they can use the same principles across contexts (as reflected in the quote below). This brings to the fore the need to find the balance between adapting to the local context, but also drawing on learnings across contexts to frame intervention strategies that can work in a particular setting.

".. The core approach of what we want to cover remains the same [], but then after that we have to look at what fits [in different countries] because we don't want to just necessarily translate. Having said that, of course, we do want to take shared lessons, so we are trying to have a bit more of a blanket approach – we need some sort of support mechanism for teachers – but the manner of which we do that depends on the country." **(Interviewee H)**

Danger of picking the 'low-hanging' fruit

Policy readiness within different regions varies, which lends to different types of service delivery approaches, both with regard to infrastructure and expertise. Choosing a particular type of intervention is often driven by what is available in terms of the infrastructure and working within these structures. While local context and adapting to existing systems has its obvious benefits, it can also run the risk of not attempting more innovative, evidence-based approaches. One of the advocacy organization members that we spoke to, challenged this by saying:

"Yes, some countries have different trajectories, but I don't like to say that there are [specific] trajectories to inclusion because there's also the risk that countries take it as an excuse. For example, they could use resource centers when they say they have closed special schools, but then they will take the children out of the class and take them back there [and continue segregation]. So, we need to really pay attention in how much we say that's okay to be on this path. Are we not being ambitious enough for student with disabilities, by saying we're not ready yet? While we understand that there might be a path, we really want to make sure that we get there at some point."
(Interviewee A)

This highlights a larger tension that INGOs often face with regard to their own relevance and survival in different country contexts. With the danger of creating parallel systems, they must usefully integrate their work and agenda within state organizations, but also realize the need to push for innovation and inclusion. Thus, evident from our analysis two interesting points emerge. First, the ideological challenges faced by these organizations: play it 'safe' with existing boundaries or seek a more radical approach. Second, the more practical challenge around accommodating their vision/operationalization of inclusive education within available structures and resources.

4.3. Opportunities to become learning organizations

One of the challenges in this context—of adopting multiple approaches and struggling for relevance in countries with different levels of 'readiness' (quick wins versus innovation)—is of organizational learning. Learning organizations have robust data collection systems that allow them to learn/make evidence-based decisions. Focus on systematically gathering evidence on what they do and the impact of the interventions is very inconsistent across organizations. While interviewees were mindful of the fact that this is important, it did not get translated into policy and program action within these organizations.

"We need more research, we need more evidence for what we do, we have got evaluation [mechanisms], and we are trying to do more in new projects, but it's true there's a bit of a gap." **(Interviewee H)**

"We are [planning to] really go deep to see how our member [organizations] mobilized the resources in their communities. Collect data and evidence on inclusive education at a local and national level and how they work to transform it into policy change at national level. We know [these things] anecdotally – how we work, how our members

work, our committees advocate for inclusive education, but this [upcoming research] project will give us evidence." **(Interviewee A)**

"regarding the evidence, we do have the mechanism of gathering evidence through results of the studies or cases. But we have done the evidence collection for other different equity dimensions, like ethnicity, gender, social economic status and vulnerability, but we have only recently implemented the component of education for children with disability and we're in the process of collecting evidence." **(Interviewee D)**

However, there are organizations which have already created opportunities for learning within their organizations. One of the organizations expressed how they embedded learning from their previous projects into future ones:

"Actually, the learning that we've got from this project has also supported the development of like similar interventions and inclusive education projects in and in Kenya and also in Uganda as well." **(Interviewee F)**

For example, Sightsavers has created an in-house research center that informs different aspects of their interventions (see Figure 9). Their fourfold research strategy aims at (a) keeping up to date with evidence and using it for programs and advocacy, (b) conducting high-quality research to address knowledge gaps, (c) building organizational capacity for research, and (d) ensuring effective dissemination of research.

Another interesting example emerges from Sense International, which reported using evidence from a collaborative project to inform their own work. They were involved in participatory research funded by the Disability Inclusive Education Task Team. The Disability Inclusive Development (DID) team (along with the government, OPDs, and other INGOs such as Sightsavers, Leonard Cheshire) led this in Tanzania, which supported their understanding of needs and the current situation. This collaboration was funded by Inclusive Futures and UKAID and provided a unique opportunity for Sense International to integrate an evidence-based approach into their existing program on teacher assistants in Tanzania. Crucially, they used co-created evidence by DID at different stages of their project. This included the needs assessment review: 'Pre-Primary and Primary Inclusive Education for Tanzania (PPPIET) - Foundation Phase: Desk Review' (DID Task Team 2020b) and the participatory research review:

Insights from the primary data
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Figure 9: Sightsavers Resource Centre - how they work
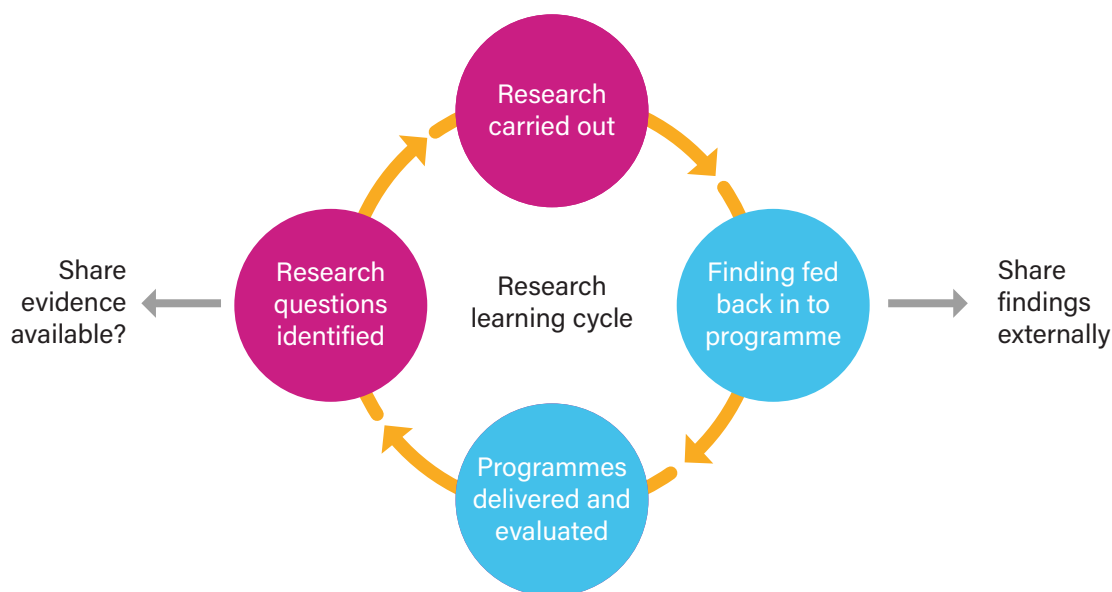
Source: Open source link here.

'Report on Participatory Research to Inform Design of New Inclusive Education Model in Tanzania' (DID Task Team 2020a).

This sort of collaboration with the ministries, other organizations, and use of evidence to inform their project was not just unique but also resulted in greater impact (evidenced by the buy-in from the government which integrated the Teacher Assistant [TA] model and created a TA cadre for inclusive education implementation in Tanzania). This reiterates the findings from the literature that networking within the field of disability inclusion and coming together of organizations with similar agendas can create a greater impact than isolated implementation of projects (Miles et al. 2012). The capacity of Sense International for evidence collection as well as learning was also significantly improved due to this collaboration.

