EDUCATION FOR EVERY ABILITY

A Review and Roadmap of Disability-Inclusive Education in East Asia and Pacific Region

Technical Summary
1. Background

Inclusion is anchored on the fundamental human right to education as enshrined in Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Various international legal frameworks endorse inclusive education. The Convention against Discrimination in Education and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) reaffirmed the rights of all children to quality education without discrimination. The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) acknowledged for the first time that a substantial number of children are excluded in education and an inclusive strategy is imperative to successfully respond to the growing issue of marginalisation. Articulated in the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action is the first explicit commitment to guarantee inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. The treaty recognised inclusion as the ‘most effective means to combating discrimination, building inclusive societies and achieving education for all.’

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**Exclusion** is where students are unable to access any form of education.

**Inclusion** is where there is recognition of a need to transform the cultures, policies and practices in school to accommodate the differing needs of individual students, and an obligation to remove the barriers that impede that possibility.

**Integration** is when students are placed in schools or educational settings with peers of a similar age but students are required to adjust to the mainstream – no adjustments are made to meet their individual needs. This limits their ability to fully access or participate in learning. Integration is not necessarily a step towards inclusion.

**Segregation** is when groups of children are purposefully separated from the majority because of difference. For example, children with disabilities can be classified according to their impairment and allocated a school designed to respond to that particular impairment.

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has 17 goals that make up a “blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future” and in many of the SDGs, disability is referenced. Specifically, SDG 4: Quality Education, calls for inclusive quality education and lifelong learning in supported and accessible learning environments. Emphasis is given to ensuring equal access to education at all levels for the vulnerable including children with disabilities. Inclusive education is defined by UNESCO as “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is

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2 UNESCO (1960). Convention against Discrimination in Education.
6 Ibid. p.9
11 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300
the responsibility of the state to educate all children.”  

Disability is only one of the many factors that contribute to exclusion in education, among other physical, social, political, and institutional barriers. This review focuses on disability-inclusive education, where disability is recognised as a “result of the interaction between long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments and various barriers in the environment that may hinder an individual’s full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” The concept of disability is complex and multidimensional. The framework developed by the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) takes into account this multidimensional and interactive nature of disability. It takes away the focus on medical diagnoses and impairments and instead, looks at the interaction between impairments and personal and environmental factors. Children with disabilities are among the most marginalised. They are more likely to be out of school and less likely to complete education than their non-disabled peers and transitioning to an inclusive education system will help ensure their right to quality and equitable education.

The East Asia and Pacific (EAP) region is home to around 580 million children, comprising one-third of the world’s population and more than one-quarter of the world’s children. In all countries, a huge gap in terms of access to education between children with and without disabilities is evident. A survey in 51 countries by the World Health Organisation reports that only 51 percent of boys with a disability complete primary school compared to 61 percent of boys without a disability. Among girls without disabilities, a 53 percent completion rate is observed while only 42 percent of girls with disabilities finish primary school. Recently, a study by UNESCO revealed wide disparities in enrolment. The largest gap was seen in Cambodia where one in every 14 children without disabilities are unable to access primary and lower secondary schools; and presenting a stark contrast, one in every two children with disabilities is out-of-school.

Children with disabilities are not a homogenous group. In many countries, school attendance rates for children with disabilities vary by disability type. Children that have difficulty remembering and children with mobility impairments have lower attendance rates than children with sight impairments. Children that have difficulty remembering and children that have difficulties with self-care are far less likely to complete primary school than children with other types of impairments. Boys with disabilities are also more likely to be excluded from education than girls with disabilities. Lower secondary and secondary school age adolescents with disabilities are far less likely to attend school than primary school children with disabilities.

17 UNESCO. (2018). Education and Disability: Analysis of Data from 49 Countries.
In EAP, segregated models of education delivery dominate where learners with disabilities are taught in special schools despite the significant progress in transitioning to more inclusive systems. This practice is rooted in many interconnected variables but understanding of and attitudes towards disability primarily push the education system in this direction. There are reports from many countries that some children with disabilities are enrolled in the formal school system where they are either 'integrated' into mainstream classrooms or taught separately in 'special classrooms' within the regular school, but essentially remain isolated from the school community.

The region continues to move towards building inclusive education systems and evidence of promising inclusive practices exist in many countries, but much remains to be done in guaranteeing equitable access and meaningful participation in education for all children.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which led to school closures across the region, is likely to increase the exclusion of children with disabilities from education and learning. A major risk exists that children with disabilities enrolled in school prior to the crisis, will not return to school or will return but with extended delay. This is because the crisis may have exacerbated the exclusion and isolation felt before the crisis. Parents of children with disabilities may also be concerned about the health risks for their children's return to school. Efforts to reopen schools may not include appropriate considerations for children with disabilities. Additionally, children with cognitive impairments and children who use learning aids and equipment that were not made available at home during school closures, are more likely to have missed out on their learning and thus fall farther behind their peers.

It is now more urgent than ever to accelerate progress towards achieving universal quality education for every child with a disability in EAP.

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2. Purpose

The Education Section of UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) commissioned a consultancy to undertake a review of the progress of countries and UNICEF programmes in the region in advancing inclusive education for children, as part of its continued commitment to enabling equitable access to and participation of all learners in high quality and inclusive education. The mapping has a particular focus on programmes targeted for children with disabilities of pre-primary and primary school age, implemented from 2015 to 2019. Specifically, the review aims to:

- review and document the nature, successes, innovative approaches, challenges, gaps and needs for technical support of Inclusive Education programmes for children with disabilities in EAP region, and
- inform the development of regional and country level strategies for advancing Inclusive Education for children with disabilities.

Geographically, the review intended to cover all UNICEF offices in the region, which includes 25 countries in East Asia and Pacific. However, UNICEF’s operational and programmatic focus allow for the availability of information in only 15 countries, which were included in the mapping: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam. The questions set out in the Terms of Reference that the mapping exercise aims to address are as follows:

1. What is the nature of the country programmes on inclusive education for children with disabilities?
2. What are the successes, challenges and gaps in current work at country and regional level?
3. What changes, if any, should be made to the Theory of Change (TOC) for Inclusive Education in the region?
4. What is the recommended roadmap for UNICEF’s programming in Inclusive Education from 2020–2030?

