

Series on Disability-Inclusive Development

My Right is Our Future

The Transformative Power of Disability-Inclusive Education





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The Transformative Power
of Disability-Inclusive Education

03 Series on
Disability-Inclusive Development



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For information about the picture, see page 154.

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Foreword

An estimated 65 million primary and lower secondary school-aged children in developing countries have disabilities, half of whom are out of school. These children are among the most marginalised in their communities. If their fundamental right to education is not met, this significantly limits their abilities to fully participate on an equal basis with others in the social, political, and economic life of their communities.

Over the last decade, there has been a growing international commitment to inclusive education. The adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006 as well as the more recent 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, an ambitious universal commitment to promote sustainable development goals, reflect this commitment. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was a major driver in influencing and addressing the equal rights of children with disabilities in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. SDG 4, in turn, has created a positive development framework addressing quality education for all. This framework moves the current debate in education beyond achieving universal primary enrolment, to ensuring inclusive, equitable, quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all persons with disabilities.

The benefits are clear. Creating inclusive schools reinforces the important human rights values of dignity, equality, personal autonomy, and choice. For children with disabilities, this

means that future health risks can be mitigated and life prospects are significantly increased. Longer term, it reduces the costs associated with unemployment, clinical treatments, remedial education, and training. Furthermore, inclusive education is more cost-effective at ensuring full access to education. When one considers that governments supporting segregated education are meeting the needs of only a minority of children with disabilities – excluding the vast majority – the argument for inclusive education is overwhelming.

Achieving it, on the other hand, is an ongoing process. CBM is working hard with our partners to transition traditional, segregated school systems to inclusive education in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24. This requires persistent, collaborative efforts with disabled people's organisations, communities, and mainstream development agencies from the grassroots to national, regional, and global levels to support governments in meeting their obligations. Our collaborations with the International Disability Alliance, the International Disability and Development Consortium, and mainstream alliances such as the Global Partnership for Education and the Global Campaign for Education are examples of this.

Through these joint efforts, we have helped influence the prominent focus on disability-inclusive education in SDG 4. Collaboration with the International Disability

and Development Consortium resulted in the high-profile #CostingEquity report. This research and advocacy on education financing work led to a global call to action for bilateral, multilateral, and other major donor agencies to invest in disability-inclusive education.

The fact remains, however, that inclusive education as an approach is still not widely understood, let alone applied. This publication explores a number of the challenges and provides practical suggestions on how to support disability-inclusive education systems that can better meet both the general and specific learning needs of all children with

disabilities. It recognises that inclusive education is a complex process and aims to help governmental and non-governmental actors alike to navigate the most suitable pathways to change.

I wish you a good and inspiring read.



Dr Rainer Brockhaus
Chairman International Leadership Team,
CBM International

Introduction

“It is not possible to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in all other areas of development if there remains exclusion and segregation in the key area that is a foundation for development—education.”

Ingrid Lewis,
Managing Director,
Enabling Education
Network (2016)





▲ Torekeyn, 14, who has a physical disability, is writing on the blackboard in his class at a primary school in Ethiopia. The school is inclusive, bringing together children with and without disabilities.

Why disability-inclusive education is important

Education and development are intrinsically linked. Education improves individual and community wellbeing. It contributes to a nation's overall development, sustainability, and stability. It is estimated that one extra year of schooling increases an individual's earnings by up to 10%.¹ Exclusion from education, on the other hand, costs countries billions of dollars annually.

"In Bangladesh, lack of schooling and employment for people with disabilities and their caregivers, could be losing the country US\$ 1.2 billion of income annually, or 1.74% of GDP [Gross Domestic Product]."²

A country's economic and social development is held back when children are out of school or do not complete a quality education. Improved access to better quality education therefore has the potential to lift individuals and nations out of poverty.

In July 2015, the Oslo Summit on Education for Development brought together members of the international community to discuss renewing and increasing their commitments to education. The event highlighted that "the global ambitions of world leaders to eradicate poverty, break the cycle of humanitarian crises and lay the foundation for sustainable development cannot be reached without quality education for all."³

Over 30 million children with disabilities are missing out on education. They are denied the opportunity to contribute more productively to the development of their families, communities, and countries. Many more children and young persons with disabilities have enrolled but subsequently dropped out of or failed to complete basic education, and even those who do complete may have received a poor quality education that did not meet their needs. If these problems were addressed, the positive impact on countries would be significant.

"Educating children with disabilities reduces welfare costs and future dependence; releases other household members from caring responsibilities, allowing them to engage in employment and other productive activities; and increases children's potential productivity and wealth creation which in turn helps to alleviate poverty."⁴

Disability is both a cause and consequence of poverty, with access to education being a key driver that can break the cycle of poverty to ensure that girls, boys, women, and men can effectively be included in development processes. For CBM, our partners, and like-minded organisations working for disability-inclusive development, the logical argument is that persons with disabilities have a right to access education on an equal basis with peers and have important contributions to make in decision making and development processes.

The next step therefore is to argue that education must be disability-inclusive. Persons with disabilities cannot achieve inclusion in development, or in social, political, and economic aspects of their communities, if the fundamental precondition for development – the right to education – remains poor quality, exclusive, discriminatory, or segregated.

Why CBM is offering this publication now

The last 10 years have seen considerable growth in commitment to inclusive education. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)⁵ was adopted in 2006. It marked a significant turning point. States that have ratified the UNCRPD are obliged not just to provide education for persons with disabilities but to “ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning.”⁶ More recently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), replacing the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs), have taken a more inclusive stance on development. SDG 4 on education has moved the debate beyond achieving universal primary enrolment, as seen with the MDGs and Education for All (EFA) movements, towards the need to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”⁷

Box 1: Defining inclusive education

Inclusive education:

- is a long-term process of changing attitudes, policies, and practices;
- focuses on identifying and removing barriers, helping to ensure that diverse learners can access, participate in, achieve within, and benefit from quality education;
- achieves its goals in a unified way, avoiding parallel systems and removing exclusion, segregation, and discrimination on the grounds of disability, gender, ethnicity, language, religion, poverty, age, health status, refugee status, among others;
- extends beyond formal schooling to encompass non-formal and informal education⁸; and
- is a stakeholder- and community-driven process, and as such is a vital part of a wider process of developing inclusive societies.

There is no single fixed formula or blueprint for inclusive education. Rather, it is a flexible approach that finds adaptive solutions that consider existing starting points, such as culture and available resources.

The body of small-scale, project- and community-level experience on inclusive education in resource-poor contexts has grown over the last 20 years or more. This has provided evidence of the benefits of community-based inclusive education. There is an urgent need to learn from and adapt these experiences to inform and support larger-scale efforts, and to encourage and enable governments to do more to build inclusive education systems. It is no longer appropriate to have inclusive education predominantly initiated and implemented through small scale non-governmental organisations (NGO). CBM and other NGOs

like us must rethink our roles in how best to support collaborative efforts for systemic change in partnership with disabled people's organisations (DPO) to hold governments and ministries of education to account in fulfilling their obligations to all children.

CBM is well placed to support the modelling of inclusive education approaches that governments and bilateral donors can take to scale. As with many organisations that have been working in the field of disability for decades, our work started from a traditional charity model approach supporting segregated and specialist schooling, gradually developing towards a human rights based approach. In partnership with local organisations, we now focus on working with mainstream governmental and non-governmental agencies to advocate for and support disability-inclusive policy and practice in line with the UNCRPD, supporting governments' transitions to inclusive systems. We position ourselves as "a significant force in the move towards disability-inclusive development globally."¹¹ This means that CBM plays an active role in the inclusive education movement.

This book is well timed to help us reflect on past work: learning and achievements by CBM, our partners, and other organisations; and to look ahead to further developing innovative work within inclusive education.

What this book covers

This publication is the third in CBM's Series on Disability-Inclusive Development, and it illustrates why inclusive education for persons

Box 2: CBM's position on inclusive education

CBM recognises that inclusive education is a process of improving the educational presence, participation, and achievement of all learners, including those with disabilities. As CBM's mission is to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the poorest countries of the world, inevitably this book focuses more on the inclusion of learners with disabilities.

CBM is committed to supporting the realisation of the UNCRPD. Article 24 makes an unambiguous call for inclusive education for all. The General Comment on Article 24 highlights that realisation of this article "is not compatible with sustaining two systems of education: mainstream and special/segregated education systems."⁹ Not all CBM's partner programmes in education are fully oriented to inclusive education yet. However, we are working with partners and governments to support the "progressive realization"¹⁰ of Article 24 as a long-term desired change.

I	Individual and systemic approaches Chapter 1	discusses conceptual issues such as the medical and social models, the human rights based approach, and the twin-track approach;
N	Non-negotiable commitments Chapter 2	discusses international conventions and national policies relevant to inclusive education;
C	Collaboration Chapter 3	looks at the vital importance of governmental and non-governmental organisations and individuals working together;
L	Long-term process Chapter 4	explains why planning and funding must be approached from a long-term perspective;
U	Understanding and awareness Chapter 5	draws attention to the need to ensure practical understanding, which includes having skills, in addition to awareness of the issues;
S	Stakeholder empowerment Chapter 6	explains why and how diverse stakeholders must be enabled to play a role in developing and sustaining inclusive education;
I	Innovation: accessibility, teaching, transition and lifelong learning Chapter 7–9	highlights a few key areas for more creative programming and policy, focused on continuous improvement and innovation;
O	Organisation of the education system Chapter 10	looks at the ways in which inclusive education systems need to be organised and funded; and
N	Next steps Chapter 11	provides a checklist of key points for programmes and advocates to consider.

◀ Description of the division of chapters according to the INCLUSION mnemonic. Each letter in INCLUSION represents a different aspect of inclusive education that needs to be considered to make it work.

with disabilities is a vital aspect of wider inclusive development. The series aims to contribute to the international debate on disability-inclusion in development and to share relevant experiences.

This book covers the ‘why and how’ of inclusive education. It also encourages readers to critically reflect on some of the common pitfalls and gaps holding back the full realisation of inclusive education systems. Inclusive education is a complex process. We have selected a number of important elements for our programmes and partners to consider and act on, through programming and advocacy. To make these elements more manageable and memorable, the key elements have been summarised as INCLUSION, as you can see on page 15.

The structure of this book motivates us to pay more attention to some key problems that are not always recognised or sufficiently addressed. It encourages us to remember that, if we do not consider all the elements, we may struggle to fully realise INCLUSION.

The book offers insights into ways of working that may help countries progress from small-scale pilot projects to larger-scale, national, and international solutions to improve the quality and inclusiveness of education. The book discusses inclusive education in both development and humanitarian contexts. Inclusive education in crises and emergencies is not discussed in a separate chapter, but examples are woven throughout.

What this publication does not do

This publication draws together and analyses information and experiences collected by diverse inclusive education actors over recent decades. It does not present findings from a specific piece of rigorous academic research. The topics presented here are not a formula or blueprint to follow to guarantee successful inclusive education. This publication provides an up-to-date overview of key debates and experiences, and as such is not a step-by-step guide or training manual. However, the book has been structured to make it useful as a supplementary or reference book for future training courses developed by CBM, our partners, or other organisations.

Who this publication is for

This publication is aimed at readers within and beyond CBM who have an interest in developing and improving the provision of education, whether they are working for disability-focused or mainstream organisations, development or advocacy organisations, or government agencies. The publication is also aimed at readers with a specific interest in disability-inclusive development, who wish to know more about how inclusive education fits into this process.

Chapter 1

Individual and Systemic Approaches

"I want the whole college to be open to me, it's my right. But I also need my teachers to remember that sometimes I have different needs from the other students. That doesn't make me a problem or a nuisance. It makes me a unique human being – just like you."

Edwina,
Vocational college student
with a disability in Tanzania
(2008)



1.1 Understanding the disability paradigm shift

“Persons with disabilities are not viewed as ‘objects’ of charity, medical treatment and social protection; rather as ‘subjects’ with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.”¹²

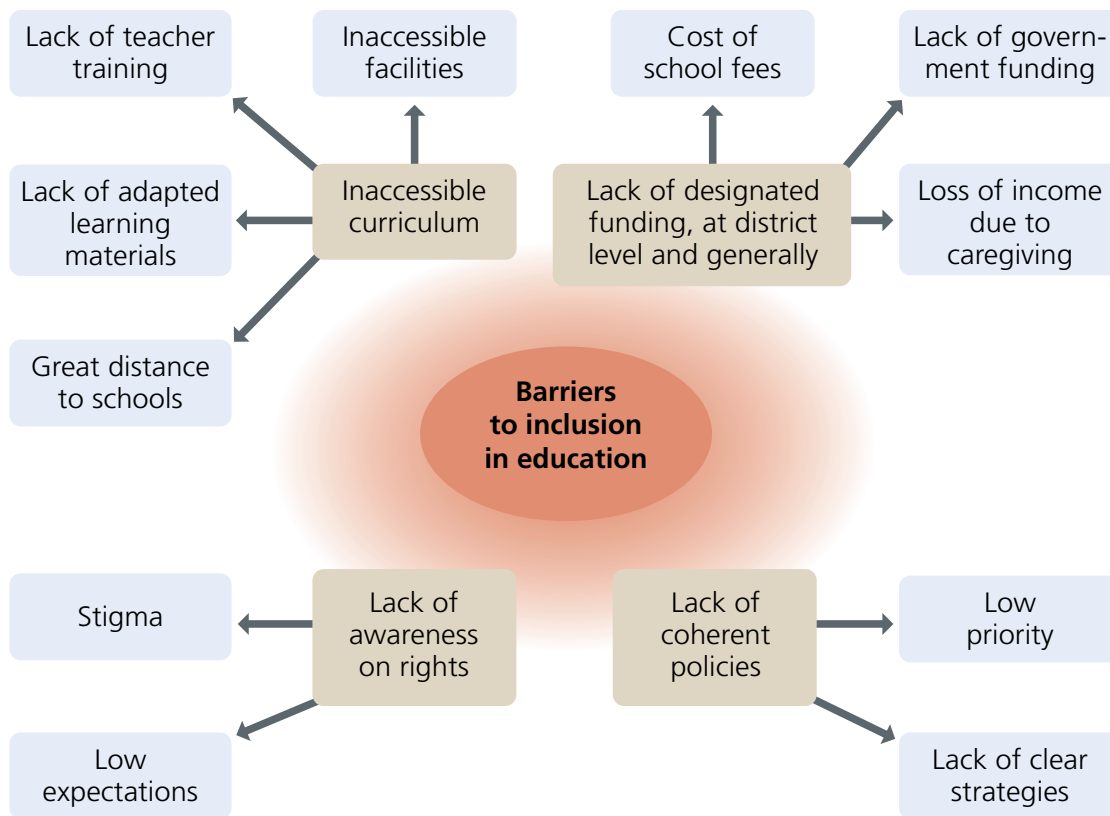
In 2006, with the adoption of the UNCRPD by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, a paradigm shift occurred in how disability is viewed worldwide. A ‘paradigm shift’ put simply is a transformation of what were once established views to new ways of thinking and understanding. For example, long-held established views of disability or persons with disabilities came through a medical and charitable lens. This meant that, in many situations, girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities were seen as problems, in need of curing or fixing and as incapable for making decisions on their own. This view resulted in the provision of services—such as education, health, and employment—delivered through a system that focused primarily on rehabilitation rather than human development and inclusion in the community.

The adoption of the UNCRPD significantly changed this view and instead promoted a human rights based approach to disability. It builds on the social model approach, which views society and its structures as the creator of barriers. This was welcomed widely by the international disability movement, which had campaigned hard for this change. Persons

with disabilities, as a result of the UNCRPD’s human rights based approach, are now seen as subjects with agency and control over their own futures. Quite simply, the human rights based approach to disability means that girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities are recognised as rights holders who are fully capable of participating in their own life decisions and in society as active contributors to community, social, and economic life.

While the transformative shift changed how disability is viewed and perceived, the human rights based approach promoted by the UNCRPD also shifted the responsibilities and duties of states towards persons with disabilities who live in their countries. Its ratification by over 170 countries means that the majority of the world’s governments subscribe to creating an inclusive world for girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities. By ratifying the UNCRPD, all of these states are duty bearers to their citizens and, as part of the ratification, there is a system for accountability where states must show progress for persons with disabilities in key areas of life such as education, social protection, and economic security.

CBM, like many other organisations, has been working for years to promote the inclusion of girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities in education. However, intense dialogue continues within CBM as well as in other organisations and within the disability movement about appropriate settings for inclusive education, resourcing needed, the quality of education delivered, and its impact. The recent General Comment by the UNCRPD expert committee on the right to inclusive



◀ Figure 1: Interaction of barriers to inclusion in education

education discussed in Sections 1.4 and 2.1.1 provides guidance that will position future policy development on inclusive education.

1.2 How the disability paradigm shift relates to education

“Education had been seen in CBM and in the advisory working groups as education for the deaf and education for the blind. These were the only areas, so [our work] was actually looking at special education

mostly from a ... medical point of view. Now we look at inclusive education ... from a social or community level rights-based approach.”¹³

The paradigm shift in relation to education is often explained as the shift from seeing the ‘individual learner as the problem’ to seeing the ‘system as the problem.’ **Figure 1** above illustrates systemic barriers that hinder the inclusion of persons with disabilities in education. Financial barriers, the lack of coherent policies, the lack of awareness on rights,



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▲ Vanessa (second from the right) is hearing impaired. Here she is at her school in Nicaragua interacting with her classmates.

as well as inaccessible curricula may prevent learners with disabilities from attending and progressing through school.¹⁴

Special needs education, especially when segregated, has tended to approach education from an individual, medical model. This type of special provision views girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities as separate and in need of a fundamentally different education to everyone else. Often the special education they receive is designed to help learners with disabilities eventually 'fit into' mainstream schools or societies. However, because these schools and societies remain largely unchanged, the reality upon leaving segregated special education settings is often one of continued social and economic exclusion. In addition, most low- and middle-

income countries cannot afford to run parallel special and mainstream school systems. This means that only a small minority of learners with disabilities will ever gain access to special schools, and then often only by travelling long distances or living away from home. Special schools have, in the past, helped persons with disabilities access education. However, moving forward, it is clear that a segregated approach within education is not a sound foundation for achieving wider inclusion of persons with disabilities within development and society.

The social and human rights models help us to understand that girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities have a fundamental right to be included in society. That means society is responsible for addressing the attitudinal, policy, practice, environmental, and resource barriers that exclude persons with disabilities. Logically, this means that education systems—as part of society—also have an obligation to address the barriers that exclude persons with disabilities from learning effectively alongside their peers without disabilities.

Actors involved in development and education work increasingly to understand that they cannot effectively support inclusive development from a social model perspective unless they also support inclusive education for persons with disabilities.

Some readers may ask: 'I agree with the theory, but why have I seen so-called inclusive schools that ignore the specific needs of children with disabilities, and that are not helping them at all?' It is a valid point, which we examine in the rest of this chapter.

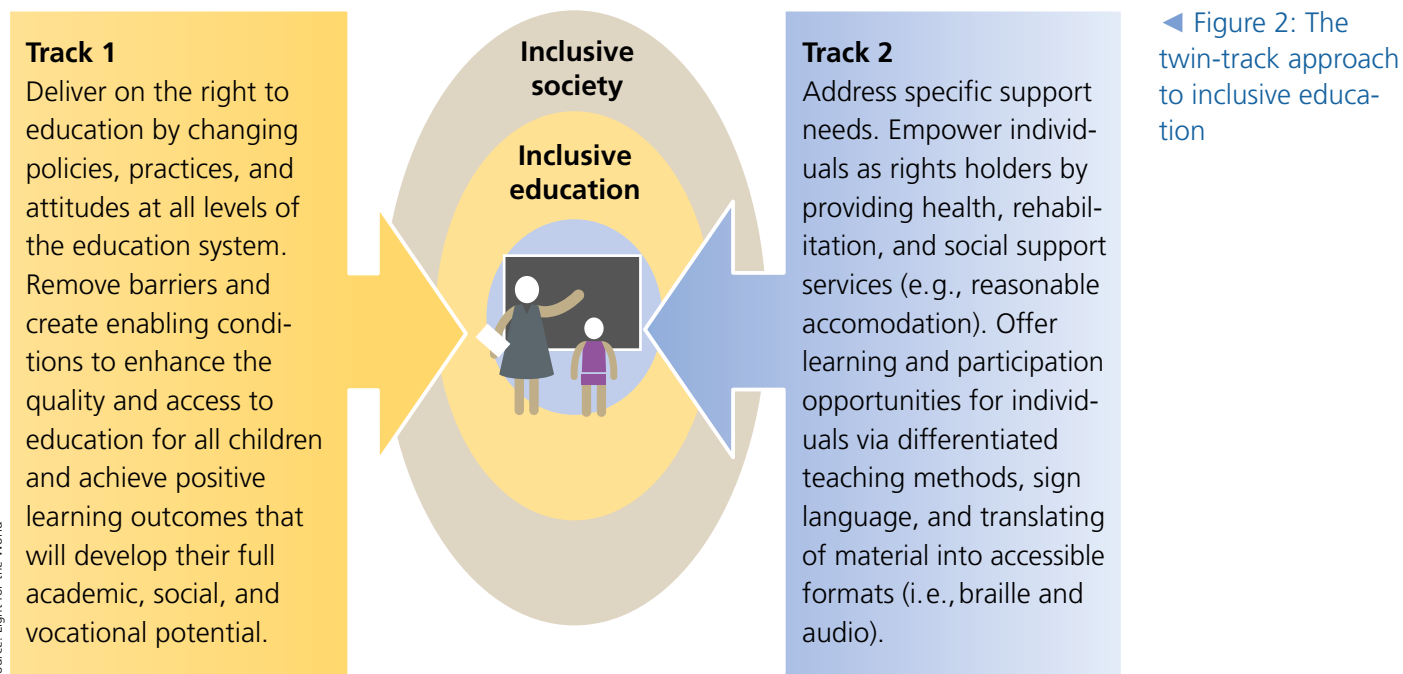
1.3 Maintaining individual support while practising inclusion – a twin-track approach

At a systems level, the twin-track approach focuses on ensuring that systems have the necessary resources so that girls and boys with disabilities:

- influence policy and practice at school level;
- have improved access to quality education; and
- have improved access to livelihood opportunities and/or higher education leading to a lifetime contribution to community and society.

Achieving inclusion at the system level is the only way to ensure a systemic approach to inclusive education for girls and boys with disabilities. At an individual level, this systemised approach can be measured by:

- the level of specific support measures being in place to meet individual needs e.g., speech therapy services, sign language, easy read, braille, and physiotherapy;
- differentiated learning methods and accessible formats available when needed;
- assistive devices and required support services e.g., amplification aids, low-vision aids, mobility aids, and closed captioning; and
- empowerment of all girls and boys as rights holders, particularly those from marginalised groups.



◀ Figure 2: The twin-track approach to inclusive education



▲ Happy reads out to his class at his school in Malawi. Read more about his story in the Case Study 1 below.

Working on both tracks at once can be challenging. That is why inclusive education needs a foundation of collaboration, which is discussed in Chapter 3.

“CBM embraces inclusive education, which means that all boys, girls, men, and women with additional educational needs are actively included within the regular educational system and provided with individually tailored support as needed.”¹⁵

Case Study 1: Twin-track support for Happy in Malawi¹⁶

► Happy had experienced hearing problems since he was in Standard 1 (the first year of primary education). Unfortunately, his teach-

ers did not notice that he could not hear properly. As a result, Happy’s performance at school deteriorated. He kept failing exams and had to repeat the same standard for three years. Eventually his teachers realised he had a hearing impairment, but they felt unable to help him and said he should seek special assistance. Happy’s head teacher contacted the Ear Nose and Throat Unit at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre, which is supported by CBM. They examined Happy, confirmed he was hard of hearing, and gave him hearing aids. Soon his performance in school improved, he passed his exams, and was able to progress to the next standard. Staff from the clinic and CBM also worked with pupils in Happy’s school. Other children had started to tease Happy about his hearing aids, so the clinic and CBM staff explained to them the causes and effects of hearing problems and encouraged them to be supportive of and friendly towards Happy. Happy benefited from support with his individual needs, such as helping him to access hearing aids, and from efforts to make systemic changes, such as reducing discriminatory attitudes. ◀

1.4 Understanding what we mean by ‘inclusive education’

The UNCRPD General Comment on Article 24 (2016)¹⁷ defines ‘inclusive education’ as a fundamental human right for all learners.

Box 3 on page 23 highlights how the Committee wants inclusive education to be understood.

The obligation of national governments

It is the obligation of national governments as duty bearers to ensure that children have free access to compulsory, quality, accessible, and lifelong education for all, including those with disabilities. This is in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. International cooperation plays an important role in supporting the governments of low- and middle-income countries in creating the infrastructure and developing the capacities needed. The implementation of the right to education can vary among states, depending on the economic and political circumstances.

There are certain key interrelated features of the right to education to which governments must adhere¹⁸:

Availability: Schools and other educational institutions and programmes are available in sufficient quality and quantity close to where people live with broad availability of educational places for learners with disabilities at all levels. They must include the relevant services for the schools to function (such as water and sanitation services) and a management structure for the education system, including the recruitment and continuous training of teachers.

Box 3: The UNCRPD framing of inclusive education

Inclusive education is to be understood as:

- (a) a fundamental human right of all learners. Notably, education is the right of the individual learner and not, in the case of children, the right of parents or caregivers. Parental responsibilities in this regard are subordinate to the rights of the child;
- (b) a principle that values the wellbeing of all students, respects their inherent dignity and autonomy, and acknowledges individuals' requirements and their abilities to be effectively included in and contribute to society;
- (c) a means of realising other human rights. It is the primary means by which persons with disabilities can lift themselves out of poverty, obtain the means to participate fully in their communities, and be safeguarded from exploitation.¹⁹ It is also the primary means of achieving inclusive societies; and
- (d) the result of a process of continuing and proactive commitment to eliminating barriers impeding the right to education, together with changes to culture, policy, and practice of regular schools to accommodate and effectively include all students.

Accessibility: All children with and without disabilities must be able to access primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others either in the communities where they live or taking part through modern technology. Primary education must be freely available in safe environments, and secondary and tertiary education must be affordable. The whole education system and its structures must be accessible in all aspects such as:

- the physical environment of the schools including e.g., recreational and refectory facilities and classrooms;
- communication and language;
- learning materials;
- assessment of students;
- support to individuals as needed;
- transport;
- commitment to provision of reasonable accommodations; and
- assistive devices.

Persons with disabilities must have access to different forms of communication, skills development, and other supports, where needed. This might include braille or accessible computer software, augmentative and alternative modes of learning, communication and mobility skills, peer support and mentoring, bilingual environments to enable the learning of sign language, and the promotion of the linguistic identity of learners who are deaf.

Acceptability: Curriculum and teaching methods must be culturally appropriate and of good quality. The form and substance of education provided must be acceptable to all.

Adaptability: Education must be flexible so that it can be adapted to the needs of changing societies and communities and responsive to learners within their diverse social and cultural settings. This requires the adoption of the ‘universal design for learning’ approach (see **Box 10** on page 88 and **Box 11** on page 89), which consists of a set of principles providing teachers and other staff with a structure for creating adaptable learning environments and developing instruction to meet the diverse needs of all learners. This adaptability must be reflected in curricula. Flexible forms of multiple assessments must be in place and individual progress towards providing alternative routes for learning must be recognised.

Quality: Adopting the above four principles is essential to ensure that education is of good quality for all learners, including those with disabilities. Inclusion and quality are reciprocal: an inclusive approach can make a significant contribution to the quality of education.

“Placing students with disabilities within mainstream classes without accompanying structural changes to, for example, organisation, curriculum and teaching and learning strategies, does not constitute inclusion.”²⁰

Inclusive education asserts that diverse learners are welcome in mainstream schools and the education system. Schools and the system must do everything they can to change their attitudes, policies, and practices, so that all learners feel supported and are participating



© CBM/Foto Backofen Mhm

◀ Johana is hearing impaired and visits a regular school in Bolivia. She receives individual support in the form of speech therapy sessions.

and achieving. Under inclusive education, if learners fail to attend, participate, or learn, it is not automatically seen as being their fault. Instead, schools and/or the system must reflect on the possible barriers to attendance, participation, and learning and make changes to address them.

The changes needed to develop inclusive education systems are extensive. They must be worked on consistently over a long period of time. This is not a process that can be planned and delivered, from start to finish, during a two-year project cycle. However, the process can be started straight away and small steps can be taken in the short term. Starting the journey with the right thinking is an important first step in shaping the rest of the process. The importance of long-term planning for inclusive education is discussed in Chapter 4.

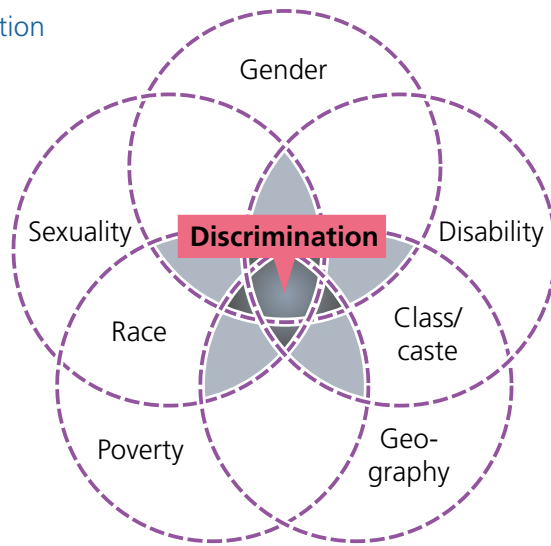
Over the years, the argument that 'inclusive education is for all learners' has led to

initiatives that focus on various marginalised groups, while often still allowing girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities to be excluded from or within education. Moving forward, CBM, our partners, and others working in this field must continue to understand that inclusive education involves changes that help all groups of learners to be included. Nevertheless, we must also monitor our work closely to ensure that those with disabilities do not slip through the net because they are the most hidden, marginalised, and/or most challenging group to include.

