INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
APPROACH PAPER

November 2024

Pathways to Inclusion and Equity: Disability Inclusion in Education

Education Operations
SUPPORT HUB

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1818 H Street NW, Washington DC 20433
Telephone: 202-473-1000; Internet: www.worldbank.org

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Acronyms

ADF	African Disability Forum
AOPD	Arab Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
ASEAN-DF	Association of Southeast Asian Nations Disability Forum
CFM	Child Functioning Module (United Nations)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSOs	civil society organizations
DIAF	Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework
DIEGN	Disability Inclusion in Education Guidance Note
DSI	Down Syndrome International
EDF	European Disability Forum
EENET	Enabling Education Network
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
ESSI	Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (United Kingdom)
FCV	fragility, conflict, and violence
FLC	Foundational Learning Compact
GLAD Network	The Global Action and Disability Network
GPN	Good Practice Notes (World Bank)
HI	Humanity and Inclusion
IDA	International Development Association (World Bank)
IDA	International Disability Alliance
IDDC	International Disability and Development Consortium
IEI	Inclusive Education Initiative
IETG	Inclusive Education Thematic Group
IFSBH	International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus
IFHOH	International Federation of Hard of Hearing People
IPF	Investment Project Financing
JET	jobs and economic transformation
LMICs	low- and middle-income countries
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys

OPDs	organizations of persons with disabilities
PC6	Policy Commitment 6
PDF	Pacific Disability Forum
RIADIS	Red Latinoamericano de Organizaciones de Personas con Discapacidad y sus Familias
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOGI	sexual orientation and gender identity
SSI	Social Sustainability and Inclusion (World Bank)
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WBU	World Blind Union
WFD	World Federation of the Deaf
WFDB	World Federation of the Deafblind
WG	Washington Group on Disability Statistics
WHO	World Health Organization
WNUSP	World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

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The **Pathways to Inclusion and Equity: Disability Inclusion in Education Approach Paper** was prepared by Hanna Alasuutari (Thematic Lead for Inclusive Education, Senior Education Specialist, Task Team Leader) and the core team including Laraib Niaz (Inclusive Education Consultant) and Sophia D'Angelo (Inclusive Education Consultant), supported by Ayesha Vawda (Lead Education Specialist, Program Leader) and Minna Mattero (Knowledge Management Consultant). This work was carried out under the guidance of Luis Benveniste (Global Director for Education), Jaime Saavedra (Regional Director for Human Development, Latin America and the Caribbean Region), and Halil Dundar (Practice Manager, Global Engagement and Knowledge).

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Executive Summary

This approach paper provides guidance to World Bank Education Task Team Leaders (TTLs), World Bank staff across sectors, and other stakeholders on how to ensure education sector operations[1] become more inclusive and include marginalized learners, such as learners with disabilities. The primary purpose of the approach paper is to ensure that education systems are strengthened to become more inclusive and to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners, including learners with disabilities, from the outset—whether drafting a research plan for an analytical study or conceptualizing operational work including lending operations. Despite a global focus on inclusive education, many of the most marginalized learners, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), remain left behind. For these learners, disadvantages may be amplified through intersecting variables such as gender and poverty. This approach paper provides four overarching principles to guide the World Bank's inclusive education approach. Inclusive education has historically been associated with persons with disabilities; however, inclusion is broader in scope (General Comment No. 4 on Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016). Exclusion in education impacts not only persons with disabilities but also "*others on account of gender, age, location, poverty, disability, ethnicity, indigeneity, language, religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, incarceration, beliefs, and attitudes*" (Antoninis et al. 2022).

Though the four principles outlined in this paper can be used to guide inclusive-education approach to ensure the inclusion of various marginalized groups, this paper particularly focuses on learners with disabilities and disability inclusion in education.[2]

1 In this paper, 'education sector operations' refer to a) education operational work including World Bank lending operations and technical assistance and b) analytical work related to education.

2 The difference between inclusive education and *disability inclusion in education,* or *disability-inclusive education,* is that while inclusive education refers to equity and inclusion for all learners, *disability inclusion in education* and *disability-inclusive education* specifically emphasize the need for the education systems to be flexible for all learners, specifically including providing the necessary support and reasonable accommodations to enable for the learners with disabilities to access, participate in, and achieve within education.

The four principles used in the paper are:

Principle 1: Meet countries where they are on the pathway to inclusive education

There is no single method for planning or implementing disability inclusion in education. Context-specific environmental, social and educational barriers should be identified and addressed early in the process of designing education sector operations. Meeting countries where they are may mean starting with small, low-risk interventions and phasing in larger-scale implementation. Roadmaps or action plans should be tailored to meet each country's specific needs. For some, it may mean developing the first-ever inclusive education policy or relevant laws and regulations; for others, it may mean focusing on capacity building, designing curricula and assessments that are fit for purpose, strengthening accountability mechanisms, or identifying and scaling innovative solutions. It is also important to conduct contextually relevant research and evaluate existing inclusive education interventions to inform decision making and build a stronger evidence base.

Principle 2: Provide an enabling environment through systemic change and a twin-track approach

An enabling environment for inclusion and equity and disability inclusion relies on systemic change and a twin-track approach of (1) making the general education system in all levels of education (from pre-primary to tertiary education) more inclusive and mainstreaming disability inclusion in sector-wide efforts (e.g., through legislation, policy interventions, inclusive curriculum and flexible assessment system mechanisms, regular support for teachers and school leaders) and (2) specifying targeted actions to support persons with different types of disabilities (e.g., ensuring that learners with disabilities receive the additional support and reasonable accommodations they need, such as providing sign language users with appropriate support and resources to learn to read with signs).

This requires the active engagement of governments, particularly ministries of education, and multisectoral collaboration among relevant line ministries such as health, finance, water, and social protection. To facilitate collaboration in achieving these goals, countrywide, disaggregated, and robust data about learners with disabilities must be systemically collected and made accessible.

Principle 3:
Identify and support inclusive practices in schools, and other education settings

In order to support the inclusive evolution of countries, their traditional practices of exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion in addressing learners with disabilities must first be analyzed. A tool that addresses placement, presence, participation, and progress (a 4Ps framework) can help identify how current practices can be improved and supported across the education system, at both the whole-of-school and classroom levels (including schools, technical and vocational education and training institutions, and universities). It is important to invest in teachers as a driving force for change by providing teacher training (both pre-service and in-service); introducing different models to support inclusive education (such as itinerant teachers or resource center models); securing focused financing; and ensuring an adequate skilled workforce. This includes having enough skilled and knowledgeable teachers and other school-based staff. Engagement of leadership in schools and other educational institutions is also essential for understanding, planning, and implementing inclusive education at all levels.

Principle 4:
Collaborate with relevant stakeholders

With an increased emphasis on strengthening knowledge and understanding of a more inclusive education system, it is important that stakeholders recognize the potential benefits of inclusive education for all students. Stakeholders—including learners with and without disabilities, local community leaders, teachers, parents, caregivers, community members, organizations for persons with disabilities (OPDs), and other civil society groups—play a critical role in driving demand for disability inclusion in education. Government leaders may be better positioned to empower stakeholders to implement innovative learning solutions that are effective and foster greater buy-in from all involved.

The four principles outlined in this approach paper can be used by World Bank education teams designing education sector operations work to promote inclusive education, particularly disability inclusion in education. This paper can also serve as a valuable resource for a broader community of stakeholders engaged in disability inclusion, supporting efforts to inform and improve inclusive education policies and interventions. The appendices provide a range of additional resources on disability inclusion in education.

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1. Introduction

Despite considerable progress worldwide in ensuring access to quality education for all learners, many of the most vulnerable and marginalized learners remain left behind. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, 258 million children were out of school (UNESCO 2020). The pandemic impacted 1.6 billion youth globally, with the most marginalized learners being the most severely impacted (UNESCO 2020), especially in terms of learning poverty- defined by the proportion of 10-year-olds who cannot read and comprehend a simple text. The learning poverty rate was estimated at 57% in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) in 2019 and has since increased to 70% because of the pandemic (World Bank et al. 2022). Learners most at risk of being excluded from school or quality learning opportunities include children and youth from poor, rural, or remote communities; girls; sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) minority groups; ethnic or racial minorities (including indigenous groups); migrants; displaced or refugee learners; and learners with disabilities. These vulnerable and marginalized young people face unique barriers to learning, including social stigma and discrimination from peers, teachers, and communities and have limited access to teaching and learning materials, curricula, and pedagogy that are responsive to their cognitive, linguistic, socioemotional, or other needs (Carew et al. 2020).

Persons with disabilities have traditionally been among the most vulnerable and marginalized populations. An estimated half (50%) of all young persons with disabilities living in LMICs were excluded from education before the COVID-19 pandemic (Education Commission 2016). Learners with disabilities account for an estimated 15% of the out-of- school population; and those with sensory, physical, or learning disabilities are 2.5 times more likely to have never attended school compared to their peers without disabilities (UNESCO 2020). Disparities in school participation are even greater for learners with multiple or severe disabilities (UNICEF 2022).

Inclusive education is an all-encompassing term that implies equity and inclusion across all levels of the education system and for *all* learners. ***Disability inclusion in education and disability-inclusive education*** refer specifically to supporting persons with disabilities, to access, participate in and achieve in learning from preprimary to tertiary education, including technical and vocational education and training, as well as adult learning as part of lifelong learning. This concept includes learners with diverse types of disabilities, ranging from moderate to severe and multiple disabilities (see table 1 for a typology of disabilities; see also appendix A for key concepts and terms).

Learners with disabilities can be further marginalized due to intersecting variables such as gender and poverty. Girls with disabilities experience a double burden of marginalization along both gender and disability lines (Nguyen et al. 2020). They are often less likely than boys with disabilities to access education and training opportunities (Stoevska 2022). Further, gender and disability can intersect with other variables, such as poverty, rurality, and indigeneity, to create multiple levels of disadvantage and educational inequality for learners with disabilities (UNESCO 2019). For instance, in many countries, a girl with disability living in a poverty-stricken rural area faces greater challenges in accessing quality education compared to a boy with disability living in a wealthy urban area.

Persons with disabilities are one of the most *invisible* groups. They face inequalities in relation to employment, poverty, food security, living conditions, assets, exposure to shocks, and education (Mitra et al. 2021). However, the lack of robust data on the prevalence and needs of persons with disabilities hinders effective policy design and implementation. Since 2015, approximately 41% of countries, representing 13% of the global population, have not had a publicly available household survey providing disability-disaggregated data on key education indicators (UNESCO 2020). A survey of ministries of education across 149 countries found that only a third of governments had taken measures to support learners with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic (UNESCO, UNICEF, and World Bank 2020). The pandemic has further exacerbated inequalities, increasing the number of out-of-school learners with disabilities and widening learning gaps for these young people (World Bank 2020c, World Bank 2021). The long-term physical and mental health impacts of the pandemic—still largely unknown—will likely affect even more persons with disabilities in the future (Leung et al. 2023). Even prior to the pandemic, mental health disorders were among the leading global causes of disability (WHO 2022), and rates of depression and anxiety among young people have doubled compared to pre-pandemic levels (UNESCO 2022).

Learners may be impacted by a broad spectrum of disabilities. The Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG) developed, tested, and adopted a set of six questions for use in national censuses and surveys (Washington Group n.d.). The typology in table 1, derived from the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS) Questionnaire, provides a framework for understanding disabilities that commonly affect learners. The WG-SS questions are based on the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF), which represents a shift from a medical model of disability. Rather than framing disability solely in terms of impairments or deficits, the ICF adopts a bio-psychosocial model, emphasizing the interaction between a person's functioning limitations and environmental barriers (whether physical, social, cultural, or legal) that may restrict societal participation. The WG-SS primarily focuses on activity limitations within this framework. It should be noted (See table 1) that not every disability fits neatly into one of these categories; some may span multiple categories. To better assess functional difficulties among all children, the WG has

Table 1. Classification of Functional Difficulties for Young Persons with Disabilities

Functional Difficulty[a]	Description
Seeing	Difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses[b]
Hearing	Difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid(s)
Mobility	Difficulty walking or climbing steps
Cognition	Difficulty remembering or concentrating
Self-care	Difficulty with self-care, such as washing or dressing oneself
Communication	Difficulty communicating (e.g., understanding or being understood)

Source: Based on the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS).

Note: a. The WG-SS and the CFM define the level of difficulty carrying out an action on the following continuum: no difficulty, some difficulty, a lot of difficulty, or cannot do at all.
b. This definition of seeing difficulty includes those who wear/do not wear glasses, and those with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in seeing.

also developed the child functioning module (CFM), finalized in 2016, which assesses difficulties across 13 domains (Loeb et al. 2018; see appendix A).

There is a dearth of research on the educational needs and experiences of learners with disabilities, primarily due to insufficient funding for data collection and disability-specific educational programming (UNESCO 2019). Educational systems can accommodate learners with disabilities by providing ramps and wheelchair-accessible facilities for those with physical disabilities, hearing aids for indiduals with hearing impairments, and braille materials for those with visual disabilities. However, learners with disabilities may have diverse educational needs. Further research is necessary to ensure the availability of inclusive teaching and learning resources in schools (UNESCO 2019).

This approach paper provides guidance to support World Bank staff in the design and implementation of disability inclusion in education sector operations. This paper helps inform education sector operations by outlining four main principles that teams can follow to ensure that all learners, including learners with disabilities, have access to inclusive learning, while taking contextual realities into account. Additionally, these principles can be applied to ensure the inclusion of other marginalized groups such as sexual and gender minorities, indigenous populations, and ethnic minorities.

While the principles are broadly applicable, this paper specifically focuses on guiding World Bank teams in ensuring disability inclusion in education. The principles help teams collaborate with country-level partners to address the demand for quality education for learners with disabilities and tackle supply-side barriers to disability inclusion in education. These principles

serve as overarching considerations when designing and implementing education sector operational work.

The **Disability Inclusion in Education Guidance Note complements this approach paper with a narrower focus, introducing four criteria for education operations, particularly in the context of education operations using the Investment Project Financing (IPF) lending instrument.** While these criteria can be applicable to all World Bank lending instruments, they were specifically developed to support World Bank education teams in ensuring that all education operations using IPFs are disability-inclusive by December 2025.

