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# **BEST PRACTICES IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: APPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM DESIGN IN THE EUROPE & EURASIA REGION**

March 2010

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# BEST PRACTICES IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: APPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM DESIGN IN THE EUROPE AND EURASIA REGION

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## **List of Acronyms**

ADRF	Albanian Disability Rights Foundation
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CWD	Children with Disability
DUGA	Cooperation of United Citizens' Actions
E&E	Europe and Eurasia
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
ERI SEE	Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe
IBE	International Bureau of Education
IE	Inclusive Education
ISSA	International Step-by-Step Association
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SEE	South Eastern Europe
SEN	Special Education Needs
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization



## **Glossary<sup>1</sup>**

**Inclusion** Children who are perceived to be 'different' are often excluded or marginalized in society and local communities. For inclusion to happen the attitudes and practices of society must change so that marginalized children can fully and equally participate in and contribute to the life of their community and culture.

**Inclusive Education** An education system that accepts **all** children equally and provides them with the best quality education possible is inclusive. To provide an inclusive education, communities, teachers, schools and systems must change so that they can better accommodate the diversity of learning needs that pupils bring to the school as well as enable them to be included in all aspects of school-life.

**Integration** This happens when children with disabilities attend mainstream schools that have made few if any changes to accommodate them; rather the pupil is expected to adapt to the present school arrangements. Integration however can often be the precursor to inclusion.

**Special Needs** This is a general catch-all term for all children who need some form of assistance or special accommodation to learn. It is not possible to give a precise definition as their learning needs are so varied.

**Special Schools** These are individual schools for children who have the same kind of a particular impairment or disability, for example, schools solely for children with sensory impairments or intellectual disabilities.

**Special Classes** Special classrooms are attached to or set aside at ordinary schools especially for children with special needs. These pupils may receive some or all of their instruction in the special classrooms. These arrangements may or may not be inclusive depending on how much the children attending these classrooms participate in joint activities with the rest of the student body.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions here are based on those presented in UNESCO (2001) *Understanding and Responding to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms: A Guide for Teachers*.

## Executive Summary

Regular schools with [an] inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

UNESCO, 1994, Salamanca Statement, p. ix

### Background and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to provide an overview of best practices in inclusive education, inform stakeholders of the current status of inclusive education in the region, describe the contextual factors which affect program implementation, and make recommendations of practical start-up steps for inclusive education programs. The ultimate purpose of this report is to improve programming efforts in inclusive education in the Europe and Eurasia region.

'Inclusive education' is defined as a strategy of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education. It is so named as it promotes the process of including children with special needs<sup>2</sup> (who are disabled or otherwise disadvantaged) into the regular education system where they should join their school-age peers in a learning process that is most conducive to their needs. Disability will be the main category of special needs under consideration in this document.

Most education ministries in the Europe and Eurasia (E&E) region have made progress in the area of education for children with special needs. Policies are in place and international institutions, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have invested considerable efforts to extend the development of inclusion on all levels. Public awareness on issues of disadvantaged children and children with disabilities is growing and parents are more often voicing their concern about their children's rights for adequate education and care. The practice of inclusive education (IE),<sup>3</sup> i.e., including children with special needs equally into mainstream education with their peers, however, is relatively new in the region and a noticeable gap remains between official recognition (international treaties, legislative frameworks) and the actual situation of education on the ground for children with disabilities.

This study presents an overview of the international best practices in the provision of inclusive education as well as offers clear guidance and practical tools that will assist USAID programming efforts in thirteen priority countries in the Europe and Eurasia region. The target countries for this study are: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Russia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Ukraine.

The understanding of and services for people with a disability are very much shaped by the various definitions that impact data collection and programming options. A perspective on these issues is offered in this document. The status of inclusive education in the E&E region is reviewed through the lens of the contextual factors which affect implementation, revealing the current practice environment, identifying gaps between policy and practice, providing some examples of promising practices, and making

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<sup>2</sup> See the definition of 'special needs' on the Acronyms and Definitions page at the beginning of this document.

<sup>3</sup> Inclusive education is defined as a strategy of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education. J.V.d. Brule (2006) UNESCO.

recommendations for implementation. The review of inclusive education includes an input-outcome framework that assists in conceptualizing the process of inclusive education implementation. The place of special schools in inclusive education is also discussed.

This report was prepared for the Social Transition Team in the USAID Bureau for Europe and Eurasia and supports their on-going work in social issues in the region and increasing interest in developing programming that addresses inclusive education for children with disabilities. This report is a result of email correspondence with regional NGO representatives and consultants, a thorough review of documents, websites, and literature on disability and inclusive education generally, and specifically the current status of IE in the region.

## **Framework for Analysis for Inclusive Education**

This document uses the best practices framework first developed for the ST Team by Rebecca Davis in the context of examining the development of community-based social services. This framework, which consists of four pillars, was adapted to present the best practices in the field of inclusive education.<sup>4</sup> The use of this model as a means to examine best practices related to a number of social sector issues promotes consistency and standardization of analysis for the work of the Social Transition Team.

<b>A Framework for Analysis</b>	
<b>Pillar 1: Policy and Legal Framework:</b> Policies and laws that reflect internationally-recognized best practices, the legal and policy mandates, implementation strategies, cross-sectoral collaboration, identified populations, relationships with NGOs, and centralized and decentralized functions, financing and accountability issues.	<b>Pillar 2: Structure of Services:</b> Types and ranges of programs, financial supports and accessibility factors: parent/community involvement, outreach, and public awareness initiatives. Includes the programs and services in which education personnel practice and how services are provided at school level.
<b>Pillar 3: Human Capacity:</b> The acquisition of knowledge, values and skills for educators, through academic and professional education and training, curriculum development activities, planning and decision-making processes, networking and knowledge-sharing activities.	<b>Pillar 4: Performance Measures:</b> Indicators and processes used to measure outcomes at all levels of inclusive education: central, community, school, and individual student achievement, as well as systems for monitoring and research on results and impacts.

The framework presents a system-wide view of implementation and works as a model for identifying strategic entry points to affect change. Sustainability is strengthened by strategies that are targeted across the system from the bottom up (aimed at the ground level, i.e., schools, parents, and communities), and top down, aimed at the national policy/legislative level, including standards and accountability.<sup>5</sup>

Multiple interventions at several insertion points across the system result in the strongest impact and support development of a unified whole. At the local level, strengthening human capacity is vital for actual implementation as can be seen in education where quality of instructional provision is dependent on capable teaching staff at a school level. The contribution of others at the community level strengthens the process; the development of innovation strategies, piloting and then replicating successful activities on a wider scale eventually builds a strong foundation on which to rest the changing system. At the same time, change needs to be made from the top down by governments and other

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<sup>4</sup> The use of this Framework as an analysis tool for social services was first presented in USAID (2005) *Promising Practices in Community-Based Social Services in CEE/CIS/Baltic: A Framework for Analysis* by R. Davis.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

actors at this level to ensure system guidance and leadership, standardization of services, accountability, and provision of incentives to the system.

Reinforcing the successful use of the framework for general social service analysis, the four pillars of change have proven useful in the specific field of inclusive education. This approach is used throughout this document therefore, to organize presentation of best practices, promising regional practices, recommendations, and summaries of findings.

## **Summary of Findings**

While there is an overwhelming amount of information available on disability and inclusive education, regionally specific information is much more limited and often confusing. Governments and organizations have websites which generally provide information in English but also in regional languages. Specific data on the number of children with disability included in mainstream classrooms is often not available. Differing definitions of disability exacerbate the issue as do widely varying classifications and methodologies used to collect disability data. In any case, this document contains no data on children with disability as this information has been thoroughly presented in previous documents in the series of analytic reports that have been produced by the Social Transition Team in the E&E Bureau.<sup>6</sup>

Collating and organizing the wealth of information on inclusive education which often utilizes different technical terms and frameworks has been challenging; however the four pillars framework has provided a common structure for analysis with the resultant study of regional progress of inclusive education presented here.

## **Policy and Legal Framework**

All of the priority countries reviewed for this document have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1998) (with the exception of Kosovo) and all are signatories to the Rights of Persons with Disability (2006)<sup>7</sup> both of which are able to serve as guides for their policies and laws.<sup>8</sup> The global strategies of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) also guide efforts (at least on paper) to improve the provision of education for children with disability.<sup>9</sup>

Within the region, countries of South and Eastern Europe seem to be more progressive in their efforts on behalf of inclusive education, driven in part by the Western European standard of education. Eurasian countries seem to be less flexible in their perceptions and practices of mainstreaming children with disabilities into regular education provision.

Most reforms in special education center on social protection of children or guarantees of equal education opportunities through national education laws. Increasingly inclusive education is becoming a policy option although it has not gained as much headway as a philosophy of education reform. Only a few countries, for example, Georgia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, have developed actual strategic plans for inclusive education.

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<sup>6</sup> See for example, USAID (2009) *The Prevalence of Disability in Europe and Eurasia*. A full list of these publications can be found on the first page of this document.

<sup>7</sup> Azerbaijan, Montenegro and Serbia are the only countries which have actually ratified it to date.

<sup>8</sup> The International Legal Framework of documents which support the rights for quality education for children with disability and inclusive education can be found in Appendix 2. These documents are available on the United Nations website: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

<sup>9</sup> Two of the six specific quantitative and qualitative education goals of the EFA which are the basis for inclusive education goals are: elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achievement of universal primary education, both of which are now part of the MDGs. Documents available at [http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed\\_for\\_all/background/jomtien\\_declaration.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/background/jomtien_declaration.shtml).

The concepts of integration (the mere physical presence of children with disabilities in mainstream classes and schools) and inclusion (the actual provision of individualized learning programs for children with special needs into mainstream education) are often confused and used interchangeably by governments to indicate their progressive attitude in addressing the education needs of children with disability. This lack of clarity is manifested in the wide array of education placement options throughout the region, including a predominance of special schools and institutions, which are viewed equally by governments as fulfilling their obligation to provide quality education for special populations.

Increasingly, the impulse for change is coming from civil society organizations and NGOs which are proving successful in mobilizing parents and communities to push for change in the policy arena. Government decentralization and wider education reform efforts (for example in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Georgia, Kosovo, Serbia) also appear to have a positive impact on inclusive education programming by allowing local authorities autonomy in addressing specific needs within their school populations. Partnerships among countries in the region and their common initiatives, for example, the Stability Pact for the Education Reform Initiative in South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) and the European Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Efficiency and Equity in European Education and Training Systems, offer opportunities for support to pro-active planning and sustainable development using a lifelong learning perspective that includes special needs education.<sup>10</sup>

The gap between policy and practice, however, is large. The numbers of children with disability in the region is growing and their disadvantages remain deeply entrenched.<sup>11</sup> Scarce financial and human resources are the most often cited barriers to the expansion of inclusive education. These are overlaid with a lack of political will by governments, their differing priorities in education reform, and the absence of clear strategic planning for inclusive education (IE) implementation.

Despite obstacles to the development of education for special needs populations in the region, efforts at both the international and national level are promising. Further progress will depend on a concerted and coherent approach by international organizations and donors. On the national level, systems need to be strengthened by coherent inclusive education strategies accompanied by clear accountability measures and committed funding. Increased efforts by networks of international and national disability NGOs are needed to add impulse to the effort.

### **Structure of Services**

There are pockets of promising practices found across the region. NGOs are the leaders in piloting inclusive education programs and several good regional examples now exist. There have been, however, only limited efforts to scale up these efforts nationally. The efforts of parents to get improved services for their children with disability are seen as a major push to introduce inclusion into the wider context of pre- and primary education (grades K-6).

Most current inclusion efforts are found at the pre-primary and primary levels of education which is in line with an identified best practice, that of early identification, intervention and placement of children with disabilities. This is an important strategy to increase children's social adjustment and attainment of learning standards and reduce the number attending special schools.<sup>12</sup> Examples at the higher levels of the system are limited due to the lack of system capacity to modify academic curricula and courses of

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<sup>10</sup> UNESCO (2007) *Inclusive Education: IBE\_UNESCO Preparatory Report for the 48<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Education*.

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF (2005) *Children and Disability in Transition in CEE/CIS and Baltic States*.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

study for use by children with different learning abilities. Also there is little expectation that children with limited learning capacities will achieve higher levels of education.

Currently, education systems are generally ill-suited for incorporation of inclusive education practices with major limitations in infrastructure, equipment and technology, education personnel, learning materials and textbooks, and curricula and assessment tools and procedures. While all of these items are individually important to support inclusive education, an integrated presentation of these fully modified components at the school level is necessary for IE progress.

Fear and ignorance of disability present the biggest barriers to inclusion across the region; therefore strong information and awareness-raising efforts are vital. NGOs have been the most successful at this, demonstrating clearly the impact they are having on policy as well as service delivery.

### **Human Capacity**

The direct success of inclusive education is strongly linked to the abilities of teachers in classrooms; therefore knowledgeable and motivated teachers are essential.<sup>13</sup> Across the region, the skill levels of the education workforce are uneven. In some countries, pre-service teacher training on inclusive education is built into teacher preparation programs. In-service training, however, has been patchy and often left to NGOs and donors. Salaries are low, incentives are few, and professional training opportunities are of unknown quality. The need for trained specialists (e.g., physiologists, therapists, special educators) to join school teams is great although the supply is limited.

Child-centered teaching methodologies<sup>14</sup> have been introduced into the region and their wider implementation will do much to improve inclusion efforts along with improving education quality generally. Regionally, converting special schools into resource centers, the development of model schools to serve as local training centers, and the use of mobile teams to visit mainstream schools on a rotating basis represent cost-effective initiatives to meet demands of workforce development.

### **Performance Measures**

Assessment in IE programming is being recognized internationally as the weakest area in the implementation of inclusive education and outcomes are often difficult to measure.<sup>15</sup> For the E&E region, at the very least, countries need to accept a standardized definition of disability which takes into account the students' potential instead of just their limitations so that a basis for measurement is available. Thereafter, countries need to develop national monitoring systems and standardized indicators.

Undertaking assessment in inclusive education requires skill and training, both of which are limited in these countries; therefore the use of international organizations and donor assistance will continue to be required. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) of which most of these countries are signatories, requires states to collect appropriate statistical and research data enabling them to implement inclusive policies; therefore the issue of data collection should now be addressed.

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<sup>13</sup> UNICEF (2005), UNESCO (2007).

<sup>14</sup> A child-centered curriculum is characterized by a move away from rote learning and towards a greater emphasis on hands-on, experienced-based, active and cooperative learning. UNESCO (undated) *10 Questions on Inclusive Quality Education*.

<sup>15</sup> World Bank (2004) *Inclusive Education: An EFA Strategy for All Children*.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations below are also organized according to the four pillars framework. They represent a compilation from various sources listed in the Reference Section without being attributed to any single one. The recommendation section in the document gives a more complete explanation of each. Within each country, USAID will need to select appropriate levels to target for implementation of each recommendation and mechanisms by which this will happen.

By necessity, many of the recommendations target school-level as a priority to offer immediate support to the implementation of inclusive education and to meet the request of USAID for practical guidance. Notwithstanding that priority, a package of integrated activities across several levels of the system would offer stronger support to sustainability and would contribute to building critical mass at key levels. Inclusive education must be seated within the development of the whole education sector.

### **Policy and Legal Framework**

1. **Assist in the formation of a designated independent unit at the central government level to lead, promote, guide, and monitor IE implementation.**
2. **Assist in the development of a policy framework for inclusive education at the central level that supports the policy, practice, and culture of inclusion across all levels of the mainstream education system.** The concept of inclusive education should be integrated into the system strategic planning process and specifically address the role of IE to improve quality.
3. **Assist in the establishment of the role and responsibilities of national and local bodies (NGOs, public sector) and accountability factors to support the leap from policy to practice.** Understanding the role all actors play supports human resource development and enables decentralized implementation of IE.
4. **Support the formation of a strong network of local and international NGOs and Disabled People's Organizations.** Increased involvement of civil society in IE development supports advocacy efforts and increases the profile of individuals with disabilities to secure rights and services for themselves.

### **Structure of Services**

1. **Support a national public information and awareness campaign for improved disability services including education.** This should be done in conjunction with all social service providers to ensure widespread service and development of a supportive inclusive environment. An awareness campaign should also target education placement committees as well as local government officials and private sector actors.
2. **Target teacher associations, school boards, parent-teacher associations, and other functioning school support groups with an informational campaign.** Increased knowledge among education staff is needed to generate understanding of disability and build confidence in educators so they are willing to accept children with disabilities into mainstream schools.
3. **Provide specialized support to staff and students at the school level that allows for appropriate learning opportunities and inclusion to take place.** Specialized support can take many forms including: training, mentoring, provision of supplies, infrastructure rehabilitation, site visits, incentives, and changes in schedules and work-loads.
4. **Support the development of some schools into model inclusive schools which thereafter can be used as resource centers for inclusion.** The sharing of services and resources among contiguous schools is a cost-effective way of training educators and promoting inclusive practices.
5. **Lead schools and communities to implement a school mapping or child-search activity in the school catchment area which locates children, particularly pre-school and early primary age, who are not receiving education.** Locating and supporting local children to

receive quality education can lead to strengthened community involvement, parent advocacy, and school leadership.

6. **Assist schools and communities to identify increased funding sources/activities which support inclusion at the local schools.** Inclusive education will not progress without economic empowerment.

### **Human Capacity Development**

1. **Provide or support child-friendly school training to administrators, teachers, and other professionals.** Internationally child-centered instructional methodologies have proven to be effective at meeting the diverse needs of children and improving learning opportunities.
2. **Create partnerships between neighboring schools, especially with special schools or schools with attached classrooms for children with disability.** This promotes sharing of knowledge and techniques among professionals for teaching children with disabilities and enables a student transfer system between institutions.
3. **Support the formation and active functioning of school-community or parent-teacher associations.** The participation of community-parent groups in education program planning and management increases ownership, strengthens community involvement in education, and can assist in program accountability and transparency.