1.5 Diversity of learners

It is also vital to recognise that learners with disabilities are not a homogenous group. All persons with disabilities are unique in terms of their type and degree of impairment and the different identities and backgrounds they

► Figure 3: Discrimination based on intersecting self-identities.²¹



may have. Many of these aspects can intersect to cause discrimination. **Figure 3** on the left depicts a series of intersecting circles: gender, disability, class/caste, geography, poverty, race, and sexuality. All of them are important factors that help to shape our self-identities, but equally they are ways in which communities and societies may differentiate, stereotype, or indeed discriminate against or between people. It is important that inclusive education reflects this holistic approach.

Key learning points

- Disability-inclusive education is a vital pre-condition for disability-inclusive development.
- With the adoption of the UNCRPD, a paradigm shift occurred towards a human rights based approach to disability.
- By ratifying the UNCRPD, the majority of world governments subscribes to creating an inclusive world for girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities.
- A twin-track approach to inclusive education is essential for creating broad, long-term systemic changes that benefit all learners, while providing individual support to specific learners where needed.
- Integrated education is not the same as inclusive education. Inclusive education is about much more than just placing girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities into mainstream classroom settings.
- Inclusive education is about removing barriers to presence, participation, and achievement in education, so that all learners can maximise their potential.

Chapter 2

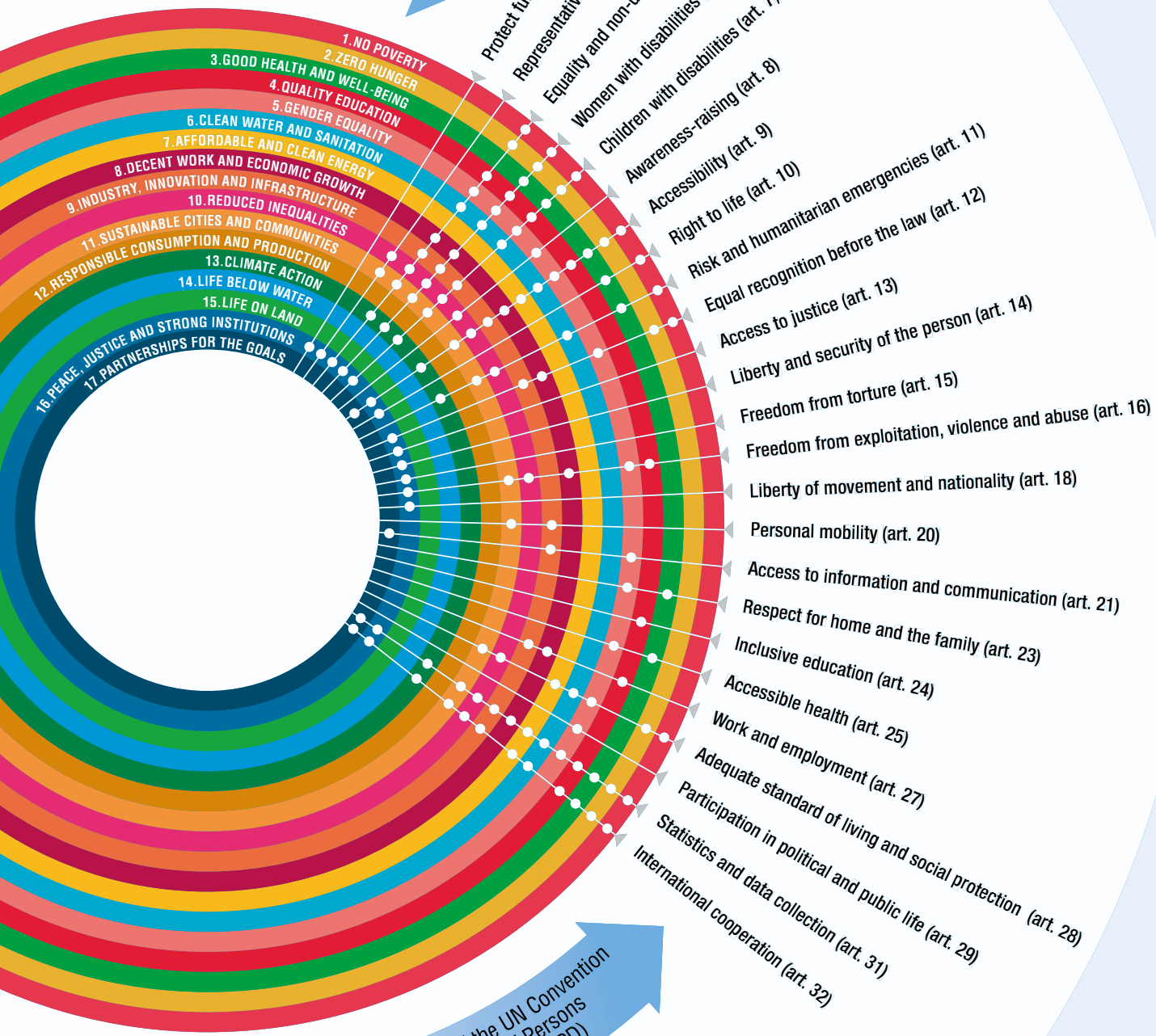
Non-Negotiable Commitments

“When states ratify human rights treaties such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, or pledge commitment to an international agreement such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, they must be held to account as duty bearers—to promote, protect, and ensure inclusive education. Civil society equally must demand their rights and hold states to account to deliver and implement inclusive education.”

Diane Kingston,
Vice-Chairperson,
UN Committee on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities
2013–2016 (2016)



Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)



Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

2.1 International instruments

The right to education is a human right recognised by a number of international treaties. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) “recognises the right of everyone to education” and that education “shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity.”²² In addition to the ICESCR, the right to education for girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities is further clarified by the following international instruments:

- UNCRPD, Article 24;
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Article 28 and Article 29; and
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Article 10.

2.1.1 The UNCRPD, 2006

Article 24 of the UNCRPD calls on States Parties to “ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning...”²³ See the full text in **Box 4** on page 30. Article 24 clarifies the rights of girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities to education and identifies a number of areas for implementation:

◀ [Figure 4: Link between SDGs and UNCRPD. More about this infographic on www.cbm.ie/New-resources-on-Agenda-2030-and-the-CRPD-502628.php](http://www.cbm.ie/New-resources-on-Agenda-2030-and-the-CRPD-502628.php)

- **Non-discrimination on the basis of disability:** Children with disabilities must not be excluded from the general education system. They should be entitled to free and compulsory primary education and to an affordable secondary education. Persons with disabilities should also be able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education, and lifelong learning on an equal basis with others.
- **Accessibility:** Children with disabilities must be able to access quality and free primary and affordable secondary education on an equal basis with others in their communities.
- **Reasonable accommodation:** Persons with disabilities might require appropriate adjustments to accommodate their needs so they can access education on an equal basis with others.
- **Individual support:** Persons with disabilities must have access to individualised support to ensure that they maximise their academic and social development. This could be sign language interpreters, school curriculum or learning material in alternative formats such as braille, or personal assistance during school hours.
- **Development of skills for life and social development:** Persons with disabilities must have access to different forms of communication where needed. This can include braille or accessible computer software, augmentative and alternative modes of learning, communication and mobility skills, peer support and mentoring, and bilingual environments to enable the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community.²⁴

Box 4: UNCRPD Article 24 – Education²⁵

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:
 - a) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
 - b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
 - c) Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.
2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
 - a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
 - b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
 - c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
 - d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
 - e) Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.
3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:
 - a) Facilitating the learning of braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;

- b) Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
 - c) Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.
4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.
5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

While Article 24 specifically focuses on inclusive education, the realisation of other rights contained in the UNCPRPD are interrelated.

Some examples of this include:

- **Article 3** outlines general principles running throughout the UNCPRPD such as respect, non-discrimination, participation, equality of opportunity, accessibility, and gender equality.
- **Article 6** seeks to ensure that the rights of women and girls with disabilities are realised, including educational rights.
- **Article 8** focuses on raising awareness, combatting stereotypes, prejudice and harmful practices, fostering respect for

girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities, and recognising their achievements, including within education.

- **Article 11** calls for the protection of rights, including education rights, within situations of risk and humanitarian emergency.
- **Article 25** focuses on health rights. Access to health and rehabilitation services is often a vital part of being able to participate in inclusive education.
- **Article 31** focuses on data. Improving disaggregated education data is important in the development of inclusive education systems.



© CERMI

▲ Yamuna is helped down the stairs at school in Nepal by her friends, Sunita and Kritika.

The UNCRPD, as with SDG 4, which is discussed in Section 2.1.2, looks beyond the need for universal primary enrolment. It highlights the importance of all girls, boys, women, and men, regardless of disability, having equitable access to quality education at all levels throughout their lives. This is to be achieved through providing reasonable accommodation and individual support,

improving access and teacher training in, for instance, sign language and braille, and increasing the use of inclusive teaching methods, among other measures.

Progress on fulfilling the obligations in Article 24 remains limited.²⁶ By September 2016, the UNCRPD Committee (the body that monitors the UNCRPD), after reviewing 47 country reports on implementation of the UNCRPD, highlighted that:

- Students with disabilities are often still refused admission to mainstream education, or are placed in segregated schools or classes.
- A lack of measures, or information on measures, exists to ensure quality and inclusive education systems at all levels, particularly in rural areas.
- A lack of measures, or information on measures, exist to ensure accessibility and to provide reasonable accommodation, particularly accessible transport and educational assistive technologies in rural areas.
- Training for teachers and other professionals on inclusive education and teaching students with disabilities is inadequate.
- Budget allocations and provision of support for inclusive education are insufficient.

To help states address persistent gaps and challenges, such as those listed above, the UNCRPD Committee adopted a General Comment on Inclusive Education in September 2016. It aims to improve understanding of Article 24 obligations and how to implement them. It highlights the need for governments to make “in-depth transformation of education systems in legislation, policy, and

the mechanisms for financing, administration, design, delivery and monitoring of education.”²⁷ The General Comment also clarifies what is and is not acceptable; for instance, segregation is not acceptable.

Inclusive education for girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities is an obligation not just in stable or development contexts but in contexts of conflict and humanitarian crisis. The UNCRPD General Comment on Inclusive Education highlights that temporary learning settings must be accessible in terms of materials, facilities, counselling, and local sign language, and that reasonable accommodations must be made. Learning environments must protect persons with disabilities, especially girls and women, from violence. The General Comment also expects governments to ensure that disaster risk reduction strategies—through which they prepare for emergencies—include measures for keeping persons with disabilities safe.²⁸ Furthermore, information about disaster risk reduction must be accessible.

2.1.2 Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, 2015

The SDGs are starting to gain traction among governments and donors. Given their high profile, it is encouraging that the SDGs “pledge that no one will be left behind” and that among the 17 goals is SDG 4 (see **Box 5** on page 35), which seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”²⁹ Its targets imply commitment to inclusion for all groups, including persons with

disabilities. For many activists, this is particularly encouraging because the previous MDG 2 on education did not specifically mention or address educational access, participation, and achievement for girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities.

However, it is vital to recognise SDG 4’s commitment to inclusive education as the tip of the iceberg and indeed the SDGs are not legally binding. Other commitments underpin

▼ Yader Ramón Vallecillo, 26, has cerebral palsy. He studies system engineering at a private university in Nicaragua.



© CBM/argum/Finberger

► Figure 5: The 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Their aim is to end all forms of poverty.



this current interest in inclusive education, and—as we will see below—these other commitments offer stronger and more long-term impetus for change. Nevertheless, SDG 4 is currently an important focus. CBM, our partners, and other organisations have a responsibility to build our own understanding around how best to support the achievement of this goal. We must also support local NGOs, DPOs, and governments to better understand the inclusive education policy and programming implications of SDG 4 and other related goals. This all means reflecting critically on what changes we must make to our project approaches and portfolio, to ensure our work will positively contribute to inclusive and equitable, quality, lifelong learning opportunities for all.

2.1.3 How inclusive education has evolved

The MDGs and the EFA movement

The MDGs preceded the SDGs and were only aimed at developing countries, whereas the SDGs are for every country. MDG 2 focused on achieving universal primary education. It ran alongside the EFA movement, initiated at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, which was also concerned with achieving primary enrolment for all. (The EFA had other goals around expanding early childhood provision, improving adult learning and literacy, ensuring gender equality, and improving education quality.) The EFA process, like MDG 2, did not specifically mention or address the educational access, participation, and

achievement needs of girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities. This omission was criticised by many. For instance, as a response, the International Council for Education of People

with Visual Impairment and the World Blind Union launched the Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment in 2006. This sought, among other

Box 5: Targets of SDG 4³⁰

SDG 4 defines targets to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all:

- By 2030, ensure that all children complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;
- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education;
- By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university;
- By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship;
- By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and 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;
- By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy;
- By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development;
- Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all;
- By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries;
- By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.



▲ Figure 6: Key milestones towards inclusive education

things, to build awareness of the needs of children with visual impairment, to ensure that their needs were included in national EFA plans, and to build the capacity of teachers and other professionals. The campaign has been supported by CBM, among various other organisations.³¹

By 2015, progress was undoubtedly made towards increased overall primary enrolment figures.

“Net enrolment ratios improved significantly, rising at least 20 percentage points from 1999 to 2012 in 17 countries, 11 of which were in sub-Saharan Africa.”³²

However, MDG 2 and the EFA movement focused mostly on primary-level enrolment. They did not focus enough on making the systemic changes needed to ensure quality education that can attract, enrol, support, and retain all learners throughout all levels of the education system. Both movements missed a key opportunity to promote more inclusive societies and services.

Ironically, MDG 2 and the EFA movement were heavily promoted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organi-

zation (UNESCO), an agency that also promotes inclusive education. Yet UNESCO mostly approached the EFA and inclusive education as being different initiatives, despite the huge overlap between them. Similarly, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has focused on promoting the child-friendly schools concept.³³ This also has significant overlaps with inclusive education principles, but the connections have often not been made. In some countries, separate child-friendly schools and inclusive education projects have been run in parallel. Reflections on the missed opportunities of the MDG and EFA period help to highlight why SDG 4 offers a much stronger, holistic, and inclusive vision for 2030.

Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education

Inclusive education, as a concept, has existed for decades before the UNCRPD came into force. In 1994, the Salamanca Statement noted the commitment of 92 governments and 25 international organisations to “education for all, recognizing the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system.”³⁴

1994

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education

2000

The Millennium Development Goals

2006

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

2015

The Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 4.

It was an early call for lifelong inclusive education. It did not have the status of an international convention and thus did not outline firm obligations for governments. Nevertheless, the Salamanca Statement has been used to inform and shape many policies and interventions.

The Salamanca Statement was significant in changing the nature and direction of discussions. It:

- pushed for an end to segregated learning;
- highlighted that all children, with or without disabilities, can have special learning needs at different times in their education; and
- reminded us that children with disabilities are diverse.

Article 24 of the UNCRPD and SDG 4 now offer the world a clear opportunity to make real progress towards lifelong inclusive education for all, more than 20 years since the ground-breaking demands in the Salamanca Statement. CBM, our partners, donors, and all stakeholders with whom we work have their own roles to play in making this happen. Those roles must be harmonised and collaborative, as we discuss in the next chapter.

2.1.4 The UNCRC, 1989

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most globally ratified convention, with non-discrimination being one of its four core principles. Underlying messages in the UNCRC therefore point to inclusive education. For example, Article 23 ensures “that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child’s achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development.”³⁵

The UNCRC does not explicitly call for the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education. Some articles are open to interpretations that could justify segregated special education. For example, Article 23 recognises “the right of the disabled child to special care.”³⁶ However, “the UNCRC monitoring committee affirms that ‘All rights are indivisible and interrelated.’ For instance, while the provision of segregated education for a child with a disability may fulfil their right to education, it can violate their rights



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▲ Sanajana has neglected clubfoot, and could not walk independently. Thanks to rehabilitation support from a CBM partner, she now walks to her school in Nepal using crutches.

► Table 1: Policy pitfalls and advocacy asks

to non-discrimination, to have their views taken into account, and to remain within their family and community.”³⁷

2.2 National commitments

It is always the obligation of national governments as duty bearers to ensure that children have access to quality education. Countries that have ratified the UNCRPD must report to the UNCRPD Committee on their progress towards achieving their disability rights obligations. The Committee makes recommendations to each country about how they could improve policies or practices to enhance their progress. These recommendations constitute

international law and are national obligations on which governments must act. In addition to the national-level recommendations, international commitments, such as 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs discussed in Section 2.1.2, are vital for taking change forward at the country and community levels.

Most countries have education policies that guide their visions for the education of their citizens and outline the approaches to be used. They usually have education sector plans to provide more detail on how the sector will be structured, run, and funded. There is no standard way for governments to develop education policies, though it is common to have policies for various sectors within education, such as early childhood education, primary, secondary, higher, and vocational. It has also been common for special education or special needs education to be discussed through separate policy documents, sometimes prepared and implemented by other ministries, such as welfare, with little or no input from ministries of education. This must change so that all education policies and actions – relevant to all learners – fall under the responsibility of ministries of education to prevent any groups of learners from being sidelined or forgotten within education provision. An increasing number of countries have developed or are developing inclusive education policies.

Table 1 on page 39 outlines key problems with national (inclusive) education policies, and suggests changes that CBM and our partners can advocate for within education policy development.

Challenges: policy changes

What governments can do:

Change of terminology, without change of approach:

Special or integrated education policies are rewritten without reflecting inclusive education approaches.

Ensure education policies describe a progressive view of inclusive education for all, based on the paradigm shift.

Ambiguous definitions: Policies are not clearly defining the meaning of 'inclusive education.'

Reflect a clear, consistent definition of 'inclusive education' (e.g., as in the UNCRPD) in all education policies and procedures, so that stakeholders understand what is required.

Stuck at the theory level: Some policies discuss progressive interpretations of inclusive education but are unable to turn policy ideas into practice.

Enable their own personnel and other stakeholders to understand how to turn inclusive education theory into reality and produce guidance on the same.

Reasonable accommodation not well understood:

This leads to lack of clarity in policy documents related to actions required for implementation.

Clearly define reasonable accommodation and expected parameters for providing it in education and related support services (see Chapter 7).

Collaboration not promoted: Policies fail to outline governments' expectations for multisectoral approach to achieve inclusive education.

Develop a multisectoral approach to inclusion in collaboration with different stakeholders and rights bearers.

Inclusion not embedded in all education policy:

The trend is still for separate inclusive education policies, which leaves inclusive education open to interpretation as a separate issue rather than being something on which everyone working in education should focus.

Ensure that all education policies and strategies are written through an inclusive lens, and that there are no contradictions between what the inclusive education policy says, and what other education policies say.

Resource allocation unclear: Some policies lack clear commitments to funding inclusive education. They often do not explain how they anticipate funding for inclusive education will be allocated or managed.

Provide funding for inclusive education that is embedded across the system, and not seen as an optional extra or something to be provided by donors or NGOs.

Indicators are lacking: Policies often do not spell out what their desired changes are or what indicators they will use for determining if practice is moving in the desired direction.

Clearly define the changes in education needed and spell out indicators and means of measuring progress.

All does not always mean all: When talking about disabilities, some impairments are often not mentioned, such as psycho-social, mental health and behavioural issues, and learning disabilities.

Ensure that stigma and prejudice against certain impairment groups are being actively challenged within their policies.



2.3 Global trends undermining inclusive education commitments

While the UNCRPD obligates, and the SDGs encourage, the building of more inclusive and equitable societies and education systems, there are unfortunately forces pulling governments in the opposite direction.

2.3.1 Standardisation

Increasingly, education systems are adopting centralised curricula, accompanied by performance targets and testing for learners and teachers. They aim to standardise education across the country, and even between countries. There is a growing focus on results in literacy, numeracy, and scientific literacy as the core determinants of ‘good’ education systems. Social studies, arts, physical, and vocational subjects are losing importance. This is all narrowing the focus in education. Many teachers are working to ensure good test results in the few areas of learning that are considered essential and will be measured, or in which their teaching competency will be judged. This narrowing and standardisation in education hinders teachers’ independent creativity and responsiveness to individual learners’ needs and interests. Teachers become scared to try new approaches, or to teach learners whom they fear will present challenges or bring down performance scores.

The ever-growing focus on measuring educational outcomes according to national and international standards and test results is seen in tests such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).³⁹

▲ Kongwyay Claude, from Cameroon, was born with congenital cataracts. Following a successful surgery, he has low vision and receives ongoing support from a CBR programme to ensure his full inclusion in school.

Getting comprehensive and progressive inclusive education policies into place is only the beginning of the story. Advocacy pressure is then needed to ensure that policies are implemented, regularly reviewed, and improved – and not ignored or replaced with less inclusive policies, as happened in Peru:

“Regression is being [experienced] as far as policies of inclusive education at State level are concerned. Since the culmination of the decade, the policies regarding inclusion have been revoked and replaced.”³⁸

Governments compete for the best test results, as do private education investors and providers (see below). This is being reinforced by international initiatives, such as by the Learning Metrics Task Force.⁴⁰ This entity – created by UNESCO through its Institute for Statistics and Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution – draws attention to education quality and learning, beyond access. However, it is using simplified measures of performance that do not consider individuals' learning progress. The data that is being collected in education systems is often interpreted against narrow indicators of performance and success.

Many governments are thus creating education systems that constrict teaching and learning to a process focused on preparing for and passing exams, rather than preparing for and succeeding in life. Many girls, boys, women, and men – with and without disabilities – are uncomfortable with or unable to express their learning and skills through standardised tests. The current trend is therefore at risk of creating more exclusive education systems, despite the UNCRPD and SDG 4 demanding greater inclusion.

2.3.2 Privatisation

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a truly ambitious global agenda for change. Goal 17 specifically calls on the need to revitalise global partnerships to achieve the sustainable development agenda. This recognises that governments, bilateral agencies, and the NGO sector do not have the resources to meet the magnitude of the change required.

The private sector has a lot to contribute to inclusive education efforts in different ways and on different levels, for example:

- provision of scholarships at the district level;
- sponsorship of accessible events;
- subsidised or free resources to improving school infrastructure;
- investment in sustainable energy technology; and
- improved accessible public transport or school buses.

There are many positive examples of private sector involvement, be this through the local businesses sector or through parents' associations that have contributed to provision of playgrounds and equipment to ensuring programmes to train teachers. At the national level, there are also opportunities for the private sector to link with schools and DPOs to ensure ongoing sponsorship of key model inclusive programmes. Equally, however, there must be vigilance in the levels and motivation of the private sector entering education initiatives.

A drive for efficiency in education has fuelled the trend towards private sector involvement, under the assumption that business model approaches can be applied to education and will raise standards, reduce costs, and make the education system more efficient. This needs careful monitoring. The nature and role of privatisation in education is a complex issue that has different drivers, approaches, and effects in each context. However, it is often driven by political ideologies and/or by the demands of international financial institutions. For instance, various



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▲ Students react as a water hose breaks loose at a primary school in Ethiopia. Students—and other community members with disabilities—receive a daily meal and water thanks to a CBM-funded inclusive school feeding and water distribution programme.

governments around the world are focusing on reducing state expenditure on public services, such as education and health. This can be achieved through means such as:

- contracting out certain education services to private suppliers that aim to deliver the services at a lower cost than the state can;
- increasing direct service-user payments, such as school fees; and

- encouraging strategic partnerships between the private and public sectors. Such partnerships may be a condition for governments receiving loans from international financial institutions.

One key private enterprise is already providing education to 100,000 students through 400 fee-paying preschools and primary schools in Africa.⁴¹ Private sector investment and service provision like this can positively fill government funding gaps. The private providers may argue that they invest in quality improvements that governments cannot afford. Such initiatives are increasingly being endorsed or partnered by large donors such as the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID).

However, private enterprises are largely driven by the need for profit. There is a risk that private funders and providers of education will create more exclusive schools, using more standardised systems and approaches perceived to be more efficient. In turn, this may lead to providers only wishing to enrol learners who they consider to be the easiest to teach, who they feel will produce the best results, and/or require the least expenditure. There is a danger that learners perceived as having special or additional needs, at extra costs, will be unwelcome in these schools. Evidence from the UK, for instance, indicates that the academy school system of public-private partnership is fuelling an increase in special school enrolment and leading to less willingness among mainstream academy schools to enrol girls and boys with disabilities.⁴²

The trend towards private sector involvement therefore must be carefully monitored to ensure that all those providing services for governments are equally bound as duty bearers to meet the obligations of the UNCRPD and specifically Article 24. All private sector contributors, as much as government services, must positively support and not undermine the inclusive development goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ultimately, it is inevitable that – to achieve inclusive education for all – there must be private sector involvement, given how many governments in developing and developed countries are struggling to meet their educa-

tion obligations. However, with this comes an urgent need for governments, civil society, and international donors to work on creating clear boundaries for such involvement. Effective monitoring and stringent checks and balances are needed to regulate and direct private sector support, so that quality inclusive education is a non-negotiable element of the services they fund or provide.

“The role of non-state actors in education remains contentious. Nevertheless, innovative sources of financing and new partnerships are needed to meet the ambitious SDG agenda.”⁴³

Key learning points

- Article 24 of the UNCRPD and SDG 4 call for states to provide inclusive education.
- Inclusive education for girls, boys, women, and men is an obligation in all contexts, including conflict and crisis situations.
- Governments are increasingly developing national policies on inclusive education, but many remain theoretical, unimplemented, and/or disconnected from core education laws and policies.
- International trends are towards private sector involvement in education.
- Growing focus on standardisation in education risks undermining the move towards inclusive education. Tests that measure individual progress should be encouraged, rather than standardised tests.
- Ensuring accessibility of accreditation systems is critical to ensuring that young people with disabilities can gain accreditation on an equal basis with their peers.

Chapter 3

Collaboration



“The principle of collaboration—in the classroom, in all aspects of school life, and within the community—is the key to the success of inclusive education.”

Katharina Pfoertner,
Senior Advisor, CBR and
Inclusive Education in
Latin America, CBM
(2017)

3.1 Collaboration in applying a twin-track approach to inclusive education

We saw in Chapter 1 that inclusive education must be built on the twin-track approach: simultaneously making changes at the systemic level and providing individualised support to learners. This can make inclusive education feel more challenging. That is why we must acknowledge that no single organisation or government department can achieve inclusive education on its own.

In most contexts, to achieve inclusive education, we must work from multiple angles, such as:

- influencing government policies to ensure that they are in line with the UNCRPD;
- providing budget advocacy to ensure that governments allocate appropriate funding to support inclusive education at the district and provincial levels;
- supporting changes to teacher education;
- reforming curricula and exams;
- improving the accessibility of school infrastructure, systems, and programmes, including learning materials;
- working with communities and parents;
- assessing learning needs;
- providing individual learning support and/or assistive devices and ensuring reasonable accommodation; and
- collecting disaggregated data to ensure effective monitoring of access and participation for all children.

These tasks require the cooperation of governments, civil society, and DPOs to achieve

real change. No one agency, including ministries of education, can achieve this on their own. Given the complexity and interdependence of stakeholders involved, it is important to find ways to share the diverse experiences of what works at different levels and in different circumstances. Pooling the skills and resources, and exchanging learnings to achieve quality inclusive education of children can help all involved.

Unfortunately, the current reality is that cooperation is quite limited. Ministries of health and social welfare are key to providing individual support to learners with disabilities. Equally, cooperation between ministries of youth and employment are essential to support ministries of education in forward planning with schools and universities to transition youth into employment markets. In some contexts, “special education has been seen as a social welfare issue, not part of the Ministry or Department of Education,”⁴⁴ and there has been little connection between the two ministries. Even within ministries, there is often poor communication and sharing of key data for planning and monitoring of access and outcomes.

NGOs also often work in isolation, sometimes due to competitive bidding for scarce funding, or due to being impairment-focused and not liaising with mainstream agencies. In addition, there may be little or no history of collaboration and limited experience of building relationships and effective networks. In contexts of crisis and conflict, there is often greater separation between the work of mainstream agencies and that of disability-specialist organisations.



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▲ Aaron (left) and Muriseni at their kindergarten in Zimbabwe. Puzzles help the students with their fine motor skills.

The reality of this isolation is that disability organisations often create education projects that provide disability-specific support to learners without always engaging in broader systemic change. Furthermore, organisations working with one impairment group may develop inclusive education initiatives with just that group, while learners with other impairments remain excluded. The chance of success is therefore limited – integration rather than inclusion is more likely; that is, limited groups of learners with disabilities are being supported to attend school within a fundamentally unchanged system. For CBM, as a disability-specific organisation, these are issues on which we must critically reflect.

Meanwhile, general NGOs work to make education systems more inclusive, high quality, and child-focused, but often they miss the

specific needs of learners with disabilities. Deaf and deafblind learners' needs in particular may be overlooked. Chances of success for such initiatives are also limited. They may help develop better quality and more inclusive systems, but if individual learners' needs relating to access, mobility, communication, and content are not addressed, then those learners may still face exclusion from or within education. Of course, there will be disability-specific and general NGOs that take more holistic, twin-track approaches to inclusive education, but they are the exception rather than the rule.

3.1.1 Working towards collaborative solutions

Achieving the ambitions of UNCRPD Article 24 and SDG 4 requires fundamental changes in the way inclusive education programmes are conceptualised and delivered. Inclusive education initiatives, be they in development or humanitarian contexts, require a collaborative effort. Line ministries such as the ministries of social welfare and health must work alongside ministries of education to ensure effective sharing of data, information, support services, and resources to effectively support children and their families. General NGOs, disability-specific organisations, DPOs, and parents' organisations have vital roles to contribute their expertise, combined with input from the community, parents, learners, teachers, and representatives of other marginalised groups, on all levels of education, from early childhood onwards.

This may sound utopian. Certainly, it will take time to change the way government,

development, and humanitarian actors work. However, as a first step, we must accept collaboration as an essential aim when planning any inclusive education initiative. If we try to work in silos, we may succeed in delivering specific outcomes for specific learners but not in achieving systemic change and inclusive education in its fullest sense.

