Inclusive Schools & Community Support Programmes

REPORT

1998
PHASE TWO
2001

UNESCO

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Foreword

UNESCO's work on inclusive education is concerned with providing access and quality in basic education with a particular focus on populations of children and young people who are excluded or marginalized by a variety of factors. They either do not have any access to services at all, or the services provided fall short from facilitating participation in learning. Moreover, they can be marginalized within the education system and thus eventually excluded.

As a follow-up to the World Conference on Special Needs Education (Salamanca, Spain 1994), UNESCO launched a project to support action and disseminate information on small-scale innovations at the national, provincial and local level, promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities and learning difficulties in regular schools.

In the first Phase of the project (1996-97), participating countries could choose the exact nature of their activity from a defined list of target areas. In the Phase Two (1998-2001), described in this report, most of the country projects involved working with pilot schools, sensitization and capacity development, a few projects also addressed specific questions such as deaf education or developing training materials. International networking among countries in different sub-regions and publications, based on grassroots experience, were additional outcomes.

In the course of the implementation, the project has worked increasingly to promote the wider concept of inclusion, primarily concerned with access to education, including the curriculum, participation and the quality of education. Inclusive education is thus seen as a means to achieve education for all where 'special needs' and barriers to learning are understood to be a result of the interaction between the learner and his/her environment.

This report reveals that when significant changes are being introduced, involving the adoption of new ways of thinking and different ways of operating in educational settings, this is a process rather than an event. A one-two year time-span for introducing complex new approaches and learning new ways of working is just an introduction, and the impact of the work can be evaluated only after some time. In order to fully understand the nature of a new approach and to become proficient in its use, people are likely to have gone through a period of trial and error, possible confusion, difficulty and occasional elation. Gradually the process leads to feelings of greater confidence and personal acceptance. In time the practice and its principles eventually become their own, linked to, and integrated with, other aspects of their thinking and practice.

'Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes' Phase Two has been supported by Denmark, Finland and Norway. UNESCO is proud of this co-operation and invites other partners to join in.

John Daniel
Assistant Director-General for Education

INTRODUCTION

The Context

Fundamental and complex change in education is a lengthy and developmental process. The path is not straight and the journey takes time to accomplish. The project *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes* has its genesis in the extensive collaborative work of the former Section for Special Needs Education at UNESCO with various partners in the early to mid 1990s, which sought to seize and give leadership and direction to fundamental changes in the way in which education was perceived, while at the same time seizing the opportunity afforded by these changes to assist countries in achieving education for all (EFA). Throughout that time, a major preoccupation had been how to fruitfully combine the previous and extensive work on special educational needs with the overall commitment to EFA, as well as to take account of the changing concept of the target groups and the provision understood by the term 'children with special needs'. The period saw a mounting debate about the usefulness and continued viability of the then dominant paradigm of two separate and unequal systems of education for two perceived groups of learners; 'regular' and 'special', as well as, in its later stages, the emergence of the concept of 'inclusive education'.

That separation was being successively and increasingly challenged, in both industrialized and developing countries. The cleavage was increasingly recognized as one of the major reasons for the continued exclusion of large numbers of learners from both systems. There was, thus, rising concern at the contribution, which this dichotomy appeared to make to a debilitating fragmentation in the implementation of policies for education for all.

These developments reflected and contributed to a revised perception of EFA, which had developed and evolved conceptually during the 1990s, but was given a particular impetus by the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education and the later preparations for the Dakar World Education Forum of April 2000. The essence of this shift in paradigm was grasped by the Salamanca Framework for Action, when it stated, "The guiding principle that informs this Framework is that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled

1. World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994), *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education.* Paris: UNESCO.

2. The basic principles, which formed the conceptual framework for the commencement of the work, were: the development of a more "child-centred" concept of primary education; the improvement of the quality of primary education, including through improvements in professional training; the provision of a more flexible and responsive primary schooling in its organisation, processes and content; more shared community responsibility for the provision of primary education; recognition of the wide diversity of needs and patterns of development of primary school children, demanding a wider and more flexible range of appropriate responses; and, commitment to a developmental, intersectoral and holistic approach to the education and care of primary school children.

and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups..." (Para. 3). The development of inclusive schools (is) the most effective means for achieving education for all...[1]

Thus, while the concept of inclusive education grew in the early 1990s out of concerns about the exclusion of disabled learners from education and the segregation of all such learners into special education centres separate from mainstream schools, inclusive education now had begun to embrace the participation of all learners who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion, if at all possible, in the cultures, curricula and communities of local learning centres. This change in the human context and the social and intellectual process within which the project was nurtured and brought to maturity has had considerable importance for the process and the outcomes of this joint enterprise with donors and participating countries. For these reasons, it is important to look at the context in which it was generated.

The *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes* project drew on the precursor work and thinking, outlined above. Its hypothesis was that education for all could not be achieved without the inclusion of millions of children who were partially or totally excluded from education in many countries on the basis of both impairments and other personal, social and economic disadvantages. This new definition also embraced those enrolling in schools, sometimes the majority, who were dropping out before completing their primary education. In response to this need, the project was intended to draw on documentary research, field visits, workshops and case studies of a cross section of countries worldwide in order to analyse and describe the state of the art in responding positively and creatively to challenge of educational exclusion and to project forward policies and operational practices, including financing strategies.

The Global Project: Phase One

In this way, the guiding framework for the launch of the collaborative work of the project was the internationally accepted paradigm, derived from the seven principles expressed by the Jomtien Conference in the action plan for implementing EFA[2]. But the actual spur to the launch of Phase One of the project *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes* was the need for a follow-up to the World Conference on Special Needs Education, held in Salamanca Spain in 1994, which specifically mandated UNESCO, inter alia, to mobilize funds for an expanded programme for inclusive schools and community support

3. *World Conference on Special Needs Education, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education.* Paris: UNESCO, 1994, Para. 4.

4. The Salamanca Framework for Action, Article 7.

programmes to enable the launching of pilot projects to illustrate new approaches and to develop appropriate indicators[3].

The Salamanca Statement reaffirmed education as an entitlement for all rather than a privilege for some. The starting point was that it is preferable for personal, social and economic reasons to educate all children in mainstream schools and regular programmes. "The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, regardless of any differences or difficulties they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students..."[4].
The aim was to mobilize and focus the expertise previously associated with increasing the participation of learners with physical or intellectual impairments to furnish the human and material resources for the inclusion and quality participation of all learners.

The global project has been supported by five donor agencies; DANIDA (Phases I and II), Finland (Phase II), Norway (Phases I and II), SIDA (Phase I), and Portugal (Phase I). However, the co-operation with the donors has not been only financial. During the course of the project, there has been an increasing co-operation also in the conceptual and practical development of inclusive education, which has enriched

thinking both at UNESCO and in the donor agencies.

Phase One of the project, which was implemented in 1996 and 1997, included eighteen countries; Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, China, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Lao Peoples republic, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Palestine Autonomous Territories, Sao Tome and Principe, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.
Participation in the project gave countries experience in developing inclusive education and assisted them in piloting new approaches to addressing diverse needs within a single continuum of provision, human resource development and the identification and demonstration of new practice for possible wider dissemination.

The project sought to identify, support and disseminate information on small scale innovations at national level and to serve as a catalyst for countries wishing to carry out initiatives to develop more inclusive schools. Participants could choose the exact nature of their activity from a defined list of target areas within the framework of inclusive schooling. The results aimed for were:

a) Capacity development;

b) Pilot projects with integral dissemination strategies;

c) Upstream work to incorporate the results into national planning; and,

d) Networking among and beyond the participating countries.

Within a projected life-span of six years for the UNESCO supported project as a whole, individual country programmes were envisaged to have a life of two years. Specific requirements were laid on those countries wishing to participate, including:

a) The preparation of a clear statement of the sustainability of the proposal;

b) The appointment of a national co-ordinator;

c) The convocation of a task force;

d) A regular reporting and evaluation regimen; and,

e) Clear means for the dissemination of results and findings.

In both phases, the overall aim was to encourage wider access to schools and quality education for children, youth and adults with 'special educational needs', with the objective of promoting their inclusion in regular educational structures. As the project has developed, it has worked increasingly to promote the wider concept of inclusion, primarily concerned with access to education, including the curriculum, participation and the quality of education. Inclusive education is thus seen as a means to achieve education for all, where 'special needs' and barriers to learning

are understood to be the result of the interaction between the learner and his/her environment.

The Global Project: Phase Two

By the time the preliminary work for Phase Two of the *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes project* began towards the end of 1997, it had been fundamentally influenced by this transformation in thinking about 'special needs', inclusion and EFA, together with the experience and feedback from the ongoing work on Phase One. It was against this developmental background that the process of preparation took place.

Much individual and team work had taken place during the intervening period, regional and international networks of contacts, information exchange and collaboration had begun to stretch across the world, many interim documents had been prepared, many experts consulted and material evaluated. All of these activities contributed to the final platform for the launch of the second phase of the project. Phase Two was launched in 1998 and covered twelve countries; Cameroon, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ghana, India, Madagascar, Mauritius, Nicaragua, Paraguay, South Africa, Yemen and Vietnam.

While most of the country projects involved working with pilot schools, sensitization and capacity development, a few projects addressed specific questions, such as early childhood education, deaf education, and the translation and testing of materials. International networking among countries in different sub regions and publications, based on grass-roots experience, were additional aims. In some cases also, the approach to capacity development was achieved through the training of teams at national level. In some countries there are now resource persons who have a solid experience of inclusive education and can be called upon to undertake training activities.

Within Phase Two a greater emphasis was placed on the sharing of experiences and the creation of networks between the country projects, with some of the personnel involved in Phase One being called upon to provide training in Phase Two. To strengthen this process, two sub-regional workshops were organized; one for English-speaking countries in February/March 1999 in Kampala (supported by Finnish funds), and the other for French-speaking countries in November/December 1999 in Bamako, Mali (supported by Norwegian funds).

Phase Two of the collaborative project between UNESCO and member countries has extended, deepened and developed the gains of the first phase. Phase One of the project, generated wide interest in the international education development community – so much so that

requests to participate in the programme by a greater number of countries were quickly matched with support from donors. This report seeks to share those gains with a wider audience.

For the purposes of Phase Two, project elaboration was conducted as follows:

- Selected countries were invited to submit proposals and, as in Phase One, countries were selected based on a commitment to inclusive education;

- Proposals were reviewed by UNESCO in collaboration with Dr Miriam Skjorten of the University of Oslo, who was designated as the representative of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In some cases, there was an opportunity to discuss and review proposals directly with the focal point of the respective countries; and,

- A contract was signed with each country for the implementation of the identified activities.

In four of the countries, Cameroon, Egypt, India and Mauritius, the projects were co-ordinated by NGOs, two of which were national parents' associations. Other projects were implemented by the Ministry of Education.

Implementation commenced towards the end of 1998. A variety of technical assistance was afforded to all projects, such as consultant services, training workshops, documents/literature and regular feedback and monitoring from UNESCO Headquarters and field units.

Project teams received evaluation guidelines to help them with monitoring, recording, reviewing and evaluation developments throughout implementation. Countries were asked to record information on actual developments and changes which took place at the conceptual and policy levels, within administrative structures and at the school and/or community levels, for example in classroom practice and collaboration among teachers and parents. They were encouraged to keep records of meetings and training activities, which would be of assistance in writing the final report[5].

5. UNESCO (March 1999), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Interim Report.* Paris: p.3.

Further Developments

Even as the preparation for Phase Two of the global project was proceeding, further developments were taking place, which would reinforce its crucial importance in the achievement of EFA:

In April, 1998, a meeting of experts was called at UNESCO. Several of the participants in that meeting had already worked together previously over a period of some years on a number of endeavours.

A discussion document 'From Special Needs Education to Education for All', prepared by that group, and presented to the International Consultative Forum on Education for All, underlined the limitations of the 'special needs agenda' and the need to put inclusion into a 'transformative, community based and human rights agenda', embracing all children within a single institutional and curricular system, fully responsive to the diversity of all learners' needs and capacities.

In April 2000, the Dakar World Education Forum clearly identified inclusive education as one of the main strategies to address the issue of marginalisation and exclusion.

As a consequence of this developmental work, a draft conceptual paper for the UNESCO education sector was prepared in mid 2001, which included a central acceptance that current strategies and programmes have been largely insufficient or inappropriate with regard to the needs of children and youth who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion and reiterated the human right to inclusive education for all learners. Inclusion was seen as the fundamental philosophy throughout UNESCO's programme and the guiding principle for the development work with governments towards education for all[6].

6. UNESCO (2001), *Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education: A challenge and a Vision* (Draft Conceptual Paper for the education sector). Paris: UNESCO, p.22.

Dominican
Republic

Nicaragua

Ghana

Paraguay

COUNTRY EXPERIENCES 2

Egypt

Yemen

India

Vietnam

Cameroon

Madagascar

Mauritius

Cameroon

Background

Although neither in the structure and functioning of the Ministry of Education nor in the basic educational legislation in Cameroon is there any discrimination against particular groups of learners, such as children with disabilities, in practice such discrimination exists. Responsibility for the provision of education is split between the Ministry of National Education, which has responsibility for the regular schools, on the one hand, and the Ministry of Social Affairs, on the other, which has responsibility for special education. Government perspectives on this issue aim at the equalization of opportunity as a master principle in the training of educational personnel at the same time as advocacy for inclusive school develops and a revised legislative and regulatory framework is being produced[7].

Aims and Objectives

The major aim of this project was the development of human resources to facilitate the process of inclusion in line with Article 40 of the Salamanca Framework. The objectives were described as:

• A change in discriminatory attitudes;

• The introduction of a child-centred pedagogy, capable of educating all children; and,

• the creation of communities which are more receptive, just and inclusive.

The expected outcomes were:

• A greater awareness of decision-makers of the need for inclusive education;

• Training of teachers for inclusive schools in Yaounde; and,

• The development of strategies for the diffusion of information about the inclusive approach throughout Cameroon.

The target groups were staff in the two Ministries, teachers, parents, the community and those with impairments[8].

The Organization and Process of the Project

The implementation of the Cameroon project was placed by the Ministry of Education in the hands of an NGO, The Association of Parents and Friends of Mentally Handicapped Children (APEHM), which has a particular aim of fighting marginalization and promoting the inclusion of children with 'special needs' in regular classrooms.

In the start-up phase of the project sensitization exercises took place through direct contacts with the schools in the capital city of Yaounde, with families of both impaired and non-impaired children, the utilization of the media, followed by a reflection workshop which included parents, teachers from regular schools and the representatives of the Ministries.

The original proposal envisaged four phases of implementation, commencing with a project launch workshop with two UNESCO consultants in February 1998, followed by sensitization and training workshops and enrolling children with disabilities into regular schools. It was intended that there would be follow-up activities, including training.

9. APEHM (1 December 1997), *Proposition de Projet: Écoles intégratrices et programmes de soutien communautaires.* Yaounde: p.4.

10. UNESCO (May 1999), Back to Office Report on a Mission to Yaounde 11-18 April 1999, p.4.

Although the original intention had been to undertake activities in only four schools, this was later expanded to nine schools[9]. These schools represented a range of facilities and conditions, including two private schools and two special schools, now admitting children other than those with special needs. Class sizes ranged from 10 to 80 learners in classrooms[10].

The first training workshop for teachers and head teachers was held in October 1998 for 65 participants. This was followed by the diffusion of the results, the distribution of materials, monthly meetings, organized by APEHM and the organization of an innovatory system of training of regular teachers by special teachers through locating special educators in pilot regular schools for a period of two months. Progressively, the project, from being seen as an additional burden on teachers, came to be regarded as a means of facilitating the educational endeavour. Thus, learners who had previously been rejected from learning centres were re-enrolled in pilot schools in Yaounde. Parallel with these efforts at integration, meetings for the exchange of views were organized by APEHM and, on some occasions these included parents.

A second workshop of reflection was organized for 44 participants, parents, teachers and representatives of the two Ministries in November 1998.
It sought to locate the inclusive school in the context of the two principal dimensions of educational provision in Cameroon, namely the regular school under the national Ministry of Education and special education, under the Ministry of Social Affairs[11]. Subsequent training sessions were held with the participation of UNESCO consultants in November 1998 for 65 persons. This was succeeded by follow-up activities, such as meetings for sharing of information in schools, provision of teaching

11. APEHM (1998), *Rapport de l'atelier de reflexion: 11-12 Novembre 1998.* Yaounde.

materials and a basic documentation. With the assistance of three UNESCO consultants, a second training workshop was organized in April 1999, which resulted in a range of recommendations, including the need for a new policy, programmes, materials and teacher training for the process of developing more inclusive schools[12].

12 . APEHM (1998), *Rapport de l'atelier de Formation, 17-20 Novembre 1998.* Yaounde: p.7.
See also Bah, K (1999) *Ateliers de formation des enseignants: Rapports finals.* Yaounde: 1999

Three principles guided the work:

• To keep the teachers in their professional context;

• Sensitisation should not be limited in time and space, but should be ongoing; and,

• The choice of participating schools should be guided by their strategic position and the interest shown.

Already in October 1998, 251 learners who previously had been retained at home or had been in special schools or facilities were integrated into the regular system. Of course, the large class sizes in the schools and the lack of special facilities and aids represented an impediment to the full blossoming of these children in regular schools. In response to this difficulty, APEHM organized meetings of the senior staff of the schools, which facilitated exchange of information. These meetings were also important in identifying the lack of preparation of teachers in ordinary schools respond to the diversity of needs, including a lack of preparation of the basic concepts of the psychology of difference[13].

13. APEHM/UNESCO (August 2000), *Écoles intégratices et programmes de soutien communautaires au Cameroun: Rapport Final.* Yaounde: p.6.

Lessons Learnt

The project has made some major achievements, not least in human resource development and dissemination of greater awareness. It has also usefully identified gaps in training, which will need to be addressed to support further development[14].

14. Statement of Project leader. See APEHM/UNESCO (May, 1999) *Rapport du Projet: Oct 1998 – Mai 1999.* Yaounde: p. 2.

From its inception, the Cameroon project had to count with a number of major difficulties, which were nonetheless informative of the approaches and policies needed to advance greater inclusion. For example, in the very first project launch reflection workshop, the representative of the Ministry of Education identified some of the obstacles to greater inclusion, including the fact that all school and initial teacher training programmes were developed for 'regular' children and schools, and apart from a very slender element of psychology, there was nothing in the initial teacher training which could equip teachers for work with those having 'special needs'. Reception practices and structures were equally conceived and organized for 'regular' learners and entry qualifications for teacher training explicitly excluded persons with impairments[15].

15. APEHM (November 1998), *Rapport de l'atelier de reflexion.* Yaounde.

One major obstacle from the commencement of the project was the complementary, but project-antipathetic views of parents of children with disabilities and children in regular schools. On the part of parents of children with disabilities, there was a strong conviction that their children were best served in special schools or separate provision, not in the mainstream schools. On the part of the parents of children already in the regular system, there was the fear that there would be a possible 'contamination' of their children through the process of inclusion and that their children's progress at school would be jeopardized.

Moreover, teachers in regular classes did not feel themselves ready to manage differences in their classrooms. Further, the public authorities did not take into account children with disabilities in the development of their policies and programmes[16]. Then too, as mentioned above, large class sizes in the regular schools and the lack of special facilities and aids were major obstacles to the full development of these children in regular schools. Lastly, and in spite of commendable efforts to the contrary, the very position of APEHM as a single impairment NGO represented a weakness in involving the Ministry of Education in the project, and its links to the Ministry of Social Affairs could possibly have led the Ministry of Education to consider that inclusion is not its domain[17].