The review is structured by a theoretical framework that was developed for the purpose of the mapping. It conceptualises inclusive education based on a rights-based perspective and is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

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25 Originally, question 1 in the TOR focuses on UNICEF-supported government programmes. Upon discussion with the education specialists in UNICEF EAPRO, the focus of the mapping shifted to the programmes initiated by the governments. A question on UNICEF’s contribution to the achievement of the government’s goals was added in the mapping tool used to cover UNICEF assistance to the countries.
The framework consists of the following domains and dimensions:

1. **Whole Systems Approach**
   - 1.1 Comprehensive Equity Legislation
   - 1.2 Inclusive Education Law
   - 1.3 Strategic National Action Plan on IE
   - 1.4 Equitable Financing and Resource Allocation
   - 1.5 Institutional Capacity Building
   - 1.6 Awareness Raising and Community Involvement

2. **Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment**
   - 2.1 Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy
   - 2.2 Inclusive Assessment
   - 2.3 Learning Materials

3. **Supported Teachers**
   - 3.1 Pre-service Teacher Education
   - 3.2 In-service Teacher Education
   - 3.3 Professional Competency Standards for Teachers and School Leaders

4. **Learning-friendly Environment**
   - 4.1 Physical Accessibility of Learning Environment
   - 4.2 Safe and Child-Friendly Learning Environment

5. **Effective Transitions**
   - 5.1 Early Intervention and Support Services
   - 5.2 Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
   - 5.3 Transition from Early Childhood Care and Education to Primary Education

6. **Partnerships**
   - 6.1 Cross-sectoral Coordination
   - 6.2 Coordination between National and Local Education Units
   - 6.3 Participation of Civil Society / Disabled Peoples’ Organisations

7. **Data and Monitoring**
   - 7.1 Identification System
   - 7.2 Education Management Information System (EMIS)
   - 7.3 Monitoring and Evaluation System
### Status of Ratification of the UNCRC and UNCRPD in the Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Country</th>
<th>Date of CRC Ratification</th>
<th>Date of UNCRPD Ratification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>15 October 1992</td>
<td>20 December 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>02 March 1992</td>
<td>01 August 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>05 September 1990</td>
<td>30 November 2011</td>
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<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic</td>
<td>08 May 1991</td>
<td>25 September 2009</td>
</tr>
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<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>17 February 1995</td>
<td>19 July 2010</td>
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<td>Mongolia</td>
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<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>10 April 1995</td>
<td>23 September 2008 (signed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>07 July 1993</td>
<td>23 October 2008</td>
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Countries’ progress in establishing an inclusive education system for children with disabilities were assessed according to the domains in the conceptual framework and then categorised against a four-level scale that was calibrated for each domain and dimension. For example:

- **Initiating**
  - Strategy is not in place.
  - The system remains rooted in the medical model. Planning and discussions are ongoing to initiate reforms.

- **Developing**
  - Strategies for inclusion are being developed and piloted. There is a range of ongoing efforts and interventions towards full inclusion.

- **Establishing**
  - Strategies are in place and institutionalized through policies and strategic plans. Implementation is limited.

- **Championing**
  - Strategies are institutionalized and implemented at a large scale.

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26 The list only includes countries in the region that participated in this review.
28 Ibid.
3. Main Findings

1. Whole Systems Approach

General Comment No. 4 to the UNCRPD requires signatories to create an enabling environment through a whole systems approach to inclusive education where implementation is the responsibility of the whole education system; A whole systems approach entails strong national policies and systems to support implementation of those policies.

Under this domain, inclusive education initiatives in six dimensions were examined:

1.1 Comprehensive Equity Legislation
1.2 Inclusive Education Law
1.3 Strategic National Action Plan on IE
1.4 Equitable Financing and Resource Allocation
1.5 Institutional Capacity Building
1.6 Awareness Raising and Community Involvement

In general, results show that most countries reviewed have begun to make progress in establishing equity legislation and action plans that explicitly include inclusive education provisions. However, implementation rates and institutional capacity to implement remain low. Most countries are categorised as Developing (six countries) and Establishing (five) equity legislation. However, some existing legislations are of inadequate quality to comply with the requirements of the UNCRPD. Thus, some countries have started reviewing existing policies and developing legislative frameworks that establish the rights of persons with disabilities. These countries need to conduct further extensive reviews and establish or strengthen inter-sectoral coordination to ensure consistency among policies, alignment with principles of equity, and compliance with the UNCRPD.

All 15 countries reviewed, allocate government budget for financial and human resources to support education for children with disabilities. However, based on the survey and desk review, allocation of funds in the majority of countries (12) is not directed towards support for children with disabilities in an inclusive setting. These efforts and resources which support both inclusive and segregated classes as dual systems of education can perpetuate the exclusion of children with disabilities from the general education population.

In terms of institutional capacity building, countries are in different phases. Some countries are just Initiating (five countries) and creating institutions for inclusive education, some are Developing (five countries) institutional capacity and some are more advanced in Establishing (five countries) such capacity. Some countries have policies and plans in place that set out strategies to increase capacity in implementing inclusive education. For example, some countries have begun training their government officials at the national and provincial levels to use the Washington Group/UNICEF Module on Child Functioning.

Most countries reviewed have undertaken awareness-raising activities to educate the public on inclusive education, often with UNICEF support. Such initiatives aim to raise awareness on disability and inclusion and to influence positive change in attitudes and behaviours toward children with disabilities in school and society. However, many communication campaigns on inclusion in education of children with disabilities are weakened by references to segregated provisions and mixed messaging around special schools.
2. Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment

All children have the right to the same high quality, equitable inclusive curriculum.\(^{29}\) The education system should ensure that curriculum and assessment mechanisms respond to the diverse needs of all learners including children with disabilities. There should be initiatives to systematise the implementation of inclusive child-centred pedagogy according to the principles of universal quality educational design. Curricula are considered to be accessible when they provide for reasonable accommodation and assistive and adaptive technology and pedagogical tools. In this section, the review will discuss the extent to which countries are progressing in three curriculum-centred dimensions:

2.1 Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy

2.2 Inclusive Assessment

2.3 Learning Materials

The review found that most countries are still in the early phases of Developing (seven countries) inclusive curricula and using learner-centred teaching strategies; however, a few countries have established important components of inclusive curricula. According to available data, few countries (five – Cambodia, Lao PDR, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste) have established strategic action plans for inclusive curriculum reform. A few have taken steps to apply inclusive principles in their curricula and/or implement a new curriculum framework. Evidence suggests that although efforts to transform the curriculum exist in many countries, the practice of learner-centred pedagogies in the classroom remains limited. Teachers need ongoing professional development support to develop inclusive teaching methods.

UNICEF has provided technical assistance for disability-inclusive curricula in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. UNICEF’s Inclusive Education programming facilitated the provision of communication tools, assistive devices, and inclusive learning materials for children with disabilities in many (five) countries in the region.

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While countries are advancing in the domain of inclusive curricula, most countries recognise that current assessment arrangements are inflexible and unresponsive to diversity. Most countries in the region still employ national examination systems and/or national assessment systems that are based on rigid measurement criteria and tools that do not support a diverse population of learners and, instead, perpetuate a culture where children with disabilities are unable to access the assessment.