When thinking about a new education initiative, rather than simply asking ‘What are we going to do to deliver inclusive education?’, we must instead ask ‘How are we going to contribute to the changes our country needs towards inclusive education, and who will be contributing alongside us?’

3.2 Intersectoral collaboration

Development work often happens in silos, with each agency or actor working narrowly within its own sector – such as health, education, social welfare, child protection – and not interacting with other sectors. This is a major barrier to progress in inclusive education, which requires input and help from outside the education system.

3.2.1 Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) and Community-based inclusive development (CBID)

When it comes to disability-inclusive education, one of the most obvious intersectoral connections is with CBID initiatives. Some inclusive education initiatives have grown from CBID programmes. Supporting girls and boys

with disabilities in accessing education is often an obvious next step after identifying their impairments, supporting (re)habilitation needs at home and in the community, and facilitating greater social inclusion. Within CBM, various CBR and CBID programmes have inclusive education components or objectives.

CBID helps to ensure that girls and boys with disabilities are identified as early as possible and have access, within their communities, to appropriate support with developing their mobility and coordination, socialisation, sensory, language and communication, daily living, and other skills. CBID workers engage with children, parents, teachers, and other specialists wherever necessary, to develop (re)habilitation and education plans, and to help girls and boys access locally appropriate and sustainable assistive devices or other equipment and materials.

CBID programmes play a key role in advocating with communities and schools to support inclusive education and advise schools on provision of reasonable accommodation and accessibility (see Chapter 7). They work with parents and families to know and claim their rights and to support their children’s development and learning at home. CBID workers serve as intermediaries with other sectors, for example, helping families access available social welfare support.

CBID programmes support learners and families during times of education transition. When learners are moving to new schools with new environmental barriers, and where they may have to participate in new activities, CBID support is vital. CBID workers, alongside



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▲ Kasandra (second on the left) is a child with Down Syndrome. She is attending a local school thanks to early learning support by CBM-partner ASOPIECAD in Nicaragua.

family and community members, may, for instance, help:

- new schools assess and define specific measures necessary to appropriately meet reasonable accommodation requests;
- learners become familiar with navigating new routes to and within school; and
- break down isolation by setting up buddy systems and challenging prejudice and bullying.

When learners progress to higher levels of education, they may encounter new subjects and activities, such as new sports activities, practical science experiments, or vocational subjects. Both the learners and their teachers

may benefit from support from CBID workers, who can help learners engage in the activities and help teachers adapt the activities. CBID programmes also help with transition into employment by working with employers and communities to provide appropriate support for the employment or self-employment of school-leavers with disabilities.

CBID programmes bring community resources and knowledge into schools to support teachers. They help schools contribute to or strengthen anti-discrimination campaigns, as well as health awareness programmes and programmes to prevent avoidable impairments. Collaboration with CBID initiatives helps inclusive education programmes deliver individual support track obligations, but also creates a louder joint voice to push for systemic changes.

Case Study 2: **Kasandra's story – the impact of CBR workers' support in Nicaragua**⁴⁵

► Kasandra was eight years old and had Down syndrome. She attended her local school, thanks to the information and support provided by CBR workers from the Association of Integral Programmes in Community Education Astrid Delleman (ASOPIECAD), CBM's partner. They helped Kasandra's mother understand her daughter's rights, including the right to inclusive education. However, being aware of these rights did not mean it was easy to get Kasandra settled into her local school. The school director and teachers were initially not keen to welcome her. The CBR workers therefore arranged trainings,

Box 6: CBR and CBID

CBR started as a service-delivery approach, bringing rehabilitation services and assistive technologies into the community and closer to persons with disabilities. In the 1990s, CBR evolved into a more multisectoral approach.

In 2004, the International Labour Organization, UNESCO, and the World Health Organization (WHO) updated the CBR Joint Position Paper. This redefines CBR as “a strategy within general community development for the rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities and social inclusion of all people with disabilities” and promotes the implementation of CBR programmes “through the combined efforts of people with disabilities themselves, their families, organizations and communities, and the relevant governmental and non-governmental health, education, vocational, social and other services.”⁴⁶

A CBR matrix now guides CBR work across five key, interrelated components: health, education (including early childhood, primary, secondary, higher, non-formal, and lifelong), livelihood, social, and empowerment.⁴⁷ CBR is also guided by the principles of the UNCRPD, with additional principles of self-advocacy and sustainability.

CBID is a broader goal, in which CBR is one strategy. Implementing agencies are increasingly using the term ‘CBID’

to more adequately reflect the range of work they are doing.

“Community Based Inclusive Development is a person-centered, community-focused approach to achieving inclusive development. CBM’s implementation of the approach is centered on persons with disabilities, their families and their organizations. This focus defines our added value in actions which, alongside others, creates inclusive development from the bottom up. Since the publication of the CBR Guidelines in 2010, CBM’s experience, alongside our implementing partners around the world shows a clear evolution in practice best captured by the shift in name of this core area of our programmatic work from CBR to CBID.... It is central to increased cooperation with disability activists and to ensuring stronger cooperation across UN agencies.... Our community-based work will contribute to strengthening health, social, education, livelihood, and other local systems without supplanting or bypassing these essential duty bearers.”⁴⁸

In this book, we will mostly refer to the concept of Community-based Inclusive Development as ‘CBID,’ unless sharing a case study in which the project uses the term ‘CBR.’

and Kasandra's teacher, Lidia, attended. The training had a positive impact on Lidia. She began working hard to prepare adapted lessons for Kasandra, and even fought for Kasandra to progress to the next level so she could stay with her peers, even though Kasandra had been unable to meet the academic standards. As a result of the support provided by the CBR workers to Kasandra's mother and teacher, Kasandra gained independence and met people outside her family. She learned to read, write, and do arithmetic, and her mother became confident that one day Kasandra will be self-sufficient. ◀

3.2.2 Working collaboratively to ensure child safeguarding

Inclusive education helps marginalised, and often extremely vulnerable, learners access and participate in education. These may be girls and boys who experience discrimination, isolation, or abuse at home or in the community, who come from poor families, or who have experienced abuse and trauma before moving to their new communities.

Schools can also be places where children need protection from, for instance, peer bullying, corporal punishment, sexual harassment, or gender-based violence by peers or adults. Children with disabilities, especially girls, are three to four times more likely to experience abuse.⁴⁹ In conflict and crisis contexts, there are even greater chances of all children, especially those with disabilities, experiencing violence, or contending with the effects of past violence. Logically therefore inclusive education programmes must work collaboratively with cross-agency support to ensure appropriate child safeguarding and protection efforts are in place at all levels of education provision (see **Box 7** below).

However, inclusive education initiatives do not always have strong links with such work. In some cases, inclusion and protection issues may be tackled through separate projects and organisations operating in the same school, district, or refugee or displaced persons setting. Often school staff do not know what to do when protection concerns are raised. Protection incidents have the capacity to undermine the gains of inclusive education and increase the fears or mistrust of parents in supporting their children to attend school. Greater connections between inclusive education and child protection and safeguarding initiatives that actively involve parents and community members are needed to ensure that abuse and violence do not lead to educational exclusion.

Such collaborations could:

- ensure school management assumes responsibility for child protection and safeguarding within schools. Ideally, partner organisations,

Box 7: Child safeguarding and protection

Child safeguarding refers to a broad range of actions to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Child protection is a specific part of this, focusing on protecting children from suffering or harm.

CBM's child safeguarding policy is available online at: www.cbm.org/article/downloads/54741/Child_Safeguarding_Policy__2014.pdf

or teams within organisations, should jointly plan and implement their inclusive education and child protection efforts in consultation with each other and the school management;

- help to make education practitioners and decision makers aware of the increased protection risks faced by some learners, especially during and after emergencies. This could include ensuring that practitioners and decision makers consider the needs of learners with disabilities in any disaster preparedness work within the school community;
- ensure that child safeguarding and protection risk assessments are conducted in education settings, to identify specific vulnerabilities and related risk mitigation measures;
- improve teacher education on inclusive education to include opportunities to discuss a range of child protection issues and practise responding to cases of abuse;
- offer viable, culturally relevant, and proven alternatives to teachers in contexts where corporal punishment is used as a form of behaviour management in schools;
- work with schools to democratically develop behaviour and discipline policies and codes of conduct with a focus on developing alternatives to corporal punishment;
- work with girls and boys, with and without disabilities, to develop mechanisms for identifying and reporting protection issues, especially gender-based violence; and
- use inclusive schools to convey protection messages – through accessible language, formats, and activities – to girls and boys, parents, and the wider community.



3.2.3 Social welfare, poverty reduction, and livelihoods

Disability and poverty are inherently linked.⁵⁰ In many contexts, poverty is still a major cause of girls and boys failing to enrol in or dropping out of school. Even in countries with free primary education, the associated costs—such as uniforms, books, and transport—can prevent many from enrolling or attending. It is therefore logical for inclusive education initiatives to collaborate with initiatives that focus on poverty alleviation and livelihoods, to ensure that families and communities can afford to educate their children and are not forced into making potentially

▲ Ramsevak Barathpure was born with an intellectual impairment. He dropped out of school and lived in isolation. Thanks to a loan from a CBM partner, he was able to purchase a buffalo and can now contribute to his family income in the Betul District in India.

biased decisions about which children to send to school and which to leave at home. **Case Study 3** below offers an example of an inclusive education programme that, when linked with livelihood and other welfare activities, boosted the inclusion and retention of the learners.

Inclusive education initiatives must link with social welfare efforts to ensure that girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities are accessing social and financial support that makes participation in education more viable. For instance, this might include accessing education stipend schemes, or initiatives to provide free or low-cost, second-hand uniforms, or feeding programmes. Inclusive education initiatives have a role to play in linking learners at risk of exclusion with social welfare programmes that will boost their education options. For example, this could include linking learners or their families with initiatives that help people obtain birth certificates or identity cards so that they are eligible to apply for government welfare funds or access rehabilitation or assistive device services.

Case Study 3: **Livelihood support for mothers of children with disabilities in Guatemala**

► In Guatemala, mothers are often left to bring up their children with disabilities alone when fathers abandon them. In 2002, Adisa, CBM's partner in Santiago Atitlán, started a project aimed at children with disabilities and their mothers. This project focused on economic empowerment as well as knowledge of rights and responsibilities.

Within the communities of Santiago Atitlán and Panajachel municipalities, CBM and Adisa noticed that, when girls and boys with disabilities attended inclusive schools, their mothers would bring them to school and then wait near the school all day. Many had to travel over an hour to and from the school. It was therefore cheaper for them to wait all day than to travel home in the morning and return later to pick up their children. In response to this, in 2015, Adisa started a business as well as a savings and credit programme for these mothers so that they could be productive during the day while their children were at school. This programme still operates.

Programme participants were selected using surveys, interviews, and home visits, with consensus from female and male community leaders. They then attended business, rights, and advocacy training, and developed business and investment plans before receiving seed money of 1,500 Guatemalan quetzals (around US\$ 200) to start their enterprises.

Participants are registered with a savings and credit group, which is like a small community savings bank. They must deposit agreed upon amounts into savings accounts each month. There are regulations for the management of these funds and for granting loans to participants. At the end of the year, savings and profit percentages are distributed. Participants use these funds to cover costs that they have prioritised, such as home improvements, health care, education, and investing in their businesses.

Reviewing the programme, Adisa and CBM have found participants becoming economically empowered. Additionally, they have



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◀ Students at a primary school in Ethiopia with their water cans. All students at this school in a drought prone area receive a daily meal, funded by CBM. The school arranged a system by which every student brings three litres of water each day—ensuring the school has enough.

had improved access to health and education, and growing knowledge of their rights and advocacy, which they are now able to use in decision-making opportunities at different levels. ◀

3.2.4 Health, nutrition, water, and sanitation

Inclusive education and health initiatives must be linked. This is not because persons with disabilities automatically experience poor health, but because all girls, boys, women, and men—with and without disabilities—need access to information and services that ensure they stay healthy and are able to participate in education. This might include screening and vaccination services, sexual and reproductive health services, or nutrition and dietary support services, all of which must be adapted to suit the physical, communication, and comprehension

needs of each person. Inclusive schools may offer an ideal channel for helping health services improve their accessibility and reach, especially among learners with disabilities and their families. Links between health and education are also essential for ensuring effective early identification and intervention for girls and boys with disabilities. Health services can help identify children with disabilities who are out of school, and liaise with education providers to ensure access to school.

Health and dietary conditions are often hidden disabilities that significantly impact learners' attendance, participation, and achievement in school. It can be difficult for learners and their families to get the recognition and support needed to manage health or dietary conditions in schools, especially invisible conditions, such as chronic pain, diabetes, or digestive conditions.



© CBM/Hayduk

▲ Misye (left) is a grade four student with low vision. She attends a primary school in Ethiopia. Lunch for all students is funded by CBM.

Education programmes—in development as well as humanitarian contexts—increasingly include school feeding activities, where they have identified hunger and/or malnutrition as barriers to learners’ presence, participation, and achievement. This may include free breakfast or lunch clubs, or school gardens where learners grow and harvest fruit and vegetables for themselves and their families. There is often more work needed to make sure that such efforts are as inclusive as possible. For instance, at mealtimes, some girls and boys may need physical help with fetching, carrying, or eating their food. Others may have specific dietary needs that are not met by the food offered through school meals. Links with available CBID services as well as with local health and nutrition programmes could help provide the support and knowledge that is needed for ensuring access to school meals.

School feeding activities promote environmental sustainability and healthy eating through, for instance, developing organic school gardens. As well as providing food for learners, they can tie the curriculum to practical, real-life learning, which is a key component of learner-centred and inclusive education.

Finally, safe water and sanitation facilities play a vital role in determining how inclusive a school is. Water and sanitation are central to the health of all girls, boys, women, and men. For many children both with and without disabilities, and especially girls, the lack of accessible, safe, secure, private, and gender-segregated water and toilet facilities in schools can be a cause of school dropout. It can also affect participation and learning. Children struggle to concentrate when they are thirsty or uncomfortable, due to lack of toilet facilities, or when they are worried about bullying or abuse in and around the toilets. Poor school water and sanitation facilities affect learners’ and teachers’ health, causing absenteeism.

3.2.5 Interministerial collaboration

Education system development and management is usually the responsibility of ministries of education. In some contexts, however, education for persons with disabilities falls under different ministries, such as health or social welfare, with ministries of education having little or no role. This hinders the education of persons with disabilities from becoming inclusive because the mainstream education system lacks experience educating them, and/or does not consider their inclusion part of the responsibility of ministries of education.

In contexts where education for persons with disabilities is already the responsibility of the ministry of education, there is often no clear relationship with other ministries—despite the importance of intersectoral approaches, as seen above.

CBM, our partners, and other development NGOs often have a range of projects covering multiple sectors, such as education, eye health, and CBID that link sectors such as health, social welfare, and employment. We can therefore play an important role in promoting interministerial collaboration in relation to inclusive education. For instance, we can:

- ensure that the intersectoral links among our own programmes are being fully and consistently made; for instance, our internal departments, project staff, and thematic advisers for different sectors can regularly communicate, share, and jointly plan and oversee projects;
- bring on board representatives from several relevant ministries as soon as we start planning an inclusive education initiative, even if inclusive education or education for persons with disabilities only sits under the auspices of one ministry;
- ask several relevant ministries for information and data to inform the inclusive education programme; and
- advocate for and, if appropriate, facilitate all relevant ministries in reviewing their actual and potential roles in relation to inclusive education, and develop strategies for collaboration to achieve the inclusive education goals and policies of all countries.

3.3 Stakeholder collaboration

In Chapter 6, we look in more detail at stakeholder empowerment and engagement. This chapter has primarily looked at intersectoral collaboration. Cutting across this, however, is the vital importance of stakeholders and their representative groups collaborating with each other and with governmental and non-governmental agencies on any decisions and initiatives that affect the lives of persons with disabilities.

Box 8: The importance of interministerial collaboration⁵¹

In Nicaragua in 2013, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, CBM's partner ASOPIECAD, and the Nicaraguan Federation of Associations of People with Disabilities conducted two forums where the Ministries of Education and Health shared their statistics on school-aged persons with disabilities under 18 years of age. The statistics revealed that the Ministry of Education had recorded 11,000 students with disabilities enrolled in special and mainstream schools. The Ministry of Health, however, had statistics indicating that there were 25,000 children under 18 with disabilities. Using the two sets of data, it became clear that 56% of school-aged children with disabilities were not actually in school. The figure may well have been higher, since the Ministry of Health's statistics only counted those children who had already been identified as having disabilities. As a result of these eye-opening statistics, both Ministries committed to sharing their information with the municipalities and to implementing a joint plan of action to gradually reduce the numbers of out-of-school girls and boys with disabilities.

Community members and groups have critical roles to play in all the sectoral work mentioned above, such as:

- working as volunteers or advocates in CBID initiatives;
- learning about and contributing to child protection efforts; and
- guiding and developing welfare, livelihoods, health, and nutrition programmes.

Community engagement in inclusive education and related initiatives helps to ensure that the work is suitably targeted and designed, well understood, and linked with existing local systems or structures to make it more sustainable.

Persons with disabilities have vital roles and rights to participate in all decisions and programmes that affect their lives. Persons with disabilities, their representative organisations (DPOs), and self-help groups have a wealth of ideas and experiences that can contribute to inclusive education and related development initiatives. While in some countries DPOs may need capacity development to effectively engage in influencing governments at local and national levels, their active participation is essential to any advocacy work undertaken.

DPOs also have a key role in supporting girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities in the community to have confidence and stronger voices to contribute to training and advocacy work. CBM values DPO engagement across all of our programmes with partners at all levels from enabling grassroots participation to national level collaboration in inclusive education.

3.4 Collaborative advocacy

“Advocacy for inclusive education takes place wherever education is being discussed, planned and experienced: in family homes; community meetings; schools and classrooms; teacher education institutions; government ministries; civil society; NGO and IGO [intergovernmental organisation] offices; national and international conferences; and many other forums.”⁵²

In Chapter 2, we highlighted inclusive education advocacy issues that are important for CBM and our partners to think about in the next few years. These include:

- holding governments accountable for effective implementation of UNCRPD Article 24 and SDG 4;
- limiting risks associated with increased private-sector involvement in education; and
- narrowing standardised curricula, testing, and measurement, and the potential for excluding and failing many learners.

These are all big issues on which one NGO working on its own may have minimal impact. Tackling such issues needs a loud and global voice, requiring multiple agencies and stakeholder groups to collaborate on advocacy in genuine partnership with DPOs.

At a national level, DPOs and civil society must actively hold governments to account on progress towards UNCRPD Article 24 and SDG 4. Again, one small local NGO will have far less impact than a group of NGOs pooling their experiences, evidence, advocacy skills, and collective voices.



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◀ Milton Daimari and Suleman Murmu, CBM colleagues and community workers, address a gathering during a community disability-awareness programme in Assam, India.

Various bodies exist that offer opportunities for national and international collaborative advocacy on education issues. For instance, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) is a civil society movement whose members are from 120 national coalitions. The GCE's mission is to "act now to deliver the right of everyone to a free, quality, public education."⁵³ The GCE has tackled various inclusion issues through its annual campaigns, such as gender equality in 2012, and disability in 2014. It offers materials and support for local, national, and international campaigning.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform established in 2002. It brings together developing countries, donors, international organisations, civil society, teacher organisations, and the private and philanthropic sectors to strengthen education systems and improve learning and equity, in line

with SDG 4. It supports governments in developing good quality education sector plans and encourages donors to match funding to the plans. It also supports civil society organisations in holding governments accountable for their education plans.

Case Study 4 below provides an example of using existing structures to help different stakeholders collaborate on inclusive education advocacy.

Case Study 4: Collaborative local-level advocacy in India⁵⁴

▶ A programme supported by CBM–Regional Action on Inclusive Education Northeast in India—is developing a resource centre approach to supporting inclusive education, offering opportunities to bring different stakeholders together for advocacy purposes.⁵⁵ Special schools are being transformed into

these resource centres. The programme has partnerships with CBR, local government, and community services, such as health, education, and training institutions to advocate for inclusive education within communities.

Around the world, resource centres are often given quite a narrow role, such as hosting specialist staff who provide support to children and teachers. The CBM-supported resource centres in India are designed more holistically, as hubs for a range of inclusive education activities. They share knowledge, build teacher capacity, distribute assistive and low-vision devices, provide information and communication technology (ICT) support, provide early learning kits and audiobooks,

support inclusive education programmes and vocational and livelihoods capacity building, and conduct advocacy.

As part of their advocacy role, the resource centres:

- network with government education departments and other service providers;
- support the formation of parents' groups to work together on advocacy and self-help activities;
- develop and deliver inclusive education awareness programmes, including among community health workers; and
- facilitate the empowerment of inclusion champions, self-advocates, and children's groups. ◀

Key learning points

- Inclusive education is a complex, multifaceted process that cannot be achieved if organisations and ministries work in silos. Collaboration must be at the heart of all inclusive education efforts.
- To make inclusive education successful, there must be intersectoral collaboration, such as linking with community-based services, child protection, poverty-alleviation, social welfare, and health and nutrition initiatives or agencies. This is vital in both development and humanitarian contexts.
- Organisations, education settings, and community groups must work together on joint advocacy activities to have a louder voice.

Chapter 4

Long-Term Process

“We need our supporters to stick around. A two-year project is not enough time for us to make our school inclusive. We start off confused, then we get excited when we begin to see progress and change. And then the project stops and... well, we try to carry on with no financial support or advice, but it's hard.”

Margaret, Teacher in an inclusive school in Uganda (2008)



4.1 No quick fix

We have seen that inclusive education has been built on a gradual paradigm shift in the way disability is understood. There are long-term international commitments underpinning inclusive education. To achieve these, we must reverse the age-old trend of governmental and NGO agencies and other stakeholders working in isolation, and move towards collaboration instead of competition. We begin to see why inclusive education is described as a continuum, an ongoing, long-term process of change. None of these changes have happened or will happen overnight.

Unlike building a new school, inclusive education does not have a predictable timeline. It is a process of large and small changes

we can start at any time, and carry on making indefinitely. There is no fixed list of materials, equipment, or people needed. These will vary in each context depending on the main barriers to, and existing solutions for, inclusion. Inclusive education will look different in every context, and even over time within each context. However, in most contexts, it is likely that significant changes will be needed in teacher education, pedagogy, curricula and exam systems, infrastructure, policies, community attitudes, and education financing. The urgency and scale of change, and the order in which such changes happen, will again vary in each context (see **Box 9** below for an example).

This description of inclusive education as a fluid and flexible process will sometimes feel

Box 9: Inclusive education is a unique, long-term journey

Imagine that 10 NGO staff from 10 countries are asked to meet at head office. They all share the same end goal for their journeys. They will all take similar steps to reach this goal, such as arriving at airports, checking in, boarding flights, and taking taxis when they reach the destination city. However, the specific details of their journeys will differ for each person – different security procedures at airports, different flight durations, different ticket prices, and different people to talk to on the planes. The path towards inclusive education is equally varied. In every community or

country, the journey will experience different starting points, challenges, and supporters. Different levels of inclusion and exclusion are in place, different attitudes and beliefs are practised, different policies exist, and different resources are available. We are all working towards the same desired change – a world in which everyone is included in education – but the exact steps we take to get there will vary, which is why this book does not offer readers a prescriptive ‘travel plan’ or blueprint, only a compass to guide the overall direction.



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◀ There is no quick fix when it comes to reconstruction. Here we see a school in the Philippines, which was destroyed when Typhoon Haiyan hit, being rebuilt.

intangible. It is easier to contemplate working on an initiative that follows a clear blueprint and timeline. But, for inclusive education to be successful, we must work in often unpredictable territory. This chapter therefore looks at the importance of embracing inclusive education as a long-term process of smaller and larger changes that cannot be fully mapped out at the start and then squeezed into rigid planning and funding cycles.

4.2 Planning and funding

4.2.1 Current challenges

Approaches to planning and funding

While many guides and policies discuss the long-term nature of inclusive education, the

current reality is one of short-term interventions. Donors fund, and NGOs and governments plan, for short periods of rarely more than five years, and often just two years. The lack of long-term vision and planning by donors, governments, and NGOs is a significant barrier to progress in inclusive education.

Often programmes are planned to last a few years, then evaluated, after which the next phase is planned – if there is a next phase. There is a growing body of experience around inclusive education to help us understand the sort of ‘pathways of change’ that are needed – the logical, progressive steps that we can take, and the essential foundations on which subsequent changes must be built. It should be increasingly possible for programmes to reflect on their own and

► Opening remarks at the national launch of the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report in Bangkok, Thailand in 2014.



others' experiences to develop at least an outline for plans spanning longer time frames, even if detailed planning and budgeting remains restricted to five years; but as yet this is not happening widely. It is therefore essential that short-term plans and activities focus on achieving successes that can subsequently be built on in a logical way, and avoid taking steps that help in the short term but that cause greater barriers to inclusion in the long-term.

Scale of funding

“Between 2002–2010 aid to education more than doubled in real terms, reaching US\$ 14.2 billion but has stagnated since 2010 ... Total aid to basic education fell in 2013–14, with bilateral donors reducing their aid by 12 % ...”⁵⁶

Evidence suggests that financing for education is falling globally. This is especially discouraging news, given that SDG 4 is putting pressure on countries to make significant, potentially costly, changes to education quality and inclusiveness. A situation of bigger demands and smaller budgets presents a risk that the most marginalised issues, such as inclusion of learners with disabilities, will drop further down the priorities list.

The inclusive education expectations of SDG 4 are relatively new, but 10 years have passed since the UNCRPD came into force. Yet very few governments and donors are taking active steps to address the challenges of tracking their spending on inclusive education and developing indicators that highlight spending consistent with inclusion. The funding that is available for inclusive education is rarely predictable for the long-term.

Donor funding has frequently supported parallel special and mainstream education systems. To date, much of the work to achieve inclusive education has been funded from the small amounts traditionally allocated for special education. The large donor budgets available for mainstream education and for reforming education systems have, on the whole, ignored inclusive education and learners with disabilities.⁵⁷ It seems inevitable that inclusive education will be constrained to small-scale, isolated pilot projects if it continues to be funded only for short periods from limited special education funding pots.

Funding for education in conflict and humanitarian crisis contexts is also often not oriented towards supporting inclusion. In May 2016, the Education Cannot Wait fund was set up to attract more funding to education in cases of emergency. This mentions that:

“The Platform will focus on children facing multiple discriminations—that is, those who are crisis-affected and denied access to education because they are refugees or displaced, because of their caste, class, ethnicity, age, gender, disability or other factors. Specific determinations regarding marginalised groups are best made at the country level.”⁵⁸

The extent to which this fund gives a priority to learners with disabilities must be carefully monitored in the coming years by CBM and like-minded NGOs. Anecdotal information from early meetings of stakeholders linked to the fund indicates that disability-inclusion has not been routinely discussed.

Data to guide long-term planning and funding

“Poor data has long been used as an excuse for slow and inadequate action [on inclusive education]. ... SDG 4 commits governments to measure disparities between groups on the basis of disability and other equity markers, so greater investment in disaggregated data and tools for inclusive education planning is expected.”⁵⁹

Programme commitments and funding are often tied to evidence. Donors may require governments or NGOs to prove that a problem exists, or that a proposed intervention is the best option. They often expect this proof to be statistical, and therefore undervalue qualitative evidence. ‘Best’ is often interpreted to mean ‘most cost-effective.’ However, evidence is often lacking: globally, data on disability is limited and unreliable; and the plethora of small-scale inclusive education initiatives are either not generating consistent, comparable data or the available data is not being collated to illustrate the bigger picture. Where national or global education data exists—such as enrolment, dropout, or exam pass-rate data—it is often not disaggregated beyond a breakdown of males and females. Such data cannot tell us anything about the numbers of, or state of education for, learners with disabilities, or from diverse ethnic, language, or other groups. Poor data collection may be due to the lack of political will or awareness of the importance of disaggregating education data; but equally it may be due to the lack of capacity in donors,

governments, NGOs, and schools to determine what data to collect and how to collect it. One essential step that should be taken is to collect information on children with disabilities and the inclusivity of the school environment within regular education management information systems.

“Positive change is promised by UNICEF’s Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), which track how disabilities are affecting children in household surveys, in collaboration with the Washington Group on Disability Statistics; and the UNICEF Guide for Including Disability in Education Management Information Systems (UNICEF, 2016). DFID is also advocating for the SDG framework to use disability indicators more aggressively (DFID, 2015). However, the success of these initiatives hinges on investments in staff capacities.”⁶⁰

Ownership

The lack of long-term planning is not just because inclusive education is usually funded from small, special education pots. It is also inherently linked to the question of who owns inclusive education.

For most development initiatives to scale up and be sustainable over time, there must be government ownership. A few inclusive education initiatives are state owned from the start, with NGOs and/or UN agencies providing technical or financial support for an initial period of time. Others are started by NGOs and/or UN agencies and later taken over by states. A concerning number of NGO- and UN-run inclusive education initiatives, how-

ever, never achieve buy-in from states. They either continue to operate in parallel to the state education system, or only operate for the limited project funding period before closing.

Education is a government responsibility. Governments are obliged under international law to provide education, including free basic education. UNCRC Article 24 now obliges governments that have ratified the Convention to provide inclusive education. Until now, many have been willing to let non-governmental actors work on inclusive education, as a way of ticking the box without the government doing much.

4.2.2 Building solutions

Small-scale inclusive education projects—such as those working in one school or a cluster of schools in a district—are relatively simple to set up and run. The plethora of inclusive education pilot projects and schools around the world illustrates this. Many such pilot initiatives achieve promising results that could be a starting point for scaling up, to reach more schools and have a greater impact on system-level changes in the long term, such as changes to curricula, exams, teacher education, and school infrastructure planning.

Various changes are needed to facilitate long-term, scaled-up inclusive education initiatives. The following are changes that CBM, our partners, and other organisations can make or advocate for:

- Governments must understand inclusive education, beyond a basic awareness, to increase their sense of ownership of and responsibility for it.