4.4. Challenges and enablers in implementing inclusive education

The organizations participating in the survey and interviews were also asked to express what, according to them, had been their work's biggest successes and challenges. The key areas of success were (a) enrolment of children with disability in mainstream schools, (b) improved interaction between children with and children without

disabilities, (c) increased awareness among communities, and (d) increased awareness and knowledge among parents (see Table 5). Interestingly, apart from the increase in enrolment numbers, these successes seem to be normative and attitudinal in nature, focusing more on the social well-being of children with disabilities. While these are important factors, it is worth pointing out that many of the 'process -related' aspects of inclusive education, which one could argue are the mainstay of inclusion in schools were ranked rather low on areas where success had been achieved. For example, improved learning outcomes for children with disabilities, expanded mainstream teacher expertise to support children with disabilities, and improved infrastructure in schools—all remained very low in the level of success. This is a matter of concern given the number of years these organizations have been working in this area, and also resonate with the issues we highlight later emphasizing the need for increased collaborations and engagement with the mainstream education organizations to achieve some of these fundamental changes in education systems.

However, it was crucial to see that organizations did talk about increase in enrolment numbers, and we do see evidence that with the legislations on inclusive education coming into SSA and SA, there are higher enrolments of children with disabilities in mainstream schools (as shown in literature review, see Bose and Heymann 2020).

While discussing these successes in the interviews, respondents also pointed to the need for greater understanding on how these are evaluated and the danger of using anecdotes as evidence. Interviewee I's concern about tools of assessing attitudinal change goes back to the need for creating a learning organization (see above).

"I think that's one of the challenge - attitudes ...I actually question sometimes when I see it in a proposal, they say, 'oh we're going to change attitudes', I think Okay, but how are you going to judge that? So, yes, we have loads of anecdotal evidence 'when I started the training people who say no, no, no to inclusive education and by the end of the week they're saying Oh yes, yes', but what are the tools to assess that?"
(Interviewee I)

Table 8: Survey responses on organizational perspectives on success of implementing inclusion programs

To what extent do you feel that your program has been successful in achieving the following outcomes?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Improved interaction between children with/without disabilities	6	3	0	0	0
Improved community awareness to support inclusive education in primary schools	6	3	0	0	0
Increased enrolments of children with disabilities	5	3	1	0	0
Improved socio-emotional well-being of children with disabilities	5	2	2	0	0
Improved awareness and knowledge among parents of children with disabilities to support their child	5	3	1	0	0
Improved understanding of inclusive education in primary schools	4	4	0	1	0
Improved teaching and learning materials available in schools for implementing inclusive education	4	2	2	0	0
Improved capacity and understanding of local NGOs and/or OPDs in implementing inclusive education	4	1	3	0	0
Improved learning outcomes of children with disabilities	3	5	0	1	0
Expanded teacher expertise in mainstream primary schools to support children with disabilities	3	4	2	0	0
Increased collaboration between mainstream primary schools and special schools	2	4	2	1	0
Improved infrastructure and facilities in mainstream primary schools to support children with disabilities	0	7	0	1	0

Insights from the primary data
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

On the other hand, Table 9 shows that the challenges are much more pragmatic and include (a) limited financial resources and (b) limited expertise on inclusive education. Other issues also seem to be legislative support and lack of resources. Having limited financial support is something that organizational representatives reinforced during their interviews as well:

"Whenever I join mainstream education events, it's interesting because some of the same actors that you talk to about inclusive education, they talk about the importance of inclusive education when they're in specific webinars on that, and they've got all of the things in place, to have disability inclusive education set up in countries. But, when it comes to these big forums on education and they talk about financing, there's very little mention of inclusive education. [] The current financial situation is bad for everyone, but our challenge is to get inclusive education heard in the big education arenas. So, while they are committed to inclusive education in certain platforms, in the more global education agendas, it's and it's quite hard to be heard." **(Interviewee H)**

"I think there still is not adequate safeguard or stipulations for education financing overall to be inclusive. So, we hear sometimes from agencies, that the countries aren't necessarily asking for special education funding or disability inclusive education funding… and you think 'yeah it's a neglected area'. In the way gender has come up as being kind of a cross cutting issue that needs to be paid attention to, I would really like to see disability getting to that level." **(Interviewee E)**

In particular, Interviewees H and E raise the concern that within educational funding, inclusive education is not prioritized which in turn affects its funding and how it is viewed within the educational system. Critically, the idea of making disability cross-cutting is an important one.

Insights from the primary data
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Table 9: Survey responses on organizational perspectives on challenges of implementing inclusion programs

To what extent do you agree that the factors listed below pose challenges to delivery of this program? (Please rank the level of challenge for all those that apply)	Most challenging	A little challenging	Neutral	Not too challenging	Not at all challenging
Limited financial resources available to your organization for IE programs	3	2	2	0	0
Expertise at the local level on inclusive education	3	3	0	1	0
Lack of supportive legislative environment (such as government policies)	2	2	2	1	0
Lack of other resources (for example, curriculum, technology)	2	3	1	0	0
Lack of motivation to participate among teachers	1	3	2	0	1
Negative community attitudes	1	4	1	1	0
Lack of motivation among school teachers to support inclusive education initiatives	0	4	2	1	0
Lack of parental support and engagement	0	3	1	2	1
Lack of engagement of children with disability	0	1	1	2	3

Insights from the primary data

Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Images Source: World Bank

5. Recommendations

5.1. Incentivizing innovation in inclusive education programming

While the Introduction section of this report identified some key innovations (resource centers, units, CBID), these do not come out strongly either in the literature review or in the insights from the interviews and surveys. Findings from this report highlight that implementation of inclusive education across Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia takes place within several constraints as governments and INGOs work toward fulfilling their ideals of inclusive education. As a result, a scatter-gun approach is used focusing on 'quick wins' or rebranding older programs into the newer ones, influenced by internal expertise, country-specific pathways and local networks and relationships (Section 4.2). Furthermore, as organizations have historically been focusing on a variety of services, their inclusive education mandate often gets diluted.

For example, Interviewee I in Section 4.1 talked about the frustrations of continuing training programs for aids and appliances, even though these have been around for a while. If not supported to develop adequately, these innovations at best become tokenistic, and at worst merely reproduce segregated practices.

Organizations currently working in the inclusive education landscape need a lot more support to incentivize them to truly move toward innovative solutions/programming, without needing to dilute or repackage their current profile of work. These organizations (and several others working in the field) have experience and in-depth understanding of the context, and if incentivized systematically and sustainably, they can be pioneers in thinking about innovative inclusive education and leaders in supporting countries to deliver the mandate of quality equitable learning for all. Currently, it seems a lost opportunity where the focus continues to be on 'easy/soft wins', such as changing community attitudes, providing parents' information and increased enrolment, without seeking to influence learning outcomes, sustained teacher quality, and collaborations for pedagogical innovations.

However, there is some evidence of small-scale innovative initiatives which can provide a direction for future interventions. In particular those which take a more assets-based and culturally relevant approach to school-level inclusion. These approaches as highlighted in studies such as Biraimah (2016), Elder, Damiani, and Oswago (2016), Ramatea and Khanare (2021), Pather (2011)—these studies highlight the importance of valuing voices, experiences, and understandings of children with disabilities as well as teachers which gets viewed as opportunities within mainstream schools rather than as deficits that need to be 'fixed'. These approaches seem to be encouraging and can be used to collaboratively to create inclusive models within mainstream schools.

The rest of the recommendations are made in line with this larger aim of creating an environment that supports innovation, as there is a need to focus on building capacity within mainstream schools, mainstream educational organizations, as well as policy makers to move toward innovations on inclusion.

5.2. Need for building capacity with policy implementers

One of the findings from the literature review was that while there are several interventions at the teacher level as well as the wider community level, there isn't a similar emphasis on policy-level interventions (Section 3.4). Studies show that most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are starting to move toward inclusive education and are also creating legislation toward these aims (GEM 2020).