However, data suggests that some (five – Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Vanuatu) countries have begun to organise a coordinated effort to plan the review and revision of their assessment systems to make them more inclusive. Enabling environments including policy reforms will be necessary to support and sustain the development of inclusive assessment systems and provisions for accessible learning resources.

Initiatives to ensure that children with disabilities learn from one flexible curriculum alongside their peers and are evaluated based on equitable and inclusive measures, are hindered by the continued provisions of specialised programmes for children with certain disabilities. These provisions tend to promote a medical segregated approach which does not meet the requirements of GC4.

Data indicate that there are limited to no available assistive devices and inclusive learning resources in most countries reviewed in the region. Where assistive devices are available, they are limited in number and are mostly used in special schools to provide support for children with specific types of impairments such as visual impairments.
3. Supported Teachers

Teacher development is at the core of implementing inclusive education (Forlin, 2010a; Global Campaign for Education & Handicap International, 2013; Lewis & Bagree, 2013) and raising educational quality. General Comment No. 4 (GC4) to Article 24 of the UNCRPD requires governments to sufficiently train pre-service and in-service teachers and other relevant staff on core inclusive values and competencies to create inclusive learning environments. An inclusive culture should provide an accessible and supportive environment which encourages teacher development through action learning, collaboration, interaction, and problem-solving. There are three dimensions examined under this domain:

3.1 Pre-service Teacher Education
3.2 In-service Teacher Education
3.3 Professional Competency Standards for Teachers and School Leaders

Many countries in the region are undergoing extensive education reforms that involve an evaluation of their current pre-service teacher education curriculum, continuous professional development approaches, and teacher competency standards. While most of these countries have committed to improving their pre-service curriculum and in-service training programmes through the integration of inclusive approaches, gaps between teacher education and requirements of inclusive practice are still evident. Teacher education programmes in many countries still do not reflect inclusive pedagogies needed to enable future teachers to address the diverse needs of all learners.

Moreover, in-service training provisions are often ineffective. Teachers and school leaders across the region should be provided with appropriate professional development support through collaborative action learning based on reflective practice, enabling school communities to work together and share effective inclusive practices. All in-service training should be followed up by regular mentoring and/or communication with teachers. Training for non-teaching school staff lacks quality.

Data on professional standards in the region is limited. In countries with available data, there is limited information on teacher professional competency standards specifically referring to inclusion and teaching diverse learners as performance indicators. Most classroom teachers do not have access to assistance or specialised services to support them in facilitating inclusive education in the classroom.

4. Learning-friendly Environment

Governments that are state parties to the CRPD are mandated by the convention to ensure all learning environments are fully accessible to everyone without discrimination. GC4 stipulates that all learning environments must be designed to foster inclusion and guarantee equity. School facilities must be physically accessible, inclusive, and safe for all types of children.

Specifically, an inclusive classroom environment must ensure that reasonable accommodations are in place for children with disabilities. This includes not only providing accessible infrastructure, but also equipping learners with assistive devices and learning materials in accessible formats such as print in braille, tactile diagrams, and audiobooks. State parties must commit to the prompt introduction of Universal Design and provision of reasonable accommodation when necessary. In inclusive learning environments, everyone feels safe, supported, stimulated and able to express themselves, with a strong emphasis on student participation in building a positive school community. Schools must also recognise the importance of the social peer group in learning and build positive relationships, friendships and acceptance. Two dimensions are examined under this domain:

4.1 Physical Accessibility of Learning Environment
4.2 Safe and Child-Friendly Learning Environment
The reviewed showed that most EAP countries are in the Developing stage in terms of having a physically accessible learning environment. In most countries, some schools are physically accessible, however it is not the norm. This means that some efforts are being made to ensure that learning environments are accessible and safe for children with disabilities and that some reasonable accommodations are provided. For example, some countries have developed inclusive design guidelines and building standards, either subsumed in national legislations or as stand-alone policies, including provisions for disaster risk reduction and WASH facilities.

Physical accessibility and safety considerations are essential to advancing inclusive education in mainstream schools. Absence of accessibility measures can exclude children with disabilities from school completely, or if they are able to attend school, put them in danger. Also, a lack of capacity and awareness among policy makers on universal design approaches, creates a poor enabling environment for promoting change towards inclusive and accessible learning environments. Where there are existing policies and standards, implementation mechanisms are either lacking or weak.

5. Effective Transitions

Children with disabilities have the same right as their non-disabled peers to a continuous non-segregated, equitable education. Governments should ensure that accommodations and adaptations are provided to children with disabilities to ensure a continuum of services from early childhood, through primary and secondary school and on to higher education tracks.

High-quality early intervention services, early childhood development and pre-school programmes are critical pillars in ensuring an inclusive primary school experience for children with disabilities. These services should be systematically extended and accessed in an equitable manner by children with disabilities. Early childhood programmes are crucial to ensuring access to primary school for children with disabilities, helping them to learn effectively in an inclusive environment and to helping them progress through higher academic levels.

This study's scope focuses on the early years and primary school, however more research is needed on children’s access to secondary, technical and higher education. Three dimensions were studied under the domain Effective Transitions:

5.1 Early Intervention and Support Services
5.2 Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
5.3 Transition from Early Childhood Care and Education to Primary Education

Countries reviewed in the region recognise the significance of Early Childhood Intervention and Support Services but still lack a systemic approach to multi-sector involvement, multi-disciplinary assessment, and a continuum of support services covering all age ranges from birth to school age. Eight countries rated themselves in the Initiating stage while seven are in the Developing stage. Data on most countries (Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Vanuatu), while limited, indicate several initiatives in developing and implementing early childhood intervention programmes in a limited scale and variably founded on the charity and medical models of disability.

Early intervention services and early education programmes in various forms are present in almost all countries in the region although most of them are in piloting phases where impact is still limited and
viability to be scaled up remains to be seen. Examples of these are the Family Support Service Model for children with disabilities in Lao PDR\textsuperscript{30} and state-sponsored early childhood care and education services\textsuperscript{31} which UNICEF supports through systems strengthening\textsuperscript{32} in the Philippines. With the technical support of international aid organisations like UNICEF, a few countries such as Myanmar, Malaysia, and Vanuatu have engaged and capacitated local communities in hard to reach areas to bring early intervention services to more children with disabilities.

Most of the countries (13) reviewed rated themselves \textit{Developing} in disability-inclusive Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programming. With UNICEF’s continued technical support, there are ongoing reforms to strengthen and upgrade ECD and ECCE policies as newly established ECD and ECCE programmes are piloted and effective programmes scaled up. These efforts are complemented in many countries by the governments’ development of strategic plans of action to support effective transition programmes. During this stage, the participation and input of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) with strong advocacy founded on the UNCRPD and the GC4 will be invaluable in ensuring that plans and policies are aligned with international conventions.

