

Teacher Training and Curriculum: Developing Teachers' Understanding of Inclusive Principles

Date: Thursday, 2nd September 2021

Time: 10.00 – 11.30 am (Bangkok Time)



Disability-Inclusive Education in Asia-Pacific Working Group Regional Webinar

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Background

Education of children with disabilities General Comment No. 4 on Article 24 issued in 2016 by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) defined inclusion as, “a process of systemic reform embodying changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education to overcome barriers with a vision serving to provide all students of the relevant age range with an equitable and participatory learning experience and environment that best corresponds to their requirements and preferences”¹

If inclusivity is to be seen as a central principle in achieving equity and quality in education as envisioned in the General Comment 4, as well as in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, it is critical that teacher education has to be reformed so that they are better equipped and prepared to work in inclusive ways. This has to apply to all teachers, not just some ² and should happen at initial teacher education as well as continued professional development level.

Teachers should be equipped to understand that each class in a mainstream school is made up of a wide diversity of learner abilities, learning styles and aspirations which cannot be addressed through a simplistic traditional teacher directed pedagogy. After the devastating losses in learning acquired through the extended school lockdowns during the pandemic (COVID-19), this situation is even further exacerbated. In order for teachers to effectively identify barriers to learning and to ensure that all children have access to **reasonable accommodation**, they must be able to introduce inclusive pedagogies and techniques such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated instruction, use of adapted materials, assistive technologies, adapted assessment methods, school-home learning links, as well as psycho-social and emotional support.

In terms of Article 24 of the CRPD, children with disabilities also have the right to “effective **individualized support measures**, provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion”³. This would require that there is a cohort of staff equipped with more specialist knowledge who are able to provide ongoing support and mentorship to teachers to strengthen their confidence and skills to identify and address barriers to learning in ever more creative and innovative

¹ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016. General Comment No. 4 on Article 24, p. 4).

² Rous, M (2010). Reforming initial teacher education: A necessary but not sufficient condition for developing inclusive practice in Forlin, C (ed.) *Teacher Education for Inclusion: Changing paradigms and innovative approaches*, London: Routledge, p. 48.

³ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), specifically Article 24.

ways. In countries where there is a shortage of such specialized teachers and professionals, there are many emerging examples of such a service being provided to schools on an itinerant basis.

While discussing the role of teachers is important, it needs to be placed within the wider context of the school and the education system as a whole. The role of school managers to embrace inclusive whole school change and the setting up of school-based inclusion structures and teams which could serve to institutionalize and sustain inclusive practices must also receive attention. Identifying agents of change such as teachers with disabilities and learners with disabilities themselves can become a critical catalyst for change and development.

This Webinar aims to bring the discussion into an in-depth understanding of how teacher education can be fundamentally transformed to ensure that schools and the education system become more inclusive, which would improve the quality of education not only for children with disabilities but for all children⁴. The role of the system to create the necessary ongoing support to schools, managers and teachers to increasingly embrace and celebrate diversity, will also be a focus of the webinar. The emphasis will be on sharing of examples of good practices in addressing barriers to the implementation of disability inclusive education policies across the region.

Objectives of this webinar

1. To raise understanding among partners on the importance of transforming both the initial teacher training curriculum as well as continued professional teacher development priorities.
2. To share research and learning on best practice models of teacher development and practice which enhances innovative inclusive pedagogy also as a response to build back better after the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. To share best practice examples from the region on provision of ongoing support to teachers to provide individualised support to children with disabilities and to school managers to drive whole school change.
4. To create momentum and collaboration potential across various stakeholders to align technical resources at the country and global levels to improve teacher training curricula to adhere to the principles of inclusion in line with global commitments.

Target Audience

The target audience for the webinar includes regional, national and international level education stakeholders (including both policymakers and implementers) interested in reliable teacher training resources to promote inclusive education for all learners.

Working Language

English will be the working language of the webinar. Live captioning and sign language will be made available during the webinar.

Dates and Format

Date: 2 September 2021

Time: 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Bangkok time (GMT + 7)

Format: Zoom

⁴ UNESCO (2020) Inclusive Teaching: Preparing all teachers to teach all students.
<https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/2020teachers>

Registration

Registration is free and required in advance. Once you register, a unique join URL will be sent to your email.

Registration link: https://leonardcheshire.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bN072lrKTjSIgwZZGceH8A

For more Information

Disability-Inclusive Education in Asia-Pacific Working Group Secretariat

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Proposed Agenda

Moderator: Erin Tanner, Education Specialist, UNICEF	
10:00 – 10:10	Welcome and Introduction from the Disability-Inclusive Education in Asia-Pacific Working Group (10 minutes) Nyi Nyi Thaung, Acting Chief of Section for IQE, UNESCO
10:10 – 10:50	Panel Moderator: Anand Singh, Chief Regional Coordinator, Educational International, Malaysia <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bhutan: Government of Bhutan’s Roadmap for Embedding Inclusive Education in Teacher Education and Ongoing Support: Progress Made: Pema Chhogyel, Dy. Chief program Officer, Special Education Section, Ministry of Education, Bhutan• SEA Region: Approaches in making teaching and learning accessible for all in inclusive classrooms and beyond Dr Hanani Harun Rasit, Director, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Special Educational Needs, Malaysia• Viet Nam: Sharing good practices in developing teachers’ understanding of inclusive principles in Viet Nam Nguyễn Xuân Hải, Head of Academic and Student Affairs Department/ Ha Noi Metropolitan University, Vietnam
10:50 – 11:20	Q&A and Discussion (30 minutes)
11:20 – 11:30	Key Messages and Closing (10 minutes) Marie Schoeman, Programmes Technical Lead, Inclusive Education, Leonard Cheshire