This approach paper can be used to guide the World Bank's operational work on all aspects of disability inclusion in education—across all levels—from preprimary to higher education, including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). While this approach paper is primarily intended for World Bank staff, but it can also serve as a resource for policy makers, practitioners, and researchers who are engaged in disability inclusion in education efforts, especially those working in low- and middle-income countries.

The remaining part of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 of the approach paper describes the four principles that guide the World Bank's disability inclusion in education approach and provides case studies and applicable tools. Section 3 summarizes key World Bank resources and tools for disability inclusion in education. Section 4 provides a conclusion. The paper also includes a series of appendices, including a definition of key concepts and terminology (appendix A), a description of the World Bank's disability inclusion in education work and key frameworks guiding this work (appendix B), a directory of key actors who support disability inclusion in education within the World Bank and externally (appendix C), and a list of answers to frequently asked questions by World Bank staff (appendix D). While this approach paper is primarily intended for World Bank staff, it can also serve as a resource for policy makers, practitioners, and researchers who are engaged in disability inclusion in education efforts, especially those working in low- and middle-income countries.

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2. Four Principles for Inclusive Education

This section explains the four principles of the World Bank's inclusive education approach. These four principles are based on a literature review of the most recent research in the field of inclusive education. The principles were further developed and modified through extensive consultations with a variety of internal and external World Bank stakeholders including TTLs, Inclusive Education Regional Focal Point staff, as well as senior and regional management of the World Bank. Feedback from external stakeholders, such as civil society, academia, and the donor community, has also been incorporated. The four principles are designed to foster inclusion for all learners and address the needs of various marginalized learners. However, this paper focuses specifically on how these principles can be applied to ensure disability inclusion in education. When applying these principles, it is important to consider the key components of the education environment in which countries and World Bank teams operate. These include factors affecting the demand, supply, and quality of education, as well as the the policy environment—such as the availability of financing, data, and evidence for inclusive education.

Principle 1: Meet countries where they are on the pathway to inclusive education

Inclusive education is the *process* of strengthening the capacity of the education system to ensure equity and inclusion for *all* learners, as enshrined in Article 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD; United Nations n.d.). Achieving this requires time; sustained support, and the commitment of all stakeholders; as well as a tailored approach that aligns with the specific context of national or subnational governments and the communities involved. The goal of inclusive education—and disability inclusion in education in particular—is to ensure that all learners, regardless of their disability status or other characteristics, can access, participate in, and learn in schools that are safe and inclusive. This involves progressively moving away from segregated school models or parallel systems, while redefining role for special schools that exist in the system. Legal frameworks must also be established and strengthened to support the inclusion of all learners, including those with disabilities.

There is no single method for planning or implementing disability inclusion in education. The very nature of disability and disability inclusion is context-specific. All countries are characterized by a unique set of social, cultural, historical, economic, and political conditions that shape the experiences related to marginalized populations. Even within countries, different regions or communities may have distinct religious or cultural norms that influence people's attitudes toward and beliefs about disability and inclusion. Further, disability is heterogeneous; not all persons with disabilities experience their disability in the same way. It is important to understand the intersection between disability and self-identity. The type or number of disabilities that a young person has will inevitably shape his or her experience, and a person's disability intersects with other characteristics, such as gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, language, citizenship, or migration or refugee status. How persons with disabilities view themselves and their disability might influence the educational choices they make. Thus, it is important to ensure quality learning and honor individual preferences; there are no right or wrong personal educational choices (Ladau 2021, 13).

Context-specific environmental and social barriers should be identified and addressed early in the process of designing operational work. When these barriers are considered and addressed at the beginning of the process, they can inform the design and implementation of operational work. The World Bank directory of key actors working in disability inclusion in education (appendix C) and other information in the appendices can also be helpful when designing disability-inclusive education interventions. It is also important to consider internal differences between countries, particularly along social, cultural, linguistic lines, as well as the resulting inequities and inequalities, when designing and implementing disability inclusion in education. This requires identifying context-specific challenges and enabling factors as the starting point of any operational work in individual countries (see boxes 1 and 2).

Meeting countries where they are may involve starting with small, low-risk interventions and phasing in larger- scale or more complex implementations. Fostering disability inclusion in education systems takes time and sustained commitment. A truly inclusive education system cannot be created overnight, and phased approaches to inclusion can help build momentum and sustainability. Roadmaps or action plans should be tailored to meet each country's specific needs. For some, this may involve developing their first-ever inclusive education policy or laws and regulations; for others, it may mean focusing on capacity building, designing cur-riculum and assessments that are fit for purpose, strengthening accountability mechanisms, or identify-ing and scaling innovative solutions.

Box 1: Environment and Social Analysis for Scaling up Inclusive Education in Pakistan

The World Bank Pakistan education team prepared a report on scaling up investments in the education of children with disabilities in Pakistan. An analysis of country-specific environmental and social barriers was conducted through the review of existing policies and data on the education of children with disabilities to understand the education landscape and identify potential barriers and enabling factors. The review of data included taking stock of existing disability data and instruments for data collection in the census and household surveys, while the review of policies involved evaluating national and regional policies and standards for disability-inclusive education. This analysis highlighted the need for more robust mechanisms collect data on the prevalence of disability among children, as well as their enrollment and learning outcomes in schools. It also highlighted an increased focus at the regional- and national-level on the education of children with disabilities through policies and legislation. Any further analytical or operational work in Pakistan could use this country-level analysis funded by the Inclusive Education Initiative (IEI) Trust Fund to better understand context-specific barriers and enabling factors for the education of children with disabilities in the country.

Source: Baron et al. 2022.

Box 2. Lesotho and Moldova: Identifying Context-Specific Challenges for Learners with Disabilities

In Lesotho, the lack of qualified teachers—particularly those trained to teach learners with disabilities, a situation primarily caused by a lack of resources—is a major contributing factor to the high student dropout rate. The World Bank-funded Lesotho Education Quality for Equality Project (LEQEP) aimed to enhance inclusive growth by targeting low-performing schools. Its development objective was to foster basic education service delivery. Specifically, the project's intended outcomes included improving teacher attendance and content knowledge related to teaching learners with disabilities and fostering higher student retention in 312 primary and 65 secondary schools, primarily located in remote areas. The World Bank team worked closely with the Lesotho government to bring learners back to school post-COVID-19 and address learning gaps. Given the numerous challenges faced by schools, the project prioritized investing in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities that would support all learners, including those with disabilities. Another priority was training teachers in inclusive teaching methods to address the needs of learners with disabilities. The World Bank collaborated with the Ministry of Education and civil society to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing learning losses.

In Moldova, the government launched the initiative, "Integration of Children with Disabilities into Main-stream Schools," supported by the World Bank, to facilitate 20 demonstration subprojects. These sub-projects aimed to modify mainstream schools to accommodate students with disabilities and enhance the capabilities of teachers, school leaders, parents, and communities. The initiative was designed to align with existing municipal-level planning, helping communities effectively implement national policies for the inclusion of learners with disabilities.

Sources:
Lesotho—Implementation status and results report; Moldova—Integration of Children with Disabilities into Mainstream Schools Project (English); Washington, D.C.—WorldBankGroup.

Research Triangle Institute's (RTI) guide for developing inclusive schools and classrooms in low- and middle-income countries outlines a phased, three-tiered approach (Bulat et al. 2017). The objective of the first tier (tier 1) is to strengthen classroom instruction in ways that will benefit all students, including those with various disabilities, by drawing utilizing on existing teaching and learning materials already used in the classroom. The objectives of the second and third tiers (tier 2 and tier 3) are to build expand upon tier 1 strategies to by more directly identifidentifying y and addressing meet more directly the needs of specific students who are struggling to learn. Tier 2 and tier 3 require increasingly intensivee levels of support, showing how interventions can shift evolve from simple to more complex over time.

When implemented successfully, small-scale efforts can help build momentum toward larger- scale or more complex interventions. Once these efforts are identified and successfully achieved, creative monitoring and reporting mechanisms can be used to garner increased government support and interest in scaling up to larger or more complex interventions (see box 3).

Box 3: Supporting Inclusion in a Fragile Country Context

While the provisional constitution of Somalia and the policies of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) guarantee access to education for persons with disabilities, the Somalia Education Sector Analysis (ESA) 2022 notes that school-age children with disabilities, and especially girls with disabilities, are disproportionately excluded from education. The challenges are even more severe for women with disabilities, who have less access than men with disabilities to available opportunities.

Against this backdrop, the World Bank funded the Empowering Women Through Education and Skills Rajo Kaaba Project for Somalia, which aims to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of women, including those with disabilities, in selected areas and to prepare them for leadership roles. This project includes a Skills for Life and Labor Market Success component, which aims to support adolescent girls and women, including persons with disabilities, in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills, cross-cutting socioemotional and life skills, and basic vocational skills to improve their livelihoods. Additionally, the project includes a Higher Skills Development for Women's Leadership component, which establishes Women's Development Centers and a Consortium of Autonomous Women's Colleges to promote vocational training and leadership skills.

Source: Somalia Empowering Women through Education and Skills Project.

It is also important to conduct contextually relevant research evidence for decision making and evaluate the impact of existing disability-inclusive education programs. Research and evaluation of educational interventions and programs are critical for providing evidence to inform decision making and ensuring that the voices of learners with disabilities are acknowledged and considered. Recently, participatory and democratizing methodologies,

using of in-depth qualitative techniques such as photovoice and audio notes together with quantitative data, have been encouraged as important tools for evaluating the effectiveness of educational interventions for learners with disabilities (Singal et al. 2022). World Bank teams would benefit from evaluating existing educational interventions in individual country contexts to better understand what is working well and which areas require more targeted focus.

Principle 2: Provide an enabling environment through systemic change and a twin-track approach

A system-wide enabling environment for disability inclusion in education depends on government support and ownership, as well as multisectoral collaboration between education and other sectors, such as health, finance, transportation, water, social protection, and sanitation.

With government support to ensure coordination and collaboration within the education system and across sectors at both national and subnational levels, a systems approach can lead to efficient service delivery for learners with disabilities (Patana 2020). A systems approach also involves working closely with supply-side actors such as teachers and school leaders, as well as beneficiaries, including students (both with and without disabilities) and their parents and families. Regulatory and institutional frameworks can be created to address and reflect the specific needs of learners with disabilities. A country's legal, political, and constitutional frameworks can be developed to align with international conventions[3] that uphold the right of all learners to be educated within mainstream education systems. These frameworks should ensure accessibility, reasonable accommodations, social protection, inclusion, and necessary support (UNESCO-IIEP et al. 2021). Budgets and financing models can be designed to support the implementation of disability inclusion in education, and partnerships with the private sector may also be explored. Furthermore, accountability systems and transparency guidelines are critical for making a disability-inclusive policy environment (GLAD Network 2022).

A systems approach can be used to address the barriers faced by learners with disabilities and ensure that all learners have access to quality education. Measuring learning outcomes and identifying factors that enable or constrain learning allows policymakers and school-level decision makers to effectively address barriers to disability inclusion in education and develop early warning systems for at-risk learners, including those with disabilities. Disability

3 This includes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC 1989), the World Declaration on Education for All (1990), the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006).

inclusion in education can also be monitored and evaluated regularly to ensure that students are neither segregated into different classrooms nor integrated into mainstream schools without adequate support to facilitate their participation and learning (UNESCO-IIEP et al. 2021). A systems approach would benefit from an inclusive education sector analysis (see box 4).

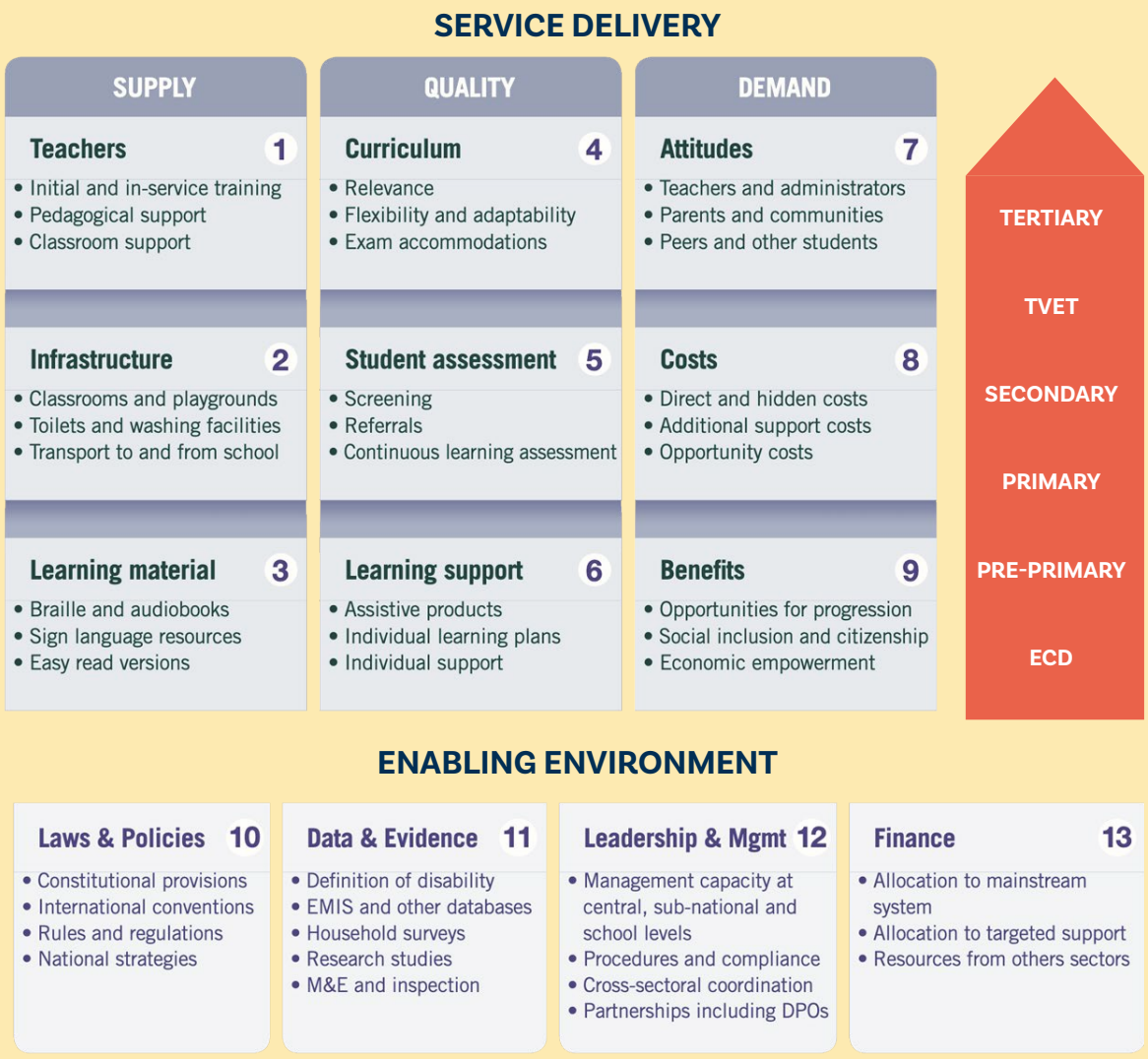
A Ministry of Education would need to ensure an inclusive general education curriculum for all learners, including those with disabilities, alongside flexible student assessment mechanisms that incorporate reasonable accommodations when needed. This implies that pre- and in-service general teacher education should be inclusive, equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to support the learning of all students and collaborate effectively with other professionals, ideally within a multi-professional team. It is important to adopt the twin-track approach, which involves mainstreaming disability inclusion by making the general education system more inclusive through sector-wide efforts. This can be achieved through legislation, policy interventions, an inclusive curriculum, flexible assessment mechanisms, and by providing regular support for teachers and school leaders. A twin-track approach also involves specifying targeted actions to support persons with different types of disabilities. This includes ensuring that learners with disabilities receive the necessary additional support and reasonable accommodations. For example, ensuring that sign language users can learn to read with the support of signs. This approach ensures both broad systemic inclusivity and targeted support to address the diverse needs of all learners.