Based on the results of the survey, the majority of the countries (10) reviewed in the region are in the Developing stage of creating sound transition plans for children with disabilities in early childhood care to primary education. Results suggest that these countries have been formulating their plans and strategies to ensure accessible and efficient transition programmes from early childhood care and education to primary education. However, supporting data in this area was extremely limited and could be an opportunity for further investigation and research. Where there is available evidence, as in Malaysia, Mongolia, and Myanmar, there are ongoing advocacy efforts to review and enhance policies and programmes on inclusive kindergarten and their transition to primary and basic education.

\section*{6. Partnerships}

The realisation of inclusive education entails a multi-sectoral commitment and accountability across government at all levels of society. The relationship between the learning environment and other parts of government, society and community must be recognised as a route towards inclusive societies (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016). This review looked at partnership between and within government sectors, civil societies, OPDs, parents, and the wider community; specifically, three dimensions were reviewed under this domain:

\begin{enumerate}
\item Cross-sectoral Coordination
\item Coordination between National and Local Education Units
\item Participation of Civil Society / Disabled Peoples’ Organisations
\end{enumerate}

Cross-sectoral and sub-national coordination remains one of the biggest challenges in implementing inclusive education in EAP. Effective and sustainable coordination and implementation mechanisms to ensure continuity and follow-through of action plans are lacking; those that exist generally have low capacity.

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There are some good examples of collaboration in the region within and between government agencies and geographic levels. Another promising trend is that government is increasingly looking to OPDs and CSOs for technical guidance. However, the limited capacity of such organisations is also a challenge thus participation of OPDs is often ad-hoc and short-term, rather than being included in all stages of programme development, implementation, and evaluation. There is not enough evidence to validate whether the inputs of OPDs and CSOs in policy dialogues are strong enough to yield positive impact nor the extent to which they require further support and capacity building to be able to manage an advisory role to governments in policy development, programme implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

7. Data and Monitoring

Quality implementation of Inclusive Education requires regular data collection, monitoring and evaluation. This requires governments to establish good identification systems, to include disability data in education management information systems, using standardised methodologies and tools based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), and to create monitoring systems for new inclusive education interventions and policies, using disability-inclusive indicators. Monitoring should involve persons with disabilities, including children and persons with intensive support requirements, involving OPDs, as well as parents or caregivers of children with disabilities, where appropriate.

In this review, practices in the following dimensions were reviewed:

7.1 Identification System
7.2 Education Management Information System (EMIS)
7.3 Monitoring and Evaluation System

The region is confronted with a huge lack of reliable data on disability and education of learners with disabilities. Across the region, there is a pressing need to enhance identification, monitoring and evaluation, as well as modernise Education Management Information Systems to produce accurate and disaggregated information on individual children with disabilities and the contextual barriers to their learning and participation. Often when data on disabilities exists in administrative data systems and EMIS systems, they are based on a medical model of classification; this is in spite of international classification standards, such as the UNCRPD definition of disability and the set of questions on functional domains for children established by the Washington Group on Disability. A medical approach to collecting data on children with disabilities is linked with issues in legislative frameworks where a medical perspective of disabilities prevails. Obtaining data on children with disabilities is indeed a challenge globally.

The lack of reliable data is closely linked to a lack of appropriate identification systems. Parents and teachers are unequipped to identify signs of disabilities and refer their children and students to appropriate screening diagnostic services. In most countries, there is limited capacity among practitioners to screen children using internationally accepted frameworks and tools.

When children with disabilities remain unseen in data they also remain invisible in education sector plans and school improvement plans. They are thus often overlooked in monitoring and evaluation processes which are linked to education sector planning and resource allocation. Recent legislative reforms in many countries, related to data and monitoring, are aiming to strengthen accountability for inclusion in order to comply with international treaties. There is little evidence to indicate that any of the countries in the region are advanced in this domain. Nonetheless, ongoing efforts to build evidence bases through multi-sectoral approaches demonstrate that countries are taking steps in the right direction.
4. Gaps & Challenges

Barriers to access inclusive and equitable quality education and interventions for children with disabilities continue to challenge governments and their partners. However, these barriers also provide opportunities to reflect and improve on current inclusive education programming. The key challenges in advancing Inclusive Education are synthesised in this section.

Negative Attitudes and Perceptions

Negative attitudes and discrimination toward children with disabilities in many layers of societies continue to hinder access to education and social services due to prevailing cultural perspectives on what it means to learn, rigid perceptions of success, and a lack of inclusive values. These negative views also persist among policy makers, which results in a lack of or weak policy provisions, segregation in schools, and non-participation in community life. Negative attitudes and perception are often caused by a lack of awareness and understanding of the rights of children with disabilities, the nature of disabilities and the principles of inclusion.

Lack of Capacity

The negative attitudes and lack of inclusive values is closely linked to generally low levels of knowledge and understanding of disability and inclusion. Moreover, this lack of awareness translates into a low capacity to design and implement national policies and programmes to advance Inclusive Education.

Findings note the lack of capacity of teachers in delivering a learner-centred curriculum one of the key factors that impede learning outcomes of children with disabilities. While there are capacity building initiatives to improve the knowledge on inclusive pedagogies and child-centred disability services, these tend to be based on a medical model of disability. In-service training appears to be predominantly delivered using outdated cascade training methods and there is little evidence of movement towards school or cluster-based models or school-based coaching and mentoring. Moreover, the content of these trainings often fails to advocate for children with disabilities to be successfully included in general education classes. Without knowledge of, and exposure to, international best practices on inclusive interventions that show evidence of successful inclusion, it can be difficult for teachers or trainers to link inclusive principles to practical teaching in classrooms.

In addition, there is little evidence emerging from the review to indicate that technical capacity is high enough across Ministries to be able to fully implement the requirements of GC4. This lack of technical know-how impedes education professionals, medical/developmental specialists, faith-based organisations and community-based rehabilitation staff from planning for and creating fully inclusive learning environments, providing enabling learning environments or ICF compliant identification systems and efficient intervention services to children with disabilities.

Inclusive values and teacher agency should be instilled and nurtured within and throughout the education system. Inclusive practices can be developed and strengthened through a whole-systems approach and collaborative action learning where the school and the community work together in reflective practice to identify and break barriers to learning. Developing inclusive leaders from the national level down to the school level and establishing champions of inclusion throughout the school system are necessary to deliver transformative change in education.

The GC4 requirement to ensure the full involvement of OPDs, civil society and faith-based organisations is often undermined by the lack of technical capacity of these actors that makes it challenging for them to provide advice and guidance to government and/or to implement community-based projects effectively. Across the region, there is a lack of support to help civil society organisations develop their capacity to provide a more strategic, technical role.
Medical Model of Disability

The majority of policies and intervention programmes for children with disabilities in EAP remain rooted in the medical model of disability. For example, state-sponsored financial assistance programmes for persons with disabilities are most often based on a government recognised list of disabilities. These lists are often not compliant with the ICF, are restrictive and do not include non-visible or hidden disabilities. When there are interventions, there is more focus on the disability of the child and less on creating an equitable enabling environment for the child to fully participate in. A fully inclusive environment should recognise the learning needs of every child and provide supports and assistive devices accordingly. Support and interventions for children with disabilities should be inclusive by design, from planning to implementation and evaluation.