However, there is limited evidence of organizations systematically working to develop capacity among low- and mid-level policy implementers to achieve these aims. While teachers and schools are key to bringing change toward making everyday educational transactions equitable, bureaucrats and officials are crucial in creating an environment where teachers and schools are supported and encouraged in doing so. This will also support organizations in working toward inclusive goals, as building capacity among policy makers would mean that everyone can work toward a similar goal of inclusion. As highlighted in the next recommendation, this also has implications on cross-sectoral and cross-ministry alignments between stakeholders who are not just working on inclusive education but also primary education, curriculum development, assessment, and other overlapping programs. With stronger capacity building of system-level actors (across different departments), there is likely to be a more effective inclusion strategy in place. Policy studies also show a diversity in legislations and policies on inclusion (Chuma Umeh 2018) and thus, focusing on policy interventions and capacity building can be a crucial step toward inclusion. As suggested by Interviewee A, "*While we understand that there might be a path, we really want to make sure that we get there at some point,*" highlighting a need for efforts across different levels (including policy) toward inclusive goals.

5.3. Prioritizing stronger partnerships between disability and educational organizations

As highlighted in the Introduction section, most of the organizations which design and implement inclusive education programs have historically worked on issues of disability. Their expertise and country-specific networks and relationships thus have also focused on these. These organizations have considerable expertise in understanding the needs of a child with disability and also seem to have a holistic and systematic view of how to support them (Section 4.1). However, their expertise does not lie in working with mainstream schooling systems. Traditionally, mainstream primary school projects are led by mainstream educational NGOs. The study shows that there is a need for greater collaboration and communication between educational organizations which have more expertise of working at the school level (rather than community) and the disability organizations, which have a stronger understanding of the child and their communities. The organizations, rightly so, have a holistic-systematic approach to inclusive education but that needs to develop with the support of stronger partnerships with mainstream schools and educational NGOs. For instance, the literature review shows that while there are many teacher training programs, there is not a lot of work around curriculum development or long-term professional development of teachers. Even challenges identified in the literature about 'realities versus ideals' (Materechera

2020) can be addressed by a closer association between the schooling systems, its needs and the needs of a child with disability. The literature review also shows the need for collaboration with these 'external' players (such as occupational therapists or specialist teachers) that enter schools and a need for clarity, understanding, and respect for their roles (see Pather, Tadesse, and Gizachew 2021; Kramer-Roy et al. 2020 in Section 3.3). The organizations included in this study can be critical in leading such an endeavor, but the responsibility of its implementation must not fall solely on them (which continues to then see 'disability inclusion' as the 'other' from mainstream education).

Partnerships also needs to be extended within and across disability and education actors. As highlighted in Section 4.3, we can see how the Disability Inclusive Education Task Team, which was a collaboration within disability-education organizations was able to produce stronger evidence as a collective and thus also had more success in working with government ministries. Furthermore, collaboration and networking across OPDs, school management, community workers alongside disability-education organizations also seems to have a stronger impact (as highlighted both in the literature review and the interviews).

5.4. Outlining learning expectations and outcomes of children with disabilities

Another challenge that needs to be addressed is the notion of learning outcomes and expectations for all children in an inclusive setting. With the closer partnership between disability inclusion and mainstream education, the larger question of 'quality' will also need to be interrogated. While mainstream teaching and learning has created tangible 'learning outcomes' to assess learning qualities, children with disability are often neglected and do not feature in the discourse on quality learning and its outcomes (Malik et al. 2022). There is a need to start thinking about including children with disability in the discourse on quality of learning. There continues to be a lack of evidence on 'learning outcomes' of children with disabilities (as they are excluded from such discourse) without which there will not be a true inclusion for children with disabilities within mainstream schooling. There is also a need for disability organizations to critically examine what 'learning outcomes' for children with disability entail and ways in which there is an emphasis on quality of education for the most marginalized, as well as a push toward acknowledging the vital importance of numeracy, literacy, and socio-emotional development.

5.5. Strengthening the twin-track approach in disability/inclusive financing

Organizations highlighted the role of the twin-track approach in funding for inclusive education, but also stated that disability continues to be marginalized (Section 4.4). In other words, while there is mainstreaming of children with disability in primary schools (increased enrolment), often special provisioning that needs to come alongside is neglected. This is often due to the lack of funding for disability-inclusive measures that are needed along with mainstreaming. In mainstream education financing, disability-inclusive funding often loses out. Reports, such as the #Costing Equity Report (2016) by the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) led by Light for the World and supported by Open Society Foundation and other INGOs, found a similar pattern of funding marginalization for disability inclusion in education. Thus, there is a need for strengthening the twin-track approach to disability inclusion funding at the levels of domestic funding and international donor funding. The strengthening of the twin-track approach goes hand in hand with greater collaboration and merging of aims and goals of inclusive education with mainstream education.

The twin-track approach, both in financing and other ways of thinking about disability-inclusive education, has increased significance in a climate where there is a decline in funding for disability-related work by many organizations. It is vital that there are efforts to continually mainstream disability issues, but in parallel work toward strengthening and responding to the specific needs of those with disabilities.

Case Studies: Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Bangladesh

Images Source: World Bank

Case Study 1: Ethiopia - A case of developing Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERC)

Case Study 1: Ethiopia - A case of developing Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERC)
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Features of the approach: The key approach to implementing inclusive education in Ethiopia, as identified by the Ethiopian Ministry representatives[10] was IERCs. Ethiopia aims to connect each of its approximately 40,000 primary schools to IERCs which are comprehensive hubs with resources needed to support children with disabilities. Each IERC connects to a few smaller primary schools (known as satellite schools) and provides support for inclusive education. IERCs provide support on the following:

- Resource hubs with **teaching and learning materials** (TLMs) needed to support learners with special educational needs (LSENs).

- Assigning teacher experts known as **itinerant teachers**, who in turn support satellite schools and neighboring communities.

- Provide **assistive devices and technologies** needed for supporting LSENs.

- Provide **community-based support** to both identify children with disabilities and to build awareness among parents and communities.

"Yes, we use this [resource centre] type of approach, that is establishing resource centres which provide support to other schools called satellites. These centres provide important materials which helps students with special educational needs such as braille, assistive devices, crutches etc. In addition to that, we also assign itinerant teacher so that person is responsible for provide training [for teachers in satellite schools] or identifying students with disabilities. Plus, that person is also expected to help students with special educational needs." **[Respondent 1a]**

Rationale for developing IERCs

This approach has been adapted because it built on existing established school network systems. Ethiopia already had around 7,000 'cluster schools', which are better resourced bigger schools. Additional special provisioning is being provided within these cluster schools, so that they can be designated as IERCs.

Special provisioning includes recruiting and training skilled teachers (itinerant teachers), providing training to mainstream teachers, creating physically accessible centers,

---

10   Two representatives (1a and 1b) from the Ministry of Education working in the specialist education desk and inclusive education were interviewed for this case study.

bringing more TLMs, assistive technologies, and so on. Through such an explicit effort of creating these spaces, the ministry officials reported that there are now almost 800 IERCs. They aim to convert all the 7,000 cluster schools into IERCs, so that they can adequately support all the primary schools they are connected with.

The above example illustrates how existing resources, networks, and structures can be used to develop a contextually appropriate approach for inclusive education.

> *"The satellite schools are the smaller schools, they used to be called feeder schools - with less materials and less experience. These satellite schools or feeder schools get support from the clusters schools which are larger primary schools with more experienced teachers, who have more materials and resources. So, these links were already created, and we used this system to establish Resource Centres."* **[Respondent 1b]**

Role of collaborations: The respondents also highlighted the important role of long-term collaboration and bilateral support. In Ethiopia's case the collaboration highlighted was with the Finnish Government who have supported the ministry's special education provisions since the 1980s. The bilateral support has evolved from a focus on providing teacher education, to now being key collaborators in supporting Ethiopia develop these IERCs. Thus, the emphasis on long-term collaborations, which evolve keeping in mind the local needs is crucial.

> *"The Finnish Government has been supporting the ministry in the area of specialist education and there is a long history [to this collaboration]. They supported teacher capacity building in special needs education in the mid-1980s. At that time, teacher from special schools were trained. And then that extended to a training cooperation with universities in Addis Ababa, and with the Ministry of Education, and now it is the IERC that they are supporting. So, there has been continuous support since the 1980s."* **[Respondent 1a]**

In addition, another crucial collaboration is the support provided through the General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity (GEQIP-E)—which includes funding from the World Bank but also from several other donors and GPE. The most recent efforts of establishing the 800 IERCs (and the incoming 600 this and next year) have been heavily supported by GEQIP-E funding (through the grants provided to IERCs).