Inclusive education requires robust data systems that can be used to target resources and design policies and programs that support the most vulnerable learners, including learners with disabilities. The World Bank has emphasized the need for a comprehensive systems approach to disability inclusion in education policy design. This includes using disability measurements in household surveys (Tiberti and Costa 2020; McClain-Nhlapo and Lay-Flurrie 2022), creating disability-inclusive identification systems (World Bank 2020a), and ensuring the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the planning and design of policies intended to support them (World Bank 2020b). Household surveys can be used to collect data on out-of-school learners. While Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and census surveys are two common tools for gathering disability-related data, they are not conducted frequently enough to provide up-to-date information for timely decision making. Additionally, results from large-scale surveys and assessments, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la CONFEMEN (PASEC), can inform country-based work on disability inclusion in education even if it will be important to consider whether learners with disabilities are included in the large-scale assessments (World Bank 2019).

Box 4. Inclusive Education Sector Analysis

In 2021, UNICEF, UNESCO-IIEP, and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) jointly developed Volume 3 of the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) gGuidelines. These guidelines seek to support governments in the preparingation of country-specific analyses to inform education reforms within the preparation or revision of their education sector plans (ESP). The guidelines propose to strengthen national capacity for analyzing education systems in four areas: inclusive education systems for children with disabilities, resilience of education systems (though risk analysis), functioning and effectiveness of the educational administration, and governance and political economy (through stakeholder mapping and problem-driven analysis). The section focusing specifically on disability inclusion in education outlines four main ways areas where education systems could better meet the needs of children with disabilities:, which are 1. System Capacity and Management; 2. Participation of Learners with Disabilities in Education; 3. Supply-Side Issues: Learning environment and Quality; and 4. Demand-Side Issues. Please see the below Framework for Disability-Inclusive Education (see Figure 1 for more information).

Figure 1. The Framework for Disability-Inclusive Education



Source: Adapted from UNESCO-IIEP et al. 2021.

Disability-related data can be integrated into an Education Management Information System (EMIS) and disaggregated by age, gender, ethnicity, and household location. The collection of this data can support analyses of how intersectional factors (e.g., gender and poverty) can impact learners with disabilities. The EMIS can also support professional development opportunities for teachers, as the data can provide them with an understanding of the types of accommodations learners with disabilities need to facilitate their learning (see box 5). There are also internationally recognized tools, such as the data collection tools developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG) and UNICEF's Child Functioning Module (CFM), which can be used to support the early identification of learners with functional difficulties. These tools can also inform policies and programs designed to remove barriers for learners with disabilities.

An enabling environment would also leverage technological advancements that can help promote disability inclusion in education. Potentially helpful information and communication technology (ICT) tools include assistive devices such as communication applications and devices such as screen readers and speech recognition software, among others. These tools can help learners with disabilities communicate, access information, and participate in educational activities. Additionally, ICT tools can be tailored to meet the needs of different types of impairment groups. For instance, learning software and platforms can facilitate personalized learning, particularly for learners with cognitive impairments, while text-to-speech applications can assist learners with visual disabilities. Finally, technological advancements can also improve the effective collection of data on disability.

Box 5. Fiji: Creating an Inclusive EMIS

A successful and cost-effective example of disability inclusion in education is Fiji's Education Management Information System (FEMIS). FEMIS is used in real time in schools to gather data on variables, such as attendance. Data on attendance are used to identify students at risk of dropping out. FEMIS also includes a disaster-risk management module, which organizes critical information about schools and zones, supporting disaster-preparedness plans.

Starting in 2015, a disability disaggregation package was introduced within FEMIS to provide schools with a standardized way of recording and analyzing information related disability in children (such as prevalence, type, and severity of disability), the availability of resources (e.g., school infrastructure and transport), and the qualifications and training of school staff with respect to disability inclusion in education.

Much of the web technology for FEMIS was successfully integrated within an existing EMIS, saving time and resources on software development. FEMIS undergoes regular updates and is used to inform policies.

The success of FEMIS can be attributed to strong government ownership and support and the engagement of local stakeholders in the education system. The Ministry of Education in Fiji plays a pivotal role in raising awareness among key stakeholders around the importance of effective education system processes. The ministry also has dedicated staff overseeing the operation of FEMIS, with continuous and ongoing training of EMIS staff.

Source: Saraogi 2017.

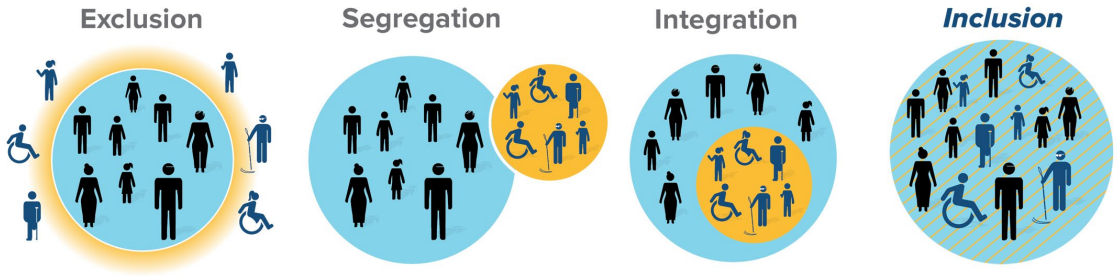
Principle 3: Identify and support inclusive practices in schools, and other education settings

It is important to recognize which education practices are in place and provide context-specific support as schools move toward incorporating more diverse and inclusive practices. Education systems across the world have traditionally dealt with learners with disabilities following four main practices: exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion (see also UNESCO 2020). These terms refer to education prac-tices in which learners with disabilities

do not have access to schooling (exclusion), have access only to separate, special schools (segregation), are placed in units or regular classes that are part of mainstream schools but without appropriate ac-commodations or support (integration), or have equitable access to education with appropriate ac-commodations and support (inclusion). Figure 2 illustrates the differences between these practices. Placement in any one of these educational systems is only part of the picture. If learners with disabilities are placed into a mainstream school but are not provided the adequate support necessary to facilitate their participation and learning, they are not benefiting from an inclusive education. For example, it is not enough for deaf learners to simply access schools if they are isolated from learning. They need to be placed in an enabling environment that fosters their learning (Johnstone, Sefuthi, and Hayes 2022). As the World Federation of the Deaf (WDF) advocates, a quality education for deaf

learners ensures that their learning needs are met using sign language, and when appropriate, accompanied by written and spoken language (WFD 2018). It is important to acknowledge that adequate support may not be entirely possible in all cases. Therefore, a focus on a human rights-based approach[4] to disability inclusion in education is imperative, as it implies the protection of fundamental human rights first, and then progressively advancing towards the best scenario for marginalized learners to fulfill all their rights.

Figure 2. Educational Practice: Exclusion, Segregation, Integration, and Inclusion



Source: Adapted from Alasuutari et al. 2020.

Classroom and school-level data can be used to identify progress and barriers to learning for learners with disabilities. School-level data on resources and infrastructure, such as ramps and accessible WASH facilities, and inclusive teaching and learning resources, such as braille materials, enable governments to identify barriers to inclusion. Data on learning outcomes, particularly through assessments of literacy and numeracy skills, can be monitored using flexible formative and summative assessments. These assessments help identify learning gaps and track progress. Additionally, this data can also help identify differences in learning outcomes between learners with and without disabilities, as well as differences based on gender.

Schools and education institutions could use more resources to address barriers to inclusive practices. While building flexible curriculum and assessment mechanisms for all learners is

4 The human rights-based approach (HRBA) is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. United Nations agencies have agreed on a number of essential attributes in the 2003 Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation and Programming, which indicates that:

- All programs of development cooperation, policies, and technical assistance should further the realization of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.
- Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process.
- Development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of "duty-bearers" to meet their obligations and of "rights-holders" to claim their rights.

critical, whole-of-school and education institution setting, as well as in-class-level support, would benefit from focused, additional financing for inclusive teaching and learning resources. These include braille materials, assistive devices such as wheelchairs and hearing aids, inclusive infrastructure including ramps in buildings and human resources such as sign-language experts and experts in providing psychosocial support. Research has identified these resources as pivotal to including learners with disabilities in schools (Nguyen 2020; Carew et al. 2020). It is also important to consider whether specific adaptations are available for different types of disabilities in various settings—for instance, the availability of sign language interpreters or teachers mastering sign language for learners using signs or sign language, availability of braille for learners with visual disabilities, or technological adaptations for children with intellectual disabilities.

A 4Ps framework can be used to help explain the focus on students at the whole-school, education-institution and classroom levels. This framework includes placement, presence, participation, and progress. Disability inclusion in education means more than placing a student (placement) into a mainstream classroom or school. It enables a student to feel motivated to attend school (presence) by providing a variety of accommodations, such as welcoming and skillful teachers and other school-level staff, accessible WASH facilities, disability-inclusive teaching and learning resources, inclusive infrastructure, and transport. It involves students in the teaching and learning processes (participation) and the development of relevant skills and knowledge (progress). Disability-inclusive education systems are not built from one day to the next. Instead, they require sustained, intentional, and often transformational efforts to offer meaningful inclusion so that all students, in all their diversity, can learn. Countries may be at very different stages of this process, and therefore, disability inclusion in an education system, policy, or intervention will vary across countries. However, some key overarching factors—such as quality teachers and teaching practices and the engagement of school leadership—can be considered to supporti schools.

Evidence has long shown that teachers are the most important school-level factor in improving student learning, including for learners with disabilities (Hanushek 1997). Existing research highlights that underperforming students can bridge achievement gaps with high-performing peers when they receive instruction from effective and professional teachers (Hanushek and Rivkin 2012). Improving student learning and achievement depends on quality teaching, which includes teacher experience, professional knowledge, and behaviors such as providing extra attention, encouragement, and individualized teaching (Burroughs et al. 2019). It is worth noting that teachers and their teaching methods play a pivotal role in delivering inclusive education to all students, including learners with disabilities (Carew et al. 2018).

Inclusive teacher training can equip teachers to address the needs of learners with disabilities. Such training can inform teachers about classroom practices that demonstrate more positive attitudes and increase learning expectations for all students, including those with disabilities (see also Mendoza and Heymann 2022; Ketner Weissman 2020). In many contexts, teachers lack the

necessary training to cater to the needs of learners with disabilities, such as specialized training in sign language where needed (Singal et al. 2023). Including disability modules in teacher training curricula, both pre-service and in-service, can enable teachers and other school staff to deliver disability-sensitive, inclusive education (Dziva and Du Plessis 2020). Additionally, greater attention should be given to recruiting teachers with disabilities (Singal et al. 2024). Boxes 6 and 7 provide examples of how teacher training can be fostered to better support learners with disabilities.

Supporting disability inclusion in education and disability-inclusive teaching practices through additional human resources can significantly improve learning outcomes for students with disabilities. Teachers play a pivotal role in making disability inclusion in education a reality, but it is important to recognize how they can be overburdened, particularly in overcrowded classrooms, in many contexts. Teachers must therefore be supported by other available school staff, such as other including additional teachers, resource or special education teachers, teacher assistants, other professionals working in within the schools, or community volunteers. These additional staff can, who can employ innovative and inclusive pedagogies, such as has been done in demonstrated in Indonesia (Kurniawati et al. 2017) or and Tanzania (Stone-Macdonald and Fettig 2019). One approach involves is the itinerant teacher model, in which engages formally trained educators to travel to different local schools—typically (for example, once or twice a week each)—to offer provide guidance, resources, and assistance to mainstream teachers, to support, for example, visually impaired students (Lynch and McCall 2007).

Box 6. Vietnam: Gaining Government Support through Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms

Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) implemented the Enhancing Teacher Education Program (ETEP) and helped 30,000 teachers. More than 600,000 teachers and principals (75% of Vietnam's teaching workforce) received blended teaching support, including both in- person and online training. The government demonstrated adaptability and innovation during the rollout by collaborating with private service providers to develop the technologies needed, including adopting a learning management system and a teacher education management information system.

Source: https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P150060.

A disability-inclusive approach to learning can benefit all learners. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach that recognizes the diversity of learners in a classroom, acknowledging that each learner understands and processes information differently. UDL is inspired by the Universal Design for Architecture, which works on creating spaces that accommodate the needs and requirements of all users (World Bank 2020). Common UDL strategies include using multiple methods to present content such as music, case studies,

and role play; using materials such as videos, online resources, and podcasts; and providing flexible to learning opportunities or assessments.