To achieve this, there should be a progressive shift from a medical to a social model of disability which will provide an inclusive lens to identifying barriers and planning strategies to remove them. This paradigm shift will require political will, advocacy, building champions of inclusion at all levels, capacity building, teacher agency, collaborative learning and knowledge transfer in the community.
Lack of Reliable Data

The review indicates an absence of standardised definitions and methodologies for collecting data based on a social model of disability and a lack of corresponding screening systems aligned with the ICF. Where there is data on children with disabilities, this is often inconsistent, incomplete, and unreliable. Data based on medical approaches is unreliable and leads to weak strategic planning. The lack of evidence on the prevalence of disability affects an equitable allocation of funds and development of inclusive education programming and interventions. There is also a lack of reliable data on the specific barriers encountered by persons and children with disability, which impedes effective and responsive policy development.

EMIS systems should be able to effectively collect disaggregated data on learning progress of children identified as having disabilities based on the ICF framework. This allows the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of teacher training approaches and inclusive interventions and support which will inform future IE programming.

Institutional Barriers

There is a lack of Inclusive Education policies and legislation that are GC4 compliant and explicitly articulate the rights of children with disabilities to inclusive education. Where there are Inclusive Education (IE) policies in place, systemic implementation guidelines and strategic plans are lacking. Weak inter-agency and cross sector coordination and collaboration, and lack of cooperation among different government agencies and ministries result in fragmented development of policies and delivery of intervention services.

The prevalence of dual modes of education perpetuate the segregation and exclusion of children with disabilities. While most countries in the region have been engaging in curricular reforms, there is little evidence to indicate that curriculums and assessment systems across the region are being developed which are GC4 compliant, accessible to all children and based on principles of Universal Design.

The lack of strong policies and plans contributes to insufficient financial support from the government resulting in the limited capacity of agencies and ministries to implement capacity building programmes, policy reform, and service delivery. Government allocation for disability and education services in many countries across the region remain inadequate. This indicates that despite positive rhetoric, inclusion in education is not among these governments’ high priorities. As a result, implementation and sustainability of inclusive initiatives remain a challenge.
5. Key Recommendations

Whole Systems Approach

• Countries which have not yet ratified the CRPD should do so and commit to the protection of the rights and inclusion of children with disabilities.

• It is essential for countries to conduct a comprehensive mapping and cross-review of legislative frameworks to assess overarching principles of equity, both as a concept and a standard guideline consistently across policy documents. Evidence-informed legislation, policy and national strategic plans should explicitly set out a strategic vision and concrete actions to meet the requirement to phase out all exclusionary and discriminatory practices. Financing and resource allocation must support education provision in inclusive settings instead of perpetuating segregated models.

• Financial resources must be allocated according to equitable criteria based on the requirements of the GC4. This includes ensuring that all children with disabilities are receiving resource allocations which ensure they are accessing quality education on the same basis as other children.

• Countries must work towards strengthening capacities and developing a shared understanding of definitions of disability and values/principles in inclusive education across all levels of the system, especially among key decision makers in the government, and in line with international resources. The understanding that inclusive education is based on inclusive values should be developed at all levels of society especially policymakers through advocacy, awareness campaigns, and capacity building initiatives.

Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment

• Countries should review curriculum and work towards reforms that apply Universal Design for Learning principles to ensure that curriculum design is accessible to all children and that teachers are employing inclusive child-centred pedagogy in order to ensure flexible access. Children with disabilities can be successfully included in regular schools where this is the case.

• Not all schools may be ready to accommodate certain categories of disability, but resourcing identified regular schools within a district to include children with a particular functional limitation (e.g. providing sign language interpreters in general education classrooms for children with hearing impairment) alongside their peers is achievable even in low income settings and should be considered as a first step towards building fully inclusive systems. Establishing resource centres is being advocated by many countries as a way forward, but this is not recommended as these tend to become a form of segregated provision. They re-enforce the misguided notion that children with disabilities require a different pedagogy and/or curriculum from other children. This view is not supported by any evidence and distracts educators from examining the barriers which can be addressed in the general education classroom.
Supported Teachers

- Pre-service training courses should be reviewed and reformed to ensure that they are preparing new teachers in learner-centred teaching as well as inclusive strategies which enable the inclusion of children with disabilities.

- More effective in-service training programmes need to be developed to provide a range of support experiences for teachers to include school-based teacher development and collaborative action planning and review; inputs which reflect a needs-based analysis of teachers’ competence measured against the curriculum and inclusive criteria. This should also include whole school approaches and systems development as well as collaborative working across networks of schools, establishing communities of practice within schools but also at different levels of the education system.

- National teacher standards should be established which reflect diversity and inclusion and are linked to assessment and support tools and systems which enable teachers to be evaluated against inclusive criteria and allow them to gradually introduce inclusive approaches into their practice.

Learning-Friendly School Environment

- Creating learner-friendly school environments requires the development of inclusive policies and leaders who are able to advocate for and introduce inclusive culture, values, and practices. Inclusive education does not develop in isolation but through individuals and communities learning from each other. This must be strategically planned for and supported at policy level.

Effective Transitions

- National strategies must have a clear focus on establishing and/or improving early identification, including child functioning screening and early childhood development services. Supporting children with disabilities in their early years should be a priority for all governments as it can go a long way in preventing further marginalisation.

- The articulation of the importance of multi sector involvement in order to properly cover and implement early intervention services for all age ranges, starting from birth through school age and to lifelong learning must be strengthened at policy level, with clear definitions of roles of different government agencies involved.

- Legislation and policies should provide clear guidance on effective transition from early childhood to basic education, ensuring that all children with disabilities are supported by a multidisciplinary team of professionals from the point of identification, with access to home support, pre-school placements in inclusive settings and supported transition to basic education and beyond. The fundamental goal of effective transition is to ensure that a positive effect to the child with a disability takes place.

- Legislation should address the effective transition at later stages such as between Primary Grades, Secondary High School and Higher Education. International data indicates that children with disabilities are more vulnerable to experiencing barriers to effective transitions between different stages in education.

Partnerships

- Cross sectoral collaboration and coordination is at the heart of strong inclusive development. Inclusive education systems cannot be developed by Ministries of Education alone. Policy and legislation need to be developed through multi-disciplinary coordination, particularly between health, social welfare, and education.

