



# Zero Project Report 2020

# Inclusive Education

75 Innovative Practices and 11 Innovative Policies  
from 54 countries

International study on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights  
of Persons with Disabilities – “For a World without Barriers”

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# “For a world without barriers”

## FOREWORD BY MARTIN ESSL



“What does the Zero in Zero Project mean?” This is one of the most frequent, if not the most frequent, questions we are asked. The answer lies in, and at, the very heart of everything we do and are about. It is really very simple: In the world we seek to help create, there are zero barriers for persons with disabilities. Thus, in everything we do, we work “for a world without barriers.” Now, having answered that question, I believe I should actually tell you a little bit about our work and where we currently are with it.

### Our sustainable work and research

This report, on the topic of education, is our eighth thematic report and, as such, completes the second full (four year) cycle of Zero Project research. Each cycle consists of a series of four research topics: employment, accessibility, independent living (and political participation), and education. To provide some context, when in late 2008 we undertook our preliminary studies into the global implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), we were not even called the Zero Project. Indeed, we didn't really even have a name. Now look at us! In addition to those early years, we can look back more recently on eight years of, I believe, both solid research and certainly a collection of 580 incredible Innovative Practices and Policies. And that is not even mentioning all our annual Conferences that serve as a global hub for innovation, inspiration, and collaboration; our website; our publications; and so much more.

I think it is worth providing here, once again, the reasoning behind our choice of research topics. We believe that education, employment, accessibility, and independent living (and political participation) are all so intimately connected that, in reality, it is difficult to have one without any of the others. And in the work we do, very often the most successful Innovative Practices and Policies that we seek to communicate, and with which we hope to inspire greater and more effective implementation of the CRPD, cut across two or even more of these themes – especially as their geographical reach spreads.

This year's research has been particularly exciting, with a record number of nominations, and has resulted in our identifying 75 Practices and 11 Policies, all of which we believe have high potential impact – not only by themselves but also when replicated by others.

Since education is one of the core themes of the CRPD and one which, once again, illustrates all too clearly just how

necessary it remains to break down the many different barriers for persons with disabilities, we look forward to presenting our findings to you. Not least in the hope that they may help tear down those barriers. Education is the very foundation on which personal independence is built, leading to other key elements of a full life that we so often take for granted, notably employment, independent living, and political and social participation. It is a sad truth that today a great many people with disabilities are denied these basic human rights simply because they do not have access to adequate or, often, any educational opportunities. But as this report makes clear, this is changing!

### You: Our growing network

This year I really do not care if I repeat myself when I say that the Zero Project is neither the Essl Foundation nor its core team. It is you! It is the network of more than 5,000 experts and organizations from 180 countries (of which you, the reader, are more than likely one), both with and without disabilities, who have contributed so much in past years and who so wonderfully continue to do so. It is the critical combination of partnerships, joint ventures, collaborations, and shared passions, visions, and activities that enables us to fight to change the world, to break down existing barriers, and to innovate. And I am delighted to report that we continue to gain both speed and traction as the pool of experts continues to grow in breadth and depth, the number of nominations each year rises, participation in our conferences increases, and we participate more often in the conferences and events of others. Thank you!

### New partnerships

We believe that sticking to our mission remains of vital importance. And this often entails us making some significant strategic decisions about future development. An example of this is, I believe, the path we are taking forward in Latin America. In doing so, we have the ability to reach some 500 million Spanish-speaking people who we have not yet reached to date.

We fully recognize that “regionalizing” the Zero Project will need not only very different approaches but also sound regional partnerships. And here, we are so very happy to have found such an excellent partner in Fundación Descúbreme in Chile. (For more detailed information on both the foundation and our partnership, please read Catalina Saieh's Foreword, which follows immediately.)

In addition, at this year's Conference in Vienna, we are organizing an Africa Forum, which will, among other things, consider the options available for supporting geographically appropriate Innovative Practices and Policies in the African continent.



After the Award Ceremony of the Zero Project Conference 2019.

Another strategic approach is through our cooperation with various UN agencies and other supranational organizations. Having held ECOSOC status since 2014, the Essl Foundation already cooperates with several UN agencies in different ways. For example, by the end of 2019 we had developed an agreement with the International Telecommunication Union to work together to create and “nourish” an ecosystem of ICT innovators in Europe. We look forward greatly to developing this further in 2020.

As always, understanding and gauging the impact of what we do remains extremely important, thus the importance we are placing on such self-examination with the 2021 publication of the Zero Project Almanac 2017–2020, covering the project’s second four-year research cycle.

### Zero Project–Impact Transfer

As you may recall, back in 2017 the Essl Foundation joined forces with Ashoka to initiate the first Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme to internationalize highly innovative and scalable disability solutions for a barrier-free world. Now in its third year (and after two very successful years), we have added Fundación Descúbreme as an additional partner. Now, we are even more excited and hopeful about what we can achieve together.

### Zero Project in Austria

As I have mentioned before, to complement our global approach, one of my personal goals has been to use our research and innovators as role models to speed up the innovation process here in Austria. To this end, we have developed a number of domestic programmes to promote our cause of a world without barriers. Among these, together with Cisco Systems and Cisco Academy as well as with Austrian vocational schools and employers, we have completed a promising pilot project on transition programmes that lead to employment in the ICT industry, and we are currently looking for implementation partners in Austria. Notably, this programme is

already showing great success, with 13 of 14 students having successfully passed their final exam, and most of them having already found employment in the ICT industry.

For the fourth consecutive year, in 2020 the Essl Foundation will also host its Dialogues with Business and Industries conference series throughout Austria. Co-financed by the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs, these conferences promote innovative practices in inclusive employment. Each year, together with the Austrian newspaper *Die Presse*, we also publish two supplements on inclusive employment and accessibility, and we are sponsoring a special Austrian Leading Companies Award for extraordinary entrepreneurship in inclusive employment.

For the first time, in 2020 we are co-hosting an event at the Austrian Parliament, jointly with the President of the Austrian Parliament and the Sinnbildungsstiftung (an Austrian foundation focusing on innovation in education), designed to promote ICT solutions for more inclusion in the Austrian education system.

Finally, after donating the Essl Collection of modern art to the renowned Albertina Museum we are creating with them a programme to make the communication of art more inclusive by training staff with various forms of disabilities and providing employment opportunities.

### Going forward

I should like to conclude with my personal thanks to the whole Zero Project team, so ably led by Michael Fembek. The Zero Project would still not be possible without this exceptional team or without the engagement of all the many members of the Project’s global network. Together, we really are creating “a world without barriers.”

**Martin Essl**

*Founder of the Essl Foundation, January 2020*

# “Catalysts of Innovation and Inspiration for Change”

FOREWORD BY CATALINA SAIEH



## **Zero Project and Fundación Descúbreme: An alliance for Latin America**

In 2017 Inclusive Cycle – a programme developed by the Chile-based Fundación Descúbreme with the cooperation of six partner organizations – was awarded by the Zero Project as an Innovative Practice on inclusive employment. The programme

aimed to expand its frontiers and to become a best practice of a successful programme of inclusive employment in which training, practice, certification, and hiring were all included. The two years following this award were years of hard work between the Essl Foundation and Fundación Descúbreme as we consolidate our partnership to expand the Zero Project mission towards a world without barriers to the Spanish-speaking world. In this commitment, we have also joined forces with Ashoka to expand the Zero Project-Impact Transfer programme worldwide.

For years, the Essl Foundation has been working for the social inclusion of persons with disabilities, and during this time it has accumulated extensive knowledge on the issue. Its work has focused on research and how best to promote Innovative Practices and Policies in four strategic areas of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Education, Employment, Accessibility, and Independent Living.

We are very grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Essl Foundation in 2020 as we work together to raise greater awareness regarding Inclusive Education. This is one of the most significant challenges to ensuring the full inclusion of people with disabilities, given the many barriers in the educational system that hinder access, development, and success at school for children and young people globally. Fundación Descúbreme, together with the Zero Project, is committed to eliminating these barriers and thus ensuring the right to education of all children and young people in Latin America and the world.

Looking forward, we are certain that the 2020 Zero Conference will continue to be a collaborative space where all organizations, led by people with and without disabilities, can present, discuss, and network with Innovative Practices and Policies in the field of education. Without a doubt, this partnership will allow us to continue building a world without barriers.

## **Fundación Descúbreme: Promoting the full inclusion of people with cognitive disabilities**

Fundación Descúbreme was founded in 2010 with the mission to promote the inclusion of people with cognitive disabilities in all areas of human development. To achieve this purpose, we have focused on promoting the rights of this group and encouraging good practices regarding cognitive disabilities and social inclusion, both nationally and internationally.

During these ten years of experience, we have moved forward in the consolidation of a series of efficient and sustainable management models in different areas, such as social investment, training, labour inclusion, consultancy, research, and advocacy. These pillars have allowed us to forge a cultural change in each of the actors and spaces involved in building a society that is more diverse, inclusive, and respectful of all people.

The primary focus of all our actions is to generate a positive impact on the quality of life of people with cognitive disabilities within the framework of the promotion of their rights. The combination of the national scenario in Chile, international trends, and our deep convictions has encouraged us to continue expanding the scope of our work. This can be seen in the collaborative alliances and partnerships that we have developed since 2015 with leading organizations in Europe and Latin America – starting with the Consultative Status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council granted to us in 2018, and continuing with our incorporation into the Inclusion International network and as part of the Inter-American Development Bank’s initiative to promote inclusive employment in five countries in the Latin America region.

We have thus begun the path to influence public policy, since we strongly believe in its high impact on the quality of life of people with disabilities. We have strengthened our efforts to allow us to accompany people with cognitive disabilities in a one-to-one relationship, as a support mechanism for the achievement of their goals and aspirations. An example of this is our role as promoters of the national labour inclusion law, which has established a mandatory hiring quota for organizations both public and private in Chile, and at the same time we act as advisors to these organizations for the successful and sustained implementation of this regulation.

Our work is only possible as a result of the trust shown to us by all individuals, public and private organizations, civil society, and international entities to build a society that is increasingly diverse, inclusive, and respectful of difference.

**Catalina Saieh**

*President, Fundación Descúbreme, January 2020*

# Executive Summary

## Zero Project

The Zero Project: History, research, network, report, and communication channels.

## Impact-Survey

Results of survey how the Zero Project creates impact.

## Innovative Practices

Overview of the 75 Innovative Practices 2020, country by country patterns and threads identified.

## Innovative Policies

Overview of the 11 Innovative Policies 2020, country by country.

## Patterns & Solutions

11 patterns of solutions that are often used by innovations.

## Life Stories

Personal reports from users and beneficiaries of Innovative Practices and Policies 2020.

# About the Zero Project

The Zero Project was initiated by the Essl Foundation in 2008 with the mission to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and to work for a world without barriers. This section summarizes its current work.

The Zero Project's primary focus is on researching and communicating innovations on behalf of persons with disabilities. Since the project's early beginnings, the Zero Project team has developed a vast global network of more than 5,000 experts from 180 countries – both with and without disabilities – that has contributed to our work over the past five years.

Working with this network, the team has developed the expertise to identify, select, and communicate Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies worldwide, working with all relevant stakeholder groups, including several UN agencies. The four basic principles of the Zero Project research and selection method are explained on page 8ff.

## 2019–2020: Inclusive Education

The Zero Project is based on a four-year research cycle. This year's topic, Education, is the fourth and last

research topic in the Project's second cycle, following Employment (2015–2016), Accessibility (2016–2017), and Independent Living/Political Participation (2017–2018). Approximately 300 Innovative Practices and Policies have been selected and disseminated during this four-year period, and the next four-year cycle will begin in 2020–2021 with Employment.

This year, 75 Innovative Practices and 11 Innovative Policies in Education were selected, all of which are covered in this report as well as online at [www.zero-project.org](http://www.zero-project.org), on social media, and at the Zero Project Conference in February 2020, held in Vienna.

## The Zero Project Conference and Awards

The Zero Project Conference is a unique meeting point of people who inspire and want to be inspired. Held annually at UN Headquarters in Vienna, the event brings together some 800 participants from more than 90 countries. At the heart of the Conference are presentations of the Innovative Practices and Policies, which also receive the Zero Project Awards, as well as presentations by international decision makers and opinion leaders from all sectors of society – the Zero Project Network and partners.

## The Essl Foundation

The Essl Foundation MGE gemeinnützige Privatstiftung is a charitable foundation established in 2007 by Martin and Gerda Essl in Klosterneuburg, Austria, with a focus on scientific research and charitable giving. The foundation initiated and now funds and organizes the Zero Project, with its team based in Vienna. The Essl Foundation also holds observer status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

## Zero Project–Impact Transfer

The Essl Foundation and Ashoka have joined forces to launch the first Impact Transfer programme, designed to support the internationalization of innovative disability solutions for a barrier-free world. The Zero Project–Impact Transfer is a huge effort of the Zero Project to support those Innovative Practices that have the highest potential to grow or to be replicated, using Ashoka expertise and capacity (see page 26).

### THE ZERO PROJECT REPORT 2020

This Report is composed of several sections:

- Executive Summary, including background information on this year's research topic and the Zero Project methodology
- The impact of the Zero Project: Survey results
- Innovative Policies and Practices: Factsheets and Life Stories
- The Zero Project–Impact Transfer accelerator programme
- An analysis of ICT supporting innovations in Inclusive Education
- SDGs and data: Legal indicators by the WORLD Policy Analysis Center on guarantees to Inclusive Education worldwide
- A summary of this Report in easy language
- An Annex, including a listing all Zero Project Network members active in 2019–2020

The Zero Project Report is also available at [www.zero-project.org](http://www.zero-project.org) in an accessible pdf format.

## Cooperation with Fundación Descúbreme

In 2019, Essl Foundation and Fundación Descúbreme announced a long-term partnership to expand the Zero Project mission of a world without barriers to the Spanish-speaking community worldwide. Essl Foundation maintains strategic leadership of the Zero Project in full consultation with Fundación Descúbreme. Specifically, Essl Foundation operates and finances research and the Conference in Vienna, whereas Fundación Descúbreme operates and finances the annual conference in Santiago, both under the brand of the Zero Project. The organizations are also joining forces with Ashoka to broaden the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme worldwide.

## The Zero Project in Austria

Within Austria, the Essl Foundation organizes the Zero Project Unternehmensdialoge (“Corporate Dialogues”) and Zero Project Branchendialoge (“Sector Dialogues”), which include a series of regional conferences to promote Innovative Practices in inclusive employment. The conferences are co-funded by the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs and co-organized with regional partner organizations. The Essl Foundation in partnership with the Austrian daily *Die Presse* also publishes newspaper supplements on inclusive employment (“Beschaeftigung”) and accessibility (“barrierefrei”), both focusing on showcasing Innovative Practices and Policies. Also jointly with *Die Presse*, the Essl Foundation sponsors special awards for outstanding efforts in creating employment for persons with disabilities, as part of the renowned Austrian Leading Companies Award.

The Essl Foundation is also actively promoting the philanthropic community in Austria by co-initiating the Association of Charitable Foundations, the House of Philanthropy (a co-working space of foundations), and the Sinnstifter and Sinnbildungstiftung, which are co-investing vehicles to promote social innovations outside the area of disability.

## The future of the Zero Project

The strategy of the Zero Project builds on its current strengths and on the unique role it has established in its first two research cycles worldwide. Going forward, the Project will continue to improve its research processes, its network, the Zero Project Conference, the Impact Transfer, and all forms of communication. Special focus will be given to partnerships with Fundación Descúbreme, selected UN agencies, and others to further distribute or localize the Zero Project. In addition, building a powerful database for all the Innovative Practices and Policies that have been selected since 2013 (more than 600) is a major goal for the forthcoming four-year cycle.



In 2017, Fundación Descúbreme received the Zero Project Award for their certification scheme of young people with disabilities. In 2019, Essl Foundation and Fundación Descúbreme have formed a partnership to promote the Zero Project in Latin America and in all Spanish-speaking countries: Michael Fembek (Essl Foundation), Matias Caceres (SK Bergé), Carola Rubia (Fundación Descúbreme), Martin Essl (Essl Foundation).

**“I believe the connections made at the Zero Project Conference are the heart of creating sustainable change at a local, state, national, and international or global level.”**

A respondent to the impact-survey of the Zero Project (December 2019)

### WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE ZERO PROJECT?

The Zero Project surveyed the 2019 Zero Project Awardees and participants of the 2019 Zero Project Conference about the impact that the Project has had on their work. We are pleased to report that the results of the survey demonstrate that, without doubt, the Zero Project is now playing an important global role in terms of promoting Innovative Practices and Policies, and consequently the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – the core mission of the Project.

The graph shows the answer to the question: **“The Zero Project Award/Zero Project Conference helped us/me/my organization to raise our profile/recognition in our home country, with tangible results.”**

Yes: 25

Maybe/A little: 13

No: 19

# The Zero Project methodology

## WHY THE ZERO PROJECT FOCUSES ON INNOVATIONS, NETWORKS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND THE ZERO PROJECT CONFERENCE

The three pillars of the Zero Project methodology are: (1) selecting Innovative Practices and Policies on the basis of innovation, impact, and scalability; (2) engaging with the Zero Project Network at all stages of the selection process; and (3) disseminating results, especially by organizing the Zero Project Conference. The selection process is described below.

For eight years the Zero Project has been using its current methodology, which basically puts the selection and dissemination of Innovative Practices and Policies at the core of its mission to “work for a world without barriers.” While in its beginnings the collection of social indicators was also part of the Zero Project work, it became obvious that a focused, independent, and “pure” research objective was much more needed by all stakeholders. Thus, the Zero Project Social Indicators were discontinued in 2017.

Among many other sources, the necessity and impact of “Best Practices” is mentioned in the CRPD itself, encouraging State Parties to share best practices (Art. 32, lit b). The 2018 United Nations Flagship Report on Development and Disability not only recognizes the need for Good Practices but mentions “Current

Practices” in every chapter. We are pleased to note that more than 40 Innovative Practices and Policies of the Zero Project were selected as Current Practices by the Flagship Report. (Find more on the impact of the Zero Project on page 28.) The methodology of the Zero Project is described here.

### Innovative Practices and Policies

The Zero Project research focuses on Social Innovation (rather than innovation in general). The term “social innovation” was introduced by the Austrian Economist Joseph Schumpeter in 1939 (who also coined the expression “creative destruction”). More recently, there have been several attempts to adapt the term [Phills, et al, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2008], emphasizing a holistic approach: Novel solutions to a social problem that are more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions, and from which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals. A social innovation can be a product, production, process, or technology (much like innovation in general), but it can also be a principle, an idea, a piece of legislation, a social movement, an intervention, or some combination of these.

For its purpose, the Zero Project organizes a multi-step-process that engages with thousands of experts – the Zero Project Network – at all stages, in clearly defined ways (see page 12 for a description of the process). In the nomination, evaluation, and selection process, experts are encouraged to consider three criteria: (1) innovation, (2) impact, and (3) scalability. Thus, it is the network of experts that makes the selection, with the Zero Project creating the framework for the process.

Social innovations from civil society and the business sector (as Innovative Practices) as well as from the public sector (as Innovative Policies) are considered.

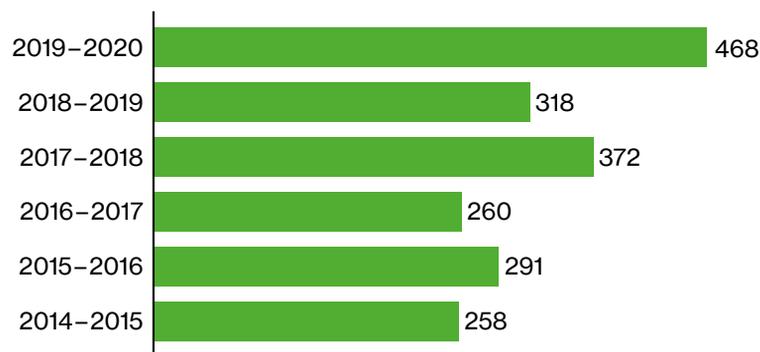
### THE THREE PILLARS OF THE ZERO PROJECT METHODOLOGY

1. Selecting Innovative Practices and Policies on the basis of innovation, impact, and scalability.
2. Engaging with the Zero Project Network at all stages of the selection process.
3. Disseminating results, especially by organizing the Zero Project Conference.

### THE THREE CRITERIA OF THE ZERO PROJECT SELECTION

1. Innovation
2. Impact
3. Scalability

## TOTAL NOMINATIONS RECEIVED BY THE ZERO PROJECT



## HOW NOMINATIONS ARE GROUPED INTO PRACTICES AND POLICIES

1. Nominations from Civil Society: Innovative Practice
2. Nominations from the Business Sector: Innovative Practice
3. Nominations from the Public Sector: Innovative Policy

### How much innovation?

Experts who nominate, evaluate, or vote are encouraged to look at the degree of innovation, considering also the innovation for certain geographies or groups of beneficiaries. For example, some services may not be innovative for a capital city in a high income country, but could at the same time be very innovative to rural areas in low income countries.

### How much impact?

According to the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of the community. Impact may consist of:

- quality, quantity, availability, and affordability of services provided;
- number of beneficiaries/users served, especially those in underserved and disadvantaged communities;
- sustainability of services and service providers improved;
- changes in policies and regulations achieved;
- changes in attitudes and paradigm shifts achieved;
- scaling to other regions, countries, or contexts.

Within the Zero Project process, impact is arguably the most important criterion. Since experts have to value the impact of one nomination against another, in practice this rules out nominations that may be promising for the future, but do not have a proven impact so far, for example, prototypes of ICT-services.

### How much scalability?

Scalability is very important for the selection process as well, considering the mission of the Zero Project. Thus, a clear preference must be given to those innovative approaches that can easily be replicated and adapted across large geographies and

populations for transformational impact (UNHCR and the International Development Innovation Alliance [IDIA], "Insights on Measuring the Impact of Innovation," 2017).

Scalability encompasses very different types of growing, replicating, or other forms of expansion, and may even mean Open Source strategies or giving away all expertise for free. The ability to scale may be dependent on a variety of factors related to the innovator, the (potential) funders, and the environment (IDIA, "Matrix of Factors Influencing Scaling and Sustainability"). Looking at the stages of scaling, the classification of IDIA is useful:

1. **Ideation:** Analysing the problem and generating potential solutions.
2. **Research and Development:** Developing and trying potential solutions.
3. **Proof of Concept:** Creating an early, field-tested solution (prototype, pilot).
4. **Transition to Scale:** Developing the growth model and attracting partners.
5. **Scaling:** Replicating (growing) and adapting the innovation to larger geographies (with mostly transformational innovation).
6. **Sustainable Scaling:** Growing/replicating with a sustainable income model and within an ecosystem.

According to its mission, the Zero Project normally focuses on Stages 4 and 5: Transition to Scale, and Scaling. At Stages 1-3 it is usually not possible for experts to estimate the impact of a nomination, whereas at Stage 6 the degree of innovation will be too low in most cases.

Affordability of products and services and a clearly explained and therefore replicable strategy are important as well.



One of this year's Innovative Practices: Inclusive preschool-education at work in a kindergarden in the Berd region in Armenia. See page 49.

### What are Innovative Policies?

Public policy-making can be done on several levels of governance: supranational (e.g., binding international treaties), national, regional, or local/municipal. Public policies can be implemented via laws and all other forms of regulations, by standards and other forms of legal obligations, by comprehensive action plans, and in some countries also by Supreme Court jurisdiction. When it comes to the implementation of the CRPD, policies may use one of the following instruments based on government and innovation ([www.nesta.org.uk](http://www.nesta.org.uk)):

- **Changes in the tax system:** Creating incentives, such as tax benefits, or risk-reduction, such as new forms of insurance; creating or improving institutions; granting more just and appropriate permissions.
- **Grant-funding:** Social benefit programmes, social protection programmes.
- **Improving regulatory conditions:** Setting mandatory targets and minimum standards for the public and all other stakeholders.
- **Democratizing innovation:** Making innovation more accessible to all; improving public participation in policy decision-making.
- **Organizational support for a nurturing environment and conditions for social innovations:** For example, public venture capital, innovation intermediaries and accelerators, support of professional collaboration, information and exchange IT-platforms.
- **Creating evaluation systems:** Including indicators and data collection methods.

### What are Innovative Practices?

According to Wikipedia: "A best practice is a method or technique that has been generally accepted as superior to any alternatives because it produces results that are superior to those achieved by other means or because it has become a standard way of doing things, e.g., a standard way of complying with legal or ethical requirements."

Practices in the field of implementation of the CRPD include projects, programmes, products, and services, but also social enterprises and business strategies. They can be organized or employed by civil society organizations, such as NGOs and foundations, but also by private companies and universities. Even the activities of public authorities may be considered as a Practice if it uses only means that are open to civil society or private companies as well.

In real life, (Public) Policies and Practices are not distinct, but are within one continuum. Social businesses and social entrepreneurs create another area where distinction lines get blurred. For example, some start-up companies clearly use organizational forms from the business sector while still serving a social purpose, and are not profit-maximizing entities but instead reinvest all returns. Or they charge fees, but only as high as needed to maintain the services. This 'behaviour' would qualify them as members of civil society.

# About Inclusive Education

## KEY ARTICLES OF THE CRPD RELATED TO THIS YEAR'S RESEARCH OF THE ZERO PROJECT

The Zero Project Report 2020 focuses on Article 24 (Education) of the CRPD, and partly also on such related topics as Article 27 (Employment), Article 23 (Respect for Home and Family), and Article 9 (Accessibility). This section explains basic principles that were used for the selection of the Innovative Practices and Policies.

The Zero Project defined six subtopics of this year's research topic of Inclusive Education:

1. Early childhood intervention
2. Formal education (primary and secondary education)
3. Universities (tertiary education)
4. Vocational education and training
5. Non-formal education
6. ICT-driven information and communication

The Zero Project is deliberately not focusing on education as it is defined in Article 24 of the CRPD, considering the fact that many innovative solutions have identified gaps in the formal education system – from early childhood to adulthood – as a major barrier for making Inclusive Education work.

Some of the innovative solutions focus on transition models, starting as early as preschool age or connecting formal education to vocational education or even employment and lifelong learning, thereby creating a relationship to Article 23.

In addition, the training of teachers as well as parents and professionals are innovative strategies often employed to move towards more Inclusive Education environments, and thereby creating a relationship to Article 27.

Non-formal education considers all methods to teach and train that do not employ the conventional textbook/classroom teaching setting, such as using sports, the arts, games, cartoons, or computer apps.

Finally, ICT-driven information and communication tools, such as cloud-based solutions or translation tools (including translation from speech to text, to sign language, or to easy language) are powerful tools to create more Inclusive Education environments, thereby creating a relationship to Article 9.

### Article 24: Education

*(a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;*

*(b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;*

*(c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;*

*(d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective*

*education;*

*(e) Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.*

*3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:*

*(a) Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;*

*(b) Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;*

*(c) Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.*

*4. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education...*

*5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others...*

### Article 27: Employment

*(d) Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training.*

### Article 23: Respect for Home and Family

*3. States Parties shall undertake to provide early and comprehensive information, services and support to children with disabilities and their families.*

### Article 9: Accessibility

*(c) To provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities;*

*(g) To promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet.*

# About Innovative Practice and Policy Research, 2019–2020

## HOW THE 86 INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND POLICIES WERE SELECTED

For 2020 the Zero Project selected 75 Innovative Practices and 11 Innovative Policies from 54 countries that had a positive impact on the rights of persons with disabilities regarding Inclusive Education. In this section the nomination and selection process is described in detail.

As in past years, in 2019–2020 the selection process was conducted in five steps, beginning with “charting of the territory” to the final selection of the Innovative Practices and Policies (see graph below).

### 1. Charting topic and subtopics

In April, the topics relating to this year’s research were defined and categorized as follows (see also page 11 on the theoretical background of Inclusive Education):

- Early childhood and preschool
- Formal education (primary and secondary education)
- Universities (tertiary education)
- Vocational education and training
- Non-formal education
- ICT-driven solutions related to education/digital skills

Next, almost 50 experts with and without disabilities from around the globe were contacted to assist in researching and identifying subtopics, such as housing, supported decision-making, voting procedures, justice, and participation in civil society.

### 2. Call for nomination

Throughout May and June 2019, more than 4,000 experts from nearly every country in the world were approached to spread the call for and to nominate Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies. The call was circulated by email as well as across the Zero Project’s social media channels, and was shared by many partners of the Zero Project Network. Nominations were accepted through the Zero Project nominations platform, which is available in Arabic, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish, or via an accessible Word document.

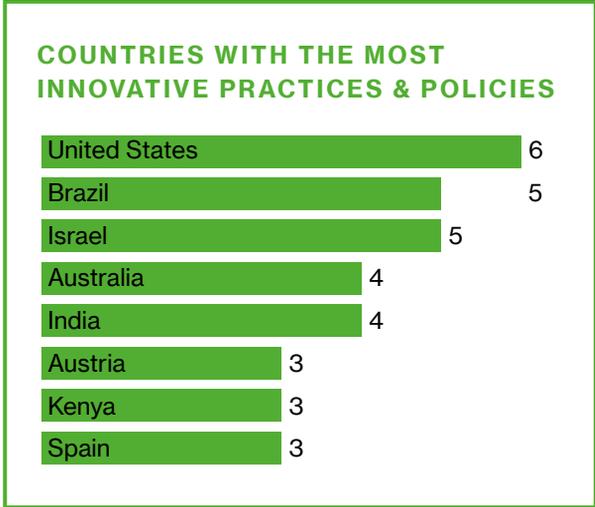
As a result, a record 468 nominations were received: 436 for Innovative Practices from 79 countries, and 32 for Innovative Policies from 27 countries.

### 3. Internal review, peer review, shortlist

In July, the Zero Project team began reviewing nominations to determine if they correctly fit the annual topic and to assess if they each showed a proven impact on the lives of persons with disabilities. Of those that were judged to fit the criteria, 76 Practices and 11 Policies proceeded directly onto the shortlist, with 227 Practices and 14 Policies identified as requiring further analysis.

More than 100 experts from the Zero Project Network participated in this first analysis, providing some 1,000 individual scores across three criteria: innovation, impact, and scalability/replicability. Nominations were ranked based on the voting scores, and about half of the reviewed nominations were added to the shortlist, which brought the total to 169 Practices and 24 Policies. The Zero Project published all shortlisted nominations in September 2019.

Based on the Zero Project shortlist, the 10 participants of the Zero Project–Impact Transfer were selected in parallel (see page 135).



## 2019–2020 research and selection at a glance

NOMINATIONS → SHORTLIST → AWARDEES

**436**

Innovative Practices

**32**

Innovative Policies

**106**

Countries represented

**169**

**24**

**64**

**75**

**11**

**54**

Numbers of peer-reviewers and voters combined

**508**

Peer-reviewers and voters combined

Experts in peer review: 108

Experts in voting: 400

**3,624**

Total votes

### 4. Voting

In September, over 3,000 experts and leaders in the wider Zero Project Network were invited to vote and comment on the shortlisted applications, with each expert being assigned randomly to a group of up to 15 projects. Over 1,800 votes plus additional written feedback were received across the month.

Exactly 400 voters from 99 countries took part in this most decisive step of the selection process, with a total of 3,624 votes received. Each of the shortlisted Practices received an average of 19.4 votes, and each of the shortlisted Policies received an average of 14.5 votes.

### 5. Additional research, Factsheet writing, and final selection

Based on the votes and feedback, and with additional analysis by topic and geographical region to account for bias and country income levels, 75 Innovative Practices and 11 Innovative Policies were ultimately selected for 2019-2020, approximately 45 per cent of the shortlisted nominations and 17.5 per cent of all nominations received. In the final step, the Zero Project team conducted additional, thorough research on each project and composed their respective Factsheets. Photos and videos of the projects were also requested to support promotion of the Factsheets. In addition, personal Life Stories of those who have benefitted from the projects were solicited.

### Zero Project Report, website, social media, and Conference

All Innovative Practices and Policies are published in this report, on [www.zeroproject.org](http://www.zeroproject.org), and on all social media outlets. In addition, the sponsoring organizations were invited to present their Practice or Policy and to receive their Zero Project Award at the annual Zero Project Conference in Vienna (19–21 February, 2020).

Find all 86 Innovative Practices and Policies on the World Map and Europe Map (page 22 and page 23), and all the Factsheets from page 28 to page 131.

Life Stories of selected persons who benefitted from these innovations can be found on pages 45, 64, 76, 92, 112, and 132.

The Zero Project Report is also made available as an accessible formatted pdf, which includes alternative text. Each project Factsheet is available on the Zero Project website in an accessible Word format.

For the first time, the Factsheets were also translated into Spanish and published on the Zero Project website, as well as in a Spanish version of the Zero Project Report.

### Patterns and solutions

The 11 patterns and solutions identified, as key findings of the Zero Project research, are published in this report and are presented on various other occasions as an additional tool to promote Innovative Practices and Policies (see page 22).

## THE SELECTION PROCESS

### The five steps of the nomination and selection process



# Patterns of solutions identified

The Zero Project team clustered all Innovative Practices and Policies into groups of solutions based on similarities, identifying 19 patterns of solutions this year.

Finding patterns of solutions is a powerful tool to promote innovation and system change. It means that two or more groups of innovators have developed a certain type of solution independently from each other and have used it successfully. Although patterns of solutions look similar to the ordinary way of clustering themes (in this case, Inclusive Education), they are much more than that. Such patterns demonstrate to opinion leaders and decision makers clear paths forward that have been effectively demonstrated more than just once, and often several times. Using such a pattern is clearly more promising than creating new solutions from scratch, with outcomes that are completely uncertain.

## Patterns and similarities

In analysing all 86 Innovative Practices and Policies, a pattern of solutions emerges in cases where three or more of them appear to be using similar models. Searching for those similarities, the Zero Project team scanned the Innovative Practices and Policies for prominent characteristics that they share and then clustered them. As a result, the Zero Project identified 11 distinct clusters.

Similarities were searched in terms of: (1) target groups, (2) methods and techniques used, (3) ICT used or developed, and (4) regions of implementation. In addition, the team looked for more education-specific traits: (5) the nature/content of education, (6) whether it worked specifically on transitions, (7) if it employed a train-the-trainer approach, and (8) if there was in-depth analysis of the ICT-solution applied.

**Five Innovative Practices work specifically to support university students with intellectual disabilities.**

## Patterns are also used for parallel sessions

The patterns of solutions were also the foundation for the composition of the parallel sessions of the Zero Project Conference 2020, bringing together on the same podium representatives of those Innovative Practices and Policies with similarities. That said, the parallel sessions do differ from the clusters, since they also include those Practices and Policies that could not be clustered as well as representatives of many other expert organizations that were not selected.

## Patterns of solutions will become even more important

Naturally, the clustering remains arbitrary to a certain degree, since many solutions could be added to different clusters at the same time. Clusters can always be merged, refined, or split for different goals. Still, defining these clusters and “bringing them to life” at the Zero Project Conference is clearly one of the most important research tracks of the Zero Project, based on unique data and research.

In this chapter of the Executive Summary, the patterns of solutions are grouped by the six subtopics of Inclusive Education that were created by the Project team (see graph). A brief description of each of the clusters and some representatives of Innovative Practices and Policies are as follows.

## Early childhood and preschool programmes: Use existing structures

A striking characteristic of most of the Innovative Practices and Policies within the subtopic “Early childhood and preschool programmes” is the usage of existing structures for child care, instead of building new ones. For example, Mais Diferenças in Brazil trains educators in public preschools; Action Foundation in Kenya works with non-formal schools; Sightsavers in Malawi works with community-based childhood centres; and Amar Seva Sangam in India operates with community rehabilitation workers. Training of educators and parents and the provision of low-cost learning materials are other denominating factors in this cluster. Technology is of minor importance; only the community rehabilitation workers in India are supported by a smartphone app.

#### **Solution No. 1**

**In early childhood support in less developed countries, use existing care providers, make them accessible, and provide them with educator training and low-cost learning materials.**

#### **System-wide approaches: Use person-centred or school-centred approaches, coordinated with parents**

Among the solutions working in the area of formal education, a significant number of Innovative Policies from very highly developed countries were selected that use a broader systemic approach to create inclusive learning environments. A defining element of almost all these Policies is an individualized approach. Decisions about support measures are made on a case-by-case basis. In the Innovative Policies of Queensland, Australia, and of Italy – both already on an advanced level of Inclusive Education – this is part of the strategy for further progress. In the Innovative Policy “Access and Inclusion Model” from Ireland and in the Innovative Practice “One School for All” from Bulgaria, it is the schools that get new opportunities and resources at their disposal, also giving parents a more important role.