Successes

- **Increase in enrolments and positive shifts in attitudes**: With itinerant teachers engaging at the community level, it was reported that there is both increase in enrolment and awareness. The number of disabled children per school has significantly increased over the years.

- **Improved relationships between children with disability and children without disability:** Some schools provide training in sign learning to children without disability so they can communicate with each other and that has supported the relationship building.

"[There is a] change in relationship between students with disability and student without disabilities, because some schools try to provide sign language training for students who are not disabled, so students can communicate with their friends by using sign. So it creates a good relationship between a person with disability and not."
[Respondent 1b]

- Local ownership of this approach which is indicated by the fact that some schools have **initiated setting up resource centers** using budgets of their own. Inspired by the IERCs, schools have started to create their own accessible schools.

- Improvement in **accessible infrastructure** in schools.

Challenges

- **Retention of itinerant teachers**: Retaining itinerant teacher has been a big challenge. While they have considerable number of additional responsibilities, there is no additional monetary support yet. In addition, since they get good quality training and capacity building, they often get hired by private schools who need expertise in special education needs. This is something the government officials are keen to address.

"When you give them [itinerant teachers] additional roles and responsibilities, they expect additional financial benefits. And the government so far has not been willing

Case Study 1: Ethiopia - A case of developing Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERC)
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

to do that. But we are working with the authorities. So when you train and build the capacity, others also want to employ them. So, there is a high turnover rate. Just because they can be employed by private schools or, different positions. So that is the challenge we have." **[Respondent 1a]**

- **Impact of conflict**: External factors (like the ongoing conflict) has led to disinvesting from this issue. The ministry officials felt that there was previously good momentum in investment in inclusive education, which has been hampered by the conflict.

- **Inclusion of children with moderate to severe disabilities**: Interventions are mostly for children with mild or moderate disabilities, and more children with more severe disabilities are yet to gain from these services.

- **Time-consuming process:** The respondents reflected on the fact that the process of connecting all primary schools to resource centers is slow. Proper provisioning and resourcing of IERCs takes time, and thus the process of converting cluster schools into IERCs are time consuming.

Related reports and links

- Report by Ministry of Ethiopia on guidelines for establishing and managing IERCs: https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/ethiopia_guideline_for_establishing_and_managing_inclusive_education_resource-support_centers.pdf

- The practice of inclusive education in Ethiopia: Global Education Monitoring Report: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373678

- Information about the GEQIP-E program: https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2023/01/24/transforming-education-across-eastern-and-southern-africa?intcid=ecr_hp_headerA_en_ext#group-section-Empower-All-OM01sKOrhf

Images Source: World Bank

Case Study 2: Rwanda - A blended approach to inclusive education with a focus on resource centers

Features of the approach: The representative[11] from the Rwandan education ministry interviewed for the study identified 'resource centers' (both within inclusive schools and outside schools) as the primary approach to providing inclusive education service for mainstream primary schools. However, it was highlighted that there were also parallel initiatives (at a smaller scale), such as itinerant teachers, which are also being implemented and are supported by international agencies.

"I would say that the main approach is the resource centre, both within the inclusive setting and also special schools supporting inclusive schools. This is the main approach that Rwanda is using, and the Minister of Education has adopted.

But to some small extent we are also using itinerant teachers. We have a small project with FCDO – the Building Learning Foundation where they have a special needs Education coordinator, who supports some select schools some schools as itinerant teachers, not all the schools in the country. But the main model, I would say that it is a resource center." **(Respondent 3)**

There are several types of resource centers that are being set up:

- **Special schools** funded by government, private as well as government aided, are being transformed into centers that support neighboring schools. This is the most important approach identified—and there are currently 52 such resource centers/special schools.

- **Resource rooms** within inclusive schools are also being created to support children with disabilities attending inclusive schools. These rooms also have a designated resource room manager (who is a teacher) who maintains the room within the school setting.

- **Resource centers** created by national council for persons with disability for secondary school students or out-of-school children.

- **Community-based resource centers** to accommodate children with disabilities. These do not yet have the designation of proper schools.

---

11   One representative who has several years of expertise in working with Ministry of Education was interviewed. They are currently supporting ministries as well as working freelance to support inclusive education provisioning.

Case Study 2: Rwanda - A blended approach to inclusive education with a focus on resource centers
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

These resource centers (particularly former special schools) support schools in the following ways:

- Teacher training and their capacity building (for example, special skills like braille, sign language): The resource centers (for example, special schools), have more qualified teachers who support training of teachers in inclusive schools.

- Teaching and learning materials: Neighboring inclusive schools access the resource centers to borrow materials for teaching and learning.

Rationale for adopting this approach: This model of 'resource center/rooms' were chosen as there was a need for building expertise, which was lacking in the system. Rwanda traditionally mostly had privately run special schools, and there was a need to bring expertise into the public education system, and thus resource centers became the key approach for supporting that.

"And maybe the reason why this was adopted is because special school are very few in Rwanda. They are private, they are expensive. So, the Minister of Education is supporting inclusive education, like, for example, right now, under the GP grant, we have built 20 resource rooms in different inclusive school, focusing on inclusive school that accommodate many number students with disabilities." **(Respondent 3)**

Role of collaborations: Collaborations with different INGOs and development partners was highlighted as critical. Stakeholder collaborators supported in both implementing the key approach adapted by the ministry—resource centers, as well as in implementing other parallel initiatives—such as itinerant teachers.

Some other collaborations mentioned included infrastructure partners—World Bank, supporting in construction of accessible buildings; UNICEF, supporting resource rooms as well as accessible textbooks.

Apart from international agencies, it was also highlighted that there were collaborations with community-based workers, school leaders; and OPDs supported in advocacy and training.

"Well, the government gets support from different organization. We have, like, FCDO, UNICEF, Humanity and Inclusion, they support government in terms of teacher training. We also have some other development partners that support accessibility, like the World Bank, supports the Ministry of Education with the construction of classrooms and UNICEF supports construction of resource room. We also have some organizations of person with disabilities (OPDs) who are supporting mainly in advocacy, awareness, training in that area.

I would say that the Government of Rwanda is, I mean, the Minister of Education is getting a lot of support from collaboration between education, development partners, organization person with disabilities and some local NGOs." **(Respondent 3)**

Successes

- **Teacher training**: More than 4,000 schools have been part of this training program, where at least one teacher per school has been trained in inclusive education. They have also created an IE module which was used to train the focal teachers and was given to the teachers as a reference document.

- **Resource rooms** have been successful in providing basic materials to support inclusive schools. While these are currently limited to so called inclusive schools, there is potential to develop these within other mainstream primary schools.

- **Digital accessible teaching and learning materials** is another initiative that the respondent identifies as a success. The Rwanda Basic Education board has run an initiative to make the textbooks accessible—including audio along with text both for lower and upper primary schools. These are currently being provided to schools which have SMART classrooms.

"One of the successes that I could mention, and I feel all people that work in education are proud of is the teacher training program. In Rwanda we have more than 4,000 schools and we have an inclusive education focal teacher per school, who is a person who have been trained in inclusive education. The target of the Education Sector strategic plan was to have at least one teacher who has been trained inclusive education, and who is supposed to train other teachers in their school. And we have achieved that. So that is a success." **(Respondent 3)**

Case Study 2: Rwanda - A blended approach to inclusive education with a focus on resource centers
Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

Challenges

- **Specialized training** of specific skills, such as Braille, sign language, use of assistive devices, is still an area that needs improvement. Currently, the training is more general and pedagogical rather than on these specific skills.

- **Assistive devices** are not as widely available, and there is a resource constraint, which is a challenge.