16. APEHM/UNESCO (August 2000), *Écoles intégratices et programmes de soutien communautaires au Cameroun: Rapport final.* Yaounde.

17. These latter points are made in a Back-to-Office Report by a two-person UNESCO Mission to Yaounde, Cameroon, 11-18 April 1999, pp. 4-5.

Dominican Republic

Background

The project, *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes*, was launched in April 1998 and was scheduled to last for a period of two years. In spite of the fact that two electoral events hindered progress, the project has been executed in accordance with the plan of action, originally foreseen, and the deadline for the completion of the work was defined as December 2000. The project was carried out in five basic education schools in low income and vulnerable areas. It was executed in the framework of the Ministry of Culture and Education's educational reform and managed by the Special Education National Division and the Primary Education National Division jointly with a technical team. The close co-ordination of these three entities enabled some problems of infrastructure and equipment to be addressed as by-products of the project[18].

18. UNESCO, Santiago (1999), *Annual Progress Report.* Santiago.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the project was to carry out a demonstrative experience of inclusive education that contributes to improve the quality and equity of education, offering equal opportunities to every child, regardless of their personal, social or cultural conditions. The specific objectives of the project were:

- To eliminate recuperation classes and reallocate the students to regular classrooms;
- To offer teacher training on inclusive education, addressed particularly to the five schools in the project;
- To create support and assessment systems to respond to diversity of educational needs in each school and at the level of the education system;
- To furnish schools with educational materials;
- To follow up and evaluate the experience.

The Organization and Process of the Project

The preferred strategy for this project was to reconvert special classes (recuperation classes), which existed previously in these schools, with the aim of integrating children into the regular classrooms closer to their chronological age, thus restraining segregation and overcoming exclusionary practices. The support of the UNESCO Santiago Office was a valuable component of the work.

The following lines of action were pursued in the project:
- Teacher training in the spirit of inclusive education, addressed to the five schools involved;
- The creation of support and assessment systems to attend the diversity of needs within each school and at the education system level;
- The provision of educational materials to the schools;
- The follow-up and evaluation of the experiment.

Some of these goals were achieved, as planned, during 1998/9, on the basis of the excellent co-operation of the technical team and the Special and Basic National Education Divisions.

Lessons Learnt

A final evaluation of the project was undertaken with the assistance of a UNESCO consultant. This included a consideration of the expected results, the activities undertaken, quantitative and qualitative indicators and their achievement. The results of this process indicated that all professional of the Special Education and Psychological Assessment Departments and one quarter of the Basic Education Department technical team had been trained on the use of the UNESCO 'Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom'. All the support staff of the regions and districts where the schools were involved were likewise trained. The functions of the National Co-ordination Team were also defined and shared with the directors of the participating schools. Further all children in special classes were integrated and
were well accepted by learners and teachers in the regular classrooms. Significant changes in practice were, however, not observed, and only 19% of the teachers observed used pedagogical strategies to respond to diversity.

Instruments of evaluation were developed and used to assess the pupils being integrated in language and mathematics and work began on the identification of minimum curricular competences and teacher training. Training materials on psycho-pedagogical interventions were elaborated and a process to eradicate architectural barriers to inclusion was commenced with the Ministry of Public Works. There was also considerable dissemination of information and material about inclusive education, including several presentations in the national mass media[19].

One major characteristic of this project and a reason for its relatively high level of success has been the close collaboration between the Special and Basic Education Sections of the Ministry, as well as its Psycho-Pedagogical Orientation Division with the central technical

19. Summary based on UNESCO Santiago (n.d.), *Annual Progress Report: Dominican Republic* (Final Report)

team. Added to this professional enthusiasm was the appreciation of the schools of their participation in the project and the beneficial impact of the training of all the staff involved. The establishment of support teams within each school was also an important modality for success, although lack of time meant that the teams could not follow up the children with various needs.

A further valuable result was the elaboration of pedagogical tests to evaluate the level of curricular attainment of the children in the recuperation classes. Above all, the project succeeded in its major goal of eradicating the recuperation classes in the five schools and reintegrating the students into the regular classrooms.

However, most of the problems faced were beyond the scope of the project to tackle. The large size of classes, over-aged children and late entrants, lack of physical resources, support professionals (a general problem in the country) and infrastructure, lack of allocated time for teachers to devote to the project, combined with lack of back-up support for the teachers in their administrative and educational roles[20].

20. Account taken from UNESCO, Santiago (September 2000), *Annual Progress Report.* Santiago:pp.2-6.

Egypt

Background

The background to this project is of a strong continuing adherence to the dual system of regular and special schools, with the number of special and segregated centres increasing. There is a dichotomy of responsibility with the Ministry of Social Affairs addressing the needs of students with moderate to severe disabilities and with the Ministry of Education not offering any kind of service to such students, but being responsible for the regular system of education. There is no legislation or regulation prescribing the inclusion of children with disabilities in the regular system. Much work is, however, being conducted by private educational institutions and parents of students with disabilities without the support of the Ministry of Education. Several initiatives for inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education have been undertaken and financed by these groups[21].

21. Caritas, Egypt (2000), *Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Regular Schools in Egypt: Final Report.* Cairo: p.3.

This project was conducted by one such organization, Caritas, Egypt, through its SETI Centre for Advice, Studies and Training on Mental Retardation [*sic.*], located in Cairo and Alexandria, in collaboration with the Upper Egypt Association in Minia. The Centre was established in 1986 and has sought to develop the concept of inclusive education through its community based rehabilitation programmes, with neighbourhood children participating together and interacting as a group in any educational services.

Until the commencement of this project, such initiatives had, however, failed to enlist the collaboration of the Ministry of Education, and so participation in the UNESCO-supported project was seen as a major avenue to involve the Ministry in efforts at introducing inclusive education[22]. The support of UNESCO in assisting SETI to obtain the permission of the Ministry of Education was crucial. Throughout the work of the project the project co-ordinator met regularly with officials of the Ministry of Education in person and maintained telephone contact with them to keep them up-to-date on the implementation of the project.

22. Ibid., p.4.

Aims and Objectives

The main aims of the project were:
- To guarantee the right of students with disabilities to be educated with their peers who are not disabled in their neighbourhood schools;
- To create new service delivery models that may be duplicated throughout the country;
- To develop positive attitudes and meaningful friendships with classmates with disabilities among students without disabilities; and,

• To facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in the community by increasing awareness, understanding, knowledge and acceptance of individual difference.

23. Caritas, Egypt (2000), *Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Regular Schools in Egypt: Final Report.* Cairo: p.7.

Additionally, SETI continued to pursue its objective of promoting inclusive education through the media. For example, a one-day symposium was organised to educate the media about inclusive education; an event in which children and parents took part. Part of this event was broadcast on national television[23].

## The Organization and Process of the Project

A co-ordinating committee was established at the commencement of the project, comprising six consultants from the Cairo and Alexandria SET1 centre, two external consultants and representatives of schools. An in-house training programme was undertaken in four sessions in Cairo and Alexandria to introduce the main ideas of the project. Collection of materials and good practice from other countries was undertaken in preparation for training. In this occasion, a technical support team for work with the schools was also selected. This team comprised two members each from SETI Cairo and Alexandria and two representatives of a partner NGO working in Upper Egypt, which was collaborating with the project. Two staff who had participated in a UNESCO workshop in Lebanon (see p. 67) participated in the training of the technical support team, in the second half of April 1999. This course comprised sixteen sessions extending over five days.

The team met every week to monitor the implementation and to prepare working guidelines and procedures during the initial stages. This pattern continued throughout the school year and during the implementation and follow-up stages. The technical consultancy committee established the selection criteria for schools' participation. Six schools were chosen and preliminary visits were undertaken and contracts signed. Several types of awareness-raising activities were undertaken.

24. Details taken from a letter from Caritas, Egypt, SETI Centre to UNESCO, Special Needs Education, dated 5 May 1999, pp.1 and 2

In some schools, support team members organised field trips for classes were there were children with disabilities. In addition to classroom teachers other personnel were targeted, such as social workers, school doctors, school custodians and parents of children who did not have impairments. Leisure activities and competitions were organised. Support team members visited classrooms regularly and also met with families[24].

The first training session in April 1999 addressed the needs of the support team members, to promote its philosophy and to demonstrate the
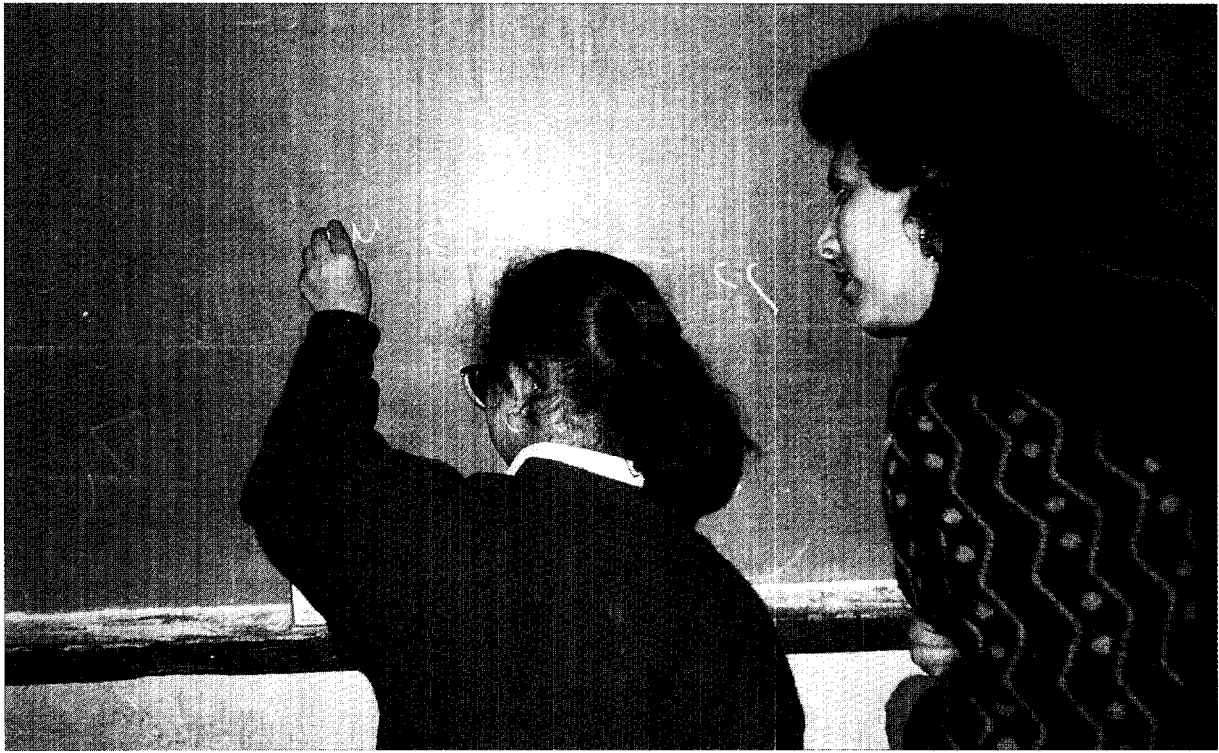
role of a successful team member. Special emphasis was placed on the development of the communication skills of the support team members, being the link between the technical consultancy committee and the schools. The second training session took place in September 1999 and addressed the needs of the school principals and teachers who were participating in the project. Support team members participated in this training session with the aim of bonding with the teachers, many of whom had negative attitudes towards children with disabilities. This latter training session included issues on pedagogy, skills in responding to learner diversity and knowledge of students with disabilities[25]

25. Caritas, Egypt (2000), *Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Regular Schools in Egypt: Final Report.* Cairo: pp.5-6.

Lessons Learnt

At all three stages of the project – initial, implementation and follow-up – issues arose and challenges were encountered. One such challenge, which clearly resulted in advance was the involvement of the Ministry of Education and its sensitization to inclusive education. The project provided an important catalyst for the achievement and fostering of contacts, which could be very important bases for future work and for driving forward advocacy of inclusive education to a wider audience.
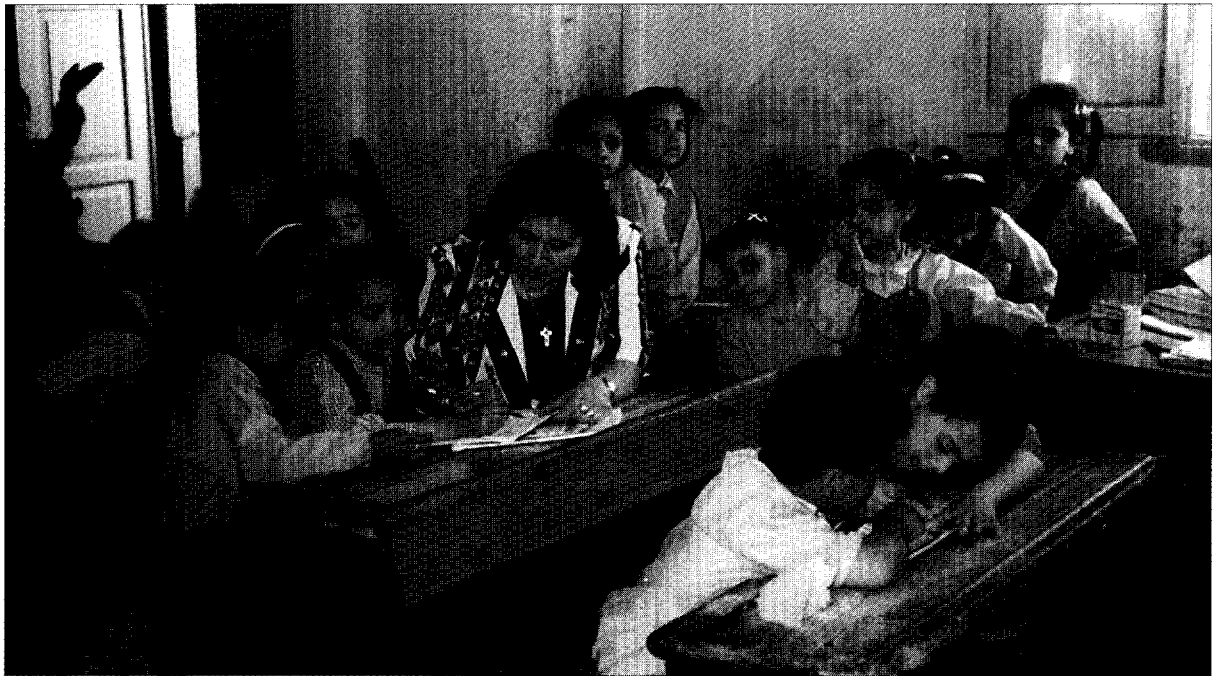
One serious blow to the work was the loss of key staff and students during the work. For example, two members of the technical consultancy committee had to resign, when they accepted other jobs. In Minia, two members of the staff, specially trained for that work, resigned and that project had, as a result, no staff to carry out the work, which had to be undertaken with much travelling by staff from Cairo. In Alexandria, the two principals and school district officials who commenced the work were transferred. Another blow was the withdrawal of some disabled children who commenced their education in regular classes. Large class sizes and poor facilities also militated against the effectiveness of the work.

A further major weakening of the project was the fact that the proposed teacher training sessions could not be carried out, due to the unwillingness or inability of school principals to release their staff. The ability of the teachers to respond to diversity in their classrooms was extremely limited, although they manifested a desire to learn. Thus, the project was a modest commencement with some significant, if indirect gains, where follow-up and continuation will be essential to maintain the momentum already gained.

Ghana

Background

The first school for the deaf was opened in Ghana in 1957, and the 1961 Education Act stipulated a free and compulsory education for all children in Ghana, including those with disabilities. A unit for the training of teachers for the deaf was established at the University of Education, Winneba in 1965, with a consequent shift to using only oralism. The 1970s saw an expansion of schools for the deaf, including basic schools and a secondary technical school. Services ranged from fully segregated schools to fully integrated provision. Approaches proposed in the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack were utilised in these latter schools.

Before the proposal of the *Deaf Education Project Ghana*, a community based rehabilitation programme (CBR) had been run in twenty districts, commencing in 1992. Although the education component of this programme was managed by the Division of Special Education of the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with other agencies, the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, Health and Local Government were also involved. This programme sought the inclusion of a number of disabled children, including some with hearing impairments, in regular schools and classrooms.

An inclusive approach was adapted to the curriculum insofar as the regular programme was followed by deaf children with minimal alterations. The programme identified problem areas in the education of the deaf in ordinary schools, including lack of interpreting services and means for instruction and communication for the deaf. In 1994, a national sign language committee was set up to look into the development of Ghanaian sign language (GSL) and a GSL dictionary.

But, problems of the lack of a unified approach, whether oralism or manualism, as well as other communication problems have meant that the educational attainments of the majority of deaf persons has remained relatively basic. In 1995, a religious organization in conjunction with the Ghana Society for the Deaf organised a workshop for interpreters, which was facilitated by four persons from the University of Kansas, at the end of which four persons were certificated as interpreters. Consequent on these developments and the work of the sign language committee, two seminars were organised to strengthen capacity and identify different hand forms, and this lead to the proposal for the *Deaf Education Project Ghana*.

The Aims and Objectives

As a result of executing the Community Based Rehabilitation Programme, and based on this experience and an analysis of the problems, four areas were identified for the *Deaf Education Project Ghana*:

- The teaching of sign language as a subject;
- Sign language curriculum development;
- The development and production of a Ghanaian sign language dictionary; and,
- The development of interpretation services. The implementing agency for the subsequent Ghanaian project was the Special Education Division of the Ministry of Education[26].

26. The details in this section have been taken from an office report prepared for UNESCO by Hildegunn Olsen, dated 31 August 2000, and contained in the Ghana file, pp.1-2 and combined with Education Service, Special Education Division *Deaf Education Project Ghana: Final Report.* Accra: Ghana.

Thus, arising from the needs analysis, the major aims of this project for the period 1998 – 2000 were formulated as follows:

- The training of a national team of trainers in the teaching of sign language and in documenting sign language;
- A group of teachers of the deaf trained to teach sign language;
- Improving sign language interpretation skills through the training of a group of sign language interpreters;
- The establishment of a core resource team; and,
- The documentation of signs and the development of training materials and interpretation, as well as the initial version of a GSL sign language dictionary[27].

27. As expressed in Ibid, p.2.

The Organization and Process of the Project

After an initial postponement due to logistic problems faced by the project team the project commenced in June 1999. A series of four workshops, led by a UNESCO consultant, were held; the first for adult deaf persons on skills in documenting signs; a second for 25 interpreters on sign language interpretation; a third for teachers of the deaf on sign language structure and teaching; and, a fourth on sign language documentation and development[28]. In the first workshop for adult deaf persons in June 1999, all ten regions of the country were represented and participants were selected with the intention of their returning to disseminate workshop knowledge and information to their peers in the respective regions. A curriculum for the training activities was prepared with the assistance of the consultant.

28. A report on all these workshops, from which some of the details of this report have been taken, was produced by the UNESCO consultant. See, Akach, A. O. (1999) *Inclusive Schools and Community Support programmes: Deaf Education Project Ghana.* Paris: UNESCO.