### **Performance Outcomes and Measures**

1. **Assist governments to develop a functional education information management system specifically for inclusive education.** Governments need to learn how to collect, manage, and track data related to children with disability in mainstream schools in order to strengthen their ability to plan for and assess progress of IE implementation.
2. **Assist individual schools to conduct situation analyses for inclusion and identify steps they need to go forward.** As a foundation for planning, an analysis is needed to enable education planners to understand the start point and the steps to go forward with inclusive education and establishes the basis for measuring progress.





## **Section I: Rationale and Objectives of the Study**

### **I. Background and Rationale**

Almost 20 years into the post-Soviet era, some of the countries of Europe and Eurasia continue to struggle through a transition phase from centralized, planned economies to liberal market economies and democratic societies. Influenced by dreams of accession to the European Union, challenged by UN Conventions to achieve Education for All Children, the Millennium Development Goals, and Disability Rights, and facing current erosion of education, health and social services and greater economic disparity within populations, the issue of disability and equitable access to quality social services in these countries is becoming a growing concern.

The regional view of disability generally comes from a medical standpoint, a continuation of the Soviet era ‘defectology’ philosophy where issues of disability are considered faults that could be treated and cured.<sup>16</sup> Children with disability (CWD) are considered ‘defective’ from the norm, stigmatized, and placed in residential institutions so that they could grow and develop ‘with their own,’ isolated and protected from general society. Today, children in institutions are often not counted in disability registers or education data as they are considered ‘not able to be educated’ (UNICEF 2005). Non-institutionalized children are typically segregated in special schools or remain at home where their opportunities to learn and socialize remain minimal. UNICEF (2007) estimates that 2.4 million children of primary-school age are missing from school in the whole of the South Eastern Europe (SEE), Central Europe (CE), and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region.

The reported rates of disability among children across the region have doubled, tripled or more during the decade following the collapse of Communism according to UNICEF (2005), due to improved reporting, social awareness, and diagnoses. Given the current social and economic reform agenda of many countries in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, the plight of children with disabilities cannot be ignored. From a human rights standpoint and moreover, from an economic viewpoint, failing to deal with disability issues or dealing with them in an inefficient manner can be very costly to countries with growing economies and aging populations. Focus on the development of a more effective education process for addressing disabled children, in the form of inclusive education, seems to be in order.

### **2. Purpose of the Study**

This study presents an overview of the international best practices in the provision of inclusive education as well as offers clear guidance and practical tools that will assist USAID programming efforts in thirteen priority countries in the Europe and Eurasia region. This report, prepared for the Social Transition Team in the USAID Bureau, is based on a review of documents, literature, and web sources on disability and inclusive education specifically in the target countries of: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, and Ukraine. Contributions via email from contractors and other individuals in the field of inclusive education in the Europe and Eurasia Region are included.

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<sup>16</sup> Defectology, developed in Russia in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, is the study and education of handicapped children. Children who are classified as handicapped are those with mental or physical defects that hinder their optimal development within the conventional educational system. Defectology employs clinical, physiological, psychological, and pedagogical approaches to determine the means of correcting and compensating defects through a system of special education (V.I. Lubovsky (undated) *Defectology: The Science of Handicapped Children*. Translated by A. Schultz). The term itself has a very negative connotation and can serve as a barrier to inclusion.

### **3. Structure of the Paper**

This paper comprises five sections, as listed below.

Section I: Rationale and Objectives of the Study: The first section provides a background and description of the study as well as the list of objectives.

Section II: Disability and Inclusive Education: Section II provides a discussion on the definitions of disability and inclusive education which includes the philosophy, programming options, an input-process-outcome framework to guide inclusive education programming, and a discussion on special schools.

Section III: Framework for Analysis: Best Practices in Inclusive Education: This section includes a discussion and the framework for analyzing internationally recognized standards of best practices in inclusive education.

Section IV: The Situation in the E&E Region: This sections presents an overview of the situation of disability in the USAID priority countries of Europe and Eurasia. A discussion of the current status of inclusive education is presented through the lens of the contextual factors which affect its development. The situation of special schools in the region is discussed along with a wrap-up of emerging good practices in the E&E region.

Section V: Findings and Recommendations: Section V presents the general conclusions of the author along with a compilation of recommendations from the literature and personal experiences.

Appendices: This section contains resources for program designers and managers.

## **Section II: Disability and Inclusive Education**

### **I. Disability**

Of the estimated 500 million persons with disabilities world-wide, 120-150 million are children. Eighty percent of these children live in lower to lower-middle income countries. Furthermore, recent research indicates that this number of children with disability is growing due to global conditions of increasing poverty, armed conflict, child labor practices, violence, and HIV/AIDS (World Bank 2004).

While the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that about 10 percent of the world's population (about 600 million people) experience some form of physical, mental, or intellectual disability, other sources estimate that about 20 to 25 percent of the world's population is affected by disability either directly or indirectly as family members and care-givers (UNICEF 2005). The European Academy of Childhood Disabilities considers a rate of at least 2.5 percent of children with disability in a country population to be the 'norm' (with one percent having serious conditions), based on the data from industrialized countries and its own extensive research and medical practices. UNICEF uses this rate as a benchmark when attempting to calculate the incidence of disability in the Europe and Eurasia Region for lack of a more efficient data collection system where given rates are variously not available, seemingly low, or confusing.

Defining disability remains an issue which makes collection of reliable data difficult and, further, confounds the use of available information to guide policy. Disability is often used as an umbrella term to refer to quite different health ailments, depending on the context and policy intervention in question. Classic definitions of disability have focused on the 'medical' approach with the understanding that disability is first and foremost a chronic medical condition that can be addressed with health care, rehabilitation, and social supports. Four types of disability are generally recognized: physical, deafness, blindness, and mental retardation. The use of the medical model to classify children is detrimental, however, to the many with milder degrees of disability who would benefit greatly from a minimal level of cost-effective services provided in a regular school but are excluded because of their disability labels.<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, medical categories do not recognize the social, cultural, and environmental factors that may play a big role in disabling individuals and focus on disability from a causal point of view rather than from a viewpoint of what can be done in the environment to accommodate individuals with disabilities. The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) notes the lack of educational utility of descriptive categories which are derived from medical classifications as they offer only partial implication for education provision while effective teaching programs have to take the whole child into account.<sup>18</sup>

Largely as the result of advocacy by disabilities rights organizations, the medical model has been superseded in the U.S. and in developed countries generally speaking by the 'social model,' which, in addition to providing support to the individual for the specific disabling condition, also strives to maximize opportunities to make the person as fully functioning a member of society as possible. The social model, while not denying the need for medical and rehabilitative treatment, implies that the system should adapt to the individual, not the individual to the system.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See Appendix I.A for more discussion on the definition of disability.

<sup>18</sup> OECD website [http://www.oecd.org/document/40/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_39263231\\_40299432\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_37455,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/40/0,3343,en_2649_39263231_40299432_1_1_1_37455,00.html)

<sup>19</sup> European Disability Forum (2002) *EDF Policy Paper: Development Cooperation and Disability*.

Clearly, definitions of disability should be understood by all involved stakeholders as they impart an understanding of the degree (mild, moderate, severe), incidence and type of impairment, and services needed to address them. For purposes of this document, disability is defined as a functional limitation due to physical, mental/emotional, sensory, and cognitive (including intellectual and developmental) impairments.<sup>20</sup>

## **2. Inclusive Education (IE)**

The global focus on EFA and the MDGs has kept persistent attention on the need to remove barriers to participation and learning for the estimated 140 million children out of school world-wide; of which children with disability make up an estimated 30 to 90 percent.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, from a human rights perspective, all children have the right to a suitable education. According to the World Bank (2003), the vast majority of these out-of-school children have moderate impairments which are often not visible and are therefore difficult to define.

There is a comprehensive framework of legally binding instruments which guarantees the right of all children to have access to education, beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 (the most widely ratified international treaty in history [UNICEF 2005]).<sup>22</sup> The latest document in the long list which supports education rights for individuals with disabilities is the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability which states that ‘persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability’ and should receive ‘reasonable accommodation and support required to learn,’ specifically mentioning the provision of sign language and Braille for individuals who are deaf and blind (Article 24).

‘Inclusive education’ is defined as a strategy of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education. It is so named as it promotes the process of including children with special needs<sup>23</sup> (who are disabled or otherwise disadvantaged) into the regular education system where they should join their school-age peers in a learning process that is most conducive to their needs. Disability will be the main category of special needs under consideration in this document.

Integration, the mere placement of children into regular classrooms and schools, should not be viewed as a replacement for inclusion, which truly means that all children should participate as fully as possible in all education programs. Physical integration into schools does not equal nor ensure participation and therefore may not be inclusive.

Inclusive education is neither short-term nor developed in isolation; rather it is an approach that is integral to a total system review and reform, comprises a systematic increase in participation and improved quality of education, and involves all social segments such as family, school, and community systems. Furthermore, research has documented that many of the techniques used to help children with disabilities to become more effective learners are effective at improving learning of other children as well (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009), UNESCO (undated)).

The three components of inclusive education are: access, quality, and community participation (i.e., parents, schools, communities, civil society). In the context of inclusive education, the initial barrier for children with special needs is access, the actuality of attending mainstream schools. Quality implies enabled appropriate learning by CWD along with individual assessment which can encompass behavioral

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<sup>20</sup> Appendix I contains a more complete discussion on differing definitions of disability.

<sup>21</sup> UNESCO (2008).

<sup>22</sup> This framework can be found in Appendix 2.

<sup>23</sup> See the definition of ‘special needs’ on the Acronyms and Definitions page at the beginning of this document.

and social as well as academic benchmarks. Community participation is the third important 'leg' of IE to provide the supportive inclusive environment needed for children with disability to thrive and take their place equally in society.

### **Inclusive Education Framework**

A framework developed for use as a conceptual guide to the network of relationships and factors inherent in IE was proposed in *Inclusive Education: An EFA [Education for All] Strategy for All Children* (World Bank 2004). Based on the framework for assessing education quality in the EFA 2002 Monitoring Report (UNESCO), it was developed for use in all countries. The framework can be useful as a map for inclusive education planning and development (along with more specific assessment instruments<sup>24</sup>) as it comprehensively encompasses all the factors that need consideration when planning and implementing inclusive education. The structure has been expanded from the EFA framework with value-added factors and insights from relevant literature on IE in developing countries (see Figure 1).

In the framework, input factors are those things which affect access to school for children with special needs. Access issues are affected by factors at all levels of inputs: students, school, family and community, and national. Reforms intended to implement inclusive education must address these issues in innovative ways to get excluded children into schools. Several of the most challenging access issues to address are finding, identifying, and encouraging children to go to school, student characteristics (i.e., degree and type of disability), conditions of teacher's work, and negative attitudes of parents and communities, and lack of political will based on attitudes of government officials.<sup>25</sup>

School climate and teaching/learning are the two broad domains concerned with process in the framework. Within these domains, the whole-school approach is emerging as critical to effective IE implementation in both developing and developed countries.<sup>26</sup> Changes need to be made across the system for inclusive education to become a reality.

Outcomes should also be expected across levels, not only on an individual student level, but in the family, community, the education system, the government, and ultimately, in society. Research is showing, however, that measurement of outcomes in this domain is perhaps the most underdeveloped of all domains in IE programming in both the developed and developing countries. Continuous evaluations are gaining more emphasis as inputs (e.g., assessment of needs and feasibility studies), process (both formative and summative evaluations of activities) and outcomes/impacts of IE programs to measure results of inclusive education programming. On an individual level, student achievement tests of content knowledge are only one indicator of impact and are not strongly linked to success in adult life. In any case, such tests are often not suitable for some CWD; therefore more performance-based assessment of students is needed.<sup>27</sup>

Of particular interest to this study are the contextual factors which influence the implementation of inclusive education on a country level. Contextual factors are derived from the influences of the political, social, cultural, and economic environment that provide the background to education. These will be reviewed in Section IV in the discussion of inclusive education in Europe and Eurasia.

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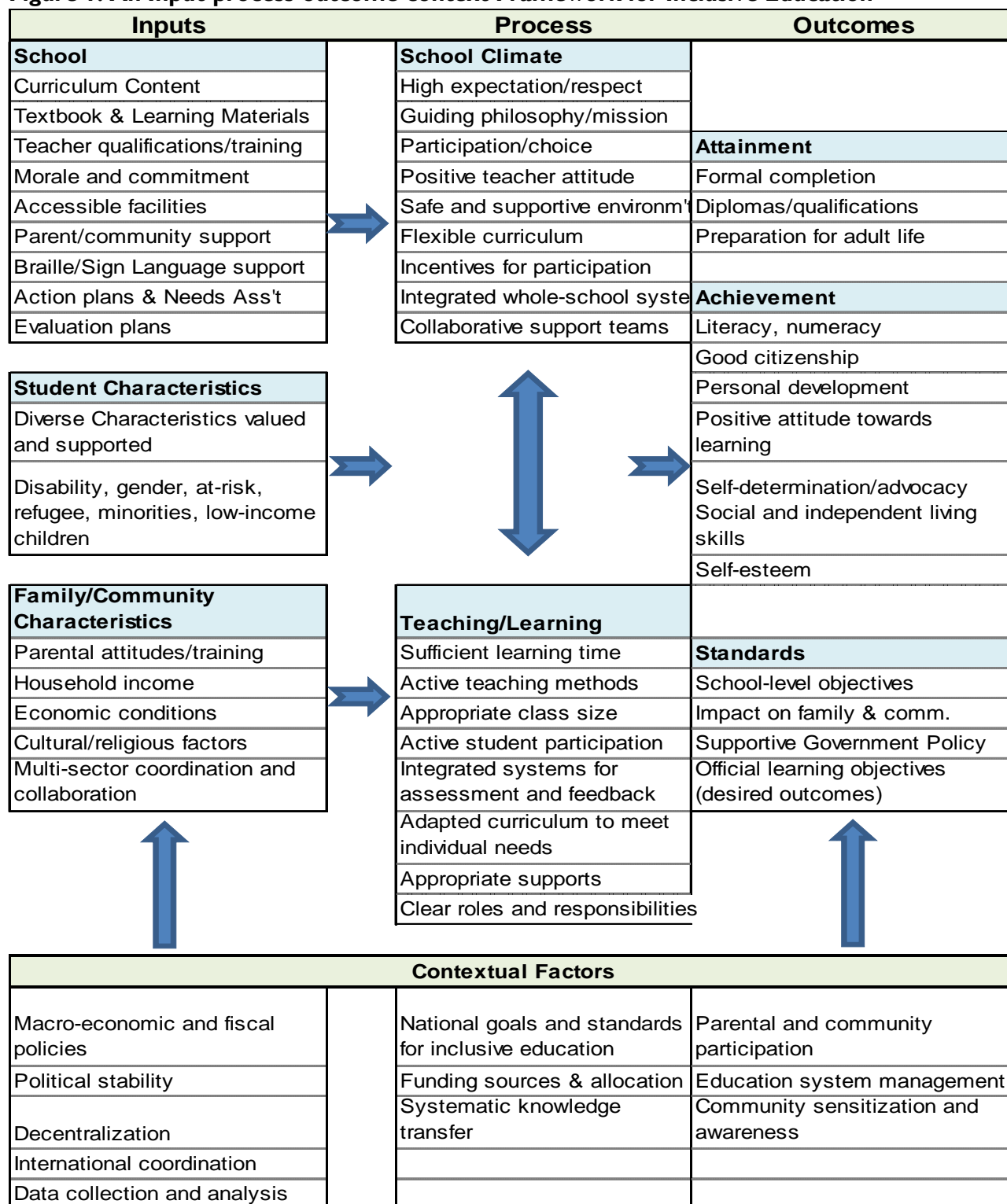
<sup>24</sup> Instruments and tools for assessment and implementation can be found in Appendix 6: Resources.

<sup>25</sup> World Bank 2004

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 1: An Input-process-outcome-context Framework for Inclusive Education**



Source: World Bank (2004) *Inclusive Education: An EFA Strategy for All Children*

### **Inclusive Education Program Options**

The diversity and individual needs of children with disability and the reality of the economic, social, cultural, and political situation of countries present a challenge to the development of effective IE programming. Programming for IE should be flexible and offer opportunities to move across and between options as children's status and abilities change. Placement should be situated on a 'diverse continuum of services' where children are placed in the least restrictive and most inclusive educational environment which best supports their learning needs. In reality, however, placements are often dictated by the current social, political, economic, and cultural situation in country. Approaches to programming include:

- a) One-track: all children are placed in general education schools.
- b) Two-track: education services for children with disability are offered as a distinct education system, such as special schools functioning in parallel to the general education service. Children placed in the special school tracks usually remain in that track for the duration of their school years; however, children with special needs integrated into mainstream schools contribute to high drop-out rates (World Bank 2004).
- c) Multi-track: services are viewed as a continuum of placement options between which children can move fluidly depending on their needs and achievements. For example, self-contained classrooms attached to mainstream schools enable disabled students to receive special assistance in their own classroom while placing them in an environment to join mainstream students for other activities (Mooij, T and E. Smeets 2006).

A one-track system would by necessity be an inclusive system but may not be the best option for all students. The multi-track option offers the most flexibility while the two-track service appears to be the most rigid as students often seem to get 'stuck' in the special school track. All programming considerations should be carefully weighed and should reflect individual needs and abilities, available resources, and social context. In any case, all options should provide high-quality education for children.

