

Open Society and Children with Special Education Needs in Central Asia

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OSI Education Support Program

- Support research and publication of the OECD report “Students with Special Education Needs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan”
- Work with local partners to demonstrate community-based models for supporting children with special education needs
- Partnership with national Soros Foundations on individual projects and research

OECD Research: Findings

- Legislation and education policy are not always consistent and bodies charged with protecting the rights of children with disabilities are often weak
- Social stigma attached to disability leads to social exclusion
- Strides in service provision are being made slowly and often on an ad hoc basis

OECD Research: Recommendations



UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Recognizing the importance of accessibility to the physical, social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education and to information and communication, in enabling persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms

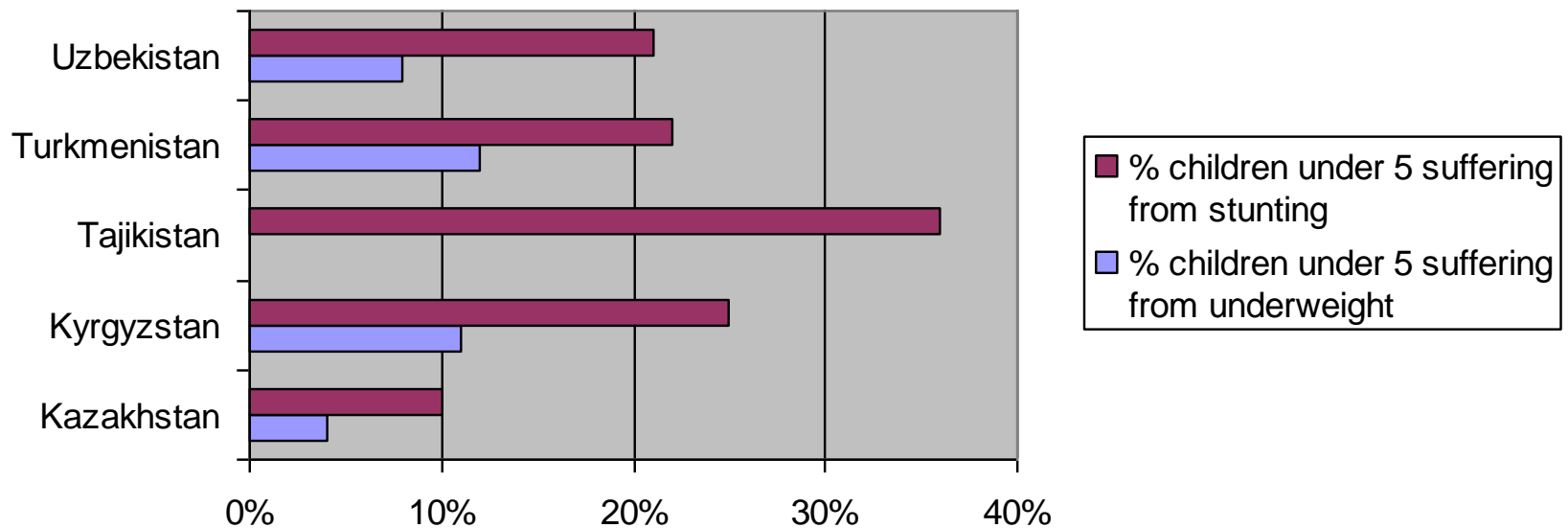
Preamble of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Early Intervention

- Helping families track child development from birth
- Enabling families to recognize what the child *can* do and provide early stimulation and learning opportunities
- Addressing disabling conditions through adequate nutrition and care
- Quick referral to appropriate services when a delay becomes apparent
- Providing access to preschool and other early education for all children

Early Intervention

Health Indicators from the GMR, 2007



Community and Civil Society



- 12 projects in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan
- Focus on improving the quality of education, providing education for children out of school and supporting families

Goals and Projects

- 12 projects in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan
- Focus on including children with special needs, supporting parents and professionals, and raising public awareness
- Projects selected as potential models for replication

Problems and Obstacles faced by CSOs

- Perverse incentives for parents not to send their children to schools and reluctance of parents to integrate their children into main stream schools
- Unfavorable tax structures for CSOs working with children with SENDDD
- Segregated system feels pressured and is reluctant to establish social partnership with organizations promoting innovative practices
- Data reliability on child birth
- Training for teachers and social workers

Kazakhstan – SATR Center



- Including children with autism
- Work with teachers, parents and children
- New approach for Kazakhstan

Kyrgyzstan – Umut Nadezhda

- 20 years working with “unteachable” children
- Teacher training
- Children’s groups
- Possible regional source of expertise



Tajikistan – Assoc of Parents of Handicapped Children



- Partnership with 10 educational institutions
- Reinforces and supports role of parents
- Raise public awareness

Thank you



Article 7 - Children with disabilities

1. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.
2. In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.

Article 23 - Respect for home and the family

3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have equal rights with respect to family life. With a view to realizing these rights, and to prevent concealment, abandonment, neglect and segregation of children with disabilities, States Parties shall undertake to provide early and comprehensive information, services and support to children with disabilities and their families.

Article 24 - Education

- 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
- 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