A follow-up workshop was organised in August 1999, with the aim of strengthening the competencies of the resource team trained in the first session. In November 1999, two further workshops were held

for participants to report, and to consolidate the strategies and skills for sign language documentation and to build resource teams for the dissemination of knowledge on sign language teaching. A resource team of six persons, competent in the teaching of sign language, was identified. Plans of action were prepared by resource teams from each of the schools for the deaf. Teachers and auxiliary staff attended the sign language training programmes and similar meetings for parent-teacher associations were planned. 76 handforms were produced and 2,500 handforms formed.

Lessons Learnt

The aims and objectives of the project are indicated to have been largely met. Much human resource development has been achieved. Sixteen adult deaf persons have been trained in sign language and commenting signs. Thirty four teachers of the deaf and thirteen interpreters were trained on sign language structure and teaching, and sign language interpretation respectively. A resource team responsible for dissemination of workshop knowledge and ideas has been formed. Advocacy has been carried out successfully. Awareness of sign language, its acceptance, teaching and usage, has been increased. A positive impact on the teaching/learning approaches has been reported.

Two particular challenges remain for this project and these would appear to be; sustainability and negative attitudes among some staff[29]. The former is a consequence of the overall level of success of the project in raising awareness, expertise and expectations. In this latter connection, a strategy has to be devised which can carry forward the momentum of reform beyond the very brief period of its initial work. With regard to the second, the need is to develop a closer understanding of the

29. As expressed by the final report. See *Deaf Education Project Ghana: Final Report.* Accra: Ghana Education Service, Special Education Division pp.3 and 29.

normative re-educative processes needed for the fundamental change of attitudes and working practices on the part of those who have to implement and generalize such innovations and to devise appropriate training experiences and routines.

India

Background

India has a well developed system for training, research and material development in the field of education. State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) is internationally known and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) have been established under its aegis. These latter were established under the 1986 National Policy on Education to improve and enrich the skills and knowledge of elementary teachers, non-formal adult education and those involved at the grass roots in education. They provide academic and professional support through teaching cum training, resource materials and a variety of enrichment programmes and to play the role of resource centre for the district[30].

30. Details taken from The Spastics Society of Northern India (2000), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: India Project 1998-2000*. New Delhi: p.15/16 and Annex 4a.

One major characteristic of this project was the effort made from the beginning to embrace close liaison with both SCERT and the DIETs for the success and eventual replicability of the project.

The major purpose was to make a Hindi version of the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom and to develop local expertise in teacher training for inclusive education, enlisting community support to enhance the spread and quality of inclusive education and developing suitable strategies for the dissemination of information about it. The UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack had already been extensively used throughout the world in teacher training activities and India had been involved in this work from the commencement.

The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), which did translation work for the project, had participated in developing and generalizing strategies for teacher education for integrating children with 'special needs' over a number of years. Given that the vast majority of provision for those with 'special needs' in India is made by NGOs,

31. These organisations were: Deepalaya NGO; Mobile Crèches NGO; Kendriya Vidyalayas; and, DIETs, SCERT – Delhi.

the implementation of this country project was entrusted to the Spastics Society of Northern India, which formed a partnership with four other organisations to carry out the work[31].

Aims and Objectives

Given the lengthy experience of India in the use of the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack, the main aims of this project were:

• To make a Hindi version of the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom;

• To develop local expertise in teacher training for inclusive education;

- To enlist community support to enhance the spread and quality of inclusive education; and,
- To develop suitable strategies for the dissemination of information about it.

The more specific objectives of the project were:
- To translate and use the Pack in Indian settings;
- To enrich the Pack with Indian experiences;
- To modify and revise the Pack, based on the feedback from field testing;
- To implement awareness raising programmes;
- To seek community support to enhance the spread and quality of inclusive education; and,
- To evolve appropriate strategies for information dissemination on inclusive education[32].

32 . The Spastics Society of Northern India (2000), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: India Project 1998-2000.* New Delhi: p.1.

The Organization and Process of the Project

The launch of the project was initiated by means of a planning and orientation session in October 1998. This was followed by a five-day workshop for master trainers in January 1999. The aim of the orientation programme was twofold: to introduce the concept of inclusive education and to understand the needs of the participants. Because of the wide diversity of backgrounds of the participants, the organization of the programme was a challenge, but in the event, the vigorous debates resulted in a broadening of the concept of inclusive education and a deepening understanding of the term 'special needs'. One item which emerged very clearly was the need of participants and their organizations for technical training support. The lead-up to the workshop was then used by the core team to understand the needs of the organization, prepare pre- and post tools for assessment and to plan for the workshop[33].

33. Ibid. p.3.

The workshop included a session where participants interacted with persons with disabilities, which proved to be particularly enriching. Units were taken from each of the four modules of the Pack with special care that the units had direct relevance to the needs of participants.
Two of the units were changed to address those needs, with a particular emphasis on solving practical problems in the classroom. From this workshop the determination came to support each school/organization with a member of the training team for planning, implementation and evaluation of their teacher training programme, the criteria having earlier been developed by the master trainers during the orientation programme.

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Detailed plans for teacher training were submitted and training took place in the respective organizations.

The master trainers had different backgrounds, ranging from those who were already trainers with a development perspective and the skills for participatory approaches, to teachers and administrators. The master trainers were expected not only to carry out training but also to undertake awareness raising and information dissemination activities. Each participating organization then carried out its own activities.

For example, mobile crèche conducted a teacher training programme of 4 days for 18 members and a workshop on safety measures when working with children with disabilities, followed by initial training on screening, identification and skills for basic learning management, training for staff on legislation, advocacy and information on external support agencies, and a theatre workshop for awareness raising. Changes in the attitudes of staff were noted as a consequence of these activities, as was greater knowledge of referral agencies, legislation and advocacy, as well as the incorporation by master trainers of some elements of the work into their sessions.

Deepalaya, an NGO working in the slums of Delhi worked with three clusters in South Delhi, where non-formal education centres had already been established, run by social entrepreneurs. Some 18 of the social entrepreneurs participated in the teacher training programme and the trainers from the organization were trained as master trainers.
All of the master trainers of the project were unfortunately either transferred or resigned and the 18 social entrepreneurs were left on their own for some time, a situation, which slowed the implementation of the project.

Lessons Learnt

The project evoked major learning on the part of all concerned. From a host of such learnings, three major issues might be identified. Firstly there was the question of relationships with other organizations and especially the organs of government. Here, the project was assisted by the open, co-operative and engaged attitudes of the management of all the organization working with the project. More challenging and certainly time-consuming perhaps was the early establishment of links with governmental organizations. Perhaps on reflection and in spite of the major efforts made in this direction by this project, there could have been closer linkages with them from the beginning.

Secondly, the diversity of experience and background proved a challenge in the early stages of the project, although it can also be seen as an enrichment. The demands for new learning on the part of those involved

were sometimes very difficult and sometimes either the strategies or the content were lacking or inadequate to the task. Linked to this was a common problem encountered by several other projects, the transfer or resignation of key staff after the completion of their induction or training. This was particularly the case with the Deepalaya project which lost all its master trainers at one stage.

Thirdly, the content of some elements of the Pack was inappropriate or insufficient. Some modules of the Pack were difficult for participants to understand, relate to and integrate into their professional biography. Additional items such as safety, specific technical training, not least in early intervention and prevention of disabilities, were identified for future inclusion. The need was identified for more material and experiences, which would enable teachers to reflect on their aims and philosophy[34].

34. Summarised from The Spastics Society of Northern India (2000), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: India Project 1998-2000.* New Delhi: pp.39-43.

Madagascar

Background

The Educational Research and Evaluation Unit (UERP) at the Ministry of Secondary and Basic Education was responsible for carrying out the activities of this project, which was entitled *The Creation of Experimental Sites for Inclusive Schools and Community Based Rehabilitation*. During 1999, the Unit set up a working group, comprising members from the Ministry of Population, Women's Affairs and Infancy, the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, UNESCO and Handicap International Madagascar.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this project was to obtain experience of inclusive education in a Malagasy context by means of a pilot project involving three schools in three different catchment areas through which a gradual movement towards inclusive education in Madagascar could be constructed. At the commencement of the project (in January 1999) and by means of a survey undertaken by the Ministry, two of the three pilot schools in the three different catchment areas had been identified in the Province of Fianarantsoa and links had been established with special education services for support[35]. The third school was selected later by UNESCO. The project also had a community based rehabilitation aspect, aiming at the sensitisation of communities and the social inclusion of disabled persons.

35. The questionnaires used in undertaking the "search" are contained in Ministère de l'Enseignement Secondaire et Education de Base, Unité d'Etude et de Recherche Pédagogiques (Septembre 2000), *Projet Ecoles Intégratrices et Programme de Soutien Communautaire: Rapport Intermédiaire 1.* Antananarivo, Madagascar: p.1.

The principal objectives of the project were:
* The dissemination of information and awareness to all the units concerned with the project;
* The training of the educational personnel in the pilot schools; and,
* The follow-up of the work undertaken in the schools.

The specific objectives of the work in the three pilot schools were twofold: a) to integrate children with 'special needs' into the schools; and, b) to improve education to better meet the needs of all children.

The Organization and Process of the Project

A central technical team was established by the Ministry Unit of Educational Research and Evaluation, comprising members of the Unit, of the Malagasy National Commission for UNESCO, a primary school inspector and a Principal of a teacher training college. The heads and teachers of the three schools were seen as the principal actors in implementing inclusive education. Their responsibilities were to seek ways of assisting children in difficulty to proceed with their learning, to sensitise parents and learners and to engage their assistance, to follow-up and note the progress made by children who experienced difficulties in their learning.

In February 1999, sensitization workshops had been organized and parallel with this, two workshops in two of the pilot schools, already selected, were organized. The first training seminar was held for 45 participants at Antsirabe in April 1999, led by two UNESCO consultants. This first workshop aimed:

* To facilitate understanding of the factors which place learners in difficulty and to improve educational interventions to better respond to diversity;

* To base the work on participants' reflections of their own situation;

* Develop means to share with others the achievements of the seminar; and,

* In the process of reflection, to take account of the need for educators to collaborate with other professionals, parents and the community, with specialists and of collaboration among children[36].

The major aims of this workshop were to deepen the training of the staff in the pilot schools and to extend the reach of the project to include the teacher training college, demonstration school and another school, already involved in inclusive education, in Antananarivo[37].

During April training sessions the project was presented at the third school. During September 1999, further workshops were organized especially for those who had not previously participated. Each workshop was led by four members of the central technical team. In July 2000, another workshop led by two different UNESCO consultants was held at the teacher training college at Manjakandriana, aimed especially at the staff of the third school and of the teacher training college itself[38]. The first term of the school year 1999/2000 was considered a time of "feeling their way" and of trial by the school staff involved.

In November 1999, two representatives of Madagascar attended the sub-regional seminar organised by UNESCO in Bamako, Mali, and consequently, regular follow-up and action research activities were carried out in the three schools. In November 2000, a support and evaluation

36. UNESCO (1999), *Ecoles Intégratrices et Programmes de Soutien Communautaire: Atelier de Formation (Avril): Rapport Final.* Paris: p.3. See also Ministère de l'Enseignement Secondaire et Education de Base, Unité d'Etude et de Recherche Pédagogiques (2000), *Projet Ecoles Intégratrices et Programme de Soutien Communautaire: Rapport Intermédiaire II. Antananarivo, Madagascar.*

37. UNESCO (2000), *Ecoles Intégratrices et Programmes de Soutien Communautaire: Atelier de Formation (Septembre): Rapport Final.* Paris: p.2.

38. Details taken from Minsitère de l'Enseignement Secondaire et Education de Base, Unité d'Etude et de Recherche Pédagogiques (Septembre 2000), *Projet Ecoles Intégratrices et Programme de Soutien Communautaire: Rapport Final.* Antananarivo, Madagascar: p.1.

mission was undertaken by a member of the Unit to purchase necessary educational materials and check on their utilization, to consider with the staffs of the two schools the challenges which they had encountered and to provide assistance in solving specific problems encountered. The aim was to evaluate the progress made in reading, writing and numeracy by pupils of the first grade. A second such evaluation visit was undertaken in June 2000.

Lessons Learnt

This project has generated a remarkable amount of interesting and valuable material across a wide selection of media; written, photographic, diagrammatic etc, as well as some very interesting ways of working. Similarly, the project has been characterized by the central involvement of the Ministry concerned from the very beginning. It has, of course had both its successes and its challenges. For example, not dissimilar to many other projects, the need for a change of attitudes at all levels was one of the major challenges faced by this project.

Nonetheless, the final report indicates such a change has taken place, not only on the part of teachers and "regular" learners. Possibly as a consequence, learners with 'special needs' appear to have been well included in the life of the school both in lessons and at playtime. At local level too, many parents have determined to co-operate with the authorities in achieving a greater inclusion. Through their involvement in the project, the relevant local, regional and national authorities have also become convinced of the importance of inclusive education[39].

39. Ministère de l'Enseignement Secondaire et Education de Base, Unité d'Etude et de Recherche Pédagogiques (Septembre 2000), *Projet Ecoles Intégratrices et Programme de Soutien Communautaire: Rapport Final.* Antananarivo, Madagascar: p.7.

Other challenges included the qualification of teachers, the suppression of the barriers between regular and special education and the commitment of the state in favour of inclusive education. In the context of these substantial tasks, it is possible to state that the project in Madagascar has registered a satisfactory result. From the commencement of the school year 1999/2000 children with 'special needs' have been included in two of the pilot schools, new methods of teaching and responding to these needs have been learnt, the main potential actors for the third school have been trained and the follow-up of the work in the three schools has been carried out regularly.

One significant by-product of the collaborative way of working of this project, which may be significant for future sustainability, was the decision taken after the commencement of the project to adopt follow-up and evaluation activities as an integral part of the project; an aspect of the work, which had not been envisaged in the original plan. This departure afforded considerable insights into the development and

40. An example of one of
the reports of such a visit
is to be found in Rabodoalala,
Harisoa (2000), *Écoles
Intégratrices et Programme
de Soutien Communautaire:
Rapport de Suivi
EPPA Manjakandriana*.
Antananarivo.

41. See, for example, also
Ministère de l'Enseignement
Secondaire et Education de
Base, Unité d'Etude et de
Recherche Pédagogiques
(2000), *Projet Ecoles
Intégratrices et Programme
de Soutien Communautaire:
Rapport Intermédiaire III*.
Antananarivo, Madagascar.

success of the project. Equally important, these activities helped to establish ongoing relationships among the actors involved: an important social and professional basis for the continuation of the work into the future[40]. Another marked characteristic of the approach adopted was the prefacing of school visits by visits to local dignitaries and officials, which generated local good will and support for the project and once again established sound relationships for future work. Local officials, for example such as the Head of the School District, were also involved in opening training sessions[41].

Mauritius

Background

The title of this project aptly describes the work intended, *From School Integration to Inclusion of Children with Intellectual Disabilities*.
The execution of this project was placed in the hands of The Mauritian National Association of Parents of Children with Impairments (Association de Parents d'Enfants Inadaptes de l'Ile Maurice or APEIM), an agency with extensive experience of the inclusion of children with intellectual difficulties. APEIM was set up some 27 years ago as an NGO by parents of children with intellectual disabilities.

Prior to the commencement of the project, APEIM had previously undertaken substantial work in finding and negotiating school placements for children with intellectual disability, working for the development of special schools, supporting integrated classes (located on the same site as the regular school and offering children with intellectual impairments an opportunity to share in the life of the school), assisting a vocational training unit, organising an early intervention programme, including family support services, counselling and therapy, facilitating parental empowerment, disseminating information, offering awareness training and organising teacher training.

42. Holdsworth, J. (1999), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Mission Report*. Paris: UNESCO, p.7.

One interesting aspect of the experience of APEIM was the fact that, although pre-schools are usually less competitive, more teacher-centred, more flexible with regard to the curriculum, and generally more tolerant of difference, in their experience, small rural kindergartens were perceived more welcoming than those in urban areas. This relative independence has permitted a flowering of inclusion at that level. In spite of these heartening developments, the concept of inclusion was reported to be weak in Mauritius at the commencement of the project[42]. Moreover, at the beginning, the involvement of the Ministry of Education appears to have been elusive[43].

43. Although the Ministry of Health attended the initial UNESCO-supported training workshop, participants are said to have been disappointed that the Ministry of Education was not present. See, APEIM/UNESCO (December 1998), *Workshop on Inclusion and Integrated Education in Mauritius; workshop Materials*. Paris: Annexes I and II.

Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this project was to sensitize, inform and awake commitment and greater awareness, and to promote the rights to education of children with intellectual disabilities. Activities included the sensitizing and informing the education authorities, training teachers, sensitizing the public in general and the development of two pilot experiences integrating children with disabilities in regular schools at the primary level. APEIM targeted relevant units within the Ministry of Education, several NGOs and local authorities. UNICEF provided support in terms of advocacy, technical expertise and the production of audiovisual materials[44]. More specifically, it objectives were:

44. Details taken from UNESCO (n.d.) *Project Proposal 1998/9*. Paris: p.9.

- To create a favourable attitude to inclusion;
- To promote the rights of children to education; and,
- To inform people of the principles of inclusion[45].

45. APEIM (October 2000), *Project APEIM/UNESCO: Rapport Final.* Mauritius: p.1.

The Organization and Process of the Project

Already at the commencement of the project, key meetings were undertaken with the Ministry of Education, the Catholic Education Bureau, head teachers and teachers. A key central team, comprising a headteacher and a head of the early integration service was given the task of defining the practical strategies, the use of the resources and the organization of the workshops and meetings.The project proceeded in November 1998 to a workshop with a week of preparation, assisted by a UNESCO consultant. The purpose on this preparatory week was to enable the local resource team in the preparation of the different workshops proposed, to identify appropriate training activities, to organize an information workshop for the main partners concerned and to devise a system for monitoring and evaluating project activities[46].

46. Holdsworth, J. (1999), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Mission Report.* Paris: UNESCO, p.3.

The results of the first workshop were then documented and made available to a wider audience. A TV clip was prepared and broadcast on television and other media actively utilised.

Early reports on the progress of the project testify to the intensity of activity, which accompanied the launch and early work of the project, especially in January and February 1999. Materials on inclusive education were shared with a wide range of actors, teachers in the six pilot schools were visited at least twice a month, parents sensitized and trained on their children's rights, teachers' awareness raised through review days, workshops with pre-primary teachers, dissemination and utilization of audio-visual material, production of a booklet on inclusion and the rights and needs of children with disabilities[47]. Consequent on discussion with the Ministry of Education, it had been agreed that each regional director would work with APEIM at the school level, facilitating access to schools.