- **Lack of parental awareness:** One of the ongoing challenges is the attitudes of parents (both of children with disabilities and without disabilities). For example, parents of children without disabilities object to having their child in inclusive schools, where they are likely to study alongside children with disabilities.

Related reports and links

- Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) has set up an e-learning portal that hosts a range of educational content, including interactive and animated content, videos, and e-books

- REB has also developed edutainment animated episodes for pre-primary children, which are meant to support children with disabilities in their studies.

- More recently, Rwanda introduced the Disability Information Management System (DMIS), an innovative digital support tool for the identification and registry of all persons with disabilities, including a Case Management support tool for those most in need.

- The Government of Rwanda established Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Resource Centers that aim to providing ICT equipment in every province of Rwanda that are accessible to persons with disabilities including students. Parents and students with disabilities access these centers to get ICT support and skills.

- The Special Needs and Inclusive Education Policy (SN&IE).

- The 2016 ICT in Education.

- [National Policy for Persons with Disabilities.](#)

- [Regulations 2020 governing ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, the elderly, and persons with special needs in Rwanda](#) states that licensees must ensure that their products and services are accessible and available to persons with disabilities and the elderly at no additional cost.

- [Rwanda promulgated Law N°40/2016 of 15/10/2016 modifying and complementing Law N°37/2012 of 9/11/2012 establishing the value added tax](#). In its Article 2 on exempted goods and services, all goods and services for health-related purposes including equipment designed for persons with disabilities are to be tax free.

Images Source: World Bank

Case Study 3: Bangladesh - A case of mainstreaming marginalized children with a focus on teacher training

Features of the approach: The representatives[12] interviewed from the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) expressed that their approach to inclusive education could not be classified as any one of the three approaches (resource center, CBID, or teacher support systems). They emphasized that they aim to provide mainstreaming for all marginalized children with disabilities.

"You mentioned 3 types of approaches which has been followed by different country, different agencies or different INGOS also – national as well as INGOS. But in our country, such type of approach is followed by NGOs, not by government. In primary education, we follow inclusive education in primary education. All children with mild to moderate disabilities are to be enrolled in primary schools, and we provide support throughout the country to support with this." **(Respondent 2a)**

Under the Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEPD4), each of the 65,566 primary schools are mandated to provide mainstream inclusive education for all children in the catchment area—including children with mild to moderate disabilities. It is worthwhile to note that mainstreaming currently is only limited to children with mild and moderate disabilities. Teachers also support the parents to communicate and connect with health centers when children with disabilities are identified.

"So, our target is to provide education for all children with mild and moderate types of disabilities. Our government mandates to provide education for all types of children. In case the teachers are unable to provide support for children with severe disabilities, in that case they go to social welfare ministry or special school." **(Respondent 2a)**

Importantly, the DPE officials were very explicit that their inclusive education plan extends to addressing issues of inclusion beyond disability and includes underserved children due to multiple factors such as poverty, child labor, linguistic and ethnic marginalization. Thus, they not only provide special education provision, but other provisions such as multilingual education programs, financial aid programs, and so on.

12   One senior representative (respondent 2a) from the DPE in Bangladesh was interviewed, alongside a senior member of the inclusive education cell (respondent 2b).

"We have a safety net programme addressing inclusive education. So, it is not only for children with disabilities, but we also provide stipends for other marginalised children. Including working children, homeless children, vulnerable, children from marginalised ethnicities etc. For example, we have a multilingual education that is provided. So, we are providing all sorts of support throughout the country in our primary schools for inclusive education." **(Respondent 2a)**

Within this larger inclusion policy for mainstreaming of children with disability (particularly mild to moderate disability), the ministry focuses on the following aspects:

- **Teacher training**: DPE has planned to train 1,30,000 teachers under PEDP4 on inclusive education. The ministry aims to train two teachers from every Government Primary School (GPS) regarding inclusive education. DPE has also developed training manuals by consulting experts in the field—focusing on pedagogical issues.

- **Identification and mainstreaming**: Teachers work closely with communities and parents within their school catchment area to identify (using social model of observations) children with mild or moderate disability and encourage them to enroll in schools. The ministry has also taken initiatives to include vulnerable and other marginalized children.

- **Capacity building within ministries**: DPE conducts regular training and capacity building opportunities for the respective officials of MoPME and DPE, including field-level officers. These trainings are often also supported by INGOs and include policy makers and implementers. For example, DPE provides fund for higher education or training for the capacity building of the officers.

Rationale for adopting this approach

The goal of the Bangladesh government is to develop their capacity for mainstreaming all marginalized children within the primary school setting. Thus, the emphasis is on creating a comprehensive plan that supports identifying the most vulnerable children within each catchment area and creating ways of bringing them to mainstream schools. Children with special educational needs and other disabilities are included within this larger mandate. Thus, their approach toward children with disabilities is also the same as that they take for other marginalized children.

Role of collaborations

- **Collaboration between ministries:** Five ministries collaborate closely to provide support to inclusive education implementation—Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Social welfare, MoPME, and Ministry of Education.

- **INGOs/and local NGOs:** While INGOs and local NGOs often have their own programs for inclusive education, no intervention was explicitly mentioned as informing the DPE plan or the inclusive education approach. However, when expertise is needed (for example, training), then INGOs/NGOs are consulted.

> *"While preparing training manual and training programme, DPE invite expert organisations – like NGOs/INGOs/government agency – and collaboratively develop training manual for teachers."* **(Respondent 2b)**

Successes

- **Multilingual educational resources for pre-primary and primary in five languages:** Started from 2015, for pre-primary to grade 3 resources are provided in the regional language.

- **Infrastructure improvements:** Accessible washrooms are being provided and ramps are provided in every GPS.

- **Teacher awareness:** The teachers are more aware, and they accept and understand that it is their responsibility to teach children with disabilities. Under PEDP-3, 68,585 teachers of GPS were trained on inclusive education.

Challenges

- **Capacity of teachers** to address specific needs of children, for example needs of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) or attention deficit disorders (ADD) is still lacking.

- **Large classroom sizes**: Issues such as large classroom size, schools located in remote areas with less access to resources, poses issues for teachers to implement inclusive education.

"We have children with ADD, or ASD, it is very difficult for teachers – especially in the large classroom to maintain IEPs (individual education plans)." **(Respondent 2b)**

- **Lack of materials**: There are several materials needs for supporting children with disabilities which are not yet available for everyone.

Related reports and links (pdfs available on request)

- Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Framework

- Gender and Inclusive Education Action Plan (GIEAP) by the DPE/MoPME

- Preliminary report on the National Survey on Persons with Disabilities by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics published in 2021.

References

Adewumi, T. M., and C. Mosito. 2019." Experiences of Teachers in Implementing Inclusion of Learners with Special Education Needs in Selected Fort Beaufort District Primary Schools, South Africa." *Cogent Education* 6 (1): 1703446. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1703446

Adewumi, T. M., S. Rembe, J. Shumba, A. A. A. Adeola. 2017. "Adaptation of the Curriculum for the Inclusion of Learners with Special Education Needs in Selected Primary Schools in the Fort Beaufort District." *African Journal of Disability* 6 (1): 1–5. https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v6i0.377

Antony, P. J. 2013. "Special Education History, Current Status and Future: India." *Journal of International Special Needs Education* 16 (1): 5–16.