#### **Solution No. 2**

**Individualized support – on the child/parent level or on the school level – is key for Innovative Policies and Practices to create more inclusive schools.**

#### **Low and middle income countries: Teacher training and door-to-door advocacy with parents**

Among successful Innovative Practices and Policies that work in low and middle income countries, several shared characteristics can be found. Training teachers is the foundation of several of them, as in the teacher-training centres of ADPP in Mozambique. Both Innovative Practices from the isle of Zanzibar (State University and Madrasa) focus on teacher training, as do the education centres of CBM in Zimbabwe. All others include at least elements of teacher training.

Another element that characterizes several Practices and Policies is the identification of those children who

are not yet in school, using door-to-door advocacy with parents and the neighbourhood, assessing their children's needs, and creating a support chain towards school enrolment. KASALI in the Philippines and APPEHL (Humanity and Inclusion) in Senegal are using this approach, as is ADISA with indigenous communities in Guatemala. Consequently, most of these solutions start earlier than school age.

#### **Solution No. 3**

**In low and middle income countries, quality teacher training – in dedicated centres or even universities – is a preferred approach to make mainstream schools more inclusive.**

#### **Solution No. 4**

**In low and middle income countries, in order to bring all children into school, successful solutions start with door-to-door advocacy work with parents, followed by a chain of support that includes an individual needs assessment.**

#### **Making universities inclusive for students with intellectual disabilities: Working on university ecosystems and employability**

A substantial number of the Innovative Practices (but none of the Policies) work in a university environment. Whereas no cluster could be found for the general inclusion and accessibility of universities, five Innovative Practices work specifically to support their students with intellectual disabilities. Looking at the content of their programmes, two clear patterns emerged that were used by all of them, but with different emphasis.

The first emphasis is on creating a more inclusive “university ecosystem” for all students. The programmes are based on mentors for those with intellectual disabilities and on supporting their integration into social life at university and on campus, for example, through access to clubs or employment opportunities on campus.

The second emphasis is on using universities – all its training opportunities, all of its people, and the prestige of its certificates – to improve the employability of students with intellectual disabilities. Mentors

## THE 6 TOPICS AND 11 PATTERNS/SOLUTIONS OF THE ZERO PROJECT RESEARCH 2019–2020

Early Childhood	Formal education	University	Vocational education and training	Non-formal education	ICT-driven communication/digital skills
1: Early childhood and preschool programmes: Using existing structures	2: System-wide approaches: Using person-centred or school-centred approaches, coordinated with parents	5: Making universities inclusive for students with intellectual disabilities: Working on university ecosystems and job-readiness	6: Vocational education and employment: Firm anchors on both sides of the divide	8: Teaching digital skills in playful ways	9 and 10: Cloud based solutions: Libraries and directories; courses and interaction platforms
	3 and 4: Low and middle income countries: Teacher training and door-to-door advocacy with parents		7: Training urban planners and architects in accessibility and Universal Design		11: Tools to support communication

who support them in attending courses and lessons, adapting learning materials, or creating additional courses that support independent living and job-readiness are all part of this model. The Austrian BLuE-Hochschulprogramm uses an incentive model for students to become mentors. Other Innovative Practices also train and certify expert skills, such as expertise in accessibility and inclusion, that qualifies them for employment in the education sector or the public sector in general.

An astonishing four Innovative Practices focus on developing digital skills in playful ways, and by doing so improving a lot of other ‘21st century skills’, such as creativity, communication, design, storytelling, orientation, math, and working in teams.

### Solution No. 5

**Opening up universities to students with intellectual disabilities is a newly emerging pattern, where Innovative Practices change the whole university ecosystem to become more inclusive, and/or university training and degrees are used to support employability.**

### Vocational education and employment: Firm anchors on both sides of the divide

Vocational education covers a wide range of programmes that bridge the gap from education to employment, or to independent living. A large number of such Innovative Practices and Policies were nominated this year and were also finally selected. This highlights the importance of this challenge for young people with disabilities, but also that many innovations are being successfully developed to address this challenge.

One common denominator of Innovate Practices is a model that anchors vocational training in secondary or high school and also does so in real employment opportunities. Enable Scotland of the United Kingdom uses a three-stage approach, and Israel Elwyn a two-stage approach, both beginning within mainstream schools with additional trainings. Coordinators of those transitions are a key element in both approaches. KVPS in Finland uses a broader approach to achieve a similar goal, establishing steering groups on the municipal level composed of a variety of stake-

holders, and applying a person-centred approach for support in the transition process.

#### Solution No. 6

**In vocational education, successful transition models work in stages – beginning within schools and only ending in real employment opportunities.**

#### Training urban planners and architects in accessibility and Universal Design

Programmes with a focus on teaching and training professionals are highly represented within Innovative Practices. One of the largest coherent clusters is on training professionals in the accessibility of built environment and infrastructure, with five Innovative Practices working exactly in that field. Interestingly, however, they use very different methods. Fundación ONCE of Spain has created a free online course, with an additional focus on the accessibility of website and information. At the other end of the spectrum, the Rick Hansen Foundation from Canada and the All-Russian Society of Disabled People create income models for the consultants (many of those with disabilities) by certifying their skills, with the Russia model even providing additional support in setting up a certification business. The programmes in India and Serbia are university-based and have a focus on developing courses and improving curricula, with the BNCA University in Pune, India, rolling out a community and involvement programme at the same time.

#### Solution No. 7

**Training architects, urban planners, and others responsible for accessible cities is of crucial importance, and a variety of models are already successfully at work, using well-developed curricula – from free online courses to certification – to serve as income models for consultants with and without disabilities.**

#### Teaching digital skills in playful ways

Within non-formal education a surprising cluster appeared, with an astonishing four Innovative Practices focusing on developing digital skills in playful ways, and by doing so improving a lot of other '21st century skills', such as creativity, communication, design, storytelling, orientation, math, and working in teams.

ScyFY from Greece and Sonokids from Australia are especially designed for young people who are blind, whereas Univali from Brazil and DIA Inclusive Lab from Mexico target a broader audience, with DIA including even young people at risk without disabilities. Methods used include the co-generation of stories, games, apps, and ICT-based tools, which can include 3D printers or laser-cutters.

Imagine your teacher speaks sign language!

Training teachers is the foundation of many innovations, especially in low and middle income countries, as in the teacher-training centres of ADPP in Mozambique, both Innovative Practices from the isle of Zanzibar, and the education centres of CBM in Zimbabwe. This picture is from the RAISE project of Light for the World in India (page 84).



#### Solution No. 8

**Teaching ICT skills in a playful and creative way is a powerful and innovative way to train many 21st century skills at the same time, such as creativity, teamwork, communication, empathy, and design.**

#### Cloud-based solutions: Libraries and directories, courses and peer-exchanges

Within ICT-driven solutions, several clusters appear instantly. Using the "cloud" (basically every software platform or service that can be accessed and used freely from any location via Internet access) is the biggest cluster of all within Innovative Practices 2020, and could even be split into two subclusters.

One subcluster comprises libraries and directories. Both the digital libraries of YPSA in Bangladesh and of UNICEF in Montenegro collect textbooks in different formats for blind users. Bookshare from the United States is a vast digital library for books in a variety of formats. Videobooks from Argentina focuses on video books with captioning for users who are deaf or hearing-impaired. Digital libraries exist for a variety of usages and users, including easy language and Braille.

Directories are related to libraries but use databases to compare and select. The directory of the Nayi Disha Resource Centre in India is an efficient tool to find support and assistance, whereas ELPIDA from Greece simplifies the process of finding the right kind of assistive technology for parents.

### Solution No. 9

Cloud-based solutions are among the most frequently used feature of Innovative Practices. Setting up digital libraries (for all kinds of alternative formats and user groups) or digital directories, organizing them to be accessible and user-friendly, and sharing them freely is a most cost-efficient way to share content.

The second subcluster creates impact by using the cloud to teach, to train, or to promote interaction among peers. The solutions are described as online training, web courses, or distance learning. In addition to sharing content via the cloud, these models add all kinds of interactive support, such as chat functions, testing, self-learning tools, and discussion platforms – with experts or among peers. The focus varies greatly, with certified studies on one end of the spectrum and peer-exchange platforms on the other, the latter having an impact by creating communities of peers with related issues and challenges. Peer exchange platforms can be moderated and augmented by expert advice and/or community management.

DIVERSA from Brazil publishes articles by experts on Inclusive Education and creates an online community to discuss experiences. Final Exam of Serbia is an online course specifically for exam preparation at the end of primary school. ABFA from Turkey works primarily with unpaid volunteers to run online courses for people who are visually impaired and that can be established most cost-efficiently, and even works on simple mobile phones without Internet connectivity. Educlick of Cameroon also works on mobile phones and is based on matching instructors and trainees who are out of school for any reason, including disabilities.

Two Innovative Practices work in a very distinct cluster, again using online courses, this time to teach Braille – a skill that is highly needed for communicating with persons who are blind. Braitico from Spain is focusing on different levels of Braille starting from birth to the end of primary education, whereas UEB Online from Australia is a course designed to work for everyone who is interested.

### Solution No. 10

Cloud-based solutions are also most efficient in setting up courses and establishing communities, with most of the Innovative Practices combining elements of online training and exchanges with experts or peers. Two of the Innovative Practices have established low-cost solutions, working on mobile phones without the need of an Internet connection and involving volunteers as trainers. Another two are focusing on teaching Braille.

### Tools to support communication

A very different cluster that emerged from ICT-based solutions is one with tools that support communication. Acknowledging that there is an enormous variety of such tools, those selected as Innovative Practices use three distinct forms of communication.

SpeechGear of the United States provides instant captioning of spoken words with an option of automated translation, and is adapting the programme to classroom situations. The Immersive Reader of Microsoft adapts texts on screens to meet various needs, most notably for people with dyslexia, visual impairments, or autism. The Livox app of Brazil enables people who cannot communicate verbally and people with intellectual disabilities to communicate and learn via a touch-based tablet.

### Solution No. 11

ICT can support communication in various ways. Reflecting the numerous approaches that are currently developed, Innovative Practices include three very different ones that also support learning environments: an instant captioning tool for spoken words, a tool adapting text to various needs, and a tool enabling the use of touch-based tablets for all.



ICT can support communication in various ways. Speechgear is an instant captioning tool for spoken words. Students who use Speechgear (page 128) for example, log in to a virtual room to see the live captioning and adjust the language to their needs.

# The Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme

Zero Project–Impact Transfer is an accelerator project, organized by Essl Foundation in partnership with Fundación Descúbreme and Ashoka Austria. Find more in Section 4.

From the hundreds of nominations for the annual Zero Project Awards, the most replicable initiatives are selected to participate. Previously, 21 projects have been supported, with ten new ones joining this high-potential programme this year (see box).

A number of success stories already have been reported, and new ones are being added continuously. For example, capito Austria was working with Escola de Gente to establish their easy-language news service, called Top Easy, in Brazil. Gallaudet University of the United States has developed the VL2 Storybook Creator to support the needs of children who are deaf. It is now cooperating with Boğaziçi University in Turkey, where two bilingual children's stories in Turkish and Turkish sign language are being prepared. As a third example, Daniel Kish has learned to 'see' using a form of echolocation and calls his technique FlashSonar. Two offshoots of his replication model "Vioneers" have already been founded in Austria and in Norway by and with the support of local partners.

## THE PARTICIPANTS OF 2019–2020

Participants	Country
Livox	Brazil
Association for Shared Learning ELA	Bulgaria
Universidad Andrés Bello	Chile
KVPS	Finland
Capito Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Germany
Amar Seva Sangam	India
Nayi Disha Resource Centre	India
InABLE	Kenya
Humanity & Inclusion Senegal	Senegal
Manzil Center	UAE



Foto: Sozialhelden e.V.

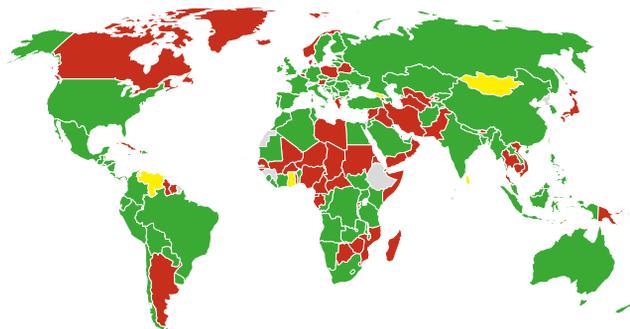
Based in Berlin, Greta & Starks has developed the free GRETA mobile app to make cinema screenings more accessible to people with visual and hearing disabilities. In 2019, Greta & Starks participated in the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme. As a result, the company attracted social impact investor Joachim Schoss as a funder for future scaling.

## Measuring national guarantees to Inclusive Education worldwide

The WORLD Policy Analysis Center is leading efforts to comparatively measure and analyze disability-inclusive policy-making across all 193 UN member states. Find more in Section 6.

WORLD's quantitatively comparative measures of national commitments to Inclusive Education support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by informing the policy and research efforts of a range of stakeholders working to dismantle persistent barriers to education.

In Section 6, six worldmaps analyze national guarantees to Inclusive Education.



Is disability-based discrimination prohibited through the completion of secondary education? A comparison of 193 countries.

# Overview: Innovative Practices/Policies 2020

Country by country from A to Z: 11 Innovative Policies and 75 Innovative Practices of the Zero Project

## INNOVATIVE POLICIES 2020

Country	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Programme	page
Australia	A rights-based approach for young people to have a place in mainstream classrooms	Queensland Department of Education	34
Austria	A municipal-level pilot-project towards continuous schooling of children with autism	City of Vienna, Bildungsdirektion	35
Canada	Building capacity to support the Inclusive Education of Children and Youth with Autism	Province of New Brunswick, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	36
Dominican Republic	700 early childhood centres across the whole country	National Institute for Comprehensive Early Childhood Care	37
Ireland	Supporting inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream preschools	Department of Children and Youth Affairs	38
Israel	Supported education services for people with serious mental health issues	Ministry of Health	39
Italy	A new set of provisions for the further implementation of Inclusive Education	Ministry of Education	40
Namibia	Inclusive Education policy in Namibia	Ministry of Education	41
Nepal	A countrywide policy framework for lifelong inclusive learning	Ministry of Education	42
Samoa	A national Inclusive Education policy promoting respect and lifelong learning	Ministry of Education	43
United States	Department testing innovative approaches towards more inclusive careers for students	US Department of Labor	44

## INNOVATIVE PRACTICES 2020

Country	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Programme	page
Argentina	A video book library of children's stories read in sign language	Canales	48
Armenia	Supporting smooth and inclusive transitions from preschool to primary school	Bridge of Hope	49
Australia	University inclusion programme for persons with intellectual disabilities	Centre for Disability Studies	50
Australia	Early-learning technology for children who are blind or visually impaired	Sonokids	51
Australia	Free online training for sighted people to learn Unified English Braille Code	Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children	52
Austria	An inclusive post-secondary programme for students with intellectual disabilities	Pädagogische Hochschule Salzburg	53
Austria	Multi-stakeholder groups developing accessibility solutions in museums	KHM-Museumsverband and partners	54
Bangladesh	Holistic support system from early childhood to vocational training	Disabled Rehabilitation & Research Association	55
Bangladesh	A broad, low-cost, and comprehensive model to create accessible schools	Save the Children International	56
Bangladesh	Providing accessible books and learning materials to blind students	Young Power in Social Action	57
Brazil	Universal Design-based practices for public early childhood education	Mais Diferenças and partners	58
Brazil	Training educators and municipalities in inclusive physical education	Rodrigo Mendes Institute and partners	59
Brazil	Digital game design by children with and without intellectual disabilities	Univali University	60
Brazil	Alternative communication platform for people with learning difficulties	Livox International LLC	61
Brazil	A worldwide online library of good practices in Inclusive Education	Rodrigo Mendes Institute	62
Bulgaria	A systematic approach to creating inclusive school environments	Association of Shared Learning ELA	63
Cameroon	Subscription-based online education platforms that also work without Internet	educlick	66
Canada	Rating-based training of accessibility assessors	Rick Hansen Foundation	67
Chile	A three-year vocational training programme for students with intellectual disabilities	Universidad de Andrés Bello	68
China	Sign bilingual education from infancy to secondary school	Centre for Sign Linguistics & Deaf Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong	69
Ecuador	Person-centred support model for university students	Universidad Politécnica Salesiana	70
Ethiopia	Training teachers of mainstream schools in sign language	Felm in partnership with EECMY-DASSC	71
Finland	Action plans to support the transition from secondary school	KVPS	72
Germany	Training people with disabilities to be museum guides	capito Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	73
Germany	People with intellectual disabilities train peers to use digital media and ICT	PIKSL by In der Gemeinde leben	74
Greece	Free open-source electronic games for children	SciFY	75
Greece et al	Multilingual training platform for parents and guardians	ELPIDA project	78

Country	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Programme	page
Guatemala	Comprehensive Inclusive Education for indigenous communities	ADISA	79
India	Grassroots self-advocacy for children through self-created comics	Catholic Health Association of India	80
India	Free online platform supporting families of children with intellectual disabilities	Nayi Disha Resource Centre	81
India	Teaching architects and students to use Universal Design principles	Universal Design Centre, BNCA University	82
India	App-based family-centred early intervention therapy in rural communities	Amar Seva Sangam	83
India	Training teachers in inclusive techniques and learning materials	Light for the World and partners	84
Indonesia	Admission quotas and support services for university enrollment	Centre for Disability Studies and Services, Universitas Brawijaya	85
Ireland	Online training for parents and teachers of children with learning disabilities	UrAbility	86
Israel	A transition into adulthood programme for young people with disabilities	Israel Elwyn	87
Israel	Museum accessibility for visitors with intellectual disability	AKIM Israel	88
Israel	Sharing personal experiences to improve the quality of inclusive teaching	Access Israel	89
Israel	Social inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities through community centres	Ministry of Health and the Association of Community Centres	90
Jordan	One-year preparation programme for children with disabilities to enter mainstream schools	Al Hussein Society	91
Jordan	Inclusive schools for students who are blind or visually impaired	Arab Episcopal School Irbid	94
Kazakhstan	Teaching reading and writing to adults with intellectual disabilities in institutions	Psychoanalytic Association	95
Kenya	Empowering non-formal schools in slum areas	The Action Foundation	96
Kenya	Supporting schools to establish assistive technology labs for blind students	inABLE	97
Kenya	24-hour TV station broadcasting in sign language	Signs Media Kenya Limited	98
Malawi	A low-cost approach to early childhood development	Sightsavers	99
Mexico	Providing free space to develop technological skills for young people at risk	The Trust for the Americas	100
Montenegro	Textbooks in electronic, audio, and video formats for mainstream primary schools	UNICEF Montenegro	101
Mozambique	Inclusive Teacher-Training Centres	ADPP in partnership with Light for the World	102
Nepal	Promoting community-based Inclusive Education	Sama Nepal	103
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Panama	Teaching students with disabilities to manage risks associated with natural disasters	RET Americas	105
Philippines	A multifaceted approach towards inclusive pre-primary and primary schools	Save the Children Philippines	106
Russia	A social franchise model for accessibility experts	All-Russian Society of Disabled People	107
Saudi Arabia	Multi-method approach to improving university accessibility for blind students	King Abdulaziz University	108
Senegal	Large-scale campaign to identify and enrol children with disabilities in Senegal	Humanity & Inclusion Senegal	109
Serbia	Online platform to prepare all students for final primary school exams	Mathematical Society of Serbia with partners	110
Serbia	Improving research and training on urban accessibility and Universal Design	University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture	111
South Africa	Disability-inclusive workforce development for all students in higher education	University of Cape Town	114
South Sudan	Providing Inclusive Education in camps for internally displaced persons	Light for the World	115
Spain	Noise-free school model inclusive of students with hearing impairments	Fundación Dales la Palabra	118
Spain	Free online training for professionals on applying accessibility guidelines	Fundación ONCE	116
Spain	A tool to teach blind children how to read and write by using Braille	Fundación ONCE	117
Tanzania	Community-based inclusive development promoting Inclusive Education in Zanzibar	Madrassa Early Childhood Programme – Zanzibar	119
Tanzania	Inclusive Education teacher-training modules in university courses	State University of Zanzibar	120
Turkey	Volunteer-based distance learning platform for people with visual impairments	Engelsiz Erisim Derneği	121
United Arab Emirates	Full-range services in Inclusive Education and job readiness	Manzil Center	122
UK	Three-step transition to professional life for young people with learning disabilities	ENABLE Scotland	123
United States	Person-centred transition programme for students to post-school life	Houston Community College – VAST Academy	124
United States	Postgraduate studies in disability law and policy	Syracuse University	125
United States	Tool to improve readability of texts built into mainstream apps and services	Microsoft Corporation	126
United States	A two-year programme with proven success in labour market integration	Taft Community College	127
United States	A website offering instant captioning and translation	SpeechGear	128
United States	Accessible eBook library with over 775,000 books in 47 languages	Benetech	129
Zimbabwe	Converting special schools into Inclusive Education centres	CBM – Christoffel-Blindenmission	130

# Innovative Policies and Practices around the world

For Europe see page 24

## ZERO PROJECT 2020

- Innovative Practice
- Innovative Policy
- Zero Project–Impact Transfer

**Chile**  
**A three-year vocational training programme for students with intellectual disabilities**  
 Universidad de Andrés Bello

**Argentina**  
**A video book library of children's stories read in sign language**  
 Canales

### United States

**Department testing innovative approaches towards more inclusive careers for students**  
 US Department of Labor

**Tool to improve readability of texts built into mainstream apps and services**  
 Microsoft Corporation

**Person-centred transition programme for students to post-school life**  
 Houston Community College – VAST Academy

**A two-year programme with proven success in labour market integration**  
 Taft Community College

**Accessible eBook library with over 775,000 books in 47 languages**  
 Benetech

**A website offering instant captioning and translation**  
 SpeechGear

**Postgraduate studies in disability law and policy**  
 Syracuse University

**Mexico**  
**Providing free space to develop technological skills for young people at risk**  
 The Trust for the Americas

**Panama**  
**Teaching students with disabilities to manage risks associated with natural disasters**  
 RET Americas

**Ecuador**  
**Person-centred support model for university students**  
 Universidad Politécnica Salesiana

### Canada

**Building capacity to support the Inclusive Education of children and youth with autism**  
 Province of New Brunswick, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD)

**Rating-based training of accessibility assessors**  
 Rick Hansen Foundation

### Dominican Republic

**700 early childhood centres across the whole country**  
 National Institute for Comprehensive Early Childhood Care

### Saudi Arabia

**Multi-method approach to improving university accessibility for blind students**  
 King Abdulaziz University

### Guatemala

**Comprehensive Inclusive Education for indigenous communities**  
 ADISA

### Senegal

**Large-scale campaign to identify and enrol children with disabilities in Senegal**  
 Humanity & Inclusion Senegal

### Cameroon

**Subscription-based online education platforms that also work without Internet**  
 educlick

### Brazil

**Universal Design-based practices for public early childhood education**  
 Mais Diferenças And Partners

**Digital game design by children with and without intellectual disabilities**  
 Univali University

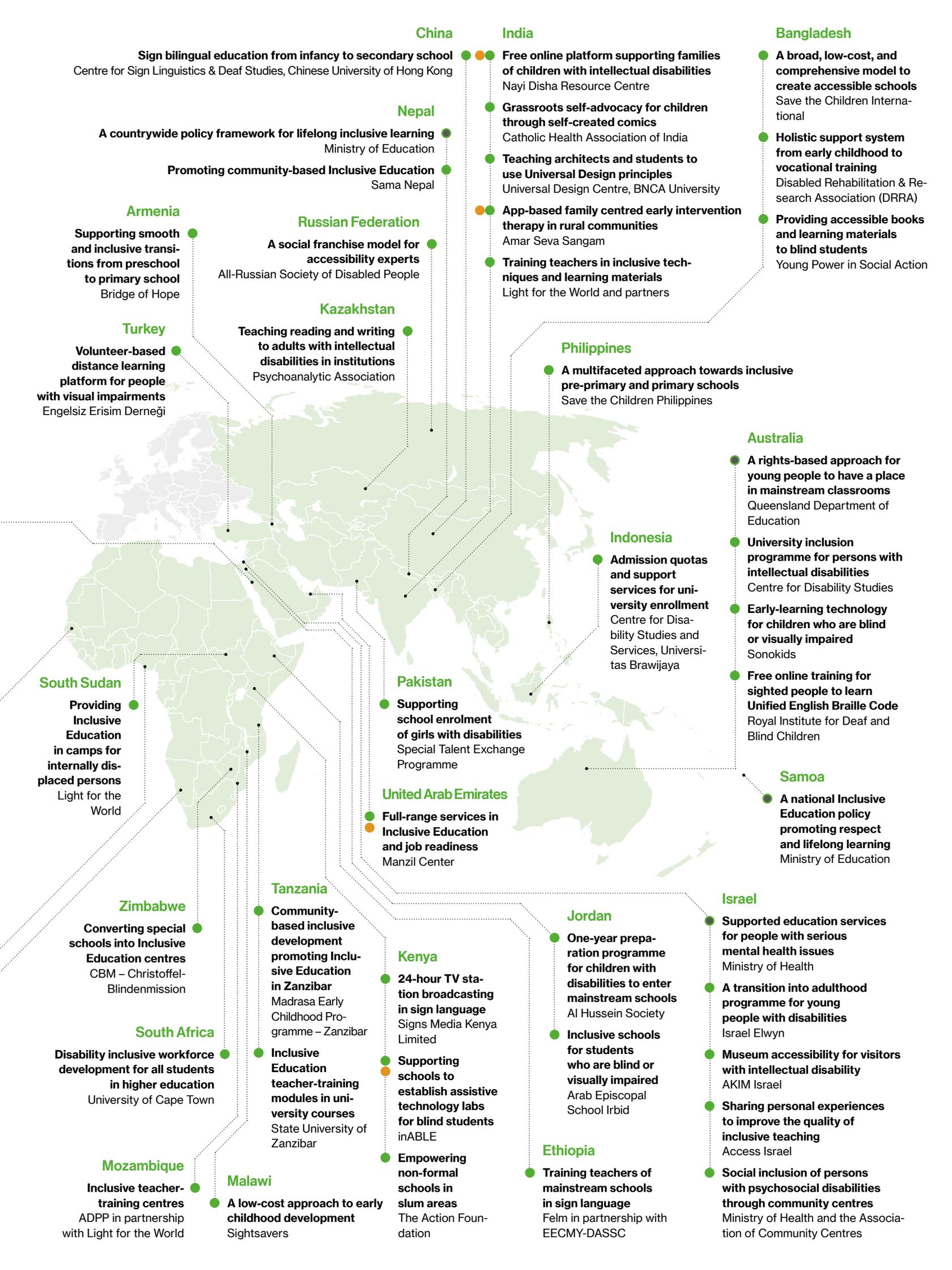
**Training educators and municipalities in inclusive physical education**  
 Rodrigo Mendes Institute and partners

**Alternative communication platform for people with learning difficulties**  
 Livox International LLC

### Namibia

**Inclusive Education policy in Namibia**  
 Ministry of Education

**A worldwide online library of good practices in Inclusive Education**  
 Rodrigo Mendes Institute



### China

**Sign bilingual education from infancy to secondary school**  
Centre for Sign Linguistics & Deaf Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong

### India

**Free online platform supporting families of children with intellectual disabilities**  
Nayi Disha Resource Centre

### Bangladesh

**A broad, low-cost, and comprehensive model to create accessible schools**  
Save the Children International

**Holistic support system from early childhood to vocational training**  
Disabled Rehabilitation & Research Association (DRRA)

**Providing accessible books and learning materials to blind students**  
Young Power in Social Action

### Nepal

**A countrywide policy framework for lifelong inclusive learning**  
Ministry of Education

**Promoting community-based Inclusive Education**  
Sama Nepal

### Armenia

**Supporting smooth and inclusive transitions from preschool to primary school**  
Bridge of Hope

### Russian Federation

**A social franchise model for accessibility experts**  
All-Russian Society of Disabled People

### Kazakhstan

**Teaching reading and writing to adults with intellectual disabilities in institutions**  
Psychoanalytic Association

### Turkey

**Volunteer-based distance learning platform for people with visual impairments**  
Engelsiz Erisim Derneği

### Philippines

**A multifaceted approach towards inclusive pre-primary and primary schools**  
Save the Children Philippines

### Australia

**A rights-based approach for young people to have a place in mainstream classrooms**  
Queensland Department of Education

**University inclusion programme for persons with intellectual disabilities**  
Centre for Disability Studies

**Early-learning technology for children who are blind or visually impaired**  
Sonokids

**Free online training for sighted people to learn Unified English Braille Code**  
Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children

### Indonesia

**Admission quotas and support services for university enrollment**  
Centre for Disability Studies and Services, Universitas Brawijaya

### Pakistan

**Supporting school enrolment of girls with disabilities**  
Special Talent Exchange Programme

### United Arab Emirates

**Full-range services in Inclusive Education and job readiness**  
Manzil Center

### Samoa

**A national Inclusive Education policy promoting respect and lifelong learning**  
Ministry of Education

### South Sudan

**Providing Inclusive Education in camps for internally displaced persons**  
Light for the World

### Zimbabwe

**Converting special schools into Inclusive Education centres**  
CBM – Christoffel-Blindenmission

### Tanzania

**Community-based inclusive development promoting Inclusive Education in Zanzibar**  
Madrasa Early Childhood Programme – Zanzibar

**Inclusive Education teacher-training modules in university courses**  
State University of Zanzibar

### Kenya

**24-hour TV station broadcasting in sign language**  
Signs Media Kenya Limited

**Supporting schools to establish assistive technology labs for blind students**  
inABLE

**Empowering non-formal schools in slum areas**  
The Action Foundation

### Jordan

**One-year preparation programme for children with disabilities to enter mainstream schools**  
Al Hussein Society

**Inclusive schools for students who are blind or visually impaired**  
Arab Episcopal School Irbid

### Israel

**Supported education services for people with serious mental health issues**  
Ministry of Health

**A transition into adulthood programme for young people with disabilities**  
Israel Elwyn

**Museum accessibility for visitors with intellectual disability**  
AKIM Israel

**Sharing personal experiences to improve the quality of inclusive teaching**  
Access Israel

**Social inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities through community centres**  
Ministry of Health and the Association of Community Centres

### South Africa

**Disability inclusive workforce development for all students in higher education**  
University of Cape Town

### Mozambique

**Inclusive teacher-training centres**  
ADPP in partnership with Light for the World

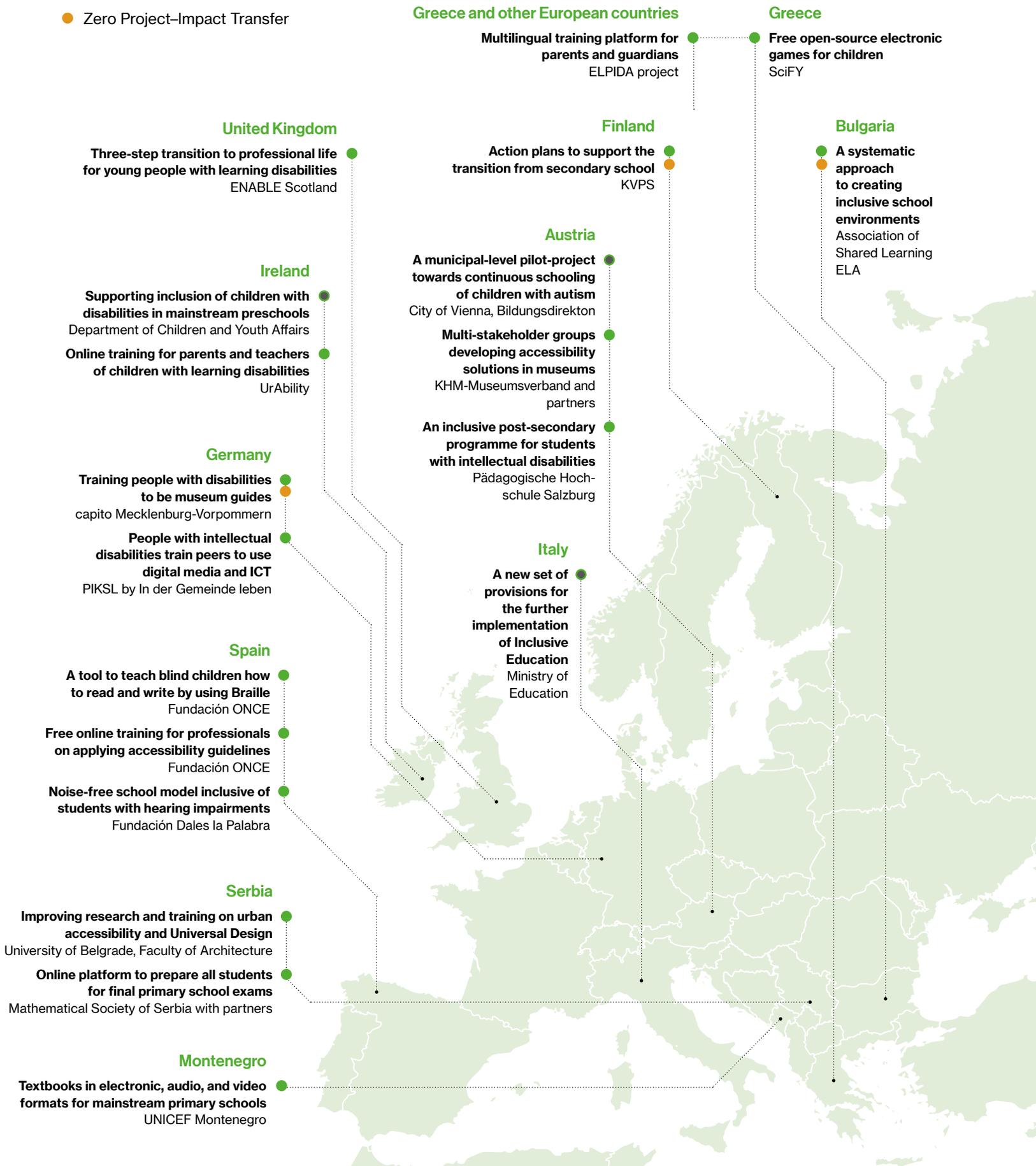
### Malawi

**A low-cost approach to early childhood development**  
Sightsavers

# Innovative Policies and Practices in Europe

## ZERO PROJECT 2020

- Innovative Practice
- Innovative Policy
- Zero Project–Impact Transfer



# A selection of Life Stories

Each Life Story tells the story of one of the beneficiary of an Innovative Practice or Innovative Policy 2020.

Find more Life Stories on pages 45, 64, 76, 92, 112, and 132.



**“The game creation helped me to work as a team and to strengthen friendships.”**

*Igor Kuehn Ferreira (9), student at Univali School of Application, Brazil. See page 77.*



**“She now attends a regular class, has learned to walk, enjoys playing, and loves to draw and paint.”**

*Kopila (10), user of Sama Nepal programmes, Nepal. See page 112.*



**“You’re looking at it from a perspective that they probably haven’t yet.”**

*Daniel Westley, certified accessibility expert, Canada. See page 77.*



**“We made new friends and started activities like Laughing Yoga.”**

*Elli (17), user of the “On the Verge of Adulthood” programme, Viitasaari, Finland. See page 92.*



**“We drew comics about our lives and held an exhibition in the college.”**

*Fathima Subair (20), participant in the grassroots comics course of CHAI, Kerala, India. See page 93.*



# The Impact of the Zero Project

## Results of a survey in the Zero Project Network

### Reported impact

by the Zero Project Network

# The impact of the Zero Project

## RESULTS OF A SURVEY IN THE ZERO PROJECT NETWORK

Confidence and self-esteem, connections and presentation at other conferences, recognition in the home country, better reflection and understanding, access to important stakeholders, media coverage, additional funding as well as expansion and improvement of service – a new survey explains the impact of the Zero Project for its network.

The Zero Project surveyed the 2019 Zero Project Awardees and participants of the 2019 Zero Project Conference about the impact that the Project has had on their work. We are pleased to report that the results of the survey demonstrate that, without doubt, the Zero Project is now playing an important global role in terms of promoting Innovative Practices and Policies, and consequently the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – the core mission of the Zero Project.

Still, most of the impact is indirect and difficult to measure. Consequently, in order to understand better the nature of the Project's impact and to create an evidence-base for its future development, we at the Essl Foundation have performed a first impact survey, the results of which will provide the basis for a broad four-year survey for the Zero Project Almanac 2017–2020 (to be published in early 2021, covering the project's second full four-year cycle of research).