### **Special Schools**

The presence of special schools is an historical reality. They were originally established to address the needs of children which ordinary schools could not serve. Therefore, regular schools which continue to inadequately address needs of special children can hardly be suggested as serious alternatives to special schools (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009). While special schools tend to perpetuate the segregation and discrimination of children with disability, the reality is that for students with some types and degree of disabilities, provision of high quality education in these special schools may be the best choice. Therefore, boarding schools and special schools should not be discounted automatically, but rather carefully considered.

Advantages that special schools can offer to children who have different education needs include: centralization of services and concentration of expertise; low staff-student ratios; modified curricula and programs of work; adapted buildings and specialized equipment; and opportunities for individuals with similar difficulties to learn and share from each other.<sup>28</sup> The absence of these things from mainstream schools makes them ineffectual in educating some pupils with disabilities (Rieser 2008).

The challenge with special schools is to find ways of sharing their expertise and resources, of embedding them in a wider educational context, ensuring that their use does indeed offer the best education to the individuals who attend them, and ensuring that best practices, as a result, are used widely to influence the public inclusive education movement. Special schools must develop an outward-looking stance and

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<sup>28</sup> For example, deaf individuals say that deaf and hearing-impaired children should be educated together in order to learn and propagate a common sign language.



take on significantly new roles, for example as resource centers, outreach opportunities, and the sharing of staff and expertise in regular schools (Rieser 2008, UNICEF 2005).

However, the provision of special schools needs to be weighed against the vast amount of research which demonstrates better academic and social achievement of students with disabilities in inclusive settings in mainstream schools and the continued evidence on many fronts that education that is good for students with special needs benefits all students in the same school setting (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2009, UNESCO 2001).

The financial cost of special schools should also be given serious consideration in their continued and widespread use. A growing body of research asserts that inclusive education is not only cost efficient but cost effective, and that equity is the way to excellence (Rieser 2008, World Bank 2003). With many countries facing financial shortfalls for education, the resources currently devoted to special schools which serve a relatively small number of children need to be examined in the context of the widespread failure to make any special educational provision for large numbers of children.

As an example, an evaluation of an inclusive education program in Albania in 2005 found that the education costs for students with disabilities in regular classrooms was 1/16 the average cost of educating these students in special institutions (There was however, no evaluation of the learning achievements of students in either setting so a comparison of the quality of education children with disability received is not possible) (Albanian Disability Rights Foundation 2005). Although the initial move to inclusive education may entail a relatively large influx of funds to get the program started (for special equipment, resources, staff training, and incentives, etc.), costs then level off and thereafter all the children in the school should benefit from the changes.

## Section III: Framework for Analysis: Best Practices in Inclusive Education

Best practices in inclusive education are identified practices or interventions that are linked to specific outcomes and contribute to improved provision of education not only for children with disabilities, but for all excluded children. Best practices are based on evidence or research that demonstrates a strengthened education delivery system where children with disabilities have increased access, attendance, and achievement in education.

The list of best practices presented here has been culled from the vast array of documentation and literature on inclusive education for children with disabilities. Eight documents from national and international sources (research centers, specialists in the field, bilateral and unilateral organizations) were reviewed and the recommended best practices were included in a Best Practices Matrix, which is located in Appendix 3.<sup>29</sup>

Best practices were then placed in the Framework for Analysis (Figure 2) under one of four pillars, which, taken together, represent a comprehensive model of community-based social services for vulnerable groups. In this case, the framework has been modified to present a more system-wide view which acknowledges the government's responsibility in supporting inclusive education without denying the importance of a community-based perspective necessary for successful education and inclusion programs.

Practices that received the most mentions (5-8 ticks) in the Best Practices Matrix were then prioritized as the 'imperatives' for inclusive education programming and more thoroughly discussed here (highlighted in bold italics larger type in Figure 2). However, all of the best practices listed here are consistently mentioned throughout the documentation although not necessarily in the same priority order or frequency. The four-pillared framework of analysis for social services is used here to ensure consistent identification and classification of best practices along the same categories used throughout the series of publications sponsored by the Social Transition Team in the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, USAID, on social transition issues in the region.

**Figure 2: Framework for Analysis: Best Practices in Inclusive Education**

<b>Best Practices in Inclusive Education from the Relevant Literature</b>	
<b>Policy and Legal Framework:</b>	This pillar reflects the policies and laws, the legal mandates, strategies and implementation plans, identified populations, centralized and decentralized functions, cross-sectoral collaboration, financing and accountability issues.
<b>1. Adequate flexible funding and fair allocation formula.</b>	
2.	Clearly defined inclusive education policy and legislation that supports universal rights of access and participation equally for all learners.
3.	Philosophy of inclusion at all levels of governance and administration.
4.	Decentralized funding and decision-making to support innovative practice and targeted implementation within a unified system of education service delivery.

<sup>29</sup> The matrix is organized by level of implementation: a) macro: government policy and legislation level, b) meso: education system level, and c) micro: school-community level. Practices that received three or more mentions in the literature were included in the matrix.

<b>5. Partnerships and coordination between all actors, including different agencies, development organizations, and NGOs and specifically with parents and individuals with disabilities.</b>
<b>Structure and type of Programs and Services:</b> This pillar presents types and ranges of programs and services, environment for change, financial supports and accessibility, parent/community involvement, community outreach, public awareness initiatives, and how services actually are provided at school level.
6. Visionary leadership at all levels.
7. Whole school reform.
8. Attitudinal change and awareness-raising
<b>9. Student and staff support through resources and services to promote access and participation.</b>
<b>10. Implementation of general education best practices: active student-centered learning, peer support, cooperative learning, critical problem-solving approaches to curriculum and instruction.</b>
11. Collaboration between regular and special education teachers and other personnel at school level.
<b>12. Inclusion and participation of children with disability in general education classes.</b>
13. Early identification, intervention and placement of students.
<b>Human Capacity Development:</b> This refers to human resources available, training and education opportunities for developing qualified workforce, planning and decision-making processes, and networking/knowledge-sharing opportunities.
<b>14. Pre-service training and on-going in-service professional development.</b>
15. Participatory program planning and management which includes all actors
16. Transitions and futures planning.
<b>Performance Outcomes and Measures:</b> indicators and processes used to measure program outcomes, information and monitoring systems in place to measure change.
17. Needs-based assessment for student placement.
<b>18. On-going, authentic<sup>30</sup>, performance-based student assessment.</b>

## **I. Priority Best Practices**

The seven most commonly mentioned best practices (from the matrix in Appendix 3 and noted here in Figure 2 in bold italics) are listed along with a fuller explanation of their implications. Due to the frequency with which they have been mentioned in the literature, these practices appear to be absolutely imperative when implementing an inclusive education initiative.

1. **Adequate flexible funding and fair allocation formula.** Adequate and targeted amounts of funding are vital at the school and community levels for the initial program start-up and continuation, staff incentives and salaries, parent/caretaker support, training, special equipment, and community organizations/services. Governments need to keep in mind that while initial IE program start-up amounts can be large, in the longer run, they are more efficiently used as they benefit a larger number of students. Large budgets are not continuously needed for IE programming, however, and should eventually be seen as benefitting the general education program.
2. **Partnerships and coordination between all actors, including different agencies, development organizations, and NGOs and specifically with parents and individuals with a disability.** Inclusive education needs to be seen as one part of the bigger whole of making society more just and less discriminatory for all marginalized populations through education delivery. Therefore all stakeholders must add their diverse talents and contributions to this effort. Commonly, responsibility for populations with disabilities is divided among several government

<sup>30</sup> 'Authentic' means assessment of direct student performance on learning tasks in the classroom on a daily/weekly/monthly basis as opposed to just the use of standardized tests at a prescribed time during the year.

ministries; therefore they must all cooperate to ensure consistent and coordinated provision of the highest quality. NGOs are able to implement innovative but often limited programs for special groups on a pilot basis. Their experiences need to be evaluated and shared to influence implementation on a national scale. Medical, health, social and community services must also add their expertise in order to ensure a continuum of service that addresses needs of the disabled in society and not just education.

Participation by parents (and caretakers) and individuals with disability is absolutely essential to ensure that program provision is most suitable to those who have the greatest stake in the services offered. Parents must be empowered to state their opinions and contribute to decisions that affect their children. Advice and input from disabled individuals is invaluable in informing the community what is most useful to assist them and enable them to contribute to social improvement. Community involvement contributes to development of social justice and a better living environment for all citizens.

3. **Student and staff support through resources and services to promote access and participation.** Resources and services need to be provided not only at school but at home and in the community. Students with special needs and teachers who are expected to instruct them absolutely require specialized materials, resources, equipment, knowledge, and personal support that specifically address individualized learning. Resources run the gamut from special equipment, technology, materials, teaching manuals, special curricula, etc., needed specifically for learning to those as straightforward as wheelchairs, prosthetics, ramps and accessible toilets. Support can also take the form of peer support for students, computer-assisted technology, and paraprofessional support to integrate services.
4. **Implementation of general education best practices: active student-centered learning, peer support, cooperative learning, critical problem-solving approaches to curriculum and instruction.** These refer specifically to methodologies used in classrooms which bring success to learners through diverse presentation and manipulation of materials and lessons for best individual learning opportunities. That this best practice is highlighted for inclusive education adds further credence to the fact that good education systems address the individual learning needs of all students, not just those considered 'special needs' children. Curricula and instructional methodologies, including assessments standards, need to be flexible but targeted to meet all children's needs.
5. **Inclusion and participation of children with disability in general education classes.** This ensures that inclusion is meant to be provision of education for all students equally in mainstream schools with individualized learning and that inclusion and integration do not mean the same thing. In cases in which children with disability are in special classrooms attached to mainstream schools for example, where they are provided with services particular to their needs, they need to have some opportunity to learn with their mainstream schoolmates in general education situations.
6. **Pre-service training and on-going in-service professional development.** Special education provision is critically dependent on the quality of teaching in schools. High quality training and professional development is vital not only for teachers, but for all support personnel who should be involved with special populations in schools, e.g., psychologists, therapists, counselors, social workers, etc. At least one course about special needs children should be in the professional development curriculum of all teachers. All teachers need a sound foundation in individualized learning needs and styles of children and practice teaching experience. Whether teachers knowingly accept special children into their classrooms or not, certainly in every classroom there will normally

be children with a range of different learning needs and abilities who will benefit from more diverse instructional methodologies.

Teachers who focus on working with special needs children specifically will of course need more specialized training. Continuous in-service training is needed to keep teachers already in classrooms updated on new developments in inclusive education and assist them to improve their overall teaching abilities.

7. **On-going, authentic, performance-based student assessment.** In many cases limited to the use of standardized testing for CWD, IE programming is shifting to more authentic assessment approaches that are less about administration and more about how students learn and what their potential is. The focus is on student's work and performance records to identify strengths, interests, and communication preferences. This approach establishes a personal learning profile which tracks what a student has and has not yet learned and of course works in conjunction with the individualized learning plan for all CWD which should be drawn up in collaboration with other school specialists (e.g. therapists, counselors, special educators, etc.).

## **Section IV: The Situation in Europe and Eurasia**

The states of Europe and Eurasia have seen dramatic and rapid transformations in the last 20 years since the dissolution of the Communist Bloc (1989) and demise of the Soviet Union (1991). The focus on strengthening democratization processes, poverty reduction, social inclusion and accelerated growth, regional cooperation and stabilization, European integration, harmonization of constitutions in line with modern states, and public investments has brought on major social, economic and political changes. Education reform has been in the forefront as governments recognize the role of education to support these changes.

### **I. General Status of Inclusive Education in the Region**

All the countries in the region appear to be working on education reform with ‘special education’ increasingly an area of focus. However, the rate and depth of development and implementation is strongly influenced by the diversity of social, political, economic, and cultural systems operating in the region.

The legacy of the Soviet policy of ‘defectology’ and institutionalization of special needs children still remains influential in the region. Special education in segregated facilities is overwhelmingly the policy approach for placement, the number of institutions in the region continues to grow and the number of children consigned to them remains stable (UNICEF 2005). Many children for many reasons remain out of school and ‘invisible.’

Information about children with disability is patchy and adds complexity to the issue of providing services when governments have poor data to use for planning and budgeting. The issue of definitions of disability continues to confound the process. Official definitions of disability across the region generally remain medically-based and anchored in functional limitations; that is, that an individual is incapable in some elemental way. As long as the understanding continues that disability is a medical condition that can be repaired, governments will be hard put to envision what children with disability can accomplish in mainstream school settings.

The status of IE is assessed by addressing the contextual factors which affect implementation in the E&E region. The contextual factors listed here are taken from the Framework for inclusive Education in Figure I of this document. Supporting information comes from the E&E Inclusive Education Information Matrix found in Appendix 4.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> In the Matrix, information is organized by issues which were identified by the author from her experience in education as indicative of the current state of inclusive/education in each country. Marks ticked against each issue were noted only where information was actually found to indicate the occurrence or lack of such an issue. No marks against an issue meant that information was either not found by the author, the issue is not present in the country, or it was not noted in the documents previewed. Information was gleaned from a review of national and (where available) inclusive education strategic plans, development reports, project reviews and research documents from bilateral and multilateral organizations (UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, OECD), assessments, research and evaluations from knowledgeable individuals, and information from USAID Mission sites, disability and inclusive education organizations accessed on the web.

## 2. Contextual Factors

### National Goals and Standards for Inclusive Education

#### Policy

All the countries in consideration (with the exception of Kosovo) have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which guarantees the right of all children to a quality education, and all with the exception of Albania, Belarus, and Kosovo, are signatories to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (2006), which guarantees the right to inclusive education for disabled individuals (only Azerbaijan, Montenegro and Serbia have actually ratified it). Each of the countries has its own social laws which, on paper at least, guarantee social protection, protection of rights, and non-discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

The national education laws in the majority of countries state that **all children** have the right to receive an education in mainstream schools along with individualized instruction appropriate to their abilities. Most of the countries also have laws or regulations specifically ensuring equal opportunity for **special needs children** to receive full benefits of education at all levels but actual provision can range from special schools, institutions, and 'correctional education centers' to special classrooms, supported home schooling, day care centers, inclusive classrooms, and individualized curricula in special classes in general education schools.

Increasingly, there is a trend toward inclusive education in the region, although it appears in different formats. The concepts of integration and inclusion are not always clearly distinguished from each other and are often used interchangeably. However, there seems to be a growing understanding that all children have a right to education under international and national law; that all children are capable of being educated; and that it is a government's responsibility to provide educational settings that respect these rights and capabilities (OECD 2007). In most cases however, inclusive education reform exists more firmly in policy than in practice (UNICEF 2007).

Of the national education strategic plans and national education reports reviewed, some specifically include a component on 'inclusive education' in their documents (Armenia, Azerbaijani, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Serbia) although budgetary support, action frameworks, indicators, and implementation commitments are not included and inclusive education is generally not harmonized with general education planning.

Bosnia-Herzegovina and Georgia are the only two countries that have actual strategic plans for 'inclusive education' in place. Azerbaijan is reforming pre-school education to be inclusive and a law for inclusive education has been submitted to the central government in October, 2009. Inclusive education is a stated priority of education strategic planning in Kosovo and Georgia, (although the Kosovo Strategy for Development of Pre-university Education (2006) also mentions the piloting of 'novelties' (original quotations) in the system such as *inclusive education, child-friendly projects, and learner-centered instruction* (author's italics), p. 10).

**Box 1:** In the report to the International Bureau of Education (IBE) Community of Practice workshop, Belarus reported that 'inclusion or involvement in the educational process of children and youths is not a *novelty for our country*' (p. 1) (author's Italics) but then goes on to mention that 'integrated education is not spread administratively and is *not compulsory or coercive, and of course, it is not opposed to education in specialized schools*' (p. 8) (italics by author).

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Belarus, Moldova, Macedonia, Ukraine, and Russia do not make a distinction between ‘inclusion’ and ‘integration,’ and their strategies clearly indicate that the majority of children with special needs are serviced by special facilities. Albania, in an otherwise comprehensive education strategy plan, makes only one mention of inclusive education in relation to curriculum development. Schools in Serbia are not legally obligated to implement IE; therefore no legal basis exists for financing schools that express an interest in doing so.

### **Existing Efforts at Inclusion**

Inclusive classrooms exist in all the countries, either by government admission and policy or by the fact that other organizations (NGOs, donor organizations) are piloting inclusive education programs, but the actual total numbers of students in these IE programs is very difficult to ascertain. At the same time, all the countries, with the exception of Kosovo, note that they have special schools, boarding schools, rehabilitation centers, attached special classrooms, and/or correctional facilities that offer placement options for children with disability. For the most part, children with mild or moderate degrees of disability seem to be candidates for inclusive education efforts in local schools, although all types of disabilities seems to be represented in that number.<sup>32</sup>

Several countries have made impressive progress addressing inclusion by the addition of specialized classes to mainstream schools. This example of multi-track programming is a predominant feature in Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo, where it is a major strategy component of improving schooling opportunities for children with disabilities. However, whether the education offered to them is truly inclusive by the provision of individualized instruction in these classrooms and by opportunities to participate with non-disabled schoolmates in other situations is not clear. Some countries also cite the intention of transitioning special schools into resource centers for IE support in mainstream schools (such as in Kosovo, Russia, Serbia, and Belarus) while others have mobile teams which travel among mainstream schools to offer advice on educating students with special needs (Montenegro).

Pre-primary and early primary education is the focus of most of the regional inclusion efforts (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Russia). In the region, there seems to be little expectation that students with disabilities will go on to mainstream secondary or higher education. Post-secondary opportunities for students with disabilities, especially for those in special schools, seem to consist predominantly of vocational training. University education is legally possible for individuals with disabilities in some countries (as in Russia and Montenegro), however, in reality, these institutions are not accessible nor accommodating of special needs students (as in students with sensory disabilities).