- Household data and education system data – disaggregated by at least disability, gender, and age, and including environmental data – is needed to help governments and donors plan more effectively and help advocates make more convincing demands for further improvements.
- Donor funding for education must be longer term and more predictable, making it more attractive and viable for governments to commit to comprehensive education system changes, like inclusive education.
- Funding for education in emergencies, such as the Education Cannot Wait fund, and support for disaster risk preparedness programmes in school communities, must have disability-inclusiveness embedded as a core expectation. Supporting inclusion in times of humanitarian crisis must become an integral part of the long-term process of building inclusive education systems in affected countries.
- Governments and donors must recognise the importance of ensuring that more core education funding is consistent with inclusive principles, and that inclusive education is not just funded as a stand-alone project from limited specialist funding pots. It is vital for governments and donors to understand the NGO role as a supportive one.



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◀ CBM India takes part in the launch of the “Include Vidya” campaign which took place in Bangalore, India. The campaign emphasized the importance of inclusive education, the role of special educators, and promoting the enrolment of children with disabilities in mainstream schools.

- Governments must improve and be more innovative in the way they allocate their budgets in order to enable more fundamental changes to happen in the education system. Opportunities for more efficient and inclusion-oriented use of existing funds are available, but they require greater innovation, such as embedding inclusive education into all pre-service teacher education rather than paying more to retrain teachers later in their careers.
- The various stakeholders must collaboratively learn from small-scale experiences to build longer-term visions for the changes we seek education and the logical pathways to follow.
- There must be a greater understanding of the twin-track approach. If pilot projects only deliver a partial, one-track solution, it is harder to argue that inclusive education is worth investing in on a larger and longer-term scale.
- Donors must use education funding to promote collaboration instead of competition. More donor support for intersectoral, inter-agency, and interministerial initiatives would enable more inclusive education initiatives to be scaled up.

Key learning points

- Inclusive education is a long-term process of change. For this, we need open and effective sharing of, and learning from, experiences to better envisage and understand the logic of the long-term pathways of change we must follow.
- Donor funding for education is declining, jeopardising the chances of inclusive education becoming a priority funding issue, and compelling civil society to fight harder for appropriate levels and innovative use of funding.
- Most inclusive education work is not yet state owned, but there must be greater government ownership and responsibility if inclusive education is to be scaled up and if widespread systemic change is to happen.
- Inclusive education during periods of crisis and conflict must be seen as an integral part of the long-term process of building inclusive education systems in affected countries.

Chapter 5

Understanding and Awareness

“We will only keep scratching the surface of inclusive education unless we recognise that those who need to own this process require more than a few days of awareness raising if they are going to stand any chance of making a real difference.”

Duncan Little,
Director, Enabling
Education Network
(2017)





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▲ Juli from India has a visual impairment. Here she is representing a social media campaign called Shikshagiri, organised to create awareness on various aspects related to education and inclusion.

5.1 The difference between understanding and awareness

There is a significant difference between raising stakeholders' awareness of an issue like inclusive education, and building their practical understanding of it.

Awareness raising, sometimes referred to as 'sensitisation', is usually designed to get stakeholders on board with an issue, so they know the issue exists and are exposed to key facts, theories, and arguments. It is designed to encourage people to support the issue, and ideally to motivate them to get further involved.

Building understanding takes this initial awareness to a higher level, expanding stakeholders' knowledge of the issue and giving them practical skills to confidently plan and implement actions related to the issue.

This distinction between awareness and practical understanding and skills may seem obvious, but it is important to keep in mind when reflecting on the current status of inclusive education, and planning future action.

UNCRPD Article 8 obliges states to raise awareness about the "rights and dignity of persons with disabilities,"⁶¹ and seeks to:

- ensure safeguarding practices in all aspects of daily lives, including education;
- stop discriminatory practices;

- foster an appreciation of what persons with disabilities can contribute in communities and in work; and
- promote awareness raising to be implemented through a variety of measures, including community campaigns using multimedia and arts approaches.

Persons with disabilities and their families and caregivers must be aware of and understand what their rights are and how to ask for them. They must understand their right to education and feel empowered to demand it.

5.2 Current challenges

A growing number of stakeholders at all levels—teachers, parents, learners, education administrators and decision makers, persons with disabilities, and DPOs—are now aware that the concept of inclusive education exists. They have some theoretical idea of what it means. However, despite plenty of donor and government money being spent on inclusive education awareness-raising activities, project evaluations⁶² often conclude that there is limited understanding of the practicalities of getting it done, and projects remain small-scale and dependent on external expertise.

Short, one-off training sessions or workshops lasting one to five days are common. Such workshops are often facilitated in a trainer-centred way. Participants are rarely given opportunities to engage in practical activities that reflect real-life situations and promote innovation. Too little work has been done to build genuine understanding and practical

skills as opposed to simply raising awareness of theories—and this is a significant barrier to progress with inclusive education.

Evaluation and research evidence shows that, even after teachers have attended inclusive education awareness-raising workshops, they still lack the understanding, confidence, or skills to change their pedagogy, communications with parents, peer collaborations, or other practices.

5.3 Building solutions

We can raise awareness quite quickly and often inexpensively with short workshops. However, helping teachers and policymakers translate theory into practice—and then have opportunities to test and practise new skills and activities while being supported and advised—takes much longer and requires multiple inputs and support.

“... teachers actually attribute their professional development and know-how not to training, but rather to watching experienced teachers teach, talking to them, trying things out and thinking about them. It is this cycle of co-operation, action and review among colleagues which is the organic process of teacher training in action. This cycle helps to challenge existing cultures, and develop inclusive thinking, practices and actions.”⁶³

Currently, the time frames and budgets for many NGOs and donors do not accommodate in-depth, ongoing work to build understanding and practical skills. CBM, our partners, and

▼ Sporting activities taking place during Global Action Week 2014 in Kenya. The initiative raises awareness of issues around disability with the campaign slogan 'Equal Right, Equal Opportunity: Education and Disability.'

other NGOs must work on this, both to change our own project approaches and to lobby funders to think long term.

Today, action-research based approaches are considered increasingly important. They help stakeholders— at all levels—to feel empowered to move beyond just awareness and to develop a more reflective and in-depth understanding of their situations, so that they can take effective action. A good example of this can be found in **Case Study 5** on this page. Action research involves a 'look-think-act' cycle. This starts by looking at the situations, such as the barriers to inclusion and the factors already enabling inclusion. Ideally, this is done from the perspective of multiple stakeholders, using participatory verbal, writ-

ten, observational, and visual or mapping techniques to collect those perspectives. It then involves thinking about or analysing information about the situation to extract lessons learned and ideas that become the basis for action. Actions based on the participatory research are experimental in nature. They involve, for instance, testing out ideas to address a particular inclusion barrier or expand on promising practice. Action research is cyclical so that actions are tested and then analysed to see what the results have been, before revised actions are suggested and tested.

The hands-on, experiential nature of action-research makes it an ideal approach to help teachers, parents, community members, learners, DPOs, NGOs, and policymakers turn their initial awareness and basic understanding of inclusive education theory into something much deeper and more practical. We discuss further the issue of making teacher education more practical and experiential in Chapter 8.



📄 Case Study 5: Action research to boost practical understanding in Zanzibar⁶⁴

► Inclusive education has been happening for many years in Zanzibar. Projects have included many teacher trainings and development of training manuals. However, evaluations for a project funded by the Norwegian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (NFU) revealed that training was mostly theoretical. Teachers expressed awareness and commitment to including all learners with and without disabilities but also a sense of fear and



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confusion about how to do it. Action research was therefore introduced as a next step to help teachers better understand inclusive education and develop confidence and problem-solving skills, and to help them collaborate better with parents, children, and each other in identifying and addressing existing barriers to inclusion.

At the start of this initiative, teachers and inclusive education advisers from resource centres that support a cluster of schools received a short training on action-research. This involved visiting a school where they could practise action-research techniques – such as

observation, focus group facilitation using photo elicitation and drawing, as well as interviews – to stimulate discussions. The training participants pooled and analysed their findings. They were surprised by the extent of new understanding about inclusion and exclusion they had elicited from just one short school visit.

Teachers from the visited school – and later teachers from various other schools – carried out small-scale, participatory research projects on topics they identified for themselves in small groups. The topics were based on problems they were facing, or issues they had

▲ CBR worker Jeevan K. C. distributes informative handouts to villagers in Nepal, during a disability-awareness programme for school children and villagers.

heard about in the theoretical training that they wanted to investigate further. The research helped them find out more about inclusion challenges and strengths in their schools and communities, and helped them generate ideas for taking action to improve inclusion. The cyclical process also involved reviewing their actions to see if changes had happened and then deciding on further action.

At one point, all the teachers from different schools met to share and discuss their action-research. Some said they were gaining better understanding of their schools, the learners, and the wider context, and had been reaching out to the community more to hear

other stakeholders' views and ideas. Others had learned collaboratively from each other about practical pedagogy improvements and making tactile learning materials for children with visual impairments.

The Inclusive Education and Lifeskills Unit in the Ministry of Education, with support from the Norwegian Association of the Disabled, which has taken over responsibility for the NFU's project, hopes to involve even more schools. New in-service and pre-service teacher training materials are being developed, which embed action-research principles to help all teachers develop reflective and critical thinking skills, to turn awareness of inclusion theory into innovative practice. ◀

Key learning points

- There is a big difference between raising awareness (answering the 'what' and 'why' questions) and building understanding of inclusive education (answering the 'how' question).
- Stakeholders need a deeper understanding of inclusive education if they are to have the confidence and skills to act rather than just discuss theory.
- Action research is a useful tool to help build understanding and confidence to act, while also promoting participation and collaboration.

Chapter 6

Stakeholder Empowerment and Engagement

“Active involvement of people with disabilities and their organisations in the process of designing and implementing policies and measures to promote inclusive education is key for the inclusion of people with disabilities in educational structures.”

David Lopez, President of Organización de Ciegos de Nicaragua Marisela Toledo and government adviser (2016)



6.1 The importance of stakeholder empowerment and engagement

Reading about international laws and national policies can make inclusive education seem like something created or driven by high-level decision- and policymakers. However, inclusive education often has strong origins within communities, for instance, evolving from efforts by parents of children with and without disabilities, teachers, or marginalised groups to do something to improve the education available to them and their children. Inclusive education is often as influenced by indigenous or community-based forms of learning as by international expectations. Consequently, no inclusive education discussion or intervention is complete without considering the vital role of grassroots stakeholders, and how to ensure they continue to be, or in some places become, the driving force behind inclusive education.

“I think parents, family members, and the learners themselves are the drivers who bring out the changes.”⁶⁵

The notion of stakeholder participation in development has gained popularity since the emergence of approaches like participatory rural appraisal and participatory learning and action in the 1980s. These sought to ensure that development work avoided top-down approaches dominated by external experts, and instead helped stakeholders feel empowered to examine and address problems themselves.

Within disability-inclusive development, we recognise the need for girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities to have a voice, and be enabled to take direct action in all decisions that affect their lives, their communities, and their countries. The role of diverse stakeholders and persons with disabilities in developing and reforming the education system, and monitoring progress, is gaining ground too, but there is still much to be done.

There are roles for various stakeholders at various levels in inclusive education. We will look at:

- parents, caregivers, and community members;
- learners with disabilities; and
- persons with disabilities and DPOs.

6.2 Parents, caregivers, and community members

6.2.1 Current challenges

Parents, and other caregivers like grandparents, siblings, or extended family members, play a central role in children’s education. Their beliefs can determine whether a child has an opportunity to attend and stay in school. For instance, parents in some contexts may prioritise the education of sons over daughters, believing sons to be better investments for the future. Or they may decide that scarce money should not be ‘wasted’ on sending a daughter or son with disabilities to school because they assume they will not achieve good results. In some contexts, especially during or after conflict or crisis, parents may be too worried about the safety of their daughters and sons



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with disabilities, especially daughters, to allow them to leave the home to attend school.

Parents help shape their children's early physical, intellectual, and social development. Some parents struggle to communicate with, teach, or support their daughter or son with disabilities. They may lack awareness or understanding of their children's rights and their own responsibilities, or they may feel cut off from advice and support services. Not all parents experience these difficulties, of course, and evidence suggests that many more parents are becoming increasingly supportive of and vocal in advocating for education rights.⁶⁶

Parents often have well-established roles in supporting their children's learning through the improvement of their schools, parent-teacher associations, school management

committees, and school inclusion teams.⁶⁷ However, not all parents are keen to engage with their children's schools, believing education to be the responsibility of teachers and education officials. Some parents may struggle to engage in their children's schooling due to health problems, the pressures of work, or caring for family members. Many schools still discourage parents and the wider community from getting involved. They may only invite them to engage in one-way meetings or to listen to presentations in which the teachers and education professionals have a voice but parents and community members do not. In some contexts, parents' input is still dismissed as interfering, or their knowledge and ideas viewed as inferior to those of the professionals.

▲ Workshop participants in Bengaluru, India. The aim of the workshop was to enable caregivers and rehabilitation professionals to support children with delayed developmental milestones.

“...some teachers refuse to allow parents in the classroom, and do not seem to appreciate that parents could be ‘specialists’ in understanding and supporting their own children’s needs: ‘During the lesson only the teacher and the children should be in the classroom’ [focus group participant quotation].”⁶⁸

6.2.2 Building solutions

A key part of any inclusive education initiative is to engage parents, caregivers, and the wider community in a two-way process of:

- asking parents and the community how the education initiative or school could support them in improving the care, development, and education they provide at home; and
- finding out from parents and community members about experience-based suggestions they can offer the school for improving learners’ presence, participation, and achievement.

Increasingly, the important role of the community in school improvement is being recognised. Community members, groups, and organisations are often valuable resources for schools, offering technical and professional expertise, funding or in-kind donations, volunteers and hands-on help, and advocacy allies who can help change attitudes towards disability across communities. This may be particularly so in crisis and conflict situations, where formal inputs from governments have been interrupted or lost.

Among parents and community members, the levels of interest and availability will vary. Inclusive education initiatives must be flexible,

and encourage and enable them to engage in their children’s education and in efforts to improve their local schools to the extent that is feasible. Evaluations sometimes reveal that programme staff or teachers feel that parents are uninterested. Conversely, parents may explain that teachers or NGO staff plan meetings at times that are inconvenient, or formally summon them to meetings in a way that makes them feel that they or their children are in trouble, so they are too scared to attend. Apparent lack of parental interest therefore needs attention; parents should not feel forced to demonstrate interest, and efforts should be made to ensure that apparent disinterest is not caused by easily tackled barriers to participation.

In some contexts, education policy gives parents choices as to which school their children may attend. This may include choosing whether to send them to special schools, if they exist. Inclusive education initiatives should work with parents who are facing this decision, not with the intention of making them choose an inclusive school but instead talking through parents’ concerns to ensure they understand the options so they can make well-informed decisions. Inclusive education personnel should also work with parents who are facing this decision to identify possible ways for mainstream schools to address their concerns, and/or to identify alternative ways in which specialist support could be arranged, other than enrolment in segregated special schools.

CBM, our partners, and other organisations must support parents to recognise the vital role they play in their children’s education, and



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facilitate their empowerment to engage more closely in education matters, if they wish.

We can support and encourage parents to:

- engage in the design and development of school improvement and inclusive education programmes in their schools;
- provide hands-on support to inclusive education in their school communities, for instance, by volunteering as classroom assistants, not necessarily just for their own children; helping make children's journeys to school safer; or taking direct action to

improve accessibility of the school buildings and compounds;

- advocate at a local level (for instance, with head teachers, local education officials) for their children's enrolment in their community schools, and for innovations in teaching and learning, accessibility, technology, and transition;
- advocate at a higher level for changes to policies, to push for inclusive education and improved funding for the twin-tracks of system reform and individual support;

▲ CBR worker Agnes Nabawanuka talks to teachers, parents, community members, and pupils about different types and causes of disability and the services offered by the hospital at which she works in Uganda.

- come together in groups to support each other, practically and emotionally, and to have a louder voice when lobbying on behalf of their children. Parents' groups can also identify barriers to inclusion that need to be discussed with school managers, and work together to develop ideas for solutions;
- participate in school-wide discussions or inclusion teams alongside teachers, managers, learners, and other community members;
- train and advise teachers through sharing their personal experiences of caring for or educating children with disabilities or children from other marginalised or at-risk groups;
- actively shape their children's learning and support plans, for instance, by engaging in individual planning and personal goal-setting processes, not just being told about them, and helping their children to be active participants in mapping and making decisions about their learning needs and goals; and
- become more active co-educators of their children, working collaboratively with teachers to motivate and reinforce learning.

"The provision of a quality primary education is important for the whole community, therefore getting the community participating in efforts to improve the quality of their primary school provision is a vital step in inclusive education."⁶⁹

Inclusive education projects and schools must investigate and map the human, material, and technical resources that are available in the wider community and build relationships

to help the projects and schools access those resources. They must also help community members engage with schools. It is particularly important that this includes finding strong role models in communities who can be motivated to support inclusive education activities. These might include successful business people with disabilities, and women with and without disabilities who have succeeded in careers that are stereotypically considered to be for men.

Awareness-raising activities for parents around disability and inclusion can be expanded to include wider community members. This can help parents and families feel that their peers and neighbours better understand and can be more supportive with removing the barriers to inclusion that their children face. Community members can also play a role in identifying out-of-school children or girls and boys with disabilities who are being hidden at home, and encouraging families, schools, and early childhood and inclusive education projects to take action.

Case Study 6: **Empowered parents support inclusion in Nicaragua**⁷⁰

► CBM has worked with ASOPIECAD in Nicaragua on CBR work since 2006. In 2012, the partnership helped 561 children with disabilities be included in mainstream education. One of those children was Maria, a 10-year-old girl with Down syndrome. The CBR programme guided and supported her family so that they could better support Maria to attend a mainstream primary school and participate

in community life. The CBR workers initially visited the family to help them overcome their fear of taking Maria to public places. They saw potential in the levels of care given by Maria's mother and encouraged her to attend CBR trainings. Maria's mother was so inspired and encouraged that she now works with the CBR programme, sharing her experiences and supporting and encouraging other families to include their children in school and community life. She provides families with advice and support on early education in her own community as well as in the municipality, and she offers support to members of parents' self-help groups. ◀

6.3 Learners with disabilities

6.3.1 Current challenges

Ironically, the stakeholder group least empowered and engaged in the field of inclusive education is the learners themselves. Girls, boys, women, and men with and without disabilities are too rarely consulted about what they want and need from education; what they would like their teachers to do or not do; how they would like their schools to look and feel; and how they would like the school day to be structured. The voices of younger learners are least heard. There is a tendency, even among those experienced with working with children and young people, to believe that they are unable to engage in discussions about education. This is particularly the case with very young children, or children with more severe or multiple impairments, such as deaf-blindness.

Yet all learners, of any age and ability, can be supported to express, in their own way, their views about their desires for education and the future; the schools or other settings in which they are learning; and the teachers, peers, or other people they encounter. These views can and should shape education – at both the school community level and at higher decision-making levels.

In some contexts, where education in segregated special schools, units, or classes is an option, learners have a right to express their opinions about which option they prefer. This must be based on providing them with unbiased and detailed information and about all available options, as well as opportunities to try different options and to change their minds and move to different education settings.

More examples of activities that seek to listen to young voices in relation to inclusive education are happening nowadays. However, embedding this youth participation into the core development, implementation, and monitoring of all education programmes remains challenging for many organisations.

“In Peru, I recently met a young man with a learning disability. We talked about his education. Until he was in his teens, he attended mainstream schools. However, in his teenage years he started to become disruptive in class, less collaborative, so it was decided that the best solution was to send him to a special school where class sizes were smaller and the curriculum was devised for his needs. He did not want to go to a special school and wanted to be in



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▲ Maria, who has Down syndrome is working with her class-mates at school. She receives early learning support from CBM's local partner ASOPIECAD, in Nicaragua.

a regular school. After a few months at the special school the teenager was very clear that he preferred to be back in mainstream education. He said, 'special school was very boring and I made no progress with my learning.' I think this personal autonomy to choose one's pathway is something we rarely take into account. Obviously the teachers are change agents, as are schools, ministries, institutions—but we also need to hear the voice of persons with disabilities themselves..."⁷¹

6.3.2 Building solutions

One-off consultations with girls, boys, young women, and young men have a value in showing the importance of consulting them, and in providing them an outlet for their opinions. However, it is important that CBM, our partners, and other organisations embed consultations with children and young people, as well as older learners, across every aspect of inclusive education and school improvement programmes. Because children and young people are the least heard, this section

focuses on ways to help them speak out and engage in direct action. We must:

- use enjoyable, age- and ability-appropriate participatory activities to consult children and young people at every stage, from the scoping and design of an initiative through to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This might include formally organised consultation activities, such as focus groups, mapping, drama, art, or photography activities; and informal or ad hoc activities, such as encouraging them to leave feedback and ideas in suggestions boxes;
- support other stakeholders, such as parents, teachers, and programme staff, to understand the value of consulting children and young people with and without disabilities, and learn how to facilitate accessible consultations and make effective use of the results;
- design structures that help children and young people with and without disabilities give input and take direct action. These could include student committees, peer support groups, child-to-child activities, campaign groups, and school improvement activity days;
- connect activities that enable children and young people to have a voice in education and community decisions, with the learning process and curriculum (there is an example of this in **Case Study 7** on the right); and
- enable children and young persons with and without disabilities to play an active role in efforts to stop bullying and prejudice, for instance, by making decisions about the content of anti-bullying policies, and design-

ing and/or running child-to-child sessions about the causes of and solutions to bullying and prejudice.

Case Study 7: Linking child empowerment and advocacy with the curriculum in Palestine⁷²

▶ A collaborative programme between the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNESCO, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) focused on achieving education for all. The programme piloted child-led action-research activities to boost inclusion and active learning. Activity guides helped teachers to connect the child-led action-research with the curriculum and to include diverse children with different abilities.

Children engaged in project-based learning. They worked collaboratively on projects that cut across the curricula of different subjects. They used action-research approaches to investigate issues that concerned them, such as environmental issues and healthy eating. Children read documents, watched videos, carried out interviews and surveys, and met with external visitors to gather information, which they analysed and presented, often using charts and tables. Such activities helped boost learning in maths, language and communication, science, and geography, using different methods that suited the abilities and interests of different learners. The children then created advocacy campaigns based on their action-research projects. The girls and

► Persons living with disabilities themselves—and their families—know best about their own specific needs. Taking their experience and knowledge into consideration could help to make education more disability-inclusive. Here, mothers of girls and boys with disabilities take part in a self-help group in Malawi.



© CBM/Hayduk

boys prepared stories, dramas, songs, and campaign slogans. They also organised an advocacy event attended by the MoEHE, the UNRWA, parents, and local institutes, at which their research findings and advocacy campaign messages were presented. The pilot activities were expanded by subject supervisors who encouraged other teachers and schools to try the approach.

The activities “showed school principals, subject supervisors and parents (and the children themselves) that children could do much more than people had previously believed. Children had a chance to discover their strengths. . . . Some parents previously thought their children were failures who could not do anything. But after their involvement in child-led activities, parents realised their children could do a lot.”⁷³ ◀

6.4 Persons with disabilities and DPOs

6.4.1 Current challenges

Disability activists pushed for the changes in attitudes and behaviours that evolved into the social model approach to disability, upon which inclusive education thinking was based. The disability movement lobbied for the creation of the UNCRPD. Many persons with disabilities or their representative organisations, pushed for Article 24 to be oriented towards inclusive education. Persons with disabilities and DPOs can play a vital role in supporting both technical and advocacy work around inclusive education—yet their input is often missing from projects and programmes. Why?

Over the years, inclusive education has evolved and been influenced by other edu-

cation movements, such as the EFA and child-friendly schools.⁷⁴ It has become a more holistic approach, making education more welcoming and flexible for all learners from diverse marginalised groups. Responding to the needs of girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities is often more challenging for schools and education officials than responding to the needs of other marginalised groups. Various inclusive education initiatives have intentionally or unintentionally overlooked disability issues and thus the voices of persons with disabilities.

Some persons with disabilities and DPOs are distanced from inclusive education due to an ongoing preference for segregated education. They believe that this offers a safer, more appropriately targeted, or better quality option for learners with disabilities than inclusion in mainstream schools that are considered to be poorly prepared. This may stem from a lack of clarity about the twin-track concept of inclusive education. It may also stem from a lack of evidence that attendance in mainstream schools can go hand-in-hand with access to specialist support.

In other cases, persons with disabilities and DPOs have not been encouraged or invited to play a role in inclusive education development or implementation. Many inclusive education programmes are initiated or run by disability-focused NGOs. In theory, these NGOs should be more attuned to the importance of engaging persons with disabilities and DPOs as allies, but in reality they often do not consider or know how to facilitate this engagement. Other inclusive education programmes and projects are run by general NGOs or

government departments that often have limited or even no historical connection or current relationships with NGOs or DPOs engaged in disability-related work.

Conversely, there are examples of inclusive education initiatives in which DPOs have played a foundational role, contributing to programme design, fundraising, community awareness raising, government advocacy, and teacher training. **Case Study 8** on page 84 highlights one example of how persons with disabilities can be included in such a teacher training.

6.4.2 Building solutions

Regardless of who initiates inclusive education programmes, engagement with DPOs and persons with disabilities is key. **Table 2** on page 85 summarises ideas for engaging persons with disabilities in various programme stages.

In some contexts, before the above-mentioned engagements are possible, girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities and those persons who run local DPOs may need support in order to:

- better understand the paradigm shift from medical and charity to social and rights models of disability and how this relates to inclusive development and education;
- understand local, national, or international decision-making processes, and identify suitable entry points;
- build advocacy skills and confidence; and
- reflect analytically on their experiences to present evidence and arguments that are timely, relevant, and hard-hitting.



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▲ Disability-awareness day at a school in Uganda sees CBR field worker Agnes Nabawanuka (wearing the CBM T-shirt) teach the teachers about different impairments, their causes, and how they can be prevented.

📄 Case Study 8: The role of persons with disabilities in teacher training in Iraq⁷⁵

▶ In northern Iraq, the Ministry of Education developed introductory courses on inclusive education for Ministry-employed teachers, and awareness-raising sessions for education leaders. Local DPOs helped identify adults with disabilities who could contribute to the trainings. Deaf and blind adults shared their personal stories about the role education had played in their lives. They demonstrated assistive resources and daily living techniques. Deaf adults taught basic sign language to teachers, using words the teachers wanted to learn. They also demonstrated visual story-telling.

At awareness seminars for school principals, education officials, and decision makers, persons with disabilities were included as participants, contributing their perspectives on inclusion. Disability rights advocates were guest lecturers, “providing detailed theoretical and practical information, and delivering

hard-hitting messages on combatting discrimination.”⁷⁶

Feedback from participants indicated that this approach “helped teachers to see people with disabilities as partners in upholding the rights of children in their classes, rather than as passive recipients of charitable services.”⁷⁷ The training activities initiated or reinforced cooperation between DPOs and the inclusive education programme. ◀

6.5 A note on the empowerment of teachers

Chapter 8 discusses teachers and teacher education in more detail. However, it is important to highlight here that teachers are also a central group of stakeholders who must feel empowered within inclusive education so they can suggest or make changes to the way they teach, to the environment, and to the way they interact with other stakeholders.

Teachers face a contradictory challenge. They are expected to work independently in their classrooms, which requires confidence, creativity, and innovation. Yet, they often face tight controls on what they can and cannot teach, and how. They face regular inspections of the quality and results of their work, and are blamed when children do not perform as expected. Teachers even face ridicule by communities or the media when results are not good enough. In some contexts, mainstream teachers may be conditioned, through training or society’s attitudes, to believe that they are incapable of teaching learners with dis-

◀ Table 2: Engaging persons with disabilities in programme cycle stages

Stages	To engage persons with disabilities in these stages, we must ensure:
Scoping, baseline, situation studies	they are involved not just as research subjects but as researchers or co-researchers who gather data upon which decisions about their education will be made.
Programme planning	they contribute their perspectives and ideas to the development of theories of change around education and inclusion, and to the logical planning of activities to reach those changes.
Implementation	they are involved as programme staff; teachers within inclusive schools; trainers of teachers, either as formal trainers or providing their personal experiences during trainings; advisers who can assist, for instance, with ideas for reasonable accommodations or improved teaching and learning techniques; and as role models for learners with disabilities.
Monitoring and evaluation	they are involved in developing frameworks for accessible, participatory approaches to investigate the outcomes and impacts of inclusive education initiatives; have a voice in developing indicators for progress; and are researchers or co-researchers, not just subjects of the research.
Advocacy	they feel empowered to speak out for inclusive education from a well-informed position; lobby for policy and funding changes, at international, national, and local community, school and classroom levels; effectively combine high-level messages, for instance about UNCRPD Article 24 and SDGs, with personal or local experiences.

abilities, and may even be warned not to try in case they harm them.⁷⁸

If we also consider teachers' poor levels of pay and/or status in many countries, it is not surprising that they often feel disempowered

or lack the confidence or motivation to tackle new challenges. Initiatives to train teachers on inclusive education often focus on conveying information on disability or pedagogical theory, rather than developing teachers as

confident, creative, motivated practitioners who welcome new challenges and know they are supported. As we show in Chapter 8, there are many ways to educate and support teachers so that they have the power to be agents of change.

A related issue is the need for more persons with disabilities to feel empowered to teach. Most countries have few teachers with disabilities, especially in mainstream schools. They face multiple barriers to pursuing teaching careers. To address this, CBM, our partners, and other organisations must support or advocate for:

- more adults with disabilities resuming or completing basic and secondary education to obtain qualifications for entry into training college;
- reforming college and university enrolment processes, and creating accelerated courses to help persons with disabilities who missed out on education to access training college;
- making teacher training courses, materials, and assessment processes accessible;
- making reasonable accommodations, so that teachers with disabilities can carry out practicums during training, and work in mainstream schools once qualified;
- reforming recruitment policies that preclude adults with disabilities from applying for teaching jobs, for instance, by removing requirements to pass strict medical or fitness tests; and
- ensuring recruiters at school, district, and central levels receive disability equality training.