For this pilot survey, 2019 Zero Project Awardees and Participants were asked about the potential impact that the Project has had on them. The survey was distributed in November and December 2019, and 57 recipients from 22 countries responded – the largest number coming from Austria (10), Israel (6), and the United States (5). The survey included seven questions designed to elicit a clearly defined result, which could only be answered with (1) Yes, (2) Maybe/A little, or (3) No. Three additional questions were more open-ended, asking for other impacts and for suggestions to improve the Zero Project.

In this section the results of the survey are described and analyzed. The order of the seven questions has

The average response for each question has been measured on a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 representing all "yes" responses and 3 representing all "no" responses.

been changed from the original survey such that they are now ranked in the order of their impact, according to the survey participants. The three open-ended questions regarding further impacts are covered at the end of this section.

### Confidence and self-esteem

*"The Zero Project/Zero Project Conference increased my/my organization's confidence and self-esteem, with tangible results."*

Yes: 30

Maybe/A little: 11

No: 16

Average: 1.72

It seems natural that taking part in an international conference at the United Nations Office in Vienna, with many respondents receiving an award, would result in growing confidence and self-esteem, and thus it is not surprising that this response was the strongest. The Zero Project survey also asked for tangible results, which most of the respondents described. Some examples (names of organizations are withheld):

*"The Zero Project and Conferences created opportunities for us to meet and learn from the experiences of so many organizations from around the world."*

*"It is great to know that what we do is in line with international standards and practices worldwide."*

### Connections and other conferences

*"Because of the Zero Project/Zero Project Conference, I/my organization was invited to other interesting conferences (exhibitions, meetings, etc.) abroad."*

Yes: 31

Maybe/A little: 5

No: 21

Average: 1.79

This kind of impact is mentioned almost as often as the increase in self-esteem. Still, the lack of funding for travel is a major constraint here, which was mentioned by several respondents, so that invitations were offered but could not be accepted.

Here are some examples and anecdotes:

*"We gained confidence in our own work and started seeking more opportunities for presenting it at other conferences. Our abstracts were accepted and we gave presentations at the Asia-Pacific Community Based Inclusive Development Conference in Mongolia and at the Global Business and Disability Network Conference in Geneva."*

*"We met (our new partner) and were impressed by their results. Now we started our club for people with psychosocial disabilities."*

*"I met great organizations in your conference last year, and I invited several to present at our own November summit. One of them moderated an impressive workshop."*

## Recognition in the home country

*"The Zero Project Award/Zero Project Conference helped us/me/my organization to raise our profile/recognition in our home country, with tangible results."*

Yes: 25

Maybe/A little: 13

No: 19

Average: 1.86

Receiving an international award or speaking at an international conference in a United Nations setting clearly has the potential to raise the recognition of an organization in its home country, and more than 40 per cent of the respondents agreed that the Zero Project provided them with this kind of value. Almost two third of respondents replied that it did so at least "a little," and a great deal of anecdotal evidence was provided, such as:

*"We are recognized by our government, particularly the Department of Transport, as being highly competent in the field of providing advice around accessibility. Through that recognition we have recently been able to form a professional body (African Association of Access Professionals)."*

*"All together it made our government adopt the programme and aim for the development of a disability-inclusive society."*

*"I am still getting responses from all around the world, from different cities . . . I am actively sharing information with India, Australia, Singapore, Thailand, and many countries in Africa."*

*"We were able to procure the help of fellow advocates and supporting organizations."*

*"We use our participation in the Zero Project Conference in our marketing material and also in our discussions with donors as evidence that we have international recognition."*

## Reflection and understanding

*"The Zero Project/Zero Project Conference supported me/my organization by providing a better understanding of our own work/role/model, with tangible results."*

Yes: 25

Maybe/A little: 12

No: 20

Average: 1.88

For many organizations, although doing excellent work, it is still difficult for them to understand fully their own model or to explain to others the distinctiveness of their model. The Zero Project, with its independent research and the global conference, provides this opportunity. Some 40 per cent of recipients agree that this is another important result of their participation in the Zero Project and Conference.

*"It was effective to compare our work with the experiences of other NGOs."*

*"We were able to learn about similar tools developed by other organizations, which helped us to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of our own model."*

*"It was great to see where we are compared to what others are doing. I was very excited by work being done in Israel and in India."*

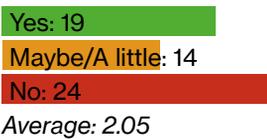
*"The support of Ashoka has helped in the presentation and development of our Theory of Change."*

NOTE: The previous comment was made from participants of the Zero Project–Impact Transfer, the accelerator programme of the Zero Project organized jointly with Ashoka since 2018 (see page 132 in Section 4).

“Information about our participation in the conference was disseminated via mass media and social networks.”

### Access to stakeholders

*“Because of the Zero Project/Zero Project Conference, I/my organization gained access to important stakeholders (funding agencies, corporations, universities, UN agencies, etc.) in my home country or country of implementation.”*



Starting from this question, the averages drop below 2.0, meaning that a majority of the respondents did not see this particular form of impact created for them. Nonetheless, fully a third of the respondents agree that they made meaningful contact with stakeholders that are important for them, and well over half agree that the Conference provided such contact at last somewhat.

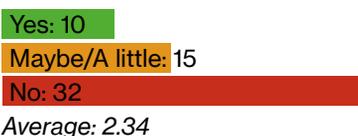
*“We are exploring a cooperation with (another Awardee of the Zero Project) to use their knowledge and experience on supporting parents with children with an intellectual disability.”*

*“Our participation has resulted in (contacts with) the European Union in Erasmus+ (joining a consortium that received funding from the EU) , lectureships at universities, etc.”*

*“Prominent universities now tap us for lectures and access audits.”*

### Media coverage

*“Because of the Zero Project/Zero Project Conference, I/my organization were covered by newspapers, TV, radio, social media, or other media.”*



Some of the awardees as well as speakers at the Zero Project Conference received national or regional

media coverage, or their award/presence at the Zero Project Conference was covered broadly by social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). The results here are surprisingly low, with only a handful of organizations acknowledging a substantial media or social media impact. This result shows there is room for improved impact, arguably with closer cooperation between the Zero Project and its many partners in sharing existing resources and channels.

*“Trailers about inclusive sports (on national television, reports in regional newspapers.”*

*“We leveraged the message and were pro-active.”*

*“Our organization was well covered in Internet news, social media sites, and TV.”*

### Access to financial resources

*“Because of the Zero Project/Zero Project Conference, I/my organization got access to new financial resources.”*



Fundraising is a major challenge for almost every organization, so it is not surprising that gaining access to new financing partners ranks lowest among these seven questions. Still, nine respondents suggest that the Zero Project was at least somewhat helpful in their gaining access to financial resources. And it is not only about access to new grants, as responses demonstrate, but also about re-affirming ties with existing funding partners or the ability to raise fees.

*“(A donor) will fund the start of a new portal in (our country of implementation). We are discussing a potential funding partnership with a foundation that was also present at the Zero Project Conference in 2018.”*

*“We secured a new donor for a two-year project with a total sum of €290,000.”*

*“We are able to charge significantly higher rates due to our raised profile.”*

*“I did not find any new funders or prospects at the conference, but I was thrilled that someone who is already a major funder of our work was involved, and I got to spend more time with her. She is fantastic!”*

*“We met a donor that is helping us to build a new centre and to increase our service capacities towards greater financial sustainability.”*

*“Our involvement in the Zero Project has helped further our relationship with (a major foundation) that is funding us, and other partners, to help create an international hub of knowledge on criminal justice and disability issues.”*

As noted above, the survey included three more general questions designed to illicit comments on other impacts and on possible improvements for future Conferences. These are as followed:

### Expansion and improvement of services

*“The number of beneficiaries/customers and/or the quality of service delivery has increased as a result of the Zero Project, because . . .”*

To be candid, it is difficult for the Zero Project to estimate the direct impact on the lives and rights of persons with disabilities given that almost all the work and impact are indirect. Sometimes not only one but several agents are between the work of the Zero Project and someone with a disability who experiences an improvement. And in almost every instance, these improvements cannot be solely attributed to the Zero Project.

That said, to keep the Zero Project in line with its mission to work for a world without barriers, and to continuously improve our methodology, measurements have to be identified and applied. This question was meant to be a pilot question in this respect. Answers, quite expectedly, referred mostly to indirect impacts, but some provided quite specific information about an impact. Most importantly, respondents referred to improvements in their strategy or concrete measures of service providing. One respondent expanded the programme because of growing self-esteem, and another described the impact of the Project on the members of his/her organization.

*“We better shaped our strategy and we introduced different interventions in terms of our services.”*

*“We have been awarded a number of government contracts recently, and surely the connections developed through the Zero Project helped somewhat.”*

*“We felt it important to make our tool multilingual and added new language options.”*

### Other impacts

*“In addition, I would like to mention another impact of the Zero Project (on us or on others)”*

There is one impact that seems to be shared by almost everyone who has attended the Conference: a sense of joining a network of people with inspiration, a network of peers, and a joint willingness to connect with each other. Participation in the Conference is by far the most important factor for creating this impact, as it is the underlying source of the materialization of togetherness and inspiration. Respondents who have not attended a Conference responded in a much more restrained manner.

*“Networking! The chance to meet colleagues from our own country and from many other countries is hugely beneficial to our organization and to my personal professional work.”*

*“We are able to charge significantly higher rates due to our raised profile.”*

*“First of all, the conference itself was inspirational! I have never been to such an accessible conference and I am trying to do the same in our conferences. And meeting all these people and their programmes, exchanging ideas, keeping in touch . . .”*

*“Networking! Best Practices all around the world, and the sense of belonging to ‘a family’.”*

*“I believe these connections are the heart of creating sustainable change at a local, state, national, and international or global level.”*

#### IMPACT THAT MEMBERS OF THE ZERO PROJECT HAVE REPORTED IN THE SURVEY

- confidence and self-esteem
- connections and presentation at other conferences
- recognition in the home country
- better reflection and understanding
- access to important stakeholders
- media coverage
- additional funding
- expansion and improvement of service



**SECTION 2:**

# **Innovative Policies 2020 on Inclusive Education**

## **Factsheets**

Factsheets from all 11 Innovative Policies 2020 ranked by country of implementation.

## **Life Stories**

Persons with disabilities or their peers explain how selected Innovative Policies have changed their life.

# A rights-based approach for young people to have a place in mainstream classrooms

## AUSTRALIA / QUEENSLAND, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

The Department of Education’s Inclusive Education Policy, implemented in 2018, is designed to ensure that students with disability in Queensland state schools receive the support they need to belong to the school community. It includes all state schools and educational settings, and obliges them to comply. Each school is allocated appropriate resources and funding, for example, to improve school accessibility and make reasonable educational adjustments. In 2019, 103,542 students with disabilities attended Queensland’s 1,241 state schools.

### Problems Targeted

The 2017 Queensland Disability Review found that while there was commitment and evidence of good practice among Queensland state schools, there was a need for further improvement to lift outcomes for students with disabilities.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The policy enables all children and young people across Queensland – from all social, cultural, community, and family backgrounds – to attend their local state school. Specifically, it provides four main areas of support: (1) to attend and participate in school, (2) to learn in a safe and supportive environment, (3) to achieve success academically and socially through reasonable adjustments, and (4) to access and participate in education. The policy is supported by a coordinated systematic approach, led by senior

“Mercedes loves going to school because she has many friends and receives a lot of support there.”

Renée, mother of a child with a disability

executives across central and regional offices. Individual implementation support is provided by regional inclusion coaches.

There are 1,241 state schools in Queensland with a total of 53,000 teachers and 19,000 support teachers, who are responsible for making reasonable adjustments for students with disability. In 2019, more than 103,500 students received reasonable adjustments as a result of their disability to enable them to access and participate in education on the same basis as their similar-aged peers. Moreover, various

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- In 2019, 95 per cent of students with disabilities attended mainstream state primary and secondary schools.
- In 2019, Queensland had 53,000 teachers and 19,000 support teachers.

therapists, nurses, and coaches provide further support. The policy is enforced through monitoring academic achievement, attendance, and absenteeism related to behaviour, and the number achieving a certificate of education.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The budget for 2019/2020 is US\$1.04 billion and the Department of Education allocates resources to state schools based on the level of reasonable adjustment needed to enable students with disability to access and participate.

Other Australian states have adopted elements of the policy; and the Department of Education believes that the policy could be easily replicated, since the policy itself and supportive materials are publicly available.



Children with and without disabilities are learning together in school.

✉ **Deborah Dunstone**, [Deborah.dunstone@ged.qld.gov.au](mailto:Deborah.dunstone@ged.qld.gov.au)  
<https://education.qld.gov.au/students/inclusive-education>

# A municipal-level pilot project towards continuous schooling of children with autism

## AUSTRIA / CITY OF VIENNA, BILDUNGSDIREKTION – CHILDREN WITH AUTISM PILOT-PROJECT

This pilot project of the City of Vienna is geared towards all compulsory education facilities in the country state to achieve a continuous and successful school process for children with autism. While the policy focuses on training teachers, there is also a strong emphasis on supporting and counselling parents. Individual solutions are created for each child, in accordance with the Basic Law on Equal Treatment and the Federal Disability Equality Act. Since 2015, the number of children with autism who complete compulsory schooling has increased from 50 per cent to 95 per cent.

### Problems Targeted

For a long time, children with autism were excluded from regular school attendance because the schools lacked competence in pedagogical diagnostics and professional handling.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The policy is an initiative of the Department of Education of the City of Vienna (Bildungsdirektion fuer Wien), implementing the Federal Disability Equality Act. Begun in 2015, children with autism were significantly involved in the project's design, and they were able to communicate their needs and wishes for a learning environment in which they could develop.

**“I learned how to behave in a way that others understand me better.”**

Christopher, a pupil with autism

The policy uses a holistic approach involving key actors both within institutions of education (e.g., teachers) and outside such institutions (e.g., families, therapeutic professionals). From kindergarten onwards, children are accompanied through all systemic transitions by trained teachers and by mentors who work in and outside class and who assist parents with out-of-school issues, such as therapies.

In school, there are special learning materials such as visual aids and cards with written tasks to facilitate communication, and mentors work with regular teachers on the best ways to facilitate the inclusion of children with autism.

Since the project's start in 2015, more than 800 children with autism have benefitted.

 **Elisabeth Jencio Stricker**  
[elisabeth.jencio-stricker@bildung-wien.gv.at](mailto:elisabeth.jencio-stricker@bildung-wien.gv.at)  
[www.wien.gv.at/bildung/stadtschulrat](http://www.wien.gv.at/bildung/stadtschulrat)



A variety of special learning materials, such as visual aids and cards as well as assistive technologies, are used in school.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The personnel cost of the mentors is spread over several organizations, including the Department of Education (DoE), Fonds Soziales Wien (a public funding agency and service provider), and the Austrian Autism Aid Organization (an NGO).

The DoE is currently working on three objectives for the future: the creation of a legal basis for the implementation of equalization of disadvantaged groups (which is currently not available to children with autism) or a binding decree by the Education Directorate for all types of schools; the further opening of secondary schools; and networking to enable education up to the age of 18.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- In 2019, 550 children with autism received support in primary school and 230 in secondary school.
- There are currently ten mentors supporting approximately 1,000 teachers in the Vienna school system.

# Building capacity to support the Inclusive Education of children and youth with autism

## CANADA / NEW BRUNSWICK, EECD – NEW BRUNSWICK PROVINCIAL AUTISM TRAINING

In 2012, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) introduced the New Brunswick Provincial Autism Training (PAT). PAT is a programme to support preschool and education personnel, families, and service providers in gaining the skills required to meet the needs of preschool-aged children, and students within an Inclusive Educational context. Through online learning and onsite coaching, professionals learn how to implement inclusive and evidence-based practices from preschool to high school. In 2019, 594 parents and 1,871 professionals as well as external partners completed the training.

### Problems Targeted

In order for children with autism to be successfully included within the classroom and school context, it is essential that personnel have the necessary knowledge and skills.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The PAT programme supports preschool agencies in meeting the standards for the delivery of intensive intervention services for preschool children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The programme is made up of three levels of training, with introductory training being delivered to educators, parents, and service

“The Provincial Autism Training framework has allowed schools to have access to competent professionals in the field of applied behaviour analysis.”

Donna Lagacy, Education Support Services Coordinator, Anglophone East School District

providers, and more advanced training for professionals designing and overseeing programmes for learners with autism. It is a government service delivered through the Department of EECD, which includes funding for educators to become Board Certified Behavior Analyst. In addition, the Department has contracted one agency that delivers services in each of the seven school districts for children who have not yet started school.

The introductory level of training, ASD & Behavioural Interventions, is an online training programme offered to preschool autism agency and education personnel as well as to the parents of children with autism.

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### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- All levels of training are offered in both French and English.
- Almost 300 education and preschool personnel have completed the advanced level of the training.

The second level, Learning for Teaching, is an advanced training programme designed for behaviour consultants, clinical supervisors (preschool agencies), and education support teachers. The third level, Continuing Education, helps those wishing to acquire new skills and knowledge of best practices, and offers professional learning opportunities through webinars and workshops.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

All funds are provided by EECD. Preschool autism agencies receive funding upon confirmation that their employees have completed the introductory online training. The annual budget for the PAT programme is \$940,000. The Department plans to expand the training offerings for families and day care centres, and to provide advanced training to educators to teach functional skills to further support learners in reaching their postsecondary goals.



Autism learning partnership.

# 700 early childhood centres across the whole country

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC / INAIPI – INTEGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE MODEL

In 2015, the National Institute for Comprehensive Early Childhood Care (INAIPI) launched the Integrated Early Childhood Care Model to introduce comprehensive early childhood care centres for children with and without disabilities aged 45 days to 5 years. The centres provide education, health, and nutrition services as well as assistance to families. An essential part of the model is the detection of disabilities and the assurance that children with disabilities receive support and equal opportunities. In 2019, there are almost 700 centres throughout the Dominican Republic, with some 11,000 employees.

### Problems Targeted

Many young children with disabilities in the Dominican Republic do not access early diagnosis and support due to a lack of awareness, lack of follow-up by parents and medical staff, a lack of specialists, and few facilities to provide them with care.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The programme model foresees six components for successful and effective early childhood intervention. During the initial education component, assistants and education coordinators observe the first signs of deviation from regular development and make the appropriate referral for adequate support. This includes therapeutic support and inclusion in classrooms that have special equipment to play and learn. The training and education of parents supports violence prevention and facilitates greater awareness and acceptance by families. Finally, health and nutrition requirements are adjusted to the needs of the young children.

“Once my grandson got into the programme, he began to receive therapies for free and got health insurance.”

Dania Payano, grandmother of a beneficiary

The children attend the early childhood care centres eight hours per day, Monday–Friday, for 11 months of the year. For children entering primary school there is a transition protocol whereby they are supervised for a year to ensure their support and inclusion.

Since 2015, more than 195,000 children have enrolled, and 1,144 children have received support.

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Children attend the early childhood care centres eight hours per day, Monday to Friday.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

INAIPI has an annual budget assigned by law as well as annual operating and purchasing plans. In 2019, the budget is \$97 million.

To enforce the policy, there are regular visits and checks from INAIPI staff to the centres and to parents. In addition, there are permanent awareness training campaigns for most of the 11,000 personnel to keep them up to date with the most recent developments in early childhood care.

INAIPI plans to improve the programme by maintaining and expanding agreements with other organizations to provide specialized care, and to further train staff to identify and support children with disabilities and their families.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Since 2015, more than 195,000 children have attended the centres, and 1,144 have received support.
- In 2019, there were 7,000 trained educators and therapists working in the centres.

# Supporting inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream preschools

## IRELAND / DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFFAIRS – AIM MODEL

Launched in 2016, the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), a government initiative for children with a disability aged two years and eight months to five years and eight months, supports access to early childhood care and education. The model helps preschool providers to deliver an inclusive experience via applications for support, equipment, and grants filled out by preschool providers and parents. AIM offers seven levels of progressive support, from universal to highly targeted, based on the needs of the child and the preschool. In 2018/19, some 8,500 children with disabilities are benefitting from AIM.

### Problems Targeted

Ireland introduced universal free preschool in 2010, an equivalent to kindergarten, but many children with disabilities could not access or participate meaningfully due to physical barriers and lack of resources and/or staff training.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

AIM is a nonbinding standard for early intervention service support. It is not embedded in legislation but works with the voluntary cooperation of early learning and care centres. The focus of AIM is on empowering preschools to build inclusive environments that understand the diverse needs of children, especially those with a disability.

“AIM is empowering providers to create nurturing and inclusive environments.”

Teresa Heeney, CEO, Early Childhood Ireland

Preschools can apply, in agreement with parents, for seven different support measures, such as mentoring from a team of qualified access and inclusion specialists, support equipment and alteration grants, targeted therapy services, plus additional personnel in the classroom.

The central government provides funding to government agencies to facilitate programme support. AIM also offers an early learning and care setting self-audit tool for preschools to help them determine their support needs. In addition to mainstream settings, preschool services are also offered in special preschools and early intervention classes that exclusively serve children with disabilities.



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<http://aim.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/AIM-Policy.pdf>

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- In 2019, 2,861 preschools are receiving support from the programme.

In 2018, after two years of AIM, the proportion of children with disabilities participating in mainstream education had risen from 45 per cent to 65 per cent. Additionally, 78 per cent of parents reported their child had benefited from AIM and that it had made the culture at their preschool more inclusive. In the 2018/19 academic year, 8,500 children received AIM support.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The 2019 AIM budget was €35 million and is increased to €43 million in 2020. Spending is monitored by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

To enforce the model, compliance checks on the use of funds are being introduced from 2019 onwards, and a comprehensive evaluation of AIM will start in early 2020. Subject to the evaluation findings, First 5 (the 2018–2028 national strategy for babies, young children, and families) has committed to considering the extension of AIM.



Some important elements of the AIM model.

# Supported education services for people with serious mental health issues

## ISRAEL / MINISTRY OF HEALTH – SES PROGRAMME

In 2010, the Israeli Ministry of Health began to support education services for persons with severe mental health issues aged 18 to 55. The SES programme, as it is known, is part of the Ministry's rehabilitation package and is operated by various service providers and universities. Following the formation of a personal rehabilitation plan, professional coordinators assist each individual with academic, emotional, and social challenges during their studies. The policy promotes life-long learning from the completion of secondary education to higher education. In 2018, 2,400 people participated in the SES programme.

### Problems Targeted

Research shows that most serious mental health issues are only discovered between the ages of 18–24.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

In 2000, Israel passed a rehabilitation act targeted at persons with mental health. This was the foundation of various mental health laws, such as the "Supported education policy for adult people with mental health issues in the community."

Specifically, the law envisions a four-part programme. First, higher education mentoring is geared towards students who are already in higher education, and this part is attended by about 220 persons each year. Second, supplementary education services provide coursework for improving Hebrew language skills and basic computer knowledge, and thus enable scholars to complete their education. This part of the programme has about 1,500 students each year.

**"The mentoring gives me more freedom and order in my mental world."**

### Student of supported education programme

The third part is a preparation course for higher education, attended by about 350 persons each year. Finally, the fourth part is designed to integrate the individual into his or her community and to reduce the digital divide.

Service standards are monitored on a monthly basis, and each service recipient is required to fill out a questionnaire to evaluate outcome measures once a year. The data are entered into a Quality Basket Model, which is aimed at incentivizing quality from service providers.



A training session for academic mentors from all institutions.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The programme cost \$3.7 million per year and is budgeted with a 10 per cent annual increase. The MoH is cooperating with various service providers such as Nathan, Eshnav, and Macshava as well as Tel Aviv University, Hebrew University, and Haifa University to implement the programme.

In the short term, the MoH intends to increase the annual number of service recipients and to create better access to all academic frameworks. Long-term goals include strengthening the interface between employment and education and promoting the inclusion of programme graduates in the open labour market.

JDC Israel, the National Insurance Institute, and the Ministry of Social Affairs are currently building similar projects for other disabilities.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2010

- The number of programme participants has grown from 1,400 in 2014 to more than 2,400 in 2019.
- More than half of all participants attend the supplementary education services.

# A new set of provisions for the further implementation of Inclusive Education

ITALY / MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – LAW 107/2015 AND DECREE 66/2017

The Italian Ministry of Education, Universities, and Research (MIUR) has a long history of supporting Inclusive Education, with inclusive schools being introduced as early as 1977. More recently, Law 107/2015 came into force, further reforming the Italian school system. The law has eight legislative decrees to improve the system, of which Decree n. 66/2017 aims to improve initial and in-service teacher training and to ensure better coordination among teachers, service providers, and families. As a result of the law, there is a wide range of new support measures for Inclusive Education.

## Problems Targeted

At a 2015 students' hearing on inclusion organized by the MIUR, students asked for several improvements to the education system.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The Good School Reform Act (Law 107/2015), which initiated an overall reform of the Italian school system and was implemented in 2017, consists of eight decrees, including Decree 66, which puts the focus on the school environment and enhances individual education plans (IEP) for pupils aimed at identifying barriers and facilitators in school life. Parents submit information about their children, so schools can provide all supports needed. In addition, families are eligible for other help measures, including financial

**“We ask politicians to firmly commit themselves to remove all barriers that hinder our self-achievement and pursue our participation, empowerment, and citizenship.”**

A student during a 2015 hearing on inclusion

support, according to the national health plan.

In every school there is a working group for inclusion (teacher, support teachers, administrative staff). Decree 66 has a special focus on monitoring and evaluation of school inclusiveness, realisation of an inclusive curriculum, specific training for teaching and non-teaching staff in inclusive strategies, territorial support centres, which create networks and spread knowledge and ICT for Inclusive Education.

Furthermore, the law provides for more support teachers who are assigned to classes where there

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- In 2019, there were nearly 260,000 children with disabilities in the Italian school system.
- In 2019, Italy had 150,609 support teachers, an increase of more than 35,000 since 2017.

are children with disabilities. They are part of the team of class teachers, and they participate in all planning and assessment activities and decisions.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The 2015 Stability Law created a specific fund to finance the school reform. In 2015, €1 billion was invested, rising to €3 billion a year since 2016. In 2019, Decree 66 was amended after a year of experimentation. It will increase its focus on the evaluation of school inclusiveness, school staff training, providing schools with Inclusive Educational tools, empower inclusion groups at all territorial levels and improve the accessibility of school buildings.



In recognition of the importance of Inclusive Education policies, Italian President Sergio Mattarella meets people with disabilities.

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# Inclusive Education policy in Namibia

## NAMIBIA / MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – SECTOR POLICY ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In 2013, the Namibian Ministry of Education introduced the Sector Policy on Inclusive Education to support all children to learn and participate fully in the education system. The policy is mandatory for all government bodies and all subsidized institutions responsible for education, from early childhood to the post-secondary level. Setting out eight guiding principles of implementation, the policy foresees teacher training and the support of assistant teachers in the classroom to facilitate inclusion. In 2019, 2,328 children with disabilities directly benefitted from the policy.

### Problems Targeted

Children with disabilities in Namibia often face discrimination in schools and do not have full access to education. In addition, many have to travel great distances to accessible schools, especially in rural areas.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Before the policy was established, the Ministry of Education (MoE) carried out a campaign to identify the needs of all learners in schools and in the community. After consultations with parents, community leaders, teachers, disability organizations, and NGOs, an Inclusive Education policy was developed. It is geared not only towards children with disabilities but also includes all vulnerable children and children from disadvantaged communities.

**“The basic pre-vocational course is exciting, as it has given me hope that I will get a job in the future in the open labour market.”**

**Malakia Auguste, a learner from the School for Visual Impairment**

The policy has eight guiding principles, which range from the setting of legal frameworks to awareness raising and the support to invest in more resources, both in infrastructure and staff.

Schools apply directly for support, for example, for infrastructure adaptations or accessible learning materials. Other measures concern a curricular review to reflect the diversity of needs of all learners, the development of teacher education and training for support staff, and a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy.

In 2019, inclusive schools have been established in seven of Namibia's 14 regions. In addition, enrolment of children with disabilities has increased, special schools have been transformed into resource

Many special schools are being transformed to prepare students for mainstream schools.



schools for mainstream schools, and Inclusive Education officers have been appointed to support schools.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Ministry of Education funds the policy at a total of \$170,000 per year, with support from UN agencies and NGOs that carry out the funded projects. All schools receive funds directly, depending on their number of learners.

The policy is enforced and monitored through regular questionnaires and school visits. The MoE wants to extend access to quality education further, especially for educationally marginalized learners, and plans to increase its support to early childhood development.

The MoE believes that the policy can be replicated in different environments by adopting the eight guiding principles to local requirements.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- Since 2013, 2,233 teachers in primary and secondary schools have been trained.
- In 2019, seven of the country's 14 regions have inclusive schools.

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# A countrywide policy framework for lifelong inclusive learning

## NEPAL / MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY 2016

The Inclusive Education Policy of 2016 targets the right to lifelong education in one's own community in a non-discriminative environment by respecting cultural, class, caste, and geographical diversities from preschool to higher education. The policy consists of 43 working policies, 17 strategies, and 13 guiding principles, and is implemented by programme committees at the local and provincial level, as well as by NGOs under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. The policy foresees specific teacher training; accessible ICT as an integral part of Inclusive Education; and the early assessment of physical, mental, sensory, and intellectual functions of children.

### Problems Targeted

In Nepal tens of thousands of children with disabilities – particularly children with intellectual disabilities, autism, or Down Syndrome, or who are deaf or blind – remain out of school.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

After Nepal ratified the CRPD in 2010, local DPOs started to work on an Inclusive Education policy and formed a draft taskforce. The draft policy was opened for feedback from concerned stakeholders, and a website was provided whereby disability leaders could give comments. These recommendations were then taken into consideration in the formulation of an Inclusive Education Policy.

The policy has been adopted by the Federal Government and is mandatory across the country, but it does not have the status of law. There is flexibility in terms of the adoption of specific curriculum and school implementation at the province level based on local circumstances.

In order to increase school participation there are continuous assessments of children with disabilities, the promotion and distribution of accessible ICT, and the implementation of accessibility measures in all school infrastructures.

Other accessibility priorities concern curricula and textbooks. In 2019, there are 380 resource classes, 32 special schools, and 22 integrated schools for the education of the deaf, children with visual impairments, and children with intellectual disabilities.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The 2019 programme budget is \$10 million. The Ministry has allocated grants for the operation of each of



Teaching in one of the inclusive schools.

the 380 resource classes as a preparatory class for mainstreaming children with disabilities across the country.

The Ministry estimates that further funding is needed to provide accessible teaching and learning materials as well as reading devices. In the immediate future, investments are targeted at ensuring that the infrastructure and environment of all schools are accessible.

Another focus is to promote disability-friendly, girl-friendly, and child-friendly attitudes among students, teachers, and communities. Since the policy has already been successfully implemented, there is strong interest from other countries to replicate it.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- In 2017, there were 64,660 children with disabilities, roughly 1 per cent of all children attending school.
- In 2019, there are 22 integrated and 32 special schools for children with disabilities.

# A national Inclusive Education policy promoting respect and lifelong learning

## SAMOA / MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

In 2014, Samoa's Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture (MESC) introduced the Inclusive Education Policy for Students Living with Disability, which regulates access to basic learning and recognizes diversity, culture, respect, and acceptance. The policy targets inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. The MESC is the main monitoring agent for the policy. The National Inclusive Education Policy Implementation Plan guides collaborative implementation by the MESC and NGOs. .

### Problems Targeted

Lack of school attendance by young people with disabilities in Samoa can be due to community attitudes such as shame, superstition, and lack of understanding.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

With help from the Australian Government, the MESC introduced a national disability policy, which consists of regulations regarding early childhood education, national safe schools, Inclusive Education for students with disabilities (IEP), and minimum service standards for primary and secondary schools.

“My daughter is deaf and attends a mainstream classroom. Our family learned sign language so that she can communicate with us and be included in our decision-making.”

Mother of a deaf student

IEP relates to all children and students with disabilities from birth to 21 years, and also includes specific group of vulnerable students. The government itself is implementing the policy and has created a five-year Educational Sector Plan, which involves several ministries and NGOs that assist with the implementation and monitoring.

The policy applies a holistic approach, covering areas such as school access, attitudes and values, accessible learning materials, teacher training, and support services. In addition to qualified personnel in Samoa, technical advisors from Australia and New Zealand provide the required expertise.

While the policy implementation is still in its early stages, between 2014 and 2019 the number of stu-

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In 2019, 44 per cent of children with disabilities attended school.
- Currently, there are nearly 64,000 children in the Samoan school system (public & private).

dents with disabilities attending mainstream schools increased from 133 to 469.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Government of Samoa provides funding for students with disabilities in all schools through the One Government Grant. The Government of Australia funds Inclusive Education service providers and special schools.

To monitor implementation, there is a funding agreement between the Government of Samoa and NGOs specifying how the funds are to be spent, and the NGOs are required to submit work plans and quarterly reviews to the MESC.

The MESC intends to implement a capacity-development plan for principals, teachers, and support personnel, and to roll out technical vocational and early childhood education training by 2024.



Hands-on activities in the the classroom.



Jennifer Seipua Afutiti Pemila

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# Department testing innovative approaches towards more inclusive careers for students

## UNITED STATES / US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR – PATHWAYS TO CAREERS PROGRAMME

In 2014, grants were given by the US Department of Labor (Office of Disability Employment Policy) to community colleges in the states of New York and Tennessee to test the Pathways to Careers (PTC) model. PTC aims to increase retention, academic success, and career development for young people with disabilities. Approaches include improving campus accessibility, supporting career planning, and providing work-based learning for students with disabilities. Since 2014, 425 students with disabilities have taken part in the two Pathways models.

### Problems Targeted

In the United States, young adults with disabilities lag behind their peers in terms of academic completion rates. Postsecondary programmes are not well equipped to address their success.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The goal of the Pathways effort is to increase the capacity of community colleges to provide inclusive integrated education and career development and training services for young adults with disabilities. The objectives are to (1) increase credential and job attainment of students with disabilities, (2) increase their job placement, and (3) decrease the wage-earning differential between students with and without disabilities.

“Teachers and staff can usually find out who I need to talk to, so I get the answers I need.”

Joel, Mechanical Engineering student

The Pathways models support students with a variety of disabilities to access campus services, use accommodations, and study towards their academic and career goals. Collaboration between career and disability services on the one hand and staff development in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) on the other is helping to create inclusive campus environments.

The programme has already tested various models and proven them successful, such as new models for training and certification in UDL, student learning contracts with companies, internships and summer programmes, and quality online career assessment to facilitate the cooperation between students and future employers.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In 2018 and 2019, the three-year graduation rates of Pathways students were on par with those of students without disabilities.
- More than 450 members of faculty and staff have been trained in Universal Design for Learning.

Since the programme's launch in 2014, there has been a 60 per cent increase in annual student enrolment.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Pathways programme has a yearly budget of \$1 million, provided by the Department of Labor, which ends in June 2020. Future funding depends on the integration of disability services, academics, and career services departments at the colleges.

PTC has a comprehensive monitoring process, which includes monthly calls, quarterly reporting, and annual compliance site visits. There is concrete interest to replicate the model, notably from the North Carolina Community College System, which seeks to examine its career development efforts and to train staff in its 58 community college campuses.



A certified expert in Universal Design.

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# Life Stories from Austria and the Dominican Republic

## THE STORY OF CRISTIAN SEVERINO (5), A USER OF AN EARLY-CHILDHOOD CENTRE

**“The facilities create and adapt the programme, the space, and the attention provided.”**

*Dominican Republic*

Cristian is a child with cerebral palsy. Before Cristian entered the programme of the Instituto Nacional de Atención Integral a la Primera Infancia (National Institute for Early Childhood Care – INAIPI), serving under-five children and their families, he did not have a birth certificate, was neglected by his parents, and did not have access to care facilities or contact with other children.

When Cristian first entered the programme he received a birth certificate, managed by the Birth Registry Department at INAIPI, and because of that he now also has health insurance. Cristian now receives support from the Multidisciplinary Department, which creates, trains, supervises, and manages access to the various services provided by other institutions, such as health, nutrition, dentistry, legal services, emotional health, child protection, early stimulation, education, etc. Importantly, because INAIPI has many centres throughout the country, Cristian could easily get transferred from one centre to another if his family were to move to a different community.

**i** See also “*INAIPI – Integrated Early Childhood Care Model*,” page 37.

## THE STORY OF CHRISTOPHER (16), A HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENT WITH AUTISM

**“We used pictures so I could better understand the rules.”**

*Vienna, Austria*

The start to Christopher’s school career was not particularly successful. He felt sad, misunderstood by teachers, and avoided every challenge or game by becoming defensive or running away.