### **Data**

Extremely limited data are available on the learning achievement or school success of children with disabilities either in inclusive classrooms or in special schools and when found, indicate that children with disability generally receive a very restricted education. In Serbia for example, school completion rates for students in special schools were very low; 12 percent finished elementary and 30 percent of those graduated from secondary schools (OECD 2007). In Armenia, an intensive search in two provinces by an NGO identified 1,277 children with disability, of which 22 percent were in inclusive classrooms in mainstream schools; however, 11 percent had incomplete schooling, had never received schooling or were not registered at all, and only 31 students had graduated from school (Sargsyan 2008). In an oblast in Russia, 24 percent of an identified population of children with disability attended regular

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<sup>32</sup> For further clarity, certain types and degrees of disability which are considered moderate in overseas settings would be considered mild in the US, with inclusion being the routine education choice for these individuals.



classrooms, however, another 11 percent are educated at home, and a full 22 percent received no instruction at all (*Perspektiva* project report, [www.disabilityworld.org](http://www.disabilityworld.org)).

### **Placement**

Children are evaluated for school placement most often by classification commissions consisting of, for example, therapists, psychologists, pedagogues, and defectologists. However, the evidence suggests that the assessment process may be outdated and rigid, and focuses on detecting disability ('categorization' or labeling) and not the potential of the child for learning. Also, subsequent evaluations of the child are not held and few concrete education recommendations made that would help educators in classroom settings (OECD 2007, UNICEF 2007). Montenegro reports that there is no organized system of early diagnosis, prevention, and monitoring of children with developmental difficulties; therefore children are already school-age before they are diagnosed and have passed the stage of extreme learning and development in early childhood where intervention might have been helpful (in Montenegro report, OECD 2007).

In many countries, parents attend the classification commission hearing that decides on education placement of their children, and in some cases, may have final say in the decision (Bosnia, Moldova, and Macedonia). However, parents may be unwilling to send their child for categorization for fear of stigmatization or may not accept the decision of the commission, in which case, they must find an alternative placement (home or local school). The whole process of categorization 'excludes inclusion' as it continues to label children by what they cannot do instead of addressing their potential (UNICEF 2007).

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

As previously mentioned, data that would help policy makers plan for and implement inclusive education strategies are limited and imprecise. Compounding the issue of accurate data collection are the problems of defining disability, also already discussed, the common practice of splitting responsibility for special needs children among government ministries (education, social, health, labor), and the fact that many children with disability do not attend school and are therefore not visible in the system.<sup>33</sup>

While data exist for children in special schools, and to some extent for children in special classes in regular schools, the number of special needs children trying to cope in regular classes is not collected according to the national governments. Many children with milder and less intrusive forms of disabilities probably do attend mainstream schools without being counted or provided for in any special way.<sup>34</sup> National education plans may clearly state that in the absence of nearby special facilities for placement purposes, parents may place their children in mainstream schools (as in Georgia), but in many cases, these same children are the ones who drop out of school early because they are not able to cope with the

**Box 2:** An example of the use of data in IE implementation comes from Bosnia: a maximum of 3 children with special needs can be integrated into the same regular class, and for each child with special needs, the total number of children in that class is reduced by 3. If children with special needs are in a regular classroom, then the number of children in that class cannot be over 18. (UNICEF (2009) Mapping IE Practices in Primary Education in BiH.)

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<sup>33</sup> In Macedonia an estimated 20% of special needs children do not attend any schooling (OECD 2007). In Serbia, an estimated 85% of special needs children did not attend any type of schooling at all in 2001 (OECD 2007).

<sup>34</sup> For example, in Albania, estimates are that 20% of 'regular' children in general education display serious learning difficulties and do not receive special education attention (ADRF 2005).

'normal' education program.<sup>35</sup>

Data are used as prescribed by education policies to limit numbers of special needs children who can be included into mainstream education classes (Box 2) (as in Russia, Montenegro). The conundrum lies in the fact that without more functional definitions of disability, how are those children with mild to moderate disabilities who have the most ability to function in inclusive classes, able to be appropriately identified, placed, and instructed?

### **Parental and Community Involvement**

The importance of parental involvement in education of children with disability is widely accepted by governments in the region, and the negative attitude of parents towards including CWD in the mainstream is considered a major barrier to a speedier move towards inclusive practices. Parents' involvement, however, is often hampered by their lack of understanding of their children's rights. They do not plan for nor are aware of the educational alternatives for their children, and are hindered by their lack of open-mindedness or fear being stigmatized by their communities. Family poverty also often forces parents to place children with special needs into institutional care where the government will be financially responsible for them. Parents in rural areas are further hindered by geographically limited options for their children so placement is often in institutions far from home.

**Box 3:** Increasingly, parents are assisting in schools which their children with disability attend, adding input to assessment as well as selecting content and activities for the child, sitting on school boards and parents' councils to contribute to school inclusion policy (for example in Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia) and enabling a level of accountability in the system.

In the past, parental involvement has been minimal but with the recent attention on increased social services for special needs children, parents have become more assertive in the future of their children. Once they understand about disability, parents with and without special needs children can become more understanding and accepting of inclusion of children with disability into mainstream schools.<sup>36</sup> However, the resistance of attitudes against the integration of children with disabilities in mainstream schools cannot be underestimated (UNICEF 2005).

As far as the attitudes of other students on the placement of children with disability into their mainstream classes, limited research in the region seems to indicate that children learn to be accepting of disabled classmates and on observation, are seen to be helpful and loving.<sup>37</sup> This supports general knowledge that younger children particularly are more accepting of differences and learn (and later display) discrimination and prejudice from adults in their society. In general, building strong and tolerant societies will support inclusive education in the region, decreasing society's fear and ignorance of disability and increasing social justice for all citizens.

Community participation can lead to stronger demand and capacity at the grassroots level for more equitable education and is, therefore, vital to successful inclusive education (for all good education systems generally). Community development has strengthened across the region as a result of policy and legal changes of the governments, increased focus on human rights, and citizens' demands for more and better services.

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<sup>35</sup> The trend for special needs children to drop out of school early is well-recognized. (World Bank 2004) For example, in Albania many children with moderate degrees of disability attending mainstream schools drop out before completing grade 4 (UNICEF 2002a).

<sup>36</sup> Save the Children UK (2008). Hilfswerk Austria International (undated). Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (2005), World Vision (2005), DUGA (2004).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

While pockets of change are apparent, the level of community participation is difficult to assess on a country-by-country basis. NGOs seem to be having the most success in supporting communities to become more active in IE as all of the countries have or had both local and international NGOs piloting IE projects in them. Governments laud efforts of NGOs and have for the most part expressed their desire for piloted IE programs to continue, offering further support to the importance of a strong and active civil society.

Some of the more successful activities of NGOs to improve provision of inclusive education in the region include: pre- and in-service teacher training, school administrator training, equipping classrooms, supplying demonstration sites, printing informational booklets,<sup>38</sup> attitudinal and disability awareness training,<sup>39</sup> networking and advocacy, and providing practical guides for IE practices.<sup>40</sup>

A host of disability-specific international organizations operate chapters in all countries in the region and offer disabled individuals an outlet to make their voices known, supply technology and specific equipment, and advocate for better services.<sup>41</sup>

### **Education System Management**

For the most part, education systems in these countries are highly centralized. The issues of containing information, limiting authority, and remaining rigid to new ideas will hinder the willingness to include disabled individuals into local schools. Some countries state the intention to decentralize in their national education strategies (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, and Serbia) but implementation will lag until all system levels have increased capacity. Decentralization of responsibility for IE, accompanied by appropriate decision-making authority, would increase flexibility at all administrative levels to meet individual student needs.

Governments that seem to be the most open towards inclusive education are those that also seem to be the most progressive with education system reform in general as noted by their national strategic plans (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Serbia). Countries that are focusing on big changes at the national level such as curriculum revision (Bosnia, Kosovo, and Georgia), an aggressive school construction initiative (Azerbaijan), major textbook overhaul (Georgia and Moldova), and large-scale teacher training efforts (Serbia) appear to embrace the issue of inclusion more willingly. Also the increased attempts of some national education systems to admit other excluded groups into mainstream schools (specifically Roma children<sup>42</sup>) bodes well for the future inclusion of children with disability.

**Box 4:** Government management styles hinder IE policy and implementation. For example, in Armenia, the government management style is 'passive,' the 'old authoritarian approaches prevail' and the system does not have flexibility to absorb new things and adapt to them (UNDP (2006) and from Bosnia-Herzegovina: 'governance is over-politicized, controlled, and fragmented' (Notes from Malgorzata Sekulowitz, independent consultant, 09.24.09).

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<sup>38</sup> International Step by Step Association programs in Moldova, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Ukraine. [www.issa.nl](http://www.issa.nl)

<sup>39</sup> Perspektiva, Advocacy program in Russia. on [www.disabilityworld.org/12-02\\_05/children/russia.shtml](http://www.disabilityworld.org/12-02_05/children/russia.shtml)

<sup>40</sup> Open Society Institute program in Serbia. [www.soros.org/esp/mews/Serbia](http://www.soros.org/esp/mews/Serbia)

<sup>41</sup> See Mobility International USA website for a searchable database of disability organizations present in each country. [www.miusa.org](http://www.miusa.org)

<sup>42</sup> Roma or 'gypsies' are a unique minority group in Europe, considered to have no distinct historical homeland, rather are scattered throughout nearly all countries of Europe and Central Asia. Roma minorities are among the poorest in society and are most vulnerable to social exclusion and gaps in service provision. USAID (2005).

### **Funding Sources and Allocation and Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policies**

The whole area of resource policy and allocation for education budgets generally and inclusive education specifically in the E&E region is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say that adequate and flexible funding continues to be an issue in most of these transitioning countries which must deal with rebuilding and country development at all levels. Addressing poverty remains a large issue in the region and countries have to astutely prioritize funds for most effective use.

Constraints to inclusive education efforts due to funding issues are often mentioned in the literature. Documents from Albania, Serbia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine all mention the lack of financial guidelines and limited funds to mainstream schools, specifically to enable implementation of inclusive education. Documents from Georgia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo mention the decreased level of funding available for education in general and Bosnia mentions the limited funds available for specialist training (e.g., therapists, psychologists, etc.).<sup>43</sup> Inclusive education does not get specific budget commitments in most countries. In the longer run, however, as noted above, governments must realize that spending large amounts of money initially on bigger system reform such as teacher and staff training, improving infrastructure, and revising curricula, learning materials and equipment that meet the needs of inclusive education will be the most efficient use of funds as all students should benefit from an improved education delivery.

### **Systematic Knowledge Transfer**

Weak systems or mechanisms for knowledge transfer further hinder the growth and development of inclusive education by limiting the sharing of knowledge. These issues surface in the E&E countries as centralized government processes that limit the transference of knowledge between levels of the education system; weak education management information systems (EMIS) that should collect, maintain, and share data of diverse populations of children in the system; and the professional development and incentive system of teachers, staff and other necessary professionals.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that school directors and administrators may be in the dark about government policies and receive little implementation guidance about inclusive education (Albania). Teachers in Montenegro report there is no coordination of their work with others, no regular exchange of experiences, information, suggestions and advice, and not even a system of passing records of children in pre-school to the receiving primary school (in Montenegro report OECD 2007).

In countries that have initiated decentralization efforts, schools especially have been given more autonomy in planning and funding inclusive education efforts (seen particularly in Serbia, Georgia, Macedonia, and Albania), but now the responsibility rests with them to share their data and lessons learned with the central level.

A few of the countries have EMIS in place or in planning (Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kosovo, and Moldova). Such a system, in principle, shares the responsibility across levels for collection of data on school populations and empowers them to use the disaggregated information for further policy development and improved school-level program planning and implementation. Accurate data collection and analysis certainly is a big need in these countries and should receive targeted attention.

Regionally, one of the most oft cited barriers to inclusive education is poorly qualified teachers who are unacquainted with teaching methodologies that address the individual learning needs of children and may lack confidence to address the needs of special children; as a result, they are often unwilling to accept special needs children into mainstream classes (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Georgia, Kosovo,

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<sup>43</sup> These have all been taken from the respective country education and/or inclusive education strategies which can be found in the Reference Section in the Appendices.

Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, and Ukraine). Teacher shortages, teacher deployment schemes, and salary/incentive issues also impact the broader issue of education personnel capacity to implement inclusive education. Countries also report limited training opportunities for special professionals (e.g., therapists, social workers, psychologists, etc.) who add necessary support to inclusion efforts.

Ultimately, teachers in classrooms are the ones who make inclusive education a success or failure; therefore knowledgeable and motivated teachers are vital. Some countries have plans for inclusion of IE components in the pre-service preparation of general education teachers or have created special education degrees at university level (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova, Russia, and Serbia), although quality may still be questionable. In-service training of teachers has been patchy and often left to NGOs or donors although there are some bright spots of hope in improved techniques of teachers.<sup>44</sup> However, many general education teachers at this point who are expected to accept special needs children into their classrooms are unprepared to do so (OECD 2007).

Inclusive education will not and cannot take off until school personnel across the region are well trained and well supported by accompanying professional development and incentive programs. Efforts to increase teachers' and administrators' understanding of disability and improve their instructional methodologies will assist the progress of inclusive education and offer big returns to the system generally by improving quality in the classroom.

### **School Factors: Infrastructure, Curricula, Equipment<sup>45</sup>**

Besides the need for well-trained and informed teachers, the one other constant that is absolutely necessary to implement inclusive education is school-level modifications that specifically support different learning needs and abilities of children. Consistently, the regional governments mention the following constraints to inclusive education:

- Curricular design,
- Inaccessible (and often old and damaged) schools,
- Large and crowded classes,
- Limited furniture (desks, writing boards, chairs),
- Limited specialized equipment,
- Un-adapted or unavailable technology and assistive devices, learning materials, textbooks, instructional methods, assessment standards, and
- Limited specialized staff for collaborative or supportive classroom assistance.

From this list, issues with schools (inaccessible, old and damaged, unfurnished, large classes) need to be addressed by governments anyway in order to improve education provision for all of the country's children but in doing so, should do it in a way that enables inclusive education. Standard design features in school rehabilitation and construction (for example, ramps, wide doorways, and accessible toilets) would benefit children with physical disabilities as well as mainstream children. Few schools, including some of those specifically for special populations, appear to be completely adapted for accessibility. The large expense of rehabilitation appears to be a major draw-back to a faster rate of renovation and construction in many of the countries (cited specifically in documentation by Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kosovo, and Macedonia).

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<sup>44</sup> See for example the International Step-by-Step Association (Appendix 5), which operates in many of the regional countries.

<sup>45</sup> School Level Factors is not one of the contextual factors listed in the Framework for Inclusive Education, Figure I, but they were mentioned so often in the literature that the author decided to address them here in the analysis of current IE status. Also, the factors of International Coordination and Political Stability from the Framework for IE are not addressed here as this document does not go into such depth of analysis.

Curricular issues are mentioned mostly in terms of how rigid (Serbia), unsuitable (Albania) or un-integrated (Ukraine) they are. Reports from Albania note ‘that schools are characterized by uniformity; the same programs for all and very little adaptation according to the needs of students.’<sup>46</sup> The Bosnia-Herzegovina report notes that the curriculum is ‘standardized and lockstep’ with an exhaustive emphasis on purely academic skills (Bosnia-Herzegovina report in OECD 2007, p. 74). As noted by UNESCO (2009), a highly academic, heavily overloaded curriculum is counterproductive to inclusive education.

On the other hand, in the Republic of Macedonia, some special curricula have been developed for those with intellectual, vision, and hearing impairments. Special attention is given to development of life skills and vocational training (in FYR of Macedonia, OECD 2007).

An inclusive curriculum is one that ensures both equity and quality and responds to all learners’ diversities.<sup>47</sup> There is no ‘one size fits all’ curriculum model; a well-defined curriculum can be taught to mixed-ability learners equally. Curricula can be adapted for inclusion in three elements: content, instructional settings, and instructional strategies (The Roeher Institute 2004). The process of curriculum modification for inclusion is a continuous and intense process that requires time and the use of professional curriculum developers as well as education stakeholders at all levels.<sup>48</sup> The best curricula modification is often done by teachers who need immediate and on-the-spot classroom level guidance to instruct special needs children; however they should not be expected to do this without appropriate compensation (i.e., time and money) as it is not their main priority in the classroom. Well-defined curricula include specified learning goals and assessment procedures where children’s progress is based on demonstrated achievement as opposed to the use of standard tools that measure all children on the same scale (UNESCO 2001).

Specialized equipment (especially technology) and adapted materials are expensive and often require additional training for the teachers. Governments that commit to inclusive education also need to commit the funds to suitably equip classrooms for these children. As mentioned previously, initial outlays are large but should level off after a few years. Many learning materials can be hand-made from local materials but require initial outlays of money for supplies.

Sources often cite a limited supply or poor quality of specialized professionals to provide collaborative services at schools in conjunction with teachers’ efforts as a barrier to speedier implementation of inclusive education (Serbia, Montenegro, Moldova, and Russia). The addition of assistant teachers to aid classroom teachers is also known to increase effectiveness to IE efforts, but governments cite limited financial resources to train and employ more teaching staff.

### **3. Special Schools**

Clearly, placement in special schools appears to be the primary solution to education of special needs children despite the big push for inclusive education. The overdevelopment of and continuing strong network of special schools in the region seems to significantly influence the chances of children with disabilities to be placed into mainstream schools (National Report of the Republic of Serbia 2008).

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<sup>46</sup> Notes from Małgorzata Sekułowicz, Independent consultant, 09.24.09.

<sup>47</sup> The definition of ‘curriculum’ applied here involves the whole set of experiences that schools use to assist children to learn and includes the subjects taught as well as the instruction they receive, the school environment, and activities that take place outside the classroom. Taken from UNESCO (2001) *Understanding and Responding to Children’s Needs in Inclusive Classrooms: A Guide for Teachers*.