Biraimah, K. L. 2016. "Moving Beyond a Destructive Past to a Decolonised and Inclusive Future: The Role of Ubuntu-Style Education in Providing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy for Namibia." *International Review of Education* 62 (1): 45–62. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-016-9541-1

Bose, B., and J. Heymann. 2020. "Do Inclusive Education Laws Improve Primary Schooling Among Children with Disabilities?" *International Journal of Educational Development* 77: 102208. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102208

Bouille, S. 2013. "Developing an itinerant teacher system that supports a twin-track approach to inclusive education, Cambodia – EENET." EENT. https://www.eenet.org.uk/enabling-education-review/enabling-education-review-2/eer-2/2-6/

Braun, V., and V. Clarke. 2006. "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2): 77–101. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Carew, M., M. Deluca, N. Groce, S. Fwaga, and M. Kett. 2020. "The Impact of an Inclusive Education Intervention on Learning Outcomes for Girls with Disabilities within a Resource-Poor Setting." *African Journal of Disability*, 9 (0): 8. https://ajod.org/index.php/ajod/article/view/555

Chuma Umeh, N. 2018. "Progress Towards Inclusive Primary Education in Selected West African Countries Section C: Regional Developments." *African Disability Rights Yearbook* 6: 263–276. https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/afdry6&i=269

Cockburn, L., G. Hashemi, C. Noumi, A. Ritchie, and K. Skead. 2017. "Realizing the Educational Rights of Children with Disabilities: An Overview of Inclusive Education in Cameroon." *Journal of Education and Practice* 8 (6): 1–11. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1133086

Das, A. K., M. Gichuru, and A. Singh. 2013. "Implementing Inclusive Education in Delhi, India: Regular School Teachers' Preferences for Professional Development Delivery Modes." *Professional Development in Education* 39 (5): 698–711. https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2012.747979

DID Task Team. 2020a. *Report on Participatory Research to Inform Design of New Inclusive Education Model in Tanzania*.

DID Task Team. 2020b. *Pre-Primary and Primary Inclusive Education for Tanzania (PPPIET) – Foundation phase: Desk Review presented by the Task Team February 2020*. https://asksource.info/resources/pre-primary-and-primary-inclusive-education-tanzania-pppiet-foundation-phase-desk-review

Donohue, D. K., and J. Bornman. 2015. "South African Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Inclusion of Learners with Different Abilities in Mainstream Classrooms." *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 62 (1): 42–59.

Drame, E. R., and K. Kamphoff. 2014. "Perceptions of Disability and Access to Inclusive Education in West Africa: A Comparative Case Study in Dakar, Senegal." *International Journal of Special Education* 29 (3): 69–81. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1045959

EAC, and HI (Educate A Child, and Humanity and Inclusion). 2021. *Experiences Implementing Inclusive Education in West Africa and Madagascar: Case Study Report | Educate a Child*. https://educateachild.org/library/publications/experiences-implementing-inclusive-education-west-africa-and-madagascar-case

Elder, B. C., and K. O. Odoyo. 2018. "Multiple Methodologies: Using Community-Based Participatory Research and Decolonizing Methodologies in Kenya." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *31*(4), 293–311. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2017.1422290

Elder, B. C., M. L. Damiani, and B. O. Oswago. 2016. "From Attitudes to Practice: Utilising Inclusive Teaching Strategies in Kenyan Primary Schools." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 20 (4): 413–434. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2015.1082648

Erhard, L., J. Degabriele, D. Naughton, and M. C. Freeman. 2013. "Policy and Provision of WASH in Schools for Children with Disabilities: A Case Study in Malawi and Uganda." *Global Public Health* 8 (9): 1000–1013. https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2013.838284

Gedfie, M., and D. Negassa. 2019. "The Contribution of Cluster Resource Centers for Inclusion: The Case of Atse Sertse Dingil Cluster Primary School, Ethiopia." *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies* 7 (2), 31–38. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1219557

GEM. 2020. *2020 Global Education Monitoring Report*. UNESCO. https://gem-report-2020.unesco.org/

Ginja, T. G., and X. Chen. 2021. "Conceptualising Inclusive Education: The Role of Teacher Training and Teacher's Attitudes Towards Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Ethiopia." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 0 (0): 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1879958

Gous, J. G., I. Eloff, and M. C. Moen. 2014. "How Inclusive Education is Understood by Principals of Independent Schools." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 18 (5): 535–552. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2013.802024

GPE (Global Partnership for Education). 2018. *Disability and Inclusive Education—A Stocktake of Education Sector Plans and GPE-Funded Grants*. https://www.global-partnership.org/content/disability-and-inclusive-education-stocktake-education-sector-plans-and-gpe-funded-grants

Grills, N., J. Devabhaktula, N. Butcher, S. Arokiaraj, P. Das, and P. Anderson. 2019. "'Inclusive Education' in India Largely Exclusive of Children with a Disability." *Disability and the Global South* 6 (2).

Groce, N. E., and P. Bakhshi. 2011. "Illiteracy Among Adults with Disabilities in the Developing World: A Review of the Literature and a Call for Action." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 15 (10): 1153–1168.

Human Rights Watch. 2018. "Nepal: Barriers to Inclusive Education." *Human Rights Watch,* September 13. https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/09/13/nepal-barriers-in-clusive-education

Jaka, F. S. 2015. "Head Teachers and Teachers as Pioneers in Facilitating Dyslexic Children in Primary Mainstream Schools." *Journal of Education and Educational Development* 2 (2): 172–190. http://dx.doi.org/10.22555/joeed.v2i2.445

Jolley, E., P. Lynch, B. Virendrakumar, S. Rowe, and E. Schmidt. 2018. "Education and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Five Countries in West Africa: A Literature Review." *Disability and Rehabilitation* 40 (22): 2704–2712. https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2017.1353649

Juma, S., and E. Lehtomäki. 2017. *Developing Inclusive Pre-service and In-service Teacher Education: Insights from Zanzibar Primary School Teachers*. http://reposi-tory.suza.ac.tz:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/147

Karande, S., R. Sholapurwala, and M. Kulkarni. 2011. Managing Specific Learning Disability in Schools in India." *Indian Pediatrics* 48 (7): 515–520. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13312-011-0090-1

Khan, I. K., and M. G. Behlol. 2014. "Inclusive Education at Primary Level: Reality or Phantasm." *Journal of Education and Educational Development* 1 (1): 1–19.

Kramer-Roy, D., D. Hashim, N. Tahir, A. Khan, A. Khalid, N. Faiz, R. Minai, S. Jawaid, S. Khan, R. Rashid, and T. Frater. 2020. "The Developing Role of Occupational Therapists in School-Based Practice: Experiences from Collaborative Action Research in Pakistan." *British Journal of Occupational Therapy* 83 (6): 375–386. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022619891841

Leonard Cheshire. 2017. *Closing the Gap: Inclusive Education for Girls with Disabilities in Kenya*. https://www.leonardcheshire.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/clos-ing-the-gap-education-report.pdf

Lewis, I., S. L. Corcoran, S. Juma, I. Kaplan, D. Little, and H. Pinnock. 2019. "Time to Stop Polishing the Brass on the Titanic: Moving Beyond 'Quick-and-Dirty' Teacher Education for Inclusion, Towards Sustainable Theories of Change." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 23 (7–8): 722–739. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1624847

Luger, R., D. Prudhomme, A. Bullen, C. Pitt, and M. Geiger. 2012. "A Journey Towards Inclusive Education; A Case Study From a 'Township' in South Africa." *African Journal of Disability* 1 (1): 15. https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v1i1.15

Lynch, P., S. McCall, G. Douglas, M. McLinden, B. Mogesa, M. Mwaura, J. Muga, and M. Njoroge. 2011. "Inclusive Educational Practices in Kenya: Evidencing Practice of Itinerant Teachers Who Work with Children with Visual Impairment in Local Mainstream Schools. *International Journal of Educational Development* 31 (5): 478–488. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2010.08.006

Lynch, P., N. Singal, and G. A. Francis. 2022. "Educational Technology for Learners with Disabilities in Primary School Settings in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Systematic Literature Review." *Educational Review* 0 (0): 1–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2022.2035685

Lynch, P., N. Singal, and G. A. Francis. 2021. *EdTech for Learners with Disabilities in Primary School Settings in LMICs: A Systematic Literature Review*.