47. APEIM (1999), *Rapport Interimaire sur l'Integration.* Mauritius: pp. 3-4.

The start-up work was not, however, easy due to a number of reasons. There were difficulties associated with catchment areas, ages of the children and administrative complications, and although six disabled children in six different schools were initially selected to be included in regular schools, this represented a number of changes because of difficulties with some parents and schools[48]. The training was also interrupted in March 1999 by riots in Mauritius and a day of information and training was postponed until April. In July of that year a workshop was organized for teachers concerned in particular with issues of

48. APEIM (March 1999), *Report for UNESCO.* Mauritius: p.3.
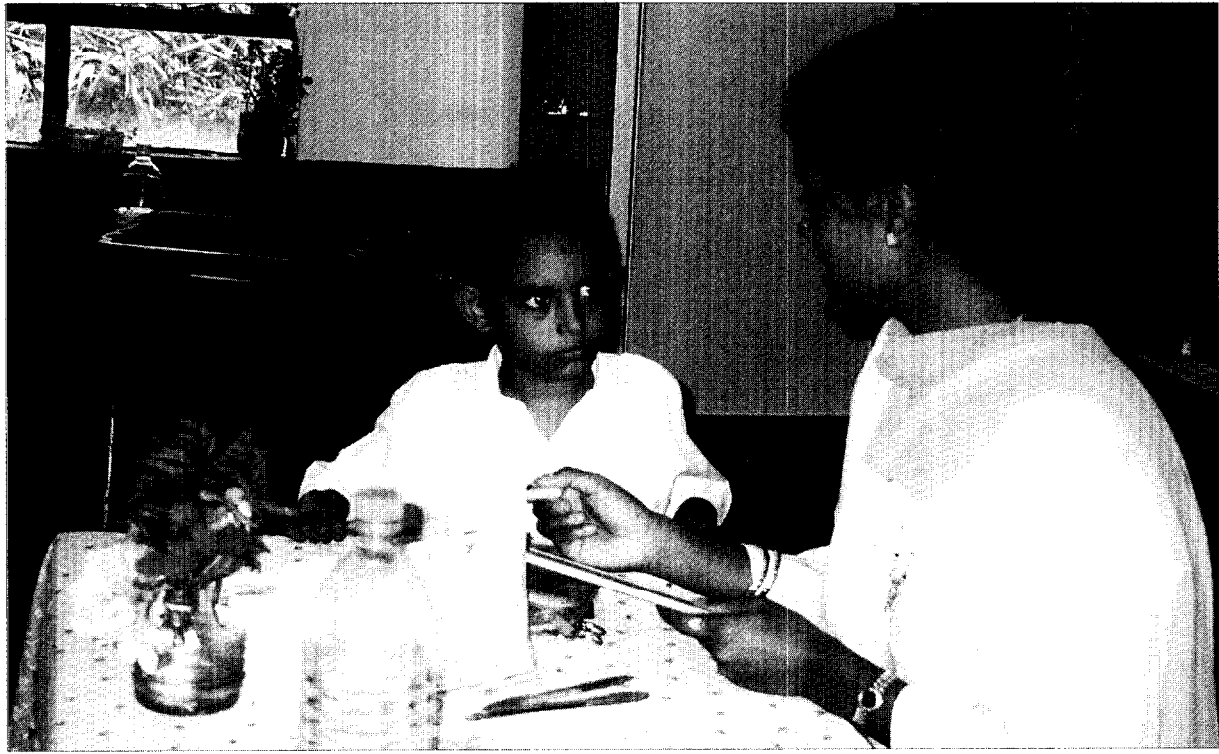
inclusion associated with transfer from kindergarten to the first grade. Subsequently, three Mauritians attended the UNESCO-organized workshop in Mali in November/December 1999 and a training workshop was organized in Mauritius with the assistance of two UNESCO consultants in June, 2000.

The aims of this latter workshop were to enable all participants to express their expectations and preoccupations, to enable a sharing of experiences, to enable reflection based on a collaborative approach, to develop the beginnings of continuous evaluation and to enable participants to stand back from the work which had been done and to identify the advances made[49]. The involvement of senior staff from the Ministry of Education in the workshop represented a marked and important advance, offering the promise of greater sustainability to the work.

49. Belmot, B. and Verillon, A. (2000), *Écoles Intégratrices et Programmes de Soutien Communautaire: Atelier de Formation: Rapport Final.* Paris: UNESCO, pp.3-4.

Lessons Learnt

The project appears to have achieved a high level of success in addressing its stated objectives. It was not plagued by instability of the staffing to the same extent experienced by some other projects, although some staff of the Ministry and teachers were transferred during the life of the project and this was an aspect, combined with a reported major reorganisation of the Ministry in July 1999, which was cited as braking

50. APEIM (1999), *Rapport Interimaire sur l'Integration.* Mauritius: p. 2.

progress in the early days of the project[50]. The inclusion of children with 'special needs' has proceeded successfully in five of the six schools, the sixth remaining somewhat problematic. Peer group support seems
to have worked out well for disabled children, their number increasing from 6 to 19 by the beginning of 2000.

The support of organizations ranging from UNICEF (especially in advocacy, materials production and dissemination of children's rights) to the Mauritian Catholic Bureau has also proved invaluable and has generated useful networks of relationship. The use of media, including film, the evoked interest of TV and the press also helped to generate interest and increase awareness, as well as a desire for further information and expertise. The substantial involvement of senior staff from the Ministry of Education in the final training workshop also represented a big step forward in securing relationships. The result is that ambitious plans for the future have been formulated and considerable enthusiasm generated. Moreover, expectations are high on the part of all concerned.

In spite of commendable efforts and progress, as well as the relative success of the project, a number of major challenges had to be faced. One major challenge encountered, in common with several of the other projects, was the difficulty of a single disability NGO to fully initiate

the wide-ranging discussion on educational policy required. Then too, one of the participating schools did not evolve in its attitude to inclusion, only tolerating the situation and considering itself subject to force majeure.

Again in common with a number of other projects, headteachers and teachers could not always be released for longer periods for training to due to lack of replacement teachers. The cultural cleavage of staff room and playground was also an inhibiting factor to more rapid progress towards a more profound change. The competitive nature of the school system, traditional pedagogical practices, unfavourable pupil/teachers ratios, lack of professional expertise and the rigidity of the curriculum were also challenges encountered in the project. Finally, there was the apparent lack of a government engagement, framework and policy for inclusion, which could have given a more disciplined direction to the work[51].

On the other hand, a basic momentum and some important networks and partnership relationships have been generated as sound bases for the future. Experience has been gained, expertise improved and training and awareness spread wider. The issue of inclusion is now firmly on the agenda. In common with many other projects, time and again, workshop reports express a thirst on the part of heads, teachers and others for further information and especially training. The signs are that the work of this project is fully sustainable and will continue into the future, given a measure of external input[52].

51. Summarized from UNESCO (January 2000), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Interim Report.* Paris: pp.6/7.

52. APEIM (October 2000), *Project APEIM/UNESCO: Rapport Final.* Mauritius: pp.13/14.

Nicaragua

Background

This project was managed by UNESCO Santiago Office. The Special Education Division of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports was the responsible body for the implementation of the *Inclusive Schools and Community Support* project, which commenced in August 1998. It addressed inclusive education through reflective practice in three primary schools, selected to develop inclusive practices. The three schools were: a rural primary school, which was one of the first schools to establish a student council, under which students take an active part in school decision-making; an urban school, which enrolled children from disadvantaged areas by means of an active and participatory pedagogy; and, another urban school, which had a "monitoring mothers" programme, where mothers collaborate as teaching assistants.

Rädda Barnen and the Health Service Centre of Nicaragua were also associated with the project in the child-to-child component. The Flemish Organization for Co-operation for Development and Technical Assistance (VVOB) was also involved in the provision of didactic material, office material and photocopiers. There was also a proposal to expand the number of schools with the assistance of VVOB. Through a national co-ordination team and follow-up teams for each school strong links were established with the Pre-Primary and Primary Directorates of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports.

Aims and objectives

The major aim of this project was to promote inclusive practices through reflection, collaboration and teacher training in order to make diversity fruitful as a strategy for improving the quality of the learning process. The project approached the development of inclusive provision in three schools by means of collaborative work, based on an action research.

The Organization and Process of the Project [53]

The main modality for the implementation of this project was action research, regarded as a means to find creative solutions to teachers' challenges and commencing with their analysis of their own teaching/learning strategies. It also included information dissemination and awareness raising activities addressed to the three schools concerned, teacher training, the provision of didactic materials and support and assessment assistance for the teachers involved in the project.

53. Account based on Gobierno de Nicaragua, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes, Dirección de Educación Especial (Diciembre 1999), *Informe del projecto: Educación Inclusiva y Opoyo Comunitario*. Managua.

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The project opened in 1998 with the preparatory work for the launch of action. Firstly came the designation of the technical advisory team and the formulation of the work plan. This was followed by the revision of the proposed action research, the preparation of support documents and the training of the technical team. The selection criteria for schools to participate in the project led to visits to pre-selected schools, a process of consultation and the despatch of invitations to the schools selected, followed by the commencement of the sensitization and training activities by means of a two-day workshop on the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom, organized for the headteachers, teachers and parents of the three schools.

Implementation of the project was carried out during 1999-2000 in each school. A situation analysis of each school was camed out by using four instruments which had been specifically designed for the analysis. Furthermore, a training workshop was held for the three schools on the action research methodology. Four meetings were organized in each school to share experiences and deepen the action research process. Individual meetings with teachers were also carried out, based on the teacher's own observations of the challenges they face in class. Documents and support guides were elaborated to facilitate teacher's work. Periodic meetings were also held with headteachers and school councils.

At the Ministry level, a meeting was held with the General Academic Director, directors and technical staff of different divisions in order to inform them about developments and to enlist their support. With the financial assistance of Rädda Barnen and the Health Service Centre of Nicaragua, the child-to-child project was promoted through the student councils of the three schools and the special school of Managua, in order to sensitize students and teachers concerning persons with disabilities.

An evaluation of the project was carried out in 1999 with the participation of teachers from the three schools. A follow-up mission was undertaken in February 2000 by the UNESCO Santiago Office to evaluate the progress and the difficulties encountered. This mission included meetings with the technical advisory team, visits to the three schools and meetings with teachers and the educational advisory team of the special school of Managua. A three-day workshop was also held for education personnel involved in development of inclusive schools[54].

54. Account based on the hack-to-office report. Duk, C (March 2000), *Memorandum Interno No S/DIR/00)/3122 de marzo del 2000*. Santiago: UNESCO, pp.2ff.

Several improvements were identified to the design and functioning of the project. In each school pedagogical support teams of experienced and committed teachers were established to lead and support the inclusion process in the school. Itinerant support teams were also

assigned to two of the schools from the educational advisory team of the special school to assist children with 'special needs' and the teachers in the regular classes.

Both of these teams were trained by professionals of the Division of Special Education. The training was aimed at strengthening regular teachers' skills and knowledge of inclusive education and how to respond to diverse needs by means of exchange of information and experience with special teachers. 22 visits were carried by these teams to supervise and follow up activities in the schools. Further, common criteria and support strategies for children were defined and action plans prepared[55].

55. Account taken from UNESCO, Santiago Office (September 2000), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Annual Progress Report.* Santiago: pp.6-10.

Lessons Learnt[56]

56. Following section based on Gobierno de Nicaragua, Minsterio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes, Dirección de Educación Especial (Diciembre 2000), *Informe Final del projecto: Educación Inclusiva y Opoyo Comunitario.* Managua.

57. Duk, C (March 2000), op. cit. p.4.

A major characteristic of this project is the fine-grained and informative evaluation approach, which evoked some perceptive results and insights into the key issues in adopting the principle of inclusion. An analysis of the weaknesses and strengths of the project was made by educational advisors, teachers and the project technical team. This revealed an apparent lack of co-ordination among the different divisions of the Ministry of Education, which impeded participation of all teachers and the lack of a collaborative plan drawn up with the head-teacher of each school[57]. The fact that the technical advisory team had other duties than the execution of the project also hindered their effectiveness, not least after the reduction of the number of its members to three. There was also a lack of a co-ordinating plan for the pilot schools to guide implementation, and a need for greater support from the headteachers.

In addition, like in many of the projects, there was the lack of time to carry out activities and meetings and to develop collaborative work among the teachers. Although support was given to teachers to assist them in developing a positive attitude to difference, changes in pedagogical practice were not observed. This was traceable to the difficulty many teachers have in analysing their own practice and the effect of their teaching/learning approaches on student attainment and performance.

An interesting aspect of this project was the adoption of an action research which requires a sustained and supported learning process. However, this approach in the project did not contribute to shared understandings and meanings among teachers and collaborative work to achieve change in the schools. Perhaps through intervisiting and more teamwork, this difficulty might have been overcome. Further, assessment approaches were not oriented to specific learning strategies

58. UNESCO, Santiago Office (September 2000), op. cit. pp.9-10.

59. Information by e-mail dated 30 August 2001 from UNESCO Santiago to UNESCO Headquarters.

which could have assisted teachers to explore new methods that would be more attentive to a diversity of needs[58]. A report from UNESCO Santiago in August 2001 indicated that the project was still not completed and that no important progress had been made in the last few months[59].

Paraguay

Background

Consequent on a UNESCO mission in July and early August 1998, the project *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes* was finalised between UNESCO and the Paraguayan authorities in August 1998 and it was launched in October of that same year. The Special Education Division of the General Education Directorate of the Ministry of Education and Culture was the responsible body for its implementation.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the project was to develop a demonstrative experience of inclusive education by designing community support services, which are responsive to the needs of all children attending regular schools. More specifically, the objectives of the project were:

- To convert the selected schools into models of inclusive education;
- To create support services as part of the general education network;
- To develop methods and practices that guarantee the effective inclusion of children with 'special needs' as part of an educational project which respects diversity;
- To develop indicators that contribute to a greater flexibility of regulations, teacher training and the co-operation between special and regular education; and,
- To extend this model to other communities of the country and to disseminate it to other countries of the region.

The Organization and Process of the Project

This project has been substantially delayed as a result of severe political and social crisis in the country and the change of staff in the Special Education Division. This in turn has led to frequent amendments to the project during the course of its implementation and the lack of concrete guidelines for its implementation. For this reason, two missions were undertaken by the UNESCO Santiago Office in order to familiarize with the project, to identify strengths and challenges and to assist the staff to define strategies and actions.

Firstly, meetings with support teachers and supervisors were organized and an attempt made to define the materials and minimum support needed for the development of the project. Discussions were held with the staff of the Special Education Division and visits made to two schools and a special school involved in the project. Meetings also took

place with the teachers to clarify the approach. During the first mission an action plan was elaborated with an accompanying timetable of activities, the criteria for the selection of schools were defined and the sensitization and information activities aimed at the community were prepared.

In April 1999, the Director responsible for the project was changed, interrupting the implementation. The project was reactivated in June 1999, under a new Director appointed in May of that year. Consequently, a number of action was taken. The geographical zone of Chaco was chosen and six schools were selected: five regular schools (of which three were enrolling indigenous populations) and one special school. A national coordination team was established, together with a technical team and local coordinating team, situated in Chaco. The roles and functions of each one of the teams were defined.

The information dissemination and sensitization activities were carried out in the six schools and the material and training needs identified. As there were particular difficulties in getting the activities in the three indigenous schools off the ground, it was decided to focus the activities in the other three schools. Work was commenced by addressing the training needs of the staff of the three schools. A process of psycho-pedagogical evaluation was undertaken to determine the kinds of difficulties which appeared to be arising. Based on this assessment, the necessary support was developed.

Lessons Learnt

Although some progress has been made as a result of the work of the project, it had to contend with extraordinary challenges beyond those encountered by other country projects. In addition to the stressful political and social instability over the last three years, the instability of staffing in the Special Education Division and the leadership of the project, organizational difficulties in the central project team, school characteristics and difficulties of geographical location were major challenges. The distance of some 200 kilometres between the special school and the pilot schools certainly played a role in impeding the work.

In the light of these problems and in spite of the production of a final report in December 2000[60], a request for the extension of the project completion date to the end of 2001 was proposed by UNESCO and a number of actions was identified, including contracting of an external specialist to be in charge of project co-ordination, to redirect the locus of implementation to schools in Asuncion, but to maintain the support and technical assistance to the three selected schools in the Chaco region.

60. Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Viceministerio de Educación, Dirreción General de Educación Permanente, Dirreción de Educación Especial (2000), *Proyecto Escualas Inclusivas y Programas con Base en la Comunidad*. Asunción.

Vietnam

Background

Education for all is a commitment of the Vietnamese Government, as stated in the 1992 Constitution, and later, a decree has been issued to encourage students with disabilities to attend school. The Vietnamese national bodies responsible for this project were the National Institute for Educational Sciences, Centre for Special Education and the Ministry of Education and Training. The National Institute of Educational Sciences (NIES) executed this project, which was implemented in two very poor communities in Hue Province. In each district, one preschool and one primary school were chosen to trial inclusive approaches suited to their context.

The Institute began in 1991 to develop integrated education and from 1996, Vietnam committed itself to develop inclusive education, with an emphasis on child-centred methodology and changes is school structures and practices so as to include more students with disabilities in the educational process. More than one million students are estimated to have disabilities in Vietnam. By the year 2000, there were estimated to be approximately 50,000 mostly moderately and mildly impaired students attending regular classes in over 1,000 pre-primary and primary schools, and 60 special schools, mostly in the two large cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Min City, which together could accommodate about 4,000 to 4,500 students with disabilities.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aims of this project were to create a model of inclusive education and a system of community support at commune level and to establish a network of support for teachers, family and community members to help include students with disabilities in the project schools. More specifically, the project objectives were:

- To create a school for all children through inclusive education;
- To mobilize community support and collaboration;
- To foster co-operation between sectors;
- To foster more inclusive teaching practices;
- To raise community awareness;
- To identify students with disabilities within the communes served by the primary schools;
- To increase the numbers of students with disabilities included within commune schools; and,
- To evaluate the project.

The Organization and Process of the Project

One marked characteristic of this project was the way that substantial capacity development was built into it and the contributions to training made by UNESCO. The project commenced in July 1998 and a three-day national seminar was organized in January 1999 for ministry personnel, provincial officials and special education personnel, with the participation of UNESCO, Bangkok. The aim of that seminar was to raise awareness of inclusive education as the best means for Vietnam to achieve education for all.

Subsequently two training courses for community leaders were organized for the two communes, aimed at raising awareness and to improve community participation. Participants included community leaders, personnel from education, health, social workers, for example from the Red Cross, staff from women's unions and the youth union, parents of children with disabilities, etc. Emphasis was placed on group work and participatory approaches.

A training course for facilitators, headteachers and teachers was also arranged in January/February 1999. It aimed to improve the educational environment in schools and to apply new teaching approaches for all children as well as specific skills to address the needs of those children with specific difficulties. Once again a participatory approach was adopted.

A study tour to Laos for four persons was organized in March 1999 to share experiences, study the management of inclusive education and undertake field visits[61]. In March/April a UNESCO consultant was provided to assist in organizing workshops for awareness raising and training, undertake field visits, and make recommendations for future development and assistance. A UNESCO Programme Specialist also visited Vietnam and reviewed the progress of the project in May 2000[62]. Subsequently, a training workshop was organized to develop teachers skills and understanding of common impairments and their implications to teaching. Further, a workshop on inclusive education was organized in July 2000 for researchers and university lecturers to review and develop further three units of material already developed[63].

Furthermore, the project envisaged the establishment of a community support team (CST) for children with disabilities, which embraces educational, health and social personnel, as well as retired persons as volunteers, persons disabled, parents of children with or without disabilities, etc.

61. Description based on National Institute for Educational Sciences (July 1999), *Project: Inclusive Education and Community Support; Progress Report*. Vietnam.

62. Oyasu, (May 2000), *Report of Mission to Vietnam*. Bangkok: UNESCO PROAP.

63. Takahashi, (September 2000), report on a workshop on inclusive education in Vietnam. Bangkok: UNESCO PROAP.

Lessons Learnt

64. Bridge, D (April 2000), *Mission Report, Inclusive Schools and Community Support in Vietnam.* Paris: UNESCO, p.2.

Reports suggest that the main aims and objectives of the project were largely achieved. A model of inclusive education was developed and tri-alled and networks of support have been initiated in the communes, where the project took place[64]. Several sessions of external consultancy enabled the project to identify areas of challenge where further work was necessary. For example, two external resource persons mentioned the fact that the project had incorporated mildly disabled students, but not severely disabled children, suggesting that this was the next major challenge.