<sup>48</sup> A more thorough explanation of an inclusive curriculum is found in Appendix I: B.

All countries seem to have at least one school each for deaf and blind disabilities as well as several schools for populations with mental or multiple disabilities. Placement based on degree of impairment is varied. Some countries, for example, have separate schools for children who are 'hearing impaired' (mild-moderate hearing loss) and 'deaf' (severe hearing loss) while in others all children with hearing loss are placed into the same schools. Serbia, for example, will only place children with severe or multiple impairments into special schools and the rest of the children are placed into attached classrooms or mainstream classrooms (OECD 2007). Albania places students 'with slight mental retardation' into special schools (UNICEF 2002a).

Quality of special schools appears to be widely variable across the region and even within individual countries. Some schools are characterized by the same complement of issues which compromise quality of education generally: poor condition and sometime inaccessibility of buildings, poorly trained teachers, limited supplies of materials, equipment, special textbooks, and lack of or poorly prepared specialists (Montenegro, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kosovo). A geographic disparity also exists in that most special schools are located in urban areas; therefore rural children are even more disadvantaged.

Education provision in these institutions is variously stated as 'rigid and authoritarian' (Serbia), 'just taking care' of students (Montenegro) or students leaving school not able to read, write or prepared for independent living or transition to regular schools (Georgia). Some schools for the deaf, for example, continue to support the oral methodology of education, not allowing sign language to be used as the instructional language (Russia, Serbia, Moldova, and Kosovo).<sup>49</sup> Governments state that education provided by special schools is 'watered down,' noting that students in these facilities receive the 9-year (usually standard) curriculum in 11 to 12 years (country reports in OECD 2007).

The most progressive schools for children with disabilities seem to be facilities for the deaf and blind. Some appear to be quite updated in their ability to provide an appropriate education to those students who need it offering well-equipped study rooms and specialist classrooms, life skills and trades training, specialized technology (for example, Brailers, talking books, amplification technology, computers), accessible buildings, teachers with disabilities (for example, individuals who are deaf who can present information in sign language), bilingual teaching (oral and sign language together), and organized paths of instruction leading to graduation (Russia, Montenegro, Albania, and Armenia).

Deafness and blindness are two areas of disability that receive particularly vigorous advocacy efforts from international organizations. These organizations are able to offer materials, teaching and training, methodologies, technologies, and cross-cultural visits. The School for the Blind in Armenia for example has a relationship with the Perkins School for the Blind (in Watertown, Massachusetts), a very progressive institution in the US that is a world leader in providing education to children who are blind or have multiple disabilities.<sup>50</sup> Establishing partnerships with international special schools is a good practice which enables a transfer of knowledge and support and aid advocacy.

Some countries have made progress in the conversion of special schools into resource centers (Russia, Serbia, Belarus, and Kosovo). Teachers at these institutions continue to instruct their classes but can have added duties of itinerant teaching of special children in the area, and research and development. Future plans envision resource centers as assisting in school planning, carrying out assessments, as well

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<sup>49</sup> The oral philosophy of education for the deaf has been out of use in the US, Canada and Western Europe since the 1970s when it was deemed discriminatory and ineffectual for the learning needs of most hearing impaired individuals. Bilingual education (combined sign language and speech) is very commonly in use today.

<sup>50</sup> With significant support from the Conrad Hilton Foundation, Perkins works with schools, parent groups and other local partners in the following countries in the region: Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine.

as remedial training programs and playing a role in ensuring the medical, health and therapeutic needs of the students (Kosovo report in OECD 2007). Conversion of special schools into resource centers would appear to be a valuable cost-effective opportunity to offer mainstream schools technical services in the advancement of inclusive education.

No information can be found on the academic achievement of children in special schools, what assessment procedures and school-leaving requirements are in place, or the numbers of children who actually graduate from special schools, how many go on to higher education, become employed, etc. As special schools are often under the jurisdiction of ministries other than the education ministry (for example labor, health, or social affairs), focusing on the education students receive in these institutions has apparently not been a government priority. Bringing pressure to bear on these schools through increased focus on improved social services, human rights issues, and country education reform is needed in order to improve the quality of education these children have the right to receive.

#### **4. Some IE Examples in the Region**

Examples of past or ongoing inclusive education programs in the region are shown in Appendix 5. Practices from these programs compared favorably to those in the Framework for Analysis: Best Practices in Inclusive Education (Figure 2, p. 9) and were therefore deemed promising. The author thought these practices should be noted and considered for replication in the countries across the region. Replication of some of these practices would build a foundation for a program of inclusive education which could then be modified and improved as capacity and motivation increased. Noted after each practice is the country from which it came. (See Appendix 5 for a review of promising IE programs.)

**Figure 3: Promising Practices from Regional Programs**

<p><b>Policy and Legal Framework</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Priority groups identified (Regional, Armenia, Montenegro, Serbia, BiH, Albania).</li> <li>2. Alliances between governments, NGOs, development organizations, parents/communities and individuals strengthened (Regional, Armenia, Montenegro, Serbia, BiH, Albania).</li> <li>3. Decentralized delivery of inclusive education developed (Regional, Armenia, Montenegro).</li> <li>4. Philosophy of inclusion promoted (Regional, Serbia, BiH, Albania).</li> <li>5. Parent and community involvement increased (Regional, Serbia, Albania).</li> <li>6. Education policy reform across all levels integrated and enabled (Montenegro).</li> <li>7. Cross-sectoral cooperation supported (BiH, Albania).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Structure of Programs and Services</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A comprehensive set of activities to develop an inclusive environment offered (Regional, Armenia, Montenegro).</li> <li>2. Strong public awareness and advocacy programs aimed to influence public attitudes and citizen involvement (Regional, Serbia, Albania).</li> <li>3. Model schools established to promote high standards of education provision, encourage replicability and increase sustainability (Armenia).</li> <li>4. An integrated approach to education provision promotes targeting, improved accessibility and parent involvement (Montenegro, BiH).</li> <li>5. Practical tools for implementation based on best practices and are easily accessed (Serbia).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Human Capacity</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. International and national knowledge-sharing opportunities provided (Regional, Serbia, BiH).</li> <li>2. A professional standard of instruction established and used as a model for pre- and in-service training (Regional, Armenia Montenegro, BiH).</li> <li>3. Integrated curriculum materials based on best practices (Serbia).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Performance Outcomes and Measures</b></p>



1. System of identification of children with special needs in place (BiH).
2. Research process in place to assess participants' attitudes (BiH).
3. Monitoring system tracks government performance (Albania).

## **Section V: Observations, Findings and Recommendations**

### **1. General Observations**

The issue of addressing education needs of special children seems to be on the agenda of all of the countries in the region. Inclusive education as a placement option appears in about half of the regional education strategies although they appear to be mostly declarative with few budget commitments and implementation plans attached. Placement in special facilities continues to be the most popular option although inclusive classrooms appear to be operating in all the countries on a limited basis.

Education data for special needs children are available but tend to be limited to access data on special institutions and classrooms. Data for the general student population on drop-out, in-school diversity, transitions between levels, and academic achievement that could be useful for policy development and program planning are limited due to poorly defined collection systems, low prioritization, or political will. No information can be found on the academic achievements of children with disability in any types of education settings and little enough for regular students. Attention to education quality for students with disabilities does not seem to be at the forefront for many of the countries.

Countries in Southeastern Europe seem to be more progressive in their efforts toward inclusive education, driven by their desire to follow the Western European standard of education. Most countries of the former Soviet Union remain very entrenched in their practice of segregating children with disabilities into special schools.

The education provided in special schools seems to be of inferior quality to that of mainstream education. The areas of deafness and blindness seem to be making the most progress as far as special school education but conversely, their expertise does not seem to touch on students with these types of disability in mainstream schools. The movement towards transitioning special schools into resource centers for IE support could add much to mainstream education inclusion efforts.

### **2. General Findings**

#### **Policy and Legal Framework**

- All countries have policies/laws which identify the right to educational arrangements for special needs populations, but not all have policies of inclusive education.
- The issue of 'integration' is confused with 'inclusion' and used interchangeably.
- The placement of special needs children into special (non-inclusive) facilities remains stable and is viewed as fulfilling governments' obligations to provide quality education to these populations. Progress in IE seems dependent on priorities in education reform and political will.
- Inclusion is not clearly defined as a principle of education reform and instruments and measures have not been specified that support the policy, practice and culture of inclusion across all levels of the mainstream education system. A clear definition of roles and responsibilities and budget commitments at all levels is lacking.
- Inclusive education is viewed as a 'placement' rather than a 'service' which constitutes only one part of a whole system reform that should support improved learning opportunities for all children.
- Centralized authority, decision-making, and funding inhibits local actors from taking more responsibility in providing service.
- NGOs and civil society groups are the driving force for change in the region through advocacy efforts and mobilization of parents.

- The numbers of children with disability in the central, south and eastern European regions are increasing, and their disadvantages remain deeply entrenched thereby putting them at great risk.<sup>51</sup>

### **Structure of Services**

- The efforts of parents to get improved services for their children with disability are now being seen as a major initiative to introduce inclusion into the wider context of the pre- and primary education system.
- Awareness-raising efforts are vital to counteract the fear and ignorance of disability that form major barriers world-wide to improved services for these individuals.
- At the school level, the most successful inclusive education efforts seem to be happening at the pre-school and early primary grades supporting one of the key strategies (early identification and intervention) to reducing the number of children attending special schools (UNICEF 2007). Improved teaching methodologies (such as the child-centered methods promoted by UNICEF and NGOs such as Step-by-Step organization (see the next section) are making progressive steps in providing teaching personnel with better techniques, increased awareness and confidence to address the special learning needs of children with disability.
- Attachment of special classes to mainstream schools and the conversion of special schools into local resource centers are two local initiatives that could make positive contributions towards inclusive education if done properly.
- NGOs have been the leaders in the region to pilot inclusive education programs and community development with components of inclusion. Governments rely on NGOs to do this and appear unwilling or unable to take over this responsibility at this time. There have been very limited efforts to nationalize any good models of IE. Chapters of international disability organizations operate in all of the countries but their presence needs to be higher profile and networked to increase critical mass.
- Education systems are generally unsuitable for inclusive education practices. Aging infrastructure, equipment and technology, materials and books, and education personnel have limited ability to adopt modifications, thereby severely limiting education delivery for special populations. Parents and communities are generally neither engaged nor willing to accept inclusive practices.

### **Human Capacity**

- There has been some effort to improve teacher professional development programs at the pre-service level for special education and inclusive education although little can be ascertained about the quality and type of training.
- NGOs have been most involved at the in-service level to train teachers in classrooms. Some governments have recognized that this is a government responsibility although there have been few attempts to address this issue.
- Child-centered teaching methodology is now being introduced into the region by various donors (particularly UNICEF) and NGOs, which can serve as the foundation for a rights-based approach to inclusive education focusing on provision of quality education for all children.
- The training status and professional development of other education personnel, i.e., school administrators and district/provincial level education staff, is very unclear although their buy-in and participation in inclusive education is vital.

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<sup>51</sup> Based on data of numbers of children with disability being placed in special facilities. UNICEF (2005).

### **Performance Measures**

- The medical definition of disability still generally in use in the region continues to inhibit understanding of what disabled individuals are capable of accomplishing; rather it focuses on what they cannot do.
- Systems collect no indicators specifically designed to measure access of special children in mainstream schools or academic performance in either mainstream or special schools.
- Education systems that note drop-out, out-of-school children, and diversity of in-school populations may have an easier way to implement inclusive education for children with disability as they are already identifying who is and is not attending school. This seems to be more the case in Southeastern European countries (for example, Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina).
- The United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) of which many of the countries are signatories, now requires states to collect appropriate statistical and research data enabling them to implement inclusive policies; however only two of the thirteen priority countries have ratified this document.

### **3. Recommendations<sup>52</sup>**

Implementation of inclusive education entails a paradigm shift, requiring change in three areas: attitudes, policy, and classroom level interventions (Rieser, 2008). Recommendations made here are presented as practical applications at the macro (government policy/legislative), meso (education system), and micro (school/community) levels of execution used in the Inclusive Education Best Practices Matrix (Appendix 3) to indicate which level of the system needs to take responsibility for change. They are accompanied by supporting information about best practices, features of successful programs, and implications of the importance of each recommendation in the progress towards inclusion.

The recommendations are also set in the Framework of Analysis of best practices that has been used consistently in the series of publications by the Social Transition Team in the Bureau of Europe and Eurasia to address social transition issues in the region. This is to give an indication of which pillar of system analysis each recommendation addresses.

To indicate the importance of each suggestion to progress towards inclusion, each recommendation is prioritized according to the order in which activities should be addressed. A '1' indicates an activity to be done initially to lay the foundation for inclusion. '2' indicates an intermediate step that can be addressed after the initial requirement has been met to expand the reach of inclusion programming. While '3s' are the last priority in terms of sequencing, they add strength and sustainability to the work of the first two steps and should not be disregarded. This sequencing applies to initiation of activities – one does not have to be fully accomplished before beginning the next; rather '2s' can start after '1s' have started and '3s' should be underway very soon after. Lastly, examples of tools and resources to support the implementation of these recommendations is given as applicable and their location in the appendices noted. A more complete list of tools and resources can be found in Appendix 6.

The need to embed inclusive education into the bigger arena of education reform and the still bigger arena of social change cannot be emphasized enough. Stand-alone activities to integrate children with disability will not be sustainable as long as the surrounding environment is also not supportive of inclusion. As much as possible, all recommendations need to include advocacy and attitudinal change components as these are vital, and indeed, perhaps the biggest hurdle to overcome towards inclusion.

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<sup>52</sup> The recommendations are a compilation from many sources listed in the Reference section and tend to be reiterated often in the literature. Some are also from the author's own personal knowledge and experience.

All recommendations and indeed, all focus on the disability sector should be guided by the USAID policy on disability which shows a strong commitment to inclusion of people with disability into all USAID programming.<sup>53</sup> Guidance for development of inclusion programming and associated materials can be found on the website.

## **Policy and Legal Framework**

### At the Macro Level:

- **Form a designated independent unit or department to lead IE implementation.** A unit at the central government level is needed to lead, promote, guide and monitor IE implementation. All government departments should have a seat at the table. A process to collect input from teachers and school administrators, parents, NGOs and all ages of individuals with disabilities needs to be built into the working mechanism of this unit to engage stakeholders at all levels. This unit should be built into the existing government structure without duplicating services; rather it should have the lead in matters concerning children with disability, avoiding the fragmentation of services among different ministries which currently exists in many of the countries.

**Best practices supported:** Clearly defined IE policy. Visionary leadership at all levels.

**Priority: 1**

- **Develop a policy framework for inclusive education at the central level that supports the policy, practice and culture of inclusion across all levels of the mainstream education system.** The framework needs to be integrated into the whole system strategic planning process and should address the role of IE as a normal part of education provision rather than as a placement only for children with special needs. The framework needs to be accompanied by funding commitments to relevant levels.

**Best practices supported:** Clearly defined IE policy and legislation. Adequate funding and fair allocation formula.

**Priority: 2**

**Tools:** *Guidelines for Inclusion* (UNESCO). Appendix 6, #5.

- **Establish the role and responsibilities of national and local bodies (public sector, NGOs) and accountability factors to support the leap from policy to reality.** This is needed to enable decentralized implementation and allows input to decision-making at all system levels.

**Best practices supported:** Clearly defined IE policy. Decentralization of service provision.

**Priority: 3**

**Tools:** *Guidelines for Inclusion* (UNESCO). Appendix 6, #5.

### At the Meso Level:

- **Support the formation of a strong network of local and international NGOs and Disabled People's Organizations to advocate for disability rights.** It is vital that governments hear the voices of individuals with disabilities and the organizations which allow them to speak up. The host of international and local disability organizations which are present in each country need to be united in their support of national disability issues. Coalition-building between stakeholders lays the foundation and builds critical mass for strong advocacy efforts, a system for monitoring government responsibility and accountability, and encourages sustainability.<sup>54</sup>

**Best practices supported:** Partnership and coordination between all actors.

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<sup>53</sup> USAID Disability Policy Paper available at [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/disability/](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/disability/)

<sup>54</sup> See case studies: Serbia: Inclusive Education from Policy to Practice and the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation in Appendix 5.

**Priority: I**

**Tools:** Searchable database of disability organizations in each country. Appendix 6, Mobility International.

**Structure of Services**

At the Meso Level:

- **Support a national public information and awareness campaign for improved disability services including education.** Social service providers need to be united in this effort so services and acceptance of individuals with disabilities become widespread and the social, economic, and political environments inclusive.<sup>55</sup> Use of national media outlets allows for a wide coverage of information and encourages these companies to exercise their social responsibility. Governments need to be involved to show their strong support for this campaign as they have the authority and control the finances to make inclusion happen.
- **Target placement committees/commissions** that identify and decide on children's future placement for information and advocacy on inclusive education so that their perception of inclusive placement in mainstream schools is altered. The traditional view and process of 'automatically' placing children with disability into special schools need to be interrupted at this point.
- **Involve community level, community-based NGOs, disability organizations, public service organizations, and local government officials in awareness campaigns.** On a local level, key insertion points to target stakeholders and citizens would be doctors'/medical facilities, child care centers, social security offices, and labor offices where parents receive services for their children with disability and community members congregate. Town halls and community theater efforts should also be targeted.

Disabled individuals need to be involved and given prominent placement in order to increase exposure of disability (put a 'face' to it) and empower them to improve social justice in their communities. Their involvement is critical to allay the fear and ignorance that surrounds the issue of disability and constrains service provision.