- This in turn should enable partnership working with civil society and OPDs. However, it is also often the case that OPDs and civil society also need support and capacity building as international evidence demonstrates that these organisations can sometimes be unaware of the requirements of the UNCRPD and GC4. Further support and capacity building to these sectors are required to be able to manage an advisory role to governments in policy developments.
Teacher associations, student associations, federations and OPDs, school boards, parent-teacher associations, and other functioning school support groups, both formal and informal, need to be supported to increase their understanding and knowledge of disability. Involvement of parents/caregivers and the community must be viewed as assets with resources and strengths to contribute. The relationship between the learning environment and the wider community must be recognised as a route towards inclusive societies.

Data and Monitoring

- The lack of comprehensive, reliable, disaggregated data affects policies and programming on inclusive education. As such, a review of existing identification systems, as well as M&E systems is strongly recommended.
- The ICF should be utilised as the main tool for identifying and assessing disability. This will then lead to the restructuring of all forms of data collection and the development of new M&E systems.
- People with disabilities and OPDs should be involved in all aspects of data collection and monitoring.
6. THE WAY FORWARD: A ROADMAP FOR ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN EAP

REGIONAL THEORY OF CHANGE TOWARDS DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Based on the stock taking, challenges and recommendations presented in Part 1 of this document, the UNICEF Regional Office for EAP prepared a roadmap or way forward to guide countries on concrete actions that can be taken to advance disability inclusive education in EAP. The roadmap is anchored by the Theory of Change shown in Figure 3 that is rooted in UNICEF’s Global Strategic Plan and the Global Education Strategy.

FIGURE 3. Theory of Change

- **GOAL**: SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all
- **UNICEF Global Goal Area 2**: Every Child Learns
  - Girls and boys, in particular the most marginalized and those affected by humanitarian situations, are provided with inclusive and equitable quality education and learning opportunities
- **UNICEF Global Goal Area 5**: Every child has an equitable chance in life
  - Girls and boys are provided with an equitable chance in life
- **STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**
  - Children with disabilities have increased access to inclusive and equitable educational opportunities in safe learning environments
  - Children with disabilities achieve higher educational and developmental outcomes
- **CHANGE STRATEGIES**
  - **SYSTEM STRENGTHENING**
    - 1.1 Policy review and reform
    - 1.2 Improve identification, data collection and monitoring systems
    - 1.3 Evidence-based strategic planning and equitable financing
    - 1.4 Institutional capacity development
    - 1.5 Strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration
  - **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**
    - 2.1 Early identification, intervention and support services
    - 2.2 Teacher professional development and ongoing support
    - 2.3 Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment systems reforms
    - 2.4 Inclusive learning environments
    - 2.5 Quality and inclusive learning materials
  - **COMMUNICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT**
    - 3.1 Strategic planning for communication and advocacy
    - 3.2 Awareness raising and behavioural change
  - **PARTNERSHIPS**
    - 4.1 Government’s commitment to international frameworks on IE
    - 4.2 Partnerships and cooperation
    - 4.3 Participation of DPOs and children with disabilities
    - 4.4 Evidence generation and use

CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

- Humanitarian Action
- Gender Equality
The Roadmap presented below in Figure 4 operationalises the Theory of Change and aims to set out concrete strategies to drive disability-inclusive education forward. Developed in the context of General Comment No. 4 to Article 24 of the UNCRPD and the findings of the regional mapping, the roadmap outlines recommendations for the region with emphasis on key priority areas crucial in achieving optimum results for children with disabilities. The roadmap, along with the theoretical framework used in this mapping can serve as a guidepost for UNICEF, Ministries of Education and their partners to move from one level of progress to the next, in identified domains of inclusion. Identified action steps and corresponding timeline should be viewed as suggestions rather than absolute recommendations. Considering economic and social diversity across the region, activities identified should be adapted and adjusted to local country contexts.

**FIGURE 4. Roadmap for advancing Inclusive Education for children with disabilities in EAP**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANGE STRATEGY</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1 Policy review and reform</strong></td>
<td>Equity Legislation established, aligned with the UNCRPD outlining clear inter-ministerial responsibilities to enable equitable inclusion of children with disabilities in all aspects of society</td>
<td>Consultation with relevant stakeholders especially persons with disabilities</td>
<td>No. of countries that have established equity law compliant with the UNCRPD</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021 Medium-term 2022–2025 Long-term 2026–2030</td>
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<td>Review of existing national policies related to provision of equitable services for persons with disabilities and international best practices in equity legislations</td>
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<td>Capacity building on equity and inclusion for key decision makers and policies</td>
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<td>Drafting of equity legislation</td>
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<td><strong>1.0 SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING</strong></td>
<td>National inclusive education law enacted, with explicit reference to children with disabilities educated in mainstream settings and moves towards removing segregated models of provision and mandates the establishment of well-resourced schools with inclusive cultures; includes implementation plan and costing</td>
<td>Consultation with relevant stakeholders, especially OPDs</td>
<td>No. of countries that have enacted a law on inclusive education which articulates education for children with disabilities in mainstream settings established</td>
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<td>Mapping of existing education policies</td>
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<td>Drafting of inclusive education law</td>
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<td>CHANGE STRATEGY</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Policy review and reform (continue)</td>
<td>Financing plans for Inclusive Education, that provide specific measures for Inclusive Schools</td>
<td>Consultation with stakeholders to establish equitable financial indicators and processes which can be integrated into criteria for inclusive schools (these should include specific requirements for schools to receive adequate funding and establishment of requirements for schools and local authorities to ensure the provision of specific support related to different functional difficulties – e.g. visual, hearing, physical, etc)</td>
<td>No. of countries which have established clear guidelines setting out the requirements for transparent equitable financing of inclusive provision for children and schools.</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021 Medium-term 2022–2025 Long-term 2026–2030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies relevant to education for children with disabilities reviewed and amended</td>
<td>Mapping of policies related to children with disabilities</td>
<td>No. of countries that conducted a review of policies related to children with disabilities No. of policies amended and aligned with international human rights frameworks</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Improve data collection and monitoring systems</td>
<td>National identification, data collection and monitoring systems are established/updated in accordance to the ICF</td>
<td>Review of the national identification, data collection, and monitoring systems Reform of the systems to align with the ICF and UNCRPD Capacity building of relevant personnel in key units of the government and OPDs on the national identification, data collection and monitoring system</td>
<td>Review and revision in target EAP countries is participated by key sectors of the government and OPDs No. of countries with reformed national identification and data collection systems that are ICF and UNCRPD compliant and aligned to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda Number of stakeholders trained in target countries</td>
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### 1.0 SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