After being diagnosed with autism, things started to improve when his teachers got support from the Kompetenzzentrum für SchülerInnen im Autismus-Spektrum, an institution of the City School Council for Vienna. “First, I worked alone with Sabrina, my mentor, since my classroom was much too noisy and chaotic,” recalled Christopher. Later, a daily agenda was developed, which proved particularly successful in getting tasks done and in helping Christopher to follow rules. “Those rules, we always used pictures to discuss them, and I even drew them myself to fully understand them,” the young student explained. Each day other children were invited to learn and play together, so Christopher learned to share, switch roles in games, and how to ask for something in a polite way. Reading, writing, and calculating also entered slowly into the routine.

After one year Christopher changed to another class, and in 2019 he moved to a gymnasiale Oberstufe (an Austrian high school), where he will get his degree in four years. He still has a contact person in school, but most of the time he manages his daily routine completely on his own.

**i** See also “*Children with autism pilot project*,” page 35.



# Innovative Practices 2020

## on Inclusive Education

### **Factsheets**

Factsheets of all Innovative Practices 2020 ranked by country of implementation.

### **Life Stories**

More than 20 personal stories from users and beneficiaries of the Innovative Practices 2020.

# A video book library of children's stories read in sign language

## ARGENTINA / CANALES – VIDEOBOOKS

Canales – a Buenos Aires-based NGO that supports access to education for deaf children – has created Videolibros enseñás, the first virtual video library of Spanish-language children's literature available in several sign languages. The videos are accompanied by voice-over so that deaf children can read stories with their hearing parents or with teachers and peers in the classroom even if they do not know sign language. Since its creation in 2011, Canales has been used on average more than 2,000 times every month.

### Problems Targeted

More than 90 per cent of deaf children in Argentina have hearing parents and teachers who cannot communicate in sign language. Further, 80 per cent of these children are at risk of becoming functionally illiterate in adulthood because they have limited access to literature in their native language.

“They were voiceless, invisible, excluded deaf children who did not know traditional children's stories. Today, these children enjoy video books, books read in sign language.”

Silvana Veinberg, Executive Director, Canales

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Videolibros enSeñas is a free online library of 'video books' – videos in which stories are presented in sign language. Every video book in the library presents a Spanish-language story in three formats: through written text and illustrations, a presenter signing the text in one of the available sign languages, and a voice-over of the text. This combination allows deaf children to be exposed to literature while sharing the reading experience with hearing parents, who in turn also become more familiar with sign language. The project started in 2011 with 15 video books in Argentine Sign Language, and by 2019 the number had quadrupled. Today, the library also includes stories in Uruguayan and Paraguayan sign language. Each video book is produced by a team of deaf and hearing persons.

Most users are based in Argentina, but the library has been accessed by users in another 40 countries.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2011

- On average, the virtual library receives 2,000 unique visits per month.
- Books are presented in three sign languages as well as in written and spoken Spanish.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Some video books are funded by UNICEF and others through company and school sponsorships, as well as donations from the Government of Argentina and international cooperation partners. In 2016, Canales created a video book production protocol, which any individual or organization can use to make similar video books. Videolibros enSeñas has been included as a resource for teachers in the national Connect Equality programme of Argentina's Ministry of Education and is being used by UNICEF and Canales as a model for improving deaf children's access to literature internationally. Canales plans to expand its video book library, to further streamline its production process to reduce the time and cost of making a video book, and to train local teams and sign language interpreters in other countries (Nicaragua and Mexico initially) to produce video books in other sign languages.



The book is told in sign-language and voice-over text so that the deaf child can follow the story and share it with parents, grandparents, or teachers, even if they do not know sign language.

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# Supporting smooth and inclusive transitions from preschool to primary school

## ARMENIA / BRIDGE OF HOPE – SMILE FOR CHILDREN PROGRAMME

Bridge of Hope is an Armenian NGO supporting rights and inclusion for young people with disabilities in the Yerevan and Tavush provinces. Bridge of Hope's SMILE for Children programme creates an inclusive learning environment and facilitates a smooth transition from preschool to primary school for children with disabilities. The programme includes the training of kindergarten teachers in inclusive learning methods and educating parents on the benefits of inclusion. As of 2019, 145 children with disabilities have been supported across 23 kindergartens.

### Problems Targeted

Poor inclusion and a difficult transition from preschool to primary school can have long-term effects on the inclusion and participation of children with disabilities.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

SMILE for Children follows a multi-method approach to increase inclusion in preschool and to ensure that children with disabilities, their parents, and their teachers all experience a smooth transition to primary school. It offers capacity-building training for teachers on Inclusive Education, including child-centred teaching and how to develop a supportive learning environment. It also includes monthly mentoring visits to

**“My son now has a positive relationship with teachers and classmates, and he feels positive about himself as a learner.”**

Mother of a 6-year-old boy

support the implementation of the new practices. All parents are educated about the benefits of inclusion, and parents of children with disabilities are supported to be active participants in their children's education. Furthermore, SMILE encourages close and transparent cooperation between teachers and parents. Seven kindergartens and seven primary schools in Yerevan province and 16 kindergartens and 21 primary schools in Tavush province have been supported. In addition, four case studies were conducted, which showed improved enthusiasm among parents and embracement of the inclusive practices by teachers.

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Inclusive preschool education at work in a kindergarten in the Berd region.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

At the local level, the organization aims to support all kindergartens in Tavush province, and to support the chair of Preschool Education at the Pedagogical University in Yerevan to incorporate inclusive pedagogy and school-to-school transition in all the university's preschool courses. Bridge of Hope has also developed a “Guide to Support Smooth Transition from Preschool Institutions to Primary School,” which can assist in its replication in other regions.

Project costs between 2016 and 2019 totalled €283,000, with €213,000 coming from the Open Society Foundation and the remaining covered by Bridge of Hope.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- 145 children with disabilities have been supported in 23 kindergartens.
- 234 preschool and primary school teachers have participated in training or other capacity-building activities.

# University inclusion programme for persons with intellectual disabilities

AUSTRALIA / CENTRE FOR DISABILITY STUDIES – UNI 2 BEYOND

Uni 2 beyond is a social inclusion initiative of the Centre for Disability Studies (CDS), which enables individuals with intellectual disabilities to experience university life at the University of Sydney and to undertake a paid internship while receiving peer support and career advice. As of 2019, 43 persons with intellectual disabilities have participated in the initiative.

## Problems Targeted

Persons with intellectual disabilities are at risk of social exclusion, especially in higher education settings, due to attitudinal barriers and a lack of opportunities for inclusion and participation.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Participants in Uni 2 beyond audit classes at the University of Sydney for two years. They attend lectures and tutorials with the support of peer mentors, and have the opportunity to join university clubs to form new social relationships. Participants also gain work

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- The programme involves some 150 mentors and 100+ lecturers from eight out of nine faculties at the University of Sydney.
- Since 2017, eight internships have been completed by Uni 2 beyond participants at six businesses.

“The students stand a mile higher than before they attended Uni 2 beyond. They network with other university students, and no longer feel different.”

Patricia O'Brien, Director, Centre for Disability Studies

experience in their chosen field by completing a paid internship, during which they receive support from a workplace mentor and have access to personalized career advice. The initiative was piloted in 2012 with five students. As of 2019, CDS has supported 43 persons with intellectual disabilities through Uni 2 beyond, with the involvement of approximately 150 mentors and over 100 lecturers. Since 2017, eight internships have been successfully completed. As a result of Uni 2 beyond, participants report feeling more independent, confident, job-ready, and socially connected. University lecturers state that the initiative promotes diversity, respect, and inclusion, and enriches the learning experience of all students.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

It costs around \$21,000 for one student to participate

in Uni 2 beyond, undertake an internship, and receive career advice. These costs are mainly covered by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which provides funding directly to individuals with disabilities for support and services, and a grant from the Australian Government (lasting until 2021). CDS will increase the number of new students from ten every two years to ten every year, thereby reaching the maximum capacity.

The Centre will also work with other universities in Australia and internationally to replicate the initiative. CDS anticipates that when the NDIS is fully rolled out across Australia in 2020, it will be easier to replicate the practice since students will be able to secure funding for their participation in Uni 2 beyond on an individual basis.



Kylie and her peer monitor, Olivia, join university clubs and form new social relationships.

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# Early-learning technology for children who are blind or visually impaired

## AUSTRALIA / SONOKIDS – BALLYLAND

Sonokids is an Australian social enterprise that produces Ballyland, a range of gamified educational software programmes and apps for children who are blind or visually impaired. The apps support children to acquire foundational (assistive) technology skills and to practice their orientation, spatial awareness, memory, and listening. Since its launch in 2013, an estimated 50,000 children have used the Ballyland suite of educational apps.

### Problems Targeted

Young students who are blind or visually impaired are often disadvantaged in education. In addition, using (assistive) technology often requires special skills.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The Ballyland range of software programmes and iPad apps allows children who are blind or visually impaired to acquire foundational (assistive) technology skills that enable them to use computers and mobile devices from the age of four. The use of images, voice-overs, audio effects, stories, and songs creates a barrier-free and inclusive learning environment. Blind or visually impaired teachers and students are involved throughout the app development process

**“As a teacher, I can not thank Sonokids enough for what they have done so far to allow children with and without a visual impairment to play and learn together.”**

Prof. Boguslaw Marek, Centre for Inclusion of Students with Special Needs

as design consultants and for beta testing, feedback, and voice-overs.

In 2013, Sonokids launched its first Ballyland early keyboarding software, followed by a series of apps to introduce children to touch screen interaction in the years thereafter (in particular Voice-over, the built-in screen reader on iOS devices). In 2018 and 2019, Sonokids released three more apps to teach computational thinking and coding and to introduce tactile learning tools.

All Ballyland apps are available in English (two having been translated into Spanish and Dutch) and have reached thousands of students at home and



A range of software programmes and iPad apps supports children from the age of 4 onwards.

through schools across Australia, Canada, Europe, New Zealand, and the United States.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Sonokids Australia is a social enterprise financed by sales, but more importantly by grants and other types of funding. The sales price of apps is kept intentionally low. Going forward, the company will continue to expand the range of apps and will design them for use on platforms other than iOS. Sonokids also plans to produce apps in additional languages, introduce the functionality of connecting the apps to mainstream educational programmes, and create an animated Ballyland TV series. The vision of Sonokids is to keep expanding the Ballyland range of educational apps as an accessible learning platform.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- Currently there are nine English-language apps for iOS.
- The Ballyland range of products has been used by an estimated 50,000 children at home and in school.



Phia Damsma

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# Free online training for sighted people to learn Unified English Braille Code

AUSTRALIA / ROYAL INSTITUTE FOR DEAF AND BLIND CHILDREN – UEB ONLINE

The Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC) is Australia's largest non-governmental provider of education, therapy, and cochlea implant services for children and adults with vision or hearing loss. RIDBC created UEB Online, a free and fully accessible online course targeting sighted people who want to learn Unified English Braille Code, such as educators, families, allied health professionals, education administrators, and policy makers. The course includes modules on literacy and mathematics.

## Problems Targeted

Blind or visual impaired students have difficulty learning literacy or math if teachers, families, and support professionals do not understand Braille or how to modify print-based activities.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

UEB Online, which was developed and tested with the support of blind RIDBC employees, allows anyone who is interested in using Braille as a means of accessing information and communication to learn Unified English Braille Code online, for free and at their own pace. The learning platform is accessible

“I have gained many skills and teach students and other teachers how to write and read it. I am now taking the RIDBC UEB course over the Internet and it is so great!”

Banga, a teacher of the vision impaired

for a broad range of needs – being available in visual access mode, high contrast mode, and non-visual access mode (for use with a screen reader) – and requires only an Internet connection and a computer to access. UEB Online was first launched in 2014, offering two modules on Braille literacy. In 2019, RIDBC released an introductory mathematics module focused on primary school-level mathematics. A certificate is issued when all exercise-based lessons in a module have been completed. As of 2019, UEB Online has currently more than 15,000 users from 174 countries. Six per cent of UEB Online subscribers use the platform through its non-visual access mode.

## FACTS & FIGURES

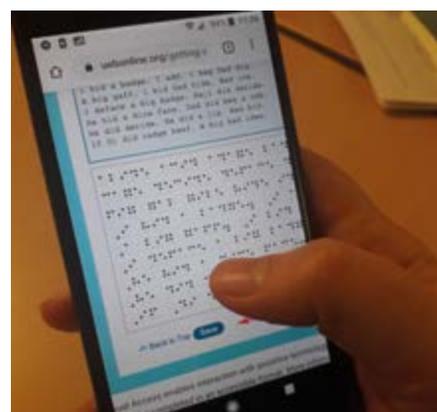
Start: 2014

- As of 2019, UEB Online had more than 15,000 users.
- Current modules focus on literacy and mathematics, and more will be added.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

UEB Online is funded entirely through donations from philanthropic organizations. The cost of developing the literacy modules was \$34,000, and the cost of creating the mathematics modules was \$71,000. In addition to its primary mathematics module, UEB Online will launch modules on advanced mathematics and extension mathematics (corresponding to the junior and senior years of secondary schooling) in the second half of 2019.

RIDBC also plans to develop additional UEB Online modules on science, engineering, and technology, and to collaborate with the World Braille Council and countries that wish to develop online Braille training programmes in other languages. Moreover, RIDBC plans to create video resources for emergent Braille literacy and the use of Braille writing equipment.



The online tool allows anyone around the world to learn Unified English Braille Code for free.

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# An inclusive post-secondary programme for students with intellectual disabilities

## AUSTRIA / PÄDAGOGISCHE HOCHSCHULE SALZBURG – BLUE UNIVERSITY PROGRAMME

The Pädagogische Hochschule Salzburg is a university for pedagogical professions that has developed the BLuE University Programme. This inclusive eight-semester programme allows students with intellectual disabilities to create and study a personalized curriculum alongside teacher-training students who play the role of tutors. Started in 2017, the programme enrolls two students with intellectual disabilities per academic year, each of whom works with four to five teacher trainees.

### Problems Targeted

People with intellectual disabilities have limited access to tertiary education in Austria, and where courses exist in other countries, they are not always inclusive.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Students undertaking teacher-training courses act as tutors to support students with intellectual disabilities to select and undertake three to four courses per semester from the university's primary teacher programme. The students with intellectual disabilities receive a BLuE certificate upon completion of the course, which is recognized by the Austrian Chamber of Commerce and the Arbeitsmarktservice (the



Students with their tutors in the cafeteria of the university.

**“I didn't know how cool it is to be a student.”**

### A BLuE student

national employment support agency). The teacher-training students receive credits towards their studies. The programme was developed in cooperation with Western Carolina University, located in the US state of North Carolina. Students with and without disabilities from that programme visited Salzburg to support the programme's development. Additionally, BLuE students with and without disabilities take part in ongoing meetings to assist further development of the BLuE course. The programme began with the intake of two students with intellectual disabilities in 2017/18, with an additional two joining each year. By 2021 the programme will have reached its maximum capacity of eight students. The programme has led to the increased self-esteem, social skills, and independence of those involved.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The programme is organized as part of regular teacher-training at the Pädagogische Hochschule Salzburg without the need for additional funding. However, funding is being sought from public institutions to optimize and expand the programme. This low-cost model would allow easy replication at similar institutions. The university is aiming to replicate the practice at other academic institutions across Europe through formalized partnerships, as well as to improve the student support system by working with students, professors, and external partners.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- As of academic year 2018/19, four students were enrolled in the programme.
- Pädagogische Hochschule Salzburg plans for a total of eight students to be enrolled at any time from 2021 onwards.



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# Multi-stakeholder groups developing accessibility solutions in museums

AUSTRIA / KHM-MUSEUMSVERBAND AND OTHERS – ARCHES

Accessible Resources for Cultural Heritage EcoSystems (ARCHES) is a three-year, EU-funded project that brings together 12 European partners from the fields of culture, technology, and academia, as well as people with disabilities. The programme develops, tests, and implements solutions for improving museum accessibility so that people with various disabilities can experience museums independently. Notable innovations include tactile art and a soon-to-be-released smartphone app to aid museum navigation. Between September 2016 and November 2019, 166 workshops were held to identify and design innovations.

## Problems Targeted

Attending museums for learning and culture can be difficult for people who are blind or deaf, or for people with learning difficulties, due to barriers to navigation and to understanding exhibits.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

ARCHES brings together people with disabilities, technology companies, universities, and museums to design and implement solutions to improve access to culture. Participative workshops consisting of around 20 people with a variety of disabilities create, discuss, test, and improve solutions for enhancing museum accessibility, with an initial focus on six museums in London, Madrid, Oviedo (Spain), and Vienna.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- 166 participative workshops have been hosted by six museums.
- An average of 20 people have participated per museum in each workshop.

“True inclusion means working hard and creatively. That’s what I learned from being part of the ARCHES workshops.”

Sabine Gruber, workshop participant

Innovations include tactile reliefs of museum artwork for people with visual impairments, with an individual relief created at each of the six participating museums. Participants with various disabilities select which piece of artwork they want to work with and test all phases of development.

Another innovation is an app to aid independent navigation and learning about exhibits within the museums, which will be released on Android and iOS in 2020. In addition, the project has created a publicly available how-to guide on inclusive museum activities entitled “Towards a participatory museum.”

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

ARCHES is funded by the European research and innovation programme HORIZON 2020 (project no. 693229). Further development and implementation of new measures will be covered by participating museums, if the project is not extended.

The project has been designed such that it can be easily implemented in other museums and languages. Training sessions on how to use the app and relief will take place in other EU countries, including France, Italy, and Germany. In addition, the project has led to participating museums to consider other accessibility measures. For example, the Kunsthistorisches Museum offers regular barrier-free guided tours since October 2019.



Participants in the ARCHES project engaged in discussions.

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# Holistic support system from early childhood to vocational training

## BANGLADESH / DISABLED REHABILITATION & RESEARCH ASSOCIATION – LEARN FOR LIFE

The Disabled Rehabilitation & Research Association (DRRA) is one of the largest NGOs working in the field of disabilities in Bangladesh, operating in 25 districts. The Learn for Life programme started in 1998 and offers a holistic model for supporting children with a variety of disabilities to achieve more in school. The programme provides learning materials, assistive materials, financial support, and training for teachers, and has supported around 8,000 children in furthering their education.

### Problems Targeted

Disability law is in place to support inclusive schooling in Bangladesh, but this does not always mean schools are sufficiently set up to provide an inclusive learning experience.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Learn for Life provides a range of support mechanisms to allow children with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities and cerebral palsy, to advance in the education system.

The project supports young people at all stages of schooling, from early childhood intervention starting at age three to supporting inclusion in vocational training up to 25 years. For school-aged children,

“The initiatives were my own, the wish to go on was my decision. My family had a positive attitude towards my journey, and the DRRA has always been beside me. That is why I am now stable and independent.”

Sondha Rani Sarker, Learn for Life beneficiary

DRRA provides supplementary learning materials, assistive technology, and financial support, along with support for teachers, parents, and therapists. The programme works with a range of stakeholders, including local disabled persons organizations (DPOs), parent groups, and the government, to embed the methods within the schools and the wider community. Local DPOs then assume leadership of the programme and continue the work of DRRA after its support is phased out.

The programme started by supporting 20 schools in one district of Bangladesh between 1998 and 2012.



Inclusive teaching is supported by a variety of additional learning materials and assistive technology.

As of 2018, Learn for Life has embedded methods in 120 primary schools and 12 special schools in 19 districts.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

As of 2019, project costs are approximately €250,000 per year with 90 per cent coming from three international donors Liliane Fonds, CBM and Niketan and 10 per cent through corporate and community funding. The practice has already proven its replicability within Bangladesh, while elements of the model have also been implemented in India. DRRA is planning to make the resources to replicate this practice available online through e-learning for interested DPOs and parent associations in disability-inclusive formats.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 1998

- Dropout rate of children with disabilities reduced from 57 per cent to 37 per cent across ten years of the programme.
- Grown from supporting 20 primary schools in one district in 1998 to 132 schools in 19 districts by 2018.

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# A broad, low-cost, and comprehensive model to create accessible schools

**BANGLADESH / SAVE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL – HOPE PROGRAMME**

Save the Children is an international NGO with the mission to improve the lives of children. In 2016, the organization started its HOPE programme in three rural districts of Bangladesh, a low-cost model to ensure and increase the enrolment of out-of-school children – including children with disabilities. This is done through improving school accessibility and by establishing community-based rehabilitation centres, which offer rehabilitation and therapy. Between 2016 and 2019, the school enrolment rate of children with disabilities has increased from 52 per cent to 74 per cent.

## Problems Targeted

Despite progress in access to primary education, 4 million school-aged children, including children with disabilities, are still out of school in Bangladesh.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The success of HOPE is the result of two key mechanisms. First, the programme works closely with local governments to ensure sufficient budgets are allocated for improving school accessibility, for example, by building ramps and accessible bathrooms, and by providing assistive devices and transportation to schools.

**“My daughter improved significantly through the services of the Union Disability Service Centre. Priyanka is now going to school.”**

Mother of Priyanka

In addition, HOPE offers teacher training and awareness campaigns for parents, including information about support possibilities. The second mechanism is the establishment of the Union Disability Service Centre, where children with disabilities who are out of school are readied for school through rehabilitation therapy and counselling services.

When creating the project, Save the Children involved out-of-school children, children already attending school, and children with disabilities.

The HOPE model is currently implemented in 45 schools, located in three rural districts, targeting children between 6 and 14 years. Between 2016 and 2019, around 1,400 children with disabilities were prepared for enrolment.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Between 2016 and 2019, 709 children with disabilities were enrolled in school.
- In 2019, there are 45 schools in three rural districts participating in the programme.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The initial budget of \$1.5 million was provided by the IKEA Foundation. The annual operational budget of \$500,000, which covers school accessibility measures, teacher training, monitoring, and evaluation, is funded by the local government. The original phase of the project was three years, and although this has now ended, the approach continues in the region thanks to its ownership being transferred to the local government. This includes the Union Disability Service Centre, which continues to offer services. HOPE is a replicable model, and Save the Children intends to expand it to more districts going forward. The HOPE approach has influenced the Directorate of Primary Education under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, resulting in an inclusive teacher-training curriculum in the three districts.



Inclusion in progress at the Union Disability Service Centre.

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# Providing accessible books and learning materials to blind students

## BANGLADESH / YOUNG POWER IN SOCIAL ACTION – AUDIOBOOK PROGRAMME

Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) is a Bangladeshi NGO that supports poor and vulnerable populations, mainly in the city of Chittagong. In 2013, YPSA started a project to make books available in accessible formats for students with visual and print disabilities. The project uses globally accepted standards for audiobooks and open source technology to convert books into audio formats, while also partnering with international organizations to make existing audiobooks available. As of 2019, YPSA has created some 1,000 audiobooks and made a further 500,000 already existing audiobooks available.

### Problems Targeted

Students with visual impairments in colleges and universities of Bangladesh have difficulties in studying due to a lack of accessible books and study materials.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project uses international publishing standards, such as Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY), Electronic Publishing (EPUB 3.0), and open-source technology, to convert textbooks into accessible formats. College and university students can access either e-books that are readable through any screen reading software, or audio versions of books, making it a cost-effective solution for accessing educational reading material.

“With this initiative, YPSA came a bit closer to its dream of building a fully accessible and inclusive society where people with disabilities can live independent lives.”

Vashkar Bhattacharjee, Team Leader, YPSA

The project is run by a team composed of over 80 per cent people with disabilities. YPSA also works closely with Bookshare, a virtual library of accessible books (another Innovative Practice of the Zero Project 2020), and the Accessible Book Consortium, a global alliance of organizations working to make books accessible to persons with disabilities. Through this global cooperation, the project has created an immense library of already-accessible books.

YPSA has also made suggestions to the National Curriculum and Textbook Board on accessible publishing,



Recording an audiobook.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

There is no charge to the end user for the books as the project is funded by external donors, most notably the World Intellectual Property Organization (a body of the United Nations) and the Accessible Book Consortium. YPSA also received technical assistance and training from the DAISY Consortium and a2i (Access to Information) of the Bangladesh Government.

YPSA plans to make more books accessible and to make them more widely available. The Government of Bangladesh funds many such initiatives under the banner of Digital Bangladesh. YPSA is also working to establish a National Accessible Library to make more books available to everyone.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- The project has created an immense library of accessible books, benefiting more than 10,000 people.
- 80 per cent of staff (32) are people with disabilities.

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# Universal design-based practices for public early childhood education

## BRAZIL / MAIS DIFERENÇAS AND PARTNERS – PROJETO BRINCAR

Projeto Brincar is a project implemented by the São Paulo-based disability NGO Mais Diferenças, in partnership with the Volkswagen Foundation (Fundação Volkswagen) and São Paulo's Municipal Secretariat of Education. Educators and families are trained in accessible and inclusive pedagogical practices based on Universal Design principles to make early childhood education more inclusive for children with disabilities living in São Paulo. The project began as a pilot in 13 schools, training in its first year 406 educators. In 2019, the project reaches more than 500 schools, having training over 2,100 educators.

### Problems Targeted

Many children with disabilities still miss out on educational opportunities because inclusive teaching practices are not always used in public education.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project promotes accessible and inclusive pedagogical practices in public preschool education by training educators in theory and method, by giving practical support to educators in the classroom, and through conducting workshops with families of preschool-age children. Such workshops include music and painting activities performed by children

“We often think there is a model to be followed, but each child is unique, each class is unique. This guarantees a fulfilling childhood.”

Maria Tereza Mora, Assistant Director of a beneficiary school

both with and without disabilities as well as their families. Moreover, the project supports the production and the dissemination of pedagogical resources for Inclusive Education. The practices proposed by Projeto Brincar follow Universal Design principles, such as the use of pictures and other visualizations as well as audio-descriptions in order to benefit all children. Expert advice is given by a group of pedagogical consultants, which includes persons with different types of disabilities. As of November 2019, over 500 municipal schools have been reached and 2,109 educators have been trained. Notably, 98 per cent of training and workshop participants agree that the practices proposed by Projeto Brincar positively impact the development of all students.

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### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Over 500 municipal schools and 2,100 educators were trained by 2019.
- 4,222 have participated in workshops for families.
- 30,000+ children with and without disabilities have benefited.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project is entirely funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, and is implemented by the NGO Mais Diferenças in partnership with São Paulo's Municipal Secretariat of Education. It has an annual budget of \$232,000. Mais Diferencas believes that to replicate the project successfully it is important to cooperate with all levels of the municipal education management and to seek dialogues with teachers, children, and their parents. The project's methodology and lessons learned have been shared among state and municipal education departments throughout Brazil and were also included in the early childhood education curriculum of the City of São Paulo. Mais Diferenças' objective is to expand Projeto Brincar to as many schools as possible in São Paulo, with plans to reach an additional 100 schools in 2020 for a total of 600.



Workshops are based on play, pictures, and music.

# Training educators and municipalities in inclusive physical education

## BRAZIL / RODRIGO MENDES INSTITUTE AND PARTNERS – OPEN DOORS TO INCLUSION

Open Doors to Inclusion is a joint project of the Rodrigo Mendes (RM) Institute, a Brazilian NGO working on Inclusive Education, UNICEF, and the FC Barcelona Foundation. The project promotes the inclusion of students with disabilities in Brazilian schools by training educators and policy makers in inclusive physical education and related topics, such as accessibility regulations and the development of inclusive school projects. The Open Doors to Inclusion course has been delivered in person by Inclusive Education experts and made available online. More than 46,000 people attended the online course in 2018 and 2019.

### Problems Targeted

Physical education is often one of the least inclusive school activities.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The RM Institute, UNICEF, and the FC Barcelona Foundation launched the in-person Open Doors to Inclusion course in 2013, during which Inclusive Education experts trained 450 teachers from the Brazilian cities that would be hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2014. Participants identify barriers to the inclusion of children with disabilities in their schools, and design and implement their own inclusive physical education activities involving staff, students, families,



Participants design and implement their own inclusive physical education activities.

“We not only have to get out of the comfort zone but get others out of it. To think about inclusion is to think about our practices and our own disabilities.”

Gilberto Junior, course participant from Maceió

and the wider community. Participating policy makers from municipal Secretariats of Education assess local public education policies and propose improvements to the services offered to students with disabilities. As a result, several cities have taken actions focused on accessibility and Inclusive Education.

The in-person course was held from 2013 to 2016, reaching 16 Brazilian municipalities. In 2018 the online version was created. Since then, the course has been used across all 26 Brazilian states.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Open Doors to Inclusion was first launched with funding from the FC Barcelona Foundation. Developing the online version of the course cost approximately \$137,000, and the RM Institute has established an endowment fund to finance future course developments, which is supported by the US-based investment firm JP Morgan Chase.

Since the online version of Open Doors to Inclusion is freely available, it can be easily used and replicated. The RM Institute plans to translate it into English and Spanish. The organization will also establish an award programme to recognize the best practices created by course participants so that these can be shared and adopted by educators and policy makers.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- The online course has drawn participants from all 26 states of Brazil.
- Person-to-person courses were held in 16 municipalities.

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# Digital game design by children with and without intellectual disabilities

## BRAZIL / UNIVALI UNIVERSITY – DIGITAL GAME DESIGN

In 2015, two teachers at the Univali University in Brazil started a project in Itajaí, Santa Catarina, based on their doctoral theses to develop digital games. The project encourages the creation of digital games by children through a framework named “I’ve made my game,” involving children with and without disabilities. The process, based on collaboration, allows children to be involved in intellectual and affective activities of negotiation, ideas development, results analysis, and interaction. In 2019, around 50 children participated in the project, including those with intellectual disabilities.

### Problems Targeted

Schools often do not include children with intellectual disabilities in technology design, causing them to miss out on important developmental opportunities.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The process involves undergraduate students and researchers conducting 90-minute workshops once a week across an eight-month programme. It begins by building trust with students, then moves on to

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Starting with just four students in 2015, the project now enrolls about 50 students.
- In 2019, the project includes seven children with intellectual disabilities.

“The project contributes significantly to the teaching and learning processes of students, both with and without disabilities, and stimulates the creativity and autonomy of all our students.”

Prof. Ronan Adinael Pinheiro

improving the children's knowledge of digital and analogue games by using board and card games as well as computers and smartphones. With support from undergraduate students from several academic fields, such as computer science, design, and education, the children then begin to create plots, conflicts, and rules for their games before proceeding to their final creation.

The project started at one school with four nine-year-old students, including two with intellectual disabilities, which led to the creation of a digital game called “Os brinquedos que criam vida” (Toys that create life), available for free on Google Play. The project has been expanded to two schools in 2019, involving around 50 students in total, including seven children

with intellectual disabilities and autism. The new games will be available online in 2020 and include characters such as ninjas and diamond thieves in fantasy worlds.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project receives financing from university grants and scholarship programmes, with the majority coming from the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development, which provided \$127,500 of the approximately \$155,000 project budget, which covered the first two years.

Univali University intends to implement the practice in a permanent way in pilot schools in the coming years.



Children co-develop games by creating plots, conflicts, and rules.

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# Alternative communication platform for people with learning difficulties

**BRAZIL / LIVOX INTERNATIONAL LLC**

Livox International LLC is a Brazilian social enterprise that has developed Livox – an alternative communication platform that can be used on Android devices. It enables people who cannot communicate verbally and people with learning difficulties to communicate and learn. Users select virtual cards with pictures and phrases, which can be shown to others or read aloud. The software uses Artificial Intelligence to respond to the needs of the user. Livox generates income from licenses, currently has more than 25,000 users in 11 countries, is compatible with 25 languages, and is looking to expand to other geographies.

## Problems Targeted

People who cannot communicate verbally, or those with learning difficulties, are at risk of being excluded from the education system.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Livox displays virtual cards showing, for example, pictures of objects, places, or emotions, or illustrated short phrases such as “I want to...” or “I am...,” which a person can then select to communicate. Livox uses intelligent algorithms and machine learning to ensure the platform is responsive to the user’s needs. For example, it learns to correct touch if someone has difficulty touching the screen or responds to blinking if that is someone’s preferred communication method.



Livox learns to correct touch if a user has difficulty touching the screen.

**“When Emanuel realized that he could communicate with Livox, we found out who he was, what he felt, and what he thought, and he has continued surprising us in many ways since!”**

**Marina Gaya, mother of a Livox user**

It adapts to the context and displays cards that are relevant to the time or location. Livox can be voice-activated to allow others to talk to the user, using artificial intelligence technology to help them answer. Students use Livox in schools to communicate with their teachers and peers, leading to greater inclusion as students can interact and take part in discussions and activities in a meaningful way.

Livox’s online tool allows caregivers or support professionals to monitor progress. Education content

can be created by users using the inbuilt content creator, or existing content can be shared online.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Livox’s revenue comes from selling licenses for the software to users, ranging from individuals and families to schools and governments. The cost of a license varies from \$35 to \$63 a month, depending on the functionality. In 2016, Livox also received a \$550,000 grant from Google to develop its technology.

Livox has developed a partnership with an organization in the Middle East to make Livox available in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Djibouti, and Sudan. The local partner is responsible for translation, localizing, and marketing. It has also run pilots in other countries and will continue to improve its algorithms to allow more meaningful conversations between people who can and cannot speak.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2011

- By the end of 2019, Livox is used by over 25,000 people in 11 countries.
- The software is compatible with 25 languages.



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# A worldwide online library of good practices in Inclusive Education

## BRAZIL / RODRIGO MENDES INSTITUTE - DIVERSA WEB PORTAL

The Rodrigo Mendes Institute is an NGO founded in 1994 in São Paulo, which aims to improve access to quality education for children with disabilities. In 2011, it started a web portal called DIVER with the support of the Brazilian Ministry of Education. The website serves as a resource bank on Inclusive Education for educators, policy makers, professionals, and families of children with disabilities in Brazil. DIVERSA offers more than 140 articles and almost 300 practices and solutions. Although the site is available in Portuguese only, DIVERSA has had users from 110 countries since 2011.

### Problems Targeted

Due to a lack of knowledge, resources, and information about best practices, Brazilian teachers and educators face a significant challenge providing Inclusive Education.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

DIVERSA's goal is to support educational networks in serving students with disabilities in mainstream schools. The website includes disability data, policies, and strategies as well as stories and articles. Since 2009, DIVERSA has published 145 articles; and there

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2011

- DIVERSA's website has 295 best practices on Inclusive Education from countries outside Brazil, including Argentina, Denmark, France, and the United States.
- From 123,000 visitors in 2011, DIVERSA has grown to over 2 million users in 2019.

“The contents of DIVERSA broadens our knowledge on Inclusive Education and questions the school practices that we are used to.”

Maria de Lourdes de Moraes Pezzuol,  
a DIVERSA user from São Paulo

are case studies from Brazil and other countries, including Argentina, Denmark, France, and the United States. All of DIVERSA's online content is compliant with the accessibility standards of the World Wide Web Consortium, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and e-Mag, which is the accessibility standard of the Brazilian Government. The online forum is a space where people working in the area of Inclusive Education and disability can exchange ideas and information and also post queries, if any. In addition, there is a possibility to gain knowledge through face-to-face meetings with partners in education facilities that promote dialogues about difficulties faced by educators in mainstream schools. Launched in 2011, the platform has grown to 2 million users from 110 countries.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

DIVERSA receives funding from private sector companies, such as IBM and J.P. Morgan, among others. The Rodrigo Mendes Institute has also created an endowment fund to further contribute to DIVERSA. Other education platforms, such as Nova Escola and Porvir, have replicated the content of DIVERSA, though there are copyright and creative commons license issues when using the DIVERSA content. Notably, UNICEF and the Government of Angola hired the Rodrigo Mendes Institute to help create a national policy on Inclusive Education, which was finalized and implemented in 2017.



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The online forum is a space where people working in the area of Inclusive Education and disability can exchange ideas and information and also post queries.

# A systematic approach to creating inclusive school environments

## BULGARIA / ASSOCIATION OF SHARED LEARNING ELA – ONE SCHOOL FOR ALL PROGRAMME

The Association of Shared Learning ELA, an education-focused NGO based in Sofia, has developed the One School for All programme to help schools to organize their processes and resources to become more inclusive. It offers schools a structured and systemic approach in four key areas: school leadership, classroom practices, partnership with parents, and child safety. In 2019 it expanded from supporting 12 schools in Bulgaria and, in collaboration with partner organizations in three other countries, to nine further schools through EU funding.

### Problems Targeted

Although Inclusive Education legislation was introduced in Bulgaria in 2016, following 14 years of integration, teachers lack support to implement Inclusive Education and negative attitudes persist.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The One School For All programme supports school teams to lead and initiate changes at all levels – culture, policies, practices – to make their schools inclusive. The structured two-year programme starts with a self-assessment by the whole school team



School teams are supported to lead and initiate changes at all levels – culture, policies, practices – to make their schools inclusive.