**Best practice supported:** Awareness-raising and attitudinal change, early identification, intervention and placement of students.

**Priority: I**

**Tools:** *A Practical Tool for Effective Disability Mainstreaming in Policy and Practice* (Leonard Cheshire International). Appendix 6, #2.

At the Micro Level:

- **At a school level, target teacher associations, school boards, parent-teacher associations, and other functioning school support groups with an informational campaign to generate understanding of disability and inclusive education.** Teachers and administrators often lack confidence and knowledge to welcome disabled children into mainstream schools. They need information to change their attitudes as do parents who fear that children with disabilities in classrooms will take away resources from their own children. Curricular units developed with these same messages should aim to increase tolerance and understanding in the student population. This should work in conjunction with inclusion initiatives in the communities.

**Best practice supported:** Awareness-raising and attitudinal change. Student and staff support.

**Priority: I**

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<sup>55</sup> See for example the *Inclusive Education: from Practice to Policy* program in Serbia which uses a Practical Guide for Improving IE for distribution to stakeholders in Appendix 5.

**Tools:** *Index for Inclusion* (Center for Studies on Inclusive Education). Appendix 6, #3, p64.

- **Provide specialized support to staff and students that allows for appropriate learning opportunities and inclusion to take place.** Support can be in the form of training, mentoring, provision of supplies, infrastructure rehabilitation, site visits, incentives, and changes in schedules and workloads. Classroom changes should focus on the formation of child-friendly learning environments which respond flexibly and creatively to the individual needs of children. For example, provision of education kits and activity boxes containing basic sets of materials that are disability-specific will support the learning of those types of disabilities (for example, manipulatives, brightly colored or learning materials with attached noise-makers, Brailled or large-print books), technology (for example, assistive devices, computer-based learning programs), adapted furniture, and modifications in the physical environment (ramps, toilets, spaces) will all encourage inclusive school access and learning.

Students will benefit from curricular units that promote tolerance and social acceptance as well as activities which encourage buddy-systems, peer-support programs, and mutual play opportunities. Teachers will need materials and training in curriculum revision and information on specific assessment procedures as well as opportunities for sharing and mutual support which professional teacher groups can offer.<sup>56</sup>

Parents and community members as well as individuals with disability are valuable human resources and need to be mobilized to assist in change. Trained parents and other interested community members can provide assistance in classrooms that will aid in classroom management and allow teachers flexibility to present individual learning programs and increased individual attention that children with disabilities often need.

**Best practices supported:** Student and staff support through resources and services. Inclusion and participation of children with disabilities in general education classes. Partnerships and coordination with parents and disabled individuals.

**Priority: I**

**Tools:** *Inclusive Education Forms and Files* (New York City Department of Education), *School-wide Inclusive Education Best Practice Indicators: Progress Chart* (Ontario Canada, Appendix C), *Index for Inclusion* (Center for Studies on Inclusive Education). Appendix 6.

- **Develop some schools into model inclusive schools which thereafter can be used as resource centers for inclusion.** Technical assistance would then be needed to develop IE practices. These schools can then be used to lay the foundation for a scaling up effort which uses the trained school staff as peer coaches and trainers for teachers in other schools. Model schools can be the sites for study visits, materials development and production, and experimentation of curricular modification and student assessment practices. Best practices should be continually assessed and re-applied.

Currently in the region, pre-schools are having the most success at inclusion efforts and create an opportunity for early achievement of children with disability in mainstream school environments (UNICEF 2005). Early childhood development and education can reduce the disabling impacts of impairment (Rieser 2007). Therefore, targeting pre-schools and early primary schools for model schools has much merit.

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<sup>56</sup> This is by no means an exhaustive list of the kinds of support that students and teachers will benefit from in inclusive situations. Some tools and resources are listed in Appendix 6 but any search of the internet will turn up an endless array of available goods and services, and often in many languages, that support inclusive education.

The development of model schools is already being done, for example, by the Step-by-Step program in Armenia (see case study in Appendix 5) and in some countries by the conversion of special schools into resources centers. This process seems to offer an effective way to promote successful inclusion practices by modeling and replication.

**Best practice supported:** Whole school reform. Inclusion and participation of children with disability into general education classes. Early identification, intervention, and placement.

**Priority: 2**

**Tools:** *Inclusive Education Forms and Files* (New York City Department of Education), *School-wide Inclusive Education Best Practice Indicators: Progress Chart* (Ontario Canada, Appendix C), *Index for Inclusion* (Center for Studies on Inclusive Education). Appendix 6.

- **Lead schools and communities to implement a school mapping or child-search activity in the school catchment area which locates children, particularly pre-school and early primary school age, who are not receiving education.** This activity is needed to locate and identify children who are not receiving the services of the education system. Once located, school authorities can work with other specialized professionals to identify the social, economic and education circumstances that constrain the child and offer a unified plan of service to the parents and child. Community representatives should include health, social work, and local government officials. This process should also identify children who are being home-schooled and offer services to improve their education in their home environment. School mapping activities also initiate the practice of more effective data collection, offer a ground-level opportunity for parent advocacy in getting children educated, and strengthen community development processes.

**Best practice supported:** Early identification, intervention, and placement of students. Student support through resources and services. Coordination between agencies.

**Priority: 2**

**Tools:** Community Participatory Assessment

- **Assist schools and communities to identify increased funding sources which support inclusion at the local schools.** This could be through school improvement grants, individual scholarships to students with disabilities, public-private partnerships, donations from local businesses and individuals, in-kind offers from community members, school vouchers, or fund-raising activities. Economic empowerment and poverty reduction are directly linked to the progress of inclusive education (Rieser 2008); therefore planning for inclusive education must be accompanied by availability of financial resources for progress to be made. In the longer run, however, education funding is a government responsibility and that understanding should be built into this activity.

**Best practices supported:** Adequate flexible funding. Decentralized funding. Student and staff support through school improvement. Promotion of philosophy of inclusive education. Attitudinal change and awareness-raising.

**Priority: 3**

## Human Capacity Development

### At the Meso Level:

- **Provide ‘child-friendly school’ training<sup>57</sup> to administrators, teachers, and other professionals to enable the provision of diverse in-class instructional methods that meet the needs of all children.** This type of training is necessary for educators to enable them to understand and respond to the different learning styles of all children generally. Administrators will

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<sup>57</sup> Also called active learning or child-centered learning.



benefit by understanding how the needs of children with disabilities can be met in mainstream classrooms and push for their inclusion. Child-centered training will assist other professionals who work in schools (i.e., therapists, counselors, psychologists) by enabling them to better diagnose learning needs of CWD and prescribe appropriate program modifications. This methodology has already been introduced into the region and should be strongly supported to enable more wide-spread coverage. Eventually this process to provide in-service training should be taken over by the government and also be included in the pre-service training curriculum.

**Best practice supported:** On-going in-service professional development.

**Priority: 1**

**Tools:** *Inclusive Education Forms and Files* (New York City Department of Education), *School-wide Inclusive Education Best Practice Indicators: Progress Chart* (Ontario Canada, Appendix C), *Index for Inclusion* (Center for Studies on Inclusive Education). Appendix 6.

- **Create partnerships between neighboring schools, especially with special schools or schools with attached classrooms, to promote sharing of knowledge and techniques for teaching children with disabilities and enable student transfers between institutions.**

The linking of schools offers education systems an efficient method for sharing information and staff. The expertise and knowledge that special schools/classrooms should be accumulating about children with special needs will benefit mainstream schools in a low-cost way in the move towards inclusion. Teachers especially need opportunities to increase their confidence and knowledge to address these needs and to problem-solve with other professionals. Plus the linking of schools supports program continuity in the transitioning of students between and across levels as their needs and abilities develop so that the most appropriate student placement is found.

**Best practice supported:** Collaboration between regular and special education teachers and other personnel at school level. On-going in-service professional development. Transitions.

**Priority: 2**

#### At the Micro Level:

- **Support the formation and active functioning of school-community or parent-teacher associations to enable participation in program planning and management.** These groups should support whole-school improvement but at the very least should focus on making the school more welcoming for all students with targeted activities such as increasing accessibility, developing student awareness and positives attitudes, developing a school philosophy of tolerance, and locating school-level IE financial resources.

**Best practice supported:** Participatory program planning and management.

**Priority: 1**

**Tools:** *Inclusive Education Forms and Files* (New York City Department of Education), *School-wide Inclusive Education Best Practice Indicators: Progress Chart* (Ontario Canada, Appendix C), *Index for Inclusion* (Center for Studies on Inclusive Education). Appendix 6, p63-65.

### **Performance Outcomes and Measures**

#### At the Macro Level:

- **Assist governments to develop a functional education information management system that collects, manages, and tracks data and measures progress specifically of inclusive education.** Collection and analysis of data will force governments to have more workable definitions of disability in order to classify CWD in mainstream classrooms. Ultimately this system will assist in policy formation and budget planning at all levels of the system but will more immediately enable school-level education personnel to guide programming for mainstreaming children with disability. Development of this system could prove to be a counterpoint to the

philosophy of *defectology*, which has such a strong negative grip on the region, by supporting a more socially just image of children who have different learning needs. A functioning data management system is a necessity for education reform.

**Best practice supported:** Early identification, intervention and placement. Participatory program planning and management.

**Priority:** I

**Tools:** *Guidelines for Inclusion: Insuring Access to Education for All* (UNESCO), *Index for Inclusion* (Center for Studies on Inclusive Education), Appendix 6.

At the Meso Level:

- **Assist schools to conduct a situation analysis for inclusion and identify the steps they then need to go forward.** Individually, schools need to look at their state of readiness to become more inclusive. They need to identify existing resources and initiatives in their schools including the availability of community and parental support to determine their potential and then they need to identify steps that will take them forward. Thereafter, they need to mobilize human and financial resources to transform the situation. Schools must realize that this process is progressive but should ultimately result in a better educational environment for all learners. All stakeholders should be involved and indicators to measure progress will be a part of this process.

**Best practice supported:** Needs-based assessment for student placement. Whole school reform. Participatory program planning and management.

**Priority:** I

**Tools:** *Guidelines for Inclusion: Insuring Access to Education for All* (UNESCO), *Index for Inclusion* (Center for Studies on Inclusive Education), Appendix 6.

#### 4. Looking Ahead

Reform is underway in the region and increasingly, pockets of change are noticeable. While much of the initiative is being driven by NGOs and civil society organizations, parents who want better futures for their children are becoming more assertive in their demands on governments to provide better educational opportunities. Other reform-minded advocates, international organizations, governments, and donors are also adding their efforts to the development of just societies to include all citizens equally. Negative attitudes and limited knowledge of disability remains the biggest barrier to inclusion and will require confirmed and committed attention from all stakeholders. Policies are generally in place but limited human capacity and resources create large gaps which must be addressed before services can be provided on a larger scale. Promising practices are emerging and will add to the scaling-up effort by serving as regional models for adaptation. The examples of ‘Best Practices’ documented here will provide guidance for development of effective inclusion efforts.

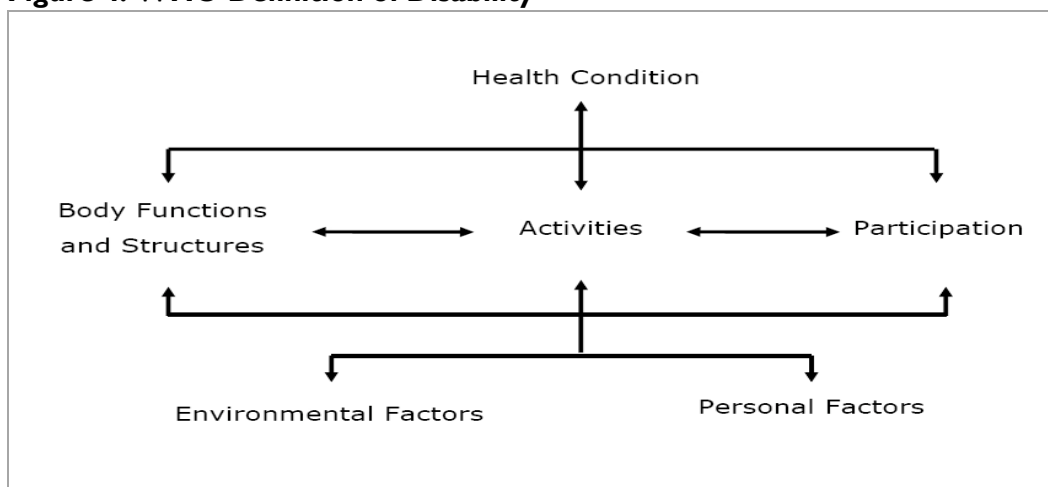
## Appendices

### Appendix I: Further Explanations

#### A. Definitions of Disability

The International Classification of Functioning and Disability (ICF), developed by the World Health Organization, organizes disability classification along two lines: functioning and physical disability (including body functions/structures and activities/participation in society), and contextual factors (environmental and personal). This model focuses on how an individual functions in different domains and the interventions appropriate within specific contexts and is consistent with the social model of disability that is upheld by disability rights organizations and individuals with disabilities (See Figure 1).<sup>58</sup>

**Figure 4: WHO Definition of Disability<sup>59</sup>**



The United Nations has also developed a functional definition of disability which is commonly used by many governments, such as the United States. In this definition, 'disability' refers to any number of functional limitations occurring in any population in the world. Functional limitations due to physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, medical conditions or mental illness are considered if they limit an individual's ability to participate in normal daily activities.<sup>60</sup>

Industrialized countries with aging populations tend to report higher disability rates due to better data on the disabled, a longer-term and more consistent use of disability definitions, and the affordance to acknowledge and provide services to a larger share of disabled in their populations. Disability rates for example in Canada and the United States are 19.4% and 18.5% respectively. Conversely, rates in developing countries are often reported as quite low, as in Kenya and Bangladesh where rates are less than one percent.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Complete classification information may be found on the WHO, ICF website at [www.who.int/icf](http://www.who.int/icf).

<sup>59</sup> World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/classifications/icf/training/icfbeginnersguide.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> See the *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability*, G.A. Res. 96, UN GAOR, 48<sup>th</sup> Session (1993).

<sup>61</sup> World Bank website

## **B. Inclusive Education Curriculum**

An inclusive curriculum is:

- flexible, balanced, and relevant to each context and individual child;
- addresses and incorporates national, local, and learners' diversities;
- has a strong focus on fostering a comprehensive citizenship education;
- needs to achieve a balance between the global, national, and local expectation, realities, and needs.<sup>62</sup>

Because of its inclusivity, curriculum development must involve the engagement of multiple stakeholders from both inside and outside the education system, but teachers must be accorded a central role as co-developers because they will be the ones using it on a daily basis in the classroom.

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<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALPROTECTION/EXTDISABILITY/0,,contentMDK:21150847~menuPK:420476~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:282699,00.html#HowMany>, accessed on 09/16/09

<sup>62</sup> UNESCO (2001)

## Appendix 2: International Legal Support Framework in Support of Inclusion

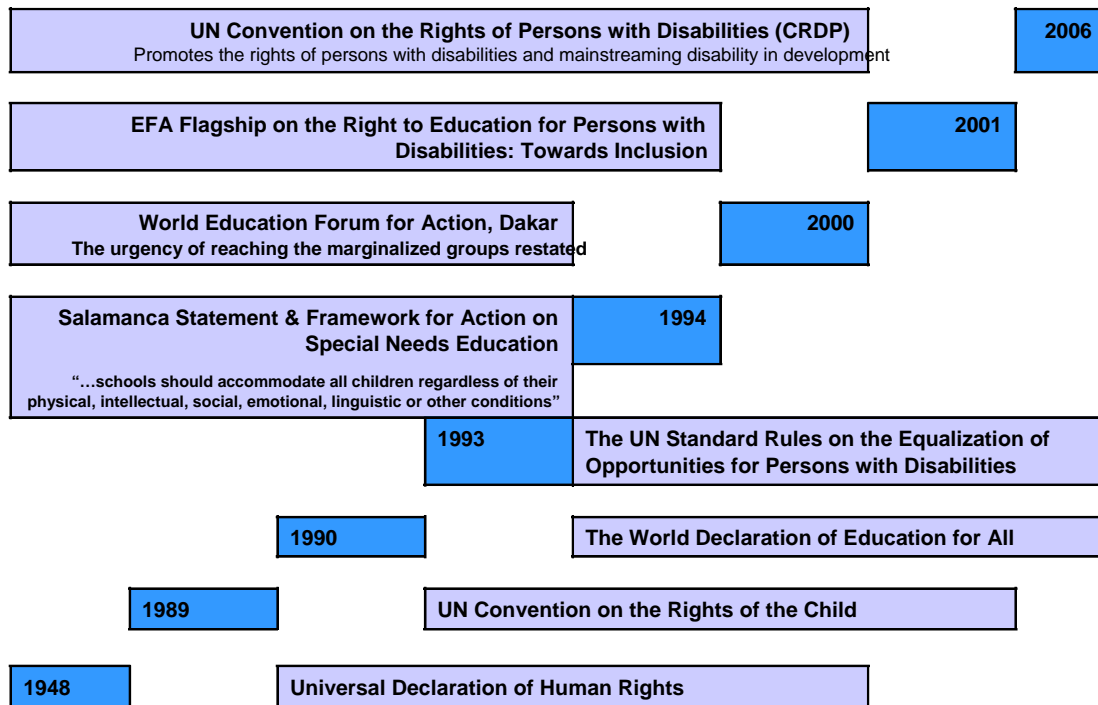


Fig 2 Rights Framework for Inclusion (UNESCO, 2005)

Source: Ghana: Ministry of Education, Science, and Sports (2007) *Global Trends: Planning and Implementing Strategies for IE*.