Key learning points

- In some contexts, vocal, committed, and empowered grassroots stakeholders have been the driving forces behind inclusive education. Elsewhere, parents, girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities, teachers, and community members have had little or no voice.
- Successful inclusive education programmes—in both development and humanitarian contexts—need grassroots stakeholders to be actively involved, from initial planning and implementation right through to evaluation stages.

Chapter 7

Innovation: Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation

“The words ‘accessibility’ and ‘reasonable accommodation’ may sound like daunting obligations that will only support a tiny minority of people. In fact, these concepts define methods and tools that ensure not only inclusion of persons with disabilities but make it easier for everyone to benefit from education services.”

Gordon Rattray,
Emergency
Communications
Coordinator
CBM International
Emergency Response Unit
(2016)



There is no pre-existing blueprint for the perfect inclusive education system or for the ideal accessible school. Each education system or school goes through a process of experimentation and reflection to arrive at the solutions that work best in that context at that time. Poor accessibility and lack of funding to improve accessibility are often cited as major barriers to inclusive education. However, with creativity and the adoption of universal design principles, steps can be taken to make improvements on access for all. **Box 10** below defines universal design and **Box 11** on the following page enumerates the principles of universal design.

7.1 Obligations

UNCRPD Article 24 on inclusive education must be read in conjunction with UNCRPD Article 9 on accessibility. Article 9 sets out clear obligations for accessibility of not just

the built environment. It recognises that, in addition to encompassing the physical environment, transport, information, and communication for all persons with disabilities must be made accessible in both urban and rural areas. It also recognises that the attitudes held by providers of goods and services impact on the extent to which persons with disabilities are able to access services. For example, a public building might be accessible but staff may not be welcoming to persons with disabilities due to lack of training and awareness.

In terms of the connection between accessibility and inclusive education, the UNCRPD General Comment on accessibility states that “without accessible transport to schools, accessible school buildings, and accessible information and communication, persons with disabilities would not have the opportunity to exercise their right to education.”⁸¹ In simple terms, this means that the obligations to provide access to girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities extend far beyond solely installing ramps.

7.2 Addressing accessibility gaps

There remains a long way to go before these commitments are achieved. Many inclusive education projects, which are often closer to integrated education, have focused mainly on addressing physical barriers in schools, as a way to help learners with disabilities gain access, without adopting a comprehensive approach towards accessibility and implemen-

Box 10: Defining universal design⁷⁹

“‘Universal design’ means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. ‘Universal design’ shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.”⁸⁰ Universal design applies to all aspects of society and services, not just education.

In relation to education, universal design for learning is about ensuring that every aspect of the learning environment and teaching and learning processes are accessible to everyone.

tation of universal design principles. Addressing other barriers in attitudes, policies, and practices is key to ensuring realisation of inclusive environments. In addition, ensuring accessibility of schools and facilities is critical to addressing the needs of persons with disabilities during disasters and emergencies, since many schools are used as emergency shelters in such events.

Furthermore, “inclusive transport that applies universal design principles is an important part of any comprehensive strategy to ensure the inclusion of people with disability. Transport infrastructure and means of transport that exclude people with disability limit educational opportunities, participation in the labour market and access to health and other social services.”⁸² Transportation is key to ensuring continuity of the travel chain, which aims at ensuring that all elements that make up a journey from home to school—including pedestrian access, information, vehicles, and transfer points—are accessible. If any link is inaccessible, the entire trip becomes difficult, particularly for learners with disabilities.

Project plans and evaluations from multiple organisations⁸³ reveal that installing ramps is a common task in inclusive education projects. Other accessibility measures—such as, clear signage; use of coloured paint to mark steps; ensuring access to evacuation exits, paths and doorways; improving lighting; adapting teaching and learning materials; access to early warning systems; access to transport; and tackling noise problems⁸⁴—have been less common. While many projects have made a significant difference through acces-

Box 11: Universal design principles

“Principle 1: Equitable use: Design that is useful and marketable to persons with diverse abilities.

Principle 2: Flexibility in use: Design that accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Principle 3: Simple and intuitive use: Design that is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or concentration level.

Principle 4: Perceptible information: Design that communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.

Principle 5: Tolerance for error: Design that minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Principle 6: Low physical effort: Design that can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Principle 7: Size and space for approach and use: Design that provides appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture or mobility.”⁸⁵

sibility adjustments such as installing ramps and handrails, such efforts are not always well executed and coordinated. For example, various evaluations have revealed poor implementation of accessibility standards and universal design principles, including ramps made from unsuitable materials, situated in the wrong places, with steep slopes, sometimes with steps at the top or bottom of the ramps, and even ramps starting in bushes or flower beds.



▲ ICT is not only used as a new, innovative way of teaching, but also as a way to connect on the topic of inclusive education more generally. Here Mila Abougharip is being interviewed in the Philippines.

The implications of poorly designed environments are wasted resources, continued exclusion, and risk of injury or harm in the event of an emergency. Why does this happen? There are various factors explaining the poor or lack of implementation of accessibility including:

- lack of incorporation of universal design principles in the early stages of the infrastructure design;
- lack of financial resources to retrofit and maintain infrastructure;
- lack of planning and design capacity;
- limited research and information;
- lack of cooperation between different institutions and organisations;
- lack of user participation;
- lack of enforcement mechanisms;

- geographic and climatic constraints; and
- lack of disability and universal design awareness component in the training curricula of planners, architects, and construction engineers.

In most cases where accessibility measures have been narrowly or poorly planned and implemented, there has been a lack of collaboration and participation with persons with disabilities in the design, planning, monitoring, and evaluation. There is often no consultation with local DPOs, with persons with disabilities in the community, or with learners in the schools who will use the ramps or other facilities, and no links with other NGOs or businesses that have experience in creating cost-effective, locally suitable accessibility solutions.

Maintenance is key to ensuring accessibility. “No matter how good accessibility is, it will fail if schools and relevant authorities do not allocate budgets for maintenance. Ensuring that monitoring and maintenance costs are addressed at the early stages of the planning process is key to ensure that schools and facilities such as washrooms are fully accessible and usable throughout their lifespan.”⁸⁶

Information and communications technology

ICT has the potential to bring about significant changes in inclusive education. It can help teachers adapt lessons and present content and learning activities in various accessible formats. Learners with visual impairments can use audio or visual formats that suit their needs and help them participate fully along-

side sighted peers. Voice output technology can help learners with communication disabilities to have a voice. Game-based software can support engagement in the learning process for those who are less comfortable with formal teaching and learning approaches.

With the boom in mobile phone and tablet technology, and the growing numbers of displaced people who have access to this technology, ICT is increasingly being adapted for use in crisis and conflict situations. ICT can facilitate learners' access to information and maintain contact with teachers and peers when movement or access to safe education facilities is restricted. Much standard ICT hardware comes with built-in accessibility features, so there is clear scope for ICT to support the inclusion of learners with disabilities during emergencies.

However, most children in low- and middle-income countries who could benefit from ICT in schools, still do not have access because their schools or parents cannot afford to buy or maintain the equipment.

"In most low-income countries only 5–15% of those who need assistive technology have access."⁸⁷

Some projects have focused on supplying ICT equipment for accessibility, while other NGOs and governments have developed ambitious plans to supply all learners with computers. However, the sustainability of equipment provision projects is always a concern when the provision is carried out through a one-off project rather than being integral to a long-term government education strategy.

Rather than aiming to supply equipment directly, CBM, our partners, and other NGOs can help support the use of ICT as a key strategy in inclusive education by:

- lobbying governments to allocate education budgets with inclusion in mind. It may be possible for governments to fund some ICT options by more strategically allocating existing funds. Interministerial collaboration and cost sharing may also be a solution. Governments may need capacity-building support to help them better understand how to budget with equity and inclusion in mind;
- lobbying donors to fund innovative, inclusion-oriented ICT projects, with a focus on accessibility; but donors must be pushed to fund such projects as part of long-term strategic education plans, not just as high-profile, one-off activities; and

▼ Clemence Mupasi, a braille transcriber, proofreading a school book at Zimbabwe Council for the Blind in Zimbabwe.



© CBM/Diener

- calling for, or providing, training for teachers that shows them how to make any existing technology more accessible. For instance, most computers, tablets, and smartphones have at least some built-in visual and audio accessibility options at no extra cost, but most users are unaware of how to use them or what benefits they could bring to teaching and learning.

7.3 Reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities

Transforming the accessibility of the entire education system will take time, which is why governments are also obliged to ensure—with immediate effect—that girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities are not discriminated against when accessing education services. Even when full accessibility is provided, persons with rare impairments might ask for accommodations that fall outside the scope of any accessibility standard. Reasonable accommodation can be used as a means of ensuring accessibility for individuals with disabilities in particular situations.⁸⁸

Reasonable accommodation is about creating immediate, innovative, versatile, and adaptive solutions suitable to the local context and resources that meet the needs of individuals. It is not about acquiring or installing expensive, high-tech facilities and equipment, although that is an option in communities that can afford it. Therefore, there is no expectation that mainstream schools will, overnight, transform into highly resourced and perfect examples of accessible infrastructure

and practice. There is, however, an expectation that education settings and services—in both stable and crisis-affected contexts—will take every measure possible to make reasonable accommodations to enable learners with disabilities to access, participate, and achieve alongside their peers. They will also make reasonable accommodations to enable women and men with disabilities to work as teachers or other staff within education settings.

The sorts of accommodations needed will be context specific and driven by the needs of individual learners and staff members. Responding to the need for reasonable accommodation is a process that requires collaboration and empowerment. Collaboratively, teachers and school staff, children with and without disabilities, parents, CBID workers, special needs coordinators, DPO representatives, adults with disabilities in the community, and local builders, transport, and other service providers must discuss the barriers to access and participation that exist, and work together to think of solutions.

To do this, a space for dialogue and a collaborative environment must be created in which all stakeholders feel empowered and able to voice their needs and ideas openly. Participation and cooperation of many actors – including learners with and without disabilities, their families, teachers, decision makers, and community members—is key to ensuring the development of good practices, innovative practical solutions at local levels, and avoiding duplication and financial waste. For instance, girls and boys with disabilities must be encouraged to explain what they think is needed, what would make them feel



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◀ Adrian (left) being helped by his friend to climb the stairs at his school in Nicaragua. He and his family are receiving support from CBM's partner ASOPIECAD.

comfortable and safe in schools – and to do this without fear of judgement. Their parents or other caregivers need opportunities to share their experiences of making homes safer and more accessible, and to describe what barriers their children face, without anyone criticising their parenting or home lives. Teachers need opportunities to share their experiences and ideas for improving accessibility, without worrying that someone more senior or considered to be more expert will devalue their ideas. Women and men with disabilities from the community need opportunities to contribute their real-life experiences and ideas.

Decisions around reasonable accommodation may involve compromise: identifying ideal solutions; reviewing available budgets, resources, and expertise; everyone working together to create solutions that are as close to ideal as possible with the money, materials, and people available. Reasonable accommodation for inclusive education involves pooling stakeholders' innovation and creativity. It is not about developing a fixed list of structural features, equipment, and materials that every school must have in place. Accessibility implementation plans must be supported by budget allocation and monitoring.

Making sure that learners can use sign language and braille is one of the more challenging aspects of reasonable accommodation. Finding skilled sign language interpreters and trainers to work in schools, or braille specialists who can train and support teachers and learners, can be difficult and/or expensive. However, short-term solutions may be possible. This includes finding volunteer interpreters, particularly family members who are fluent in sign language communication, or braille users in the community who can pro-

vide some support or advice, while longer-term efforts to develop budgets and train or recruit personnel are worked on.

Reasonable accommodation efforts help to achieve the individual support needs of learners. If the concept of universal design for learning is also considered, for instance, when designing new infrastructure, equipment and learning materials, and curricula, then the reasonable accommodation adjustments being made can feed into more long-term, systemic changes.⁸⁹

Key learning points

- The UNCRPD compels governments to ensure that girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities are not discriminated against in accessing education.
- Innovative access and accommodation solutions are best developed through collaborative processes involving all stakeholders, though the responsibility of governments to deliver solutions remains paramount.
- Reasonable accommodation and accessibility issues require attention in emergency as well as stable contexts. The growth in availability and affordability of mobile technology offers potential opportunities for the future.

Chapter 8

Innovation: Teachers and Teacher Education

“Teachers have an enormous influence on our lives. We all remember that one teacher who helped us to grow or crushed our confidence. There is ample evidence of the importance of teacher attitude. By providing the right teacher preparation that embraces diversity and uses flexible teaching methods, we have the potential to create a diverse world that celebrates differences – inclusive education is about good teaching.”

Sian Tesni,
Senior Adviser Education, CBM
(2017)



Teachers around the world work incredibly hard, often in difficult circumstances. When education systems are not performing as well as governments, communities, donors, or businesses think they should, teachers are often the scapegoats. When education is not inclusive, there is a tendency to blame the teachers. However, they are usually only doing what they were trained to do and what society has for many years expected them to do. The development of inclusive education therefore depends on bringing reform and innovation into teacher education.

The most inclusive teachers and teaching assistants are the ones who are innovative. They have not been taught exactly how to deal with every situation or how to respond to every girl's or boy's unique abilities and problems because that would be impossible. Instead they have core skills, competence, and confidence that enables them to think reflectively and solve problems. Inclusive teachers and inclusive teaching assistants are also collaborative – they recognise that they cannot address all inclusion challenges on their own. They find other people who can help them, and then work with them to identify learners' needs and abilities, and to find solutions to problems. Teachers will always struggle to teach in an inclusive way if they work in isolation, and if their school leaders have not been trained on inclusion and have not established structures to support the development of teachers.

Successful inclusive education depends on mainstream teachers, and their school leaders, being both aware of inclusive education and understanding how to teach and

support learners inclusively. Currently, few teachers are encouraged to learn about inclusion in an ongoing experiential, collaborative, and empowering way. The lack of innovation in teacher education and ongoing professional development is a significant barrier to progress.

8.1 In-service and pre-service training

In-service training on inclusive education is becoming more common. NGOs, UN agencies, and government departments are increasingly funding and/or rolling out training courses, often taking a whole-school approach to train as many teachers, head teachers, and support staff in schools as possible. This is a positive step, recognising that inclusive education cannot just depend on a small number of specially trained teachers, but needs an education workplace in which everyone is committed and able to support inclusion.

Training for inclusive education must also focus on pre-service training. Teachers must enter the profession understanding that they have a responsibility to teach diverse learners. They must feel confident that they have the foundation of inclusive skills, upon which they can build as they gain experience. In the long-term, it will be far more effective to invest in training teachers to be inclusive from the start of their careers than to change attitudes and practices once they have started work and developed entrenched ideas. To date, there has been less focus on pre-service training for inclusive education than in-service.

Table 3 below summarises some common problems with both in-service and pre-service training for inclusive education, and indicates

the changes needed, for which CBM, our partners, and other organisations can lobby or take direct action towards.

Problem: in-service training	Change needed
<p>Trainings are often one-off courses, with little or no follow-up.</p>	<p>Short courses must be planned with follow-up activities, such as more in-depth formal training, plus peer observation, learning and support, self-study, and action-research activities.</p>
<p>Trainings are often very short, for instance, one to five days.</p>	
<p>Theory-dominated courses persist; little time is spent discussing or observing practical issues, or learning through doing, where teachers practise inclusive approaches and test ideas for how to adapt the theory to their classrooms.</p>	<p>Much greater proportion of in-service training time must be dedicated to hands-on learning activities.</p>
<p>Courses that are labelled 'inclusive education' often focus narrowly on technical issues relating to specific impairments, such as courses on braille, sign language, or how to diagnose impairments. Specific skills training is needed to help teachers respond to learners' individual support needs and understand where to get help with this. But labelling specialist, technically or medically oriented training as 'inclusive education' confuses teachers and often leaves them unprepared for the wider system-level practice or pedagogical changes they must make.</p>	<p>Course developers must reflect on whether they are genuinely training on inclusive education or only offering narrow, impairment-specific, or technical training. They must better understand which type of training is needed, where, when, and with which trainees, and how to balance broader inclusive education content with impairment-specific content. Those who organise training for teachers must also better understand what training they should ask for from the trainers.</p>

◀ Table 3: Problems and desired changes in in-service and pre-service teacher training

► Table 3 (continued):
Problems and desired
changes in in-service
and pre-service
teacher training

Problem: in-service training

Courses may not be compulsory for every serving teacher. Often keen teachers will attend several in-service courses on inclusive education while others receive no training.

Some in-service teacher training courses may be compulsory, such as regular upgrading of subject knowledge or courses about new curricula. In-service inclusive education training should also be compulsory. However, rather than adding another compulsory course, steps could be taken to embed inclusive education principles and practical examples into all other in-service courses. This needs co-ordination across all actors engaged in in-service training.

Change needed

In-service training is often delivered through cascade models – for example, a group of so-called ‘master trainers’ is trained and that group passes on the training to other teachers, who may then be expected to pass the training to colleagues. This is considered cost-effective for reaching large numbers of teachers with one course. However, problems include:

- Master trainers often only have basic awareness of inclusive education, with limited practical experience, so they only pass on basic theoretical messages.
- Cascade approaches tend to be useful for raising awareness but ineffective at building practical skills and understanding. NGOs, governments, and teachers often have unrealistic expectations for the scale of practical change that cascade trainings can achieve, leading to disappointment and fuelling pronouncements that inclusive education does not work.

Training providers must think critically about the potential impact of cascade training on inclusive education. They must take a long-term view, look beyond the short-term statistics of how many teachers can be trained quickly, and instead critically assess the type and scale of practical changes that result from these trainings. CBM, our partners, and other organisations must ensure that we do not see cascade training as the only option. We must also ensure that, where cascade training is used, it is accompanied by ongoing support for teachers from the most experienced trainers in the cascade, and includes regular peer support and learning opportunities for teachers within and/or between schools, as part of their ongoing professional development.

Problem: pre-service training

Courses on inclusive education are often separate modules within teacher education programmes. They may not be compulsory, so teachers can complete college and enter the profession with no awareness let alone understanding of inclusive education. Consequently, pre-service training on inclusive education often only reaches those who actively seek to become specialists.

Courses are often theoretical and not integrated with teachers' practicum opportunities.

Many pre-service courses perpetuate special needs approaches better suited to segregated special education rather than inclusive education.

In-service and pre-service trainings are often developed and run by different agencies, with different levels of up-to-date experience of inclusive education. Consequently, in-service and pre-service trainings may convey different messages using different methods. This means teachers can receive different, even contradictory, advice about inclusive education, at different stages of their professional development.

Change needed

Compulsory pre-service training on inclusive education should be provided for all teachers at all levels. This should be done through a mixture of modules on inclusive education, and by embedding inclusive education theory and practice across all other pedagogy and subject-specific courses.

Modules on inclusive education should include a high proportion of time spent on practice-based learning, such as action research, self-study, and peer learning activities. Practicum periods, where possible, should be spent in inclusive schools, or in schools where there are teachers who already practise inclusion. Where this is not possible, trainees should be supervised and supported to try out inclusive ideas, or at least critically reflect on their practicum periods through an inclusive lens.

Collaboration between agencies or departments that provide in-service and pre-service training on inclusive education is essential. This will ensure that teachers receive a consistent and constantly reinforced message about inclusion. It will also ensure that practical experiences are shared and used to inform improved training across both levels.

◀ Table 3 (continued):
Problems and desired
changes in in-service
and pre-service
teacher training



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▲ CBM inclusive education specialist, Katharina Pfoertner, providing training in inclusive education to a school teacher in Nicaragua.

“Currently, too much effort and too many resources are going into training teachers about the large range of impairments and their medical causes and presentation. ... Too little time and effort goes into working on an inclusive pedagogy that will reduce the number of individual adjustments necessary for children with various impairments.”⁹⁰

Teacher training for inclusive education at both in- and pre-service levels is often designed from the top down. A training depart-

ment or consultant writes a training manual or course and then trains a group of trainers to use it, or sometimes the trainers are left to use the manual with no training or guidance. However, this approach can leave trainers feeling disconnected from the training course; they do not feel they own it. The top-down approach can sometimes mean that courses are created by people who are out of touch with the reality of what teachers want or need to learn, or what other stakeholders want their teachers to learn.

Involving persons with disabilities as expert advisers in teacher training for inclusion is vital. This can be taken a step further, to ensure the entire design of the course is collaborative. Inclusive education teacher training courses must be developed with input from a range of people, including external experts, ministry of education staff, teacher trainers, teachers, resource centre staff, NGOs, and DPOs. The process should not simply involve one expert writing the course and other stakeholders being given a chance to comment. A proven approach⁹¹ is for there to be a series of workshops at which drafts of the materials are reviewed, tested, and adapted by a range of stakeholders. In between these workshops, trainers and teachers conduct action-research activities—testing and reflecting on the training materials in real-life training situations, and finding local case studies to add to the materials. Using this collaborative process, it can take several years to complete the development of a detailed teacher training course. However, the results can be more sustainable than a top-down or consultant-developed course. Results include:

- greater ownership of the training by trainers, their managers, and decision makers;
- improved understanding of the training content and approach;
- greater capacity to regularly review and improve the materials without hiring external consultants; and
- inclusion of more locally appropriate activities and examples in training materials.

8.2 Teachers as agents of change

What is the role of a teacher? Increasingly, we view teachers as agents of change. We recognise their role is not to force learners to remember facts that can be repeated in exams, although sadly many education systems still focus on that. Their role is to shape young citizens who can be creative, collaborative, and innovative problem-solvers for the future development of their countries. Teachers therefore whether consciously or unconsciously, help bring about change in individuals and society.

If we see teachers as agents of change, then we understand the importance of them having a proactive role in inclusive education rather than a passive one: they must be actively making changes in their schools and how they teach. Teachers must be proactively identifying barriers to presence, participation, and achievement for all girls and boys and finding solutions, instead of passively implementing fixed instructions recalled from training courses or waiting for instructions from others in the system. We also need teachers

from diverse backgrounds, including teachers with disabilities, who can be positive role models for change.

For many education systems, this requires a paradigm shift in the understanding of the roles of teachers, in how they are recruited and educated, the status they have, and how their achievements are recognised. In short, inclusive education requires a process of teacher empowerment, which is inevitably linked to wider education system reforms.

CBM and our partners must raise awareness of these issues among high-level decision makers. Again, we see why collaboration is so important for inclusive education. Reforming the teacher education system, for instance, is not something that a disability NGO like CBM could achieve on its own. But, unless progress is made to reform teacher education, our inclusive education projects may only scratch the surface in terms of bringing about real change for girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities.

8.3 Preparing teachers to be good teachers

Many of the skills teachers must have to be inclusive could simply be described as good quality, innovative teaching—the things within a quality education system that we should expect all teachers to do. Other skills are more specific to learners with disabilities or learning difficulties. Training for quality inclusive teaching must cover, but not be limited to, issues such as those outlined below. CBM, our partners, and other organisations can critically



© CBM/Farmer

▲ A first year class at a school in Burundi, where the teacher, who is hearing impaired, gives a lesson.

reflect on our own training, and on government-led training, to ensure that it is sufficiently covering these issues:

- **Assessing learners' needs:** In line with universal design for learning, teachers must recognise all children's abilities, looking at what learners can do, not just at what they cannot do, and understand how to build on these abilities and who to ask for advice.
- **Curriculum differentiation:** Good teachers are flexible and adaptive to each learner's different strengths, weaknesses, and interests. Teachers must create lesson plans and activities that match the curriculum but are adapted for different learners.
- **Using diverse teaching and learning approaches:** Universal design for learning

calls for teachers to find multiple ways to convey learning objectives and information and help learners engage and express themselves.

- **Testing learners' progress:** Teachers must be prepared not just to use standardised tests but to find creative and inclusive ways of measuring learners' individual progress against academic, social, physical, or other skills and knowledge goals set collaboratively by children, parents, and teachers.
- **Peer relationships among children:** Knowing how to use child-to-child or peer learning activities can help teachers organise and manage large classes, avoid teacher-centred methods, and benefit both stronger and weaker learners.
- **Peer relationships between teachers:** Approaches such as collaborative team-teaching can help teachers overcome practical inclusion challenges.
- **Mobilising and using resources:** All teachers must know how to find and make—and encourage children and parents to find and make—accessible and adapted teaching and learning materials, especially in resource-poor contexts.
- **Disability awareness:** All teachers must have a solid understanding of disability rights issues, as well as awareness of gender and other diversity issues. Their training must actively tackle prejudiced attitudes by encouraging self-reflection and peer debate, and by enabling them to engage with girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities. **Case Study 8** on page 84 provides an example of persons with disabilities serving as teacher trainers in Iraq.

- **Reasonable accommodation:** Teachers must know that reasonable accommodation does not always require them or their schools to access expensive equipment or infrastructure solutions but instead requires them to work collaboratively to find innovative, affordable solutions.
- **Parents and the community:** Teachers cannot teach inclusively if they work in isolation from parents and community members. Parents can help them to understand the lives, strengths, and challenges of girls and boys with and without disabilities, and can contribute innovative ideas.

“In inclusive education, all children have the chance to learn from each other. To have this diversity to learn in their own rhythm, in their own interest, is a benefit for everybody, even for the teachers.”⁹²

8.4 Training for teachers in crisis and conflict contexts

In situations of humanitarian crisis and conflict, the teaching workforce can be affected, losing teachers to displacement, injury, death, or even to join the conflict, or simply because they have too many problems with which to deal. In such contexts, it is common for education programmes to supplement the teaching workforce with volunteers, or with trainee or unqualified teachers. They may need training not just in more advanced issues like inclusive education but in the basics of teaching and learning, and in responding appropriately

to learners who may be facing greater protection, health, nutrition, and welfare problems. Qualified or experienced teachers who remain may also feel overwhelmed by the situation. For these reasons, training teachers on inclusive education in crisis and conflict settings requires careful attention.

A key starting point is likely to be training in the basics of good teaching. The interagency Teachers in Conflict and Crisis Working Group has developed a training resource with this in mind called Training for Primary School Teachers in Crisis Contexts.⁹³ If designed carefully, foundational training on how to be a good teacher can embed some simple inclusion theory and easy-to-achieve practical ideas.

▼ Shaheeda is a girl with a hearing impairment from Syria, who was diagnosed deaf at the age of three. Now she teaches deaf children sign language at a refugee camp in Jordan, where she lives.



© CBM

► Six-year-old Delight from Zimbabwe, has been blind since birth. Here, her teacher, Mike Zonke, is helping her to read braille.



© CBM/Diemer

Supporting inexperienced and/or overwhelmed teachers in crisis and conflict situations also calls for a strong focus on collaboration, for instance, by finding people in the community or within other organisations who can help teachers with specific subjects or supporting particular learners in class.

8.5 Specialist education personnel

‘Specialist’ is a term that encompasses a wide range of education personnel, such as:

- teachers trained to work with learners with specific impairments;

- teachers who operate as special needs advisers or coordinators for one or more mainstream schools;
- personnel with roles such as educational psychologist and speech and language therapist; and
- itinerant teachers who travel to support learners and teachers in various schools.

In some contexts, specialists play a key role in the education system. In many other contexts, there are very few specialists, or they may only be available in urban areas, or in just a handful of special schools.

In the past, such personnel were trained in special needs education. There was then a tendency for the same personnel to be trained on inclusive education. Although the title of the training they received often changed, the content did not. Mainstream teachers, meanwhile, who needed to be inclusive were not trained. The growth of the whole-school training approach is helping to change this, as **Case Study 9** on page 106 shows.

The move towards inclusive education does not mean that specialist teachers and other personnel are no longer needed, or that all mainstream teachers will be expected and able to carry out all specialist roles. However, it does mean that the role of specialist teachers and other personnel is evolving – and thus their training must evolve.

In some places, specialist educators have received extensive training and are highly skilled and experienced. However, in others, their training has barely kept them one step ahead of mainstream teachers. For instance,

some specialist teachers for deaf learners have limited sign language skills, so they struggle to communicate and teach effectively.

Training for specialist personnel within inclusive education is a key area for innovation. Many education systems still need to find effective ways to balance mainstream teachers taking responsibility for inclusion, while being effectively supported by sufficient and appropriate specialist advice. CBM, our partners, and like-minded organisations therefore must consider the following in programming and advocacy work:

- **Provide quality training to specialists:**

Teachers in mainstream schools are increasingly developing skills to support diverse learners. However, they often still need help with more technical matters, such as using braille, understanding sign language and/or working effectively with interpreters; supporting speech and language development; using assistive devices effectively and troubleshooting basic problems such as changing hearing aid batteries; and orientation and mobility.

- **Train specialists through an inclusive lens:** All specialists must be trained to work within inclusive rather than segregated settings; as well, they must be trained how to advise and support mainstream teachers rather than intervene directly themselves, and how to listen to and use other stakeholders' perspectives and ideas. Specialists must ensure that teachers, parents, and learners are empowered to play active roles in making education more inclusive.

- **Consider other roles for specialists:** In many contexts, hiring specialist educators

is unaffordable. However, expanding their role could make specialist support in mainstream settings more viable. For instance, in addition to having expertise in teaching deaf learners, specialist educators could also be child-centred pedagogy specialists, who are able to provide advice on good quality teaching across the school; or they could be action-research facilitators who help the school community to collaboratively investigate and address inclusion barriers; or they could support speech and language development throughout the school.

- **Reorient specialists and special school staff and assistants:**

Personnel working in segregated special schools, units, or classes—where they exist—could play an important role in inclusive education. For instance, they could have an outreach or itinerant role to support mainstream teachers and to facilitate links with health and other social welfare services. However, they may be unprepared for such a role change and need support or training in:

- inclusive education theory and practice, to raise awareness and build understanding;
- how mainstream schools and classes operate, to ensure that they are familiar with the processes, curricula, environments, and available equipment in mainstream schools;
- how to use their knowledge and experience to train, support, reassure, and motivate mainstream teachers, and support them to work collaboratively in teams; and
- how to work in participatory and collaborative ways with diverse stakeholders in the school community, such as other

teachers, parents, and community members, and in other sectors.