“The One School for All programme helps schools to create an inclusive environment so students feel comfortable, parents are satisfied, and teachers are successful.”

Emilia Manolova, Principal, 97 School  
Bratya Miladinovi in Sofia

against key indicators in four main areas (school leadership, classroom practices, partnership with parents, and child safety). Using this assessment, the school selects priorities and objectives and sets indicators of success. The school then develops an inclusion action plan, with assigned roles and deadlines. The next step is implementation of the plan and monitoring of its progress. Finally, the plan is reviewed and updated. The programme provides mentorship and training for the school leadership team and teachers to support them in this process.

Evaluation of the programme shows an improvement in teachers’ understanding the concept of Inclusive Education and their specific responsibility.

Teachers are more confident in communicating with parents and students are more accepting of diversity.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The programme costs €5,200 annually for one school in Bulgaria, including eight training sessions, mentorship support, and printed materials (plus travel costs). The programme was funded by the America for Bulgaria Foundation from 2014–2019.

The practice has grown in Bulgaria from five schools in 2014/15 to 12 schools in 2018/19. From 2019, the programme is being scaled up to nine schools in Greece, Portugal, and Romania through an Erasmus+ funded project. Through this project, a ‘train the trainer’ approach has been developed, as well as a free Inclusive Education e-learning course in English.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- Following the programme, there is a 34 per cent improvement in teachers’ understanding of Inclusive Education.
- Since 2014, 376 teachers have participated in the programme.

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# Life Stories from Armenia, Austria, Australia & Bangladesh



THE STORY OF THOMAS KOECK (39),  
A USER OF ARCHES ACCESSIBLE MUSEUMS PROJECT

**“There are now guided tours in the museum for people with different needs and abilities.”**

*Vienna, Austria*

Since the age of ten I have had issues with balance, motor senses, and speech. I am very much interested in visual arts, and a friend introduced me to Rotraut Krall and her team at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, working on the ARCHES programme. They organized a series of workshops, including people with various disabilities, which I was invited to join. Working with them was inspiring, and jointly we pointed out a lot of improvements that can be made at the museum. Unfortunately the project is over, but now there are guided tours in the museum for people with different needs and abilities, and we hope that the project will be continued in the future.

**i** See also the Factsheet on the ARCHES programme, page 54.

THE STORY OF BEN DOMINISH,  
A STUDENT USING UNI2BEYOND

**“Uni2beyond is a great way to experience university.”**

*Australia*



My name is Ben and I am a Uni2beyond student who has enjoyed experiencing studying at university. I feel like I have become a wiser person due to studying there and learning about a lot of different things – from the history of classical music to the fun and creative learning to become an art teacher who can teach art to kids in different forms. The Uni2beyond programme has made me a lot happier and a lot stronger, not only because I am gaining knowledge but also because I am meeting wonderful people, including my mentors.

I would recommend Uni2beyond because it's a great way to experience university. You can study a lot of fascinating subjects and you are always surrounded by genuine people.

**i** See also the Factsheet on Uni2beyond, page 50.

## THE STORY OF GOR BALASYAN (6), BENEFICIARY OF THE SMILE PROJECT

**“A smooth transition to school, without stress and fear, is the most important achievement for Gor.”**

*Achajur, Armenia*

My name is Arev Mezhlumyan, and I am the mother of 6-year-old Gor Balasyan. We live in the village of Achajur, in the Tavush province of Armenia. From the age of 4, Gor has been attending Achajur kindergarten. At the beginning, it was hard to break the existing stereotypes in our community and especially among kindergarten teachers regarding people with disabilities. But due to my close cooperation with teachers and my readiness to support my son, and also due to the series of trainings organized by Bridge of Hope, the attitude and behaviour of the teachers has changed. They are not afraid to teach in groups that include children with diverse learning and development needs.

Now my son is equally participating in group activities. Trainings and peer support meetings organized for parents has helped us to learn tools for positive parenting, and a series of joint activities were organized between the kindergarten and the school prior to the new school year. I did not have high expectations, but to my surprise, Gor is actively involved and included in classroom activities and discussions. He has positive relationships with teachers and classmates and feels positive about himself as a learner.

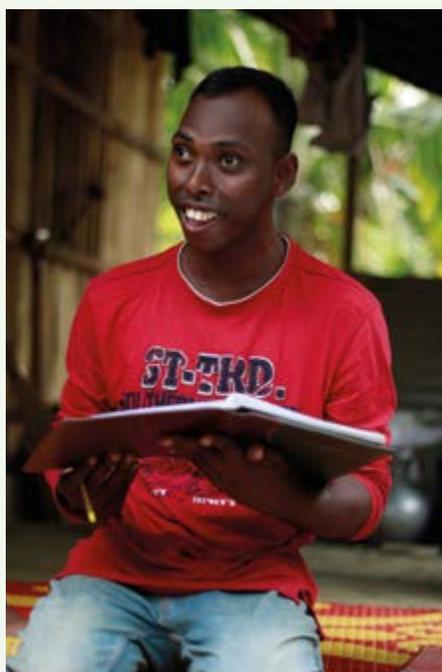


**i** See also the Factsheet on Bridge of Hope, page 49.

## THE STORY OF FARHAD, A STUDENT SUPPORTED BY DRRRA

**“Now many young people with disabilities get a government scholarship because of our advocacy.”**

*Bangladesh*



I am currently working with young people in an organization for people with disabilities while also finishing my final year of courses for a B.A. degree, but the journey has not been simple. At the age of 8 my parents realized that I have cerebral palsy and so I am dependent from a wheelchair in my whole life. I even had difficulty holding my pen. At first, my parents tried to admit me at a private school, but they failed because the other parents didn't want me there.

After a year, I was admitted to a pre-primary school run by the Disabled Rehabilitation & Research Association (DRRA), and from there I got the chance to go to a public primary school. Because of the advocacy of DRRRA, the school authorities provided me with an accessible toilet and arranged extra time for me to take exams according to my needs.

Now I am in the last year of my B.A. degree, but it would not have been possible without the support of the DRRRA. I receive five euro monthly as an education stipend from the government, but my need is about 40 euro. DRRRA employs me part time to cover the difference, and based on my work experience, I founded SNUS, an organization for people with disabilities in the city of Satkhira.

We currently work with 90 youth and are an inspiration for all children with disabilities. Now many get a government scholarship because of our advocacy.

**i** See also the Factsheet on DRRRA, page 55.

# Subscription-based online education platforms that also work without Internet

## CAMEROON / EDUCCLICK – KAMER BIG BANG PLATFORM AND EDUCCLICK PLATFORM

educlick is a Cameroonian social business supporting access to education. Since 2015, educlick offers two platforms: Kamer Big Bang, an online resource centre for matching users with jobs and learning opportunities; and the educlick platform, a mobile phone-based e-learning system whereby users undertake courses via text message. Originally targeted to people displaced through armed conflict, it became popular with people with disabilities. Of the 6,000 people who have taken courses via educlick, around 1,000 are people with disabilities and use system features like voice activation.

### Problems Targeted

Due to armed conflict in the region, over 300,000 students in Cameroon can no longer attend mainstream education, including around 20,000 with disabilities.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

educlick's online Kamer Big Bang platform, launched in 2015, provides courses and job opportunities for people who are no longer able to attend education,

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Out of 6,000 users of the platform, about 1,000 are people with disabilities.
- USSD technology is utilized to allow users to take courses without an Internet connection.

**“Thanks to educlick, I realise that my daughter is one of the smartest people I know. And she can code!”**

Alice Magne, mother of a student with one arm

for example, where schools have been destroyed by conflict. The platform allows users to log in at a time and place convenient for them. educlick then matches students with a course and an instructor. educlick's second platform, which takes the educlick name, uses USSD communications – an international communications protocol for two-way open communication between mobile phones and computers. Users receive and respond to educational content and questions, such as in the national curriculum or on vocational training, via SMS messages on their mobile phone, thus eliminating the need for an Internet connection.

Although not originally the target market, people with disabilities began giving positive feedback about the platforms, which led to the inclusion of basic accessibility features, such as voice activation.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Both platforms have various options for payment,

including per course or per subscription. Typical costs are around \$2 weekly or \$44 annually. educlick works with civil society organizations to pay subscriptions for much of the target audience who are unable to pay for themselves. Most fees are covered by the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Cameroon branch of the UNHCR. In addition, it has received funding from the African Union on Education. Overall costs of the programme are approximately \$35,000 annually.

Prototypes of the educlick platform have been successfully tested in other countries, such as Chad and Senegal. educlick is currently building and testing an online version of the platform, which will be available across Africa; and it is signing partnerships with DPOs in the Cameroon cities of Buea, Douala, and Limbe.

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Training of educlick professionals.



# Rating-based training of accessibility assessors

## CANADA / RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION – ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATION

In 2017, The Rick Hansen Foundation, an NGO based in Richmond, Canada, launched a programme called the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC), which uses a comprehensive rating system to measure meaningful accessibility in the built environment. The foundation also started a training course for professionals in the built environment to promote the RHFAC and Universal Design principles in general. Since its launch, the programme has trained over 200 professionals, including architects, urban planners, designers, and contractors.

### Problems Targeted

Designers, architects, and other professionals in Canada working on the built environment often do not take accessibility into account.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Through the RHFAC Training, participants learn to deliver evaluations that determine the accessibility of buildings and sites for people with disabilities. The training is based on the RHFAC rating survey, which is the only tool in Canada to certify accessibility of built environments. The training curriculum includes topics such as disability awareness, legal compliance, and construction plans and documents. It also trains participants to prepare reports that identify key areas of improvement or success with respect to a site's accessibility.

**“RHFAC is a meaningful pursuit. You're helping others. Not just those who are going to be directly benefitting, but all businesses that strive to be accessible.”**

Daniel Westley, RHFAC Professional and Accessibility Champion

Two government bodies in Canada have made the RHFAC ratings a mandatory practice, with more institutions adopting the scale in their policies. The programme is available in five institutions spread across Canada. Between 2017 and 2019, over 200 professionals have taken the course. By end of 2019, 70 people had received the RHFAC professional designation.

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Participants learn to evaluate the accessibility of buildings.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The foundation administers the training in private post-secondary institutions through revenue-sharing agreements. The course fee ranges from \$1,000 to \$1,200, depending on the institution hosting the course. Tuition subsidies are available for participants with disabilities.

The course is easily replicable as it has a standardized curriculum and structure. The foundation will release an online version in January 2020, in partnership with Athabasca University, which will include virtual reality as part of the training to evaluate accessibility in the built environment.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Since 2017, 70 participants of the training programme have received the RHFAC professional designation.
- Trained professionals across Canada have completed over 1,350 ratings of buildings and sites since the launch of the course.

# A three-year vocational training programme for students with intellectual disabilities

## CHILE / UNIVERSIDAD DE ANDRÉS BELLO – SOCIO-LABOUR TRAINING PROGRAMME

Universidad Andrés Bello (UAB) is a private Chilean university with a main campus in Santiago, and further campuses in Concepción and Viña del Mar. It has developed a structured three-year vocational training programme for students with intellectual disabilities, fully housed within the university campuses. The programme develops employment skills in specific industries and supports students' transition to work. Since 2006, there have been 360 graduates, 72 per cent of whom are now employed. The programme runs at all three campuses and has been replicated in universities in Argentina, Mexico, and Spain.

### Problems Targeted

In Chile, young people with intellectual disabilities have limited access to vocational training in mainstream higher education settings, and often have to attend specialist education centres instead.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The first year of the programme focuses on developing the cognitive, linguistic, and social skills necessary for future work activity. In the second year, students acquire specific skills by choosing modules in one of five areas: administration, education, catering, gardening, and veterinary skills. In the third year, students

“The resilience and perseverance of my students has taught me much more than I ever imagined.”

Sibelle Bagu Aybar, computing teacher

gain work experience at companies in their chosen fields. Learning materials are designed to be accessible to students with intellectual disabilities, and personalized support is offered by teachers as needed. Students have access to all the extracurricular activities on campus, for example, sports programmes and dance classes, and meet peers from other study programmes through these activities.

At the end of the programme, students graduate with a job skills diploma. Throughout the programme university staff also work with potential employers to identify the key skills needed in each industry, and they support employers to offer inclusive work environments to graduates of the programme.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2006

- In 2018, 136 students were enrolled in the programme over the university's three campuses.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Students pay a fee of approximately \$5,000 per year, in line with fees for other programs at the university. Those who cannot afford the fee are granted scholarships through donations from private companies, banks, and other institutions. In 2019, 30 per cent of students were supported by scholarship.

The fee finances the cost of teachers, assistants, labour supervisors, and materials. The university provides the infrastructure and general administration expenses. There is no state contribution. The programme started with 35 students in Santiago in 2006 and had 136 participants across its three campuses in 2018. As well as replicating the programme to its other campuses, UAB has also supported three universities to replicate the programme in Argentina, Mexico, and Spain, and it is looking to expand it further.

Students gain work experience at companies, such as at an online radio programme.



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# Sign bilingual education from infancy to secondary school

CHINA / CENTRE FOR SIGN LINGUISTICS & DEAF STUDIES, CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

In 2006, the Centre for Sign Language and Deaf Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong introduced the Sign Bilingual and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Programme (SLCO), targeting deaf and hard of hearing children from infancy to secondary education. Deaf and hearing students study together in the same classroom, receiving sign language and oral instructions simultaneously. In 2019, 124 deaf children enrolled in the programme. .

## Problems Targeted

Due to an emphasis on oral learning and teaching in Hong Kong, deaf children do not have access to a comprehensive education, which further leads to lower social and academic performance.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The programme starts from infancy with a sign bilingual class, whereby deaf children up to the age of three learn sign language along with their parents. When they grow older, they are enrolled in the sign bilingual reading class to begin developing their literacy skills. Once in kindergarten, a hearing and a deaf teacher teach together in oral and sign language, creating a multi-sensory environment for all students. Finally, the children enter primary and secondary schools, where they continue to receive bilingual education.



Deaf and hearing students study together in the same classroom, receiving sign language and oral instructions simultaneously.

As of 2019, five crèches, one kindergarten, two primary schools, and one secondary school use the SLCO model. There are also new programmes started in Singapore, Macau, and the province of Quzhou in Mainland China.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Because there is no government support for sign language in mainstream schools, SLCO relies on funding from charities and trusts.

In terms of transferability, the Singapore Ministry of Education started a similar programme in 2018, and SLCO receives regular queries and visits from educators in other countries, including Belgium, Netherlands, Japan, and Sweden. Going forward, SLCO plans to organize training and workshops to support organizations that wish to replicate the model.

“Growing up in a silent world, I am so grateful to have met the SLCO teachers in a happy learning environment. My biggest dream is to be a deaf teacher in future.”

Heidi, a deaf girl who has been with SLCO for 13 years

The ratio of students is usually one deaf or hard of hearing child to three or four hearing children in each class. The Child Assessment Service of the Hong Kong government recommends the SLCO model to parents of deaf children; and in Macau, the government introduced a new policy to give deaf children preferential admission to the SLCO nursery programme. The SLCO model includes the training of deaf adults to become teachers and sign language trainers for both students and parents.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2006

- Since 2006, the number of deaf students supported by the programme has increased from 13 to 124.
- In 2019, the SLCO model is followed in nine schools and crèches across Mainland China, China - Hong Kong and Macao.

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# Person-centred support model for university students

## ECUADOR / UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA SALESIANA UNESCO CHAIR ON SUPPORT TECHNOLOGIES

Universidad Politécnica Salesiana (UPS) is a university based in Quito, Ecuador, which implements the UNESCO Chair on Support Technologies for Educational Inclusion project. Students with disabilities receive support based on a holistic, person-centred approach and a reasonable accommodation plan, which includes use of assistive technology, adapted teaching and learning evaluation methods, sign language interpretation, and peer support. In 2018, more than 186 students with disabilities at UPS received support.

### Problems Targeted

University students with disabilities in Ecuador face barriers to learning because assistive technologies are often unavailable and teaching and learning evaluation methods are not inclusive.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

UPS students with disabilities and their families participate in a functional assessment of their educational needs and preferences to develop a person-centred support plan and a reasonable accommodation plan. Students learn the same academic content as their peers, but professors make reasonable adjustments to their teaching and learning evaluation methods. The students manage their own

“One of my dreams is to finish college and work in a foundation. In this way, I feel that I can help and support other people.”

Valeria Analuisa, a psychology student with a visual impairment

learning process and support needs by drawing on a variety of resources, including assistive technology, sign language interpretation, and a peer support programme between students with and without disabilities. The university also runs workshops for teachers and families on person-centred educational planning. Through the UNESCO Chair project, UPS has supported students with visual, auditory, and motor impairments, autism spectrum disorders, and intellectual disabilities. In 2015, 92 students with disabilities attended UPS; and by 2018, that number had more than doubled to 186.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Since 2015, more than 800 students with disabilities have received support at UPS.
- \$30,000 in scholarships is awarded annually.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project has an annual cost of about \$100,000. Students pay tuition but are eligible for a full or partial scholarship according to their financial situation. The university allocates \$30,000 to such scholarships annually. Students with disabilities in Ecuador also receive a monthly stipend through a government programme. The university's person-centred support has been successfully replicated across its other two campuses and has been shared with other universities in Ecuador. UPS plans to offer transition programmes to graduating students, with an emphasis on internships and soft skills development to improve job-readiness and will engage student associations to become more involved in the peer-support programme.



UPS uses a variety of learning materials and teaching methods, including theatre.

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# Training teachers of mainstream schools in sign language

## ETHIOPIA / FELM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EECMY-DASSC – SIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING

Felm is an NGO of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland working in 30 countries to support human dignity and justice. Since 2003, Felm has run the Social and Educational Programme for the Deaf jointly with EECMY-DASSC in Ethiopia, which provides training for teachers in mainstream schools in the use of sign language. This allows lessons to be provided bilingually in spoken and sign language, thus enabling deaf students to avoid specialist boarding schools. The number of teachers trained in sign language has risen from 100 per year to over 150 in 2018.

### Problems Targeted

There are more than 500,000 deaf people in Ethiopia, with fewer than 10 per cent having access to formal education, and there are few support systems or teachers trained in sign language.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project, that Felm has developed in partnership with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Development and Social Services Commission (EECYM-DASSC) focuses on training teachers in rural areas to include sign language in their lessons, along with providing educational materials and assistive devices to students with disabilities.

Begun in the Hosaina region of Ethiopia, it has since reached teachers in many regions across the country. The project was developed through a work-



Around 2,000 teachers, 1,000 parents, and 300 education officials have received training or support in providing sign language and other inclusive classroom methods.

“Teachers go far beyond their duties to provide sign language and awareness training for parents and the community. This motivates us to continue.”

Asefa Guta, a deaf social worker and trainer

shop of deaf and hard of hearing teachers of deaf and hard of hearing children along with representatives from the national association of the deaf.

Over the project’s 16 years, more than 35,000 deaf and hard of hearing children have gained access to education. During this same time, around 2,000 teachers, 1,000 parents, and 300 education officials have received training or support in providing sign language and other inclusive classroom methods. In addition, the project has influenced the Special

Needs/Inclusive Education Strategy of Ethiopia, including the provision for deaf and hard of hearing students to learn sign language in preschool, ready for entering primary school.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project’s annual budget is €70,000, of which €42,000 covers the teacher-training component. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland covers 92.5 per cent of the budget and 7.5 per cent is covered by donations from Finnish foundations and Christian congregations. Additionally, the Ethiopian Government provides in-kind funding, such as training venues and accessories.

Felm aims to expand into rural Ethiopia, where around 80 per cent of people with disabilities reside.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2003

- Since 2003, 35,000 deaf or hard of hearing children have accessed education.
- In-service training has been provided for 2,000 teachers.



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# Action plans to support the transition from secondary school

## FINLAND / KVPS – ON THE VERGE OF ADULTHOOD

The Finnish Service Foundation for People with an Intellectual Disability (KVPS) has developed On the Verge of Adulthood – a programme designed to assist people with disabilities to transition from secondary education to the next phase of their life. KVPS works with schools, municipalities, and NGOs to support people aged 13–25 and their families. In a first step, a personal action plan is created on key areas like work and housing; and in a second step, the necessary support is provided to carry out the transition. Since 2013, 434 young people have been supported.

### Problems Targeted

Young people with disabilities and their families do not have adequate access to information and support to plan their future once the young person leaves school.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

In each municipality, KVPS convenes a steering group of the local municipality, schools, NGOs, and families, which then develops a local action plan and agrees how to work together on key transition areas, such as education, employment, and housing. Once the local action plan is agreed upon, the focus moves to individual and family goals. Young people and their families get workbooks and other person-centred planning tools to help them determine their wishes and goals. At the meetings, families receive peer

“On the Verge of Adulthood has brought all of us in this municipality together to focus on our children’s future. Now we feel that we as a family are not alone.”

Anneli Palonen, mother of Otto

support, input from KVPS, and information about access to local support from schools, local authority representatives, and other services. At the end of the process, there is a meeting to finalise the individual goals of young people and their families and to decide how local stakeholders will take this forward. By the end of 2019, KVPS has supported 434 young people, and feedback shows that participants find the process meaningful and that afterwards they are more certain on what they want in the future. In addition,

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- Between 2013 and 2019, KVPS has supported 757 family members.
- In 2019, KVPS has worked with 505 professionals across 35 municipalities.

local support services learn new tools to work with families on future planning.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project is funded by the Finnish Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organizations, and in-kind support comes from the municipalities that offer venues to support the project. There is no fee for young people and their families. The practice has been scaled in 35 municipalities, and the core model and activities are scalable and can be adjusted to meet local and individual needs. To support further replication, KVPS wants to train other professionals on the model and further formalise their processes.



A family in a local On the Verge of Adulthood workshop.



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# Training people with disabilities to be museum guides

## GERMANY / CAPITO MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN – NEW WAYS TO EXPERIENCE ART

capito is an Austrian social franchise network active in 20 locations in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. capito Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (capito MV), based in Germany, has worked in partnership with the Staatliches Museum Schwerin, a museum and art gallery, to develop a training course for people with disabilities to conduct art tours. The project creates job opportunities for people with disabilities and improves the accessibility of museums' education content. Seven guides have been trained since the project started in 2017.

### Problems Targeted

Informational and educational content in museums are often not accessible to visitors with disabilities, which also makes professional participation in museums more difficult for people with disabilities.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Two education experts from capito MV worked alongside a colleague from the education department at the Staatliches Museum Schwerin to deliver the training course. Trainees helped determine the design of the course and suggested key modules, for example, the use of digital media in art education.

“The project has made me more confident. I have expanded my knowledge of art and have met many people who have helped me to demonstrate what I am capable of.”

Felix Jedlink, museum guide

In addition to art history, the course covers such competencies as communicating with different visitors and handling difficult situations. Some of the training materials are also available in easy language formats, and ten training workshops have already taken place. The project works on several levels. People with disabilities experience cultural participation, function as inclusion consultants within the museum, and create an inclusive consciousness in society through their encounters with visitors and media appearances. The project is currently developing a new job profile for people with disabilities in museums.

More than 500 people have attended one of the 25 tours given by museum guides trained by capito



A capito-trained tour guide at work in the Staatlichen Museum Schwerin.

MV. The museum guides themselves have expressed a desire for further vocational training in the museum sector, and that desire is being pursued.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Until 2019, the project has not had any specific funding, and costs have been covered by existing budgets within capito MV and the Staatliches Museum Schwerin. Additional funding is being sought to develop the project further. In October 2019, the Federal Academy for Cultural Education in Germany and the German Museum Association cooperated to develop a job description and training profile for people with disabilities to become museum guides. This project will support the development of more accessible training materials, for example, in easy language formats and with a read aloud function. This would then be translated into other languages to support replication in other countries.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- More than 500 people have attended one of the 25 tours given by the museum guides trained by capito MV.



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[www.capito.eu/team/capito-mecklenburg-vorpommern](http://www.capito.eu/team/capito-mecklenburg-vorpommern)

# People with intellectual disabilities train peers to use digital media and ICT

GERMANY / PIKSL IN DER GEMEINDE LEBEN – PIKSL MOBIL

PIKSL is a social enterprise in Düsseldorf, Germany, which runs projects to support people with intellectual disabilities. In 2014, PIKSL launched PIKSL Mobil – a peer-to-peer teaching approach whereby people with intellectual disabilities teach other persons with disabilities and seniors living in residential facilities to use digital media and information and communication technologies independently. Three two-hour courses are held weekly, which involve around 250 people per year.

## Problems Targeted

People with learning difficulties and senior citizens are often excluded from the use of information and communication technologies, creating a vast digital divide, especially affecting those who live in supervised accommodations.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

PIKSL Mobil was developed by people with intellectual disabilities who identified training and education needs that had not been covered by traditional education facilities, such as adult education centres. People with intellectual disabilities were trained by PIKSL in using digital technology and how to train others, such as how to use mobile phone and computer applications. The trained trainers collect a backpack

“PIKSL Mobil breaks down barriers and puts people with a high need for support in contact with technologies.”

## A PIKSL Mobil beneficiary

from PIKSL with technical equipment, including a router, tablet computers, and headphones, and then proceed to residential facilities and senior citizen centres. There, they offer a short introduction to the devices before giving one-to-one training, for example, on how to use news sites, play games, and make video calls. Instead of a fixed training programme, content is based on the needs, abilities, and pace of each participant.

As of 2019, ten trainers with intellectual disabilities are training groups of up to eight people living in homes for the elderly and in communal residential facilities for people with intellectual disabilities and people who have suffered brain damage.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- Ten people with intellectual disabilities have been trained as trainers.
- Around 1,000 people have received training in ICT skills.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth together with the German Association of Organizations for Seniors fund the PIKSL Mobil services offered in facilities for seniors. Funding for the In der Gemeinde leben programme for those living in residential facilities comes from PIKSL's own budget. PIKSL Mobil is part of the educational catalogue of PIKSL Laboratories. In 2019, the laboratories are being scaled to establish a nationwide network of Inclusive Education locations. Going forward, PIKSL Mobil hopes to provide digital education for people with disabilities and senior citizens throughout the country.



People with intellectual disabilities are trained by PIKSL in using digital technology and how to train others.

✉ **Tim Neumann**, [tim.neumann@igl-duesseldorf.de](mailto:tim.neumann@igl-duesseldorf.de)  
<https://piksl.net/bildungsangebote>

# Free open-source electronic games for children

## GREECE / SCIFY – GAMES FOR THE BLIND

SciFY is a non-profit organization based in Athens that created Games for the Blind, a series of free electronic games designed for blind children as well as an online platform allowing anyone to create and share their own game. More than 30 accessible electronic games have been created using Games for the Blind since 2016.

### Problems Targeted

Play-based learning opportunities are often not accessible to children with visual impairments. Many blind children therefore miss out on opportunities to acquire and practice new skills or to play with their peers.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Games for the Blind is a series of games for blind children aged six and over that employs 3D sound technology and an accessible interface. The games are designed to familiarize children with computers, and to allow them to practice their hearing and other skills while having the option to play with their peers.



Games are designed to familiarize children with computers and to allow them to practice their hearing and other skills.

**“I really liked it. The only problem is that I want to play more!”**

### A blind child who played Games for the Blind

The games include tennis, through which children practice sensing movement, speed, and depth; tic-tac-toe, to practice spatial orientation and strategy; and Curve, a game that uses sounds to express the graphs of mathematical functions. Games for the Blind was created in consultation with blind children, special education teachers, and organizations for the blind. It is also a platform that allows anyone, including children themselves, to create and share their own game. As of 2019, more than 25,000 people have played Games for the Blind.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Total development cost was €65,300. The platform receives funding from civil society and businesses, and was initially set up through an EEA Grant (funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway). SciFY part-

nered with Ionian University for the creation of certain games, such as tennis, tic-tac-toe, and Curve. The games are available in English, Greek, and Norwegian and can be easily further developed because they are open source, freely available, and simple to translate. SciFY has also published guidelines for those who are interested in creating new games. Games for the Blind has been endorsed by the Greek Ministry of Education for use in schools. To date, the practice has been replicated multiple times locally (Athens), nationally (other Greek cities), and in various countries such as the Czech Republic and Norway. SciFY is currently investigating the possibility of implementing educational electronic games for children with autism, the ultimate goal being that all children, regardless of the type of disability, have equal opportunities in play, education, and skills development.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In 2019, 25,000+ people have played Games for the Blind.
- Games are currently available in English, Greek, and Norwegian.



Vasileios Giannakopoulos

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# Life Stories from Brazil, Bangladesh, and Canada

## THE STORY OF FELIPE, USER OF OPEN DOOR TO INCLUSION

**“The teacher created a new game – Felipeball.”**

*Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

Felipe was attending the fifth grade of a mainstream public school in Rio de Janeiro. He has cerebral palsy and was always excluded from the physical education classes. Things changed when Felipe’s teacher, Luiz Gustavo, attended the Open Doors to Inclusion course and began to modify the rules of the sports offered to his classes. First, he explored basketball, which allowed Felipe to participate with his classmates, but still in a very limited way. Luiz noticed that Felipe could do more, and so he decided to create a new sport: “Felipeball.”

Felipeball is an inclusive game. Everyone moves around supported by the other four team members, which is the position that maximizes the mobility of Felipe. The game is played with the hands, and only the goalkeeper can stand up. All students like the new game and it became the most popular activity of the school. Says Felipe: “I used to play by standing still on a chair. Now I feel that I am really participating. I make somersaults, score many goals, and celebrate with my friends.”

**i** See also the Factsheet on Open Doors to Inclusion, page 59.



## THE STORY OF UMME SALIMA CHOWDHURY, BENEFICIARY OF YPSA’S CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVE

**“Using DAISY digital books helped me find a goal in my life.”**

*Bangladesh*

My name is Umme Salima Chowdhury. I have three sisters, and all four of us are blind since birth. However, I am from a prosperous family.

During my time at the Muradpur government school for the blind and later during my college life, like other visually impaired persons in Bangladesh, I faced tremendous obstacles regarding my studies. At that time the reading materials were not available apart from a few Braille books, and there were never enough copies. Reading materials in Daisy, E-Pub, accessible audio, or digital Braille were out of the question. Eventually, I passed the SSC level exam in 2006, and two years later I passed the HSC exam from Chittagong Government City College. Later, I completed my Master’s degree in 2015 from the department of Sociology of the University of Chittagong.

In the meantime, I came in contact with YPSA and I became one of the hundreds of beneficiaries of the organization’s capacity-building initiative. It was also the turning point in my life, because after being involved in this project I found my life’s goal, which is to become a teacher. I feel much more confident, and I have enrolled for my BA in Teachers Training College, Chittagong.

This project has changed the lives of hundreds of visually impaired persons like me by producing and distributing DAISY digital talking books along with relevant training.

**i** See also the Factsheet on YPSA, page 57.

## THE STORY OF OF IGOR KUEHN FERREIRA (9), STUDENT AT UNIVALI SCHOOL OF APPLICATION

**“The game creation helped me to work as a team and to strengthen friendships.”**

*Brazil*



I am Igor. I am in the fourth grade and my group name is Itajaí. I have many friends and they are very nice. We started a project creating toy prototypes in groups of students. We played several games to understand how they worked, and after that we learned a little bit about how to create games from scratch. We then designed our game and we played the first prototype. Weeks later, we played the game beta version and then the final version, but the dragon phase was still missing.

This game creation helped me to work together as a team and to strengthen friendships. It also helped to direct me towards my future profession – to become a game designer!

**i** See also the Factsheet on Univali, page 60.

## THE STORY OF MÁRIO, MEMBER OF THE PROJETO BRINCAR TEAM

**“My own school life would have been very different if Projeto Brincar had already been around.”**

*Brazil*

My name is Mário Paulo Bovino Greggio, and I am 40 years old and have Asperger's Syndrome. Currently, I am attending Computer Science College, and I also work with the monitoring and evaluation team at Mais Diferenças, a Brazilian non-governmental organization whose aim is to promote, construct, and implement inclusive practices in several sectors of society, with a focus on the rights of people who face physically disabling barriers. Here I am responsible for inserting data about the activities of Projeto Brincar into our database.

Among my daily tasks, the ones I like most are uploading photos and videos into the Projeto Brincar image bank and monitoring teachers' attendance at the project's events. This year in particular, I truly enjoyed taking part in the school workshops in order to talk about autism with teachers who mostly had never met an adult with autism. I talked about my school life in special and regular schools, which, I now realise, would have been pretty different if I had attended a regular school where there were projects such as Projeto Brincar.

**i** See also the Factsheet on Projeto Brincar, page 58.

## THE STORY OF DANIEL WESTLEY, CERTIFIED ACCESSIBILITY EXPERT

**“You're looking at it from a perspective that they probably haven't yet.”**

*Canada*



Before he became an RHFAC Professional, Daniel Westley was an accomplished Paralympian. When he retired from skiing and racing, he moved on to handle customer service and public affairs, and for

the past ten years he has sold home medical equipment. Daniel was already familiar with the Rick Hansen Foundation – in fact, it was meeting Rick that inspired his athletic career – so when he heard about RHFAC, he saw it as a great opportunity to become self-employed in a meaningful field.

Daniel acknowledges the growing need for Universal Design in the built environment, which factored into his decision to take the training. When rating sites, he has noticed how many people are touched by disability in some way. He looks at assessments in two parts. The first is a conversation using real examples on an organization's site to explain meaningful accessibility from the point of view of someone with a disability. The second is providing real solutions to areas they could improve.

“You're looking at it from a perspective that they probably haven't yet,” he explains, “so you give them some wonderful opportunities that they can jump on board with and feel good about.”

**i** See also the Factsheet on the Rick Hanson programme, page 67.

# Multilingual training platform for parents and guardians

## GREECE AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES / ELPIDA PROJECT

ELPIDA (E-Learning Platform for Intellectual Disability Awareness) is a grant-funded project launched by a consortium of European organizations – including an independent research centre, non-profit association, social enterprise, state-funded resource centre, and university – to equip parents of persons with intellectual disabilities with the knowledge and skills to better support their children. As of September 2019, some 400 parents have completed this free, multilingual online course.

### Problems Targeted

Most approaches to supporting persons with intellectual disabilities are focused either on the people themselves or on the professionals who work with them, while overlooking the importance of training parents and guardians.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The ELPIDA project meets the training and support needs of parents and guardians of persons with intellectual disabilities by offering an evidence-based online course about their children's rights and needs. By educating parents, the project aims to create a positive secondary effect on the quality of life of persons with intellectual disabilities. Parents, practitioners, and experts in human rights, disability rights,

“Rights-based trainings have a positive impact on the lives of persons with disabilities and their families.”

Albert Prevos, Member of the Executive Board, European Disability Forum

and parent rights collaboratively designed the course content to address topics identified as important by parents. The course is self-paced and comprised of six stand-alone modules: human rights, communication, stress management, transition to adulthood, sexual health, and ageing. Since its launch in October 2017, the course, which is free of charge, has been taken by approximately 400 people in six different languages. As a result, parents report that they have a better understanding of their children's rights and needs, can communicate more effectively with profes-

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- The course is available in Danish, English, German, Greek, Norwegian, and Portuguese and has been taken by approximately 400 parents, from 2017 to 2019.

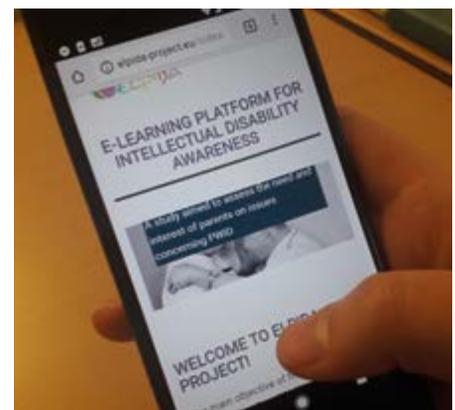
sionals about their children, and can better manage their own stress.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The ELPIDA project is funded as an Erasmus+ project by the European Union with a grant of €188,578 covering a two-year period (October 2017 to September 2019). The consortium will seek additional funding in 2020 and is maintaining all activities in the meantime. Further funds will be used to expand the parent training; to create a welcoming space for awareness-raising about intellectual disability inclusion; to train persons with intellectual disabilities as self-advocates; and to expand the consortium.

Since the course content is based on expert evidence-based input from multiple countries, the course can be easily replicated in additional languages.

Courses can also be taken on smartphones.



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# Comprehensive Inclusive Education for indigenous communities

## GUATEMALA / ADISA

ADISA is an NGO providing community-based Inclusive Education to children with disabilities from the indigenous community of Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala. Through its Inclusive Education Programme, ADISA trains teachers in inclusive teaching methods; offers parent workshops, early intervention therapy, and academic support to students at home; and raises awareness about disabilities in the community. From 2017 to 2019, the programme supported more than 150 young people.