Box 7. Bangladesh: Focusing on Teacher Training to Support Learners with Disabilities

The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) in Bangladesh aims to include all marginalized learners with disabilities in mainstream education. The ministry focuses on teachers as pivotal actors, whose support is needed to ensure progress. This is undertaken through:

- **Identification and mainstreaming.** Teachers are leveraged as primary agents who work with communities, parents, and organizations of persons with disabilities in school catchment areas to identify learners with mild or moderate disabilities and encourage their enrollment in regular schools. The aim is to train teachers to identify and support the most marginalized learners.
- **Teacher training.** With the help of field experts, the DPE developed training manuals that focus on pedagogical issues, including those related to the inclusion of learners with disabilities. The aim is to train teachers to effectively use these manuals.

As a result of the initiative, teachers became more aware of inclusion practices for learners with disabilities, and accepted and understood their responsibility to teach these learners. Under the government's Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-3), 68,585 teachers were trained in disability-inclusive education. Under PEDP-4, the MOPME aims to train 130,000 teachers.

Source: World Bank 2023.

Engagement of school and other educational institution leadership is essential for understanding, planning, and implementing inclusive education at all levels. This includes classroom teaching and relationships, board meetings, teacher supervision, counseling services and medical care, school trips, budgetary allocations, and any interface with parents of learners with and without disabilities, as well as the local community or broader public (UNESCO-IIEP et al. 2021). Disability inclusion in education requires a whole-school approach (McMaster 2015) and the active engagement of school support groups, both formal and informal. For example, teacher and student associations, school boards, and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) are encouraged to increase their understanding and knowledge of disability (UNESCO-IIEP et al. 2021).

Support provided to schools varies according to context. Globally, a range of innovative approaches has been used to provide equitable access to learning for learners with disabilities, based on what best meets the specific needs of each country. Table 2 provides three different approaches for supporting the inclusion of learners with disabilities in education across three different countries. These examples demonstrate how support can be given to schools with financing and human resources , to address the specific needs at both -school and classroom levels.

Table 2. Country-Specific Approaches to Disability-Inclusive Education at Different Levels of Education Systems

Rwanda	Ethiopia	Malawi
The use of resource centers to provide a blended approach for including learners with disabilities	**The use of resource centers and itinerant teachers to support the integration of learners with disabilities in mainstream schools**	**The use of community-based education to enable out-of-school learners with disabilities to catch up on missed learning**
The Ministry of Education has established resource centers, both within inclusive schools[5] and outside schools, to provide access to inclusive learning for learners with disabilities. Smaller-scale parallel initiatives are also being implemented. Besides the use of itinerant teachers, these include: • Government-funded, private, and government-aided special schools established to serve as support centers for nearby schools; 52 established resource centers/special schools • Resource rooms within inclusive schools set up to support learners with disabilities, overseen by a teacher or resource room manager • Resource centers created by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities to support secondary school students or out-of-school learners • Community-based resource centers created for learners with disabilities • Resource centers created to assist schools by providing teacher training and inclusive teaching and learning materials, benefiting more than 4,000 participating schools	The Ministry of Education has created 1,400 inclusive education resource centers (IERCs), in collaboration with regional education bureaus and with assistance from the Program for Equity (GEQIP-E) has created 1,400 inclusive education resource centers (IERCs). Psychosocial training was provided to school communities under the IERC initiative in areas affected by conflict, in partnership with a university in the Afar region and regional health bureaus in Afar and Amhara regions. This helps to alleviate the effects of conflict. There are 7,000 primary cluster schools that serve as essential resources, supporting nearby schools, often referred to as local or satellite schools. They also provide access to teachers (itinerant teachers), specially trained to work with learners with disabilities, and act as central hubs for distributing educational materials and assistive devices. IERCs are responsible for the early identification and assessment of learners with disabilities, ensuring appropriate interventions are implemented. The long-term goal is to convert all cluster schools into IERCs.	Link Education International through its project under the aegis of the Girls' Education Challenge is providing catch-up literacy and numeracy interventions and life skills education through 105 complementary basic education centers (CBEs), which employ trained community volunteers. Career development and work-based learning opportunities are also provided in these CBE centers. An evaluation of the project showed that improvements for learners with disabilities were achieved in learning outcomes (such as the ability to read and write) and socioemotional skills outcomes (such as increased learners' confidence levels and interactions with peers and community members). The project also offers financial literacy, vocational, and micro-business training for girls, including those with disabilities, who have been supported to join village savings and loan associations to access loans for business ventures. This training has resulted in increased financial independence and higher aspirations among girls with disabilities.

5 Inclusive schools in Rwanda are schools that provide education for all learners, including learners with disabilities.

Principle 4:
Collaborate with relevant stakeholders

It is important that all stakeholders recognize that every student has the potential to benefit from inclusive education. These stakeholders include learners with and without disabilities, teachers, parents, local community leaders, and other community members. Securing the commitment of all stakeholders to inclusive education may require raising awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, engaging in discussions about the potential benefits of inclusive education for all learners, and addressing stigma and discrimination within communities and among cultural, religious, or political leaders (Hayes and Bulat 2017).

Support for disability inclusion in education depends on a range of stakeholder commitments. The United Nations states that all persons with disabilities, including learners with disabilities, have the right to freely express their concerns about matters that affect them, including at the policy or programmatic level. The World Bank has also acknowledged the importance of fostering ownership and participation in disability inclusion in education. It has encouraged stakeholder engagement, participatory approaches, and grievance mechanisms in its operations as outlined in two key resources: Disability Inclusion in Education Guidance Note (Alasuutari and Powers 2021) and *Inclusive Education Resource Guide: Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education* (Alasuutari et al. 2020).

Organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) play a key role, and persons with disabilities can be active participants, visible advocates, and partners in transformative change.[6] The involvement of strategic community partnerships has been pivotal in implementing disability inclusion in education in low- and middle-income countries (UNGEI 2017). However, more research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of community-support practices in raising awareness about disability inclusion in education and increasing access to disability-inclusive in education for learners with disabilities (UNGEI 2017).

Parents and community members play a pivotal role in fostering the education of learners with disabilities. Parents and families of students with disabilities, OPDs, and other stakeholders are important players in advocating for disability inclusion in education. They can facilitate a wide range of activities that support disability inclusion in education (Singal et al. 2023). They can also help foster positive attitudes toward the educational access and learning of learners with disabilities by challenging stereotypes about disability that may hinder access to education for these learners (UNESCO 2020). The support of parents is also important in reinforcing and complementing the teaching received by learners with disabilities in school. Research on disability inclusion in education has shown that the active

6 See United Nations 2019.

participation of parents in their children's education improves students' school enrollment, attendance, socioemotional skills, and learning outcomes (Lalvani 2015).

In addition to collaboration and engagement, there needs to be an emphasis on strengthening knowledge and conceptions of disability among persons with disabilities, their parents, families, caregivers, teachers, and other stakeholders. Research has highlighted, particularly in countries across the Global South, how misconceptions and stigma around disability can lead to the exclusion of learners with disabilities from education (Carew et al. 2020). Fostering positive community attitudes toward learners with disabilities, therefore, involves challenging traditional stereotypes about persons with disabilities in general and learners with disabilities in particular (Carew et al. 2020).

Government support for inclusive education can lead to more collaboration and engagement from other stakeholders. These include teachers and other education personnel, as well as beneficiaries such as learners with and without disabilities and their families. Government policymakers may often better positioned to enable different stakeholders to implement innovative learning solutions that work for, and receive greater buy-in from, *all* stakeholders.

Engagement with stakeholders can help complement and strengthen the World Bank's education sector operations. For example, the World Bank Pakistan education team carried out focus group discussions as part of its analytical work with stakeholders, including teachers, parents, community members, and organizations of persons with disabilities. This approach helped to improve the understanding participants' perceptions regarding the need for and importance of education for children with disabilities. It also helped identify the structural and societal barriers and constraints faced by children with disabilities in accessing education. Additionally, engagement with local governments enabled the team to understand policy-level issues and the enabling factors for promoting disability inclusion in education. Such work, involving engagement with stakeholders, can inform future operational work that address the specific needs of individual countries (see box 8).

Box 8: Engagement with Stakeholders

Cameroon: Secondary Education and Skills Development Project

The objective of this project was to increase equitable access to quality general secondary education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), with a focus on girls, including those with disabilities. An important aspect of this project was the emphasis on stakeholder engagement, including parents, teachers, and local communities, to create awareness of the need for education and skills training for vulnerable youth.

The project prepared an inclusive Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure Plan (SEP). This plan considered all project stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers and community members with targeted outreach programs for women, adolescent girls, and persons living with disabilities.

In selected areas, the project conducted a communication campaign to raise awareness of households about the intervention and to promote secondary schooling and TVET for all. These activities included (1) training and group activities on socioemotional skills; (2) the use of roles models; (3) improved access to health and reproductive-health information; (4) training modules for teachers, including sensitization on gender participation, disability inclusion, retention strategies, and guidance on addressing gender stereotypes in various fields of training and employment; and (5) development of school improvement plans in consultation with parents and local communities..

Source: World Bank 2020.

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3. Resources for Disability Inclusion in Education

The table below summarizes the main World Bank documents and resources that support inclusion, equity, and disability inclusion in education, including this approach paper. These resources can be valuable for education sector operations, with a focus on disability-inclusive education.

Table 3. Reports and Resources for Disability Inclusion in Education

Type of Education Resource	Description
Pathways to Inclusion and Equity: Disability Inclusion in Education Approach Paper (2024)	Introduces the four below mentioned main principles of the World Bank's inclusive education approach for education sector operations work including education projects such as lending operations and analytical work related to education.These principles can be applied to ensure the inclusion of any marginalized groups, even though this paper specifically focuses on learners with disabilities and disability inclusion in education. • **Principle 1:** Meet countries where they are on the pathway to inclusive education • **Principle 2:** Provide an enabling environment through systemic change and a twin-track approach • **Principle 3:** Identify and support inclusive practices in schools, and other education settings • **Principle 4:** Collaborate with relevant stakeholders
Disability (DIEGN) (2021)	Includes four main criteria for ensuring disability inclusion in education within World Bank-financed education projects using for the Investment Project Financing (IPF) lending instrument. • Criteria 1: Stakeholder engagement • Criteria 2: Analysis • Criteria 3: Inclusive project design • Criteria 4: Monitoring/reporting
Inclusive Education Resource Guide (2020)	Provides suggestions for World Bank Education Task Team Leaders (TTLs), and staff across sectors, World Bank client countries, and other stakeholders to make education projects more inclusive. These suggestions focus on addressing the needs of learners with disabilities and sexual and gender minorities, starting from the project design and preparation stages.

Type of Education Resource	Description
Inclusive Education Policy Academy	Curates and packages the latest cutting-edge knowledge on disability inclusion and broader inclusive education to guide the design and implementation of evidence-based inclusive education policy into structured learning programs.
Inclusive Education Initiative (IEI) publications and resources	• Learners with Disabilities and COVID-19 School Closures: Findings from a Global Survey Conducted by the World Bank's Inclusive Education Initiative • Inclusive Education live courses are available for county cohorts on demand • Module • Inclusive Education Initiative Community of Practice • Outcomes of children with disabilities • IEI Research Exchange Summary Reports & Visual Notes • Capacity for Disability-Inclusion Research Programs • A Landscape Review of ICT for Disability-Inclusive Education • São Paulo Smart Mobility Program • South Asia • Indonesia • Sierra Leone • for Learners with Disabilities
Intranet Page	• Provides additional inclusive education resources • Ask Us Anything • Roster of Consultants • Examples of TORs
Checklists	• Moodle Accessibility Checklist • Excel Accessibility Checklist • Word Accessibility Checklist • PDF Accessibility Checklist • Power Point Accessibility Checklist
Word Bank Frameworks for different sectors	• Disability Inclusion Accountability Framework (DIAF) • Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)

Type of Education Resource	Description
TEDDIE Toolkit	The Education GP has developed the Tech-EnableD Disability Inclusive Education (TEDDIE) toolkit. The purpose of the TEDDIE toolkit is to assist World Bank education tasks teams estimating the cost of technology solutions aimed at strengthening learning of students with disabilities. The toolkit offers support in four specific areas for developing a minimum package of EdTech solutions: • Minimum package • Intervention • Costing tool • Case study/research

Table 4. Major Cost Considerations in a Typical TEDDIE Input Package

Item	Cost
Digital devices, tools, and hardware	Hardware includes computers, tablets, mobile phones, smartphones, speakers, and projectors. Assistive technologies include wheelchairs, walkers/canes, eyeglasses, hearing aids, prosthetics, handheld magnifying glasses, digital recorders, vibrating wrist watches, e-readers, handheld scanners, alternative or adaptive keyboards, trackball mouse, pencil grips, and smartboards.
Software, platforms, and apps	Preinstalled or ready-to-install software, apps, or games include screen readers, text-to-speech software, voice-recognition software, software to transcribe audio to text, magnification software, audio-to-text converters, alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) software, word-prediction software, dyslexia or dyscalculia apps, and other apps and games that support learning.
Non-tech teaching and learning materials	Printed books or signs and manipulatives include blocks, puzzles, shapes, picture cards, flash cards, toys, mathematics and science kits, and other non-tech resources.
Reasonable accommodations	Supports not mentioned in other categories include accessible transportation, accessible restrooms, wheelchair ramps, and communication campaigns.
Teacher and specialist training	Training for teachers and specialists includes teacher-training materials/curriculum, staff time (for teachers, ad-hoc teachers, psychologists, sign language interpreters, other specialists, teacher trainers, among others), per diems, transportation, accommodation, food, and training venues.
Maintenance	Material and human resources needed to repair and maintain technology include technicians, replacement batteries, and equipment to (re)install equipment.

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GPE/Mugithi David
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4. Conclusion

The World Bank aims to support countries in their progress toward inclusive education. This approach paper provides guidance to World Bank staff on disability inclusion in education, focusing on education sector operations through four key principles. It can also be used to support a wider community of stakeholders engaged in efforts to promote disability-inclusive education. The four key data-driven principles to guide education teams and other stakeholders are summarized below.

Principle 1: Meet countries where they are on the pathway to inclusive education

- Recognizing that each country is at a different stage in its path toward disability inclusion in education is important.
- Guidance and support can be tailored to meet the needs of persons with disabilities residing in a specific country, as well as the needs of national and/or subnational governments and the communities they serve.