### Appendix 3: Inclusive Education Best Practices Matrix

	1. Nat'l Ctr on Ed Restructuring & Inclusion Essentials 1995 US	2. Incl. Policy and Practice in Ed: Best Practices CAN 2004	3. Essential Best Practices in Incl. High Schools CAN 2009	4. EFA: Including Children with Disabilities WB 2003	5. Disability World: Inclusive Education Key Lessons.	6. Inclusive Ed: An EFA Strategy for All Children WB 2004	7. IBE-UNESCO Prep Report Incl. Ed East/South East Europe 2007	8. Imple IE: Commonwealth Guide Art. 24 UK 2008
<b>MACRO: POLICY LEVEL</b>								
<b>Funding: amounts and allocation</b>	X	X	X	X	X			X
Policy and legislation at all levels		X		X			X	X
Philosophy of inclusion		X		X		X		X
Decentralization			X	X				
<b>MESO: EDUCATION SYSTEM LEVEL</b>								
Visionary leadership	X					X		
Attitudinal changes/awareness raising					X		X	
Participatory prog. planning and mgmt				X	X		X	
<b>Partnership: all actors especially parents</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Transitions/future planning		X	X					
<b>MICRO: SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>								
<b>Assessment student work/performance</b>	X	X	X		X			X
<b>Student/staff support: resources, services,</b>	X	X	X		X	X		
<b>Gen Education best practices (group work, peer work, active learning, etc.)</b>	X	X	X		X	X		
Collaboration: Reg and Spec Ed teachers	X		X	X		X		
<b>Gen education inclusion/participation</b>			X	X	X		X	X
<b>Pre-service training/In-service prof. dev</b>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Whole school reform			x	x	x			x
Attitudinal changes					x	x	x	
Early intervention, Placement		x		x				x
High expectations			x			x		
Curriculum instruction and support		x	x	x			x	
Transitions/future planning		x	x				x	
Physical accessibility/universal design		x		x	x			
Resource centers, outreach program				x			x	
Parents as resources				x				X

**Sources:**

- 1. National Center on Education Restructuring and Inclusion (1995) *National Study United States***
- 2. The Roeher Institute (2004) *Inclusive Policy and Practice in Education: Best Practices for Students with Disabilities*. Canada**
- 3. Jorgensen, C et. al. (undated) *Essential Best Practices in Inclusive High Schools*. Univ. of New Hampshire, United States.**
- 4. World Bank (2003) *Education for All: Including Children with Disabilities***
- 5. Disability World [www.disabilityworld.org](http://www.disabilityworld.org), accessed 09.09**
- 6. World Bank (2004) *Inclusive Education: An EFA Strategy for All Children***
- 7. UNESCO (2007) *Inclusive Education: IBE-UNESCO Preparatory Report for the 48th ICE***
- 8. Rieser (2008) *Implementing IE: Commonwealth Guide: Implementing Art. 24 of UN Convention on the Rights of People w/ Disabilities United Kingdom***

**Priority Practices (based on frequency of mentioning by sources) are in bold italic, larger font size and shaded in gray.**

For a list of best practices, the author picked a representation of international experts from a range of countries and organizations who specialized in and could be considered experts on inclusive education. All ‘best practices’ (sometimes also mentioned as ‘key factors’) were listed here as they were noted in the individual documents. The practices receiving the most ticks were considered to be the most important ones that should be minimally considered when implementing IE. However, all practices have merit and implementation should be considered as programs progress. Also, the author considered some practices to be of a similar nature and grouped some of them together into a larger classification when transferring them to the Best Practices Matrix (Figure 2) in the body of this document (e.g. ‘physical accessibility /universal design’ and ‘curriculum instruction and support’ were rolled up into the classification of ‘student/staff support: resources and services’). The macro, meso, and micro classification was used by the author to

give an idea which level of the education system should be targeted for implementation although placement of specific practices at each particular level are open to interpretation. For example, 'visionary leadership' is needed at all levels, but in the author's experience in education, seems to be extremely important at the meso level to add impulse to system change. Certainly attitudinal changes are necessary across all levels but are critical at the lower levels to create demand and build a critical mass as a foundation.



## Appendix 4: E&E Inclusive Education Information Matrix

	Albania	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Bosnia	Georgia	Kosovo	Macedonia	Moldova	Montenegro	Russia	Serbia	Ukraine
Education guaranteed Constitution	X	X	X	X				X			X	X	
Ratify Convention Rights of the Child	1992	1993	1992	1990	1993	1994		1989	1993	2003	1990	2003	1991
National strategic plans for IE in place		2005			2006	X	X					X	
Social plans/laws for disabled	2002	2005	2004	2004	X	X	2007	2006	X	2004	X	X	X
Education system progressive/active		X	X		X	X	X	X				X	
Decentralization efforts	X	X			X	X		X				X	
Special schools available	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X
Inclusive classrooms available	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Teacher training/prof. dev.		X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
NGO/CB groups active	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student drop-out/out-of-school data	X				X		X	X				X	

Disabled Children counted (spec. sch.s)	X	X	X	X		X		X	x		X	X	X
Student academic achievement info			X		X			X				X	
<b>Actions:</b>													
<b>NGOs</b>													
Teacher/admin training	X	X	X	X					X			X	X
Special events, days, etc							X				X	X	
Coalition building	X				X					X	X	X	
Media involved					X					X	X	X	X
Pilot projects: IE, TT, etc	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Advocacy/awareness	X	X		X	X					X	X	X	X
<b>Reasons why no/limited focus on IE:</b>													
economic (gov't, ind.)	X	X				X	X		X		X		X
attitude (parents, tchrs, gov't)	X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X
infrastructure (schools, spec equip, etc)		X	X	X		X	X				X	X	X
In-school (teachers, curriculum, resources,	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X

equipm't, books)													
cultural			X	X	X				X	X			X
no/lmtd support services (hlth/medica l, comm groups, NGO, etc)	X	X					X		X	X			
political/gov' t issues	X				X		X		X				
policy/legisla tion							X		X			X	X
Lmtd prog evaluation/a ss't	X	X		X	X	X	X	X				X	
Lmtd data collection	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X

In the Matrix, information is organized by issues which were identified by the author from her experience in education as indicative of the current state of inclusive/education in each country. A date was noted where they were found in the documents; otherwise an **x** was marked to indicate the occurrence of such an issue. No marks against an issue meant that information was either not found by the author, the issue is not present in the country, or it was not noted in the documents previewed. All information was gleaned from a review of national and inclusive education strategic plans (where available), development reports, project reviews and research documents from bilateral and multilateral organizations (UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, OECD), assessments, research and evaluations from knowledgeable individuals, information from USAID Mission sites and press releases, disability and inclusive education organizations accessed on the web, and in some cases, through personal email correspondence.

As this information is based only on a review of accessible sources on the web and not on actual in-country verification, it should not be considered 100% accurate.

## **Appendix 5: Selected Examples of Past or Ongoing Inclusive Education Programs in the E&E Region**

### **Regional: International Step-by-Step Association**

- Armenia: Step-by-Step Benevolent Foundation (SBSBF)
- Montenegro: Pedagogical Center of Montenegro (PCM)

### **Serbia: Inclusive Education: from Practice to Policy**

### **Bosnia & Herzegovina: DUGA (Corporation of United Citizens' Actions)**

### **Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF)**

The examples of inclusive education programs in the E&E region are presented in the format of the framework for analysis of best practices. Practices are categorized according to the four pillars in the left column and a more specific explanation of the project practices and implementation details is in the right column.

These programs were initially considered for inclusion as examples of promising practices based on the availability of their information in English on the web and through email correspondence with an implementer (DUGA organization). Further comparison of their practices to those in the Framework for Analysis: Best Practices in Inclusive Education (Figure 2, p9), found they were very similar and thus were deemed promising as they were following recommended best practices. In the roll-up of Promising Practices from Regional Programs (Figure 3, p23), when listing which country each practice came from, it can be noted that many of the same practices are used across the region in most of the programs adding strength to their value as representative practices as they have already been 'field-tested' in several countries and been found to be effective.

The first program, the Regional Step-by-Step Association, has country programs in many of the Central/Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries adding strength to its reputation for effective implementation of IE on a pilot basis. The program has the support of several regional governments, being mentioned in national education strategic plans as a model to be used to increase implementation of IE programming (for example in Moldova).

<b>NGO: International Step-by-Step Association (ISSA)<sup>63</sup></b>	
<p><b>Policy and Legal Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority groups identified.</li> <li>• Alliances between governments, NGOs, development organizations, parents/communities and individuals strengthened.</li> <li>• Decentralized delivery of inclusive education developed.</li> <li>• Philosophy of inclusion promoted.</li> <li>• Principles of family and community developed.</li> <li>• Parent and community involvement increased.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Further Explanation of Project Specifics</b></p> <p>The stated mission of this membership organization is to provide high quality care and education services for all children aged 0-10 years, ensure greater participation of family and community in children’s development, and ensure social inclusion and respect for diversity through development of strong civil societies that influence and assist decision-makers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established in 1999, the network now includes programs around the world. Core members are 29 NGOs located primarily in Central/Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Operating in the following E&amp;E countries: Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, and Ukraine.</li> <li>• Officially endorsed by several national ministries of education as quality pre-school education providers.</li> <li>• Activities build on belief of right of the child as a member of a community and education as the meeting place for community members to develop social cohesion.</li> <li>• Advocate for diverse forms of community-based early childhood services.</li> <li>• Maintains close relationship with Open Society Institute (OSI), which supported original program in Central and Eastern Europe. OSI continues to provide substantial funding to ISSA activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure of Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive set of activities to develop an inclusive environment offered.</li> <li>• Strong public awareness and advocacy programs aimed to influence public attitudes and citizen involvement.</li> <li>• International good practices in early childhood education delivery applied.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities include awareness-raising of importance of quality care and education, developing resources, disseminating information, advocating, strengthening alliances, and building capacity to create conditions where all children thrive.</li> <li>• Materials used provide children with safe, healthy and developmentally enriched environments. Resources are designed for parent and caregivers, group facilitators, and educators in formal and informal school settings, community centers, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Human Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanism for professional teacher development based on best practices in early childhood education and international research-based trends.</li> <li>• Professional development and national knowledge-sharing opportunities provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedagogical Standards, developed by regional professionals, provides a framework for professional development and quality assessment through a certification system supported by resource materials and mentoring. Standards have been recently up-dated and reflect latest international research findings on quality pedagogy. They strongly support inclusive education through child-centered and interactive methodologies.</li> <li>• Pedagogical Standards offered as an on-line course to increase accessibility.</li> <li>• Hosts annual conference as well as a Newsletter and website to provide opportunities for professional exchange and networking.</li> </ul>

<b>Armenia<sup>64</sup></b>	
<b>Step-by-Step Benevolent Foundation (SBSBF)</b>	
<p><b>Policy and Legal Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority groups identified.</li> <li>• Alliances between government, NGOs, development organizations, and local educators strengthened.</li> <li>• Decentralized delivery of inclusive education developed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Further Explanation of Project Specifics</b></p> <p>This member of the Step-by-Step organization was initiated in 1998 by the Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation to address issues of pre-school closures and very little attention to primary education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Step-by-Step Benevolent Foundation was founded in 2001 to continue promoting child-centered early children education.</li> <li>• This program is officially endorsed by the Ministry of Education as a quality pre-school education provider and included in the Education Development State Program for 2001-2005. .</li> </ul>

<sup>63</sup> From the International Step-by-Step Association organizational CV, at [www.issa.nl](http://www.issa.nl). Accessed Oct-Nov. 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. [www.issa.nl/network/armenia/armenia.html](http://www.issa.nl/network/armenia/armenia.html)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBSBF cooperates with UNICEF to strengthen home-based education and parenting. With World Vision, SBSBF works to support inclusive education for children with disabilities, and with Save the Children to focus on kindergartens in remote regions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure of Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive set of activities to develop an inclusive environment offered.</li> <li>Model schools established to promote high standards of education provision, encourage replicability, and increase sustainability.</li> <li>Education delivery across school levels strengthened.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities include awareness-raising of importance of quality education, teacher training, education reform, and translation and publication of professional literature.</li> <li>From an initial pilot group of classrooms in 5 kindergartens in 3 major cities, the program has expanded to 72 kindergartens and 22 primary schools in all regions of the country.</li> <li>Model sites established in 5 existing kindergartens and 5 primary schools in 4 major cities. The government predicts the addition of 50 kindergartens into the program each year.</li> <li>The program works with teachers and professionals at 3 levels: pre-school, primary school and higher education.</li> <li>In 2002, training and education materials provided to 34 new first grades, 35 second grades, 32 third grades, 12 fourth grades and 15 infants and toddlers classrooms.</li> <li>SBSBF also implements the 'Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking' program which complements and increases effectiveness of the Step-by-Step program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Human Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional teacher certification promotes quality classroom instruction.</li> <li>A professional standard of instruction established and used as a model for pre- and in-service training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional teacher certification established with assistance from ISSA regional mentors and technical assistance from the US to ensure a continued high quality of classroom education provision.</li> <li>Professionals at the model schools conduct in-service training for current pre-school and primary teachers, and support student practicum for university students and teacher training institutes. In 2002, 600 new educators were trained by the existing model sites.</li> </ul>

Montenegro <sup>65</sup> Pedagogical Center of Montenegro (PCM)	
<p><b>Policy and Legal Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority groups identified.</li> <li>Alliances between government, NGOs, development organizations, and local educators strengthened.</li> <li>Decentralized delivery of inclusive education developed.</li> <li>Education policy reform across all levels integrated and enabled.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Further Explanation of Project Specifics</b></p> <p>Established in 2000, this center implements the Step-by-Step program through teacher training and education reform efforts for pre-school, primary school, inclusive classrooms, and Roma children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PCM is officially endorsed by the Ministry of Education as a quality pre-school education provider. PCM staff experts all work with the government on education reform. Seven of ten members of the preschool commission and eight of fifteen of the primary school commission work with PCM. PCM major policies and key principles are incorporated into the government reform document, 'Book of Changes of the Education System in Montenegro'.</li> <li>PCM has strong and comprehensive partnerships with other organizations in the country which focus on programs of inclusive education (Save the Children UK), refugees (Save the Children US), parents' councils (Catholic Relief Services), active learning (UNICEF), and creation of democratic schools (British Council).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure of Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive set of activities to develop an inclusive environment offered.</li> <li>An integrated approach to education provision promotes targeting, improved accessibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities include awareness-raising of importance of quality education, teacher training, education reform, and translation and publication of professional literature.</li> <li>The program added initiatives for inclusive education for children with special needs and equal education for Roma children in 2000-2001. The program goal is to foster child-centered learning and create a teaching process that addresses the mental and physical abilities of each child.</li> <li>The program operates in 142 pre-school classrooms, 110 primary classrooms, 3</li> </ul>

<sup>65</sup> Ibid [www.issa.nl/network/montenegro/montenegro.html](http://www.issa.nl/network/montenegro/montenegro.html)

and parent involvement.	classrooms for Roma children and 2 inclusive pre-school classrooms.
<p><b>Human Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A professional standard of instruction established and used as a model for pre- and in-service training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PCM offers on-going professional training for school principals and administrators as part of the 'Creating Democratic Schools' initiative.</li> </ul>

Serbia <sup>66</sup> Inclusive Education: from Practice to Policy	
<p><b>Policy and Legal Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority groups identified.</li> <li>Coalitions between NGOs, government officials, educators and parents/communities built to enhance impact and increase sustainability.</li> <li>Philosophy of inclusion promoted.</li> <li>Parent and community involvement increased.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Further Explanation of Project Specifics</b></p> <p>This program was initiated and funded by the Open Society-Serbia from 2005-2007 with the goal of promoting increased access to quality education for student populations who are discriminated against because of ethnicity, social deprivation, disability or illness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A coalition of ten NGOs and government organizations was set up to promote increased school access and focus on development of a flexible, needs-based, child-centered, measureable education practice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure of Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practical tools for implementation based on best practices and easily accessed.</li> <li>Public awareness aimed to influence attitudes and citizen involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Practical Guide for Improving IE for practitioners developed and printed for distribution. Includes best practice examples and criteria for advancement of IE practice. Guide piloted in 5 pre-schools and 26 primary schools.</li> <li>The Service for Inclusive Education Facilitation, consisting of 30 advisors in 10 Serbian cities, was set up as a horizontal and vertical advising support of practitioners and provides information on IE on a daily basis.</li> <li>The Network of Local Inclusive Teams was established in 10 cities to mobilize community support for improved access to education. As a result, advocacy activities were organized and garnered considerable media attention. Activities included: local roundtables, coverage on 26 TV and radio stations, newspaper coverage, preparation of the Declaration on Access to EFA in one city, a Strategy for Social Policy in one city, a Guide for Parents in 10 cities, development of Municipal Databases including numbers of excluded children in 3 cities, and three municipal web sites updated with information about inclusive education.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Human Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development and knowledge-sharing opportunities provided.</li> <li>Integrated learning materials based on best practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Inclusive Education Network of 150 teachers engaged in exchange of experiences and good practices, horizontal learning, and offering mutual psychological and professional support.</li> <li>The project 'Intercultural/Multicultural Education – from Policy to Practice' launched to address the lack of appropriate inter-cultural pedagogical practices in Serbian education institutions. Promotes multi-ethnic co-existence through quality education practice and policy.</li> </ul>

<sup>66</sup> From the Open Society Institute. [www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/news/serbia\\_20071025?skin-printable](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/news/serbia_20071025?skin-printable) Accessed Oct-Nov 2009.