- **Keep in mind that inevitably, some special school personnel will not want to retrain for revised roles in an inclusive system:** they should be able to leave the profession in a way that recognises, respects, and remunerates their service.

Case Study 9: Mainstream teachers with specialist skills in Ethiopia⁹⁴

► It is often said that mainstream teachers cannot be expected to have a full range of specialist skills. However, some mainstream schools have succeeded in developing a teach-

ing staff where everyone has a specialist skill. The Jerusalem Inclusive School in Ethiopia, which is a CBM partner, was established by the head teacher who is deaf. The school aims to include children with and without disabilities, and each class includes learners who are deaf or hard of hearing, those with intellectual, physical, or visual impairments as well as learners without disabilities. Every teacher communicates fluently in sign language, and community members are encouraged and supported to learn sign language. If all teachers were trained from the start of their careers in skills such as sign language or braille, they would consider this to be a normal part of being a teacher and not see it as a separate skill or additional challenge. ◀

Key learning points

- Mainstream teachers must learn about inclusive education theory—and have opportunities to experience inclusive education through practicum and action-research—at in-service, pre-service, and ongoing professional development levels of training.
- Inclusive education, from a twin-track perspective, must be embedded into all aspects of teacher education, and not just presented as a separate, optional module. Trainers must have a high level of understanding of inclusive education.
- Regular interaction with girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities helps teachers become more effective inclusive teachers.
- Specialist educators must still be trained, but their training, or retraining, must prepare them to work in inclusive not segregated settings.
- Mainstream and specialist teachers must know how to collaborate and see each other's roles as complementary.
- It is important to remove barriers to training and recruitment so that persons with disabilities can become teachers and teacher trainers.
- Teachers in situations of crisis and conflict need training on inclusion. They may need this to be combined with much more basic and foundational teaching skills, as well as being helped to respond appropriately to increased child protection, health, and welfare challenges.

Chapter 9

Innovation: Transition and Lifelong Learning

“Transition points in our lives can be frightening, exciting, or even chaotic at first. Successful transitions in education need preparation from early years through to post-school provision or livelihood.”

Maegan Shanks,
Disability-Inclusive
Development Learning
Coordinator, CBM
(2016)



Education movements, international agreements and treaties, and funding in recent decades have focused on universal primary education. With this has come a focus on developing inclusive education at the primary level. Much of the content of this book therefore draws on experience of inclusive education at the primary level. However, there has been far less attention paid to inclusion in other levels of education. There has also been limited focus on making non-formal education inclusive, even though such education can provide opportunities to learners with disabilities who have previously missed out on formal education. SDG 4 now clearly calls on governments to achieve quality and inclusive education throughout people's lives. In this chapter, we focus on the levels of education that have received the least attention with regard to inclusion and on the importance of transition planning at each stage—early years, post-primary, vocational, adult literacy, and non-formal education—and thus which must be priority areas for innovation and advocacy.

This chapter ends by looking at transition planning in more detail. However it is important to understand the importance of transition planning for all learners at any age, stage, gender, or disability. The most significant of these transitions begins at preschool. Supporting learners with additional or complex needs to transition involves more than timing and monitoring the physical transfer from one educational setting to another. Transition planning is like building a bridge that connects and enables the transition from one stage to the next. The principles and desired outcomes

that guide effective transition planning for children and young persons living with disabilities are the same as those for children and young persons who are not disabled. What may be different is the need for transitions to be clear, of longer duration, and for schools to recognise the impact that such changes may have, not just on learners, but also on their parents, guardians, caregivers, siblings, peers, and teachers. Considerations for transitions for learners with disabilities include:

- the nature and severity of their disabilities;
- the impact of disability on their access to and participation in the educational setting; and
- the extent to which existing transition programmes take account of the individual needs of learners, families, and educational settings.

In this chapter, we will also look at the situation of out-of-school children and the issue of transition between grades and levels—both areas that need more innovation to tackle some persistent challenges.

9.1 Early years education

9.1.1 Current challenges

“Engagement with early childhood education, alongside timely and appropriate early detection and intervention, can reduce and prevent learning difficulties and disabilities and thus the costs associated with them (UNICEF/University of Wisconsin, 2008).”⁹⁵

Section 3.2.1 highlighted that early identification of the development and learning needs of children with disabilities is vital for more effectively supporting their future educational and social inclusion. Inclusive early childhood education provides opportunities for children from diverse backgrounds, with and without disabilities, to learn together, accept diversity, and reject discrimination from the start. Children aged 0–5 develop at different speeds, so early years classes tend to be naturally diverse in terms of learners' levels and abilities.

Early childhood development (ECD) and education takes many forms, including formal kindergartens and preschools, child development centres, informal childcare provision, parent and child groups in communities, and home-based support, often from CBR workers. These forms of provision and support are all more flexible than higher levels of formal education, and offer great opportunities for innovation and inclusivity.

Early education is often more learner-centred than primary, secondary, and higher education. Inevitably, in some contexts, preschool education remains rigid and teacher-centred, but increasingly it uses creative, child-centred teaching and learning strategies that should help diverse learners, with diverse abilities, participate and learn.

“Approaches to teaching were revealed to be significantly different in pre-schools and primary schools. The former were considered by teachers and parents to be more child-centred, supportive and flexible; while teaching in schools was seen as more rigid, curriculum-driven, and unsupportive for learners.”⁹⁶

Therefore the first transition from early intervention programmes and services in the first months and years of childhood to preschool should consider what adaptations and supports are needed to enable that learners with disabilities and/or specific learning needs are able to participate in:

- play, games, and fun-based activities;
- multisensory activities—see, hear, touch, smell, taste;
- pair, small group, large group, and individual activities;
- using indoor and outdoor spaces, and making creative use of different areas for different purposes;
- using or recycling everyday objects as learning aids, with teachers and children making their own learning materials;
- environmental activities—learning about the environment and creating pleasant, colourful, friendly environments around schools;
- oral communication and culture—stories, drama, poems, performance, singing; and
- building relationships with other children.

Achieving the above requires that teachers ensure that all children are doing something—even if they are sometimes doing different things. Using a team teaching approach would also support learning by, for example, bringing to more classes or groups together for joint activities and having teachers work together on activities. Teachers also need to engage parents as helpers in the classroom and ensure they continue or adapt the learning and play activities at home⁹⁷. Thus, transition to early years requires multisectoral



© CBM/Harims

▲ Dervin (second from the right), who was born with a cleft lip, plays with his classmates in a preschool class in Nicaragua.

teams that include professionals, parents, caregivers, and teachers who work together to develop transition plans.

Early childhood education is an under-developed sector, available only to a small minority in many countries. Early childhood education receives limited government and donor attention, and often lacks government policies and regulation. It is also often in the hands of private providers, making it exclusive for those who cannot afford it, or who do not match expectations. As such, children with disabilities are often least likely to participate, despite being most likely to benefit.

Parents are not always aware of available early years services or may be sceptical about paying to send children to preschool settings,

which are often perceived as just places for playing. Early childhood education may also be seen simply as a school preparedness activity, while the full range of benefits, for children and families, is not recognised by parents, or not being provided or promoted by the setting. Parents of children with disabilities may worry about sending their very young, vulnerable children to preschool if it is not essential or compulsory, and they may not understand the benefits.

Inclusive education awareness raising and practical training needs to be targeted at early years educators. They often have a stronger foundation of inclusive skills and a greater propensity to be flexible and child-centred than other teachers.

Preschools often have more structural or management flexibility. This could enable them, and subsequently other parts of the education system, to collaborate with other services to help them better support girls and boys with disabilities. Other services may include CBID, child health, and social welfare programmes. Such connections and opportunities are often not being exploited. For an example of inclusive early childhood education in Kenya, which takes a multisectoral approach, see **Case Study 10** on page 111.

9.1.2 Building solutions

CBM, our partners, and other organisations must consider the following points when supporting or advocating for inclusive early childhood education:

- **Embed early childhood education into inclusive education initiatives:** Inclusive education initiatives must ensure collabora-

tion with CBID, health, protection, and welfare programmes to assist early identification and development support at home and/or in school. They can also help develop inclusive formal preschool settings and/or informal community-based opportunities for parents and young children with and without disabilities to meet, learn, and be supported.

- **Include early childhood educators in training programmes:** This will boost their awareness and understanding of inclusive education and build on any existing child-centred approaches they already use.
- **Push for more long-term reforms to early childhood educators' training:** It is important to plan for and fund efforts to raise the levels of teacher professionalism and qualifications at this vitally important educational level, and to ensure they can play a stronger role in early identification of disabilities, developmental delays, and learning difficulties.

Case Study 10: **Comprehensive early education in Kibera slum in Kenya**⁹⁸

▶ Little Rock ECD Centre is in Nairobi's huge Kibera slum. It started as a small initiative to help young children become better prepared for primary school, after free primary education was introduced in 2003. It grew rapidly, due to community demand.

When the first deaf child enrolled, Little Rock sent two teachers for sign language training. They then expanded the number of teachers trained to work with deaf children, including recruiting two deaf teachers. From

there, Little Rock started to enrol children with other disabilities, and then began doing advocacy with the government to ensure that primary school teachers would learn about disability-inclusive education so they could welcome the children when they graduated from Little Rock.

Little Rock started a feeding programme, as many children were from very poor families and were unable to learn due to hunger. They then expanded to support skills development and income-generating activities for some parents, to create a more long-term solution to hunger and poverty. Little Rock also started a health and HIV screening and support programme. An after-school library programme was started for older children who had transitioned to primary school but who wanted to use the library after school for doing homework and getting additional support if they were struggling to learn at their new schools. Little Rock also began offering day care for infants and toddlers to enable teenage mothers to return to school and give their toddlers an early education start. Little Rock offers a great example of how ECD provision can be a starting point for collaboration with wider welfare and education efforts. ◀

9.2 Post-primary education

9.2.1 Current challenges

UNCRPD Article 24 and SDG 4 give countries a clear motivation to achieve inclusive lifelong learning. There are very limited structures in place for transition planning from early years to primary education. Where such services do

exist, they are usually due to the foresight of the CBID or resource centre involved. Yet, at the post primary level, it is equally important to have transition planning in place. Teachers will understand what is needed and therefore feel more confident to manage inclusion. While early years services are increasing and primary education is becoming more available in most countries, this is not the case for post-primary education. Lessons and experiences from these levels are not being routinely applied to bring inclusive innovations into higher levels of education. Why not?

Attitudes and practices

Post-primary education—which encompasses secondary, vocational, and higher level—is often characterised by approaches that lack innovation and by stricter adherence to rules. For instance, key features include:

- environments that are more formally decorated, typically more ‘adult’ in nature, with fewer materials on display;
- classrooms that contain fewer objects, with less focus on multisensory approaches;
- learning approaches that are more independent, with less group or peer learning;
- entry processes that are more competitive and/or academic tests to determine enrolment;
- lessons that are rigidly structured around national curricula; and
- teachers who focus on preparing learners to pass exams, and who work more in isolation from colleagues.

In short, the elements that help younger children participate, learn, and feel included are

often absent in higher levels of education; and factors that make education more exclusive are more prominent. There is a lack of recognition among teachers, parents, and decision makers that older learners—with and without disabilities—can benefit as much as young learners from learning collaboratively in stimulating environments, using all their senses, and having fun. Efforts must be made to create inclusive education at post-primary levels, that is, to find ways to bring the necessary flexibility and creativity into a fundamentally more rigid and formal part of the education system.

Older learners with and without disabilities who have been displaced by crisis or conflict can find it particularly challenging to gain post-primary, and especially post-secondary education. Negative attitudes about refugees and migrants are common, and seem to be growing with the recent large global displacements and migration of populations due, for instance, to the conflict in Syria. Host governments are obliged to provide education for displaced children. But it can be much harder for older learners to gain access to higher education, due to, for instance, lack of funds, lack of identification or suitable visa documents, lack of proof of their previous education or qualifications, and lack of support to reach the level of host language skills set by institutions.

Financial barriers

Secondary, higher, and vocational education is often not available fee-free and may have high associated costs, such as paying for uniforms, learning materials and equipment, text

books, study visits, and residential accommodation. Such costs put these levels of education beyond the reach of many families with girls and boys with disabilities, who are often among the poorest families in communities. Older children—with and without disabilities—are also more likely to be pressured to drop out of education to work to support their families or help at home.

Accessibility barriers

Secondary schools and higher education institutions may present increased accessibility challenges. They are often more likely to occupy bigger and/or multistorey buildings than primary schools, and have more specialist subject rooms, such as science laboratories, which are rarely adapted for accessibility. Secondary and higher education facilities are usually less numerous, requiring learners to travel further, often on inaccessible or unsafe transport, or to stay in residential facilities, which may be inaccessible or unsafe for at-risk learners, especially girls with disabilities.

At secondary and higher education levels, lack of visually and/or language accessible text and reference books can become a much greater barrier. More learning at this level depends on books, and teachers are generally less flexible and creative in how they deliver lessons to overcome book shortages or the inaccessibility of books. At these levels of education, it also becomes a bigger challenge to support deaf learners in the absence of formal support mechanisms. For instance, while informal or ad hoc measures such as peer or community volunteers helping with sign language interpretation may sometimes work



adequately in lower classes, deaf learners usually need higher quality and more professional interpretation to learn effectively, especially in secondary and higher levels. Additionally, learners who are hard of hearing may require support for amplification aids as well as closed captioning, which are currently not available for most who would benefit. Some of these issues can be overcome through good transition planning.

Gender-related barriers

Girls' post-primary enrolment and dropout rates can be greatly impacted if gender-related barriers are not addressed. For instance, adolescent girls can miss days at school due to lack of access to sanitary pads and unhygienic conditions. For girls with disabilities, these challenges can be amplified due to lack of accessibility and personal assistant support.

▲ Following a successful surgery, Milly from Uganda is back in school. She had dropped out after developing cataracts, which led to her losing sight in both eyes.

Early child marriage is another example of a gender-related barrier to education, often driven by familial financial pressures or a perceived lack of value in educating girls, causing many young girls to not get an education. Anecdotal evidence suggests that girls with disabilities are also affected by early marriage, but there has been a lack of rigorous investigation into marriage and disability. However, earlier findings from a study carried out by Plan International Norway in Nepal highlighted a significant gap between the perceptions of community members and NGOs, and reality. The common perception is that marriage of girls with disabilities is rare, while the study revealed it to be quite prevalent.⁹⁹

First transition into mainstream

For some learners who have attended special schools or units at lower levels, their move to higher levels of education may be their first time at mainstream, non-segregated settings. This can be a shock for some, who may be unused to learning and socialising with diverse peers. In some instances, they may not have developed the independent living skills they need in mainstream schools, colleges, or universities. They may also find the range of subjects they can study is limited, either by the lack of accessible facilities, materials, and communications for certain subjects, or by prejudiced rules imposed by institutions. More higher education institutions are developing disability support staff and resource centres but they are not necessarily making the fundamental system-level changes needed to achieve inclusion as opposed to integration.

9.2.2 Building solutions

Efforts to expand post-primary inclusive education must be innovative, and must challenge entrenched beliefs about the purpose of education and how we learn as we get older. Many of the necessary changes are the same as those needed at the pre-primary and primary levels. The discussion below focuses on programme and advocacy issues that are particularly pertinent to the post-primary level with which CBM, our partners, and other organisations must engage.

Reform teacher education for post-primary settings

There is a need to expand training on inclusion to secondary and higher level teachers. In- and pre-service training for post-primary level teachers must include both the value of using learner-centred approaches with older learners, and the knowledge about how to use these approaches. Collaboration is vital to help teachers at different levels learn from each other's experiences and, ultimately, to provide more consistent inclusive support to learners as they transition through the levels.

Review and reform exam systems

“Standardised assessments must be replaced by flexible and multiple forms of assessment and recognition of individual progress towards broad goals...”¹⁰⁰

Post-primary education is usually characterised by a much greater focus on tests and exams, and on learners being able to prove that they should be allowed to move to the next grade

or level of education. Innovation is urgently needed. Wherever exams are used, learners must be able to access them through braille, large print, sign language, or speaking or typing rather than handwriting, or they must have alternative ways of demonstrating understanding. There often needs to be flexibility with respect to location and duration of exams, as well as flexibility with respect to having personal assistants—such as readers, scribes, or communication assistants—in exam rooms. There is also a need for more continuous assessment approaches, with innovative use of written, visual, oral, and practical demonstration techniques to enable learners to convey knowledge and understanding, and for teachers to assess their learning.

Collaboration between gender- and disability-focused organisations or projects

Projects to provide girls with low-cost sanitary products, such as re-useable menstrual cups, are becoming increasingly common.¹⁰¹ However, there is a need for such projects to collaborate with disability organisations, like CBM and our partners, to ensure that their products, services, and information are reaching girls with disabilities. This is especially important for reaching those who may be unable to read, hear, or understand the information provided, or may need support learning to use the products. Initiatives to prevent girls from dropping out of school due to child marriage must also link with disability organisations. CBM and our partners can play a vital advocacy role in challenging the common misperception that early marriage, sex, or pregnancy are not issues that affect young persons with



disabilities. We can then play a key role in guiding programmes to include and protect these young people.

9.3 Vocational education

9.3.1 Current challenges

Often, persons with disabilities have been supported to learn vocational skills instead of having opportunities to access formal, academic education. Vocational training for persons with disabilities often lacks innovation and follows stereotypical lines—for instance, blind persons being encouraged to

▲ In Nepal, Sajana is smiling as she solves a maths equation on the whiteboard in her classroom. She has neglected clubfoot, but is now able to go to school thanks to support from CBM's partner, the Hospital & Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled Children.

► Alvaro Enrique Vargas (front right) has an intellectual disability. Here he receives training in sewing from CBM's partner, ASOPIECAD, in Nicaragua. He will then provide early learning support for children and adults with disabilities.



learn basket weaving or piano tuning– which may not reflect learners' ambitions and may not have been well-researched in terms of local supply and demand.

Mainstream vocational colleges are often not inclusive and there is a tendency to have separate institutions or classes for learners with disabilities. Where vocational colleges have tried to become inclusive, training for their staff has again often been too theoretical.¹⁰² In vocational training, perhaps more than other forms of education, teachers need highly practical skills for adapting technical activities and equipment for learners with different physical and intellectual abilities.

It is often assumed that learners with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities, can only learn the most basic skills or aim for the lowest vocational qualifications. A common assumption is that they are enrolled in vocational training because they cannot cope with anything academic, even though some continued academic learning might help vocational learners gain a wider range of skills for employment or self-employment. Curricula in vocational institutions that purport to be inclusive often remain exclusive, such as not allowing for the additional time that some learners may need. For instance, learners with mobility impairments

may need longer to gain the motor skills or coordination for a task, and may need rehabilitation support and reasonable accommodations. Inflexible curriculum timing denies them the opportunity to do well in the course if they cannot carry out activities or actions at the same pace as others.

9.3.2 Building solutions

CBM, our partners, and other organisations can consider programme or advocacy activities that bring innovations into vocational education for persons with disabilities.

Challenge vocational stereotypes

We must enable girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities to learn trades and skills beyond what their communities may traditionally perceive them to be good at.

Make vocational training relevant

We must ensure that all vocational training is researched carefully so that it meets local and national needs. Market research must be carried out regularly by all vocational education providers, with input from their students, to understand the latest supply and demand issues. Girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities must feel empowered to have a voice in explaining their ambitions and learning desires to those who develop and run vocational training.

Link with employment

Employers must be aware of and understand the obligations and the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities. All vocational training providers must collaborate with others to

deliver employer advocacy and training programmes to help remove prejudice and discrimination in the workplace. Such employer training should be guided and led by persons with disabilities and DPOs.

Make vocational training more holistic

We must ensure that vocational education for girls, boys, women, and men with and without disabilities includes learning skills for business and financial management, customer service, marketing, and human resource management. Enrolling in vocational training programmes should not mean that learners are automatically cut off from academic learning. Vocational training can help girls, boys, women, and men continue with an appropriate level of academic learning but set within more meaningful, real-life contexts. It can also help them develop so-called 'soft skills,' such as personal care, independent living, teamwork, and punctuality.

Innovate with low-cost adaptations

Invite women and men with disabilities from DPOs, the community, and local businesses—along with other local entrepreneurs, engineers, inventors—to discuss and help design low-cost, feasible access and reasonable accommodation solutions for vocational training facilities and equipment.

Provide support

Some learners with disabilities, especially those with learning disabilities or multiple disabilities, may need hands-on support from assistants or peers, at least in the early stages of their vocational education while they gain

practical skills and confidence, particularly if they are learning skills that are totally new to them. Understanding and preparing for these supports are essential to transition planning.

Case Study 11: **EmployAble – vocational training for persons with disabilities in Ethiopia**

► In Ethiopia, Light for the World has supported a programme called EmployAble. The aim is not just to improve inclusion for persons with disabilities in technical and vocational education and training (TVET), but also to improve links between TVET and the labour market to help ensure that there will be viable employment or self-employment after training.

The programme supports several TVET institutions to become more inclusive. It conducts disability-inclusion assessments; works with learners with disabilities and institutions to assess learning needs and relevant course selections; and provides scholarships or bursaries if needed, to help overcome financial barriers to inclusion. Employers and agencies that support employment and/or self-employment receive training in inclusive workplace management.

The programme ensures that learners with disabilities take courses they find interesting and that will be useful for them: “their placement won’t be based only on our [teachers’] judgement; rather they will be placed based on their preferences.”¹⁰³ Persons with disabilities are also involved in project management. “It’s great that EmployAble is run by persons with disabilities themselves.”¹⁰⁴ ◀

9.4 Out-of-school children and dropouts

9.4.1 Current challenges

Many girls and boys with disabilities still do not enrol in school, drop out before completing primary education, or complete primary but then do not progress to secondary or vocational levels.

According to the World Health Survey 2002–2004, in low-income countries, 32.9 % of girls and women with disabilities completed primary education, compared with 42 % of their non-disabled peers. For boys and men, the figures were 45.6 % and 55.6 %, respectively. For older women and men, the completion rates were significantly lower, indicating that completion rates are better for current generations than for their parents and grandparents, but still far from satisfactory.¹⁰⁵

Many girls and boys with disabilities do not enrol, or do not stay in school due to:

- lack of a twin-track approach to inclusive education, which leaves learners with disabilities feeling that either the education system and schools remain unwelcoming, or their individual needs are not being supported, or both;
- financial barriers;
- parental attitudes about the value of educating girls and boys with disabilities or fears about letting them out of the home;
- bullying and abuse, from peers and teachers;
- gender-related barriers; and
- crisis and conflict situations that have prevented them from attending or re-enrolling,

even if their peers without disabilities have managed to continue or return to some form of education during or after the crisis.

9.4.2 Building solutions

The problem of out-of-school children, with and without disabilities, is a perpetual one, highlighting the need for commitment and innovative solutions if we are to make progress.

Governments must have a clearer picture of who is failing to enrol and who is dropping out of school. The UNCRPD General Comment on Article 24 highlights that governments have an obligation to collect disaggregated data on learners with disabilities, along with evidence of why they experience exclusion or drop out from education.¹⁰⁶ All disability organisations, including CBM and our partners, have a role to play in developing innovative ways to ensure that girls, boys, women, and men are no longer excluded from qualitative and quantitative mechanisms for gathering education-related data, for example, action-research.

9.5 Alternative and non-formal learning

"[My mother] called a meeting with all the children [in my neighbourhood] and informed them that as I wanted to go to school, but could not walk, they should teach me. ... We organised ourselves and every day we would spend an hour or two on study activities. Many times it would be a reflection of what some of the children



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had covered at school. ... It was fun and I used to outperform them all at exercises and tests. [Later when I enrolled in school, I found that] [m]y non-formal education both sharpened my academic abilities, and imparted the requisite social skills to deal with bullying expected in a typical mainstream setting."¹⁰⁷

For many children who are out of school, there may not be a simple solution to bring them into school. Alternative forms of education, outside of formal schooling, are

▲ Keerthika (in the green uniform) enjoys a break with her classmates. She attends a lesson in computer typing at the vocational training centre of a CBM partner, while also studying at an integrated school in India.

therefore an important part of inclusive education. CBM, our partners, and other organisations can help support initiatives such as accelerated education, home-based education, and other entry points to inclusive learning (e. g., sporting, religious, and cultural activities).

Accelerated education

Accelerated education programmes are common, particularly in post-crisis or conflict situations. They enable learners who have missed periods of education to get back into learning and complete the basic education curriculum in an accelerated time frame. The approach is particularly useful for learners who cannot re-enrol in formal schooling because they have become too old. To date, however, accelerated education programmes have not always been inclusive of learners with disabilities, even though post-crisis and conflict situations may have seen an increase in the number of learners with disabilities. This calls for increased collaboration between disability organisations and other organisations that run accelerated education programmes.

Home-based education

Home-based education is important in instances where children with or without disabilities cannot travel to school, due to geography – such as communities on remote islands – or ongoing crises. Home-based education can be done innovatively, in ways that foster inclusion, even when children are not always physically together.

Education via radio can be a key tool for bringing learning and interaction into homes,

as illustrated in **Case Study 12** on page 121. The use of radio can be accompanied by other learning approaches and materials, for instance:

- Home learners can be given accessible written and visual or pictorial materials that supplement broadcast programmes.
- Parents can be given guidance for activities they, or older siblings, can do to supplement learning. For example, they can be guided on how to take lessons from the programmes and repeat them in simplified, bite-sized ways for children who need to work at a slower pace. There can be further guidance on how parents or older siblings can facilitate groups of girls and boys who live nearby to come together to listen to radio programmes or do supplementary activities in groups.
- Parents, siblings, and neighbours can be encouraged to interpret radio programmes for learners who are deaf or deafblind. CBID programmes could get involved with some home-based support that helps parents, siblings, and friends improve their sign language skills using radio programmes as a stimulus.

Where the norm is to attend school, there may still be some girls and boys who cannot attend or who may only be able to attend occasionally, such as learners with severe or multiple impairments, deafblindness, chronic health conditions, or those for whom transport to school remains too inaccessible or dangerous, such as children with brittle bones. With collaboration between schools, families, and CBID workers, where they exist, or staff

from projects run by NGOs, home-based education can foster inclusion rather than perpetuating segregation. For instance:

- Girls or boys who receive some or all of their education at home can still be considered members of classes in their local schools.
- They can be given regular and facilitated opportunities to meet, play, and learn with their classmates in schools, in communities, or in or near their homes.
- Peers can be encouraged and supported to engage in the home education process. Ideas include:
 - peers joining some of the home-based lessons facilitated by teachers or CBID workers;
 - local neighbourhood homework or project-based learning clubs that include school-based and home-educated learners;
 - peer teaching, where school-based learners spend one or more sessions each week visiting home-based learners to share what they have learned in class and find out what the home-based learners experienced that week to share with the rest of the class; and
 - using photography and video (where facilities exist) to capture some class-based lessons for home-based learners.

With some innovative design, there is no need for home-based education to perpetuate segregation or for it to be dismissed as an option in inclusive education—so long as the primary aim is to support learners with disabilities to participate in as many diverse and innovative learning processes as possible alongside their peers.

Case Study 12: **Using radio for home-based education in Sierra Leone¹⁰⁸**

► In 2011, the international child rights agency Child to Child and its local partner, Pikin to Pikin Movement, ran an ECD programme in Kailahun District, an area badly affected by the country's civil war. Because of the post-conflict context, a programme called Getting Ready for School had a strong focus on life skills and child protection.

When the Ebola outbreak hit the area in early 2014, the ECD programme stopped. It was too dangerous to bring learners and

▼ Thirumoorth learns the alphabet with his mother and grandfather, while using a standing frame. He has severe cerebral palsy and was identified for assistance by the CSI Rehabilitation Centre in India.



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▲ Endayhu Mestin, who is losing his vision, sits in a classroom at a primary school in Ethiopia. The advocacy group that he is part of, meets there.

teachers together. The programme was converted into a child-friendly and participatory ‘radio for education’ series called Pikin to Pikin Tok, which is still running.

There are three radio programmes. One is aimed at very young children, using traditional storytelling to address real-life issues and help develop numeracy and literacy skills. The second uses music to achieve similar aims, for slightly older children. The third is for older children, and it supports them in thinking crit-

ically about life skills issues that have emerged since the Ebola outbreak, such as increased stigma, exclusion, disability, sexual violence, and teenage pregnancy.

The radio programmes give a voice to marginalised children and young people in Kailahun District. The aim is to inspire children to work together to tackle the stigma and exclusion they face from being affected by Ebola. The radio programmes help them learn about minimising the risks of catching Ebola and other serious diseases, and about other health and life skills messages, which they then share with peers and neighbours.

Children co-create the content of the radio programmes; 36 have been trained as young journalists who identify stories and conduct interviews. Wind-up solar powered radios have been distributed and children are supported to listen to the broadcasts by trained adult volunteer facilitators. Through phone-ins, children can share their experiences of the issues addressed in the programme, and adults are on hand to support the discussions. ◀

Other entry points to inclusive learning

Various projects around the world use inclusive sporting activities as an alternative entry point to education. For instance, an NGO project in Cambodia has taught children with and without disabilities to skateboard. During sessions, they learn the physical skills but also spend time engaging in health, education, and counselling activities, using art, photography, drama, and dance as learning tools.¹⁰⁹ In some places, religious and cultural education activ-

ities are used to get previously excluded children engaged in learning alongside their peers.