65. Ibid., p.5.

One resource person commented that there was a lack of technical support for visually impaired and blind and hearing impaired and deaf students, and there was a lack of clear assessment procedures for the needs assessment of students. Both pre- and in-service teacher education are also presently problematic, not least to support students with disabilities in the regular classroom, and there are also problems of coordination of services[65]. As with some other projects, the rigidity of the curriculum and the assessment and examination processes linked to it inhibit rapid progress in inclusive education.

Yemen

Background

The Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs is the lead agency in Yemen for the provision of services for disabled persons and is also the body responsible for the coordination of NGOs. Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) was introduced in Yemen in 1993, after a few initial pilot experiments. That Ministry has chosen Community Based Rehabilitation as the priority strategy for service provision to children with disabilities. A national CBR team was established in early 1997 and it plays a critical role in the implementation of the national strategy, which plans and monitors the process, and develops necessary accountability systems. The CBR programme covers such areas as training, disability rights, attitude change, community participation, medical referral, prevention and participation in school[66].

66. Details taken from Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs and Rädda Barnen (1998), *Strategy Plan for the Development of Community Based Rehabilitation for Girls and Boys with Disability in the Republic of Yemen.* Sana'a: Section One.

One major characteristic of this project was the close relationship and professional mutuality between CBR and inclusive education in districts where CBR already existed providing fertile ground for seeding inclusive education. Another characteristic was the close working relationship in support of the project among Rädda Barnen, UNICEF and UNESCO. In addition, funding for a separate but related initiative, with the aim of developing a new curriculum, was provided by the World Bank, affording an opportunity to include all children within the regular curriculum.

In 1999, a major step forward towards inclusive education was taken through issuing the Resolution 407, which stated the right of children with disabilities to attend public schools. Within the Government's Five Year Plan, two groups have been prioritised: girls and children with disabilities.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of the project were formulated as follows:

- To have all children with disabilities welcomed to inclusive schools;
- To learn lessons from the schools and the teachers as experience is gained to find ways forward;
- To address and be sensitive to gender needs;
- To train all teachers in the pilot schools by using the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom;
- To identify a cadre of teachers to receive further training to become trainers;
- To establish a referral process for children in inclusive schools;

- To develop progressive teaching methods in the classroom and to make participatory materials;
- To focus on classes 1 to 3 until 2000 and in 2001 to expand to classes 4 to 6;
- To involve the inspectorate in the monitoring and assessment of children;
- To listen to the students with 'special needs' and other students on ways forward and to encourage full participation;
- To encourage environmental changes in schools;
- To have more schools and new governorates working towards inclusive education; and,
- To include children in other difficult circumstances[67].

67. Details from Brouillette, J (1999), *Community Based Rehabilitation and Inclusive Education to Support Boys and Girls with Disability: Update for 1999 in the Republic of Yemen.* Rädda Barnen, Yemen, p.17

The Organization and Process of the Project

The Ministry of Education was the responsible body for the implementation of this project. The project contributed to the momentum for the recognition of inclusive education embedded in the Resolution 407. It concentrated in fourteen schools in three different governorates. The Ministry of Education assigned a focal point in each governorate to follow up the activities and in each governorate a co-ordinator was identified to follow up the work in schools.

The project started with a consultant mission in April 1999 and followed by two resource persons from Lebanon and Jordan, who led training activities for the pilot schools in the three provinces in the South. They also provided advice to the project team and the Ministry of Education on the follow-up activities to be carried out with the schools and on the support and monitoring required. A strategy was established for teacher training activities in the three governorates and the schools committed themselves to put into practice new skills and knowledge at the school level. In the schools, training was focussed on teaching techniques responsive to a wide variety of learning needs, as well as specific training on children with hearing impairments. Focus was also placed on training of trainers, so that they could work with teachers and encourage information sharing among the various governorates.

A follow-up workshop was organised in November 1999 with the support of a UNESCO consultant. The objectives of this workshop were:
- To train teachers to develop good classroom practice;
- To encourage inclusion and participation of children with disabilities in ordinary classrooms; and,
- To shortlist some candidates to become trainers.

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A number of units from the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom were covered in the workshop. Multi-level instruction and how to deal with large size classes were also discussed. Both individual and group evaluations were undertaken[68].

68. Information taken from Sha'ban, R (1999), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Follow-up Workshop on Special Needs in the Classroom: Final Report.* Paris: UNESCO, pp.3-8.

Training in 1999 involved some 120 teachers and in 2000 175 persons were trained. 62% of those trained have been women. In early 2001, there were 149 male and 331 female children with 'special needs' attending the designated pilot schools.

Furthermore, serious attempts were made to build accountability. At the end of the first year, in May and June 1999, for example, meetings took place with teachers and students about ways forward. Twenty-two recommendations were made and taken to the Minister and Deputy Minister. Perhaps not surprisingly, teachers prioritized their own needs for training.

Lessons Learnt

The Yemen project used existing structures and has concentrated in adjustments in the system and routines, and growth from what already existed. This was so especially with the close association of CBR and inclusive education. The fourteen project schools were all within areas where CBR was being implemented and it was observed in the year 2000 that the areas making the greatest changes were those with both CBR and inclusive developments. Existing already changing attitudes provided a fertile seedbed for the launch of inclusive education[69]. As a result of the work of the project, changes have been observed in the participating schools, both within and out of classrooms.

69. Brouillette, J et al (2001), *From Policy to Implementation: The Development Process of Inclusive Education within the Ministry of Education, Republic of Yemen*. Beirut: Arab Regional Conference on the Inclusion of Persons with Special Needs in Formal Education, p.5.

An important "coincidence" was the close working relationship between Rädda Barnen, UNICEF and UNESCO and the commencement of curriculum reform (funded by the World Bank). Teachers have been encouraged to change their teaching/learning approaches, and increased participation and group work have been observed in classrooms.
Team teaching and preparation of simple interactive learning materials have been other positive outcomes of the work around curriculum development.

During break times, interaction among children with disabilities and those without also indicates positive progress. The attitudes of students and teachers appear to have changed and students with disabilities are quoted as feeling welcomed in their schools[70]. The combination of CBR and inclusive education would appear to have been highly effective, with close co-operation among donors they seem to have been decisive factors in the success of this project.

70. Judgements based on UNESCO (January 2000), *UNESCO/Norway Funds-in-Trust Co-operation: Implementation Status Report.* Paris: p.6.
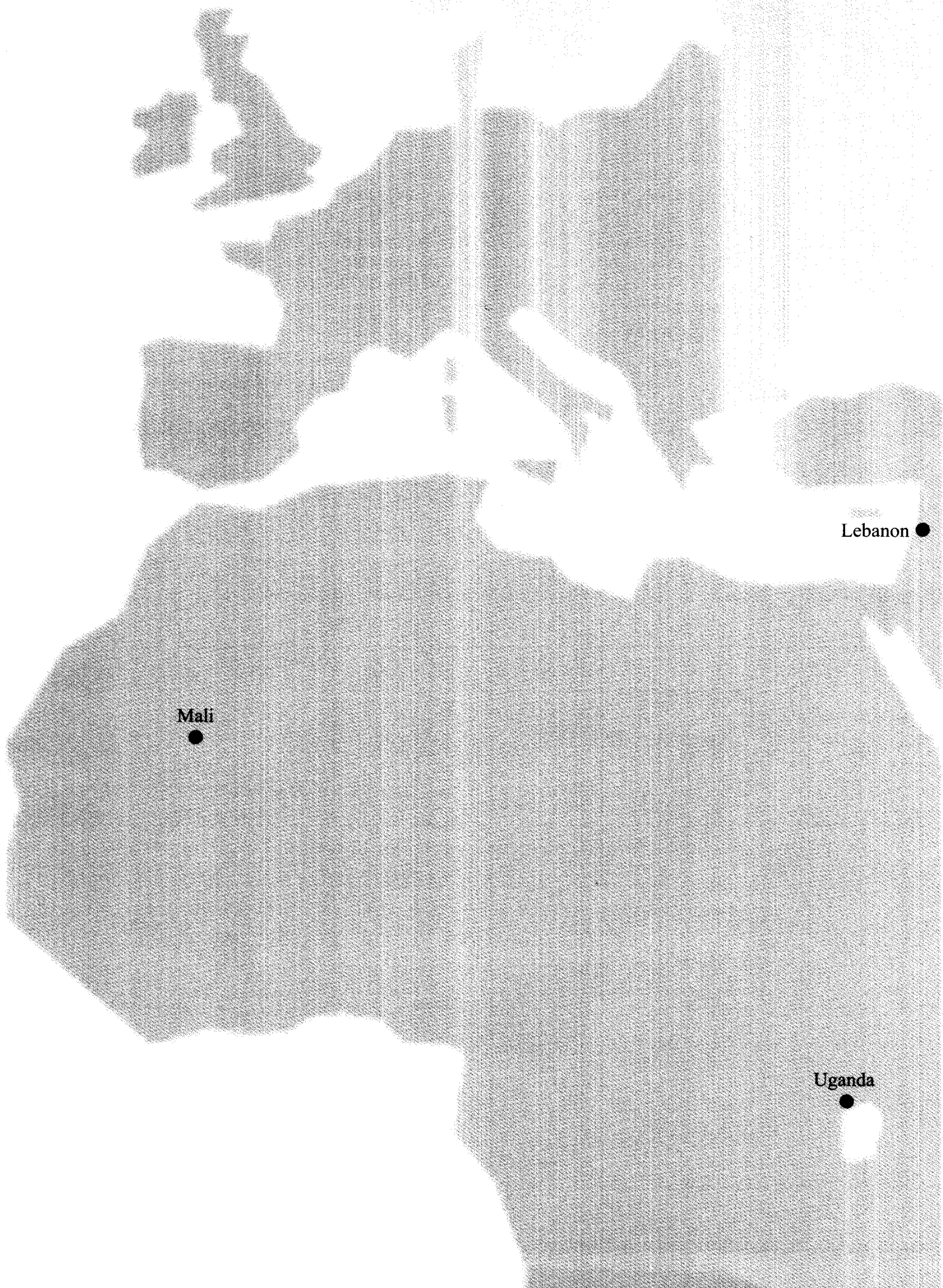
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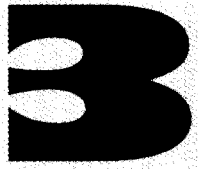
Background

Most of the country reports indicate a lack of expertise and training on the part of educational personnel in the policy and practice of inclusive education as being a major challenge. In anticipation of this gap, several international/regional and subregional workshops have been organised by UNESCO to build capacities for inclusive education and an introduction to training in skills and expertise required by a range of educational personnel.

One of these workshops in Mali, was closely linked to the country projects, described above, and indeed its usefulness and impact is referred to in several country reports. Two others were organized during the time-span of the project, one in Uganda for English-speaking African countries and one in Beirut for Lebanon and other Arab countries. A brief description of each of these workshops follows.
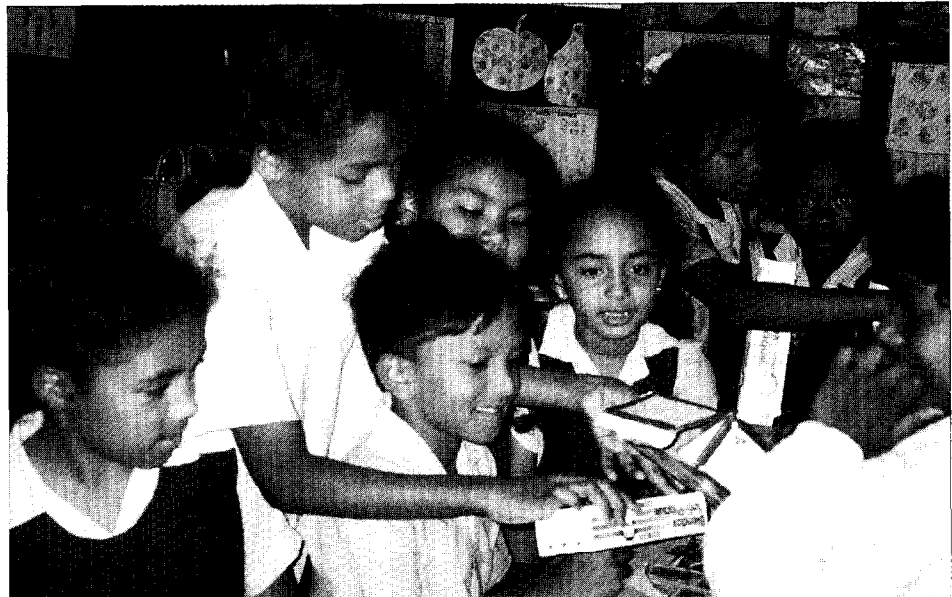
Human Resource Development in Support of Inclusive Education

Uganda Institute for Special Education, Kampala, Uganda, February-March 1999

Aims and objectives

The objectives and expected outcomes of the workshop were formulated as follows:

• Understanding of new concepts and broader perspectives related to inclusion: inclusion as part of the Education for All initiative;

• Understanding of what schools, teachers and the curriculum can do to minimize barriers and maximize participation in learning: skills in introducing active learning approaches to teachers and student teachers;

• Familiarization with and mastering skills in the use of the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: use of the Pack in training activities in working with schools, etc;

• Understanding the role of the education community in the inclusive education movement: skills in mobilization, developing partnership and networking; and,

• Basic skills in planning activities in support of inclusive education.

The Organization and Process of the Workshop

Twenty five participants from Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe participated. In addition, an expert from Finland was invited to participate in the workshop. All participants had a background of teacher training, either in teacher training colleges, universities or ministries. The workshop was led by two UNESCO consultants, one from India and one from Australia and supported by two UNESCO staff members.

A basic principle of the working process was participation. Group activities were central to this method of working. Visits to schools, including observation of classroom practice and learning environments, were arranged, in the context of promoting inclusion and participation in Africa. A meaningful and joint definition of inclusive education in an African context was worked out, based on common values, understandings and goals.

Topics covered in the workshop included the following major areas:

- New perspectives on inclusion;

- Approaches in training teachers and other educational personnel to promote inclusive education;

- Addressing the curriculum; and,

- Facilitating innovation – initiatives to introduce and promote inclusive education[71].

71. Details taken from UNESCO (March 1999), *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Brief Project Update.* Paris: pp.2/3.

Outcomes

The careful preparation and selection of participants contributed to a successful workshop in the following respects:

- It utilized well the extensive facilities, experience and expertise of UNISE in hosting such events;

- It consolidated and reinforced basic understanding and competence in working with the concept of inclusion;

- It built on the experience and expertise of the carefully selected group of participants;

- The responsive, participatory approach of the organizers unlocked vast experience available from Africa;

- It opened up new channels for networking; and,

- It provided links and sharing of experiences among inclusive education practitioners from countries of the South and the North[72].

72. Account based on UNESCO (1999), *Human Resource Development in Support of Inclusive Education; Report on the Subregional Workshop, 22 February to 3 March 1999. Paris.*

Workshop on UNESCO's Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom

Beirut, Lebanon, February 1999

Background

This workshop was organized jointly by the Lebanese Down Syndrome Association and UNESCO. Although the workshop had originally been intended exclusively for Lebanese participants as the forerunner of a teacher education programme to a number of schools throughout the country, participants from Egypt, Morocco and Yemen were also invited.

The criteria for the selection of the Lebanese schools were:

- That the school had to either have already started including children with disabilities or was willing to adopt the idea;
- Participation had to be in teams, the aim being not to train individuals but to introduce a new method of thinking training;
- Administrators or programme coordinators had to be involved in order to facilitate the implementation of what was learned in the school; and,
- The school(s) involved should become part of a larger network which will have to work together, support and learn from each other.

Aims and objectives

The workshop was organized for those schools and institutions which were already attempting inclusion, so as to support and to give an opportunity to be exposed to the principles and practices of inclusive education. It also aimed to give the participants the opportunity to relive the experience of being a student through the exposure of as many different teaching methods as possible as a live example of how the needs of students of mixed abilities can be met by using methods that cater to different learning styles and sensory preferences.

The Themes of the Workshop

The workshop took place over a period of five days, with one session for the introduction of each module of the Pack, followed by several units from each module. The workshop concluded with a feedback and evaluation session. The issues covered included:

- Integration versus inclusion;

- Integration versus inclusion;
- Negotiation of objectives; and
- Cooperative learning.

Outcomes

Evaluation of the workshop suggests that some participants felt the pressure of the timing, but that they came to appreciate the importance of organizing the timing of the sessions and using the time allocated effectively. Participants also appreciated flexibility on the part of the facilitators in dealing with participants. The high level of interaction, characterized by respect for opinions of others, and the opportunity to share with and learn from others were also valued. The workshop also appears to have been successful in achieving the following results:

- Developing a better understanding of the concept of inclusion and its value in the education system;
- Encouraging a strong enthusiasm to support student diversity;
- Developing a conviction that students with disabilities should be in regular classes;
- Creating willingness to work with other schools and institutions;
- Convincing participants that using a variety of teaching methods makes learning more enjoyable and thus more meaningful;
- Introducing methods applicable to regular classes at all levels; and,
- Convincing participants that feedback is a necessary component of the teaching/learning process[73].

73. Material summarised from Ibrahim, H T (1999), *UNESCO's Resource Pack Workshop: Special Needs in the Regular Classroom: Final Report*. Beirut: Lebanese Downs Syndrome Association/UNESCO.

Human Resource Development in Support of Inclusive Education

Bamako, Mali, November-December 1999

The aims and objectives of the Workshop

The overall goal of this workshop was to contribute to the development of human resources in order to promote the inclusion in education. Two major expected outcomes were outlined:

• to enable participants to master the concept of inclusive education, learn from experiences in inclusive education and be able to formulate recommendations to government, community, authorities and teachers in order to promote inclusion; and,

• to deepen the competencies needed for inclusive education, in particular training by using the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack, to mobilize resources and collaboration, and to evaluate and monitor educational actions.

More specifically the objectives of the workshop were:

• To offer a sensitization to the new concepts and perspectives in the domain of inclusion within a broad concept of education for all;

• To encourage taking account of the possibilities, which exist in schools to reduce barries to learning and to increase participation of children in the process of learning at the level of practice, organization of the learning centre and curriculum;

• To facilitate reflection on the role of the community in promoting inclusive education;

• To provide an initiation to the training of teachers and headteachers; and,

• To a familiarise with the use of the UNESCO Teacher Training Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom.

The Organization and Process of the Workshop

Most participants came from the ongoing *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes* project from ten French-speaking African countries. The workshop was led by a team of UNESCO staff members and consultants. The principles for the organization and delivery of the workshop were:

- To start with the experience of the participants and evoke a dynamic exchange allowing participants to perceive common trends, knowledge and questions;
- To take account of expectations of the participants and to adjust to the evolution of the group's reflections;
- To evoke active learning of all participants, and an effective participation conducive to production of ideas and debate;
- To arouse reflection; and,
- To provoke an exchange, based on concrete examples and contexts.

The content of the workshop included activities about the new perspectives and concepts in the area of inclusion; the identification of barriers to learning; the identification of resources in schools and through collaboration with the parents and community, as well as with existing support services; multisectoral collaboration; training, including the composition of groups and the use of time and space; and, the evaluation of the learning of the pupils. A part of the workshop also enabled participants themselves to use the UNESCO Pack as trainers. In order to provide transferable training strategies, the reflection also included a recommended method for its use.