### Problems Targeted

Educational opportunities are limited in the rural, indigenous, Tzutujil-speaking community of Santiago Atitlán, especially for children with disabilities whose needs and abilities are often not considered in regular schools.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

When the Inclusive Education Programme began in 2007, it consisted of just two teachers who trained other educators, raised awareness about disabilities, and taught three students with disabilities. Over time, additional practices and teaching methods have evolved to include more innovative strategies. The workshops for parents, for example, tackle a wide range of topics, depending on the identified needs of the families.

“Because of ADISA, I have learned so many things that I would never have had the opportunity to learn.”

Salvador Mendoza, former programme participant with a disability

In 2019, workshops centred on the topic of non-violent parenting strategies. In addition, monthly activities such as art therapy and yoga are organized for mothers of children with disabilities to foster a sense of community and to promote better mental health. Most of the children and their families also access ADISA's complementary services, including physical, psychological, and language therapy.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The annual cost of ADISA's Inclusive Education Programme is approximately \$60,000. The programme is entirely funded by the Christoffel Blind Mission (CBM),



Workshops for parents tackle a wide range of topics, depending on the identified needs of the families.

the Strachan Foundation, and the Archdiocese of Osaka.

ADISA has replicated this practice with a partner organization in Chiquimula, adapting the programme to local needs (e.g., by focusing on teaching sign language, Braille, and orientation and mobility skills to students who have mostly visual and hearing impairments). The NGO also supports the Resource Centre for Inclusive Education (CREI) in eight municipalities.

ADISA will continue supporting CREI in the 40 schools of Santiago Atitlán. Ultimately, however, it expects the government to assume its responsibility to educate persons with disabilities, with ADISA in an advisory role in the design of policies and programmes.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2007

- Since its founding in 2007, more than 40 teachers have been trained in Inclusive Education.
- 35+ parents of children with disabilities were supported from 2017 to 2019.

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# Grassroots self-advocacy for children through self-created comics

## INDIA / CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF INDIA – GRASSROOTS COMICS

The Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI) is the largest non-profit health care provider in India after the Indian Government. CHAI joined Grassroots Comics in a project that teaches children with various disabilities how to develop and produce hand-drawn comics on paper as a medium for self-expression and a tool for self-advocacy. The Grassroots Comics movement was initiated by World Comics India, and CHAI has been trained to develop the grassroots comics. Since 2016, more than 1,000 Grassroots Comics have been created by children with disabilities in India each year.

### Problems Targeted

Children with disabilities in India – especially those living in rural areas – lack access to education, experience exclusion from families and communities; and have limited opportunities to express themselves.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Grassroots Comics offers an alternative form of communication that allows children with disabilities to express their personalities and opinions. The children begin with four days of comic development training with attendants to help in translation, communication, and articulation of the issues.

**“An innovative, cost-effective, and replicable method that provides great opportunity for direct representation of children and youngsters with disabilities.”**

Vishal Gupta, Senior Programme Manager

The training starts with a brainstorming session about the word “disability,” and the children then learn some examples on how to draw the human head and how to make drawings more expressive by adding text balloons. After this initial training, children draw their own story on paper, including the various narrative elements such as an introduction, development, drama/plot twist, and conclusion.

After the completion of training, children are encouraged to train other children with disabilities in their communities. The A3-sized (30 x 42 cm) comics are displayed in various locations in the children's communities; and CHAI compiles booklets of these comics, which are sent to government officials and

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Children from eight out of India's 29 states have participated.
- Some 1,500 comics were created in 2018.

other stakeholders. The number of comics produced annually has steadily grown, from about 1,000 in 2016 to 1,500 in 2018.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The cost of setting up Grassroots Comics in 2015 was \$64,000, which included training sessions, producing the comics, a communications campaign, and monitoring. The Liliane Foundation covered about 90 per cent of the costs, and CHAI, as implementing partner, covered the remainder. Since then it has been integrated into CHAI's regular budget, without requiring additional funds.

CHAI has trained other organizations to replicate the practice, and as of 2018 the project has been successfully undertaken with CHAI's partner organizations in eight out of 29 states in India. Going forward, the NGO plans to replicate the practice with 60 more partner organizations across India.



Drawing your own comics with peer support.



Vishal Gupta

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# Free online platform supporting families of children with intellectual disabilities

## INDIA / NAYI DISHA RESOURCE CENTRE – ONLINE PLATFORM FOR PARENTS

Based in Hyderabad, India, Nayi Disha Resource Centre is an NGO that supports families of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Its free online platform offers evidence-based information on topics such as education, therapies, and future planning for their children, as well as an online peer support community and a directory of verified services. Offline support is also available through workshops and support groups. The platform receives between 600 and 800 visits a day, mainly from parents across India.

### Problems Targeted

There is a lack of awareness and information for families of children with intellectual disabilities in India, which leads to delayed diagnosis and reduced uptake of services.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Nayi Disha Resource Centre has three sections online: a pan-India directory of services, a knowledge hub, and an online parent community.

The directory includes doctors, therapists, schools, and community support services. There are various search options, for example, by location or age of the child, and the directory also includes

“Nayi Disha helped me find new avenues for my daughter. I found an art group, a vocational centre, and much more in the directory.”

Deepali Sengar, parent

reviews from other parents. The knowledge hub has evidence-based information in Hindi, English, and Telugu. Topics include diagnostic assessments, therapies, and age-relevant information, such as for early childhood or adolescence. The online support groups for parents allow families to share blogs, educational videos, and other information. Nayi Disha also offers offline support, including workshops, support groups, and family events, including some run by parents.

Since 2015, over 4,200 families have accessed online support or attended offline events.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Nayi Disha was initially set up with no external



The Knowledge Hub has books and learning materials in Hindi, English, and Telugu covering a variety of parenting and teaching-related topics.

income, and is now funded through corporate and individual donations, sponsorships, and parent contributions, with an annual budget of \$76,000 in 2019.

The organization is currently looking to diversify its future income. Since its launch in Hyderabad, Nayi Disha's programme has been replicated in other Indian cities, including Pune, Mumbai, and Bangalore. The replication model is to identify early adopters to train as parent champions, develop networks with the local healthcare system, and partner with credible local organizations, providing them with the resources to adopt the model. Nayi Disha is currently creating multilingual information resources and upgrading its technology to support such replication.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- The online platform has received 110,000 visitors since it was launched in 2015.
- The online service directory lists 1,450 services across 64 cities in India.
- The website hosts 330 articles on different themes and age groups.



Prachi Deo

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# Teaching architects and students to use Universal Design principles

INDIA / UNIVERSAL DESIGN CENTRE, BNCA UNIVERSITY – UDC CENTRE

BNCA University is based in Pune, Maharashtra. With the Universal Design Centre (UDC), BNCA has focused on bringing architectural education into the national education framework. The centre has developed curricula, content, and teaching/learning methods, as well as resources for the capacity-building of students and faculty of architecture to promote Universal Design. Starting from two architectural institutes in 2014, the practice has grown to more than 30 architectural and design institutes across India in 2018. More than 4,500 people have been trained from 2014 to 2019.

## Problems Targeted

Architectural education in India has failed to include Universal Design and accessibility in both the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Persons with disabilities have been engaged by BNCA University as core team members in formulating the curricula and creating course content for the Universal Design Centre. They have also been invited as user experts and resource persons for conducting the training programmes. In cooperation with professional architecture and design bodies, UDC has compiled publications of academic projects, research papers, and scholarly articles based on Universal Design. It has also conducted state- and national-level conferences, roundtables, and seminars to create awareness and to overcome the challenges regarding the integration of Universal Design in architectural education and practice in India.

“The sensitivity of students towards Universal Design has grown immensely.”

Dr. Aradhana Jindal, Head, M. M. School of Architecture

The workshops have a theoretical, practical, and creative component, featuring, for example, many easy-to-implement measures – such as doorknobs that require only a push or pull, or remote controls for smart homes with a limited number of buttons.

Since 2014, more than 3,000 students and 500 teachers of architecture from over 30 institutes across India have participated in the programme, including the National Institute of Design and the National Institute of Technology.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- Since 2014, more than 1,000 professionals, 3,000 students, and 500 teachers in architecture have been sensitized and trained.
- UDC has already expanded to 30 institutes, and ultimately seeks to reach all 500 architecture and design institutes in India.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Universal Design Centre is a voluntary, non-profit organization that does not charge for its services. Travel costs and overhead expenses are funded by BNCA or the participating architectural institution. As of 2019, the programme has been scaled to 30 participating institutes, and UDC wants to actively engage with all 500 architectural institutions in the country. As a first step, regional sub-centres are being developed for conducting train-the-trainer programmes and to help institutions in making Universal Design an integral part of the design process.

Finally, UDC intends to introduce postgraduate courses in Universal Design in India.



Workshops have a theoretical, practical, and creative component.

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[www.bnca.ac.in/bnca-cells/universal-design](http://www.bnca.ac.in/bnca-cells/universal-design)

# App-based family-centred early intervention therapy in rural communities

## INDIA / AMAR SEVA SANGAM – TRAINING OF COMMUNITY REHABILITATION WORKERS

Amar Seva Sangam is an NGO in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu focused on the support of people with disabilities in rural areas. The organization has trained over 1,800 community rehabilitation workers to provide early intervention therapy in the home to children aged 0–6. It has developed an app whereby community rehabilitation workers, childcare workers, and health workers can access support from rehabilitation specialists. This addresses gaps in provision and ensures that children in rural areas receive quality therapies.

### Problems Targeted

There is insufficient access to early intervention therapy services for children in India's rural areas due to a lack of trained professionals and long distances to urban areas.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project offers community rehabilitation workers (CRWs) a three-day orientation, followed by a ten-day base training programme. Here, rehabilitation specialists such as physiotherapists and special educators teach basic knowledge and give demonstrations. Following base training, the CRWs have enrichment training every six months, including lectures, hands-on learning, and group work.

The CRWs receive ongoing support through the Mobile Village-Based Rehabilitation – Early Intervention app. The app has learning modules that CRWs can use to educate themselves and the family

**“No child should be denied the school experience because of a disability.”**

S. Sankara Raman, Honorary Secretary, Amar Seva Sangam

members of the children they support. Rehabilitation specialists do an initial assessment of a child and enter their findings into the app, setting treatment goals and therapeutic protocols to be followed.

CRWs implement the treatment plan, and specialists track progress using standardized tools for motor, cognitive, mobility, and speech skills embedded in the app. Rehabilitation specialists visit each child once a month jointly with the CRW, providing therapy for the child and training for both CRW and parents.



A therapy session at the early intervention centre.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The development and scaling of the app and home-based early intervention programme was grant funded by Grand Challenges Canada until March 2020, with additional funding from Handicare International and the Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiative.

Funding from the government of Tamil Nadu and Grand Challenges Canada in 2019–2020 will expand the programme to 2,100 additional children; and further government funding will allow other NGOs to scale the programme across the state.

The project's ultimate aim is to cover all children with developmental disabilities living in rural Tamil Nadu (estimated at 54,000) by 2030.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- 47,375 children have been screened for delayed development up to the end of 2019.
- 1,102 children have received early intervention therapy.
- 2,033 health workers have been trained.

 Sankara Raman Srinivasan  
secretary.amar@amarseva.org – www.amarseva.org

# Training teachers in inclusive techniques and learning materials

## INDIA / LIGHT FOR THE WORLD AND PARTNERS – RAISE PROJECT

In 2016 Light for the World, a global disability and development NGO, launched a joint project called Regional Action for Inclusive Education (RAISE) along with CBM India and Jan Vikas Samiti, an NGO based in Varanasi, as well as 15 local NGO partners. The five-year project aims to increase the participation of children with various disabilities in mainstream schools by training teachers on inclusive techniques. As of May 2019, 617 teachers have been trained and official partnerships have been set up with the government's Education for All programme in five states of north-east India.

### Problems Targeted

While India has made progress through its Education for All programme, many children with disabilities continue to be cut off from mainstream education due to inaccessible learning environments and untrained teachers.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

RAISE partners with 15 NGOs in selected districts of five states in North-East India – Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Tripura – and these NGOs now function as resource centres for Inclusive Education. These centres promote the access and

“The students are now happier and more responsive, especially through group activities and good teaching aids and other materials.”

Phiryooda Rymbai, Headteacher, Hope Centre Presbyterian School

increased participation and performance of children with disabilities in 78 government primary schools. They also train teachers, provide technical support to schools, and cooperate with education authorities. Teachers are trained in adapting or developing alternative learning materials and teaching aids, as well as in how to support a variety of disabilities, such as sensory, intellectual, learning, and multiple disabilities.

RAISE also supports schools in obtaining assistive devices and other aids for children through existing government schemes. 28 teachers have been enabled to lead and replicate the inclusion process in their own institutions as well as the government system.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- By the end of the project in 2020, 1,700 teachers and 330 master trainers shall be trained.

As per May 2019, 617 teachers have been trained. In addition, 78 public schools have been selected and are being assessed with a view of implementing minimum standards for Inclusive Education.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

RAISE has received funds from CBM (more than €1 million), Light for the World (€343,000), and Jan Vikas Samiti (€343,000). The funds cover the training and capacity development of local NGOs, teacher-training programmes, advocacy and awareness-raising, documentation, and administrative and salary costs.

The future aim is for the resource centres to become autonomous centres of expertise on Inclusive Education for their respective states. Additionally, RAISE aims to replicate the project in other districts, while training and resource materials will be taken up within the government's Education for All programme.



Teachers are trained to use a variety of materials in the classroom.

 Eva Nittmann

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# Admission quotas and support services for university enrollment

INDONESIA / CENTRE FOR DISABILITY STUDIES AND SERVICES, UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA

The Centre for Disability Studies and Services (CDSS) at Universitas Brawijaya, based in Malang City, Indonesia, runs an affirmative admission programme for students with various disabilities, which includes an admissions quota complemented by student support services. The Centre also raises awareness about disabilities at the university and advocates inclusive higher education at the national level. As of 2019, there are 165 students with disabilities (70 per cent of whom are deaf or hearing impaired) enrolled at Universitas Brawijaya.

## Problems Targeted

Only 0.9 per cent of the approximately 25 million people with disabilities in Indonesia access higher education due to poverty, scarcity of opportunity, lack of support services, and low levels of disability awareness.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Through its affirmative admission programme, CDSS has established a quota for 20 students per year with various disabilities to be admitted to Universitas Brawijaya. CDSS also provides services to support learning and inclusion. There are sign language interpreters for deaf and hard of hearing students during lectures, and peer supporters to take notes or assist otherwise. Reasonable accommodation is also practiced, and tutorials support students.

“The Centre for Disability Studies and Services and their programmes are terrific. They gave me the services that I need for my study.”

Muhammad Hasanudin, deaf graduate of Department of Tourism, Universitas Brawijaya

Tests and exams are made accessible, taking into account a variety of disabilities such as hearing and sight impairment, mobility issues, cerebral palsy, and autism. To attract peer supporters, CDSS offers trainings four times a year, teaching sign language and other support skills. In addition, disability awareness training is given to all academics at the university.

The practice started in 2012 by Slamet Thohari, a polio survivor and lecturer at the university. That year, the first 15 students with disabilities were enrolled; and as of 2019, 56 students have graduated.

 Slamet Thohari  
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Sign language interpreters and peer supporters at work in the classroom.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The entire programme costs \$2,500 per year, which is provided by Universitas Brawijaya. This covers the cost for peer support services, tutors, and accessibility measures.

Indonesia's Ministry of Higher Education incorporated CDSS's affirmative admission practice as a model of Inclusive Education into a 2017 law. All Indonesian universities are now obliged to admit students with disabilities and to provide them with necessary assistance. As of 2019, two state universities have successfully adapted the model: the State University of Surabaya and Universitas Airlangga, also in Surabaya.

CDSS plans to further optimize its disability support services by offering career assistance to graduates (through partnerships with employers), and to incorporate Inclusive Education practices in its university curriculum and teaching methods.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- Each year 20 students with various disabilities are admitted.
- Since 2016, 56 students have graduated.

# Online training for parents and teachers of children with learning disabilities

## IRELAND / URABILITY – ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY TOOL

UrAbility is a company based in Cork, Ireland, offering face-to-face training courses for teachers and parents on how to use assistive technology (AT) to support their students and children with learning disabilities. In 2019, UrAbility launched its training programmes through an online tool that selects the most appropriate course for the user according to the type of AT most suitable for a particular child. Since January 2019, more than 400 teachers and parents have subscribed to the online platform.

### Problems Targeted

With assistive technologies, children depend on their teachers and parents to assist them to use these technologies successfully. These supporting groups, however, often lack the relevant skills to do so.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

On first accessing UrAbility's online platform, users are guided through an AT selection tool. Using a decision tree, an algorithm chooses the best fitting AT for their student or child. Users are then auto-assigned courses based on their technical abilities, spoken language, and location. The courses offered by UrAbility contain video demonstrations of how to access and use the AT, additional resources, live Q&A sessions, and access to a closed meet-up group (which meets locally).

**"I would highly recommend the course to anyone interested in finding out more about the transformative power of technology."**

Rachel Doody, teacher

Each user can build a student profile, which can then be shared with other teachers or family members. This allows all people in a student's ecosystem to know which AT works best for his or her learning. UrAbility's online training and selection tool grew out of five years' experience providing in-person AT training, and two years of research involving children with learning disabilities, their parents, and schools in the United States and Ireland.

Since the platform was launched in January 2019, its users have completed more than 900 hours of online training.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- By the end of 2019, more than 400 teachers and parents have subscribed to the online platform, and some 900 hours of online training have been completed.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The base model of Urability is offered for free and encourages users to subscribe to auto-assigned courses based on the recommended AT at a later stage. UrAbility charges a monthly fee of €19 (€228 yearly) for access to course materials and ongoing support via online workshops.

The company aims to launch the online training tool in the United Kingdom in 2020 and in Germany and Austria thereafter. Over the next three years, UrAbility will also provide online training to parents and teachers in the United States.

The AT selection tool will be developed into a stand-alone app, with the possibility of connecting it to school management systems so that all teachers can access AT training and know which technology their students with learning disabilities require.



A software algorithm chooses the best fitting technology and training for each student.

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# A transition into adulthood programme for young people with disabilities

## ISRAEL / ISRAEL ELWYN – CREATING A FUTURE

In 2009 the Jerusalem-based Israel Elwyn (IE), an NGO that focuses on fostering the independence of adults and children with disabilities, started a national project called Creating a Future. The project prepares students between the ages of 16 and 21 for adulthood through employment skills and future orientation training, such as managing bank accounts and taking instructions at work. It also supports preparation for employment through an assessment of an individual's interests and strengths as well as by providing work experience. Between 2018 and 2019, some 1,500 students participated in the IE programme.

### Problems Targeted

After high school, young people with disabilities in Israel often enter sheltered programmes and employment, leading to very few opportunities and choices for their adult life.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Israel Elwyn runs the Creating a Future project in more than 60 special and inclusive schools across Israel, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Social Services as well as local municipalities.

Students undertake two work placements over a period of two years based on their interests and strengths.



“Thanks to the IE’s programme I have the confidence to advocate for myself, and I now feel ready to go for an interview and find a job.”

### A service recipient

The programme serves young people between 16 and 21 years with many kinds of disabilities, working in groups for 30 months, and is divided into two phases. For the first six months, Israel Elwyn prepares students for independence by providing training in such areas as time management, personal finances, social skills, safe use of electronic media, technology, and preventing sexual harassment. IE conducts one-on-one meetings with the students, undertakes parental and teacher questionnaires, and searches for suitable work experience opportunities.

In the second phase, students undertake two work placements over two years based on their interests and strengths, so as to adjust to the work environment. The students receive support according

to each student's preference, recognizing additional support needs such as sign language or the use of assistive devices. Some 250 students complete the programme annually.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Since 2009, Israel Elwyn receives 75 per cent of its funding through government grants and the remaining 25 per cent from local municipalities. In 2017, Israel Elwyn was funded for a total of \$1.6 million. Going forward, Israel Elwyn plans to continue to expand the programme nationally. To do so, it will pool resources with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Social Services, the Ministry of Education, and various local governments. Israel Elwyn believes its model is easily replicable internationally given its documented model, which has now been running for over a decade.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2009

- 90 per cent of IE's high school graduates go on to participate in inclusive programmes such as the National Social Service.
- Between 2018 and 2019, 1,500 students from 60+ schools participated in Creating a Future.



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# Museum accessibility for visitors with intellectual disability

## ISRAEL / AKIM ISRAEL – MUSEUM ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAMME

AKIM Israel – the National Organization for People with Intellectual Disability and their Families – is undertaking a national programme to make museums and leisure sites accessible for people with intellectual disability. Training and support are provided to participating museums in order to adapt or create accessible installations, for example, by creating large-scale models of exhibits or automated accessible explanatory videos on TV screens. In 2018, more than 3,300 people with intellectual disability used these new opportunities.

### Problems Targeted

People with intellectual disability may not be able to fully understand or enjoy museum exhibits due to inaccessible installations or complex explanations.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project aims to improve understanding and increase knowledge of those working in museums about accessibilities for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This is done by focusing on accessible and simple data, clear guidance, and easy-to-use technology in order to reduce alienation and frustration. AKIM has worked with the City of

“Last year I visited the City of David in Jerusalem. I enjoyed being with my friends and learning about history.”

Nadra Shantizi, a woman from Tel Aviv with intellectual disabilities

David National Park, the Technoda Science Museum in Hadera, the Hiriya Recycling Park, and the Atlit Illegal Immigration Detention Camp Museum to train staff and create new accessible exhibits. For example, two large-scale models simulating garbage mountain were created in the Hiriya Recycling Park, and six TV screens showing easy-to-understand Hebrew videos have been installed in Technoda Science Museum. People with intellectual disability were involved in the evaluation process.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Between 2014 and 2018 the project collaborated with leading organizations that promote the inclusion of people with disabilities. AKIM and the Shalem

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- More than 350 professionals have been trained in cognitive accessibility.

Fund, with support of government officials covered the costs of training and management (\$8,300) and of research (\$77,700), while development of the accessible installations was covered by the National Insurance Institute (\$222,200) and the participating museums (\$55,500).

Since the initial phase ended in 2018, AKIM has continued to train staff in other leisure organizations and institutes to duplicate the programme, including the Israel Nature and Parks Authority and the Jewish National Fund, which seek to apply the idea to forest areas. Training has also been given to new staff starting at two of the original museums as well as to professors and students working in the area of Inclusive Education. The long-term aim is for professionals and coordinators across a range of fields to make every aspect of their work more cognitively accessible.



Information is presented in a clear, simple, and easy-to-use format.



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# Sharing personal experiences to improve the quality of inclusive teaching

## ISRAEL / ACCESS ISRAEL – AWARENESS TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

Access Israel is an established NGO based in the metropolitan area of Tel Aviv. In 2012, it developed a training programme of lectures and personal meetings for teachers and school service providers that teaches how to work with students with disabilities. Experiential activities simulate life with a disability, and there are personal meetings with persons with disabilities who provide insights into the challenges of being a student with a disability. In 2018, some 2,000 teachers were trained. Access Israel wants to increase its outreach to more schools in Israel and to make the programme a part of the national teaching curriculum.

### Problems Targeted

Children with disabilities in Israel who are studying in mainstream schools often do not receive a quality Inclusive Education due to the lack of trained teachers.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Persons with disabilities were actively involved in the development of the training as they gave their personal insights into life with a disability. During the programmes people with disabilities are actively involved in some stages of the training by sharing their story about the challenges and successes of being a student with a disability or a parent of such a student. These personal stories are very important and effective in helping teachers to understand better what is necessary for true inclusion.

“The meeting was well organized and fitted the way the children think. I learned a lot, and I believe that experiential activities are a must for all schools.”

Shoshana Cohen, teacher

The project itself includes four components: understanding disability through lectures, experiential activities and simulations, interactions with instructors with disabilities, and teaching tools for inclusive and accessible education.

The project started with the training of 30 teachers in 2012, and this number has grown to approximately 2,000 teachers in 2018. In 2019, Friends of Access Israel (FAISR) was established and they want to duplicate one of the projects of Access Israel and



Through experiential activities and simulations, understanding and awareness is created.

bring it to the United States – carrying forward the work of training teachers for Inclusive Education.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project received initial funding from foundations, and each school that receives teacher training subsidizes these trainings with a small fee. In 2019, since Inclusive Education is becoming a matter of priority for schools, the cost of training and the project is covered primarily by the schools, with some support from the Ministry of Education and municipalities. Since the training programme is readily adaptable, it has been replicated throughout Israel. Access Israel also plays an advisory role to the Ministry of Education for accessible and Inclusive Education. In 2018, Access Israel, in collaboration with the Embassy of Israel in Latvia, presented the teacher-training model in Latvia.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- Access Israel conducted over 100 training programmes in 2018 and trained some 1,000 teachers.



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# Social inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities through community centres

## ISRAEL / THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY CENTRES (AMITIM) WITH THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Amitim is a joint project of Israel's Ministry of Health and the Israeli Association of Community Centres – local meeting places that are open to everyone. Amitim has its own coordinators within the centres to provide people with psychosocial disabilities with social and educational support and to help them engage in joint activities. This innovative model aims to achieve the promotion of personal recovery via meaningful leisure and educational activities as well as the promotion of social change in the community.

### Problems Targeted

Persons with psychosocial disabilities often face stigma and exclusion from social and educational activities because there is little awareness about mental health among support services and the general public.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Through the Amitim programme in community centres adults with psychosocial disabilities can participate in meaningful recreational and educational activities alongside other community members without disabilities based on shared interests. Through activities as diverse as art, sports, cooking, and history, participants can develop social skills, form interpersonal relationships, improve their ability to live independently, and overcome loneliness. More than 100 mental impairment professionals work at the community centres to support participants in managing their individual well-being.

“The Amitim course was part of my recovery process from a mental crisis.”

### A programme beneficiary

One of the keys to success is that people with psychosocial disabilities are part of Amitim at all levels – as directors, as mental health professionals, and as partners in designing activities. The Amitim coordinator that works in the community centres also promote discussions about mental impairments and raise awareness of psychosocial disabilities in the community through cultural and artistic events open to the general public.

As of October 2019, there were over 80 community centres nationwide serving more than 3,100 adults with a psychosocial disability.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2001

- Some 4,000+ participants have been served between 2016 and 2019.
- The centres employ 100+ mental health professionals.
- Currently, there are 80 community centres, with more planned.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Amitim programme is jointly financed by Israel's Ministry of Health and the Israeli Association of Community Centres, with an annual budget of \$4.2 million. The Amitim programs in the community centres have been replicated in major and peripheral cities to cater to both Hebrew and Arabic-speaking communities, and the model is believed to be easily replicable in other countries. In 2020 another ten Amitim community centres will open in Israel.

The project also aims to provide more services geared towards specific communities (such as Bedouins and ultra-orthodox Jews) and to reach at least 4,000 people through 100 centres.



Theatre performances are an important part of the community centre's activities.



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# One-year preparation programme for children with disabilities to enter mainstream schools

## JORDAN / AL HUSSEIN SOCIETY – SCHOOL PREPARATION PROGRAMME

The Al Hussein Society is a leading Jordanian NGO that provides a range of rehabilitation and educational programmes and services for people with disabilities. Since 2009, the society has run an intensive one-year course to prepare children with disabilities for joining mainstream schools. A multi-disciplinary team provides services such as tuition and therapy, followed by an assessment. Since the beginning of the programme until 2019, 111 children with disabilities enrolled in the programme, with 77 admitted to mainstream schools.

### Problems Targeted

Children with disabilities who are not exposed to environmental and educational stimulants might not be accepted in mainstream schools based on below average IQ assessments.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The one-year intensive programme provides children aged 6–10 and their families with a tailored programme to support their learning via such services as occupational therapy, assistive technology, and support from special education specialists, along with the creation of individual education plans. The services are designed to help children to prepare for and pass the entrance exam, which students with disabilities must take in order to be admitted into grade 1 of mainstream schools in Jordan.

“Tears of joy started to fall when I entered the school because I never thought that my daughter could learn like everybody else.”

Mother of Tuleen

Since the programme began, the Al Hussein Society has been successful in integrating an average of 65 per cent of children into mainstream schools, with a rate of almost 85 per cent in the latest academic year, 2018/19. Aside from its focus on school admission, the programme improves students' behaviour, participation in society, and social skills development.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Funding for the Society comes mostly from its imple-

All services are designed to support children with disabilities to pass the school entrance exam.



mentation of developmental and humanitarian projects using international donations, which provides 70 per cent of the project budget. The rest comes from contributions by caregivers and government funds. Additional income is derived from the Society's gift shop, events, and donations.

Replication of this practice is possible if the same circumstances can be created, for example, a suitably trained network of rehabilitation and therapy professionals, plus parents willing to support their children in learning the skills necessary for first grade.

In the future, the Al Hussein Society plans to share the model and results of the practice with all institutions, associations, schools, and decision makers in Jordan and the wider Arab world.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2009

- 111 children with disabilities have enrolled in the programme, with 77 admitted to mainstream schools.
- Almost 85 per cent of children with disabilities entered mainstream schools in academic year 2018/19.

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# Life Stories from Chile, Finland, Germany, and India



THE STORY OF ELLI (17), USER OF THE “ON THE VERGE OF ADULTHOOD” PROGRAMME

**“We made new friends and started activities like Laughing Yoga.”**

*Viitasaari, Finland*

My name is Elli, I am 17 years old, and I live with my family in Viitasaari, Finland. Before I joined the On the Verge of Adulthood programme I had lots of questions, such as: How can I make friends? How can I find a hobby? What should I study? What is my dream job? Where do I want to live? What are my dreams for the future?

My family and I started working with local services, the school, church, and KVPS [Finnish Service Foundation for People with an Intellectual Disability] to find answers to these questions. We got peer support, we made new friends, and we did activities like Laughing Yoga and making movies together. I also found something I wanted to study at Spesia Vocational College.

Through the programme, my family and I have felt more in charge of the process. It has strengthened my roots in the community, but it has also given me wings for the future. My questions have been answered and my path towards independent living has been created.

**i** See also the Factsheet on the On the Verge of Adulthood programme, page 72.

THE STORY OF DIETER KWIATKOWSKI (61), USER OF PIKSL MOBIL

**“I like to travel via my tablet to countries where you speak Spanish, French, and Italian.”**

*Düsseldorf, Germany*



I live in the Haus am Falder dormitory in Düsseldorf with 13 other people. This is a home for people who are affected by an accident, a stroke, or

a similar condition that causes sudden damage to the brain. In various ways, I can learn again the things that are important for an independent and self-determined life.

In 2011 the PIKSL laboratory opened a location in Düsseldorf where digital barriers are being broken down in the environment for people with and without disabilities. Since 2014, the PIKSL lab has also come to our dormitory in order to reach people with acquired brain damage.

People like me, who cannot go to the PIKSL lab, are visited by PIKSL experts. They help me and my roommates to explore the digital world with tablet computers. In this way, we can participate in the digital life. For me, this means that once a week I can rediscover the world through travel reports on YouTube. For example, I like to travel via the tablet to countries where you speak Spanish, French, and Italian. I don't know why, but after that I always speak Spanish very well, although I didn't learn the language at school. I also like to watch documentaries about culinary specialties. Did you know that you have to pay several hundred euros for a kilogram of fillet of Japanese Wagyu beef?

**i** See also the Factsheet on PIKSL Mobil, page 74.

## THE STORY OF ÁNGELA OLIVARES, STUDENT OF THE “DIPLOMA IN LABOUR SKILLS” PROGRAMME

**“I now believe that I can have a job and be independent.”**

*Viña del Mar Headquarters, Valparaíso, Chile*



My name is Ángela Olivares Tello, and I live with my mother, a sister, and my brother-in-law in the city of Valparaíso. I am currently finishing my second year in the Diploma in Labour Skills programme, specializing in administration. I am doing my practice at the Valparaíso Real Estate Conservator, where I have learned a lot.

Before entering the programme I dedicated myself to massage work, but I decided to take a sabbatical because I was very tired. Studying in the programme, I have learned to be more responsible and independent. I now believe that I can have a job and be independent. I would also like to have my own apartment and my own car. In addition, I want to have my own family, like everyone else, and also have my own massage and manicure shop.

**i** See also the Factsheet on *Universidad Andrés Bello*, page 68.

## THE STORY OF JOSEF PERRIE BASHUWA SYIEM, USER OF THE RAISE PROGRAMME

**“In just a matter of a month in that school, his speech started improving.”**

*Shillong, India*



Like most other parents, we sent Joseph to preschool and nursery classes in two mainstream private schools in Shillong. Initially, his autism wasn't noticed. However, he would not play with the other children, as he had a fear or anxiety regarding it. Also, he could not perform his role/duties in a group during the school assembly.

We stopped sending Josef to school at some point, and sent him for diagnosis, which is when we discovered that he had autistic traits. It was then that we looked for a school with an Inclusive Education programme. Josef was admitted to Jyoti Sroat Inclusive School in Shillong later in the academic year.

In just a matter of a month in that school, his speech started improving. His social skills have also improved, especially with regards to mingling with his brother and his cousins at home. The flexible nature of learning and the freedom to walk around the campus safely makes Josef very happy to go to school. He certainly has a keenness for learning, and he has shown improvement beyond our expectations.

**i** See also the Factsheet on the *RAISE* programme, page 84.

## THE STORY OF FATHIMA SUBAIR (20), PARTICIPANT IN THE GRASSROOTS COMICS COURSE OF CHAI

**“We drew comics about our lives and held an exhibition in the college.”**

*Kerala, India*



My name is Fathima Subair, born with cerebral palsy and now using a wheelchair. My small family consists of my father, mother, and a sister. My father is a diabetic patient and he is unable to work. My mother does agricultural work and is engaged in goat rearing and backyard

poultry farming. Currently, I am a second-year economics student in St. John's College, Anchal. Unfortunately, however, there is no ramp or lift to go to classrooms. Therefore, my classmates would carry me to the second-floor classrooms. I also faced difficulties in using the toilets. There are four other youngsters like me with disabilities at this college, all with similar difficulties.

In August 2018, with the support of CHAI [Catholic Health Association of India] and its partner organization [Punalur Social Service Society], we all participated in a grassroots comics programme. We drew comics about our lives and held an exhibition in the college. As a result, the students and teachers came to better understand the practical and emotional difficulties of the students with disabilities. For example, the second-year economics classroom was moved to the ground floor, and modifications were made so that I can use the toilet with my wheelchair without any difficulty.

**i** See also the Factsheet on *CHAI*, page 80.

# Inclusive schools for students who are blind or visually impaired

## JORDAN / ARAB EPISCOPAL SCHOOL IRBID

The Arab Episcopal School was opened in 2003 in the Jordanian city of Irbid with the support of the Anglican Church. An inclusive school and kindergarten for blind and visually impaired children, learning is supported by assistive devices and accessible materials such as magnifiers and Braille books. Children with and without visual impairments, and from different religions, learn together from infancy to age 16. In 2018, the school had 40 students who are blind or visually impaired.

### Problems Targeted

Because Irbid did not have schools where blind children could learn, the only option was for children to travel to Amman and live in a boarding school for the blind.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The Arab Episcopal School is an inclusive Christian school where students, both with and without disabilities and of different religions, learn together. As of 2019, the Arab Episcopal School is the second school in Jordan that works to integrate sighted, low-vision, and blind students. The school offers support methods to make the resources accessible for its students. Currently, there are Braille computer keyboards and printers, camera magnifiers, and Braille books

“I am so used to being with my blind friends, studying and playing together as if we were one.”

Mera, a ninth-grade student at Arab Episcopal School

and boards to support blind or low-vision children with reading. Among the school's 51 employees, five of the teachers are blind, and they not only support the blind students with class work but also assist them in their daily lives. Besides the regular curriculum, the school promotes ethnic and religious tolerance. Students learn respectful interaction with their fellow peers as well as life skills, such as healthy nutrition and environmental protection. Registration has been growing since the school's launch in 2003, with 275 students in academic year 2018/19.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2003

- The number of students with disabilities in the school has grown from two in 2003 to 40 in 2019.
- Five of the school's 51 employees are blind teachers.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Approximately 60 per cent of the school's funding comes from fees paid for by sighted students, other donors are the Dioceses of the Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East, and Jordan's Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities.

The Arab Episcopal School has not yet replicated its model, but it aims to expand with an inclusive workshop for grade-10 students with learning disabilities, for which it is seeking funding. This workshop would aim to train students with professional skills and to support them in finding employment. The school also aims to establish a Braille-language teaching centre for the local community.