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| **1.3 Evidence-based strategic planning and equitable financing**                | Baseline study on children with disabilities with emphasis on provision and quality of educational opportunities, including barriers to education and learning, conducted  | Conduct baseline study in partnership with key government offices (i.e. education, health, social protection)                         | No. of countries that have conducted a national baseline study  
National baseline study in target countries includes voices of children with disabilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Short-term: 2020–2021  
Medium-term: 2022–2025  
Long-term: 2026–2030                                                                 |
|                                                                                |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                      | Will depend on respective planning periods of governments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                         |
|                                                                                | Evidence-informed education sector plans with reference to disability-inclusive education developed | Capacity building for government officials on disability-inclusive planning  
Drafting of education sector plans                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | No. of countries with education sector plans which include inclusive education as a national priority  
Funding for inclusive education secured in national sector plans in target countries                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                         |
| **1.4 Institutional capacity building**                                         | Capacity building for key government officials and OPDs on essential principles contained in human rights legislation with focus on the CRC, UNCRPD General Comment #4, ICF and international best practices on inclusion | Training Needs Analysis of key policy makers and government officials/OPDs  
Design and Implementation of a series of workshops with the goal of capacitating policy makers/OPDs and government officials in inclusive leadership and on their role in protecting the rights of children with disabilities to education on an equal basis with others | Key government officials, especially at the top level, have an improved understanding of inclusive education from rights-based perspectives in target countries  
Number of policy makers trained in target countries  
Number of government officials trained in target countries  
Number of OPD representatives trained in target countries                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Short-term: 2020–2021  
Medium-term: 2022–2025  
Long-term: 2026–2030                                                                 |
| **1.5 Strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration for inclusive education established** | System for inter-sectoral collaboration for inclusive education established                          | Mapping of cross-sector linkages  
Establish an inter-ministerial committee for inclusive education with systems, processes and clear delineation of functions oriented towards holistic development of children with disabilities | Inter-ministerial committee for inclusive education established in target countries  
Mechanism for collaboration among different sectors in target countries (i.e. education, health, child protection, social protection) is in place and sets out responsibilities relating to education for children with disabilities | Short-term: 2020–2021  
Medium-term: 2022–2025  
Long-term: 2026–2030                                                                 |
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<td>1.0 SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.5 Strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration (continue)</td>
<td>Training needs analysis of the committee for Inclusive Education in inclusive education, essential components of human rights legislation, CRC, ICF, and UNCRPD in relation to their role</td>
<td>Number of government officials trained in target countries</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021</td>
<td>Medium-term 2022–2025</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Capacity building of Committee for Inclusive Education on inclusive education and their role in leading inter-sector collaboration towards the holistic development of children with disabilities</td>
<td>Inter-ministerial committee’s vision and target outcomes and outputs articulated by target countries</td>
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<td>Intersectoral planning workshop to create joint vision and to articulate inter-sectoral target outcomes and outputs</td>
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<td>Mechanism for coordination between national and local education government units established</td>
<td>Review of existing vertical coordination mechanisms between national and local education authorities, down to the school level</td>
<td>Vertical coordination improved in target countries</td>
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### 2.0 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

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<tr>
<td>2.1 Early identification, intervention and support services</td>
<td>Early identification, intervention systems and support services for children with disabilities delivered through multi-disciplinary approaches</td>
<td>Review and reform of assessment framework and procedures for early identification and referrals against the ICF and based on clear standards for service delivery</td>
<td>Assessment and referral processes are ICF and UNCRPD compliant in target countries</td>
<td><strong>Short-term</strong> 2020–2021 <strong>Medium-term</strong> 2022–2025 <strong>Long-term</strong> 2026–2030</td>
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<td>Key ministry officials and staff are capacitated to provide holistic assessment and community-based services for children with disabilities</td>
<td>Multi-disciplinary support services for children with disabilities are established and providing support to children with disabilities in non-segregated inclusive schools in target countries</td>
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<td>Monitoring early identification and intervention systems such that there are internal and external quality assurance measures to ensure that systems and practices are UNCRPD compliant and aligned to the ICF Framework</td>
<td>Number of government officials trained in target countries</td>
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<td>Mechanism for regular monitoring established in target countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Teacher professional development and ongoing support</td>
<td>Pre-service curriculum is reviewed and aligned with the requirements of the UNCRPD</td>
<td>Review and reform of pre-service teacher education curriculum, including special education, to include inclusive education principles, starting with pilot teacher training institutions</td>
<td>Pre-service curriculum in identified programmes in pilot teacher training institutions reviewed</td>
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<td>CHANGE STRATEGY</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Teacher professional development and ongoing support (continue)</td>
<td>Integration of inclusive education principles in pre-service curricula in teacher training institutions</td>
<td>No. of pre-service programmes/courses wherein the inclusive education principles/modules are embedded</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021</td>
<td>Medium-term 2022–2025</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Capacity building of teacher educators in the new pre-service curriculum</td>
<td>Number of teacher educators trained</td>
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<td>Implementation of the revised pre-service curriculum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In-service training curricula includes key principles of inclusive education</td>
<td>No. of governments that have adopted an inclusive in-service training curricula</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop teacher development programmes focused on key principles in inclusive education, reflective practice and collaboration and, learner-centred teaching approaches</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Baseline study on current school-based in-service professional development practices and review of international best practices</td>
<td>No. of countries that conducted baseline study</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Consultation workshops with stakeholders</td>
<td>No. of countries that formulated a policy on school-based teacher professional development in consultation with relevant stakeholders especially teachers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Formulation of policy on school-based teacher development</td>
<td>Number of pilot schools implementing school-based approach to teacher development in target countries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Implement school-based teacher professional development activities to support teachers develop inclusive classroom strategies with ongoing support through peer learning, coaching and mentoring</td>
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## 2.0 Capacity Development