Outcomes

In general, there would appear to have been a high level of satisfaction with the workshop and its approach. Most participants completed an evaluation form. All respondents found the material, which had been used of good quality and well adapted, the themes and the make-up of the target group pertinent and relevant to their needs, although a half of them felt the material inadequate in quantity. Half found the theme of the "school where all learn" – a case study – interesting, with a half also considering partnership indispensable for the implementation of inclusive policies. A big majority wanted to deepen the theme of training, based on actual cases from the classroom, some demanding the development of a culture of partnership. The majority also considered that the participatory approach of the workshop, with the workgroups varying according to the activity and the distribution of roles in the groups changing, had been active, diverse and varied.

At the end of the workshop, the participants committed themselves to make a concrete reality of inclusive education. To guarantee the success of this enterprise, they recommended:

- The identification of inclusive education as an educational priority at all levels;
- The creation at schools, mechanisms for intervention, management, of monitoring and evaluation of inclusive education;
- The organization of meetings on inclusive education in schools;
- The promotion of inclusive education among learners through suitably adapted approaches;
- The advocacy on the part of UNESCO with governments for the introduction of inclusive education;
- Publication of a Bulletin for exchange of experiences in the area;
- The acceptance of inclusive education as a priority for organizations of those with disabilities and other partners;
- Collaboration of organization with ministries for the implementation of inclusive education;
- A request to the African Institute for Rehabilitation for the member states of the OAU to emphasize inclusive education in its plan of action for the African Decade of Disabled Persons, 2000-2009; and,
- The encouragement of study visits among countries developing inclusive education[74].

74. Account based on UNESCO (2000), *Atelier sous Régional sur le Développement des Ressources Humaines: Appui à l'Education Intégratrice*, Bamako, Mali, 27 Novembre au 4 Décembre 1999

Brazil

OTHER INITIATIVES 4

India

Myanmar

South Africa

Developing Sustainable Inclusion Policies and Practices[75]

Background

75. A first draft of this part of this section of the present report was prepared by Maldwyn Jones in early 2001.

76. England participated in this work, but it is not covered in this report as UNESCO did not provided any financial assistance to England.

This collaborative, comparative, research and development project on educational inclusion policy and practice drew on the knowledge and experience of researchers and practitioners in four participating countries and was coordinated by Canterbury Christ Church University College, UK.[76]. Countries were chosen which could make a major contribution to the development of each other's practice. These countries proposed their own participation on the basis of their own assessment of their capacity to make a contribution through mutual collaboration, exchange of information and interlearning.

A careful analysis of the similarities and differences between the countries, and of the problems encountered and attempts to overcome them, highlighted the educational solutions most fitted in culture-specific settings. The most important outcomes were to be the developments in policy and practice within the selected areas of each country and evidence of the spread of instructive practice to other areas locally and regionally[77].

77. The current account documents the first two phases of the work, supported by UNESCO, and is a summary of work done so far. The final two phases of the project are devoted to analysing and applying intervention strategies to be adopted in supporting development and dissemination.

In the 'Four Nations' project context, the term inclusion is used in a broader perspective, referring to all children facing barriers, whatever their nature, to learning. It is not restricted to children with disabilities but also draws in children who are socially disadvantaged through poverty and/or racial, linguistic, religious and gender discrimination. Inclusion is defined as a process of increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, cultures, curricula and communities. Inclusion is a never-ending process, rather than a simple change of state, and is dependent on continuous pedagogical and organisational development within the mainstream.

Aims and objectives

78. This aim is as stated in the original research proposal, dated September 1998.

The project aims to identify and maximize the human and material resources available to support educational inclusion in any one country, so that developments are sustainable and can be incorporated into regional and national policy[78]. The main aims of Phases One and Two (1998-1999 with UNESCO support) were:

* To identify the factors causing exclusion;
* To maximize the participation of all students in the development areas within the Education for All framework;
* To construct sustainable, context-based, culture specific models of inclusion; and,
* To co-ordinate with national and local authorities and draw them into the project to ensure long-term sustainability.

Phases Three and Four (2000-2002) involve the further development of inclusion policy and practice within the pilot areas and evaluation of progress over a three-year period.

Organization and Process of the Project

The four overlapping phases of the project entailed:

1. Setting up the project:
Researchers came to the project having already identified a policy development area within which the project would be carried out.
The main event for Phase 1 was an extended, intensive seminar held in Cambridge UK., in September 1998, attended by the principal researchers leading the project in each of the four countries.
At the seminar, participants described in detail inclusive education policies in their respective countries and collectively defined the parameters of the project.

2. Establishing development areas and identifying barriers to inclusion:
This involved the creation of a support team and the start of development work within the selected area. An initial survey of barriers to participation and inclusion was carried out for all the schools and communities involved in the project.

3. Supporting development:
Phase 3 involves a cycle of joint research and development fora in each country, where researchers join with others within the selected area of the host country and a representative of the national government to review developments and share solutions to overcoming barriers to progress. Two-week visits have been made to two of the countries during the three years of the project. These two-week encounters allow for exchange of information among the participants and then focus on the further development of policy and practice, and on dissemination.

4. Dissemination:
This phase calls for the spread of policy from the selected area to other areas within each country. Policy developments are to be documented by the researchers and publications linked to the first seminar and to each subsequent research and development forum. Dissemination would also occur through articles, books and conferences[79].

79. This section of the report is based on the original proposal, prepared and proposed by Booth, T dated 11 September 1998.

UNESCO contributed in 1998/1999 towards the first phases of research in Brazil, India and South Africa for baseline analysis and training of educational personnel. This permitted the project teams in each of these countries to launch their work with preliminary organization and a first round of surveys and contacts with communities and schools that were surveyed as case studies for subsequent more detailed examination over the following years.

■ Brazil

The development areas: Three schools were identified in two impoverished boroughs of the Rio de Janeiro suburbs. All cater to economically and socially disadvantaged children as well as a limited number of pupils with disabilities.

Special needs education in the national context

Despite legislative efforts to make special needs education available at all levels, the current practice most observed is a special needs education system in segregated settings running parallel to mainstream education. Private networks are responsible for most of Brazil's special schools
and mainly the Association of Parents and Friends of the Exceptional throughout the whole country. They are financed through private donations and by federal government money coming from the Ministries of Education and Social Welfare. Of late, however, due to changes in government attitudes, policies have become more pro-inclusion.
As a result of the 1988 Constitution (resulting from the establishment of the 'New Republic') the following initiatives concerning special needs education are now part of the policy agenda:

- Encouragement of non-segregational policies;
- Discouragement of the establishment of special schools;
- Encouragement of links between special and regular schools;
- Inter-ministerial links;
- Links between the special and regular education branches within the Ministry of Education; and,
- Promotion of awareness of special needs education issues throughout society.

Already in 1994, the Secretary for Special Needs Education in the Ministry of Education had indicated his view that inclusion is a dynamic process of participation of people within a net of relationships.
This process legitimises people's interactions within social groups. Inclusion implies reciprocity. Thus, the perspective regarding special needs education is changing into a more democratic one; one that implies that special needs education is to be particularly of regular and universal public education.

Special needs education in the municipality

Rio de Janeiro is implementing a new educational framework called 'Multi-education'. The framework is inclusive in the sense that schools must be open to all children served by the system, including all who are excluded. A further reform involves three-year 'cycles' as regards curricula and grading of students (as opposed to the traditional, year-by-year pass-fail system).

The experience with the three development area schools

The Brazilian researchers concentrated their attention on structural and institutional challenges within the schools themselves and between the schools and the municipality education administration. These challenges indeed affect all students.

80. The name of the school has been changed.

João Pessoa school[80] caters for approximately 700 pupils, in two shifts each day. It has a school-community committee made up of parents' and teachers' representatives and the headteacher. Although the school has a good number of students with disabilities integrated and two special classes, it is not very open to the principle of integration. There appeared to be internal strife between teachers, the headteacher and the pedagogic
co-ordinator. The school's curriculum does not refer *per se* to special needs education or inclusion. There was great reluctance to participate in the project because teachers had difficulties with the proposed schedule; they did not believe in the need for external help; and they did not want to make the extra effort needed to meet with the project team. Indeed, the staff wanted to be paid to participate in an activity that they saw as
'extra working hours'. Had it not been for the headteacher's persistence and willingness to make all the necessary adjustments, the project would not have included this school.

81. The name of the school has been changed.

Of the three schools participating in the project, *Graça Barbosa*[81] is the smallest. The school caters for some 460 children (pre-schoolers to age 11) and functions in two shifts of four and a half hours each. The school has two special classes for children with intellectual disabilities (with seven children in each class) and one accelerated learning class which was later changed to 'progression class'. The children come from five surrounding communities, all of them poor.

The school, like all public schools, benefits from three support programmes of the State of Rio de Janeiro: Merenda Escolar (food); Livro didatico (school books); and Repasse de recursos do FNDE (money given by the National Fund for the Development of Education). One aim of this school's policy is "to ensure the elaboration and implementation of projects which are tuned to the needs of the school's

surrounding communities; stimulating participation, creativity and inclusion". Its curriculum includes the aim to integrate all the special services (special classes for the intellectually disabled and the acceleration/progression class).

82. The name of the school has been changed.

Ronaldo Monteiro school[82] differs from the other two in that it operates a full day shift for 590 children from kindergarten through grade four, with one acceleration/progression class. It also offers an evening programme for 157 students who had previously avoided or been excluded from the education system. The regular students have their breakfast, lunch and dinner at the school. Built of concrete, the school might have been very austere, but staff and students have covered the walls with figures of children's characters and other colorful motifs. The human atmosphere is very warm and students (and visitors) feel welcome from the beginning.

The school has a low student/teacher ratio, at 1:24. The school is very proud of having established, through its own initiative, a good relationship with the community. It is also active in seeking out and establishing partnerships with NGOs and churches, improving the services it can offer to the community. *Ronaldo Monteiro* does not yet have a policy statement. Its curriculum does not refer to inclusive education.

The main barriers to inclusion and learning at these three schools were identified and characterized by the researchers as 'structural', 'process-related', and 'contextual', as follows:

- Structural:
  Architecture: All regular classrooms at *João Pessoa* and *Graça Barbosa* are on the first floor. As there are no ramps or lifts, many physically disabled children cannot attend these schools.
  The surrounding grounds at two schools are not used for want of resources, even to cut the grass. The forecourt of one school is used for teachers' parking.

- Process-related:
  The difficulty of gathering all the teachers together at each school more than once a month.
  Some teachers cannot stay until the end of a work period or the end of a day because they leave to work in another school.
  At one school, not all teachers were aware of activities developed by their colleagues. Some did not know that there was an acceleration class.
  Communication between the schools and the regional education co-ordination office are not systematic, so that many issues are ultimately decided by the central administration without consultation.
  There are few opportunities for the technical staff of the municipality

secretary of education and of the regional education co-ordination office to meet with the schools. These contacts are needed so that teachers can express their needs, feelings and ideas.

Aggressive, sometimes violent, behavior is manifested by the students. The difficulty posed by children with visual, hearing and other which interfere negatively in the teaching-learning process.

The relationship between students and teachers is the traditional model: teacher-centred.

- Contextual:

The poverty of the local community and, in the case of *Barbosa* school, the contrast with groups of higher socio-economic and cultural status.

The lack of interest and participation by many families.

Family disorganisation, with children living in promiscuous conditions.

Majority of children originating from a large slum district and thus in precarious living conditions

Lack of hygiene and experience of social interaction.

Lack of human and material resources.

Teachers working double shifts, often in different schools, make it difficult to get to work on time, given the travel distances.

Lack of flexibility in the school calendar, making it difficult for teachers to meet and discuss their practices, outside of one fixed half day or day per month.

Low wages for teachers with serious repercussions for their self-esteem.

The socio-economic situation of the nation, with growing levels of dissatisfaction on the part of the Brazilian population.

The work plan for the future:

- With the project schools:

Intensify the project's presence in the schools.

Further observe whole school cultures.

Deepen contacts with students and parents.

Work with families.

Establish contacts with outside professionals for courses and direct assistance to the school community.

- With the school communities:

Initiate contacts with community to identify resources available in the communities (clinics, hospitals, pre-school classes, leisure and sports centres, business and industry).

Strengthen links with neighbourhood associations to gather frequent information about the communities.

Strengthen existing and establish new partnerships.

- With education administrators participating directly in the project:
  Maintain and expand the actions already undertaken to increase opportunities to study inclusion and related educational actions.
- For the research group in Brazil:
  Improve timing and frequency of meetings of the research group for ongoing study and evaluation of the project.

■ India

The research methodology

The overall study concentrates on extremely deprived areas. The sites represent urban slum and poor rural schooling. While exclusion in India occurs at all levels, for the purpose of the study, research boundaries are restricted to the lowest socio-economic levels.
The final report on Phases I and II of the study looks at the overall Indian context, then focuses on schools and school districts within or near the chief cities of two States: Mumbai (Maharashtra State) and Chennai (Tamil Nadu State).

A combination of methods have been used: desk research, field research and observation, situation analyses, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and photo analysis. The research teams met several times in Mumbai and in Chennai for initial project planning. The whole Indian team attended a seminar in Chennai.

The context and identification of policy development areas

Using a broad definition of 'disabilities' (physical and intellectual disabilities, social and economic exclusion – poverty, ethnicity, gender), there is educational exclusion on a massive scale in India:
nearly 98 per cent of children with disabilities remain outside the orbit of any service from the State. Implementation strategies for children with 'special needs' have not been worked out. Legislation regarding persons with disabilities, including children with 'special needs' is recent but is "...without mechanisms to claim and without obligation to provide".

As in all participating countries, the Indian researchers identified administrative districts or sub-districts based on the existing organization government services. The selected districts contain a number of schools and reflect a range of issues, including some of the more intractable barriers to learning within the country.

The school districts and schools

Mumbai, Satyam School: [83]

Prior to its recent official classification as a recognized slum district, fear of demolition and lack of resources in the district meant no investment in education infrastructure. In spite of its size and proximity to existing education institutions, no government or NGO education facility existed. Pre-school education and nutrition supplements are not available. One attempt to start a *balwadi* (a child day care nursery for children 3-6) quickly folded. Only since 1999 has a single NGO (Spastics Society) school for children with disabilities existed, teaching 50 children the usual school subjects as well as personal hygiene.

Further reasons for the lack of educational infrastructure are absence of parental and community involvement (85 per cent of parents are illiterate, migration in and out is frequent); a 'theoretical' curriculum that is uninteresting; and 'theoretical' teaching methods that are inappropriate.

Mumbai, Shastri School: [84]

The other two schools in Mumbai chosen for the project are located in an officially recognized slum district. Educational support is received from the local and central governments and from several NGOs.
The district is slightly better off than the one described above by virtue of having limited electricity and water connections and more pervasive informal and household industries. Home-based industries manufacture many more items than traditional household industries: leather, plastic and garments good enough to be exported. Virtually all homes are involved in some kind of economic activity, notably 'pappad' making (large wafers for later frying).

The *Shastri* school is a five-story building with separate schools on each floor according to language of instruction: Gujarathi, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu. If, theoretically, the school must accept all children, it refuses children with intellectual disabilities for whom, according to the headteacher, "there are special schools". The headteacher notes that "90 per cent of children studying in schools run by the Municipal Corporation (BMC) can be considered 'disabled' due to deprivation of basic facilities". He considers those children who cannot fight the system or 'circumstances' to be disabled and does not apply this term only to those with impairments.

The headteacher mentioned a recent order from the government asking teachers of all BMC schools to go out into the community and locate children not attending schools, with the aim of enrolling them.
He admitted frankly that none of his teachers had done this, relying rather on social workers from other organisations, mainly NGOs, which work with street children and run balwadis (pre-schools) in the community.

Raman school: [85]

The *Raman School* is a state-supported school. The headteacher, a teacher for 22 years and now headteacher in the primary section, is very pro-inclusion and very motivated to help. However, she could only recall four children with disabilities who had attended the school.

Tamil Nadu, Saraswaty pre-school: [86]

Tamil Nadu State is in south-eastern India and has a population of 60 million. The development site for the study is a pre-school started specially for children of the Irula tribe, chosen because:

- It focuses on 'first generation' learners;

- It is located in a rural area; and,

- It focuses on a tribe with a different history, which until recently was totally isolated from mainstream Indian culture.

The *Saraswaty* pre-school was started in 1988 by an NGO in order to give tribal children a head start to formal education and social interaction, before mainstreaming them to larger local schools.
Particular factors:

- The isolated lifestyle of the Irulas makes them wary of and submissive to non-Irula populations. Participation and interaction with other groups at school is seen as a first step;

- The concept of formal schooling is new to the Irulas. They have always learned from their fathers, and the forest was their school. 'Sit in' to learn has been introduced to the children, so adjustment to formal schooling later on will be easier, and the children learn to focus better on what has to be learned;

- Not having attended school themselves, Irula parents often withdraw their children to work, today generally in the fields. The importance of regular attendance is not understood. This initial programme focuses on bringing home the habit of school to both the children and their parents;

- The habits and hygiene of the Irulas are different. The concept of personal hygiene is specifically taught to the children before they are mainstreamed.

Tamil Nadu, Middle and High School:
The school serves a 20 kms radius and is accessed by the children on foot. Long distance leads to children dropping out, especially adolescent girls who must walk unaccompanied. The parents of whom many are illitrate are unable to help the children to solve their academic problems – or motivate them to study – and are unaware of the importance of their children's regular attendance at school.

*Chennai, Higher Secondary School and Vigay Special Educational
Needs School:*[87]

Vigay Special School and the secondary school have worked together
for some years, the contact beginning with the secondary school helping
Vigay to sell greeting cards. Many avenues towards inclusion have been
tried. The first step was taken in 1998 when some students between
12 and 15 from *Vigay* began attending sports and games sessions at the
secondary school once a week. These students needed physical activities
and social interaction. The attitude of the secondary school students was
sympathetic. The next project 1998 was an 'interaction' club. *Vigay* has
activities once a week where children participate in arts and crafts,
music, sports, science, maths and nature. Students from the secondary
school participate in these activities once a week. The students together
performed a Christmas play, a turning point where the secondary school
students saw themselves as participants and not helpers. The real resistance
to integration and inclusion comes from the secondary school's staff and
management.

In response to a proposal to include seven *Vigay* students at the sec-
ondary school, the staff responded:

"Only five students, not seven. The five students would be 'guest stu-
dents' and not enrolled as other students, and thus could not wear
the school's uniform or use the school transport."

They wanted special educators in each class. If the special educator
was not present in the classroom, the children with disabilities were
expelled.

Barriers to learning

Study findings reveal that a wide variety of factors exclude children
from education.

Poverty and lack of resources for education:
In many households, the struggle for survival is so acute that every
member of the family must work and earn in order that the whole family
gets a least one square meal a day: hence, children from such families
do not enter the education system at all. Though education is theoretically
free, the costs of uniforms, textbooks, paper and travel are unaffordable
and are common deterrents. The absence of any school or government
organization providing at least pre-primary educational services in the
slum districts is a reason for low enrolment.

Illiteracy:
Biased attitudes among parents themselves towards education stemming
from their own lack of education and the large number of children
in typical families are major barriers to learning in the community.

Girls:
Girls are kept at home in order to look after younger siblings when the parents are at work. Parents feel that it is futile to educate girls where early marriage is a tradition. Gender-bias is quite strong in socio-economically impoverished areas, particularly in the Muslim community. Parents show a greater interest in the education of their sons. They also have higher expectations of their sons than of their daughters.