Teachers not only support the blind students with class work but also assist them in their daily lives and teach tolerance for different ethnicities and religions.



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# Teaching reading and writing to adults with intellectual disabilities in institutions

## KAZAKHSTAN / PSYCHOANALYTIC ASSOCIATION – ED-RECOVERY ACADEMY

In 2017 the Psychoanalytic Association, an NGO based in Almaty, Kazakhstan, launched the Ed-Recovery Academy (ERA) – a programme designed to teach reading and writing skills to young adults with intellectual disabilities who are living in psychiatric institutions. The ultimate goal of ERA is to move people out of closed institutions, and as of 2019 some 100 people had completed the programme’s training.

### Problems Targeted

In Kazakhstan, people with intellectual disabilities over the age of 18 often lack access to educational opportunities and are usually locked away in psychiatric institutions.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Ed-Recovery Academy started in 2017 with 20 people with intellectual disabilities taking part in a one-year pilot programme, and their input served for the design of the curriculum. ERA focuses on people with intellectual disabilities with no literacy skills and teaches them reading, grammar, and math.



A study group learning about nature.

“I was able to write but not to read. But my mentor was able to show me the way how to read. I don’t know how she did it, but I’m glad that I can read now!”

S., aged 32

The teaching is done through an easy-to-read methodology and by incorporating life skills into the curriculum. Each student receives two hours of individual lessons twice a week and two hours of group work, plus regular homework. The Ed-Recovery Academy cooperates with another concept, called Training Café, whereby advanced students find work and continue with vocational training, such as cooking skills.

As of 2018, 70 persons with intellectual disabilities have been trained.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Psychoanalytic Association runs both programs, the Ed-Recovery Academy and the Training Café,

which provides supportive employment for people with intellectual disabilities. Funding for the education programme comes partly from sales generated by the Training Café, and the cost of the teaching staff cost is covered by the association.

Currently, the ERA programme runs only in Almaty, but it could be readily replicated in other Russian-speaking communities. The association is working on a collaboration to incorporate the programme in other boarding houses in Almaty.

Looking further ahead, ERA aims to implement the programme nationally in psychiatric institutions, boarding houses, and especially places where people with intellectual disabilities do not have access to any education.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Between 2017 and 2019, the programme trained 100 people with intellectual disabilities.
- The programme aims to move 100 people with intellectual disabilities out of closed psychiatric institutions by 2021.

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# Empowering non-formal schools in slum areas

## KENYA / THE ACTION FOUNDATION – NON-FORMAL SCHOOL PROGRAMME

The Action Foundation (TAF), based in Nairobi, is a youth-led NGO supporting children with physical disabilities and their families. In 2015, TAF launched a project to promote early childhood care and education for children between the ages of four and eight, targeting low-cost, non-formal schools in poor residential neighbourhoods of Nairobi. Its holistic approach includes early identification, child safeguarding, creating enabling learning environments, and strengthening the ability of teachers and caregivers to interact with children in creative ways.

### Problems Targeted

In Kenya there exist low-cost, non-formal schools in poor residential neighbourhoods, offering basic education and training. However, their standards often fall short of national quality standards due to the lack of teaching skills and infrastructure.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

TAF initiated improvements to preschools using a child-centred model, which included teacher training in Inclusive Education, provision of volunteer special needs teachers, and low-cost learning materials.

**“I have developed a variety of strategies to include all learners.”**

*Njenga, a teacher and TAF project supporter*

The interventions started in the three informal settlements of Kibera, Kawangware, and Mukuru, targeting low-cost, non-formal schools. Teachers were motivated to interact with children in creative ways that encourage play and learning (e.g., by adapting teaching materials), while supporting the development of cognitive and motor skills. Initially, 16 volunteer special needs teachers travelled to the local early childhood development centres to work alongside 40 teachers, who have together reached 240 mainstream teachers, 800 caregivers, and 21 heads of schools between 2015 and 2019.

For children with disabilities, the practice has increased school enrolment, retention, and transition to mainstream education following their preschool years. In addition, the organization has developed an app and an online tool for peer learning and awareness about Inclusive Education.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Since 2015, more than 1,600 children with and without disabilities have benefitted from the project.
- In 2019, there are 56 teachers working in three slum communities in Nairobi.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The annual budget of the early intervention and education model is \$86,000. The TAF funding model is primarily based on sourcing donor funds through proposal development. Additionally, the organization sells handmade articles that are produced by caregivers. Moreover, partners, corporations, schools, and the community are asked to mobilize local resources to meet various needs, such as learning materials, physiotherapy equipment, and nutritional items.

TAF intends to expand the project to Kilifi and Makueni counties. The project is highly replicable, especially as the organization has developed a user-friendly toolkit manual and an android application.



Teachers interact with children in creative ways that encourage play and learning.

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# Supporting schools to establish assistive technology labs for blind students

## KENYA / INABLE – COMPUTER LABS

inABLE is a US-based NGO working across Kenya to increase access to assistive technology for students who are blind or have low vision. It equips specialist schools with assistive technology computer labs, including PCs and software, and provides training for teachers and students. Since 2009, inABLE has enrolled over 7,700 students in these labs and has trained 195 teachers in six specialist schools. Going forward, it is looking to expand to all the specialist schools in Kenya, as well as to replicating the programme in other East African countries.

### Problems Targeted

Low access to assistive technology in Kenyan schools means that students who are blind or visually impaired graduate without the digital skills needed to communicate, access information, and secure employment.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

inABLE provides schools with everything needed to set up an assistive technology computer lab. It installs the infrastructure, hardware, software, and accessories, and provides skills training to students and teachers. The organization offers assistive technology skills training ranging from basic skills, such as typing, to more advanced job-focused skills, such as Java

**“When blind students access digital information and communicate with the world, they are more hopeful about their future.”**

Irene Mbari-Kirika, Founder and Executive Director, inABLE

programming. The programme also encourages peer learning, whereby advanced students train fellow students. inABLE has developed a computer skills curriculum for blind students aged 6–20, including email, web browsing, productivity software, and HTML web page design.

Current annual enrolment is 1,500 students. Students demonstrate increased proficiency with various devices, including desktop computers, laptops, and iPads, and they learn how to identify accessible hardware and software. A nationwide survey of visually impaired students conducted by the Georgia Institute of Technology (US), showed that inABLE students had a more positive outlook and greater self-confidence compared to students in other schools.



The inABLE computer skills curriculum for blind students includes email, web browsing, productivity software, and HTML web page design.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

inABLE was launched in 2009 in one school with 100 students, and in 2019 it has grown to eight labs in six specialist schools. The cost of setting up a lab is approximately \$325,000 over a three-year period. inABLE's income is generated by fundraising from individuals, institutions, businesses, and events.

The goal is to replicate the model in the remaining specialist schools in Kenya, as well as to adapt the model for other disabilities and low-income countries.

In 2017, inABLE signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education to increase access to education for students with visual impairments through digitalizing learning materials, a computer skills curriculum, and impact research.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2009

- Over 30,000 training hours provided.
- In late 2019, 155 desktop computers, 53 laptops, and 61 iPads across six schools are maintained.



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# 24-hour TV station broadcasting in sign language

## KENYA / SIGNS MEDIA KENYA LIMITED – SIGNS TV

In 2017, Signs Media Kenya Limited, a social enterprise supporting the talent of people with disabilities in Kenya, launched a 24-hour sign language television station called Signs TV. The station broadcasts content in sign language along with spoken words and audio. Broadcasting in 14 counties of Kenya, Signs TV presents informative, educational, and entertainment content along with a focus on deaf culture and disability rights. In 2019, Signs TV has an estimated viewership of 500,000 deaf persons, 1.2 million with other disabilities, and 1.5 million adults and children wanting to learn sign language.

### Problems Targeted

Television content is not accessible to deaf persons in Kenya, leaving out a significant viewership population. Their social invisibility and the lack of opportunities to produce content themselves further enhances the stigma of their disability.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Signs TV broadcasts content in sign language along with audio and voice, and was launched to produce accessible content for deaf persons and to make disability more visible in the public space in Kenya. The content covers an array of topics related to news, information, education, and entertainment, and is run by a team consisting of 60 per cent people

“Promoting the social, economic, political, and talent development of persons with disabilities through Signs TV will greatly help to reduce stigma and discrimination.”

Luke Kizito Ojiambo Muleka, Founder/  
Managing Director, Signs TV

with disabilities. The channel not only allows deaf people and people with hearing impairments to learn from the informative content, but it also provides the opportunity for friends and family members to learn sign language. By focusing on inclusive broadcasting, Signs TV has begun to influence the school system in Kenya, including working with schools to introduce sign language at an early age, and documenting inclusion projects such as those by the Kenya Institute of Special Education.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Signs TV currently broadcasts in 14 of the 47 counties of Kenya.
- 60 per cent of employees at Signs Media Kenya Limited are people with disabilities.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Funding for Signs TV comes through its advertising model. Apart from its original content, it broadcasts advertisements in sign language for a fee. The organization also offers sign language interpretation services and disability-friendly productions. Replication of this model should not be challenging since it has been tried and tested in Kenya, with good results. Signs TV plans to go national in 2020 and expand to 50 other African countries by 2025. The station is working closely with the government to develop opportunities for the employment of persons with disabilities, such as an employment quota for businesses. It also aims to include more educational programming, representing various schools and students with disabilities.



Signs TV broadcasts content in sign language along with audio and voice, making disability more visible in the public space in Kenya.

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# A low-cost approach to early childhood development

## MALAWI / SIGHTSAVERS – EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

In 2016 Sightsavers, a UK-based NGO with a focus on eye-care in over 30 low income countries, launched a project in the Ntcheu and Chikwawa districts of Malawi to promote disability inclusion in early childhood and development education (ECDE) programmes. The organization works with local community-based childhood centres (CBCCs) and creates low-cost learning materials to make education more inclusive for children with disabilities. Since 2016, the project has supported 20 CBCCs in the two districts, which include 179 children with disabilities.

### Problems Targeted

Access to early childhood development and education is limited for children with disabilities in Malawi due to negative social attitudes, inaccessible learning environments, and lack of investment.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project has developed a local model of inclusive ECDE that relies on existing services and low-cost methods. First, information, education, and communication materials were created and distributed, highlighting simple ways of supporting children with disabilities in centres and at home. Next, specially adapted bicycles for transport were provided.

“The kids have a good foundation that assists them to easily adapt to primary level education.”

Materson, volunteer caregiver at a community-based childhood centre

The project was implemented in partnership with the Catholic Health Commission (CHC), the Centre for Children’s Affairs (CCA) and the Federation of Disabled People’s Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA). These partners were involved from the design stage to project completion.

As of 2019, 212 children with disabilities had enrolled in CBCCs, while 50 received home-based care. Additionally, screening for disabilities took place for 1,324 children. Anecdotal evidence suggests that children are successfully making friends and learning new skills, and that parents are pleased with their children’s progress. The Ministry of Gender, which is responsible for ECDE, has recognized the CBCCs as centres of excellence.



Daily life at a community-based childhood centre.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project received funding for three years from Comic Relief, a UK-based charity, plus funding from Stitching Dioraphte, a Dutch Charitable Fund. Sightsavers worked closely with the Ministry of Gender in Malawi, FEDOMA, local communities, and two other national NGOs to ensure effective utilisation of funds.

The project has been designed with replication in mind, as it utilises existing government systems and local CBCCs, and is set up and sustained by communities. It has developed low or no-cost solutions in which children with disabilities can be included in the centres and also receive support at home.

In the next year, Sightsavers will scale the project up to an additional 29 CBCCs in the district of Ntcheu and will trial a livelihoods component to ensure sustainability.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- As of 2019, 60 children with disabilities have transitioned from CBCCs to primary schools.
- The project has trained 842 caregivers, community leaders, and government workers.



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# Providing free space to develop technological skills for young people at risk

## MEXICO / THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS – DIA INCLUSIVE INNOVATION LAB

In 2015 The Trust for the Americas, a non-profit organization affiliated with the Organization of American States promoting social and economic inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean, teamed up with Universidad Tecnológica Santa Catarina (UTSC) in Mexico to create the Democratizing Innovation in the Americas (DIA) Inclusive Lab. The lab provides youth with and without disabilities a free space to learn digital and technical skills and to develop new ideas using technology. It offers accessible equipment such as 3D printers and laser cutters, and has seen the creation of over 300 designs, with 40 being awarded seed funding. In 2019, there are labs in Mexico, Colombia, and Jamaica.

### Problems Targeted

Young people with disabilities in Mexico often lack access to technical education, with many dropping out due to a lack of accessible equipment or from stigma.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The DIA Inclusive Lab provides young people with disabilities and other at-risk youths a free space in which to develop technological skills and where they can create low-cost solutions and innovations. Young people can access adaptive and high-end technologies such as 3D printers, laser cutters, screen readers, and voice recognition programmes to learn, experiment, create, and innovate.

“The lab is a community of driven youth, and we are ready to thrive!”

Sugeyry, a 21-year-old lab participant

The Trust for the Americas chose UTSC as a partner for this project because the university is among very few accessible educational institutions in the region that serves people both with and without disabilities.

Since its creation in 2015, the lab has provided training to some 2,000 at-risk youth and opened access to its resources to almost 14,000 people.

An example of the kind of innovations created in the lab is Exo-chair, a low-cost technology kit that transforms a manual wheelchair into an electronic one. The number of participants to have accessed the lab increased from 2,306 in 2016 to 5,578 in 2018.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Some 2,000 at-risk youths have used the UTSC lab since 2015.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The lab is supported financially by UTSC. A UTSC project called POETA YouthSpark, financed by Microsoft and implemented by the Trust, helps with providing participants and other resources.

The lab is located within the UTSC premises, which also gives it access to regular maintenance, equipment renovation, and qualified staff.

The DIA lab's success has led the Trust to open two more such labs in Kingston, Jamaica and Bogota, Colombia. The lab in Kingston has provided training to over 440 youth and promoted the creation of 130 innovation projects since opening in 2017. It has a focus on solutions for urban challenges, while the lab in Bogota focuses on peace and social reconciliation among people affected by armed conflict.

Going forward, the lab intends to form and strengthen partnerships with key allies, such as Microsoft and Cisco.



Young people can access adaptive and high-end technologies such as 3D printers, laser cutters, and screen readers.

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# Textbooks in electronic, audio, and video formats for mainstream primary schools

## MONTENEGRO / UNICEF MONTENEGRO – DAISY TEXTBOOKS

In 2013, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) launched a project across Montenegro to produce DAISY-standard audio-visual books and make them available in mainstream primary schools. The project aims to make learning materials accessible to students with various disabilities, such as blindness and dyslexia, and at the same time to enable them to study alongside their peers to create an Inclusive Educational environment. The project started in 25 schools and was expanded to 70 by 2019.

### Problems Targeted

Many children with disabilities attend regular schools in Montenegro, but there is a lack of accessible teaching materials and trained teachers.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The textbooks have visual and audio options whereby text can be enlarged, and each word is highlighted as it is spoken by the narrator, enabling children with disabilities – such as those who are blind or have dyslexia or dysgraphia – to follow more easily. The books are generally used at a class level via a classroom computer and a display screen so that all children with and without disabilities can learn together. The children can also use their own devices and review the DAISY textbooks at home.

UNICEF Montenegro cooperated with the Resource Centre for Children with Physical, Visual, and

“It is much better and more effective to listen and form images in my mind that I can analyse easily. I can even retell the stories.”

Aferdita Berishaj, student and DAISY book user

Combined Disabilities – Podgorica, which converts the books to DAISY format, with the help of Drama Academy teachers and students as narrators. National Textbooks Publishing Agency took over the production in 2016. In addition, UNICEF Montenegro has partnered with the Bureau of Education and the Ministry of Education to enable the large-scale training of teachers to use DAISY in regular classrooms.

By 2019, ten textbooks have been converted to DAISY format, covering language learning and history. As of early 2019, the method has been expanded to include half of all primary schools in the country.



Children with different disabilities learning together.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Total funding from UNICEF since 2013 is €55,000, covering teacher training, capacity-building for producing the DAISY books, plus the pilot review. The Textbook Publishing Agency have provided additional funds since 2017.

The new National Inclusive Education Strategy, which was adopted in 2018, has defined the use of assistive technologies as one of the objectives to support classroom learning. Thus, government funding now covers most costs, with UNICEF supporting only the teacher training.

The project uses internationally recognized technology, which has made the model highly replicable for similar contexts.

Next steps for the project include creating awareness on the use of DAISY textbooks and its impact on learning.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- Some 35,000 students are benefitting from the use of DAISY textbooks in schools, including an estimated 500 children with disabilities.



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# Inclusive teacher-training centres

## MOZAMBIQUE / ADPP IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LFTW – TEACHER TRAINING CENTRES

ADPP, a Mozambican NGO supporting vulnerable people, and Light for the World, a global disability and development NGO working in low-income communities, are working together to transform rural teacher-training centres (TTC) into centres of expertise on Inclusive Education. Starting with two TTCs in the Mozambican provinces of Sofala and Manica, ADPP acts as the implementing partner, while Light for the World provides most of the funding as well as the Inclusive Education expertise. Since the first centre was established in 2017, 200 new teachers have been trained each year.

### Problems Targeted

Inclusive Education is not part of the official teacher-training curriculum in Mozambique, which means there are few teachers in the country who are skilled in instructing children with disabilities and special educational needs.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project started with the inclusion of blind persons in the teacher-training programme at the TTC in Sofala, who then became role models and advocates in their communities. At the same time, the TTC built up expertise in Innovative Education and started to work with trainers, students, and the school community to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities. Now teachers for primary education are trained in disability issues, enabling them to work with children with and without disabilities. In addition, the centres of expertise create links to the communities through their knowledge of environmental, health, and nutrition

“When I finish my studies,  
I want to become a doctor.”

Estrela, student in the Inclusive  
Education programme in Chimoio

issues. The trainers are also state officials, ensuring seamless cooperation with government authorities. The centres for expertise also offer a postgraduate degree in Inclusive Education, covering areas such as special educational needs, alternative communication systems, transition to the labour market, and early intervention. Moreover, the centres provide expertise and support to other stakeholders, including 47 mainstream schools and one district authority.

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### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Currently, 47 mainstream schools are practicing Inclusive Education.

As of 2019, there are two centres of expertise in which a total of 200 teachers are trained each year.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project is sustained through funds and in-kind contributions from Light for the World, with support from the Austrian Development Association (ADA), ADPP, and the Mozambican Government.

ADPP has already started to replicate the model with the transfer of the former director of the TTC in Sofala to Manica, where a second TTC is being transitioned to a centre of expertise.

Moreover, the NGOs also plan to transform eight of the 47 schools supported by the centres into model schools for Inclusive Education. At these eight model schools, teachers will receive intensified Inclusive Education training and support, while community-based activists and members of disabled persons organizations will cooperate to bring their expertise to new communities.



Teachers are trained in disability issues, enabling them to work jointly with children with and without disabilities.

# Promoting community-based Inclusive Education

## NEPAL / SAMA NEPAL – SCHOOL INCLUSION PROGRAMME

Sama Nepal, a non-profit organization active across four districts in Nepal, takes a multidisciplinary and community-based approach to providing Inclusive Education for out-of-school children, focusing on bringing those with disabilities into mainstream schools. Begun in 2016, the organization collaborates with parents, schools, community-based organizations, and government agencies to supply a wide range of support measures, such as assistive devices and teacher trainings. Sama Nepal also supports the operation of day-care services run by parents, offering therapeutic interventions together with partner organizations. As of 2019, 222 children with disabilities have enrolled in mainstream schools.

### Problems Targeted

Children with disabilities in Nepal have limited access to mainstream schools because of social stigma and a lack of accessible infrastructure and curricula.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Sama Nepal focuses on its 'base school' in every district (Banke, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, and Sindupalchok), which includes a care centre and/or a resource class in which children with special needs are enrolled. From there they participate in many mainstream school activities, such as educational, recreational and vocational classes according to their abilities. A multidisciplinary team assesses the needs of every child and provides educational, health, and rehabili-



Sama Nepal provides a wide range of learning materials and other support to students, teachers, and day-care centres for parents.

**“Sama Nepal is able to create a huge impact by bringing children with disabilities out of invisibility.”**

Audrey Jacobs Foundation, partner organization of Sama Nepal

tation support and referrals. Assistive technology is made available for learning and recreation.

Sama Nepal also supports partner schools in the district through awareness-raising workshops and trainings on Inclusive Education for teachers, students, and parents. Additionally, it collaborates with key stakeholders (including families, schools, local government, and NGOs).

The organization has grown from one base school and four partner schools in 2016 to five base schools and 41 partner schools in 2019.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Sama Nepal's annual budget is \$40,000 and is funded entirely through various civil society contributions, such as the Swiss Audrey Jacobs Foundation, providing financial and technical support. The three-tiered community-based model – involving the base school, partner schools, and collaboration with key stakeholders – was designed to be easily replicable and fundable using locally available resources, for example, through a school's existing budget or through community mobilization efforts led by the local government.

Sama Nepal intends to expand its community-based model to an additional six districts, for a total of ten districts.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Training sessions on Inclusive Education have been attended by 2,164 teachers, parents, and students, from 5 base schools and 41 partner schools.



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See corresponding Life Story on page 112.

# Supporting school enrolment of girls with disabilities

## PAKISTAN / SPECIAL TALENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMME – GIRL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMME

In 2017, Special Talent Exchange Programme (STEP), a disabled persons' organization (DPO) based in Islamabad, launched a project to promote the enrolment of children with disabilities in mainstream schools, with a focus on girls. The programme, which runs in the Charsadda and Nowshera districts of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, encourages families to send their children to school, while also offering assistive devices. STEP has been supporting 220 girls with disabilities in school and has trained 90 teachers.

### Problems Targeted

Students with disabilities in Pakistan often do not enrol in mainstream schools due to the lack of an accessible curriculum and trained teachers.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The project ran for one year from 2017 to 2018 and aimed to promote Inclusive Education through the participation of girls with disabilities in mainstream schools. STEP engaged with local community members to encourage families to send their children to school, and it distributed various assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, and hearing aids in the community.

“The project also enabled the provision of assistive devices and an accessible environment for children with disabilities in mainstream schools.”

Spokesperson for the KPK Provincial Education Department

Moreover, STEP trained 90 teachers in the two identified districts on methods that can be used to teach children with disabilities.

In order to build capacity, STEP has developed two comprehensive manuals: one for teacher training and one for parent-teacher councils. These manuals also include information about all available resources related to Inclusive Education.

STEP identified 220 girls with disabilities for school enrolment and provided 180 of them with assistive devices so they could continue their education. The project was implemented with the support



Promotion of sports is a key feature of all programmes.

of parent-teacher councils and school management councils in the two districts.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The one-year project budget was approximately \$111,000, which was provided by the Small Grants and Ambassador's Fund Program of USAID. STEP has not replicated the project since its completion in 2018. In order to ensure that the 220 girls with disabilities continue their educational progress, STEP has engaged local DPOs to generate awareness of the girls' needs among their communities, and it has requested the Ministry of Education to support the girls with a monthly stipend.

As one outcome of the lobbying efforts, the Ministry of Education has introduced special training of teachers in order to equip them with the techniques of Inclusive Education.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- STEP distributed assistive devices to 180 girls with disabilities, including wheelchairs and hearing aids.



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# Teaching students with disabilities to manage risks associated with natural disasters

## PANAMA / RET AMERICAS – DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT (DDR&M)

RET Americas is an independent NGO that currently acts as RET Headquarters for country operations in Latin America and the Caribbean. The organization runs an inclusive school safety project in Panama to teach students with disabilities how to manage the risks associated with natural hazards. This is the first project in Panama to integrate disaster risk reduction and management practices into public schools to address the needs of children and youth with disabilities. Since 2015, more than 4,000 young people with disabilities have taken part in the project.

### Problems Targeted

Children and youth with disabilities in Panama are not sufficiently aware of the risks and dangers associated with the Niño phenomenon, and are not adequately trained to prevent and to manage the potential effects of natural disasters.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

RET Americas has developed inclusive learning methodologies to integrate disaster risk reduction and management (DRR&M) as a topic in public schools, introducing curricula and exercises specifically for students with disabilities. Two examples are first aid procedures tailored for students with cognitive disabilities and instructions in sign language about emergency procedures. The NGO also builds the

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- In addition to students, 716 teachers, 339 public officials, and many community leaders have participated in the trainings.
- 13 local risk assessments have been carried out across Panama.

“We have succeeded in making children and young people with disabilities, their caregivers, and their teachers the agents of their own security in case of emergencies.”

Senior RET advisor

capacity of education partners on DRR&M through trainings and guidelines, and it has created the first DRR&M set of language signs for deaf persons in Panama to support the programme.

Youth with disabilities actively participate in the design and the activities of the project to increase the resilience of their schools and communities to disasters, for example, by assessing and improving proposed learning methodologies. Starting in 2015, the project has reached more than 6,000 beneficiaries.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project is funded by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID-OFDA) through an annual average grant of \$150,000.

RET supports the project with in-kind contributions worth \$12,300. With each phase the project has scaled-up its activities in Panama to reach more schools, local governments, and communities.

The model could be replicated at the international level and adapted to different contexts. Subject to the availability of funds, RET Americas intends to replicate the project in other countries in the region, starting with Costa Rica.

Inclusive learning methodologies integrates disaster risk reduction and management as a topic in public schools.



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# A multifaceted approach towards inclusive pre-primary and primary schools

## PHILIPPINES / SAVE THE CHILDREN PHILIPPINES – KASALI

KASALI (which means “no one is left behind” in Filipino) is an Inclusive Education programme for children 12 years and under, organized by Save the Children Philippines. It uses a range of methods to achieve its goals, such as establishing model schools, training teachers in inclusive teaching techniques, and educating parents. Moreover, the organization is conducting advocacy and policy discussions with the government. As a result, 739 children with disabilities have enrolled in school since 2014.

### Problems Targeted

Children with disabilities in the Philippines are often left marginalized due to social stigma, with many schools unprepared to support their learning, and many children never enrolling.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

KASALI worked with local governments and schools to identify the current situation of children with disabilities in Parañaque, Taguig, and Pateros – three cities in the metropolitan area of Manila.

Based on that expertise, KASALI facilitated the enrolment of 739 children aged 3–12 in general education classrooms (276) and in special education centres (351), while 42 were enrolled in day-care cen-



Assessing the skills and needs of people with disabilities.

“Even at the dinner table I make adjustments. I use a placemat so that her plate does not slide and I can leave her with her meal.”

Neil, father of a child with disability

tres. It also provided training on Inclusive Education to teachers, parents, school heads, other education personnel, allied health professionals and peers, and local government bodies.

Results show that the children have improved their cognitive skills through participation in school activities and have learned to trust their teachers and peers.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The initial budget to set up operations was \$1.7 million, funded by the IKEA Foundation. As of 2019, the KASALI budget is \$260,000, covered by Save the Children.

KASALI's engagement at the national level resulted in a memorandum of understanding on Inclusive Education for children with disabilities as part of the Council for the Welfare of Children's National Strategic Plan on Children with Disabilities. The agreement outlines roles and responsibilities among the national government agencies, including initial steps towards better programme integration for children and youth with disabilities.

The Department of Education has adopted and used KASALI-developed materials, such as those used in teacher training, on a national scale. Moreover, from 2019 onwards, KASALI advocates for a national policy on the education for learners with disabilities.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In 2018, more than 700 children benefitted from the programme.
- In 2019, KASALI is being implemented in 112 elementary schools.

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# A social franchise model for accessibility experts

## RUSSIAN FEDERATION / ALL-RUSSIAN SOCIETY OF DISABLED PEOPLE – CERTIFICATIONS

In 2015, the All-Russian Society of Disabled People (ARDS), an NGO based in Moscow and 83 regions of Russia, started running seminars and trainings for people with disabilities and representatives of non-profit and commercial organizations on the effective removal of barriers in the built environment. In a second step, ARDS initiated a social franchise model to support many of those who it has trained to set up expert centres on accessible environments across Russia, providing them with consulting and financial support. In 2019, around 480 experts are active in 64 of Russia's 85 regions.

### Problems Targeted

Infrastructure in cities and many buildings in Russia's regions need competent experts to make them accessible, but there is currently a lack of trained specialists in the field of accessible environment.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

In 2015, ARDS began to conduct accessibility seminars, which were held in various regions of the country. Persons with and without disabilities were given the opportunity to learn about accessibility in the built environment and how it can be achieved. Upon completion of the seminars, the participants become certified as accessibility experts and were then qualified as regional accessibility consultants, advising public and private organization on how to improve accessibility in the built environment.

“The ARDS system of voluntary certification gives people with disabilities the opportunity to create an accessible environment in their native region.”

Evgeny Bukharov, CEO, ARDS

They also were given the opportunity to set up their own expert centre, since ARDS has created a kind of social franchise model that provides the centres with support measures, necessary documents, and a unified standard of activity.

Recently, representatives of commercial and non-profit organizations and various government authorities are also attending the accessibility seminars,

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- In 2019, there are 43 regional expert centres in 33 regions.

and ARDS notes that the level of knowledge about the accessible environment is increasing.

In 2019, of the 480 accessibility experts, 250 are persons with disabilities.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project is entirely financed by the All-Russian Society for the Disabled, with an annual budget of \$170,000. ARDS generates income from consulting services and receives fees from the social franchise model.

ARDS has already scaled the seminars and expert centres to 34 regions through the social business franchise model.

There is also interest from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Byelorussia, and Kazakhstan to replicate the model. ARDS plans to further expand and create expert centres in most regions of the Russian Federation within the next three years.



Learning about accessibility in the built environment.

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# Multi-method approach to improving university accessibility for blind students

## SAUDI ARABIA / KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY – INCLUSION PROGRAMME

In 2018 King Abdulaziz University (KAU), a public university in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, launched a project to make its campus and facilities accessible for students with disabilities. Focusing on students with visual impairments, the university laid down tactile pathways and Bluetooth beacons, which connect to a mobile application, and it converted textbooks to DAISY format. Additionally, KAU has launched a testing centre and an exhibit to educate the community about disability rights. KAU plans to expand this project, including the tactile pathways, which are currently being used by 100 students at the university.

### Problems Targeted

Students with visual impairments in Saudi Arabia have difficulty in navigating campuses and accessing books due to inaccessible environments and educational materials.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

KAU, a large public university in Jeddah, has around 1,100 students with disabilities, including 200 with visual impairments. To make the educational experience accessible for blind and visually impaired students,

KAU identified three challenges: physical navigation of the campus, accessibility of textbooks, and accessible examinations. KAU laid down four kilometres of tactile paving and installed Bluetooth beacons that connect to a mobile application called Show Me The Way, which provides audio guidance to direct students to their desired destination on campus.

**“We are committed to making King Abdulaziz University an equal learning environment that empowers people with disabilities to reach their maximum potential.”**

Prof. Abdulmonem bin Abdul Salam Al-Hayani,  
Vice President of Academic Affairs

Next, KAU used DAISY, an internationally-renowned digital accessible information format, to make books for foundation year students available in audio formats. Finally, KAU created an accessible testing centre where students can take exams independently in different formats.

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A blind project participant navigates his way through tactile paving using his white stick.

As a result, personal assistance for navigation at KAU is no longer needed, and the number of complaints about university accessibility has decreased substantially.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

For the first phase of the initiative, KAU received a grant of \$250,000 from the government as part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 plan. The Office of National Transformation 2020, a part of the Ministry of Higher Education, has approved the second phase of the project, for which the university received \$2 million in the latter half of 2019.

KAU has received requests from other universities in the kingdom to demonstrate the mobile application and has signed an agreement with Um-Alqura University to install the system.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- Some 100 students are using the tactile paths and 50 students are using the DAISY-format textbooks.

# Large-scale campaign to identify and enrol children with disabilities in Senegal

## SENEGAL / HUMANITY & INCLUSION SENEGAL – APPEHL PROGRAMME

Humanity & Inclusion is an international development NGO based in France. In 2012, the country team in Senegal initiated the Promoting the Full Participation of Children with Disabilities in Education (APPEHL) programme, which works at multiple levels with individual children and families, with teachers and schools, and also in influencing policy regarding Inclusive Education. The programme, which is funded by public funding agencies, has trained over 2,000 teachers and supported 45 schools to be more inclusive.

### Problems Targeted

For many children with disabilities in Senegal, mainstream schools are physically inaccessible, and their teachers do not receive the necessary training to support them.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Programme staff work to identify primary school-children with disabilities in rural and urban areas and refer them to health specialists. Identification of out-of-school children is done through awareness-raising campaigns run by local disabled peoples' organizations, along with home visits. Staff work with the children and their families, and take on the management of the social, educational, and health needs of those children who require the most support.

“Thanks to training on deafness and sign language, I better understand the difficulties my son faces, and this has greatly improved my relationship with him!”

Kardiatou, President, Pikine Parents of Children with Disabilities Association, and mother of Ameth

By the end of 2019, more than 1,500 children have received assistance, for example, with glasses, assistive devices, and physiotherapy. In addition, 224 parents of deaf children have been trained in deafness and sign language. The APPEHL programme also offers Inclusive Education training sessions, which have been delivered to over 2,000 teachers. This training uses the existing expertise of teachers in the specialist school system so that their knowledge can be used to make the wider school system more

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- By the end of 2019, more than 1,500 children have received assistance, and 2,000 teachers have been trained.

inclusive. Furthermore, APPEHL works to improve the physical accessibility of schools and provides adapted learning materials for children with disabilities in mainstream schools.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project has been funded by the French Agency for Development since 2015, with co-funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg since 2018. This €500,000 funding provided for Inclusive Education projects in Senegal, runs until the end of 2021. The programme has been replicated by other NGOs and associations working in various regions of Senegal, done in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and its decentralized bodies. Future plans are to further extend the programme to all regions of the country.



Sign language training for parents and teachers.

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 See corresponding Life Story on page 113.

# Online platform to prepare all students for final primary school exams

## SERBIA / MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY OF SERBIA WITH PARTNERS – FINAL EXAM

Final Exam is a free online educational platform developed by the Mathematical Society of Serbia; the Ministry of Trade, Tourism, and Telecommunications; the Faculty of Mathematics of the University of Belgrade; and the GeoGebra Centre. It supports students with and without disabilities in their preparation for the national primary school final exams. The exam questions are offered in various formats, such as easy language and the extensive use of pictures, corresponding to the skill level of a particular student. Since its start in 2015, almost 4,000 students have benefitted.

### Problems Targeted

Due to large class sizes and a lack of Inclusive Educational materials, teachers in Serbia often cannot properly attend to the different learning needs of students with disabilities, who are therefore disadvantaged in their educational journey.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The Final Exam platform prepares primary school students in grade 8 (aged 15 years) to take the final exam at the end of elementary school so that they can transition to secondary education.

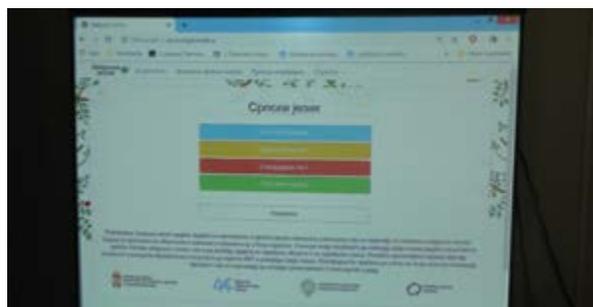
The platform is freely available online and can host specially adapted questions and features. When a student chooses to do adapted-level tasks, the level of difficulty of these tasks and the form of the answers will be adapted to the student's needs. For example, navigation through the exam can be made easier, and there are easy language functions and explicative pictures as well.

**“For me, the platform is interesting and beautiful. I understand all the questions.”**

**Milan, 14 years, attends class in hospital**

The target groups are children with special education needs and students with disabilities, but also all other students without special education needs who think they need support. Teachers can add their own questions and exercises to the platform.

Since its launch in 2015, the platform has been used by students with cerebral palsy and autism; students who are out of school due to illness, either



Navigation through the exam can be made easier, and there are easy language functions as well.

at home or in hospital; and Roma children. As of 2019, the platform contains practice questions for the mathematics and Serbian language final exams.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Development of the Final Exam platform was funded by Serbia's Ministry of Trade, Tourism, and Telecommunications in 2015, and it is maintained through volunteers from the Mathematical Society.

As the platform is available in Serbian, it could easily be replicated in Montenegro, Croatia, North Macedonia, and Bosnia. The model could also be adapted to the education system of other countries and translated into other languages.