<table>
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<th>Change Strategy</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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</table>
| 2.2 Teacher professional development and ongoing support (continue) | Development of professional standards for teachers and education leaders to include focus on disability and inclusive education | Capacity building for professional standards developers and reviewers on IE, UDL and UNCRPD to ensure professional standards include focus on disability and inclusion  
Review of current standards and research on international best practice on teacher standards and school leadership standards and inclusion  
Development and finalisation of teacher standards and school leaders professional standards including support tools such as self-assessment, classroom observation and performance management tools and processes | Capacity building for standards reviewers and developers conducted in target countries  
No. of personnel trained  
Increased understanding of inclusive principles among standards developers  
Review of curriculum current standards and research on best practices conducted  
Teacher professional standards developed  
Teacher professional standards include capacity for foundational skills in building an inclusive school community and learner-centred pedagogy aligned to the UDL and UNCRPD  
School leader’s professional standards developed  
School leader’s standards reflect school leader’s capacity to support teachers’ knowledge, attitudes and practices for inclusion through the effective implementation of systems for school-based professional development such as mentoring and coaching, instructional supervision, and communities of practice | Short-term 2020–2021  
Medium-term 2022–2025  
Long-term 2026–2030 |
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<th>CHANGE STRATEGY</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.3 Curriculum and assessment systems reforms</td>
<td>National curriculum, assessment procedures are reviewed and reformed following the principles of child-centred teaching approaches, Universal Design for Learning and the CRPD</td>
<td>Strengthen the capacity of government units responsible for the development of national curriculum and assessment systems and creation of instructional materials on inclusive education and universal design for learning</td>
<td>Number of government officials trained in target countries</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021</td>
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<td>Medium-term 2022–2025</td>
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<td>Long-term 2026–2030</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4 Inclusive learning environments</td>
<td>Learning environments and infrastructures are adapted to ensure equitable access for children with disabilities</td>
<td>Development of guidelines and assessment tools for adapting learning environments and infrastructures in alignment to UNCRPD Assessment of learning environments and infrastructures integrated into school improvement planning processes</td>
<td>Guidelines and assessment tools developed in target countries Number of schools assessed in target countries Assessment process integrated into school improvement planning processes in target countries Learning environments and infrastructures in schools adapted to ensure equitable access and participation in target countries Number of personnel and OPD representatives trained in target countries</td>
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<td>CHANGE STRATEGY</td>
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<td>2.4 Inclusive learning environments</td>
<td>National policy setting infrastructure standards aligned with universal design established</td>
<td>Capacity building of key government officials, including education, health and social protection sectors on universal design</td>
<td>National policy developed in target countries</td>
<td>SHORT-TERM 2020–2021</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-sectoral review of policies related to accessibility of infrastructures and formulation of recommendations for policy development</td>
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<td>2.5 Quality and inclusive learning materials</td>
<td>Learning materials which are inclusive following the principles of UDL and fit the needs of a wide range of learners are available</td>
<td>Review of teaching and learning materials in primary level</td>
<td>Teaching and learning materials, including textbooks include positive references to children with disabilities and aligned with UDL in target countries</td>
<td>SHORT-TERM 2020–2021</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adaptation and revision of teaching and learning materials to reflect positive references to children with disabilities</td>
<td>Number of learning materials reviewed in target countries</td>
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<td>Provision of assistive devices, including innovations and digital platforms</td>
<td>Number of learning materials revised and made available nationwide in target countries</td>
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<td>Number of assistive devices provided in regular and special schools in target countries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>National guidelines and assessment tools for adapting learning environments and infrastructures developed, based on UDL</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop national guidelines and assessment tools for adapting learning environments and infrastructures based on universal design and the CRPD to ensure equitable access to buildings, facilities, resources and services. Guidelines should mandate the integration of assessment of learning environments and infrastructures into school improvement planning process</td>
<td>Number of countries that developed and implemented national guidelines aligned with UDL</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 2.0 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANGE STRATEGY</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Developing inclusive schools and communities</td>
<td>Well-resourced schools with inclusive cultures and inclusively aware communities developed</td>
<td>Support the development of inclusive schools which are adequately resourced to meet the needs of diverse learners and able to cater to the most prevalent disabilities</td>
<td>Number of pilot schools supported through a phased approach in target countries</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021  Medium-term 2022–2025  Long-term 2026–2030</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.0 COMMUNICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANGE STRATEGY</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Strategic planning for communication and advocacy</td>
<td>Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Study towards children with disabilities conducted, including a review of international best practices on communication for social change</td>
<td>Conduct of KAP study towards children with disabilities and inclusive education</td>
<td>Number of countries that have conducted a KAP Study on children with disabilities</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021  Medium-term 2022–2025  Long-term 2026–2030</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Communications for Social Change strategic plan developed through multi-sectoral cooperation</td>
<td>Development of national Communications for Social Change strategic plan utilizing the findings of the KAP study Implementation of communication for social change strategic plan and development of campaign materials</td>
<td>Strategic communication plan has clear outcomes and outputs and the content/strategies identified adhere to the UNCRPD, ICF, and UDL principles in target countries OPDs are consulted and key sectors are represented in the in the planning process and implementation in target countries Content of advocacy and campaign materials reflect UNCRPD, ICF and UDL principles in target countries Reach of advocacy campaigns in target countries</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 3.0 COMMUNICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Awareness raising and behavioural change</td>
<td>Awareness raising programmes to tackle stigma and promote positive attitudes towards disability and IE are implemented in accordance to the strategic plan</td>
<td>Conduct of awareness raising programmes promoting clear messages on the social model definition of disability and the rights of children with disabilities to education</td>
<td>Number of advocacy programmes implemented in target countries</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging the wider school community in creating inclusive school cultures</td>
<td>Reach of awareness raising programmes in target countries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Increased uptake and demand for inclusive, quality education in target countries</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive shifts towards children with disabilities and inclusive education observed in target countries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Number of schools engaging active community participation in the implementation of inclusive education in target countries</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 4.0 PARTNERSHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Government’s commitment to international frameworks on IE</td>
<td>Ratification of the UNCRPD and UNCRC in EAP countries that are yet to commit to key international frameworks on IE</td>
<td>Ratification of the UNCRPD</td>
<td>27 countries in the EAP region have ratified the UNCRPD</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ratification of the UNCRC</td>
<td>27 countries in the EAP region have ratified the UNCRC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Partnerships and cooperation</td>
<td>Regional technical working group on IE organised</td>
<td>Establishment of regional technical working group on IE</td>
<td>Asia Pacific regional working group established</td>
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<td>Increased sharing of evidence bases, lessons learned among countries in the region</td>
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<td>Partnerships forged and strengthened with key development organisations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stakeholders analysis to identify existing partners and opportunities for partnerships conducted</td>
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<td>Increase in number of partnerships with key development organisations in the field of IE</td>
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</table>
## 4.0 PARTNERSHIPS

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<tr>
<td>4.3 Participation of OPDs and children with disabilities</td>
<td>Increased engagement of OPDs and children with disabilities in policies and programmes related to disability inclusive education</td>
<td>Strategic planning for increasing participation of OPDs and children with disabilities</td>
<td>Strategic plans/country programme documents include strategies for involving OPDs and children with disabilities in policy development and programme design and implementation</td>
<td>Short-term 2020–2021, Medium-term 2022–2025, Long-term 2026–2030</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capacity building of OPDs on inclusion supported</td>
<td>Processes at the subnational and national level for involving children with disabilities established in target countries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mechanism that ensures voices of children with disabilities influence all programming established</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4 Evidence generation and use</td>
<td>Researches on children with disabilities and the barriers they face in accessing education conducted</td>
<td>Stock taking of existing researches on disability-inclusive education and identification of research gaps</td>
<td>Percent of programme funds allocated to evidence generation on disability-inclusive education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct of researches on identified priority research agenda</td>
<td>No. of countries that have conducted researches on identified research gaps</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of evidence bases in policy development and sector planning</td>
<td>Number of countries that utilised evidence generated from UNICEF-supported researches/studies in policy development and sector planning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>