Children at work:
Child labour is widely prevalent. Many if not most slum children work in minor jobs in the informal sector as cleaners, flower sellers, porters, 'grease monkeys', etc.

Children with disabilities:
Children with disabilities simply seem to remain outside official programmes.

Other causes for dropping out of the school system

Many children drop out of the education system after they fail in a class a couple of times. Others are shunted off to the home village every couple of years when the mother has another baby. Many youngsters after the school are without jobs, but not ready to go back to traditional occupations, leaving them disillusioned with and lost within the system.

Lack of teaching resources:
Class sizes of 40-60, sometimes more than 100 in rural areas, are common. Material teaching aids and resources are limited to non-existent.

Poor teaching:
The education system continues to be essentially teaching- and teacher-oriented. The curriculum centres around prescribed textbooks and the teacher has little scope for creativity in modifying the set pattern. The annual external examination continues to be the most dominant element in the academic calendar, disrupting the learning process. The use of corporal punishment is still resorted to, as teachers believe this is necessary to keep classes under control.

Irrelevant curricula:
Many parents cite the irrelevance of the curriculum as a reason for not sending their children to school. They feel the curriculum is not geared to real life, and fruitful years of income generation will be lost even if the child receives only a primary education. Some parents equate the curriculum with 'alienation', many feel that the school system is simply "not for them". Another sentiment that came out strongly among some parents who themselves had never received and education was the fear that the educated child "might get too big for his boots" and stop

"looking up" to the parents with respect. These parents felt that if they had managed to live 'decently' without an education, their children could also be expected to do so.

The syllabus:
The syllabus is overwhelming at each grade level. Texts are poorly written. Teachers are not involved in syllabus determination and find syllabus content to be vague and oriented to rote learning.

Language:
English, generally the medium of instruction in the study areas, poses a barrier to learning. Many students are from homes where English is not spoken at all.

Travel distance:
Long travel distances to attend school lead to children dropping out, especially adolescent girls who have to walk long distances over lonely roads.

Intervention strategies

The Indian experience shows that grassroots efforts are valuable and inclusive practices need not await systemic change. Inclusion is a process that can be linked to smaller innovative practices.

Desegregation of existing services:
Within the context of Spastics Society schools, a redefinition of objectives and activities has enabled the admission of children without disabilities but facing barriers in slum districts. Desegregation is taking place within the Society's own schools to make a place for the most disadvantaged children in terms of poverty and ethnic, linguistic and gender barriers. Children from the slum district are now included.

Community-based initiatives in inclusive education:
Capacity-building in the community and among parents has begun. Community workers have been very creative in designing educational aids and toys from recycled material, which is both effective and cost-neutral. The Spastics Society has moved from 'Community Based Rehabilitation' to a 'Community Based Initiative in Inclusive Education'. The needs of slum children, of street children, of girls and of children with disabilities are being tackled. And indeed, the initial success in training community workers has shown that 'special needs' can be addressed without too much specialization.

Inclusive nurseries in inner city slum districts:
In another slum, for the high-risk category children aged 1-6, local nurseries are being run in two shifts. Teachers and assistants are all women and belong to the community. A 10-point questionnaires developed by the

World Health Organisation and administered by community workers is being used to identify children with disabilities. More than 1 000 children, with a special focus on girls and children with disabilities, are attending regular community pre-schools set up within the study sites in the slum districts.

❖ "In Human Diversity lies the creativity of the Universe. Undoubtedly, it will be a Himalayan task to ensure that civil society is built on the bedrock of values of social justice and human rights where all children's needs are respected and those who suffer from oppressive laws are reinstated into our lives as citizens we respect and learn from, with their own rights and entitlements. Suffering has no barrier ... no territorial boundary. Oppressive systems, injustice, contravention of human rights are a world problem. To build civil society based on the bedrock of values of social justice and human rights, many systems will need to be dismantled."

■ South Africa

In South Africa, this project has been one of the first initiatives to implement recommendations in inclusive education made in policy documents having emerged since 1994 (cf. Report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Commission on Education Support Services (November 1997); South African Schools Act of 1996; White Paper on Education and Training, March 1995; White Paper on an Integrated Disability Strategy, 1997; Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive education and training system, July 2001).

A critical task in education is to maximize participation for all through minimizing barriers to learning. The Report of the National Commission of Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services in their research identified the following key barriers that learners face within the South African context: socio-economic barriers (lack of access to basic services, poverty and under-development); and factors putting children at risk (physical, emotional and sexual abuse; political violence, HIV/AIDS); attitudes; inflexible curricula; language and communication; inaccessible and unsafe built environments; inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services; lack of parental recognition and involvement; disabilities; and lack of human resource development strategies.

There are two project sites in South Africa. One district in the province of Kwazulu-Natal, and the other in the Gauteng Province. The project covers the whole scope of educational contexts in South Africa from rural disadvantaged, to urban disadvantaged to urban advantaged.

The Development Areas

Kwazulu-Natal Province:

The development area was selected for the project because it was felt that the most marginalized learners reside in the rural areas of the country.
In addition, in 1995 the special school in the district together with the Department of Health and an NGO, began an inclusive education initiative with regular schools. However, this project was not sustained because
of lack of secure links with the Department of Education. It was felt that since the participants in this initiative were still keen to develop inclusive schools, there was a need to build on their efforts.

In the whole Region there are 701 schools of which 485 are primary, 181 secondary, 6 pre-primary, 25 combined (primary and high schools on the same campus), and 4 special/remedial schools. 222 schools are without water, 384 without power, 400 without telephones and 34 with buildings not suitable for education. Out of the 181 secondary schools, 124 are without libraries. The learner enrolment in 1997 was 383 129 with 10 665 teachers. The average number of learners to a classroom is approximately 48. The number of learners to a teacher is approximately 36.

Gauteng Province:

The selected project covers a cross section of South African schools, reflecting all the complexities of a transforming social and education system. Eight schools were selected as well as two Early Child Care Centres. Most of the schools are situated in a very poor informal settlement area which is an old township stretching over 20 Km.
There is huge population growth in this area through the rapid influx of families from rural areas who are migrating to the city in the hope of finding employment. Unemployment remains the biggest problem in the area. Most schools are huge with learner populations of between 1000 and 2000 learners and class sizes often exceeding 60.

One of the project schools is situated in a traditional 'coloured' township. In Apartheid South Africa the 'coloured' areas were in a sense better off than 'black townships' and schools were also better resourced.
A tendency therefore developed of 'township parents' sending their children to schools in this area, the school fees not being quite as high as in former exclusively 'white' schools. The predominant language of instruction in these schools is Afrikaans. Children from the 'township'coming to these schools prefer being taught in English, even though their home language is Northern Sotho, Zulu or Tswana. This is often a primary reason for learning breakdown, especially in the early primary school years.

Two of the project schools are traditional 'white' schools in middle class suburbs. The selected schools are unique in as far as they were of the first Afrikaans schools in the area to open their doors to children from the 'townships'. The secondary school in fact is already 50% 'black'. The primary school in the area is one of the first schools to successfully include children with Down syndrome into ordinary classes.

In the following, a brief description of the development work carried out in one of the project schools is given in order to illustrate the kind of issues that need to be addressed when developing more inclusive schools. This description starts with identifying barriers to learning and participation and then continues looking into positive aspects of the school community. Finally, the plan for the development work is outlined.

Barriers to inclusion and learning

88. The name of the school has been changed.

Zwazulu-Natal, Philani Primary School:[88]
Philani school is situated approximately 25km from the nearest town. The school is made of brick and iron roofing and was built 22 years ago by parents. There are 32 teaching staff and a learner population of 1473. The average class size is 1:70. Most learners come from the local community and walk to school for distances up to 7 km. The school fee is ZAR 20 (USD 3,50) per year. Only 55% of learners are able to pay since most parents are unemployed. To make up for the deficit in funds, the school has established a building fund to raise money to maintain the school. The school, also, on occasion, rents out extra furniture to people in the community.

Social problems (factors that place learners at risk):
The headteacher mentioned that some of the social problems at the school included substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, child abuse and violence.

He further explained that a major problem facing him is that young men who are unemployed loiter about the school, and harrass the girls. On one occasion the headteacher and teachers had to go into the community to rescue a girl who was abducted by a group of young men. The problem was discussed with parents at a meeting. No solutions have been found on how to address the problem.

Dagga (marijuana) is illegally grown in the area. The headteacher indicated that it is a serious problem and even the chief of the area, has not been able to address the problem. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has made raids in the area. Soldiers made house to house searches on foot, and helicopters fly over the area in search of the

crop. Community members claim that they are growing dagga in order to get some income.

Teenage pregnancy is another concern for the staff. Girls who fall pregnant whilst at school, go home and never return. Local women of about 18 years, often have more than one child. The headteacher attributed this practice to cultural influence by parents who encouraged their children to marry working men at an early age to help support their families.

There has been experience of child abuse at the school. Cases of child abuse were reported to the parents of the child, the police and then to the Child Protection Unit. The school nurse is only able to counsel learners once a year owing to the enormity of her task. She is the only school nurse in the district.

Inaccessible, unsafe and unhealthy school environment:
The school buildings were poorly constructed and poorly maintained. There were broken windows, broken furniture and the playgrounds were dusty and uneven.

Over-aged learners:
The school caters for children in Grades 1 to 8. Although there is a neighbouring high school approximately 4 km away, which also caters for Grade 8, some learners from the community choose to come to *Philani Primary*. The age group in this grade ranges from 14 to 20 years.

Positive Aspects of the School Contexts

Attitudes:
Historically, the school has been open to accepting children with disabilities from the community. The headteacher reported there were presently some disabled children at his school, some physically and others 'mentally retarded'. The teachers stated that they need help on how to cater for diverse learning needs.

Staff Development:
Staff attend workshops and meetings organized by the Department of Education and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The headteacher reportedly organized meetings to discuss the current policy issues and ongoing changes in the education system.

School-Parent/Community Partnerships:
Parents are an integral part of the school governing body which meets monthly. Parent meetings held twice a year are attended by approximately 600 parents. Although most are unemployed, they were able to raise money to purchase a photocopy machine. They also assist in raising money for the building fund established at the school, and with this money,

the school plans to build more classrooms. The deputy headteacher and other female teachers have started a local club at the school for women in the community. Their activities include classes on how to breed chickens and on baking. The club members meet twice a week and they use their membership fees to fund their activities, and to pay visiting tutors.

Development Work at Philani Primary School:
At this school, it was clear that the school has become more responsive to barriers to learning and participation experienced by pupils.
There main concerns have been the issue of substance abuse; children vulnerable to abuse in the community; and pupils in the school who are experiencing learning difficulties.

The headteacher further explained that many children care for their siblings while the parents are working in big cities. Others live with a grandmother on the old age pension. The staff feel that there is a need for staff to be trained in counselling skills.

According to the headteacher and the teachers, an urgent need was also to train teachers to be able to accommodate diversity in large classes. There were children who had potential to progress but they did not get enough attention because of large classes. In addition, most parents were illiterate and could not give adequate support to their children.

The following priorities were set for the first six months:

• The school explores a programme to address substance abuse, and a sex education programme at the school;

• The project researchers work with teachers and the occupational therapist at the special school to explore ways to meet the needs of the 'slow learners' identified by the school's learning support team (LST);

• It is important to build the capacity of teachers to meet the needs of these learners within the broad curriculum 2005 and its outcomes based approach.

It is evident that inclusion in education goes beyond simple placement of learners to a certain learning environment. In order to create a school that truly welcomes, respects and values each learner and each staff member, schools need to make an effort to address all those factors that may pose barriers to learning and participation. These examples from Brazil, India and South Africa demonstrate the complexity of school development and highlight the need for whole-school, and indeed, whole community approches in working towards more inclusive education systems.

Inclusive Education
and National Development

Background

The spur to the launch of this initiative was the continuing debate about the paradigm of two separate and unequal systems of education for 'regular' and 'special' learners, which was being successively and increasingly challenged.

At the same time, in developing countries, a renewed commitment had been made to affording all children their human right to primary education. The urgency of this had been the central message of the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All. As the deadline neared for the Dakar World Education Forum the aim of EFA by 2000 was increasingly seen as unattainable and a new strategy was needed.

The time for such an initiative was felt to be particularly opportune for a number of reasons. The last ten years had witnessed a growing concern in a number of African and Asian countries with provision for children who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion and development agencies had been co-operating with those countries in devising appropriate response strategies. There were concrete developments in a number of countries and awareness and mobilization were growing.

Aims and Objectives

In the context of the above sharply shifting context and focus, the initiative was intended to make a distinctive and seminal contribution to the debate about the interrelationship between education for all, inclusive education and national development. A publication was envisaged which could express in operational terms the implications of the analysis and description undertaken in the case studies and other work. The objective was to move the debate beyond mere entitlement, to raise fundamental issues concerning the contribution of inclusive education to economic and broader social and political development. The publication was also intended to include a broad rationale for inclusive education and the constraints surrounding improved educational provision for all in developing countries, guidelines for its implementation, management and financing and evaluation.

It was intended to construct a profile of the characteristics which might be observed in a system developing inclusive education for all; what policies, approaches, interventions, expected results and indicators of success for the achievement of fully inclusive primary education might be defined. The emphasis was on ways in which children with various impairments and other disadvantages could be included in school, in order to explore how the new inclusive educational paradigm could

provide a framework for making strategic choices at the country level and operational choices at the institutional and instructional levels.

Country Case Studies

UNESCO headquarters worked in close co-operation with the UNESCO National Commission and the representative national consultative groups, as well as other donors in order to identify and select the countries which can most usefully contribute to the study and to carry out the work. The dialogue for selection was conducted according to explicit and transparent criteria. In principle, and in order to give a geographical, cultural, demographic and socio-economic contextual spread, countries were selected, which had advanced in the formulation of their policy and practice of inclusive education, where case studies of particular innovations promised to be especially instructive.

Detailed guidelines for the preparation and presentation of case studies were prepared, discussed, amended and distributed. In most cases, these guidelines were also discussed in detail, by UNESCO and country teams during a visit to the country concerned. Each report was to include a major account of progress in the country in moving to inclusive policies of education, together with one or two brief descriptions of exemplary innovations.

The aims of the national case studies were:
- To give a detailed description of the legal, policy, financial, pedagogical and organizational provisions of inclusive education in selected countries;
- To portray a case study of good practice, which is illuminative of the principles and practice of inclusive education; and,
- To contribute to the synthesis publication for the completion of the agenda of EFA and to the identification of principles for the policy and practice of inclusive education, including operational and financial guidelines.

The national case studies, including the more detailed case studies of particular innovations, were commissioned with the advice of the national consultative groups. One focal point and responsible author in each case was nominated to prepare the national country report.

The preparation for the reports included the collection of basic demographic, financial and policy data, documentary searches, policy

analysis, interviews and field visits, supplemented by ethnographic cameo portraits of illuminative good practice in each country.

Through the above process, five countries, one in each of the major world regions, were identified to participate in the construction of case studies: Brazil, Morocco, The Philippines, Romania, and Uganda. They were approached informally and then formally, terms of reference were drawn up for the conduct of those studies, a timetable for facilitation visits was agreed with the countries, visits were undertaken and four of the chosen five countries produced both interim and final case study material which included one or more innovatory mini-cases. This material was reviewed in detail by UNESCO headquarters and editorial and substantive comments provided to the country teams. By the date of writing of this report, two of the case studies, those on Uganda and Romania, have also been published by UNESCO[89].

89. See UNESCO (2001), *Including the Excluded: Meeting Diversity in Education: Example from Uganda.* Paris: and UNESCO (2001), *Including the Excluded: Meeting Diversity in Education: Example from Romania.* Paris:

All the material produced was considered in the context of a paper on inclusive education as a reference for the Dakar World Education Forum. A paper was produced and discussed internally within UNESCO by the end of March 2000, with a final draft version available for the commencement of the conference. That paper then formed the basis for further internal discussion within UNESCO and led to the production of a draft conceptual paper for the education sector, produced in August 2001 and entitled "Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education: A Challenge and a Vision".

Outcomes

The work of preparing, marshalling and focussing the work was complex and difficult. It was, however, assisted by a number of factors. Whilst the direct published output from this project has been modest, considered within the context of the global project, its contribution to the Dakar World Education Forum and to the internal UNESCO discourse leading to the production of a draft conceptual paper for the education sector has been seminal. The strong expression of the linkage between inclusive policies in education and national social and cultural development was path breaking. The first two country case studies have also indicated in depth pathways to inclusive education in policy and practice and the appended accounts of ongoing innovations have contributed to the increasing critical mass of documented work on inclusive education.

90. Lynch, J (March 2000), *Evaluation Report on a Two-Year UNESCO Activity during the Period March 1998 to March 2000 on the subject of inclusive education and national development.* Paris: UNESCO.

According to an evaluation produced in 2000, the success of the initiative was assisted by a number of crucial factors[90]. Firstly, the work was able to evolve within a flexible, changing but firm and disciplined policy framework, set by UNESCO, in which the work could develop

and could grow. A rigorous pre-preparation of guidelines, notes and information ensured that participating countries had access to a discourse, based on the best available information and advice. Secondly, the work underlines the long term and evolutionary nature of educational thinking and its processual nature. There are no quick fixes. The continuity of staff involvement over more than two years was a major factor in ensuring the coherence of the study process and the quality and relevance of the end-product. Organizational and institutional memories were able to be secured. Informal pathways were perceived to the achievement of common goals within the culture of the organization.

Thirdly, real and potent partnership has implied a discourse from the start where all parties were welcome to contribute to the discussions and where that contribution was seen to be valued and was considered necessary to deliver results. This dialogical process involved a rigorous learning experience for all participants, the development of new skills, not least of listening, and a willingness to see proposals altered, contradicted and even demolished in the search for a common way forward. In the case studies, UNESCO's role was to offer guidance, comparative example and support for home-based efforts, but also to seek to evoke development of home-grown competence. In other words, the very process of the work was intended to produce capacity development.

Improving Life Options
for Deaf Youth in Myanmar

Background

91. Summarised from Reilly, C and Wrigley, O (1998), *Signs to Come: Improving Life Options for Deaf Youth in Myanmar.*

UNESCO supported the initial stage of this three-year programme which is an intensive effort to focus on two root problems of deaf children and adults in Myanmar: early childhood learning and the transition from school to work. The project draws upon nearly twenty years of experience of similar work in neighbouring Thailand. The technical inputs are designed to lead to higher educational standards and achievement for deaf students, a better qualified and more competent teacher body, including deaf adult teachers, school leavers with better chances of further training and advancement and, with the involvement of various non-profit and church groups and agencies, a self help association. The initial focus envisaged the early childhood development of very young deaf children in Yangon and Mandalay. All students at two schools for the deaf were given a screening and diagnosis of general health, audiological, dental and vision conditions with follow-up care and treatment[91].

Aims and Objectives

Within the above context, the project's goals and objectives are:

- To improve educational experience and achievement;
- To improve deaf pre-schoolers' readiness to learn;
- To provide enhanced intake and assessment services, including thorough procedures to screen all students in areas of health, cognition and language development, as well as follow-up and systematic record keeping;
- To develop early childhood education, including pre-school activities at schools, training of school personnel and an expanded number of deaf adult mentors;
- To improve opportunities for out-of-school youth;
- To enhance peer support networks;
- To expand and strengthen communication and collaboration between existing social networks of deaf adults and local NGOs and church-based providers;
- To strengthen the role of Myanmar sign language (MSL);
- To identify key deaf sign masters and engage them in documentation and teaching of their sign language; and,
- To provide materials, documentation and research, including videos of Myanmar sign language (MSL)[92].