Majoko, T. 2016. "Inclusion of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Listening and Hearing to Voices from the Grassroots." *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* 46 (4): 1429–1440. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10803-015-2685-1

Majoko, T. 2020. "Preparation of Zimbabwean Special Education Administrators for Inclusion in Mainstream Primary Schools." *Educational Research for Policy and Practice* 19 (1): 19–47. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-018-9240-8

Malak, M. S. 2013. "Inclusive Education Reform in Bangladesh: Pre-Service Teachers' Responses to Include Students with Special Educational Needs in Regular Classrooms." *Online Submission* 6 (1): 195–214. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED539903

Malak, M. S., H. A. Begum, M. A. Habib, M. Shaila, and M. M. Roshid. 2013. "Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Policy and Practice." In *Australian Association for Research in Education*. Australian Association for Research in Education. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED603287

Malik, R., F. Raza, P. Rose, and N. Singal. 2022. "Are Children with Disabilities in School and Learning? Evidence from a Household Survey in Rural Punjab, Pakistan." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 52 (2): 211–231. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2020.1749993

Materechera, E. K. 2020. "Inclusive Education: Why it Poses a Dilemma to Some Teachers." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 24 (7): 771–786. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1492640

McKenzie, J. A., S. G. Pillay, C.-M. Duvenhage, E. Du Plessis, and J. M. Jelsma. 2017. "Implementation of Educational Provision for Children with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability in the Western Cape: From Rights to Reality." *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 64 (6): 596–611. https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2017.1313394

Miles, S., G. O. Fefoame, D. Mulligan, and Z. Haque. 2012. "Education for Diversity: The Role of Networking in Resisting Disabled People's Marginalisation in Bangladesh." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 42 (2): 283–302. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2012.650482

Miles, S., L. Wapling, and Beart, J. (2011). "Including Deaf Children in Primary Schools in Bushenyi, Uganda: A Community-Based Initiative." *Third World Quarterly* 32 (8): 1515–1525. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2011.604523

Mncube, V. S., and N. Lebopa. 2019. "The Dynamics of Implementing Inclusive Education in Schools." *Bulgarian Comparative Education Society*. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED596944

Morelle, M., and R. Tabane. 2019. "Challenges Experienced by Learners with Visual Impairments in South African Township Mainstream Primary Schools." *South African Journal of Education* 39 (3): 1–6.

Mosia, P. A. 2014. "Threats to Inclusive Education in Lesotho: An Overview of Policy and Implementation Challenges." *Africa Education Review* 11 (3): 292–310. https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2014.934989

Motala, R., S. Govender, and D. Nzima. 2015. "Attitudes of Department of Education District Officials Towards Inclusive Education in South African Primary Schools." *Africa Education Review* 12 (4): 515–532.

Mukhopadhyay, S., B. Mangope, and F. Moorad. 2019. "Voices of the Voiceless: Inclusion of Learners with Special Education Needs in Botswana Primary Schools." *Exceptionality* 27 (3): 232–246.

Munir, S. Z., and S. S. Zaman. 2009. "Models of Inclusion: Bangladesh Experience." *Inclusive Education across Cultures: Crossing Boundaries, Sharing Ideas*: 290–298.

Naraian, S. 2016. "Inclusive Education Complexly Defined for Teacher Preparation: The Significance and Uses of Error." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 20 (9): 946–961. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2015.1134682

Ngcobo, J., and N. Muthukrishna. 2011. "The Geographies of Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in an Ordinary School." *South African Journal of Education* 31 (3): 357–368. https://doi.org/10.4314/saje.v31i3.69820

Osisanya, A., and A. T. Adewunmi. 2018. "Evidence-Based Interventions of Dichotic Listening Training, Compensatory Strategies and Combined Therapies in Managing Pupils with Auditory Processing Disorders." *International Journal of Audiology* 57 (2): 115–123. https://doi.org/10.1080/14992027.2017.1386331

Otukile-Mongwaketse, M., B. Mangope, and A. B. Kuyini. 2016. "Teachers' Understandings of Curriculum Adaptations for Learners with Learning Difficulties in Primary Schools in Botswana: Issues and Challenges of Inclusive Education." *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs* 16 (3): 169–177. https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-3802.12069

Pather, S. 2011. "Evidence on Inclusion and Support for Learners with Disabilities in Mainstream Schools in South Africa: Off the Policy Radar?" *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 15 (10): 1103–1117. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2011.555075

Pather, S., A. Tadesse, and S. Gizachew. 2021. "Moving Toward Inclusive Education in Ethiopia Through Itinerant Teachers at Resource Centers." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.438

Potgieter-Groot, L., M. Visser, and C. Lubbe-de Beer. 2012. "Emotional and Behavioural Barriers to Learning and Development in the Inclusive Education Classrooms in South Africa: Developing a Training Programme for Teachers." *Journal of Child & Adolescent Mental Health* 24 (1): 59–71. https://doi.org/10.2989/17280583.2011.639775

Ramatea, M. A., and F. P. Khanare. 2021. "Improving The Well-being of Learners with Visual Impairments in Rural Lesotho Schools: An Asset-Based Approach."

International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being 16 (1): 1890341. https://doi.org/10.1080/17482631.2021.1890341

Riggall, A., and A. Croft. 2016. "Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Study on the Fulfilment of the Right to Education of Children with Disabilities." *Reading, UK: Education Development Trust*.

Rohwerder, B. 2018. *Disability Stigma in Developing Countries*. https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/13795

Saran, A., H. White, and H. Kuper. 2020). "Evidence and Gap Map of Studies Assessing the Effectiveness of Interventions for People with Disabilities in Low- and Middle-Income Countries." *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 16 (1): e1070. https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1070

Sense International Tanzania. 2018. *A Review of Sense International Tanzania's Teaching Assistants' Approach to Inclusive Education: Policy Brief*.

Siddik, M. A. B., and N. Kawai. 2020. "Government Primary School Teacher Training Needs for Inclusive Education in Bangladesh." *International Journal of Whole Schooling* 16 (2): 35–69. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1268928

Sightsavers. 2021. *Inclusive Education Strategy: Championing Every Child's Right to Inclusive and Quality Education*. https://www.sightsavers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Sightsavers-Inclusive-Education-Strategy.pdf

Singal, N. 2019. "Challenges and Opportunities in Efforts Towards Inclusive Education: Reflections from India." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 23 (7–8): 827–840. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1624845

Singal, N. 2020. *Role of Non-Government Organisations as providers of and advocates for inclusive education: Paper commissioned for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report, Inclusion and Education*. UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373684

Singal, N., P. Lynch, and S. T. Johansson. 2018. *Education and Disability in the Global South: New Perspectives from Africa and Asia*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Šiška, J., Y. Bekele, J. Beadle-Brown, and J. Záhořík. 2020. "Role of Resource Centres in Facilitating Inclusive Education: Experience from Ethiopia." *Disability & Society* 35 (5): 811–830. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2019.1649120

Srivastava, M., A. De Boer, and S. J. Pijl. 2015. "Inclusive Education in Developing Countries: A Closer Look at its Implementation in the Last 10 years." *Educational Review* 67 (2): 179–195.

Taneja Johansson, S. 2014. "A Critical and Contextual Approach to Inclusive Education: Perspectives from an Indian Context." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 18 (12): 1219–1236. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2014.885594

UN SDG. 2015. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN General Assembly. https://www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html

UNCPRD. 2007. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Resolution*. https://www.refworld.org/docid/45f973632.html

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). 2021. *Seen, Counted, Included: Using Data to Shed Light on the Well-being of Children with Disabilities*. https://data.unicef.org/resources/children-with-disabilities-report-2021/

Walton, E. 2011. "'They discluded me': Possibilities and limitations of children's participation in inclusion research in South Africa." *Perspectives in Education* 29 (1): 83–92.

Walton, E. 2018. "Decolonising (through) Inclusive Education?" *Educational Research for Social Change* 7 (SPE): 31–45.

Wegner, L., and P. Struthers. 2011. "Sports for Learners with Physical Disabilities in Ordinary Public Primary Schools in the Western Cape, South Africa: Disability Sport." *African Journal for Physical Health Education, Recreation and Dance* 17 (sup-1): 103–112.