Principle 2: Provide an enabling environment through systemic change and a twin-track approach

- An enabling environment for diversity inclusion depends on a systems approach that includes a whole-of-education and government approach, led by ministries of education.
- Cultivating multisectoral collaboration across finance, education, health, social protection, transportation, and other sectors is equally important.
- The availability of robust data and analysis of data is also essential for enabling a systemwide approach to disability inclusion in education.

Principle 3:
Identify and support inclusive practices in schools, and other education settings

- Schools can be supported by first identifying the type of education system (see figure 2) they use to address learners with disabilities, such as exclusion, segregation, integration, or inclusion.
- A 4P framework of placement, presence, participation, and progress can be adopted to support schools with financing and human resources, enabling context-specific disability inclusion in education practices at both whole-of-school and in-class levels.
- Teachers are the most important factor in making schools more inclusive.

Principle 4:
Collaborate with relevant stakeholders

- Disability inclusion in education requires collaboration with various actors, including persons with disabilities, their parents or caregivers, community members, organizations for persons with disabilities, and teachers.
- Engaging with diverse stakeholders is essential to ensure inclusion in education.
- Government support can facilitate greater engagement from all stakeholders including teachers and community members.

Through its education sector operations, the World Bank aims to support stakeholders—including governments, educational leaders, organizations of persons with disabilities, teachers, and learners with and without disabilities in advancing inclusive education system development. To support this objective, World Bank education teams are encouraged to apply the four core principles outlined in this Approach Paper. These principles guide the systematic and careful design of educational projects and other interventions, ensuring they are contextually relevant and tailored to the specific needs of countries on their pathway to achieving disability inclusion in education.

Appendix A. Key Concepts and Terminology of Disability Inclusion in Education

Defining Inclusion, Barriers, and Equity in Education

To understand disability inclusion in education, it is important to understand the concept of inclusion. **Inclusion** in development is defined as empowering all people to participate in, and benefit from, the development process. Inclusion utilizes policies to promote equity and nondiscrimination that increase the access of all people, including the poor and disadvantaged, to services and benefits, encompassing education, health, social protection, infrastructure, and other assets (Alasuutari et al. 2020).

Barriers are defined as the aspects of society that intentionally or unintentionally exclude persons with disabilities from full participation and inclusion in society. These barriers can be physical, economical, informational, legal, institutional, environmental, or attitudinal (Alasuutari et al. 2020). Inclusion in education, specifically, targets overcoming barriers that limit the presence, participation, and achievement of learners.

Equity, as a concept, ensures concern for fairness such that the education of all learners is seen as having equal importance (Alasuutari et al. 2020). This might include differentiated approaches in teaching and learning. Equity is often compared to equality: While equality means providing the same, or *equal*, resources and support to all persons, equity respects and values diversity. For an equitable education, individuals with distinct needs would have their needs addressed to ensure equitable access to, and participation in social, economic, political, or educational opportunities.

Inclusive Education vs. Disability Inclusion in Education

The main difference between inclusive education and disability inclusion in education is a matter of scope and focus. **Inclusive education** is an educational approach that focuses on addressing the needs and rights of *all* learners, including learners with disabilities and other marginalized children and youth, such as girls; boys; sexual orientation and gender identity

(SOGI) minorities; ethnic and linguistic minorities; displaced, migrant, or refugee students; and students more broadly identified as having special education needs. **Disability inclusion** in education has a narrower focus; it relates to learners with all types of disabilities, including physical, sensory (hearing, vision), intellectual, communication, and psychosocial disabilities.

Special Education

Special education refers to classes or instruction designed for students categorized as having special or diverse educational needs (Alasuutari et al. 2020). The term **"special educational needs"** is used in some countries to refer to learners with impairments or diverse educational needs who are seen as requiring additional support (Alasuutari et al. 2020). Importantly, not all learners with special education needs have disabilities, and not all students with disabilities have special education needs (Porter et al. 2011, cited in UNESCO-IIEP 2021). For example, students who have a physical disability and use a wheelchair may need a ramp to enter a school building, but they may not require any special support in the classroom to ensure their access to learning. Likewise, students who have not been diagnosed with or identified as having a disability may be included in a special education program.

Twin-Track Approach to Disability Inclusion

The **twin-track approach** refers to the World Bank's approach to disability-inclusive development, which recognizes that **mainstreaming** and **targeted programming** are essential tracks for advancing the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in development (McClain-Nhlapo et al. 2022). Mainstream education, or mainstreaming inclusion, is the practice of educating students with specific learning needs in a general education system (Alasuutari et al. 2020). Examples of mainstreaming approaches to disability inclusion in education may include constructing or renovating more accessible school infrastructure and integrating guidelines for inclusion into national curriculum, textbooks and teacher guides, or assessment tools as well as using pedagogies and working methods that support inclusive education. Examples of targeted programming in disability inclusion in education interventions may involve providing scholarships, stipends, or assistive technologies to learners with disabilities, conducting campaigns to raise awareness about disability inclusion in education or about the right of persons with disabilities to education and life-long learning, and training teacher assistants, resource teachers, or other specialists to support learners with disabilities and adding special education contents to teacher training.

Defining Disability

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) defines **persons with disabilities** as "those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective

participation in society on an equal basis with others" (United Nations, n.d.). This definition comes from what is now known as a **biopsychosocial model of disability**, which conceptualizes disability as emerging from a combination of factors including biological, psychological, and social or environmental factors. The biopsychosocial model of disability seeks to address the shortcomings of both the medical model of disability and the social model of disability. The medical model has been criticized for placing too much emphasis (and at times, blame) on the individual with an impairment or health condition, while the social model has been criticized for its focus on external and environmental barriers and oversimplifying the chronic and severe health needs of some persons with disabilities.

Disability vs. Impairment

Table A.1 summarizes the differences between the concepts of disability and impairment. The main difference lies in the fact that while disability recognizes environmental barriers that should be addressed in making the communities and societies more inclusive, an impairment (or health condition) can be more or less disabling depending on the context in which it occurs and the barriers that exist (CBM Global Disability Inclusion 2012). Not all persons with impairments have a disability. For example, a child who has access to vision screening and appropriate prescription eyeglasses may have a visual impairment but is not a person with a disability; however, if a child needs glasses but does not have access to vision screening services or the appropriate prescription lenses, the visual impairment can become a disability (see the section on assistive devices and technologies).

Table A.1. Differences between Disability and Impairment

Disability	Impairment
A disability is the result of negative interactions that take place between a person with an impairment and his or her social environment. A disability is not caused by an impairment but by the social experience around the impairment. It is a result of the relationship between a person's impairment and his or her social environment.	Impairment is something that a person is born with or acquires later in life. It is an injury, illness, or congenital condition that causes or is likely to cause a loss or difference in physiological or psychological function. Impairment can be physical, psychoemotional, biological, chemical, or a combination.

Source: IETG team.

Disability and Functional Difficulties

Disability is often classified in terms of **functional difficulties**, or certain limitations, that a person may have when performing certain everyday functions or tasks, such as seeing, hearing, walking, or self-care. Table A.2 provides a classification of functional disabilities, based on a set of questions from the Washington Group's child functioning module (WG-CFM). Screening and identifying students who have difficulties in one or more domains of functioning is the first step to identifying students at risk of having a disability and in need of support required to enable better their ability to function and participate in school and society (see box A.1).

Table A.2. Washington Group's Classification of Functional Difficulties for Young People

Functional Difficulty	Description
Vision	Difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses
Hearing	Difficulty hearing, even if using hearing aid(s)
Mobility	Difficulty walking or climbing steps
Self-care	Difficulty with self-care, such as washing or dressing oneself
Communication	Difficulty communicating (e.g., understanding or being understood)
Learning	Difficulty learning
Remembering	Difficulty remembering
Concentrating	Difficulty concentrating
Accepting change	Difficulty accepting changes to routine
Controlling behavior	Difficulty controlling behavior
Making friends	Difficulty making friends
Anxiety	Feeling anxious, worried or nervous
Depression	Feeling sad or depressed

Source: Based on the Washington Group's Child Functioning Module (WG-CFM).

Box A.1. Case Study Exemplifying Disability, Impairment, Functional Difficulties, and Barriers

Maya is 17 and lives in a rural area of India. She has a disability that includes impairment, functional difficulties, and economic, social, and environmental barriers.

When Maya was young, she was in a traffic accident. At the hospital, she was diagnosed as having a spinal cord injury (physical impairment). While she can sit up, she cannot move her legs (functional difficulty). Her family took her home from the hospital because they could not afford further rehabilitation or hospital-based care (economic barrier). There is no social welfare or other benefits system in place to ensure that the cost of her care would be covered (policy barrier).

Maya has been given a wheelchair; however, her home is on a hill, and there are steps leading up to the house (physical environment barrier). While she is physically able to sit up and do many things, she often stays at home, and rarely goes to school. The perception of her community is that she can no longer participate in many community activities (social participation barrier).

Source: Adapted from CBM Global Disability Inclusion 2012.

Understanding Inclusive Education Terminology

Inclusive education refers to a process of strengthening the capacity of the whole general education system to reach out to all learners. To ensure a broader understanding of inclusion, some countries have started using the term "educational inclusion" to refer to the inclusion of all diversities through guaranteeing access and learning. The conclusion is that we should clarify what exactly is meant by inclusive education in each context mean and be cognizant of any other concepts are used to reach out to all learners.

Box A2. IE terminology in Ecuador

In Ecuador, the current legal framework includes specific articles on the importance and meaning of educational inclusion and inclusive education. Educational inclusion is one of the key approaches of the National Intercultural Education Law[7] and implies recognition of the diversity of learners, including indigenous peoples, and learners´individual and collective differences. The legal framework seeks to eliminate barriers to guaranteeing quality education and attend the needs of the diversity of learners, through access, continuity in education system, learning, participation, promotion, and completion of the education trajectory.[8]

In the legal framework, educational inclusion "…guarantees the full exercise of the right to quality education, through access, permanence, learning, participation, promotion, and completion of education by children, adolescents, young people, and adults, in the National Education System at all levels and modalities. It responds to diversity and promotes physical and emotional well-being, with special emphasis on priority attention populations." Meanwhile, inclusive education is "…an integral part of educational inclusion that facilitates access, permanence, learning, participation, promotion, and completion of education, in all services, programs, modalities, and educational levels. It eliminates learning barriers and implements the use of methodological, pedagogical, physical, technical, and technological educational resources. Inclusive education promotes attention to diversity within the National Education System and adds to the quality of education."[9]

The representatives of the National Directorate for Inclusive and Special Education of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador[10] explain that under this legal framework, attention is given to the diversity of learners in conditions of vulnerability. Their department works to guarantee access and learning specifically for learners with disabilities, learners with learning problems without disabilities, learners with catastrophic or chronic illnesses, adolescents in centers for juvenile offenders or in rehabilitation due to alcohol or drug addiction. Other departments of the ministry concentrate on groups such as pregnant girls and adolescent mothers, migrants and refugees. The ministry

7 *Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural* in Spanish.
8 Translation of Article 3 of the General Regulation to the Intercultural Education Law ratified February 19, 2023, by the President of the Republic of Ecuador. Available at https://educacion.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2023/03/reglamento-LOEI-2023.pdf.
9 Translation and summary of Articles 153 and 154 of the General Regulation to the Intercultural Education Law ratified February 19, 2023, by the President of the Republic of Ecuador. Available at https://educacion.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2023/03/reglamento-LOEI-2023.pdf.
10 Sofía León, director, and Teresa Pinto, technical specialist, of the National Directorate for Inclusive and Special Education of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador.

also has a special secretary for intercultural bilingual and Afro-Ecuadorian ethnoeducation, with "bilingual" referring to indigenous languages. Currently, educational inclusion is understood as the broad approach to ensure right to education for all diversities and groups in conditions of vulnerability. Meanwhile, inclusive education is understood as the operational framework to respond to the specific needs of each learner already enrolled in education.

Box A.3 Inclusive Education terminology in Paraguay

In Paraguay, under the process of Educational Transformation, inclusive education has been included in the national education plan both as a conceptual approach and as a methodology. There has been wide debate at the national level on what is meant by inclusive education. Currently the concept of inclusive education encompasses mainly children with disabilities and indigenous peoples. The current legal framework mentions inclusive education and focuses specifically on children with disabilities. In Paraguay, the inclusion of all diversities is a complex topic and there are some who consider the word "diversity" improper. This is why different expressions have to be used in different contexts to talk about inclusion of all children in conditions of vulnerability.

UNICEF Paraguay advocates for a wide approach to include under the umbrella of inclusive education, diversities, and children and youth in different conditions of vulnerability. To advocate for a rights-based approach to education, UNICEF Paraguay is using the concept of educational inclusion and exclusion in its recent national study on out-of-school children.

Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations refer to "the necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments that do not impose a disproportionate or undue burden to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms" (Alasuutari et al. 2020). Some students with disabilities require reasonable accommodations to support their full inclusion and participation in the classroom, school, or other settings. Reasonable accommodations seek to remove barriers to the involvement of learners with disabilities and may include sign language interpretation, additional time to perform a given assignment or assessment, accessible transportation, or the use of assistive technologies, such as a hearing aid, tape recorder, magnifying glass, or mobility device (for more details, see the subsection on assistive technologies).

Providing reasonable accommodations may not mean handing out new materials or performing a new or unique task or behavior. It may mean simply being flexible in the expectations that one has toward a learner. For example, learners with autism often use self-stimulation (also called stimming) to cope with overwhelming situations and sensory overload or to manage their emotions. Stimming usually involves repetitive movements or

noises, including fidgeting, twirling, rocking, hand-flapping, or finger-flicking. At first glance, these behaviors seem inconducive to classroom learning. However, stimming has been found to facilitate learning by freeing up executive-functioning resources in the brain that would otherwise be devoted to suppressing them (Silberman 2016, 308). For an autistic learner who uses self-stimulation techniques, a reasonable accommodation in the classroom may be to allow this type of behavior or to raise awareness among other students in the classroom so that the behavior is not met with mocking or other negative responses.