92. Based on Reilly, C and Wrigley, O (1998), *Signs to Come: Improving Life Options for Deaf Youth in Myanmar.*

The project is on-going at the time of writing this report.

MATERIALS IN SUPPORT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION 5

Understanding and Responding
to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms

Background

The UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom has been widely recognized and utilized in teacher training and other activities across the globe. The main emphasis in the Pack is on teaching methods, classroom management and practices, along with structural and organizational changes to support inclusive practices in regular schools. However, although the Pack has proved very useful in pre-service and in-service training, as well as in school-based staff development, additional material on disability specific questions for regular classroom teachers was needed.

This development is especially urgent in countries and communities, where specialist knowledge and expertise is scarce and classroom teachers have to address these issues by themselves. The additional training material, "Understanding and Responding to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms" was published in autumn 2001.

93 Details taken from McConkey, R (n d), *Understanding and Responding to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms: proposal.*

In any case, several countries had embarked on revisions to parts of the Pack and it is opportune for the new training to be incorporated with these[93].

Aims and Objectives of the Training Material

Although the focus of the new training material is in pre- and primary education, it should also prove helpful to teachers in secondary education. It focuses on common biological and social impediments to children's learning, such as visual, intellectual, hearing and physical impairments, along with social factors such as malnutrition, childhood illnesses and social isolation. The training material seeks to provide advice for teachers on how they may detect signs of these impairments and the specific adaptations to their classroom practice and teaching, which they may make in order to reduce the handicapping effects of such impairments. An effort is made to nurture teachers confidence in their ability to manage diversity among their learners and to encourage their creativity in responding to individual needs.

Within that context, the new training material has three major aims:
- To provide teachers with key facts about various impairments and how to overcome the most common barriers to learning that result from them;
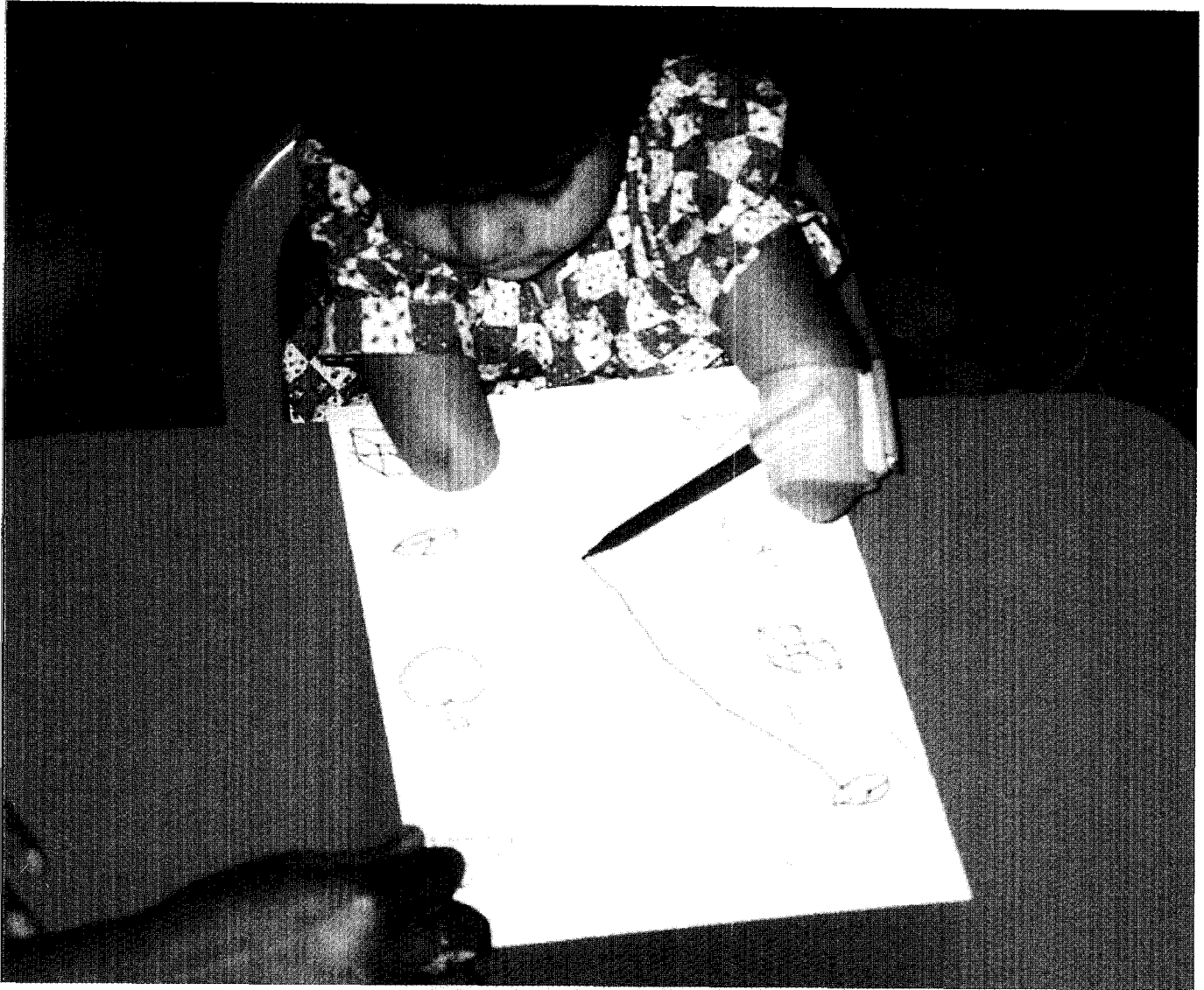
94. UNESCO (forthcoming Summer 2001), *Understanding and Responding to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms*. Paris: p.7.

- To inform teachers what they can reasonably do to adapt the class and school environment to overcome the barriers to learning faced by children;

- To describe the strategies teachers can use to manage diversity in their classrooms and show some ideas how the curriculum can be adapted to individual needs; and,

- To encourage teachers to work with families and other personnel in health services and in the community[94].

Deafness; A Guide for Parents, Teachers and Community Workers

Background

International statistics estimate that some 2.5% of the world population has some degree of deafness. In some case this impairment is present at birth. In other cases, it arises due to childhood illness, accidents or other trauma. Although some children inherit congenital deafness, this group makes up only a very small number of the total of deaf people in the world. Deafness has a dual effect on the life chances of children and other learners, in so far as it makes communication more difficult, at the same time as slows or otherwise impedes learning. It is, therefore, a substantial barrier to inclusion of deaf people.

Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that the only thing that deaf people cannot do is hear properly; there is the same range of ability as among the population at large. Moreover, deaf children, youths and adults around the world have demonstrated that they can live, learn and work as fully participating and contributing citizens of their communities and societies. In spite of this deaf learners are often excluded or marginalized and the full development of their capacities and potential is thereby inhibited. For this reason, and as part of its overall programme to support and encourage inclusion in education, UNESCO undertook the preparation and publication of a video and accompanying manual.

The Aim of the Guide

The video and accompanying manual aim to offer a multi-media information pack and resource base for those involved in the education of the deaf, including parents and teachers, or in the training of educational and ancillary staff personnel for that role.

The Organization of the Guide

The Guide has six different sections. After an Introduction which sets the scene of the themes to be dealt, Programme One covers major issues concerning sign language, including the importance of learning to sign, when such learning should best take place, how deaf children learn and what teachers of deaf children need to know. Programme Two deals with the education of the deaf, including pre-school and school learning, the partnership of family, school and community, the responsibility of government and ways to help deaf children to learn. Programme Three tackles the important issue of early identification, including the measurement of hearing loss, the causes of deafness and hearing aids.

95. Summary based on
UNESCO (2000), *Deafness:
A Guide for Parents, Teachers
and Community Workers.*
Paris: UNESCO.

Programme Four addresses the needs of parents of deaf children, includ-
ing involvement and ownership, organisations and deaf culture, includ-
ing publications of organisations. Programme Five deals with
the issue of employment of deaf people so that they can be productive
members of society, the opportunities which are available for deaf per-
sons and the need to overcome low expectations of deaf people
on the part of society in general. Programme Six covers organizations
of deaf people, including national and international links. There is a
brief appendix of the most important addresses, from which the resources
referred to in the Guide can be obtained[95].

PROVISIONAL REFLECTIONS 6

Some Provisional Reflections

The first thing which strikes the reader about the project *Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes* is the immense variety of initiatives, carried out over a relatively short period of time, in vastly different political, social and cultural contexts, with a pluralism of different strategies and approaches, and yet all within the framework of a common commitment to inclusive education. In other words, the unitary commitment to a comprehensive goal of inclusion has not restricted the diversity of approaches. Given the modesty of the budget involved, the coherence, range and quality of the work in the project are quite an achievement. Some countries adopted a wide range of methods and approaches. In the India component of the 'Four Nations Project', for example, desk research involving documentation analysis, field research and observation, situational analyses, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and photo analysis, were all combined. In other cases, the approach was narrower.

Thus, it is legitimate for the reader to ask, on the basis of what evidence, judgements about the efficacy of the global project may be made. How were the projects monitored and evaluated? How was the evidence collected, collated and presented and by whom? To provide a documentary and evidential basis to respond to the need to monitor, evaluate and be accountable, countries were requested, as part of the process of their projects, to record information on actual developments and changes that took place at policy or conceptual levels, within administrative structures and at school or community levels, within classrooms and out of classrooms, in order to facilitate the conduct of monitoring and evaluation. It was considered that this would help document good practice and help replicability, as well as spreading good ideas beyond the bounds of one country.

Extensive records have been kept of meetings and workshops and a participatory approach to training has in most cases evoked many recommendations for change in almost every project. Countries were requested to provide details of their own perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of their projects through interim reports during the project and in their final reports. UNESCO staff and consultants visited most projects and in some cases more than once, offering advice, guidance, information and training. Workshops were organized to provide missing expertise and as a forum for exchange and brain-storming.

Clearly, as already indicated, there was an immense variety of approaches, and experience of monitoring and evaluation techniques also varied considerably among the countries concerned. Their styles of working differed too. The interim and final reports alone reflect this differential capacity and approach. Nonetheless, many countries have sought to integrate ongoing monitoring or a formative evaluation into the implementation of their project. Some countries, such as Nicaragua, had a built-in formative evaluation from the beginning. In others, such as Madagascar, one significant by-product of the collaborative way of working of the project was the decision, taken after the project had begun, to adopt follow-up and evaluation activities as an integral part of the project; adding a dimension to the work, which had not been envisaged in the original plan.

Certainly, given the long term nature of educational change, caution is needed in interpreting the interim results of the first two phases, which have, in any case, taken place against a worldwide background of fundamental conceptual sea-change about the nature of schooling; a movement which still continues. On the other hand, it is evident from the interim and final reports, and from the back-to-office reports of UNESCO staff and consultants, that much new momentum, enthusiasm and expertise has been generated, capacity developed and understanding extended. New directionality and currency has been given to efforts to introduce policies of inclusive education to achieve EFA. Not least, many children have benefited from enhanced educational and life chances and the promise is for many more benefits and more learners to come.

In almost all cases, the concept of inclusive education has achieved a far wider currency through the action approach of the global project than would have been achievable through exclusively verbal approaches, even electronic ones, although these latter have played a part. New approaches have been tested, new ideas encountered, new networks of interrelationship, exchange and mutual assistance have been generated. More is now known about the practical problems of introducing policies of inclusive education at various levels within systems, institutions, classrooms and in communities.

Several country project reports reiterate the valuable role played by UNESCO in opening up the work, both as facilitator of previously difficult or non-existent relationships, for example between NGOs and Ministries, in interministerial or intraministerial dialogue or in the provision and/or sharing of expertise and consultancy. Indeed the crucial role of UNESCO in enabling both national and regional sharing of very scarce expertise should not be underestimated. Then too, an important by-product of the project has been a series of excellent micro-descriptions of the successes and failures, the strengths and weaknesses of countries

and organizations, in their struggle to introduce inclusive education. There are relatively few accounts in the literature of the long-term technology of implementation of fundamental educational reforms, not least at the micro level. The global project has certainly added to the literature available in this respect, and it represents an important resource base.

Tentative results from the first two phases indicate the ongoing necessity to consider inclusive education not as an event, but as a process. That process demands significant normative changes from all involved, including the adoption of new and complex ways of thinking and acting in educational settings by teachers, administrators and others. It requires a search for the modalities to come to operational terms with the way in which education is perceived, apprehended and delivered in a system which we call schooling. For such a process, a one to two year time-span can be considered only as a very minimal introduction. Moreover, progress has to be seen against a background in most cases of under-resourced and -staffed schools, which by and large have all too little excess capacity for the discretionary effort needed for innovation and where system maintenance often seems the most that can be envisaged by all concerned.

But, although a more significant and valid evaluation will require a longer time-span, that does not preclude both formative and summative evaluation and learning at all stages of the process. Fundamental changes in ideas and practices do not take place instantaneously but grow over a period of time, as this report has sought to illustrate. This process will inevitably involve discovery and experience, trial and error, doubt and confidence, success and failure. Unrealistic timelines can constrain the very professional confidence, which is required to sustain the change.

Absence of time, discipline and ongoing and formative evaluation, on the other hand, could result in the loss of important insights, which could otherwise contribute to the momentum of change and its efficient and cost effective guidance[96]. Thus, as with any educational innovation, the predictability and flexibility of the financing of the further development of the work may also play a critical role in the efficiency of the global project, as also in the success of individual country projects. Willingness on the part of donors to continue to support this innovation by co-mingling funding, for at least some of the activities, albeit it with appropriate tracing mechanisms, could facilitate a greater flexibility and probably improved effectiveness in the implementation of the project.

In spite of the guidelines, suggested by UNESCO, the reports themselves are understandably very variable in their content and quality, and this is not least the case in their reflection on their own successes and failures;

96. Some of the points made in this last section were contained in UNESCO (February 2001) *Project proposal: Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes: Phase III.* Paris: UNESCO.

strengths and weaknesses. Some of the evaluations are rather bland and provide little into the problems and difficulties encountered, which could be grist to the mill of future work. On the other hand, some, most indeed, offer insightful, frank and informative counsel for the design and implementation of continuation projects.

There are understandable reasons for this variability, ranging from scarcity of resources to differences in the level of expertise in such areas as preparation of reports for international bodies, action research approaches and experience in adopting polices of inclusive education. This variability embraces the richness of the material, but it also implies a certain caution in the interpretation of results cited and not least as concerns the issues and challenges described as encountered by participating countries. Nonetheless, there are clear commonalities among many of the projects. Each, in its own way and style, offers a valuable contribution to the improvement of further initiatives.

Although some of the projects were based in Ministries, e.g. Madagascar and Yemen, quite a number were not, e.g. Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, India and Mauritius. Several of those projects not based in ministries in Phase Two have mentioned the challenging nature of establishing links

97. The Spastics Society
of Northern India (1999),
*Mid Term Report on the
UNESCO Project:
Inclusive Schools and
Community Support
Programmes.* New Delhi:
p.3.

with government structures, e.g. India, where the project staff, recognizing the need to link with the Education Department of Government to allow for replicability, took specific initiatives to secure that goal[97]. Some refer to the absence of co-ordination across different departments as an important factor inhibiting their work, e.g. Nicaragua.

Where two or several ministries carry overlapping responsibilities, inter-ministerial tensions and the weakness of NGOs vis-à-vis ministries were sometimes seen as an additional challenge for the project to cope with, e.g. in Cameroon. Indeed, where a single disability NGO had links to a ministry, such as Social Affairs, it was sometimes in a weak position in involving the Ministry of Education in the project. Some countries mention the facilitatory role played by UNESCO in overcoming problems or smoothing the path in this respect and the power of being linked to an international project, e.g. Egypt.

Other projects have made it a mark of their work to address the need for close internal co-operation in government endeavours, e.g. the close collaboration between the Special and Basic Education Sections of the Ministry in the Dominican Republic, as well as its Psycho-Pedagogical Orientation Division with the central technical team. But, a commonly encountered obstacle by ministry staff was the clash with other work. The transfer of key personnel after contact had been made, and sometimes after training has taken place, were also mentioned as factors inhibiting the work of successful implementation.

Of course, this was not so in every case, and some projects appear to have been able rapidly to develop very good interministerial and interagency relationships with relative ease, e.g. Yemen. Some, as indicated above, devised specific strategies to establish or strengthen links with government. There is no doubt, however, that the viability and sustainability beyond the pilot stage of the projects will be interdependent with UNESCO's investment in establishing good relations with government bodies and assisting projects to do likewise, where there are difficulties. There is clearly a major task of advocacy and dissemination of information about inclusive education in ministries and government agencies and organizations, as well as facilitation of human relations and training, where UNESCO can play a crucial, if time-consuming, role of human and professional facilitation.

Several projects mention issues and challenges, which are clearly beyond their scope to tackle. The instability of staffing, a particularly acute problem in the case of Paraguay, also affected many of the other projects. The large size of classes, the numbers of over-age children and late entrants, lack of physical resources and infrastructure, lack of support to professionals, lack of allocated time for teachers to devote to the project particularly as regards release for training, combined with lack of back-up support for the teachers in their administrative

and educational roles. The report on Nicaragua makes a particular point about the fact that the central technical team had other duties than the execution of the project, which hindered their effectiveness, not least after the reduction of the number of its members to three, as well as the lack of time to carry out the activities and meetings and to develop collaborative work among the teachers at each school.

The competitive nature of the school system, traditional pedagogical practices, lack of professional expertise and the rigidity of the curriculum were also factors, which appear to have weighed heavily against a higher level of success in many projects. Curricula and assessment methods which are too rigid and inflexible, in particular, feature as major challenges in many of the reports, e.g. Nicaragua and Mauritius, although one project was fortunate to have a coterminous major project to reform the curriculum running at the same time as the UNESCO-supported project (Yemen). Often, paradoxically, there was said to be a lack of clear assessment procedures for the identification of students who experience barriers to learning and for needs assessment.

Both pre- and in-service teacher education and training and broader recurrent professional support clearly remain problematic presently in a number of countries, not least to support students with disabilities in regular classes. In this connection, some reports comment on the lack of technical support for visually impaired and blind and hearing impaired and deaf students in regular schools as a consequence of the introduction of inclusive approaches to education e.g. Vietnam. Several also mention problems of coordination of services to support inclusive education. Further, in some cases, there might appear from the documentation to have been an apparent lack of a government engagement, framework and policy for inclusion, which could have given a more disciplined direction to the work, although as stated above projects appear to have worked to good effect to meet this particular challenge.

Then too, many reports express concerns about the continuation of the work, and its sustainability, e.g. Madagascar. Not atypical of other countries too, in Ghana, the project has become, in a sense, a prisoner of its own success, for the pressure to continue is a consequence of the overall level of success of the project in raising awareness, expertise and expectations. Clearly, then, in all cases, expectations have been raised across a range of constituencies, and this offers both UNESCO and international donors themselves opportunities and responsibilities. One decisive factor in the success of this project has been that it has enjoyed at all stages close donor cooperation. Moreover, it is noticeable that some of the most successful country projects have rested on close working relationships among donors in pursuit of a common goal.

Certainly, there is no other sustained, wide ranging and coordinated international effort to achieve EFA through inclusion in education, than that led currently by UNESCO, in close collaboration with its country and donor partners.