Westbrook, J., and A. Croft. 2015. "Beginning to Teach Inclusively: An Analysis of Newly-Qualified Teacher Pedagogy in Lower Primary Classes in Tanzania." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 51: 38–46. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.05.003

Westbrook, J., A. Croft, and S. Miles. 2018. "Inclusions and Exclusions in Rural Tanzanian Primary Schools: Material Barriers, Teacher Agency and Disability Equality." *Social Inclusion* 6 (1): 73–81. https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v6i1.1203

Wiazowski, J. 2012. "On the Dirt Road to Inclusion." *International Journal of Special Education* 27 (2): 148–156. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ982869

Zaunda, H., R. Holm, A. Itimu-Phiri, M. Malota, and S. White. 2018. "A Qualitative Assessment of Disability Friendly Water and Sanitation Facilities in Primary Schools, Rumphi, Malawi." *Development Southern Africa* 35 (6): 760–773. https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2018.1461610

Zhang, H., and S. T. Holden. 2022. "Disability Types and Children's Schooling in Africa." In *31,* Working paper. Norwegian University of Life Sciences. https://nmbu.brage.unit.no/nmbu-xmlui/handle/11250/2977371

Appendix A: Survey questionnaire

I: Background

(Note that the information in this section will not be attributable and will not be used in the final research analysis)

- First Name:
- Last Name:
- Name of your organization:
- Your role/designation in the organization:
- Name the program which support(s) inclusive education in primary schools (please provide weblinks where available):

II: About the program

- Which country/s does the program operate in?
- How long has this program been running for?
- Who is funding this program?
- Does the program adhere to National Policies and Inclusive Education laws where applicable?
- When is the program's planned end date/year?
- What are the main activities that the program covers (tick all that apply from the multiple options provided)
  Others (please list as needed):
- Who is the primary beneficiary for this program? (tick all that apply from the multiple options provided)

- Which model of inclusive education do you think this program is closely aligned to?

  ☐ Resource centers
  ☐ Resource units
  ☐ Community-Based Rehabilitation/Community-Based Inclusive Development
  ☐ Other (please specify)

- Does your organization focus on any particular type of disability group?

  ☐ Yes   ☐ No

- If yes, please state:

III: Impact of your work

- To what extent do you feel that your program has been successful in achieving the following outcomes? (Please rank the level of success of all those that apply according to you.)
- Please list three things which have supported the continued implementation and impact of this program?
- Do you have a theory of change for this program?

  ☐ Yes   ☐ No

- Please provide details of your theory of change

- Please share a document outlining your theory of change? (optional with upload option)

- Did you undertake any monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of this program?

  ☐ Yes   ☐ No

- If yes, please give details of the type of M&E that you use to measure the impact of the program
- Please share your monitoring and evaluation report (optional)

Appendix A: Survey questionnaire

Approaches to Deliver Inclusive Education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

IV: Challenges

- To what extent do you agree that the factors listed below pose challenges to delivery of this program? (Rank them from most challenging to not challenging at all.)

    Other (specify) (in words)

- Please share any other comments you want to add about the program

Appendix B: Interview guide

I: Introduction to the study

The Inclusive Education Initiative (hosted by two Global Practices of the World Bank – Social Sustainability and Inclusion and Education) has commissioned a survey to gain insights and understanding of the different ongoing programs on inclusive education implemented specifically at the primary school level, in countries in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Professor Nidhi Singal and I (Dr. Meghna Nag Chowdhuri) are supporting this initiative and conducting the study. This is a multi-method study, and since July 2021, we have conducted a literature review, stakeholder surveys, as well as first roundtable with World Bank country-level task team leaders (TTLs). Informed by the data collected till now, we are keen to conduct an in-depth interview with you to understand the 'whys' of many of the emerging findings. Here are the questions we will discuss today. Here are the key themes for the interview:

II: Rationale for adopting a specific approach

- From the composite analysis of the survey, we found that rather than focusing on any one particular type of intervention (resource center, CBID), organizations tend to use a multi-intervention approach (for example, teacher support alongside CBR support). What are your views?

- From the survey, it seems that the interventions largely focus on school level programs (with majority of the interventions directed toward Providing training to mainstream primary teachers, Developing inclusive teaching and learning materials, Providing training to specialist teachers). What are your views?

- During the roundtable we conducted with World Bank country-level TTLs, a need was expressed for organizations to focus on working with national-level policy makers (for example, developing expertise among mid- and high-level policy makers), which is not something we found in current programs or the research literature. What are your views?

III: Expectations

- What is the main overarching goal of undertaking different interventions/programs in the countries you work in? Could you please say more about your overarching long-term goal for these programs. How do these differ from country to country?

- How sustainable do you think these programs will be once your organization leaves? In your opinion, what factors contribute to the success of programs which are sustainable?

IV: Impact and challenges

- The key areas which most organizations feel that they have been successful in are awareness building, enrolments and students' social well-being, while other impact indicators such as learning outcomes were not perceived as being very successful? Why do you think this is happening?

- When we asked respondents to note the main challenges in achieving their program goals, the main challenges seemed to focus on logistical issues rather than attitudes. Why do you think this is the case?

- Would you like to share a story of a particular program for IE (specifying the approach you adopted) that you feel has been successfully implemented? What do you think are the main reasons for its success?

V: Approaches to IE and funding patterns

- Given that the main focus of this project is to understand which approaches/models are most useful for successful implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools, we would like to understand your views on the national-level funding patterns around these.

Appendix C: Interview guide for government officials

Introduction to the study

The Inclusive Education Initiative (hosted by two Global Practices of the World Bank—Social Sustainability and Inclusion and Education) has commissioned a survey to gain insights and understanding of the different ongoing programs on inclusive education implemented specifically at the primary school level in countries in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Professor Nidhi Singal and I (Dr. Meghna Nag Chowdhuri) are supporting this initiative and conducting the study. This is a multi-method study, and since July 2021, we have conducted a study which includes literature review, stakeholder surveys, roundtable with World Bank country-level TTLs as well as interviews with NGO representatives.

Informed by our emerging analysis, we are keen to explore *your country's strategy for inclusion of children with disabilities (inclusive education—IE) in mainstream schools*. Here are the key themes to guide our discussions:

- **Understanding the model of country IE approach:** In our initial findings three models were evident - resource centers within schools, community based integrated development model, introduction of teacher assistant - which one is closest to your country approach?

  - How would you describe your country's current approach to IEI?

  - What led to this being the dominant approach chosen?

  - Please provide examples.

- **Understanding the collaborations for IE**: Which main collaborations/networks (INGOs, NGOs, OPDs, other organizations) does the government use to support the development and implementation of inclusive education programs?

- Please provide examples of the key organizations and their role in the development and implementation of the IEI program.

- How does coordination between these different implementers take place?

- **Understanding the role of international organizations:** In our analysis we found a strong role of international organizations in shaping the inclusive education agenda. Has this been the case in your country context too? If so, could you please elaborate the mechanisms through which this takes place.

  - Please provide examples of the international organizations you have previously and currently collaborated with on IEI initiatives.

- **Understanding IE implementation capacity building:** Are there any capacity-building initiatives on inclusive education which are directed toward policy makers, such as low-/mid-level bureaucrats?

- **IE implementation successes:** Could you share an example of a particular program for IE (specifying the approach you adopted) that you feel has been successfully implemented? What do you think are the main reasons for its success?

- **IE implementation challenges:** Could you share an example of a particular challenge you have faced during development and implementation of the IE program (specify the model/approach)? Please provide details of what you think are the main reasons for the challenges.

- **Understanding the financing of IE projects:** Could you please tell us how inclusive education is financed in your country? Does the government have a specified budgetary allocation for promoting the education of children with disabilities?

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Transforming Education for Children with Disabilities

Norad

UKaid
from the British people

WORLD BANK GROUP

www.inclusive-education-initiative.org