Assistive Technologies

The World Health Organization (WHO) uses the term **assistive technologies** to cover systems related to the delivery of assistive products and services that maintain or improve an individual's functioning and independence to the extent to which it promotes their well-being (WHO 2018). Examples of assistive technologies include hearing aids, wheelchairs, communication aids, eyeglasses, prostheses, pill organizers, and memory aids. Thus, the term assistive technology may contradict a common understanding of 'technology' as it includes low-tech and nontech products, such as large-print materials or communication boards. Box A.4 provides a case study of an autistic child with functional difficulties in communication who uses assistive technologies in his household environment to support his development.

Box A.4. Case Study Demonstrating the Use of Reasonable Accommodations and Assistive Devices

Leo is a young autistic child. The first thing that he does each day is look at a list of icons taped to his door, which his mother made for him by downloading and laminating clip art from the Internet. The list serves as a "visual schedule," allowing Leo to use pictures rather than words to support his daily routine. An image of a boy putting on his shoes prompts Leo to get dressed; a likeness of a toothbrush reminds him to brush his teeth; and an icon of a boy making his bed reminds Leo to do the same. Leo's visual schedule demonstrates the 11-year-old's life as a series of discrete and manageable actions, and it helps him regulate his anxiety and channel his energy to complete everyday tasks.

By his front door, there is also a framed sheet of paper, which his mother designed. It is titled, "Questions to Ask Leo," and includes the following questions: *What is your name? How old are you? What is your address? What is your big sister's name? What is your little sister's name?* This list of questions serves two purposes: to encourage visitors to initiate conversations with Leo, and to help him learn to verbalize information that he already knows but is not always able to communicate. Leo can understand many of the phrases his parents say to him; he has good receptive language, but finds that expressive speech does not come as easily. Leo's parents have adapted their lives and living space to create a safe and enabling learning environment.

Source: Adapted from Silberman (2016).

Disability and Language

Terminology is important; the language used to speak about disability may reinforce stigmatization and discrimination, or it may allow for a more nuanced perception that values and appreciates persons with disabilities. Modern debates about disability often use two types of language: people-first or identity-first. **People-first language** emphasizes the person over his or her disability. For example, the following terms are used: a person with a disability (rather than a disabled person), a person who is deaf (rather than a deaf person), or a person in a wheelchair (rather than a wheelchair user). The logic of people-first language is that disability is something a person has rather than who they are. By putting the person first and separating the mention of disability from the person, there is a demonstrated respect for the personhood of someone with a disability (Ladau 2021, 11). This acknowledgment of personhood in the use of person-first language is important in societies, especially in the Global South, where disability continues to be highly stigmatizing (Singal 2010, 417).

However, recent debates, especially in the Global North, criticize person-first language because it separates the individual from their diagnosis (Marschall 2023) rather than acknowledging disability as part of what makes a person who they are (Ladau 2021, 11). **Identity-first language** recognizes that disability is not just a description or diagnosis; it is an identity that connects people to a community, a culture, and a history (Ladau 2021, 11). A global survey of more than 11,000 respondents found that autistic people preferred identity-first language ("autistic person") rather than person-first language ("person with autism") (Bonnello 2022). As one autistic survey respondent said, "I am autistic. It's not an item I carry, can put down, it's who I am" (Marschall 2023). Nevertheless, while there may be preferences among certain disability communities, no community is monolithic, and each individual will likely have his or her own preference. Thus, it is important to honor these individual preferences; there are no right or wrong personal choices (Ladau 2021, 13). A simple rule of thumb to follow is to ask a person with a disability what terminology they would prefer others to use when speaking with them.

It is also important to keep in mind that **language is shaped by culture**. Different expressions may be considered appropriate or inappropriate depending on the language used and cultural context, so it is always advisable to ascertain the terminology preferences of the individuals themselves (Cobley 2018, 3) as well as of civil society actors, such as organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs). While language and cultural context should be kept in mind, table A.3 provides a short guide to inclusive language etiquette.

Table A.3. Inclusive Language Etiquette: The Dos and Don'ts of Communication and Behavior

Dos	Don'ts
Avoid stigmatizing language, labels, stereotypes, and condescending euphemisms.	Do not use words such as handicapped, slow, retarded, gimp/cripple, midget, crazy; do not describe someone as "suffering" from or being a "victim" of his or her disability.
Use objective language when describing what someone can or cannot do.	Do not use terms that allude to a ranking system or comparison of two persons, e.g., "high vs. low functioning" or a "normal" person (who does not have a disability).
Use everyday phrases such as "let's go for a walk" or "did you hear the news?" to communicate with persons with difficulty walking or hearing, respectively. Most persons with disabilities are used to this.	Do not use idioms or phrases that belittle persons with disabilities, such as "blind as a bat" or "to fall on deaf ears."
Address the person with a disability directly.	Do not address the interpreter, personal assistant, or guide, and instead address the person with a disability directly.
Position yourself at eye level with a person in a wheelchair when talking one-on-one.	Do not touch any mobility aids such as wheelchairs, long canes, or dog guides (unless permitted or requested, such as to push a wheelchair or to toilet a dog guide).
Politely ask a person with a speech difficulty to repeat something you have not understood.	Do not simply nod and pretend you understand; persons with speech difficulties may be used to repeating themselves.
Identify yourself if you wish to talk to someone with a vision impairment; inform the person if you are moving away.	Do not assume that the person with a visual disability will recognize your voice, or know that you are walking away.
Ask if people with difficulty seeing would like a visual description, and if so, what aspects they would like you to include (of yourself, the environment, etc.).	Do not use subjective terms such as "strong," "beautiful," or "weird-looking" in visual descriptions.
Communicate about preferences for a human guide; identify obstacles that may be in the person's way, if/when you are providing guidance.	Do not guide someone to a location without first asking where he or she would like to go.
Explain acronyms in full when referring to them for the first time.	Do not assume everyone knows what all acronyms mean; this is particularly important for persons with cognitive difficulties or interpreters who need to spell out phrases.

Source: Adapted from CBM Global Disability Inclusion 2012; United Nations 2021; Ladau 2021.

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Appendix B. World Bank Frameworks and Architecture for Disability-Inclusive Education

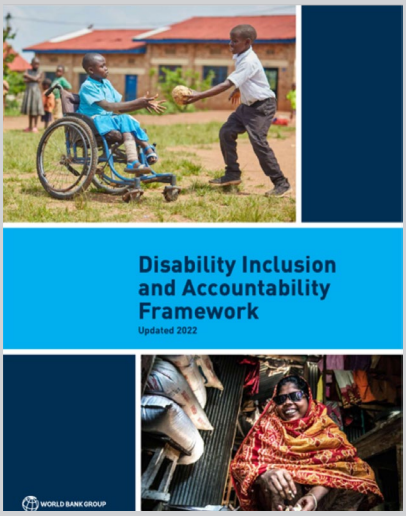
Environmental and Social Framework

The World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) sets out the Bank's commitment to sustainable development. It does so through a World Bank Policy and a set of Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) that are designed to support Borrowers' projects, with the aim of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity. The ESS sets out the requirements for Borrowers relating to the identification and assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts associated with projects supported by the World Bank through Investment Project Financing (IPF). The standards include the following: (1) support Borrowers in achieving good international practice relating to environmental and social sustainability; (2) assist Borrowers in fulfilling their national and international environmental and social obligations; (3) enhance the sustainable development outcomes of projects through ongoing stakeholder engagement; and (4) enhance nondiscrimination, transparency, participation, accountability, and governance. Disability is specifically addressed in Standard 2 (ESS2) and Standard 10 (ESS10). ESS2, "Labor and Working Conditions," ensures the protection of project workers, including vulnerable workers such as persons with disabilities, and the creation of reasonable measures to adapt the workplace in relation to project workers with disabilities. ESS10, "Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure," ensures that information is presented in an accessible language or format for persons with disabilities. The ESF is also accompanied by several World Bank Good Practice Notes (GPN) to support its implementation. The GPN on Non-Discrimination and Disability focuses on investment project financing issues relating to discrimination based on disability. The World Bank's Open Learning Campus offers two free optional online courses (a short and long version) titled, "ESF Fundamentals," for World Bank staff to further familiarize themselves with the content, standards, and expectations outlined in the ESF.

World Bank Directive: Addressing Risks and Impacts on Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Individuals or Groups

This Directive informs World Bank staff of due diligence obligations relating to the identification of, and mitigation of risks and impacts on, individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable.[11] "Disadvantaged or vulnerable" refers to those individuals or groups who, by virtue of their age; gender; race; ethnicity; religion; physical, mental or other disability; social, civic, or health status; sexual orientation; gender identity; economic disadvantages or indigenous status; or dependence on unique natural resources, may be more likely to be adversely affected by a project's impacts or more limited than others in their ability to take advantage of a project's benefits.

Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework



The main objective of the Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework (DIAF) is to support the mainstreaming of disability in World Bank activities and investments. The framework lays out a roadmap for including disability in the World Bank's policies, operations, and analytical work; and building internal capacity for supporting clients in implementing disability inclusive development programs. The DIAF provides the following four main principles for guiding the World Bank's engagement with persons with disabilities: nondiscrimination and equality; accessibility; inclusion and participation; and partnership and collaboration. It outlines the following six key steps toward disability inclusion in World Bank-financed projects: (1) apply a twin-track approach for recognizing persons with disabilities among the beneficiaries of all projects while also carrying out specific projects to address the main gaps to their inclusion; (2) adopt explicit references to disability in general and to the DIAF policies, guidelines, and procedures that shape the World Bank's activities; (3) identify focus areas for disability-inclusive projects and advisory services; (4) collect data to improve the evidence base on the situation of persons with disabilities; (5) build staff capacity and organizational knowledge on disability inclusion; and (6) develop external partnerships for implementing the disability-inclusion agenda.

11 This is described in paragraph 4 (b) of the World Bank Environmental and Social Policy For Investment Project Financing (E&S Policy) and paragraph 28 (b) of the Environmental and Social Standard 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts (ESSI).

Five Pillars Guiding the World Bank's Education Approach

The World Bank's approach to education is built around five pillars. These pillars represent key areas that countries have typically found to be crucial in building a strong education system. The five pillars focus on learners, teachers, classrooms, schools, and education systems (figure B.1).

Figure B.1. The Five Pillars

Learners are prepared and motivated to learn

- Early Childhood Education (ECE)
- Nutrition
- Stimulation

Teachers at all levels are effective and valued

- Meritocratic profession
- Effective HR function of Ministry
- Continous school-based professional development
- Children taught at the right level

Classrooms are equipped for learning

- Simple, effective, curriculum
- Books and supportive technology
- Coaching & structured pedagogy

Schools are safe and inclusive spaces

- Eliminate all types of school violence & discrimination in schools
- Students with any disability receive the right service
- Minimum level of infrastructure

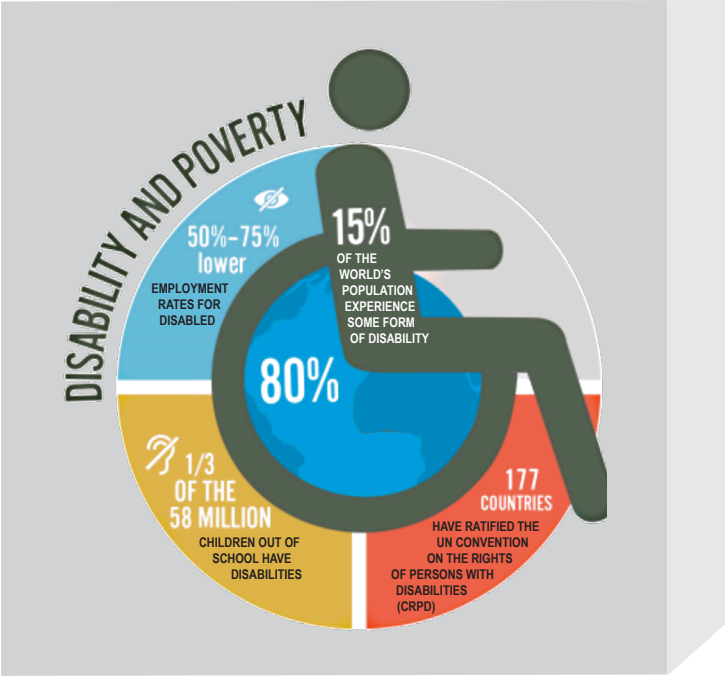
Education systems are well-managed

- Career track for principals
- Clear mandates & accountability
- Merit-based professional bureaucracy

Source: World Bank 2019.

World Bank Group Commitments on Disability-Inclusive Development

During the Global Disability Summit of 2018, the World Bank made a set of 10 commitments related to disability-inclusive development. The first of these 10 commitments is "Inclusive Education" and seeks to ensure that all World Bank-financed education projects and programs are disability inclusive by 2025.