9.6 Adult literacy

9.6.1 Current challenges

Large numbers of girls and boys with disabilities grow up having had little or no formal education, especially beyond the primary level. This may be particularly so during and after situations of crisis and conflict, when education provision often becomes even more limited and inaccessible. In future—because of innovations in formal and non-formal inclusive education and ICT—there should be fewer persons with disabilities reaching adulthood without having completed at least basic education. For now, however, illiteracy levels among women and men with disabilities are likely to be much higher than among their peers without disabilities, although there has been very little research on literacy among women and men with disabilities to give us concrete figures.¹¹⁰

Mainstream adult literacy programmes are not usually inclusive. They often do not proactively identify women or men with disabilities in the community who need support. Adult literacy educators are often unfamiliar with the different or additional challenges women and men with disabilities face in the community, and thus do not know how to make literacy training relevant and useful. Programmes also rarely offer literacy training in accessible formats. Some disability NGOs offer targeted literacy programmes for adults

with disabilities, but these may be segregated from the adult literacy initiatives that reach the rest of the community.

9.6.2 Building solutions

To meet their obligations, governments and supporting NGOs must invest in innovative adult literacy opportunities for women and men with disabilities. In the spirit of inclusive education and inclusive communities, this means primarily supporting existing adult literacy programmes to become inclusive, not creating parallel, segregated adult literacy initiatives for women and men with disabilities. Again, this calls for collaboration between disability NGOs and DPOs and other NGOs and government departments. There is also likely to be a key role for enabling literate men and women with disabilities in the community to feel empowered to support such initiatives, by advising on matters such as accessibility and relevance of the training, or acting as literacy educators.

9.7 Inclusive transition between grades and levels

9.7.1 Current challenges

In this chapter, we have looked at various levels and types of education, and ways to make them more inclusive. However, the period when learners move from one school, level, or type of education to another can determine whether they stay in or drop out of education, or whether they participate and succeed in their new settings. So far, few inclusive education programmes in low- and

middle-income countries have built-in components that support an inclusive transition. This is an area where innovative work urgently needs to be done.

When learners move to new settings, they face new barriers to inclusion, such as:

- different attitudes from teachers and peers;
- different teaching practices and curriculum expectations;
- different assessment and exam methods; and
- new environments.

When learners move from inclusive settings to new schools that may not be as inclusive – for instance, a school that has not been part of the same programme – these moves can be particularly frightening for learners with and without disabilities, their parents, and their teachers.

Levels of education are often planned, financed, and managed separately, by different ministry of education departments or NGOs. Consequently, the investments made in developing support systems for learners with disabilities are often discontinued when they move to new settings. For example, individual learning plans and goals may not move with learners to their new schools. There may be no communication from the previous schools and so the new schools must start from scratch with identifying learners' needs and support packages. This is extremely frustrating and time-wasting for learners, their families, and their new teachers. Specialists, where they exist, may be assigned to work with one level of education but not the next level, leaving learners and parents with no continuity of

support. For learners with hidden disabilities or more complex or challenging needs, and their parents, it can be particularly frustrating having to get another group of teachers and professionals to understand their conditions and needs.

9.7.2 Building solutions

Innovations are needed to prevent investments in early identification and inclusive primary education from being wasted due to exclusive transition periods. Innovations must focus on maximising the chances of learners with disabilities as a way of ensuring they progress successfully through other levels and types of education. CBM, our partners, and other organisations have a role to play in advocating for policy- and system-level changes and/or demonstrating innovative transition practices in the projects and schools we support.

Working together

Inclusive transition requires collaboration so that schools, teachers, specialists, and education officials communicate and jointly plan for the period when learners leave one school and start the next. This could include having staff who are dedicated to coordinating transition for learners with disabilities leaving or joining their schools. They may create transition plans with learners and parents, perhaps with advice from CBID workers or other specialist staff.

Collaboration on transition can also include staff from lower- and higher-level grades or schools visiting each other, discussing transition support plans, and meeting learners –

especially those with disabilities or others who may need extra help during transition, such as learners from other language groups. There may need to be collaboration between the government departments or NGOs that support different levels of education, to ensure that their programmes and teacher training efforts are pulling in the same direction and supporting inclusive transition.

There must also be more collaborative approaches to support inclusive transition from school to work, for instance, through developing links with and raising awareness among employers who could offer learners internships, apprenticeships, or advice and training around job hunting and interviewing skills.

Listening to persons with disabilities

Inclusive transition requires empowerment. Learners and parents must be aware of what the transition process may be like, and they must be able to say what scares them, what support they have had, and what they think they still need. All teachers must be trained to support learners who are facing transition or who have just transitioned, especially those who are struggling with the changes.

There is a role for local adults with disabilities and DPOs in supporting inclusive transition. Educated and successful role models can help learners through difficult periods by sharing positive and motivating experiences of transition and of succeeding at higher levels.

Changing the system

Systemic changes are needed regarding transition. For instance, exams that may need to

be taken prior to transition to new levels, must be made accessible and flexible for diverse learners, or better still, converted into assessments that measure learners' progress against their own individual goals. There must be a formally designed and monitored system for transferring education plans and goals between schools and levels, and for old and new staff to communicate with one another. The example from Indonesia in **Case Study 13** below shows how one teacher committed herself to supporting transition, but the steps taken by this teacher must be systematised, so that all learners benefit from such advocacy, communication, collaboration, and ongoing support activities.

Case Study 13: **One teacher's support for inclusive transition in Indonesia¹¹¹**

► Dante is an inclusive teacher in Indonesia. She has worked for many years to include learners with disabilities and other marginalised learners in her classes. Johan is a student with learning difficulties. Dante devised various creative solutions to support his learning.

The first transition-related challenge came with the end-of-primary exam. Dante successfully advocated with the school principal, the school supervisor, subject teachers, as well as Johan's parents that he should take the national exam and that he could do well, if he could be given some support with reading the questions and writing down answers. He took the exam, with Dante in the room to provide support when needed, and passed. This meant that he could move to secondary

school—but finding a school that would accept Johan was the next transition-related challenge.

The secondary school next to the primary school was the first choice because it was local and familiar to Johan. However, the head teacher said the school needed agreement from teachers and the district education department. Because the school was not officially labelled an ‘inclusive school’, the head teacher feared getting into trouble for enrolling a child with special educational needs.

The head of the district education department tried to convince Dante that Johan should go to a special school, and cited regulations as to why the local secondary school was unsuitable. For instance, the school had no special needs trained teachers. Dante offered to support the school herself with spe-

cialist advice and help. She was overruled and told that Johan must go to a secondary school that was officially labelled as inclusive—far from where he lived.

Reluctantly, Dante, Johan, and his parents agreed. Dante’s third transition-related challenge then began. Dante prepared detailed records of Johan’s primary school activities and support needs and plans. She worked with the secondary school to develop a learning programme for him, and to prepare a teaching assistant to work with him. She met with Johan’s new teaching assistant, subject teachers, and curriculum adviser to discuss his learning programme. Dante continued to work with the teaching assistant even after Johan moved to the new school and continued to support his transition from junior high school to a vocational school several years later. ◀

Key learning points

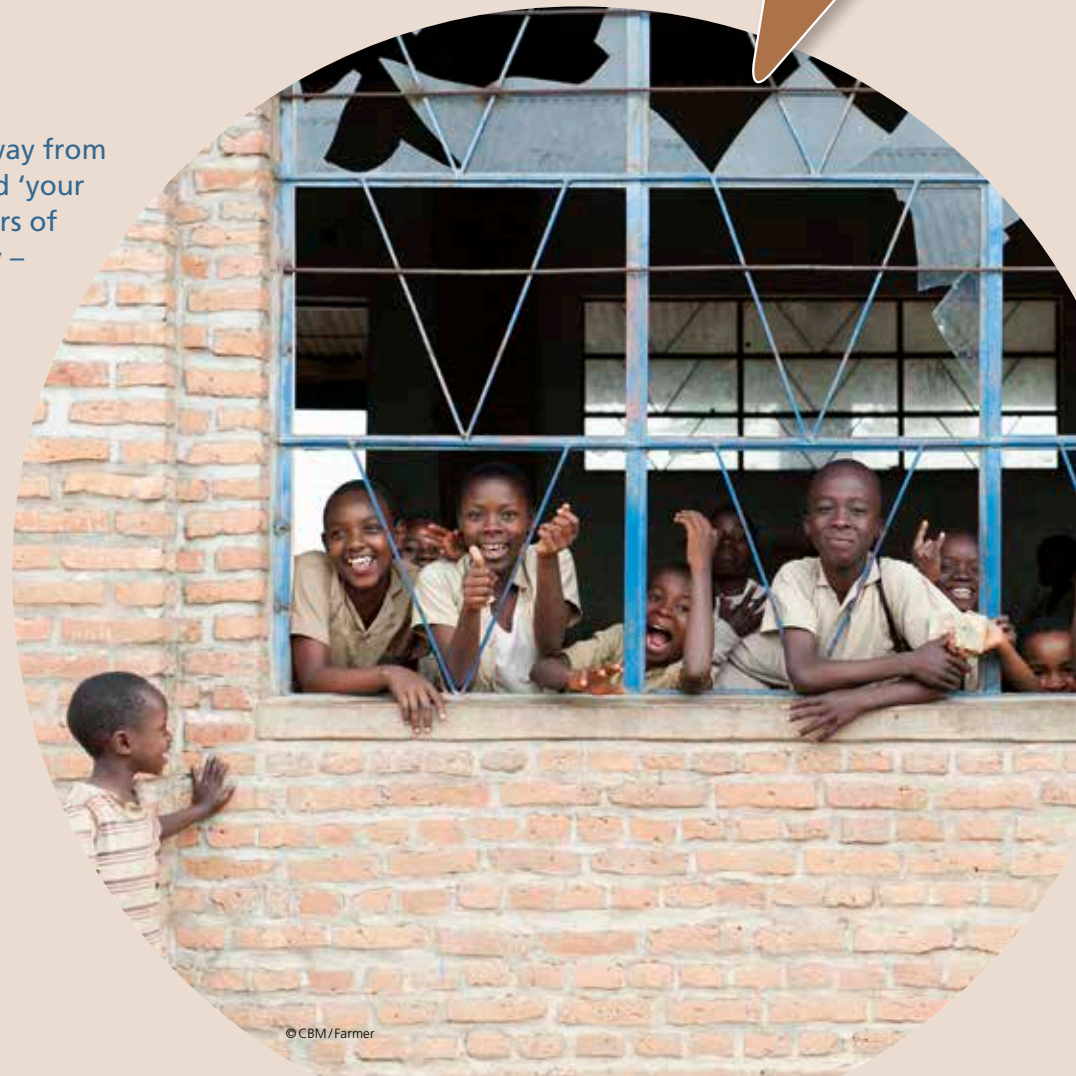
- To date, inclusive education efforts have mostly focused on primary education.
- Much more work must be done to develop inclusive early years education as well as inclusive post-primary and vocational education, and innovative use of non-formal education to support inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- Transition between grades and levels of education must be given much more attention to ensure that the process is inclusive and supportive and does not cause learners to drop out or become excluded within their new settings.
- There is currently little support for learners with and without disabilities to access post-primary and higher education in situations of crisis, conflict, and displacement.

Chapter 10

Organising Inclusive Education Systems

“It is important to break away from the idea of ‘my student’ and ‘your student’. We all are members of the same school community – both regular and specialist teachers – we are all doing the same work with the same goal of giving all children a good education. We must organise ourselves together.”

Armenia, Special needs support teacher¹¹² (2015)



10.1 Putting the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle together

This book has presented a range of issues, rather like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. A key question is: how do we create education system structures that enable us to put all the pieces of the inclusive education jigsaw puzzle together in a way that is logical, coordinated, and does not leave any gaps?

How do we shape an education system that:

- I** delivers on **individual** support and systemic change simultaneously?
- N** lives up to the expectations of global **non-negotiable commitments**?
- C** promotes **collaboration** instead of competition?
- L** plans strategically and delivers financing for the **long-term** changes needed?
- U** ensures stakeholders **understand** the practice and are aware of the theory of inclusion?
- S** promotes **stakeholder empowerment** instead of just top-down decision making and implementation?
- I** strives always to be **innovative**?
- O** is **organised** and funded to achieve all of the above?
- N** is constantly reflecting on the **next steps** to take in the pathway of change?

This book cannot provide definitive answers, but this chapter pulls together the issues we have discussed in Chapters 1 – 9 to reflect on some of the big questions our work must help to answer.

10.2 The way ahead

Many education systems are currently – to a greater or lesser extent – characterised by:

- a focus on the formal school, in which learning is guided by a centrally designed curriculum, fixed standards, exam systems, and teacher-centred approaches – none of which are inherently inclusive; and
- a divided system (mainstream and special) with separate budgets, management, even ministry oversight; or, if limited funding has prevented a special system from developing, it is often still seen as something to strive for.

These and other characteristics of education systems are often taken for granted. Many people assume that the education system must be like this because it has always been like this, either in their own countries or in countries they look to for inspiration or financial support.

For inclusive education to succeed, we must think more imaginatively regarding the organisation of education. We must not assume that the system must be organised as it has always been. Clearly, if the current way of organising education systems was truly effective, we would not have millions of children out of school or experiencing systemic discrimination and poor quality teaching.

Most current education systems do not do what needs to be done, and yet governments, donors, and NGOs spend billions of dollars annually making relatively small, peripheral changes in the hope of rectifying problems that in fact run very deep.

Bigger, systemic changes are required; otherwise, many countries will maintain ineffective and exclusive education systems. Of course, large-scale systemic reform is neither quick nor easy to achieve, but it must be the long-term vision for everyone who has an interest in, or obligations towards, the future of education for all. We must understand our relatively small but vitally important contributions in terms of the huge, overall changes we ultimately seek in the world.

10.3 Reflective questions for rethinking the way education is organised

10.3.1 How can we plan for and fund inclusive education?

Education planning and funding must radically change for inclusive education to succeed on a large scale. CBM, our partners, and other organisations must lobby for inclusive education to be embedded into national education sector plans and budgets, and for inclusive development to be central to other national development plans. We must work collaboratively with other NGOs and DPOs to provide governments with advice and support to achieve this. In particular, governments are likely to need help with improving their capacity for equitable budgeting, for finding



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innovative solutions for re-allocating existing funds more equitably, and for achieving reasonable accommodations quickly. Some governments may need to radically rethink how education budgeting is organised, especially if they have until now operated totally separate budgets for special and mainstream education, and if the special education budget was not managed by the ministry of education.

We must also collaboratively push donors to ensure that disability-inclusive development and inclusive education are integral to their long-term funding strategies, backed up by indicators that oblige funding recipients to be inclusive. Donors will want evidence to convince them, so everyone involved in inclusive education must get better at organising information, and accessibly documenting and openly sharing their experiences in this field.

▲ Justine, 6, from Uganda, who has hydrocephalus, takes part in home-based learning with a CBR worker.

10.3.2 Who runs the education system?

Ask most people who runs education and they will probably say the ministry of education or the district education officer, or children may say the school's head teacher. However, for inclusive education to succeed, the answer to this vital question must be that bureaucrats and experts collaboratively run the education system, alongside communities, parents, interest groups such as DPOs, and learners.

Inclusive education is based on breaking down barriers to inclusion and finding ways to build on positive experiences. Fully understanding the barriers and strengths in the system requires that high-level decision makers and budget holders collaborate with stakeholders who are experiencing the reality of the education system and with the communities in which that education system exists. CBM, our partners, and other organisations therefore must ensure that, when we intervene to support education, everything we do builds the capacity and empowerment of stakeholders—in our case, especially girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities—to play a central role in organising, running, and monitoring their education systems.

10.3.3 How do we learn, who helps us to learn, and where do we learn?

Most people around the world experience and are used to a formal school-based, teacher-centred education, organised around learners taking standardised tests to determine whether they can be considered successful

and progress to the next level or gain good employment. This assumes that people mostly learn from teachers and from centrally created learning materials, and that they learn because they must pass standardised exams. As we saw in Section 2.3.1, the current global trend is towards even more standardised forms of education, testing, and performance measurement. However, there is a growing body of evidence to show this is not the best or only way to facilitate learning. Many persons with and without disabilities are missing out on life and livelihood opportunities because the system for learning, and for assessing learning, is not organised around their individual needs and abilities.

Within our inclusive education work, we must challenge the rigid perception of learning and push for innovations. There are so many other ways to learn, and to organise and assess learning; and there are so many other people who facilitate and support learning, from birth until old age. People must learn in order to improve their lives and communities, not just to pass exams. CBM, our partners, and other organisations therefore must contribute towards organising inclusive education systems that promote approaches like peer learning, learning from role models, learning in the community, and learning from hands-on experiences. We must contribute to the evolution of education systems that value self-assessment, continuous and more practice-based assessment, assessment that is based on individual learning goals, and broader indicators of knowledge and skill.

Education systems must recognise that these types of learning and assessment can



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◀ Elisabeth, 9, (in the wheelchair) was born with spina bifi-da and cannot walk. Her sister takes her to primary school in Tanzania and her classmates pull her up the steps to the classroom. Elisabeth is well accepted in her class. Her teacher says she is a fast learner with a special talent in maths.

happen effectively in formal schools, non-formal education settings, communities, and homes. Our contribution to this change might include lobbying for government and donor policy changes so that diverse types and locations of learning are recognised, valued, and increasingly seen as the responsibility of governments. Such lobbying might also focus on ensuring that there are well-trained, disability- and diversity-aware educators to organise and facilitate learning in these diverse education settings.

10.3.4 How should we organise specialist provision?

For legal, human rights, and practical reasons, a divided system of mainstream and segregated special provision is no longer appropriate.

Unified education systems are needed, where everyone's education is the responsibility of their country's ministry of education, with support from other relevant ministries, and where learning alongside diverse peers and receiving specialist support happens simultaneously.

We have already discussed the idea that, with a twin-track approach, inclusive education does not mean that we cannot have specialist support or a focus on meeting individual needs. We have also seen that inclusive education does not require everyone being together in a formal school. **Table 4** on the next page provides a summary of some of the ways we can bring specialist support into an inclusive system, while promoting diversity and avoiding segregation.

▼ Table 4: Strategies for non-segregated special support in inclusive education

Strategy for inclusive specialist support	To avoid segregation, we must ensure ...
Resource rooms in schools Resource centres for clusters of schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They genuinely operate as places for sharing materials and ideas, and for conducting carefully targeted teaching, rehabilitation, or other support activities. See Case Study 4 on page 57 for a description of such a resource centre in India.• They never become places where learners with disabilities are put because no other class, teacher, or school is prepared to teach them.
Itinerant teachers travel to a manageable cluster of schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They focus on directly supporting teachers, learners, and parents in mainstream classrooms.• They offer support across the whole school on improved pedagogy or other activities for improving inclusion and ending discrimination.
Classroom or teaching assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They support multiple learners in classes, so that their presence does not stigmatise individual learners. Their role is linked with diversity and anti-bullying educational activities for learners.• They help teachers develop and facilitate differentiated activities and materials.• They are never considered to be cheap labour, people who simply relieve teachers of the problem of teaching learners they consider to be difficult.
Volunteers , for example, parents, community members, women and men with disabilities, and older learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They support learners who need assistance with daily activities.• They serve as confidantes and advocates.• They stimulate and/or facilitate play activities that are inclusive of diverse learners.
School or cluster-based special educational needs coordinators (SENCO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They are coordinators and people who work collaboratively with learners, teachers, parents, and other service providers to find ways to support learners' presence, participation, and achievement.• SENCOs are not teachers of children with disabilities; they work with children outside the mainstream classroom to provide essential assessments, support specific learning needs, and facilitate monitoring sessions.

Strategy for inclusive specialist support

To avoid segregation, we must ensure ...

Collaborate with CBID programmes (where they exist)

- CBID workers offer specific support, such as advising on reasonable accommodation for individual learners, and offering support for the whole school with more systemic changes (e.g., improving accessibility for all and campaigning with school communities for changes in attitudes, policies, or practices).

Home-based learning for learners who are unable to attend school some or all of the time

- Activities are planned with parents, CBID workers, relevant health professionals, among others to keep learners connected with their classes, teachers, and peers.

Individual education and personal support plans

- These plans are created collaboratively by learners, parents, teachers, and other support personnel.
- Plans do not focus solely on academic learning targets, but on a wide spectrum of development and learning goals desired by learners.

Special school outreach staff (where they exist)

- Special school staff are involved in developing inclusive education plans.
- They are trained or retrained in how to support inclusion through a range of activities, such as working as itinerant teachers, supporting home-based learning, helping to establish or run resource rooms or centres, and supporting SENCOs and school inclusion teams.

Case Study 14: Mainstream and special schools working together in Vietnam¹¹³

► In a programme run by Nguyen Dinh Chieu school (CBM's partners in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam), children who are blind have choices as to whether to attend mainstream schools or remain in the resource centre in segregated classes where there are boarding facilities. Some of those who attended the residential resource centre for a year or two and then went to their local community school said they missed the extracurricular activities available at the resource centre, such as music, art, and

vocational training. They preferred to return to the residential facility, as their community school was unable to offer such extracurricular activities. In response to the children's views, and to encourage children to choose to stay and feel more comfortable in their local community school, the resource centre offered extracurricular activities on weekends and during holidays, for children at mainstream schools. The school also provided more support for learners in the community school through resources provided by the resource centre and in-service training for mainstream teachers. ◀

▲ Table 4 (continued)
Strategies for non-segregated special support in inclusive education

► Pupils of a school for the integration of deaf, blind, and deaf-blind children, in Brazil, standing in front of the school building. The school is integrated into a regular private school.



The special school question

In discussing how to organise a unified education system so that individual, specialist support is provided in mainstream settings without segregation, we cannot ignore the fact that segregated special schools exist in some contexts.

CBM and various like-minded organisations and governments are interested in special schools being transformed into resource centres that support inclusive education. There is no formula for this transformation, and indeed there is not yet much documented evidence of the process, challenges, and successes.

Various interpretations of the transformation exist and are being attempted around the world. These include special schools:

- transforming into resource and outreach centres, ceasing to directly teach learners with disabilities;
- becoming centres that provide early identification and assessment services and assistive devices, engage in research and development, and support capacity building and self-help groups, among other roles;
- developing their resource centres and outreach role alongside maintaining classes and services for learners with severe or multiple

disabilities who need the most support, such as learners who are deafblind;

- running time-limited preparatory classes, with the intention of teaching learners the skills they need for transition to mainstream schools, such as sign language, braille, and mobility and orientation skills; and
- converting into mainstream schools, welcoming learners with and without disabilities.

There is no right answer to the challenge of how to develop special schools into resources for inclusion, although the extreme measure of simply closing down special schools is unlikely to benefit anyone. Each context will

evolve and develop its own solution, depending on current attitudes, policies, and resources. A vital role is to document in detail any work done to support special school transformations. This is an area where everyone is still learning, so sharing reflective documentation about the processes could be one of the most important contributions.

Case Study 15: **Special school transformation in Burkina Faso**¹¹⁴

► The Integrated Education and Training Centre for Deaf and Hearing People (CEFISE), a CBM partner in Burkina Faso, originally ran



◀ Laxmi (middle), who has a physical disability with her leg, is seen here playing with her friends at school in Nepal.

a day special school for deaf learners. The school built up expertise in educational provision, audiology, speech and language, and psychological support services. The school director then decided that the school should accept hearing learners with and without disabilities alongside deaf and hard of hearing learners.

The school now employs deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing teachers who work together in most classes, particularly in early education classes. There are transition classes for deaf learners who start school late. They provide a language- and communication-rich environment for one to two years, after which

these learners are included alongside other deaf and hearing learners in inclusive classes. Inclusive classes have sign language interpreters. The school still provides audiological assessments and hearing aids for those who can benefit from them. Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing learners experience a bilingual education and deaf and hearing cultures.

While the school now supports learners with other disabilities, those with autism or other complex learning needs are still referred to specialist centres in the city. Nevertheless, CEFISE's school now provides capacity building and resource support to other schools in Burkina Faso. ◀

Key learning points

- Education systems do not have to stay as they are just because that is what everyone is familiar with.
- Donors and governments must embed inclusive education within their strategic plans and budgets, and may need help doing this.
- The education system must be understood as being owned by learners and communities, not just by policymakers and budget holders.
- Successful inclusive education requires more imaginative thinking about how we learn, who helps us learn, and where that learning should take place.
- There are many ways for specialist support to be provided to learners with disabilities while enabling them to learn in mainstream settings alongside their peers.
- Special schools can play an important role in the evolution of inclusive education, and it is essential that experiences are well documented and learned from.

Chapter 11

Next Steps

“Inclusive, good-quality education is a foundation for dynamic and equitable societies.”

Desmond Tutu, former Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa¹¹⁵ (2010)



Inclusive education is an ongoing process of change. In every context, we will encounter different political, social, and economic challenges and enablers that will shape the path we must take. As this book illustrates, there is a growing body of experience about what helps and what hinders inclusive education. Governmental and non-governmental actors can use this experience to help them navigate the most suitable pathways of change towards inclusive education.

In this section, we summarise some of the main changes that we think must be made to achieve the ambition of inclusive, quality, and lifelong education for all. We encourage you to look at **Table 5** on pages 139–145 and reflect on whether and how you need to contribute towards each of the changes listed. Do you need to:

- **take direct action**, for instance, through the way you implement your own projects or programmes?

- **advocate** for other actors to make changes?
- **collaborate with others** to maximise your direct action or advocacy efforts?
- **discuss with others and learn more** before you can start taking appropriate action or advocating, or expanding your actions or advocacy?

You are probably already contributing to some of the changes listed. Could you increase or refine your direct actions, advocacy, collaboration, or learning around those issues? Remember, you do not necessarily have to take direct action to make a valuable contribution towards a desired change. Fill in **Table 5** on the following pages with ticks to show where you need or want to do more, or write more detailed notes in the table about what you want to do and why. You could also add notes about what you are already successfully doing.

► **Table 5 (pages 139–145):**

Reflecting on current work and next steps. The following table is a checklist that allows you to determine how far along you are in implementing the changes needed to achieve inclusive education.

You can also download this table as a separate accessible document from https://www.cbm.org/article/downloads/54741/DID_Series_-_Book_3.pdf

On the path towards inclusive education, the following changes must happen ...

To contribute to change on this issue our programme/country must ...



Take direct action

Advocate

Collaborate with others

Discuss with others and learn more

Individual and systemic approaches

Diverse stakeholders are aware of and understand the social and human rights models of disability and how these relate to inclusive education.



Policymakers, donors, implementers, and grassroots stakeholders are aware of and understand the twin-track approach to inclusive education.



Diverse stakeholders understand the difference between segregated special education, integrated education, and inclusive education.



Non-negotiable commitments

Diverse stakeholders critically reflect on the inclusive education commitments laid out in UNCRPD Article 24 and SDG 4 and what this means for them and their work.



Diverse stakeholders are committed to upholding the obligations of UNCRPD Article 24 and SDG 4.



National policies and strategies reflect the commitments made in UNCRPD Article 24 and SDG 4.



The threat to inclusive education posed by increased private sector engagement is openly debated and mitigated.



The threat to inclusive education posed by increased standardisation of curricula and testing is openly debated and mitigated.



On the path towards inclusive education, the following changes must happen ...

To contribute to change on this issue our programme/country must ...



Take direct action

Advocate

Collaborate with others

Discuss with others and learn more

Collaboration

There are fewer agencies working in isolation on inclusive education efforts.



Intersectoral collaboration in inclusive education – with CBR, health, social welfare, child protection, and others – becomes the norm.



Government ministries collaborate on inclusive education, with ministries of education taking the lead.



There is an increase in collaborative advocacy on inclusive education.



School communities – parents, teachers, community members, girls, boys, women, and men with and without disabilities, and DPOs – collaborate on school improvement and inclusive education.



On the path towards inclusive education, the following changes must happen ...

To contribute to change on this issue our programme/country must ...



Take direct action

Advocate

Collaborate with others

Discuss with others and learn more

Long-term process

Policymakers, donors, implementers, and grassroots stakeholders understand that inclusive education is a long-term transformation process, not just a short-term project activity.



Good quality disaggregated data is available to inform education policy and budgets.



Funding for education generally becomes more predictable and long term.



Funding for inclusive education is embedded into all education budgets.



Governments have improved capacity for equitable budgeting.



Small-scale or pilot inclusive education initiatives are designed from the start with government ownership and scaling up in mind.



Donor funding promotes collaboration rather than competition between agencies and stakeholders.



On the path towards inclusive education, the following changes must happen ...

To contribute to change on this issue our programme/country must ...



Take direct action

Advocate

Collaborate with others

Discuss with others and learn more

Understanding and awareness

There is widespread recognition among inclusive education programmes, trainers, and other stakeholders of the difference between basic awareness and deeper practical understanding of how to implement inclusive education.



Action research approaches become more commonly embedded into projects and training to boost practical understanding and to enable stakeholders to feel empowered to take action.



Stakeholder empowerment and engagement

The role of grassroots stakeholders in the evolution of inclusive education is recognised and appreciated.



Parents are actively involved in inclusive education advocacy, planning, implementation, and monitoring.



Girls, boys, and young persons with and without disabilities are actively involved in inclusive education advocacy, planning, implementation, and monitoring.




Persons with disabilities and DPOs have the capacity to train and advocate on inclusive education; and are actively involved in inclusive education advocacy, planning, implementation, and monitoring.



Teachers, including teachers with disabilities, are empowered to be agents of change in education.



On the path towards inclusive education, the following changes must happen...	To contribute to change on this issue our programme/country must ... 			
	Take direct action	Advocate	Collaborate with others	Discuss with others and learn more
Innovation Accessibility and reasonable accommodation				
More schools understand and are supported by governments, NGOs, DPOs, and communities to make reasonable accommodations for learners and staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Universal design principles are used in the design of all new schools, facilities, education programmes, curricula, and materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Innovation Teachers and teacher education				
Inclusive education, as a twin-track approach, is embedded across all in-service, pre-service, and ongoing professional development activities for teachers, teaching assistants, and school leaders at all levels of education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers are appreciated as, and encouraged to be, agents of change, innovators, and facilitators of real-life based learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grassroots stakeholders, especially persons with disabilities, are engaged in designing and delivering teacher education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More persons with disabilities are trained, recruited, deployed, and supported as teachers at all levels of education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High-quality specialist educators are trained or retrained to work in teams and are encouraged to share problems and solutions in inclusive settings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

On the path towards inclusive education, the following changes must happen ...