Bosnia & Herzegovina <sup>67</sup> NGO: DUGA (Corporation of United Citizens' Actions)	
<p><b>Policy and Legal Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority groups identified.</li> <li>• Local government authorities, educators, parent and community involvement increased.</li> <li>• Cross-sectoral cooperation supported.</li> <li>• Philosophy of inclusion promoted.</li> <li>• Alliances between government, NGOs, development organizations, and local educators strengthened.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Further Explanation of Project Specifics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The association practices three main activities: improvement of education status of children with barriers to learning, training of professional educators in IE, and participation in on-going reforms at pre-school and primary school level.</li> <li>• Program advances expert competencies and promotes collaboration of education, health, and social protection professionals along with civil society representatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure of Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated approach to prevention, support and treatment promotes holistic improvement of children with disabilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities include psychological counseling, special pedagogue work, stress and anxiety prevention, family workshops, completion of individual education programs for children in school, speech and psychological therapy, training of parent's associations, translating, printing and distributing instructional and recreational reading materials.</li> <li>• In 2008, the program benefitted 168 children, 59 parents, and 30 primary schools. Psychological services benefitted approximately 350 children and adolescents a year from 1994-2005. Citizen governance workshops in 2007 encouraged participation in public schools to support children's rights to education. Participants (total 512) included school boards, teachers, and parent/student councils.</li> <li>• Manuals for Inclusive Education, Teacher's Manuals, and Manuals for Trainers for Preliminary Training on Inclusive Education prepared and distributed to schools.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Human Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional training curriculum provides skills in curriculum planning, assessment, addressing behavioral and social problems, and individualized instructional strategies.</li> <li>• A scale of professional in-service and pre-service trainings offered to continuously up-grade competencies.</li> <li>• International knowledge-sharing opportunities provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program offers professional upgrades of expert competencies of teachers working with children with special needs.</li> <li>• Program offers workshops in inclusive education to parents, community representatives (health institution staff, social protection center staff, NGOs), and school personnel.</li> <li>• 26 local trainers trained in initial IE program. 290 primary school teachers trained in 2008 and 520 in 2009. Current program offers advanced training to 20 pedagogical institute advisors in order to institutionalize IE at pre-service level.</li> <li>• Cooperation of DUGA Association and mainstream primary schools presented as a paper at the XIII International Congress of Comparative Pedagogy, Sarajevo, 2007.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Performance Outcomes and Measures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System of identification of children with special needs in place.</li> <li>• Research process in place to assess participants' attitudes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area mapping located children who were not in school or had special learning needs such gifted and talented. Assessed numbers, nature, extent of needs, educational status, possibility and direction of change needed, as well as organizational and technical capacities of relevant organizations and institutions.</li> <li>• Attitude assessment of school staff indicated 78% with positive attitudes of IE when basic prerequisites are fulfilled (10% gave full support, 12% did not support IE). Assessment of parents showed 86% with positive attitudes towards IE, 6% with negative and 8% with neutral attitudes.</li> </ul>

<sup>67</sup> From email correspondence with Marina Nezirovic at [marina.nezirovic@duga.org.ba](mailto:marina.nezirovic@duga.org.ba)



Albania <sup>68</sup> NGO: Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF)	
<p><b>Policy and Legal Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority groups identified.</li> <li>• Local government authorities, parent and community involvement increased.</li> <li>• Cross-sectoral cooperation supported.</li> <li>• Philosophy of inclusion promoted.</li> <li>• Alliances between government, NGOs, development organizations, and local educators strengthened.</li> <li>• Government accountability enforced.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Further Explanation of Project Specifics</b></p> <p>The Albanian Disability Rights Foundation was established in 1996 to promote equal opportunities, protect human rights, and improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and their family members. ADRF implements multiple projects with support from USAID, which support development of an inclusive society and increased social justice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two women’s movements established, ‘Intellectual Young Girls and Women with Disability’ and ‘Women’s Club’ which promote the integration of women with disability into social, economic and political life of Albania by empowering and enhancing their skills in advocacy, lobbying, and leadership.</li> <li>• Under the program of ‘Promoting the Human Rights for People with Disability in Albania’, ADRF monitored the implementation of the National Strategy on People with Disability (NSPD), passed in 2005.</li> <li>• Under the program ‘Building a Disability and Development Coalition’, a coalition consisting of 25 members representing disabled peoples’ organizations and other NGOs, donors (including USAID and World Health Organization), public and private entities, and business communities was created to share information, build capacity and strategize on how to move toward an inclusive society.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure of Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public awareness aimed to influence public attitudes and citizen involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized the first National Conference for women and girls with disabilities to raise awareness of need to devise a national action plan and develop lobbying and advocacy strategies to address issues of young girls and women with disability.</li> <li>• Launched a comprehensive media campaign in 2009 to provide positive images and improve knowledge and awareness of rights of women with disabilities.</li> <li>• A National Conference held to announce to the public the report on the Implementation by the Albanian Government of the National Action Plan of the strategy to address rights of people with disability.</li> <li>• Two advocacy actions completed and sent to all responsible institutions on electoral reform which thereafter committed their full support to increase access to people with disability in the electoral process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Performance Outcomes and Measures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring system tracks government performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with Ministry of Labor Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, published “Women with Disability in Albania – Included or Neglected?”, evaluating the inclusion of rights of women with disabilities in national policy documents that focus on achieving gender equality and disability rights.</li> <li>• 113 government officials at the central, regional, and local level and 954 people with disability and family members were surveyed in five areas of the NSPD: accessibility, services (health care and social services), education, employment and vocational training, capacity building, and legislation. The survey found that 98% of the measures of the National Action plan had been delayed (of which 41% showed no progress). Results from the people with disabilities and family: 52% consider their financial situation to be poor, communities continue to be inaccessible, 4,534 children with special needs between ages of 6-18 do not receive any form of education, limited opportunities for training and employment exist, are not considered equal partners in relevant decision-making process at local, regional, and central level, and feel they are not treated as equal citizens.</li> </ul>

<sup>68</sup> From [www.albania.usaid.gov](http://www.albania.usaid.gov), [www.wecando.wordpress.com](http://www.wecando.wordpress.com), and [www.miusa.org](http://www.miusa.org). Accessed on Dec. 8. 2009.

## Appendix 6: Resources

**Tools:** Examples of tools to be used for the development of inclusive education, a list of available topics, and sites where they can be accessed in their entirety.

- I. New York City Department of Education: Inclusive Education: Forms and Files  
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/Departments/InclusiveEducation/forms.htm>

Topics:

- Individual classroom checklist
- Teacher's inclusion to-do list
- Administrator's guidelines
- Principal's inclusion to-do list
- Student profile
- Workshop materials

Example of what is available on the site:

**INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM CHECKLIST**

School \_\_\_\_\_ Site \_\_\_\_\_

❖ **Student placement**

Are students attending general education classes for 80% of the day?

Are students in age and grade-appropriate classrooms?

Are no more than two or three students placed in any one classroom?

Is the culture of the school welcoming to students and staff?

❖ **Teaching**

Is the teacher engaged with:

- the whole class
- individual students
- small groups
- co-teaching

Is the general education teacher including students by:

- calling on students
- sharing materials equally
- pairing them appropriately with peers
- displaying students' work alongside typical students' work

2. **Leonard Cheshire International:** *A Practical Tool for Effective Disability Mainstreaming in Policy and Practice* (European-developed). <http://www.lcint.org/?lid=3653>

Topics:

- Principle One: Engagement
- Principle Two: Access
- Principle Three: Resourcing
- Principle Four: Enforcement

Example of what is available on the site:

<b>Principle One: Engagement:</b>
I.1 Engagement with persons with disabilities and their organizations in relation to policy/practice development, recognizing the diversity of persons with disabilities (e.g., age, gender and ethnicity)
I.1.1 Names of organizations managed and run by persons with disabilities engaged at all stages.
I.1.2 Other organizations which are being or will be consulted.
I.1.3 Aims of consultation with persons with disabilities.
I.1.4 Modes of consultation e.g., meetings, phone calls, emails, other means of communication.
I.1.5 Other relevant details.

3. **Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education:** *Index for Inclusion: a resource for assessing schools and guiding to next steps for inclusion.* (UK-developed)

<http://www.csie.org.uk/index.shtml>

Organized along 3 inter-connected dimensions:

- Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures:
  - A.1: Building community
  - A.2: Establishing inclusive values.
- Dimension B: Producing inclusive policies:
  - B.1: Developing the school for all
  - B.2: Organizing support for diversity.
- Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices:
  - C.1: Orchestrating learning
  - C.2: Mobilizing resources.

Example of what is available on the site:

<b>Dimension C: Evolving Inclusive Practices</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
C.1.1 Teaching is planned with the learning of all students in mind				
C.1.2 Lessons encourage the participation of all students.				
C.1.3 lessons develop an understanding of difference.				
C.1.4 Students are actively involved with their own learning.				
C.1.5 Students learn collaboratively.				

1: Definitely agree. 2. Agree to some extent. 3. Disagree. 4. Need more information

4. **Ontario, Canada:** *Appendix 6: Questionnaire: School-Wide Inclusive Education Best Practice Indicators: Progress Chart* (based on a University of New Hampshire, USA tool)

[http://cal2.edu.gov.on.ca/april2009/Appendix\\_C\\_IAI\\_EDU\\_Indicator.pdf](http://cal2.edu.gov.on.ca/april2009/Appendix_C_IAI_EDU_Indicator.pdf)

Topics covered:

- General education membership
- Family-school partnerships
- On-going authentic assessment
- Team collaboration

Social relationships/natural supports  
 Self-determination  
 Quality augmentation/alternative communication  
 Curriculum, instruction and support  
 Specific and general education reform

Futures planning  
 Professional development

Example of what is available on the site:

<i>Students with significant disabilities are members of age-appropriate general education classes in their neighborhood schools. There are no programs or rooms just for students with significant disabilities and these students have access to the full range of learning experiences and environments offered to students without disabilities.</i>	
2.1	The student is on the roster of and formally a member of an age-appropriate general education class.
2.12	The student attends the school he/she would attend if he/she didn't have a disability.
2.13	The student progresses through the grades according to the same pattern as students without disabilities.
2.14	The student marches at graduation at the average age at which other classmates without disabilities graduate.
2.15	The student receives a diploma when he/she is discharged from special education.
2.2	The student learns in outside-of-school, age-appropriate, and inclusive

5. **UNESCO: Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All**,  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001402/140224e.pdf>

Topics:

Situation Analysis  
 Policy, Goals, Objectives  
 Implementation  
 Monitoring and Evaluation  
 Capacity Building/Stakeholder Involvement/Participation

Example of what is available on the site:

### **B. Policy, goals, objectives**

1. Which are the main action programs in regard to marginalized/excluded/vulnerable groups? Is there specific mention made of particular groups? Are children with disabilities and other groups specifically planned for?
2. Are there specific policies/programs/strategies in place to identify out-of-school children, provide speed-up and/or second chance educational opportunities? Are there specific family-based strategies to support them on a financial and/or emotional basis?
3. What are the linkages between formal and non-formal education in the plans/programs for more inclusive education?
4. Do current educational policies favor particular groups at the expense of marginalized ones? If so, in which ways? Does this create obstacles to inclusion?
5. Is there any policy statement with regard to excluded groups? Are any particular groups specified?
6. Is there a policy statement regarding language of instruction?
7. Is there language with negative connotations referring to excluded/marginalized groups? If so, how can this be changed?
8. What kind of priorities are reflected in the country's objectives of education? Do these priorities stimulate or discourage inclusion?
9. Does the plan include provisions or measures regarding access to the curriculum for all learners?

10. Does the plan include provisions or measures regarding physical access to school for all learners?

**Planning Matrix**

<b>Indices of inclusion</b>	<b>Situation Analysis</b> What is the current situation?	<b>Policy, Goals, objectives</b> What actions are needed?	<b>Implementation</b> How will the actions be taken and by whom?	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b> What information needs to be collected? How will you know when it has been achieved?
References to IE in National EFA plans.				
References to marginalized excluded groups. Specific references to CWD?				
Legislation and policies.				
Physical infrastructure, transportation and facilities.				
Training.				

**6. Other Resources:**

**Organizations:** Sources for IE, their web addresses, and a short description of what is available on their sites. Very comprehensive! Every need for inclusive education can be found here.

**Children’s Resources International (CRI):** Is a non-profit educational and training organization whose mission is to promote democratic educational practices for children, their families, and their teachers around the world. Many publications available (for example, *Creating Inclusive Classrooms* and *Creating Child-Centered Classrooms*). Extensive programming in Central, South, and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States. [http://www.childrensresources.org/our\\_mission.htm](http://www.childrensresources.org/our_mission.htm)

**Disabled People International (DPI):** An umbrella cross-disability organization mandated to promote the human rights of all persons with disabilities through full participation, equalization of opportunity and international cooperation. Has national assemblies in 135 countries and Regional Development Offices in five regions (Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa, Latin America and North America-Caribbean). Includes a toolkit for the ratification of the Convention of the Rights of People with Disabilities as well as resources, publications and links. <http://vl.dpi.org/lang-en/index>

**Disability World:** A web-based magazine of international disability news and views. Including Annex C: How to Mainstream: Examples of guidelines and key lessons. <http://www.disabilityworld.org/>

**Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe:** A regional platform for cooperation in the field of education and training. It supports national reforms in education and training through regional capacity building, transfer of know-how and linking these efforts to European frameworks for education development (the EU Work Program ‘Education and Training 2010’, the Bologna and the Copenhagen Processes). Promotes cooperation between the education and research sectors in South Eastern Europe (SEE). <http://www.erisee.hr>

**Enabling Education Network (EENET):** An inclusive education information-sharing network open to everyone: teachers, parents, students, non-governmental organizations and policy-makers. Promotes and shares information and documentation originating in the South (developing countries). Encourages critical thinking, innovation and conversations within and between countries on issues of inclusion, equity and rights in education. A source for regional and national network links in many countries, newsletters and resources, materials and links in many other languages. Has the *Index for Inclusion* in different languages. <http://www.eenet.org.uk/index.php>

**The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education:** An independent and self-governing organization established by member countries to act as their platform for collaboration in the field of special needs education. Includes country information, agency projects, and publications. <http://www.european-agency.org>

**Inclusion:** Workshops, Books, Media, Resources: CDs, videos, literacy and school resources, publishers, catalogues, and distributors, inclusion links, and training tools. Everything for inclusion or a source to find it. <http://www.inclusion.com/>

**Inclusion International:** A grassroots human rights organization of families, self-advocates and committed citizens, dedicated to the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with intellectual disabilities. Inclusion International has identified four key issue areas to guide an agenda for inclusion. These issue areas are inclusive education, children and families, poverty reduction, and values and ethics. <http://www.inclusion-international.org/en/>

**Kids Together, Inc:** Information and resources for children and adults with disabilities including information about assistive technology, vision building, building community, and agencies and organizations. <http://www.kidstogether.org>

**Mobility International:** Empowering people with disabilities around the world to achieve their human rights through international exchange and international development. A very comprehensive site with many resources including: training materials, networking opportunities, information about specific disabilities, development topics (including education), searchable database of international NGOs, women with disabilities and development materials, and resources including books, DVDs/videos, booklets, posters, and brochures in different languages (including Russian). [www.miusa.org](http://www.miusa.org)

**SouthEast European Education Cooperation Networks:** Is a broad-based, low-cost regional initiative that supports the exchange of information, ideas, and know-how for the reform and quality improvement of education in 11 countries in South East Europe. It provides an example of capacity mobilization and of east-east cooperation achieved through virtual networking. <http://www.see-educoop.net/about/index.htm>

**TASH:** An international association of people with disabilities, their family members, other advocates, and professionals fighting for a society in which inclusion of all people in all aspects of society is the norm. Includes advocacy actions, conferences, training, publications, information, resolutions and resources including links to many other organizations for inclusive education. [http://www.tash.org/who\\_we\\_are.html](http://www.tash.org/who_we_are.html)

**World Institute on Disability:** The mission in communities and nations worldwide is to eliminate barriers to full social integration and increase employment, economic security and health care

for persons with disabilities. WID creates innovative programs and tools; conducts research, public education, training and advocacy campaigns; and provides technical assistance. Web: [www.wid.org](http://www.wid.org)

**Schools:** Sites for special schools and several US state education departments which have comprehensive policy, documents, and resources for inclusive education. The special schools build partnerships with overseas special schools. There is no link here.

**California Department of Education:** <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/>

Topics: Administration and Support, Announcements and Current Issues, Data Collection and Reporting, Family Involvement and Partnerships, Laws, Regulations and Policies, Quality Assurance Process, Services and Resources. See for example: *Programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Student Guidelines for Quality Standards* or *Braille Math Standards for Grades 1-6*.

**Gallaudet University:** <http://www.gallaudet.edu/>

Gallaudet University is the world leader in liberal education and career development for deaf and hard of hearing undergraduate students. The University enjoys an international reputation for the outstanding graduate programs it provides deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing students, as well as for the quality of the research it conducts on the history, language, culture, and other topics related to deaf people. In addition, the University's Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center serves deaf and hard of hearing children at its two demonstration schools and throughout the nation by developing, implementing, and disseminating innovative educational strategies.

**Overbrook School for the Blind:** <http://www.obs.org/page.php?ITEM=190>

Founded in 1832, the Overbrook School for the Blind offers a variety of programs for children of different ages and abilities. The whole school is geared toward supporting students as they grow and learn. The school has an international program with regional outreach initiatives in Central Europe, SE Asia, and China.

**Perkins School for the Blind:** <http://www.perkins.org/international-programs/regions/europe.html>

Perkins School for the Blind provides education and services for children and adults around the world who are blind, deaf-blind, or visually impaired. The school has a large international program and partners with hundreds of local agencies worldwide. In the Central and South Europe region, Perkins is involved in the following countries: Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey, and Ukraine. Program topics include: building local expertise, supporting parents, advancing Braille literacy, influencing policy, and developing and translating materials.

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