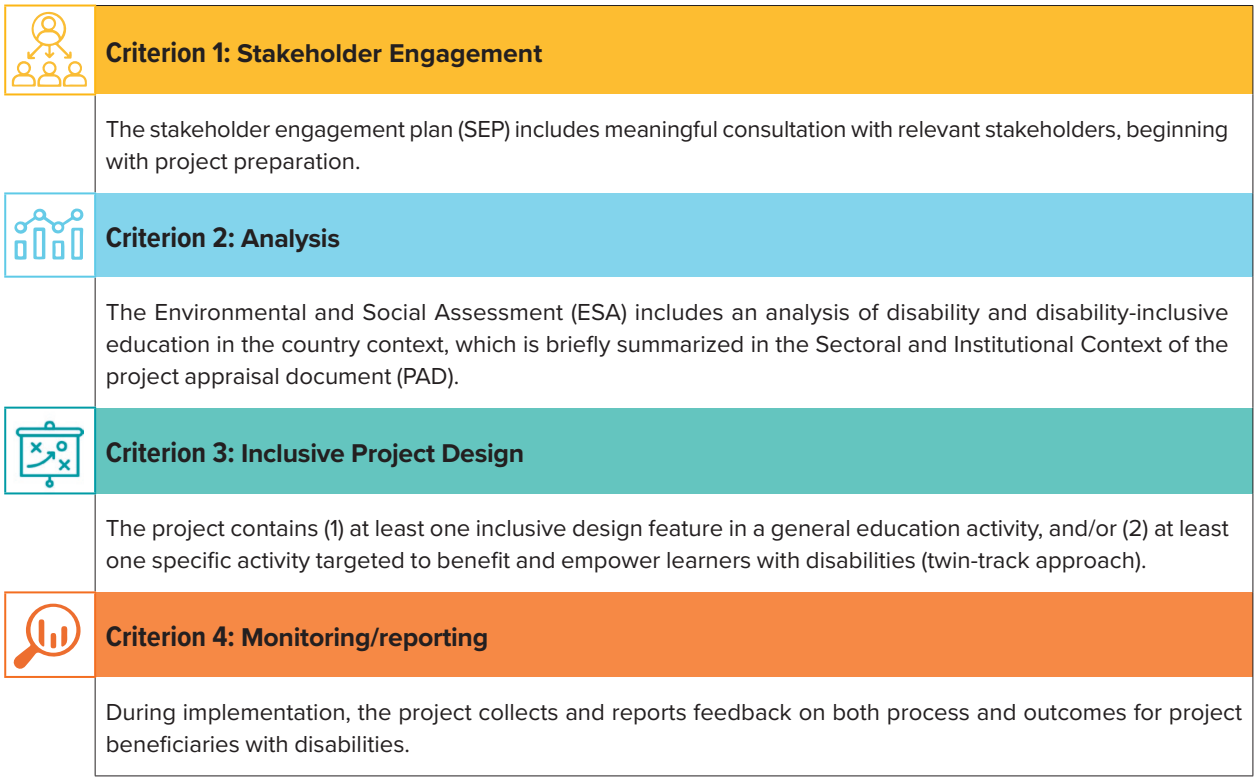


Source: World Bank 2018.

Disability Inclusion in Education Guidance Note

The Disability Inclusion in Education Guidance Note (DIEGN) presents four criteria that all Investment Project Financing (IPF) projects must comply with by 2025 to meet the World Bank's corporate commitments (Alasuutari and Powers 2021). These four criteria address the following: (1) stakeholder engagement, ensuring persons with disabilities are consulted during the design and implementation of any project; (2) analysis, drawing on disability-disaggregated data or disability-inclusive education policies in the country; (3) inclusive project design, using a twin-track approach to support disability inclusion; and (4) monitoring/reporting, including disability-related indicators or disability-disaggregated data in the project's results framework (figure B.2). To accompany the DIEGN, the Inclusive Education Resource Guide (Alasuutari et al. 2020) provides a wider menu of project examples that address not just disability inclusion but also broader inclusive education, including the needs of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) minorities.

Figure B.2. Four Criteria for Disability-Inclusive Education IPF Projects

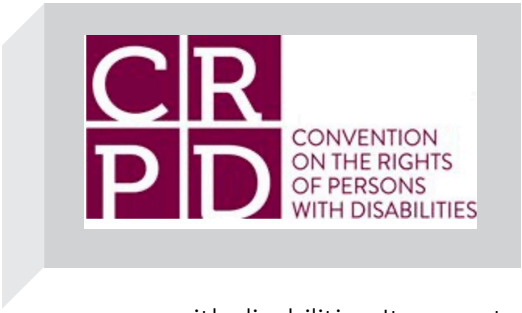


Source: Alasuutari and Powers 2021.

Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared agenda for peace and prosperity for people and the planet (United Nations 2015). To achieve this agenda now and in the future, the United Nations created 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a call for action by all member states. In particular, SDG4, "Quality Education," ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong education opportunities for all. Within SDG4, there are 10 separate targets, each with respective indicators to monitor and track progress by 2030. The targets that explicitly focus on disability inclusion in education include: (1) Target 4.5, which is to eliminate gender disparities in education and to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations; and (2) Target 4.A, which is to substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries.

Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted on December 13, 2006 at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Since then, it has been signed by 164 countries or regional integration organizations, and as of December 2023, it has been ratified by 188 state parties. The CRPD follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes toward and approaches to supporting persons with disabilities. It promotes a vision of persons with disabilities as autonomous actors capable of claiming their rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society. The right to inclusive education is protected in Article 24 of the CRPD, which states: "States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels.... In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that: a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability... b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality, and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live; ... d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education." Additionally, Article 31 states, "States. Parties undertake to collect appropriate information, including statistical and research data, to enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the present Convention."

Appendix C. Directory of Key Actors Working in Disability-Inclusive Education

World Bank Actors

World Bank Inclusive Education Thematic Group

The World Bank's Inclusive Education Thematic Group (IETG) is a thematic team housed within the Education Global Practice's Global Engagement and Knowledge (GEAK) Unit, working closely with regional focal points. The Inclusive Education Thematic Group aims to (1) consolidate and advance the knowledge base available to staff, clients, and development partners on issues related to ensuring equity and inclusion in education; (2) promote cross-sectoral knowledge sharing and find ways to scale up sustainable inclusive-education interventions through diagnostics, analytical work, and operational support; and (3) promote collaboration and synergies across relevant groups and practices within the World Bank Group and with a range of external partners at global, regional, and country levels. World Bank staff can access resources and tools provided by IETG through their internal intranet page.

World Bank Inclusive Education Regional Focal Points

The Inclusive Education Regional Focal Points play a critical role in supporting IETG and liaising between the global team and country teams. They meet regularly to discuss recent and current activities related to both disability inclusion and broader inclusive education. If you are World Bank staff working in one of country teams and are interested in supporting inclusive education, please send an email to: inclusive_education@worldbank.org.

World Bank Trust Funds Supporting Disability Inclusion in Education

The Foundational Learning Compact (FLC) is a World Bank multidonor umbrella trust fund for early childhood, primary education, and secondary education. The FLC focuses on basic literacy, numeracy, and transferable skills that serve as the foundations for learning for all children. These funds are complementary education initiatives aimed at bolstering foundational learning while simultaneously pursuing lasting systematic changes to education systems so that all children everywhere can achieve quality learning. To support the

achievement of these goals, the FLC is designed around three pillars: (1) measurement, to improve country-level capacity to measure and monitor learning outcomes and drivers of learning; (2) evidence-based policies and systemwide reforms, to distill the best evidence on what works in education, develop resources to inform systemwide reforms with lessons learned from what works, and provide support for implementation of those systemwide reforms; and (3) capacity building, to improve the effectiveness of the education systems. The five cross-cutting themes within the FLC are gender, climate, technology, inclusion, and fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) affected states.

The Inclusive Education Initiative (IEI) is a World Bank multidonor trust fund that is part of the Human Rights Trust Fund and overseen by the World Bank's Social Sustainability and Inclusion (SSI) Global Practice. The IEI was launched in 2019 with support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and the U.K. government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), to accelerate action by countries to make their education systems more inclusive for learners with disabilities. To do this at the global level, IEI works to coordinate inclusive-education planning and to develop public goods that countries can use to improve access to and quality of education for children with disabilities. At the country level, the initiative seeks to ensure that efforts by development partners are coordinated, provides funding and technical assistance for the development and implementation of disability-inclusive education programs, and supports the collection of disaggregated data related to disability. IEI also uses an intersectional lens, recognizing how disability interacts with other characteristics of marginalization and disadvantage.

International Organizations

UNICEF

United Nation children's Fund (UNICEF) works in 190 countries on a variety of aspects related to the welfare of children including education, health, social policy, child protection and inclusion. UNICEF's work is guided by the social model and human rights approach to disability. UNICEF widely supports accessibility as a precondition for children and adults to participate fully in an equal society. UNICEF supports the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream programmes and promotes use of personal care assistance, rehabilitation, and assistive technologies. It also works on building knowledge and collecting data on disability, support parents, caregivers, and families of children with disabilities and working with communities to counter stigma and discrimination against disability. UNICEF also works on building partnerships with organizations of persons with disabilities. In line with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, UNICEF is making disability a primary component of its policies, programmes, and operations. Our goal is to be an inclusive, accessible organization and an employer of choice for persons with disabilities, and to advance inclusion in development and humanitarian work across the United Nations system.

UNESCO

Education is at the forefront of UNESCO's mission to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development. UNESCO provides technical support to its Member States to comply with international norms and standards, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and report on their engagement with persons with disabilities. It contributes toward the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy conducive institutional framework. UNESCO also leverages partnerships and seeks to facilitate knowledge-sharing and international cooperation.

UNESCO IIEP

Founded in 1963, the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) is the only organization in the United Nations system devoted to educational planning and management. For six decades, IIEP has supported Member States with designing and implementing educational policies and plans to efficiently and effectively reach both national and international education goals.

UNESCO GEM Report

The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report is an editorially independent report hosted and published by UNESCO focusing on progress in education under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and on the implementation of national and international strategies on education. The 2020 GEM Report focused particularly on inclusion, drawing on those populations that are excluded from education based on ability and background. The report explores policy examples from countries dealing with challenges of inclusive education. These include differing understandings of the word "inclusion," lack of teacher support, absence of data on those excluded from education, and inaccessible infrastructure, among others. Alongside the report, an online database—the Worldwide Inequality Database on Education (WIDE)—highlights education inequalities while the Profiles Enhancing Education Reviews (PEER) platform prepared by the GEM Report present individual countries' laws and policies on inclusion and education. The 2020 GEM Report also was complemented by two special regional reports that focus on inclusion and education in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia.

Global Partnership for Education

Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a multistakeholder partnership and the largest global fund focusing on transforming education in lower-income countries. GPE 2025, the partnership's strategic plan, commits to leaving no child behind. GPE works with countries to make schools accessible and inclusive to ensure education does not discriminate and all children are able to access education. GPE has provided $50 million to support inclusion of

children with disabilities through GPE grants in 2022 and used $379 million in GPE funding to support activities promoting equity, gender equality, and inclusion in 2019. GPE has led to both research and projects on disability, school health (including screening for disability and provision of eyeglasses), school-related, gender-based violence, and refugee children. Additionally, GPE supports national governments to strengthen education data systems, including helping disaggregate education data by disability. GPE has also supported countries in assessing barriers facing children with disabilities; advocated for inclusive education at the global, regional, and national levels; worked on enhancing the capacity of civil society—especially organizations of persons with disabilities. GPE supports partner countries to transform schools so that they support the learning of all students, including those with disabilities. Key activities may include disability screening and early interventions, the provision of assistive technologies, and communication campaigns to raise awareness about all children's right to education.

International Disability Alliance Networks

Global Action on Disability Network

The Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network is a coordination body of bilateral and multilateral donors and agencies, public and private foundations, and key coalitions of the disability movement, with a common interest in achieving inclusive international development and humanitarian action. The rotating co-chair of the GLAD Network is currently the United States (U.S. Department of State), while the permanent co-chair of the GLAD Network is the International Disability Alliance (IDA). GLAD has several working groups, such as the Inclusive Education Working Group, Inclusive Health Working Group, Inclusive Employment Working Group, Gender Equality Working Group, and Disability Inclusive Climate Working Group.

International Disability Alliance

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) is an alliance of networks that brings together over 1,100 member organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and their families from across eight global and six regional networks, including: African Disability Forum (ADF), Arab Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (AOPD), Association of Southeast Asian Nations Disability Forum (ASEAN-DF), Down Syndrome International (DSI), European Disability Forum (EDF), Inclusion International, International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH), International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IFSBH), Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS),[12] Pacific Disability Forum (PDF), World Blind Union (WBU), World Federation of the Deaf (WFD),

12 Red Latinoamericano de Organizaciones de Personas con Discapacidad y sus Familias (https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/RIADIS).

World Federation of the Deafblind (WFDB), and World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (WNUSP).

International Disability and Development Consortium

The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) is a network of civil society organizations (CSOs) that have come together with the common objective of promoting inclusive international development and humanitarian action. IDDC works closely in partnership with IDA.

Inclusion International

Inclusion International is a network of individuals and organizations supporting people with intellectual disabilities and their families. The network seeks to support the full inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities as valued members of their societies through advocacy, collaboration, and the development and dissemination of tools, resources, and capacity-building programs. One program, Catalyst for Inclusive Education, aims to develop and strengthen Inclusion International members' common understanding of inclusive education; develop a set of advocacy tools to support inclusive education advocacy work; provide technical support for the implementation of inclusive education in members' countries; collect, create, and share information learning and resources related to inclusive education; and enhance collaboration among Inclusion International members and their regional networks in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and the Americas.

Enabling Education Network

Enabling Education Network (EENET) is an international information-sharing network that encourages and supports innovation on educational inclusion, equity, and rights. EENET is based in the United Kingdom but is also open to the international community. It is committed to prioritizing the needs of countries, organizations, and individuals who have limited access to basic information and resources. It develops advocacy materials and shares campaign messages about the right to quality, inclusive education for all, and offers tailor-made consultancy services including training, research, and evaluations, for government and nongovernment clients. The EENET website consists of a repository of resources, including videos, training manuals, and guidance documents, as well as a consultancy roster of international inclusive-education experts.

International Nongovernmental Organizations Working on Disability Inclusion in Education

Humanity and Inclusion

Humanity and Inclusion (HI), formerly known as Handicapped International, promotes disability rights in some of the world's most pressing emergency and humanitarian settings, including contexts affected by armed conflict or natural disasters. With projects in 60 countries, HI advocates for universal recognition of the rights of persons with disabilities through national planning and advocacy, and by working with local authorities and OPDs across various sectors, including emergency response, rehabilitation and health, and education. HI implements projects supporting inclusive education in 31 countries across West, Central, North, and East Africa, in the Middle East, and in Asia. It also launched the #school4all campaign to ensure school buildings and infrastructure are accessible to all and to strengthen the enrollment and participation of children and youth with disabilities.

Light for the World

Light for the World is a global development organization that empowers persons with disabilities and enables eye health services in low-income countries. As an independent, nonprofit association, Light for the World uses a multisectoral approach, promoting education for all through improving health systems and amplifying the voices of persons with disabilities in the workplace and beyond.

Sightsavers

Sightsavers works to prevent avoidable blindness and to fight for the rights of people with visual difficulties. The organization works in more than 30 countries, partnering with governments, and local, national, and international partners to carry out eye operations and distribute treatments where needed. It also advocates for the rights of people with visual difficulties and other disabilities, to help improve local health services so they are sustainable.