To contribute to change on this issue our programme/country must ...



Take direct action

Advocate

Collaborate with others

Discuss with others and learn more

Innovation

Transition and lifelong learning

More early years educators and settings receive inclusive education training and support.



Early education settings collaborate more with other sectors, such as health, welfare, and CBID.



Other levels of education learn more from the child-centred teaching and learning experiences of early education settings.



Financial barriers that make post-primary education more exclusive, especially for learners with disabilities, are more effectively addressed.



Curricula and exam systems in post-primary education are reformed to reduce exclusion and enable better transition rates.



Inclusive vocational education is relevant and useful, and leads to employment or self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities within their communities and countries.



Inclusive vocational education enables continued academic learning, and supports additional skills building, such as business management skills.



Education settings collaborate with persons with disabilities and DPOs to make reasonable accommodations for vocational training and equipment.



More learners with and without disabilities transition to the next grade or level without being forced to repeat grades due to rigid exams.



More learners, parents, and teachers receive support during periods when learners transition between grades or levels of education.



On the path towards inclusive education, the following changes must happen ...

To contribute to change on this issue our programme/country must ...



Take direct action

Advocate

Collaborate with others

Discuss with others and learn more

Organising inclusive education systems

More education stakeholders debate and develop ideas for taking different approaches to education.



More governments and donors embed inclusive education in their strategies and budgets.



Education is increasingly recognised as being owned by learners and communities, not just by decision makers and funders.



Education systems become more innovative regarding their responses to how we learn, where we can learn, and who helps us learn.



A growing body of evidence is documented showing innovative school, community, and home-based ways to offer specialist support to learners with disabilities in inclusive settings, avoiding segregation.



Innovative ways for transforming special schools into wider resources for inclusion and communities are tried and documented.



Next steps

Keep working towards the above changes on the path towards inclusive education.

Conclusions



"Poverty eradication and the achievement of economic growth can ensure the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. As such, the new framework must be people centred, with participation at all levels. We, persons with disabilities, should be recognised as equal partners and work with all of you – governments, the UN system, and civil society – in the post-2015 implementation process."

Maryanne Diamond,
Chair of IDA (2015)



© Robin Wyatt

◀ Chowdamma (girl in the blue dress) from India, has a learning disability and used to fear talking with other children. She started attending her local after-school club, and her confidence has improved dramatically.

Inclusive education is complex; it involves much more than simply placing children with disabilities into mainstream classes. It requires a diverse range of stakeholders – from learners, their families, teachers, and communities, to governments, and international donors – to be committed to facilitating and supporting interrelated changes to attitudes, policies, practices, resources, funding, and environments.

Each actor in this process of change has their role to play, their area of expertise to contribute, and particular barriers to inclusion for which they wish to champion solutions. Some will focus on policy and law, others on stakeholder engagement, teacher education, or accessible environments. Some actors will take on multiple roles, but no single actor in inclusive education will ever successfully play every role alone.

The key to the kind of long-term, persistent education system reform that is needed lies in finding ways to bring every actor's role together in a collaborative effort – like putting the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together. Even when stakeholders are working effectively together, the process of change may be slow. It is never going to be just one quick step from non-inclusive to inclusive education.

This book has discussed some of the pieces in that inclusive education jigsaw puzzle, and illustrated how some pieces connect with others. No blueprint is available to tell us exactly where to put each piece and in which order. However, if more actors engage with others, share their ideas and experiences, and understand that they are all working towards a common desired change, the closer we will get to revealing the full picture of inclusive education.

CBM's Inclusive Education Experience



“CBM supports and advocates for inclusive education as the most appropriate option for learners with a disability. This approach requires specialist support, is often linked with inclusive education resource facilities, and requires development of local skills and capacity.”

CBM mission statement on inclusive education¹¹⁶

Our approach to inclusive education is based on non-negotiable commitments such as the UNCRPD and SDG 4. This is underpinned by a human rights based approach to disability-inclusive development in which gender equality, safeguarding, and environmental impact are core elements.

In this chapter, we reflect on CBM's experiences and plot our journey towards inclusive education. We briefly outline the historical development of CBM's work, the lessons we have learned, the challenges encountered, and what we consider to be some of our best practices. Extracts from an interview with Katharina Pfoertner, CBM's Regional Advisor for Inclusive Education and CBID in Latin America, illustrate key points raised.

Working towards inclusive education

CBM was founded in 1908. The German Pastor Ernst Jakob Christoffel founded a home in Malatia, Turkey, for blind and otherwise disabled and orphaned girls and boys, with the support of a handful of friends. In those early days, the goal was to provide persons with disabilities with literacy skills, vocational training, and empowerment, giving them autonomy to choose their own pathways when they left the home. This commitment to education and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities laid the foundation for an organisation whose mission today is to work towards having "an inclusive world in which all persons with disabilities enjoy their human rights and achieve their full potential."¹¹⁷

Historically, and through the 1960s and 1970s, our support helped construct special schools, often with boarding facilities, hospitals, and rehabilitation centres. We developed considerable special education expertise. CBM provided technical support by placing specialist educators, and health and rehabilitation workers within partner organisations in the field.

From special school provision, our focus then developed into supporting integration, building teacher capacity, providing assistive devices and CBR (now known as CBID). This development saw the beginnings of working in communities rather than just in institutions. As global practices developed and changed towards a social model approach to education for learners with disabilities, so too did CBM's support in the field. Today, we are expanding and improving our work with like-minded partner organisations by promoting inclusive education in low- and middle-income countries worldwide.

However, we needed internal understanding and awareness, as well as an understanding of the individual and systemic approaches required for inclusive education to be realised, before we could truly move towards supporting quality inclusive education provision in the field. We needed to be convinced internally before being able to advise our partners. One of the challenges with inclusive education is that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' programme formula that will work well everywhere. Inclusive education is a long journey and an evolving process, which is why some work that is labelled as 'inclusive education' still more closely resembles integrated education.

► Ernst Jakob Christoffel (standing), founder of CBM, with blind students at Bethesda Home for the Blind in Malatia, Turkey.



Raising awareness and understanding at CBM therefore required us to look more closely at our partners' work in education. Several meetings involving partners, global and field advisers, and programme office staff enabled us to discuss and understand how to move from supporting special or integrated education towards promoting and supporting inclusive education.

"There are a lot of challenges. I think the biggest challenge is to make people understand that inclusive education is about changing the system."¹¹⁸

There are no quick fixes for education planning and development, as it is a long-term process. Education programmes need time to develop and CBM partnerships are generally long standing for this reason. One example of this is the continued partnership with special schools as they are supported in their transition into resource centres, that will assist inclusive education provision.

"CBM and partners are recognised for their expertise in special education, so how can we ensure that this expertise is utilised to support inclusive education? What we have

been doing and seeing already is that partners are taking the first steps to developing resource centres. The numbers are increasing, as are our partnerships with government structures, such as the ministry of education. This is a very positive move forward as it recognises that some learners will need expertise and resources to support their inclusion, but also that most children need support at some point or other along their education journey. Resource centres are there for everyone, not just to provide special education.”¹¹⁹

We have other long-standing partnerships that did not start from a special school focus, such as Callan Services for Persons with Disabilities in Papua New Guinea. Our partnership with Callan began in 1990. At that time, the support focused on providing funds for equipment and staff. By 1994, the Ministry of Education made a commitment to inclusive education. This was achieved through Callan advocating with the Ministry through the National Board of Disabled People and the National Education Board, with CBM providing a special education co-worker to support technical and service development. The new education policy emphasised that all children with disabilities had a right to be educated in their local community schools. All centres previously supported by international NGOs and providing CBR or special education, seven in total, were to become special education resource centres with teaching salaries taken over by the Ministry. This was an incredible achievement. It meant that CBM could now support its partner to use its funds for imple-

menting government policy – such as, supporting capacity development for early detection of disabilities, teacher preparation, and supporting the implementation of the policy – rather than for paying salaries.

Enabling stakeholders and raising awareness

CBM puts rights bearers and stakeholders at the centre of discussions as agents of change. For these discussions to be meaningful, stakeholders are in need of capacity development opportunities. Stakeholder empowerment also requires engagement at international levels, such as alliances with international DPOs like World Federation of the Deaf and Inclusion International.

“I had an early experience of the power of strong community stakeholder engagement coming together to make real changes to the lives of person with disabilities. It was one of those ‘ah-ha’ moments for me. I was a CBM co-worker in El Salvador, and we met two little boys with cerebral palsy called Alberto and Diego. Their father, Pedro, was part of a community-based agricultural cooperative supported by local government, and their mother, Gladis, was a seamstress. Community members told us where they lived. We went to the house and were amazed by the positive attitude of the parents. Through Pedro’s connection with the cooperative, a whole CBID system was developed including inclusive education. Pedro became one of the key leaders

of the CBID committee in this little community. Gladis was very active in the early education group with her two children. After two years, Alberto attended primary school. Through Pedro's leadership all these organisations worked together and supported the little boy to have access to school. As with many boys and girls with cerebral palsy, Alberto needed a ramp and a special chair. All this was supported by the CBID community group. Older youths with a disability were provided with livelihood opportunities and a self-help group was founded. The community provided a field for young people with disabilities to work in, to grow products and sell them. This is a perfect example of community engagement of people working together. Starting with the parents but through community and governmental organisations, they facilitated this level of inclusion at preschool, primary school and in livelihoods in such a short time." ¹²⁰

CBM has always focused on capacity development, whether via CBID programmes providing community-level awareness and understanding of disability, or through supporting higher education or in- and pre-service training for specialist and mainstream teachers.

One strength of our work is our support for research and development through the International Centre for Evidence on Disability in London. Several research programmes and documents have been published, leading the way to improved evidence and data for guiding programme development and planning. CBM also contributes to building capacity and evidence-based learning opportunities for

CBM staff and partners in the field through monitoring and evaluation. Internally, we have developed various documents on education: one such recent document is a reference guide on inclusive education, which helps guide programme planning. This book provides further support for understanding inclusive education and will be joined and complemented by another internal document, a CBM Training Guideline on Inclusive Education.

Collaborations and international partnerships

CBM is active from the grassroots to national, regional, and global levels of engagement. This is achieved mostly through collaboration, either directly with partners in the field or indeed through alliance partners. Ever since the mid-1990s, there have been key collaborations with the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) and its Inclusive Education Task Group, and with the International Disability Alliance. More recently, CBM has joined mainstream alliances, such as the GCE and the GPE, and has engaged in advocacy work with UN bodies including WHO.

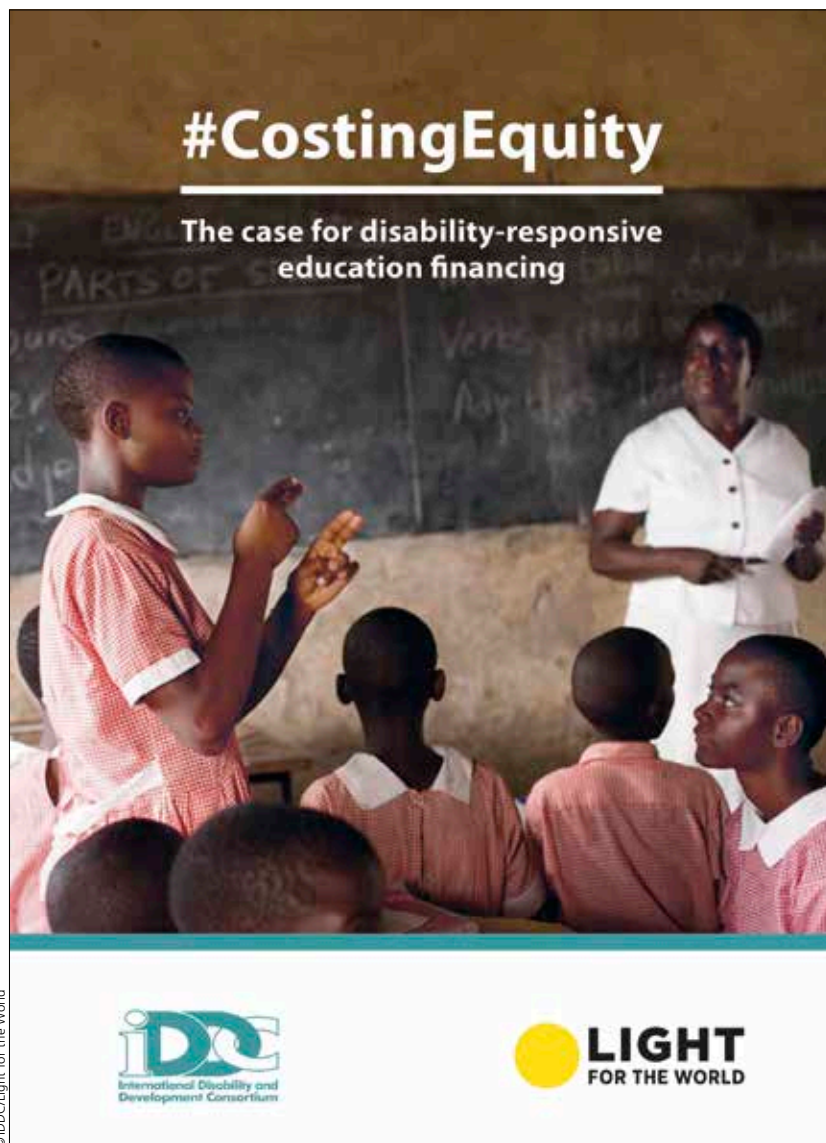
Such collaborations have influenced the prominent focus on disability-inclusive education in SDG 4. In 2015, IDDC members lobbied for a seat on the Board of the GCE, dedicated to ensuring representation of disability-inclusive education. As a result of the IDDC collaboration, there has been high-profile research and advocacy on education financing entitled "**#CostingEquity: The case for disability-responsive education financing**".

This led to a global call to action for bilateral, multilateral, and other major donor agencies to invest in disability-inclusive education. Similar in-country consortia have developed in low- and middle-income countries such as Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Honduras, Peru, and Zambia.

Increasingly, there is a realisation that to achieve success in inclusive education there must be interministerial collaboration from central government down to community levels, starting from the level of early detection, early intervention, and ECD and education.

“In Nicaragua we have worked with community organisations supported by Plan International and by SOS Children’s Villages (SOS Kinderdorf). All stakeholders worked together with the secretary of state on the rights of persons with disabilities. From this, a district programme for early detection and early education was developed. Training was given first to community representatives from different sectors (health, community organisations, education, social, local government, NGOs, and DPOs). Through cascade training these people would then train others within their work and community. This practice continues today. There is permanent training in a cascade system for early years educators in order for them to be able to detect children with disabilities and children who are at risk, such as with early identification of children with difficulties in concentrating.”¹²¹

Previously, CBM had technical working groups in specialist areas of education that were dis-



ability-focused, but now this has moved to encompass broader, more inclusive education-focused communities of practice led by a global advisor with a small core team. These communities of practice function globally as well as regionally. In Latin America, CBM has a

▲ Cover page of the IDDC #CostingEquity report.



© CBM/argum/Einberger

▲ Abigail (also shown on the cover with her classmates), was born with spina bifida, at her school in Zambia. She has lots of friends at school and is a very good and committed student.

particularly active inclusive education community of practice.

Working with global advisors from different mandate areas has meant that we have been able to advocate for improved health and rehabilitation services as well. One such example is our collaboration with WHO. Such work ultimately benefits education, for instance, through our input into the WHO Priority Assistive Products List, the Primary Ear and Hearing Care Manuals, and the WHO CBR Guidelines.

Challenges ahead and innovative approaches

Moving forward, there are many challenges that CBM must be thinking through with our partners if we are to help organise education systems more effectively. Many governments lack the understanding of what inclusive education means and that it requires systemic change to be effective. Although many adaptations are needed, CBM works towards an innovative approach in some key areas such

as physical and communication accessibility, teaching and transition and lifelong learning.

Accessibility

In relation to accessibility, CBM promotes various recommendations. We want to see that persons with disabilities are also included as partners in policy development and implementation and in the monitoring of physical and digital accessibility within disaster risk reduction, development, and humanitarian contexts. We know that universal design principles and comprehensive accessibility must be incorporated into building and transport standards and codes as well as in general infrastructure programmes and local development projects. It is important to us that participatory planning approaches and tools, such as accessibility audits, are used to engage persons with disabilities and entire communities in all mechanisms for urban planning and implementation. We also believe that the development of technical expertise on universal design can be enhanced by supporting capacity building of DPOs, policymakers, local authorities, and professionals involved in planning, including by gathering and sharing evidence and information around new technology.

Teaching

A key challenge is building teacher capacity at in- and pre-service levels, and training specialist teachers with the goal of achieving universal quality inclusive education for all learners. To this end, CBM is working with ministries of education and government structures to support systemic changes in teacher preparation and educational service provision,

as well as having persons with disabilities as teachers, school governors, and so on in inclusive education settings.

“We have some positive examples: for instance, in Nicaragua one CBM partner is the organisation of blind people through which CBM supports a teacher training programme. Blind teachers from the organisation train regular teachers at the training institutions of the Ministry of Education. They provide training on how to include learners who are blind in regular school settings using a very practical approach. There is no reason why the same blind teachers could not teach broader aspects of inclusive education. There are similar examples in other parts of the world, such as the Philippines.”¹²²

Transition and lifelong learning

CBM believes that there must be a more structured system in place to support learners with disabilities when they transition from one stage of education to another.

All children have unique needs and qualities, not just those related to impairment, and all children require support at some time in their education. For inclusion to be a reality, it must start from birth. CBM knows that early intervention and education is key to making inclusive education possible.

“Early education is very concrete: programmes need to start inclusive education in pre-schools or kindergarten. Mostly people start thinking about inclusive education when the child has a problem at school age

► Maynor, 12, is deaf. He used not to attend school as his very poor family needed him to earn money. CBM's partner, ASOPIECAD in Nicaragua, supported the family with a microcredit business training, and now Maynor is attending school. He is also a proud member of the local baseball team.



© CBM/argum/Emberger

and then they think that the only solution is a special school. So for me, the most important thing to do is to start training inclusive education educators for preschool because this is actually the easiest way to do it. There are many good examples of this approach in CBM, for example in Central America... community partnerships, parents groups, NGOs, or DPOs are supporting children with disabilities in schools. The teacher has the lead, but receives support from community and from parents. In El Salvador and Nicaragua, there are several such partnerships for early years where we train

community members like health staff or local governments in detecting children with disabilities from an early age and start intervention programmes. The parents are central in supporting their children in the early years, in government preschools and when they come to school, so from three years on they can go to a preschool where teachers are trained in inclusive practices. In preschool, there are better possibilities for inclusion as there is less emphasis on reaching academic grades. Also, children learn to be more accepting of each other, to see each other's strengths, to respect each other when they start from a young age." ¹²³

Next steps for CBM

Our goal to increase understanding of inclusive education within CBM and among our partners will partially be supported by the information in this book, the training guidelines we are developing, our new reference guide, CBM's internal technical guides, position papers, and case studies, and by a leaflet outlining CBM's approach to inclusive education. Additionally CBM will continue to play an active role in alliances such as the IDDC, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), the International Council for Education of Children with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and many others, to achieve this goal.

Going forward, we will focus on the following, in collaboration with our colleagues in health, education, and (re)habilitation programmes:

- early identification and early intervention;
- early years education;

- in-country and global advocacy to improve the tracking of disability-inclusive funding, SDG 4, UNCRPD Article 24, and more;
- building internal CBM capacity in the field of inclusive education;
- developing the capacity of regional advisors and other staff;
- ensuring engagement with DPOs, parents, and family members; and
- collaborating with national governments to support them to meet their own targets toward SDG 4, and their own education sector plans enabling sustainable changes.

Internally, the framework for CBM's Federation Strategy 2021 will focus on initiative priorities. Initially, these will be disability-inclusive development, eye health, and CBID. However, over the coming years, we are preparing for an initiative on inclusive education.

Katharina Pfoertner's final words sum up why all the challenges and ideas outlined in this book are so important to CBM:

"If we are talking about an inclusive society, where would we start? Obviously, we start with education. A growing human being spends a lot of time in school. For many people, and from my personal experience growing up, I never knew somebody with a disability because they were taught in different schools. Likewise, a child with a disability being in a special school has no contact with non-disabled children. I remember speaking once with a blind man in Cuba and he said: 'I had such a good education. I was educated in a special school and I had the best teachers. I reached a very high level education, but when I came back to my village after graduating nobody knew me. I had no social contacts. I had become completely isolated, and this is what we don't want.' This made me think: if we want an inclusive society, we need inclusive education."¹²⁴

Who is CBM?

We are CBM

CBM is a Christian international development organisation, committed to improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities in the poorest communities of the world irrespective of race, gender, or religious belief.

Based on its core values and over 100 years of professional expertise, CBM addresses poverty both as a cause and as a consequence of disability, and works in partnership with local and national civil society organisations to create an inclusive society for all.

CBM is a federation currently composed of 11 national member associations based in Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States and an international office with a network of regional and country offices that work closely with our partners in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Our approach

Disability-inclusive development is the framework of all our initiatives and the key theme that drives our activities and the impact of our work. We believe that this is the most effective way to bring positive change to the lives of persons with disabilities living in poverty and their communities. Through our disability-inclusive development approach, we address the barriers that hinder access and participation and

actively seek to ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities as empowered self-advocates in all development and emergency response processes.

Our work

With a global network of partners, CBM seeks to build and promote an inclusive world in which all persons with disabilities enjoy their human rights and achieve their full potential. Our work includes:

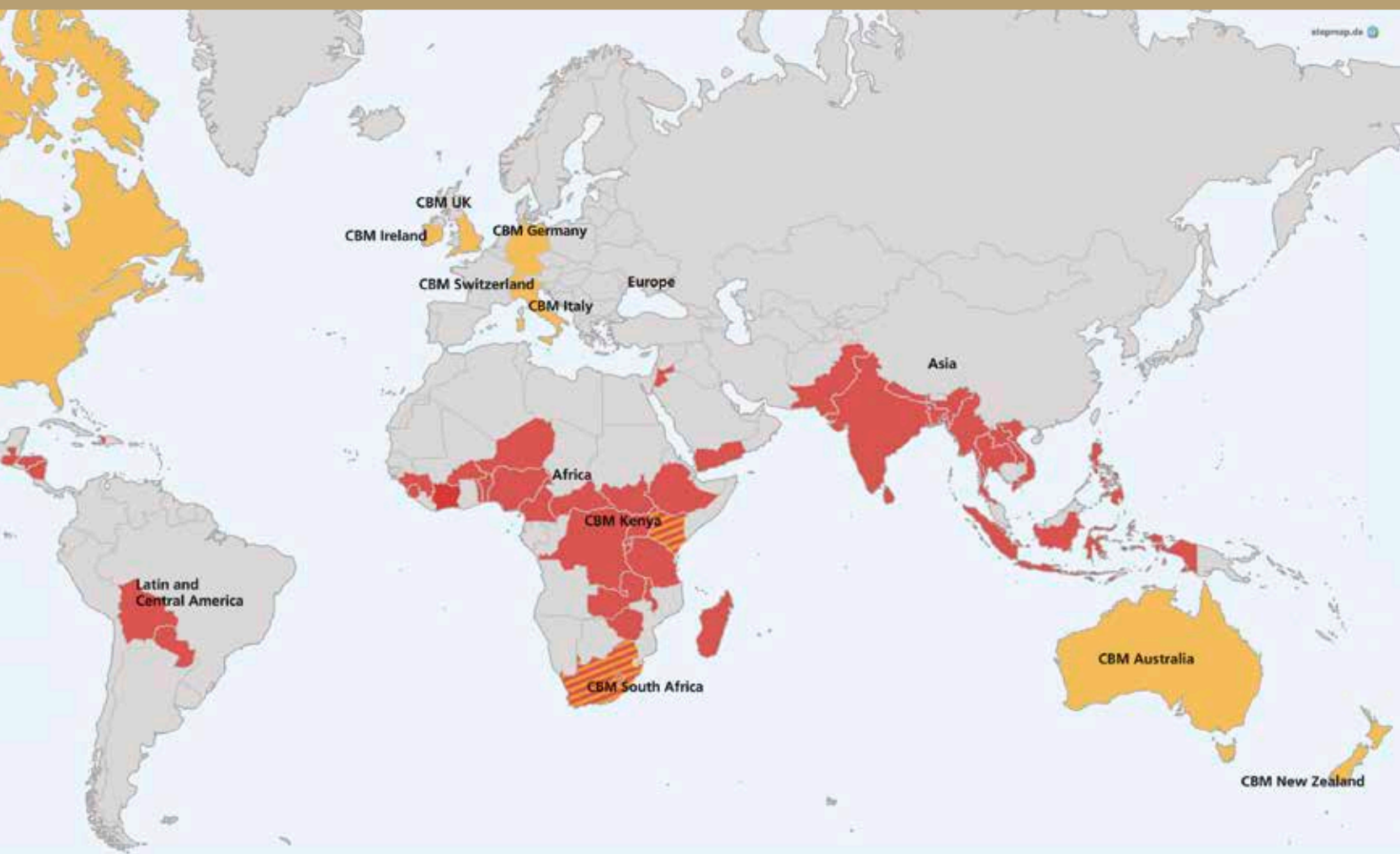
- supporting comprehensive health care systems and services in eye health, ear and hearing care, community mental health, and physical rehabilitation;
- ensuring inclusive education for all, reaching the most marginalised;
- building inclusive, resilient communities through CBID;
- implementing inclusive emergency response and disaster risk reduction; and
- strengthening international advocacy and alliances to realise the human rights of persons with disabilities and the promotion of disability-inclusive development.

Working in partnership

Working in partnership allows us to maximise the positive impact we can have on the lives of persons with disabilities. Examples of our collaborations include a long-standing partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as consultative status at the



▲ Worldmap of support. CBM is helping worldwide – together with its local partners.



United Nations (UN). We also work closely with many national and global networks and initiatives, and with governments, project partners, and DPOs.

As CBM could never be a good advocate and partner of persons with disabilities with-

out listening to and learning from girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities all over the world, we are in a constant process of mutual learning and support.

More information is available at www.cbm.org

CBM's 'Series on Disability-Inclusive Development'

In April 2015, CBM launched its **'Series on Disability-Inclusive Development.'** CBM is publishing a number of books over the coming years as part of a dialogue on key issues in disability-inclusive development. This book is the third in the series.

'The Future is Inclusive. How to Make International Development Disability-Inclusive'

This opening publication (2015) covers key facts and figures on the situation of girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities, living in low- and middle-income countries. It investigates why development and humanitarian actions must always have a disability-inclusive

approach. The book also looks at how CBM has implemented disability-inclusive development, as well as some of the key lessons learned along the way.

'The Future is Inclusive' can be ordered via www.epubli.com (ISBN 978-3-7375-3923-4) and is available at www.cbm.org/didseries1_the_future_is_inclusive_pdf

A German version is also available:

„Zukunft inklusiv(e)! Entwicklungszusammenarbeit mit und für Menschen mit Behinderungen gestalten“
(ISBN 978-3-7375-3922-7)





‘Inclusion Counts. The Economic Case for Disability-Inclusive Development’

The second book (2016) of CBM’s DID Series looks at how barriers in society exclude persons with disabilities from key areas of life, such as health, education, work, and livelihood. Readers are asked to consider the following questions: can governments afford to continue excluding girls, boys, women, and men with disabilities from key areas of life? How can investment in inclusion benefit persons with disabilities, their families, and societies overall and how can international cooperation support this inclusion?

‘Inclusion Counts’ can also be ordered via www.epubli.com

(ISBN 978-3-7418-8877-9)

and is available at

www.cbm.org/didseries2_inclusion_counts_pdf



„Inklusion – ein Gewinn für alle. Warum sich inklusive Entwicklungszusammenarbeit lohnt“

is the German version of this publication (ISBN 978-3-7418-8857-1).

Accessibility

All publications in this series are available as accessible PDFs on CBM’s website:

www.cbm.org (English),

www.cbm.de (German)

Feedback

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

APCD	Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability
ASOPIECAD	Association of Integral Programmes in Community Education Astrid Delleman
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CBID	Community-Based Inclusive Development
CBR	Community-Based Rehabilitation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEFISE	Integrated Education and Training Centre for Deaf and Hearing People
DFID	Department for International Development
DIAUD	Disability Inclusive and Accessible Urban Development
DPO	Disabled People's Organisations
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EENET	Enabling Education Network
EFA	Education for All
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	International Disability Alliance
IDDC	International Disability and Development Consortium
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education (Palestine)
NDC HCM	Nguyen Dinh Chieu School Ho Chi Minh
NFU	Norwegian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinators
TiCCWG	Teachers in Crisis Contexts Working Group
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WHO	World Health Organization

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Half of the 65 million persons with disabilities are out of school. Even those in school are unlikely to be accessing equitable, quality education. This is the situation despite the adoption of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and the more recent 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has inclusive and equitable quality education as its goal.

Yet, inclusive education is not only about meeting human rights obligations. It is also about celebrating diversity, promoting a more sustainable path to development and helping bring an end to poverty, thereby leading to more inclusive societies.

But how can we achieve this? What are the barriers along the way and how can we overcome them? Is there a blueprint we can follow? How can we include persons with disabilities, their families, and their organisations to achieve inclusive education? Who else should be involved? How must inclusive education be financed?

These are some of the questions on which this book critically reflects. Also included are case studies and accounts of some of the experiences CBM has gathered in more than 100 years of supporting partners in providing education to persons with disabilities in the poorest countries of the world.

“Inclusive, good quality education is a foundation for dynamic and equitable societies.”

Desmond Tutu

Together with disabled persons organisations, our readers, and partners in governments, development, and education, CBM wants to discuss how we need to reshape our education systems to make them inclusive for everybody around the world. Inclusive quality education is the right of all people—and the foundation of our future.

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