1. Could you please advise the process behind the success of the inclusive education policy by the government of Fiji and the successful implementation of FEMIS?

Beth Sprunt: Fiji Ministry of Education has been in a partnership with the Government of Australia for many years, through which the transition from special education to inclusive education has been supported with funding, policy support, research, pilot programs, support of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), professional scholarships, technical assistance, curriculum support, etc.

The development of FEMIS (as a whole system, not just related to inclusive education) has also been one of the big programs supported over many many years through the bilateral partnership. Advocacy by OPDs has also been an important factor in Fiji keeping up with its obligations within the CRPD.

2. Are there tools to measure whether Universal Design for Learning is being practiced in classes?

Beth Sprunt: This paper may be helpful (provided attached and under Resources Section): Basham JD, Gardner JE, Smith SJ. Measuring the Implementation of UDL in Classrooms and Schools: Initial Field Test Results. Remedial and Special Education. 2020;41(4):231-243. doi:10.1177/0741932520908015

This may also be helpful: https://udlguidelines.cast.org/

3. Is there a recent comparative study done so as to ascertain the level of inclusive education-state wise in India?

4. How to get technical support for shifting from Special Education to Inclusive Education at Government level in Sindh?

Professor Nidhi Singal may be able to provide information and related resources on the above questions 3 and 4:
https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/people/staff/singal/
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nidhi-Singal

5. Are there global indicators for inclusive education under SDG4 and their contextualisation?


6. How can we ensure that data addresses intersecting vulnerabilities such as disability, gender, income level, etc? And how do we ensure gender equality in inclusive education?

Beth Sprunt: Disaggregate data sets by as many vulnerability variables as is practical and put resources into doing the data analysis to the detail required to dive into those intersecting variables.

Daniel Mont: To get a full picture of the impacts of disability and how it plays out differently by different characteristics, it is also important that we harmonize the various ways that disability data is collected across censuses, surveys, and administrative data so that all those datasets can be used in conjunction with each other. Different agencies collect disability data for different purposes -- and may even have different definitions of disability including at what threshold of difficulty they identify someone as having a "disability," but if all data sets have a common core of questions that take a functionally based approach, then they can be used in conjunction with each other to get a fuller picture. So, for example, if the EMIS, MICS, and HIES in a country all used the UNICEF/WG Child Functioning Module then the people identified as having a disability in all three data tools are similar and can be used together - which is very useful because EMIS's for example do not have information on out of school children or their families, the MICS does not have information on schools, etc.

We are working on this kind of harmonization in a few countries right now - South Africa, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe. it is important separate from intersectionality, but the more we can leverage our data sources the deeper we can look at intersectionality. For example, some data sources may have good data on gender related topics (like domestic violence) while others do not. But if we can statistically match them, we can take advantage of that. I have attached an article I wrote (provided attached and under Resources section) that statistically matched the census with a household survey in Vietnam that enabled us to do things that could not have been done with either data set alone, but we could only do because both data sources used the same disability questions.
Questions responded during the webinar

7. One also has to worry about the transition from pre-primary and/or the home into primary education - not only primary to secondary and beyond. Children with disabilities might feel accepted and comfortable in more informal ECCE programmes and then are excluded from enrolling in primary school and/or from learning.

Roshan Bajracharya: Percentage of children with disabilities of grade 1 entrance with ECCE experiences might be able to show the transition from ECCE and primary.

8. Could we recommend CFM to mainstreaming organization for their consideration of Children with Disabilities and getting number of CWDs?

Daniel Mont: Yes, for identifying how many children with disabilities.

9. Do we have consolidated short child functioning model questions like short WG 6 Qs?

Daniel Mont: The WG and UNICEF are currently testing a shortened version of the CFM for teachers, but it is not finalized yet. It is a bit shorter than the CFM.

10. Considering the limitation of the UNICEF / WG tool, what other tools can you suggest to make the assessment comprehensive?

Daniel Mont: The limitation was in the WG SHORT SET, which is why the CFM was designed to address those shortcomings for children.

11. Do you have the standardized questionnaire to capture data of children with disabilities? If so, can it be shared.

Daniel Mont: The CFM is available on the WG website; washingtongroup-disability.com

12. Thank you, I heard that medical doctor or someone who is authorized to decide CWDs or not can only decide or label children. So, CFM might be conflict with medical professional when we say that child has some kind of disability?

Daniel Mont: Teachers can identify the functional difficulties that children have - difficulty seeing, walking, staying on task, etc. They cannot diagnose medical conditions, like doctors. But they do not need to. Most of the interventions at the school level do not need those diagnoses. They are tailored to the child’s individual difficulties. We want to get away from a medical definition of disability, but instead look at functioning. Two people with the same diagnosis, for example, cerebral palsy, may have very, very different functional capacities. For whatever reason, a child has walking, for example - CP, multiple
sclerosis, paralysis, amputation — the point is they have difficulty walking and need an accessible environment and/or assistive device.

13. Could I get CFM short version for schoolteacher please?

Daniel Mont: Please contact the WG. Maybe you can be involved in testing it! the website is washingtongroup-disability.com or you can email: WG_secretariat@cdc.gov

14. WG questionnaire could including EMIS?

Daniel Mont: Fiji has integrated the CFM in their EMIS.

15. Is there any connection between ethnicity and disability?

Daniel Mont: To the extent that ethnicity is correlated with poverty and poverty can lead to disability there could be a connection but not because of the disability. Also, in some places there is a lot of intermarriage within a family which can be correlated with some mental disabilities, and sometimes children with of certain ethnicities are more likely to be mis-identified because of discrimination, for example the Roma population in Europe. I meant “not because of ethnicity” not “not because of the disability”.

16. Considering the limitation of the UNICEF / WG tool, what other tools can you suggest making the assessment comprehensive?

Daniel Mont: The limitation was in the WG SHORT SET, which is why the CFM was designed to address those shortcomings for children.

17. Thanks for sharing the case of Cambodia, about 85% of CwDs ever attended school in 2014, that is really good. FYI, a later study by UNESCO (2018) revealed only one in every two children with disabilities is out-of-school. Would you mind sharing any observation on this, is it something to do with the data?

Roshan Bajracharya: The definition of ever attended and out of school is different. Out of school children might be ever attended. Therefore, the value for ever attended is higher than the out of school.

18. Does the WG have a guidance for teachers/data collectors on identifying the degree of difficulty (i.e., some, a lot) or this is something that countries develop on their own?

Beth Sprunt: The "descriptors matrix" referred to is in the FEMIS disaggregation package in the link http://www.education.gov.fi/special-inclusive-education/.