Save the Children

Save the Children is a humanitarian organization working across education, health, and child-protection sectors in more than 100 countries. It is a global membership organization comprising Save the Children International and 30 national members. Save the Children works with national and local governments to improve access to education, improve children's literacy and numeracy skills at an early age, create safe and inclusive schools, and provide education in times of conflict or in the aftermath of a natural disaster. In addition to implementing programs, Save the Children conducts research, creates global public goods, and has a repository of resources specific to disability inclusion and inclusive education. In

2021, Save the Children launched its first Disability Inclusion Policy, in which it promoted a human rights-based approach to disability inclusion and articulated its commitment to: (1) partnering with persons with disabilities, including children and youth with disabilities, and their representative organizations; (2) designing and delivering disability-inclusive programs through a twin-track approach; (3), promoting, protecting and upholding the rights of children with disabilities of all genders through advocacy for sector-specific and cross-sectoral inclusive policies and laws; and (4) creating a diverse and disability-confident workplace that actively recruits persons with disabilities.

Plan International

Plan International promotes free, equal access to quality education for all children and works with children, their families, communities, and governments to advocate at both the local and international levels. Plan International specifically focuses on inclusive education as it relates to children with disabilities, particularly girls with disabilities. Plan International supports these young people in accessing primary and secondary education and transitioning to labor markets through skills development. The organization also supports the broader health and well-being of young persons with disabilities, by providing specialized physiotherapy and rehabilitation, as well as sexual and reproductive health services and education.

Appendix D. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

FAQ 1. How can I develop a disability-inclusive education project plan? How can teams begin to approach disability inclusion in a country for the first time?

The four principles can help create a disability-inclusion-in-education project plan. An example of how they can be applied for analytical work is given below:

- Principle 1: Teams can initiate analytical work by first attempting to understand the educational environment of the country with regards to disability inclusion. This would entail exploring data on disability prevalence in children as well as their enrollment and retention rates in schools and their learning outcomes; conducting a comprehensive review of the policy landscape of the country to understand whether disability inclusion in education is a policy priority; and engaging with stakeholders including organizations of persons with disabilities, community members, and others.
- Principle 2: Teams can conduct research on system-level changes and support available or required for learners with disabilities. In particular, this would include identifying whether multisectoral support (health, finance, education) is available for schools and learners with disabilities.
- Principle 3: Teams can conduct research to understand the sort of support and accommodations that are available or that are required by learners with disabilities at the whole-of-school and classroom levels. For instance, this can include identifying whether school buildings are accessible or whether inclusive teaching and learning resources are available.
- Principle 4: Teams can conduct research on the perspectives and experiences of persons with disabilities, their families, community members, OPDs, teachers, and other stakeholders to understand how disability and education is viewed in the country (for example, whether any stigma and discrimination are associated with disability) and what the awareness and demands are around providing education to learners with disabilities, and to identify key actors and potential partners that support inclusive education or disability inclusion.

An example of how the framework can be applied for operational work is given below:

- Principle 1: Teams can begin their operational work by reviewing the educational environment of the country with regards to disability inclusion and then identifying areas that require support. Meeting countries where they are would also mean that funding is provided in a phased approach for low-risk tasks and consultations are held with the government and other stakeholders to understand the policy priorities of the country.
- Principle 2: Teams can identify whether multisectoral support (health, finance, education) is available for schools and learners with disabilities and provide support accordingly.
- Principle 3: Teams can identify areas of support at whole-of-school and classroom levels, for instance, funding priorities focusing on accessible infrastructure, inclusive teaching and learning resources, or teacher training.
- Principle 4: Teams can identify key actors and potential partners that back inclusive education and disability inclusion in education and can help support the operational work.

FAQ 2. Where can I find qualified specialists in disability inclusion?

Consult Ministry of Education and universities and schools in the country you work in and the World Bank resources complied by the Inclusive Education Thematic Group (IETG), which include:

- A roster of consultants
- A list of organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and academics working with disability inclusion in the countries where your projects will be implemented
- A list of international organizations and development partners working in disability inclusion

FAQ 3. How can I garner government support for and commitment to disability inclusion in education?

- Take a human rights approach that emphasizes a policy argument, framing inclusion and equitable quality education as a core commitment of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. (See examples of talking points and PPTs in inclusive education pages of the Education Operations Support Hub (Ops Hub) to support discussions.)
- Use a phased approach, starting with small-scale objectives, which can lead to larger-scale or more complex interventions.

- Emphasize the returns to investment in learners with disabilities and the benefits of investing in disability inclusion. Research indicates that governments get more value for their money when they design education systems to be "intrinsically disability inclusive."[13] Making investments in disability inclusion has the potential to improve livelihood opportunities and wages for persons with disabilities, creating more prosperous societies.[14]

FAQ 4. How can I initiate policy dialogue on disability-inclusive education in contexts with nascent or fragile education systems (e.g., FCV contexts)?

Consult the World Bank Group (WBG)'s adapted approach to Fragile, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) settings, which has shifted from a focus on postconflict reconstruction to address challenges across the entire fragility spectrum. The World Bank has developed a comprehensive strategy comprising 23 measures to address FCV, serving as an essential resource for World Bank teams working in FCV settings (see World Bank 2020d).[15]

FAQ 5. How can I support governments as they rethink their approaches to inclusive education? How can I help shift government priorities or agendas around disability- inclusion education?

Understand and meet countries where they are in their pathway toward inclusive education. Globally, 25% of countries (and over 40% in Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean) continue to rely on segregated models of inclusive education. This means that they make provisions for learners with disabilities in separate settings (i.e., "special schools") (UNESCO 2020). Laws in 10% of countries foster *integration* of learners with disabilities in mainstream schools but in separate classrooms, and less than 17% of countries have laws that support the full *inclusion* of learners with disabilities in mainstream schools (UNESCO 2020). Policies tend

13 See Watters 2020. For the benefits of returns to investment in countries in Africa and Asia, see Thomas and Burnett 2013; for studies in countries in South Asia, see Lamichhane 2015.

14 For more about the benefits of investing in disability inclusion, see Lamichhane and Sawada 2013; Watters 2020; Watters 2022; and UNESCO-IIEP et al. 2021. As one study reports: "Evidence shows that both students with and without intellectual disabilities develop their social-emotional learning skills which create a ripple effect in the school climate for learning, resulting in improved academic performance and later career success" (Jodl 2023).

15 The 2011 World Development Report highlighted the interconnectedness of security, justice, and development, while the 2018 joint UN-WBG report, *Pathways for Peace*, urged the WBG to prioritize inclusive development approaches as a preventive measure against FCV risks. Even in the toughest conflict environments, the WBG aims to engage meaningfully to preserve institutional capacity and human capital crucial for future recovery. As signs of recovery emerge, the WBG supports governments undergoing transformative change. Acknowledging the pivotal role of the private sector in sustainable development in FCV settings, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) are significantly expanding their efforts.

to be more ambitious, emphasizing segregation in 5% of countries, partial segregation in 45%, integration in 12%, and inclusion in 38% (UNESCO 2020). Nevertheless, moving students from special to mainstream schools is not automatically a solution; adequate human and financial resources need to be available to effectively provide inclusive education (UNESCO 2020).

FAQ 6. How do I convince governments to invest in learners with disabilities, in contexts where there are so many other learners in need of support (e.g., in FCV contexts or where there are large numbers of out-of-school learners)?

Learners with disabilities are part of out-of-school learners as well and are often one of the most marginalized learners. Addressing learners with minor difficulties (such as minor learning difficulties) and more severe disabilities benefits all. Establish a **twin-track approach** to inclusive education by designing policies that mainstream inclusive practices into the mainstream education system (general track); and target activities or resources directly to learners with disabilities (targeted track) benefiting all learners. The World Bank's twin-track approach addresses general barriers that hamper access of education for all learners while also focusing on specific barriers that constrain the inclusion in education for children with disabilities. This approach both confronts specific disability-related barriers and the wider social, environmental, and legal barriers that can impact all learners.

- A practical way to implement a general-track approach is to foster inclusive and accessible school infrastructure, classroom, and school environments. Learning-friendly environments require that all learners feel safe, supported, and stimulated (UNESCO-IIEP et al. 2021), and pre-service and in-service teacher education can help teachers focus on inclusive pedagogies and curricula. Assessments can be sufficiently flexible to meet the requirements of learners with different abilities to ensure that enabling learning environments are created.
- Practical ways to implement a targeted approach to inclusion can include providing learners with disabilities stipends, scholarships, or subsidies to attend school or cover educational costs; and offering reasonable accommodations to learners with disabilities, including through assistive technologies. Targeted awareness-raising campaigns may further be supported by addressing demand-driven barriers within communities, such as attitudes and beliefs of community members, including parents themselves (see Inclusive Education Resource Guide).

FAQ 7. What sort of project activities, from simple to more complex, can I implement to support learners with different types of disabilities?

A range of project activities can be incorporated to support the needs of learners with different types of disabilities depending on contextual needs and realities. These include but are not limited to:

- Different forms of educational provisions. This includes using innovative and diverse techniques for the education of learners with disabilities, such as community resource centers, catch-up schools or classes for out-of-school learners with disabilities, and vocational training opportunities for older learners with disabilities.
- Provision of accessible teaching and learning resources. This includes the provision of inclusive-teaching and learning materials, such as braille materials that can help learners with visual impairments to be included in classrooms.
- Provision of assistive devices. This includes the provision of assistive devices to improve access for learners with disabilities, such as wheelchairs for learners with physical disabilities and hearing aids for learners with hearing impairments.
- Provision of inclusive infrastructure. This includes ensuring the infrastructure in schools is accessible and inclusive for learners with disabilities and may include having accessible ramps for learners with physical disabilities and WASH facilities for all learners.
- Teacher training and support for teachers in the classrooms. This includes providing teachers with both pre-service and in-service training as well as employing a range of models, such as the itinerant teaching model, that can help teachers foster inclusive education in classrooms. This also includes having additional resources in the classrooms, such as sign language assistants for learners with hearing disabilities or psychosocial specialists for learners with cognitive difficulties, to provide support to teachers and learners in the classrooms.
- Parent and community awareness programs. These can help raise awareness on the need for inclusive education for learners with disabilities and identify children with disabilities in the communities.

FAQ 8. How can I meaningfully engage with persons with disabilities at different phases of the project lifecycle?

- Consult the following table on when and how to engage with persons with disabilities, their families, and their support networks at different stages of a project (table D.1).

- Address the access needs of all participants. This may include the provision of reasonable accommodations, in addition to simple steps that can be taken to ensure everyone has access to the consultation venue, information shared, and participation strategies employed (see table D.2).
- Make sure to use appropriate language and etiquette when interacting with persons with disabilities (see table A.3).

Table D.1. When and How to Engage Persons with Disabilities for Disability Inclusion in Education

Who to engage	When and how to engage them
Students with disabilities	**In the initial planning stages of a project or policy:** • Conduct a needs assessment for persons with disabilities • Identify potential risks that a project may place upon persons with disabilities (e.g., by drawing on the ESF)
Parents or families of students with disabilities	**During the implementation of a projects or policy:** • Facilitate multisectoral dialogue and engagement between civil society, OPDs, and the government • Support the translation or piloting of data-collection tools to ensure that the language makes sense and that these tools can be used to collect accurate data • Conduct an audit of financial investment and distribution of resources for disability inclusion in education activities (e.g., Mongolia) • Review or assess the appropriateness of the inclusive-education policy, curriculum, textbooks, and teacher education and training modules • Co-design or co-create new materials and resources • Conduct an audit of school infrastructure (e.g., Fiji) • Create and facilitate training for teachers, school leaders, parents, and other education stakeholders
Organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), including umbrella organizations and organizations with specific expertise in a disability (e.g., deaf and hard-of-hearing; Down syndrome)	**While monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on a project or policy intervention:** • Ensure grievance mechanisms are accessible for persons with disabilities • Examine the impact that the intervention has had on persons with disabilities through qualitative or quantitative research methods (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups) • Report and disseminate findings and results of an intervention (e.g., recording videos of success stories)

Source: IETG team.

Table D.2. Inclusive Practices When Planning and Facilitating Consultations with OPDs	
Inclusive practice	**Purpose**
When selecting a venue…	
Identify a central location for community members with disabilities	To reduce travel time
Identify a venue that may already be used by persons with disabilities	To increase familiarity with venue and possible attendance rates
Ensure that the venue has ramp access, accessible toilets, handrails, etc.	To ensure minimum access requirements for persons with disabilities
Ensure that the venue is close to public transportation	To increase access to venue for persons with disabilities who are dependent on public transport
Provide accessible transportation if there are not suitable transport options available to the venue	To ensure persons with disabilities can access the venue when public transportation is not accessible
Ensure wide walkways between and around chairs and other furniture inside the venue	To enable ease of mobility for persons in wheelchairs or with walking frames
Ensure adequate lighting in the venue	To enable lip reading for participants who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and to improve visual identification of location of presenters for participants with vision impairments
Provide the option of front-row seating for participants with disabilities (optional only and dependent on individual preferences)	To ensure participants who are using sign interpreters have an unobstructed view; to allow for participants with difficulty seeing to have unobstructed access to visual content; and to allow persons who have difficulty moving to avoid stairs (if there is tiered seating)

Inclusive practice	Purpose
When promoting an event or consultation…	
Develop large-size posters with good color contrast	To enable greater visibility of information for persons with vision impairments
Use a range of communication modes, including print media, radio, and community announcements to promote consultations	To enable persons with different disabilities to access information
Identify promotional information that persons with disabilities are encouraged to attend	To ensure persons with disabilities feel invited and welcomed to the consultation
When facilitating the event or consultation…	
Allow for breaks throughout consultation	To allow rest time for persons with disabilities, their personal assistants, and interpreters
Increase time allowance for activities such as meal breaks when relevant	To allow additional time for persons with disabilities to complete care needs
Voice all printed and visual information, and provide verbal descriptions of content being discussed; don't point or show objects without auditory description	To support access for participants who have difficulty following visual content, such as those with seeing, learning, or intellectual difficulties
Ensure only one person speaks at a time when in group settings	To assist participants with auditory-processing difficulties better understand what is said; to ensure that participants with vision impairments can face the speaker; to ensure that participants using interpreters can follow the proceedings, as interpreters can only interpret one voice at a time

Source: Adapted from CBM 2012.

Note: OPDs = organizations of persons with disabilities.

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