The Mathematical Society intends to add more content to the platform (other than mathematics and Serbian) to offer a broad base of preparation before entering secondary education.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- In 2018/19, 970 teachers used the platform.
- Between 2015/16 and 2018/19, 3,873 students took adapted tests.

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# Improving research and training on urban accessibility and Universal Design

## SERBIA / UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE, FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE – TEACHING UNIVERSAL DESIGN

In 2018, the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Belgrade began a multi-method approach to improve knowledge of professionals, particularly architects and urban planners, to integrate Universal Design principles into their work, focusing on physical accessibility. The project involves publishing research on Universal Design, improving the curricula and training of planners and surveyors undertaking university study, plus assessing cities on accessibility criteria. As of 2019, two research studies and one research paper have been published, and four university courses have been modified to include Universal Design or urban accessibility topics.

### Problems Targeted

Urban areas are often not accessible for people with disabilities due to a lack of education on inclusiveness among those responsible for planning, construction, and maintenance.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The “Expert Support for the Development of the Design for All Practices in Serbia” project is a multi-method approach to educate future urban planners on accessibility. It was created through a partnership between academics at the University of Belgrade and the Serbian disability organization LIMITLESS, along with support from the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans Affairs, and Social Affairs.

“Awareness is changing. People with disabilities are now seen as active participants in daily life.”

Jelena Kostic, a student

The goal is to use scientifically based research to support and educate future professionals to solve physical urban accessibility problems. The first phase was a university research project on the cities of Belgrade, Novi Sad, and Nis, where the accessibility of around 2,000 public service points was analysed and published. The analysis looked at features such as the dimensions and shape of pedestrian crossings, ramps to access buildings, and the height of sinks in public bathrooms.

The second phase was to improve Universal Design in architectural curricula. Study within the courses included furthering the review of urban

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- 140 people have been trained in assessing urban accessibility.
- 32 cities have been assessed and analysed for accessibility.

accessibility to an additional 29 cities in Serbia, and examining cities rewarded under the EU Access Awards. In addition, 140 volunteers from high schools and organizations of person with disabilities were trained in undertaking the urban accessibility reviews.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans Affairs, and Social Affairs covers the organizational and material expenses of publishing the research, plus the IT equipment and the surveying of urban areas for accessibility. The University of Belgrade covers the costs of those employed by the project and provides the facilities for carrying out the work.

The education and research programme are suitable for replication in other universities as it relies on published scientific academic studies.



Public workshops are key to developing the curricula for urban planners and architects.



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# Life Stories from Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Senegal, and USA

THE STORY OF MUHAMMAD HASANUDDIN (22),  
BENEFICIARY OF CDSS SERVICES AT UNIVER-  
SITAS BRAWIJAYA

**“In every class, I was accompanied by one assistant who was able to translate the lecture into sign language.”**

*Malang, Indonesia*

After a series of selection processes, I was accepted to the Faculty of Business Administration, Universitas Brawijaya. At first, studying in the university was quite challenging for me. In my first days, I tried to get along with my classmates by pretending that I was not deaf, because I was kind of ashamed of my true identity as a person with a hearing impairment. It took time for me to realize that I needed to use the services of the university’s Centre for Disability Studies and Services (CDSS). In every class, I was accompanied by one assistant who was able to translate the lectures into sign language, sometimes also taking notes. That changed my life. I had no more problems with my studies, and in fact I graduated with honours in August 2019.

Besides my study life, I also joined many activities and organizations, all of which have been facilitated by CDSS or an independent organization, such as Akar Tuli (a deaf community in town), Deaf Story Telling Community, Organization for Students with Disability, and many more. I also became a professional sign language tutor for hearing people who are willing to learn sign language.

Lastly, only a couple of months after I graduated I was accepted to work in the Regional Body for Planning and Development in Malang!

**i** See also the Factsheet on the CDSS programme, page 85.



THE STORY OF KOPILA (10), USER OF SAMA NEPAL PROGRAMMES

**“She now attends a regular class, has learned to walk, enjoys playing, and loves to draw and paint.”**

*Nepal*

My daughter Kopila is ten years old. She has cerebral palsy, and I never thought she would be able to attend school. She could not stand or sit and had difficulties in controlling her physical movements. She cried so much for not being able to enjoy the simple moments any child should live.

With the help of Sama Nepal and its partners, Kopila got accepted in a mainstream school and now attends a regular class. With practice, Kopila learned to walk and even to climb up and down the stairs in school to reach her classroom. She enjoys playing with other children and is very much involved in learning activities and loves to draw and paint.

She is now able to dress, to go to toilet, and to wash all by herself. In addition to her personal care, she likes to help me at home – grooming, washing vegetables, as well as going for groceries and shopping. She does these things slowly, but I am very happy and proud to see her doing all that now.

**i** See also the Factsheet on Sama Nepal, page 103.

## THE STORY OF MARK (10), BENEFICIARY OF THE KASALI PROJECT

**“After only a few months, Mark was able to sit still and talk more.”**

*Philippines*

Mark’s mother, Sarena, didn’t understand her son’s behaviour. Unlike other toddlers, he never made eye contact, didn’t talk when playing, and never reacted to her calling him. People in her village called him abnormal and rowdy. Day-care centres refused to enrol him, saying they feared he was too violent and different, and that other parents would take their children away. Sarena learned about the Special Education class offered at one of the schools supported by Save the Children’s KASALI project. Mark was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and through the project he was able to start therapy. Sarena also met other parents in similar situations and learned more about disabilities.

Today she is supporting other parents through the school’s parent group. As Sarena noted, “After only a few months, Mark was able to sit still, he talks more, and he doesn’t snatch snacks from others anymore.”

**i** See also the Factsheet on the KASALI programme of Save the Children, page 106.

## THE STORY OF CARLA VILLARREAL, A BENEFICIARY OF THE DLPP AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

**“I grow as a researcher and  
rights advocate.”**

*Syracuse, New York, United States*

I was working as a human rights lawyer at the Peruvian Ombudsman’s Office when I received the Open Society Foundation’s Disability Rights Scholarship to study the LL.M. at Syracuse University College of Law from 2016 to 2017. I joined the Disability Law and Policy Program (DLPP) thanks to Professor Arlene Kanter, who led the programme and was my faculty advisor.

My experience as a beneficiary of the DLPP has enriched my personal life and my career in disability rights, allowing me to grow as a researcher and human rights advocate. The courses on the framework of the DLPP helped me to foster critical thinking and the ability to analyse complex legal issues, as well as to improve my research and writing skills. I co-authored, with Professor Kanter, an article on violence against women and girls with disabilities that was published.

Furthermore, as a DLPP beneficiary I could be engaged in different extracurricular opportunities, including the Disability Law Society, research assistantships, academic visits, and international events. In addition, I was able to get an internship in Washington, DC, with Women Enabled International, where I worked on the intersection of women’s and disability rights.

**i** See also the Factsheet on the DLPP programme of Syracuse University, page 125.



## THE STORY OF MARIÈME (13), USER OF THE APPEHL PROGRAMME OF HUMANITÉ & INCLUSION

**“I am studying in a mainstream  
school, working with a school assis-  
tant trained in sign language.”**

*Dakar, Senegal*

I am 13 years old and live near Dakar in Senegal. My parents and four of my six siblings are deaf, and I have been unable to hear since birth. Three years ago I was alone at home as I had to stop attending the only school in the area that offered literacy classes for deaf children. Now, with the help of Humanity & Inclusion, I am studying in a mainstream school. I have a school assistant trained in sign language who helps me in the classroom and with my homework. I love learning at school and was very proud to have completed my first year of school as the first in my class. I have just completed my third year (CE1) and am moving into CE2. When I grow up I want to graduate and go to work in the factory office where my father works as a handyman.

**i** See also the Factsheet on APPEHL, page 109.

# Disability inclusive workforce development for all students in higher education

## SOUTH AFRICA / UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN – INCLUSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

In 2012, the University of Cape Town (UCT) started a disability studies programme at the Postgraduate Diploma, Masters, and PhD levels for students with and without disabilities. The curriculum is focused on advancing inclusive practices in education, health, and social context. Approximately 25 per cent of all students in the disability studies programme are persons with a disability. Students with disability are supported to access the curriculum through sign language, software applications for those who are blind, and personal learning support. In 2019, there are more than 100 students in the programme.

### Problems Targeted

The higher education curriculum often does not prepare the future professional workforce for disability inclusive practices.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The curriculum of Inclusion for Social Justice (ISJ) extends the disability inclusive focus from the disability studies programme into higher education curricula as well to prepare the workforce for disability inclusive practices. In addition, the ISJ project focuses on student mental health and well-being.

The university offers three different postgraduate programmes.



“We need as much research on disability as possible for evidence-based advocacy for our future.”

Vic McKinney, a 2018 graduate

There are three different postgraduate programmes. The Diploma students learn about diversity and disability and their integration into sustainability goals. They also study tools to monitor disability inclusion in society. The Masters studies consist of primary research into inclusive practices regarding topics in education, health, and family and social support systems, followed by a dissertation. PhD candidates complete their studies by working on a part-time basis as practitioners, mostly in the public health, education, or NGO sectors.

UCT also offers courses for students who would not typically have an opportunity to attend university due to poor prior access to education. These students gain access to the programme through recognition of prior learning.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The programme team raised funds through research grants and fundraising initiatives. The programmes are further sustained by tuition fees and have an annual budget of \$850,000.

The ISJ has potential to influence the other 28,000 UCT students and the more than 1,200 university staff. On a national level, ISJ has influenced early childhood and higher education policies.

Through the programme there has been increased awareness not only among policy makers but also in rural areas, mostly due to the RPL courses, which provide opportunities for marginalized groups of the population.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- In 2019, 25 per cent enrolled in the disabilities studies programmes are persons with disabilities.
- In 2019, 27 students are attending the programme's recognition of prior learning course.

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# Providing Inclusive Education in camps for internally displaced persons

## SOUTH SUDAN / LIGHT FOR THE WORLD – IDP PROGRAMME

Light for the World (LFTW), a global disability and development NGO based in Austria, launched a project in South Sudan in 2014 to make education accessible to children with disabilities in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). The project provides training to teachers in the camps, supports children with disabilities and their families, and offers training to relief workers to identify disabilities and make their wider emergency response services more inclusive. As of 2019, LFTW is working in three camps in South Sudan in partnership with 16 relief organizations and NGOs.

### Problems Targeted

Children with disabilities living in IDP camps are generally excluded from most health and education services due to a lack of trained professionals.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

LFTW works with local and international partners to build the capacity of existing education staff and systems in IDP camps to be inclusive. In partnership with local DPOs, teachers in IDP camps are trained in Inclusive Education and classroom management as well as in key skills, such as Braille and sign language. The training lasts 15 days and is followed by three months of on-the-job training. As of the end of 2019, 97 teachers working in IDP camps had been trained.

“The programme demonstrates hope and fosters inclusion for a generation separated by conflict.”

Sander Schot, Programme Manager

A key focus of the project is identifying children with disabilities to support their access to rehabilitation and education services. Volunteers and service providers in the camps are trained to identify children with disabilities. The project provides adapted learning materials and assistive devices to children as needed, such as Braille materials and white canes. It can also organize medical referrals, as necessary.

In 2019, LFTW was supporting 280 children in three camps. The project has influenced the Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to ensure that their emergency education initiatives are delivered using inclusive methods.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In 2019, the programme supported the education of 280 children with disabilities.
- As of the end of 2019, 97 teachers working in IDP camps had been trained.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project is funded by a grant from the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation, based in Italy.

The project began in the Mahad camp, close to Juba, in South Sudan, and in 2019 it has been extended to two additional camps. Key to the successful replication of the programme is involvement of all relevant stakeholders in an IDP camp.

LFTW has developed a manual on Inclusive Education that it uses to train other organizations to train their teachers.



The project provides adapted learning materials and assistive devices to children as needed, such as Braille materials and white canes.

 Tom Kingsley

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# Free online training for professionals on applying accessibility guidelines

SPAIN / FUNDACIÓN ONCE

Fundación ONCE, a leading Spanish foundation with a focus on disabilities, has created open and accessible online training courses for professionals and service providers working in a variety of sectors. Participants learn the importance of Universal Design and how to apply accessibility in their particular profession. Since the project was created in 2016, over 800 students have completed courses.

## Problems Targeted

There is a widespread lack of knowledge about how to apply accessibility guidelines among professionals in many fields of work.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The free online training covers the legal implications of a lack of accessibility, and the economic and social importance of accessible technology. It also teaches professionals and future professionals how to apply accessibility guidelines and technology within each of the professions.

Each course consists of learning materials such as study texts, self-assessment tests, videos with subtitles and Spanish sign language, practical exercises, and forums to connect with teachers. The course content was developed by accessibility experts with disabilities, many of whom also feature in the educational videos.

**“I will soon be president of a building cooperative that is building 21 homes and we want to make them accessible.”**

Student from the Accessible Home course

The online platform is compliant with WCAG 2.1 AA level of web accessibility, and is hosted by Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Spanish National Distance Education University, UNED). UNED also provides consultancy on creation of open and accessible e-learning materials, and provides support to enrolled students on the forum. At launch in 2016, the programme offered one course, but it has grown to seven by 2019. Most students come from Spain, with 20 per cent coming from other countries, mostly in Latin America.

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Each course consists of learning materials such as study texts, self-assessment tests, videos with subtitles, and Spanish sign language

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The platform is co-financed, with half coming from the Royal Board on Disability of the Spanish Ministry of Health and half from Fundación ONCE.

The courses are free to undertake. Optionally, students can pay €15 for a certificate of completion and €40 to receive an academic credit, which counts towards their university qualification.

Fundación ONCE plans to increase the number of courses available in the coming years, with inclusive customer service being added in 2019 and accessible tourism in 2020. It also hopes that actions can be implemented with the Spanish Government to ensure that civil servants and company employees undertake the courses.

The courses have been designed so that they can be reproduced by other organizations.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Between 2016 and 2018, 5,727 people have enrolled in the courses.
- 20 per cent of students come from countries outside of Spain, mainly in Latin America.

# A tool to teach blind children how to read and write by using Braille

SPAIN / FUNDACIÓN ONCE – BRAITICO

In 2014 Fundación ONCE, a leading foundation based in Madrid, launched a free education model called Braitico for children who are blind or have low vision. The programme uses an accessible app along with a combination of learning tools, such as stories and games, to teach Braille to students with and without blindness. Braitico uses a step-by-step approach right from infancy up to 12 years.

## Problems Targeted

Even though students with blindness or low vision in Spain study in mainstream schools, most of them cannot cope with the curriculum due to the lack of accessible material.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Braitico teaches children the use of Braille in a fun and simple way and consists of four modules divided by age, from birth to the end of primary education (0–12 years).

“The children books allow me to teach letters to the entire class. This helps me to create a mental map of the dots to read and write.”

A Braitico teacher

The training is performed by one of ONCE's 23 Specific Educational Support Teams based throughout Spain. Each module contains instructions for teachers and different activities depending on the literacy age. The first module works to develop literacy skills before the student begins to use Braille. Teachers and professionals who work with blind children aged 0–2 use this module to promote the children's interest in everything around them. The second module, for children aged 2–5, includes pre-reading and pre-writing in Braille. The third module is for children aged 5–8, during which time they learn how to read and write Braille and decode the symbols. The final and fourth module of Braitico aims to strengthen the effectiveness of literacy once the children have learned to read and write.

Between 2017 and 2019, 106 children have used Braitico.



Braitico teaches children the use of Braille in a fun and simple way according to their age.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Braitico was developed by the Fundación ONCE staff with sponsorship by the Spanish Braille Commission. Going forward, the foundation aims to train more teachers on how to use the modules and to spread the programme across Latin America. It also hopes to develop the programme for students who are both deaf and –blind, and to translate it into other official languages of the Spanish state, which include Catalan, Galician, and Basque.

The ultimate objective of Fundación ONCE is that Braitico becomes a fundamental tool for all teachers in Spain who have blind students in their classrooms.

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In addition to training 106 children out of its 1,600 potential users, ONCE has trained more than 400 teachers between 2017 and 2019.
- In 2019, ONCE is providing Braitico materials to the 23 Special Educational Support Teams throughout Spain.

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# Noise-free school model inclusive of students with hearing impairments

SPAIN / FUNDACIÓN DALES LA PALABRA – TRES OLIVOS SCHOOL IN MADRID

The Fundación Dales la Palabra is driven by parents and educational professionals working for the co-education of hearing-impaired children. In 2001 it established the Tres Olivos School in Madrid, offering Inclusive Education to students with and without hearing impairments from early childhood to high school and through to vocational training. Approximately 10 per cent of the 1,100 pupils have a hearing impairment, and tailored support is provided to these students and their families.

## Problems Targeted

Students with hearing impairments face communication barriers throughout their education because of noisy environments, untrained staff, lack of assistive technology, and attitudinal barriers.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Tres Olivos School promotes a 'noise-free' environment, so that speech remains intelligible to its students with hearing impairments. Classrooms are built with sound-absorbing materials and equipped with sound-level meters that indicate when the ambient noise has exceeded an acceptable level of decibels. Moreover, there is sign language support available. All teachers and staff at Tres Olivos are trained to teach and work with students with hearing impairments.

“Thanks to the Tres Olivos project, I enable deaf students to develop all their capacities.”

Maria Dolores Bermejo, teacher at Tres Olivos

A speech therapy team provides tailored support to students and their families. In addition, two deaf teachers who work at the school run weekly workshops on deafness for hearing families.

Established in 2001, Tres Olivos initially offered only primary education, and in 2009 it introduced early childhood education (up to three years old), a high school programme, and vocational training (in pharmacy and computer science).

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Tres Olivos is mostly financed by the Ministry of Education of the Community of Madrid. Fundación

## FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2001

- The school employs 98 teachers, including speech therapists and deaf teachers.
- To date, 200+ students with hearing impairments have completed their studies.

Dales la Palabra also receives donations, which it puts towards the school.

The Tres Olivos model for Inclusive Education is being adapted to the Moroccan educational system for replication in Casablanca. The school's teaching team further shares the practice by training others in Inclusive Education, both in Spain and abroad (such as in Argentina, Brazil, and Peru in 2019).

The foundation has also created a Master's degree in augmentative and alternative communication systems, in collaboration with the Universidad Española a Distancia. In 2020, Fundación Dales la Palabra will sign a Permanent Teacher Training Agreement with Spain's Ministry of Education and will continue to develop MINIMO – a mobile app offering auditory training to people who use hearing aids or cochlear implants – with support of the Vodafone Foundation.



Teachers and staff at Tres Olivos are trained to teach and work with students with hearing impairments in a 'noise-free' environment.



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# Community-based inclusive development promoting Inclusive Education

## TANZANIA / MADRASA EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMME-ZANZIBAR

In 2014, the Tanzanian NGO Madrasa Early Childhood Programme-Zanzibar (MECP-Z) in cooperation with the Norwegian Association for Disabled launched a project to improve enrolment of children with disabilities in pre-primary and primary schools. It focuses on the training of teachers in inclusive methods and intervention, as well as on fostering greater community awareness by working with parents and administrators. The project has been implemented in three of Zanzibar's eleven districts, and in 2018 more than 4,300 children with disabilities were enrolled.

### Problems Targeted

Due to cultural traditions and stigma, children with disabilities in Tanzania are often hidden from society by their families.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Targeting children from zero to eight years, the programme started with a door-to-door campaign to engage parents in discussions about Inclusive Education and to provide information about health services available for children with disabilities. Local disabled persons' organizations (DPOs) provided input to the programme's design.

“Through this in-service training we see that we can help every child.”

### A female participant in the training project

The model includes a teacher-training programme on early childhood development designed especially for children with disabilities, with a focus on play-based teaching. In addition, the programme covers three other aspects of disability for teachers: identification, intervention, and referral.

The trainings take place over two days of courses for each module, which are then introduced to pilot schools.

Children with disabilities attend pre- and primary schools together with children without disabilities. Sign language interpreters and special visual learning materials facilitate inclusion.

In 2018, 876 children with disabilities were enrolled in pre-primary education.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In 2018, the project was implemented at eight schools with 170 teachers trained.
- Between 2016 and 2018, 2,626 children with disabilities enrolled in pre-primary school.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The project receives funding from international NGOs and corporate social responsibility grants. Between 2016 and 2019, the organization has received \$1.5 million for its community-based work.

MECP-Z wants to scale the programme to all eleven districts of Zanzibar with the support of local DPOs and local governments. Common evaluations from similar programmes implemented in Zambia and Malawi will further improve the programme's design. As an outcome of the work done by MECP-Z, community-based inclusive development is now a part of Zanzibar's new disability policy, and the organization is advocating for a special unit dealing with Inclusive Education within the Ministry of Education.



Pre-primary teachers being trained in Inclusive Education.



Khamis Said

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# Inclusive Education teacher-training modules in university courses

## TANZANIA / STATE UNIVERSITY OF ZANZIBAR – TEACHER TRAININGS

In 2016, the Zanzibar Inclusive Education and Life Skills Unit and the Zanzibar department of Teacher Education worked with the Enabling Education Network (EENET) of the UK to improve inclusive teaching methods in schools. Seven training modules were developed by EENET, reviewed by the Zanzibar stakeholders and tested in eight pilot schools. Between 2016 and 2019 all 170 teachers in the eight pilot schools were trained using the seven modules.

### Problems Targeted

In Zanzibar, there is a shortage of teachers equipped with skills to teach children with disabilities, which often leads to a high drop-out rate or no access to education.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Teacher training in Inclusive Education for pre-service teachers is an addition to the standard university course offerings and is free of charge.

The programme consists of the following steps. First, the training modules were developed for teachers. Second, principal trainers undertake the training (train the trainer model). Third, the principal trainers deliver the training to teachers in the selected schools. Fourth, the teachers in the selected schools' practice what they have learned and finally implement the new teaching practice in their classrooms.

**“Now we see that we can help every child learn!”**

### A female participant in the training project

The formation of school inclusion teams (teachers, students with disabilities, and school administrators) helps with addressing practicalities in the daily routine. Further, teachers learn how to bring out-of-school children back into the learning environment, how to determine their learning needs, and how to create individual education plans. Moreover, teachers are trained as Inclusive Education coordinators, and how to promote active learning in the classroom. The teaching takes place at local teacher centres and involves pupils with disabilities as role models. The training is followed-up with a practice training and then actual implementation in eight selected schools, with a total of about 12,000 pupils.

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Principal trainers deliver the training to teachers in selected schools.

By the end of 2019, 186 dropouts have returned to school after their schools included Inclusive Education.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The teacher-training project had a budget of \$64,000, funded by the Norwegian Association of Disabled. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training provided the project with human resources and training venues.

The project in 2019 does not have funding to scale-up throughout Zanzibar, and thus cannot yet be replicated. However, the university is currently seeking additional grants and hopes to expand the training to more public and private schools, reaching at least 30 schools per year.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Between 2016 and 2018, two facilitators trained 70 trainers, who then taught 170 teachers.
- The project is currently implemented in eight schools.

# Volunteer-based distance learning platform for people with visual impairments

## TURKEY / ENGELSIZ ERISIM DERNEĞİ – ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM

The Association of Barrier-Free Access (ABFA, known as Engelsiz Erisim Derneği in Turkish) is an NGO based in Istanbul working to remove social and physical barriers that prevent people with disabilities from living an independent and integrated life. ABFA has developed a barrier-free online learning platform offering courses to people with visual impairments according to the users' needs and interests, with the overarching aim of improving their independent living skills. Since 2016, the platform has been used by more than 70 learners per week.

### Problems Targeted

People with visual impairments often face difficulties accessing in-person educational opportunities because they cannot travel easily, especially those living in rural areas.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The ABFA started offering Turkish-language online learning courses in 2014. Up to seven different classes are taught daily using TeamTalk, a free voice chat room, which can be easily accessed through a computer or mobile device.

“Thanks to this programme, I had the chance to share our experiences with many friends from various regions of Turkey.”

### A programme participant

The courses are prepared and conducted on a voluntary basis by twenty visually impaired instructors, who are also members of the association. Each class is attended by at least ten people, and all are recorded and uploaded to the online platform so that they can be accessed at any time.

Most of the visually impaired participants live in rural areas without much support. Through the courses they increase their knowledge and skills in using computers, mobile devices, and other technologies, and gain access to art and literature.

New courses are added based on the expressed needs and interests of the users, which are surveyed annually. The subjects on offer until 2019 have included: independent living skills, digital skills, assistive technologies, disability rights, art, and music.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- Since 2016, more than 70 learners per week have used the distance learning platform.
- At least ten people attend each online class.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The model requires little funding since all instructors are volunteers and only basic computer equipment is needed. The courses are both prepared and conducted by the instructors at home, and the platform's website is sponsored by a web hosting provider called Doruknet. The platform is therefore both easily scalable and replicable in other countries and languages.

Moving forward, the AFBA plans to expand its course offering by recruiting volunteer instructors from outside the association to teach additional subjects. By securing funding, the association will be able to offer a financial incentive to motivate more instructors.

The organization also intends to work with universities to use its barrier-free distance learning model to make traditional instruction and learning practices accessible to people with visual impairments.



Independent living skills, digital skills, art, music – and a lot more, including makeup courses – are taught.

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# Full-range services in Inclusive Education and job readiness

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES / MANZIL CENTER – PRIDE PROGRAMME

The Manzil Center is a non-profit organization focused on Inclusive Education and employment based in the Emirate of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It has developed the PRIDE (People Receiving Independence and Dignity through Empowerment) programme, offering education programmes, vocational training, and employment services to children and young people with disabilities. Between 2016 and 2019, 450 young people went through the PRIDE programme.

### Problems Targeted

In the United Arab Emirates, the needs of people with disabilities in education and employment are not being met as the right, professionals, practices and policies are not in place to support them.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The PRIDE programme covers all of Manzil's education and training programmes, ranging from pre-education (for children aged 4 and up) to vocational training and employment programmes (for students aged 14 and over).

**“Manzil is the wind beneath its students' wings, helping them to reach their destination.”**

Wayne Jones, Partner,  
Clyde & Co LLP, a Manzil partner

Placement in one of Manzil's programmes is supported by an assessment by a multidisciplinary team, including special educators, facilitators, therapists, and job coaches. Students can either attend Manzil's education centre on a full-time basis or attend individual programmes part-time. All full-time students spend at least one day a week in a mainstream school.

Students in Manzil's employment programmes undergo an assessment to identify whether they are job ready or require further skills training. If job ready, candidates' profiles are matched with the appropriate job opportunities. For the others, the assessment process recommends appropriate training, and they can enrol in Manzil's pre-vocation or vocational training programmes. Some 72 per cent of job offers received by employment programme graduates have resulted in permanent employment. Once in employment, a



Students undergo an assessment to identify whether they are ready for the labour market or require further skills training.

job coach accompanies the employee for the initial onboarding.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Manzil is partially funded by student fees, with full-time students paying approximately \$10,000 annually. Fees are 40 per cent subsidized, with sponsorships from organizations and individuals bridging the gap. To ensure sustainability, Manzil is planning to offer paid consultancy services in the future.

Manzil will continue its partnership with the Emirates NBD banking group on the Together Limitless Careers Network, started in 2016 and which promotes workplace inclusion based on the PRIDE programme philosophy.

Manzil has signed memorandums of understanding with the Ministry of Education and the Ajman Chamber of Commerce to share its expertise, and also plans to replicate elements of the PRIDE programme within and outside the UAE.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2005

- Between 2016 and 2019, 1,640 education professionals were trained in inclusive teaching techniques and classroom management.

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# Three-step transition to professional life for young people with learning disabilities

## UNITED KINGDOM / ENABLE SCOTLAND – STEPPING UP

ENABLE Scotland, a national NGO based in Scotland, focusses on the support of persons with learning disabilities. In 2009, it launched Stepping Up – an inclusive curriculum programme that works in eight regions of Scotland. Stepping Up offers an alternative curriculum to support students to develop skills and confidence for a better transition either to higher education or employment. From 2009 to 2019, it has worked with more than 2,000 young people with learning disabilities across Scotland.

### Problems Targeted

Due to the lack of an inclusive curriculum in Scotland, young people with learning disabilities between ages 14 and 19 face challenges when transitioning into adult life and are not offered the same opportunities as their mainstream peers.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The Stepping Up programme is an initiative for the transitional education of young people with learning disabilities in Scotland, employing a three-stage model.

“Emma knows how to interact well with our pupils, and she demonstrates a great understanding of their needs.”

Suzanne Morris, Head of Caldervale High School

Life after School (targeted at pupils aged 14 to 15) is a school-based learning course to introduce the concepts of employment and to create an environment that fosters a motivation to work. Make the Move (for students aged 16 to 17) is stage two of the model where the participants work with a transition coordinator for two years (until the end of school) who supports young people towards paid employment. In Aftercare, the third stage, participants get extra support to ensure a smooth transition to their professional life. Transition coordinators are the primary point of contact within each school, engaging with the students, their families, teachers, and employers.

The programme aims to offer students a more comprehensive curriculum than what is usually provided in schools, exploring all the options available to them. An impressive 98 per cent finish the pro-

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2009

- From 2009 to 2019, Stepping Up has worked with 70+ schools across Scotland.

gramme and either continue to higher education or start working. To date, 434 young people have gone into paid work and 287 have started training programmes, such as apprenticeships.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Stepping Up has a yearly budget of €300,000, which as of 2019 comes from Our Future Now, a national government fund to support young people to fulfil their potential. It has also secured individual grants from local authorities and schools to expand the programme in their areas.

Since 2009, the programme has expanded to new areas of Scotland and is available in more than 70 cities. By 2019, ENABLE Scotland have now devised a model supporting young people in rural areas of Scotland. The growth of the project has proven its replicability, based on the principles of being embedded within the school curriculum.

In Aftercare, the third-stage, participants get extra support to ensure a smooth transition to their professional life.



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# Person-centred transition programme for students to post-school life

## UNITED STATES / HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE – VAST ACADEMY

VAST (Vocational Advancement and Skills Training) Academy, a department of Houston Community College (HCC) in the US state of Texas, gives students with intellectual and developmental disabilities the option of continuing their education after high school through a comprehensive post-secondary transition programme. Through this person-centred programme, students can gain credentials, vocational skills, and employment assistance as part of their transition to post-school life. Since its founding in 1990, VAST Academy has catered to more than 4,000 students.

### Problems Targeted

Most students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the US leave high school with few skills for employment and few options to attend college.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

VAST Academy offers a post-secondary transition programme enabling students aged 18 to 25 to move into jobs or to further their education. It was one of the first institutions in the United States to offer inclusive continuing education to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

“The HCC VAST Academy was the push I needed to achieve my Associates Degree.”

Tiffany Grady, HCC alumna

Opportunities include vocational certificates (e.g., to work in the retail industry) and career-readiness credentials, such as the two-year Occupational Skills Career Readiness Certificate. Some students concurrently pursue a career while enrolling in college credit courses at HCC. A complementary person-centred support service offers mentoring and tutoring, career counselling, and self-advocacy training. VAST also offers employment and internship placement assistance.

The Academy reports a 75 per cent successful completion rate for its two-year Occupational Skills Career Readiness Certificate and a 70 per cent employment success rate. In addition, between 15 to 20 per cent of its graduates transition to college credit programmes.



The proud graduates of the Houston Community College, VAST Academy, Class of 2018.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

VAST Academy has an annual operating cost of \$730,000, half of which is financed by tuition revenues. The Academy also receives state funding and foundation grants.

HCC has shared VAST's post-secondary transition programme as a good practice with other colleges, and has received national recognition.

VAST will implement a peer mentor model, provide enhanced support for students transitioning to college credit programmes, and create more pathways to continuing education and workforce training programmes.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 1990

- The programme has catered to 4,000+ students since 1990.
- Some 200+ students enrol annually.
- The Academy boasts a 70 per cent employment success rate.



Susan Moraska

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# Postgraduate studies in disability law and policy

## UNITED STATES / SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY – DLPP

Syracuse University, based in the US state of New York, established the Disability Law and Policy Program (DLPP) at its College of Law in order to recruit more students – with and without disabilities – to specialize in disability law. The courses at the College of Law include (US) Disability Law, International Human Rights, and Comparative Disability Law, among others. DLPP students may also work as interns during the summer or full-time for a semester at disability law-related offices.

### Problems Targeted

There are few opportunities for students with disabilities to attend law school in the US and disability law is not often considered an established field of law.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The DLPP recruits students with and without disabilities from the US and abroad, offering them the opportunity to specialize in the field of international and domestic disability law through coursework, curricular and extracurricular activities, and internships.

Students have the option of pursuing a JD (Juris Doctor, a post-graduate law degree), a LLM (Master in Laws), and a joint degree JD/MS (Master's degree) in Law and Disability Studies, as well as a curricular programme in Disability Law and Policy, and to seek admission to practice law in the US.

**“The DLPP has enriched my personal life and my career in disability rights.”**

Carla Jeanette Villarreal Lopez, LLM, Class of 2018

A range of accessibility features such as captioning, sign language, text-to-speech software, etc. facilitates inclusion of students with various disabilities. Through courses and externships, students gain experience representing clients and engaging in advocacy for policies, practices, and procedures that benefit persons with disabilities.

Starting in 2005 with just two students from the United States, the DLPP has since then enrolled more than 600 students from 15 countries.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The primary source of funding is student tuition, as well as grants and alumni donations. Many students

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2005

- In 2019, there are 70 law students with and without disabilities.
- Of the 268 students enrolled between 2016 and 2019, 38 received a Certificate in Disability Studies and 17 also received the Curricular Program certificate.

are scholarship recipients or participants in a Fellowship Program developed with the Open Society Foundation as a funding partner.

The DLPP is an easily replicable model, as any law school can take steps to include disability law in their curriculum and to increase enrolment of students with disabilities. The DLPP faculty plans to increase the enrolment of students with disabilities, expand the programme offerings to include more internships, and offer more opportunities to study abroad.

In addition, the DLPP is seeking approval to begin a SJD programme (Doctor of Juridical Science, equivalent to a PhD in law) to increase the number of law professors with disabilities and with expertise in disability law both in the US and internationally.



Through courses and externships, students gain experience representing clients and engaging in advocacy work that benefits persons with disabilities.

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# Tool to improve readability of texts built into mainstream apps and services

## UNITED STATES / MICROSOFT CORPORATION – IMMERSIVE READER

Microsoft – the U.S.-based multinational technology company – has developed the Immersive Reader, a free tool using evidence-based techniques to increase the readability of text for students with and without disabilities, most notably for people with dyslexia, visual impairments, or autism. It uses inclusive design and adjustable features, such as letter spacing, line focus, read aloud, and syllable breaks, thus allowing improved reading and text decoding, writing, and language learning. As of 2019, the Immersive Reader is used by more than 16 million people every month.

### Problems Targeted

People with disabilities such as dyslexia, visual impairments or autism can find it difficult to read and write due to problems identifying speech sounds or recognizing words.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

The Immersive Reader can be personalized according to a wide range of individual needs. For example, users can reduce the effects of blurred vision by increasing line, letter and word spacing, or by using a line focus function; change the font and background colour; and display grammar markers for syllabification and to identify parts of speech. In addition, the user can activate a picture dictionary to visually display the meaning of a word or use the built-in text-to-speech function to hear words read out loud. Text translation is available in more than 60 languages, and the text-to-speech function is available in more than 40.



The Immersive Reader has, for example, a line focus function, changes the font and background colour, and can display grammar markers for syllabification.

**“I see better fluency and engagement, and the kids are assuming more ownership.”**

Merlyne Graves, Washington, DC, educator

The tool was developed with literacy and dyslexia experts, speech pathologists and researchers, and tested in consultation with students with dyslexia, dysgraphia, vision impairments, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The Immersive Reader is built into Microsoft products on web, PC, Mac, iOS and Android. Users of the immersive reader have grown from 100,000 in 2016 to over 16 million by 2019.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

While the tool was originally created for students with dyslexia for use in the classroom, due to its inclusive design it is benefitting a range of people in and out of school, including those with ADHD, vision impairments, non-native speakers, and new readers. Microsoft has made the Immersive Reader available beyond its own products through a “Literacy as a Service” approach, so that the tool can be added to any service or site to make text content more accessible, as well as to software developers for use in their own applications.

The company also intends to continue working with dyslexia researchers to integrate new techniques for acquiring reading skills into its products.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Translation is available in 60+ languages, text-to-speech in 40+ languages.
- Compatible with web, PC, Mac, iOS, and Android.

✉ Mike Tholfsen, [michtho@microsoft.com](mailto:michtho@microsoft.com)  
<https://aka.ms/AllAboutImmersiveReader>

# A two-year programme with proven success in labour market integration

## UNITED STATES / TAFT COMMUNITY COLLEGE – TIL PROGRAMME

Taft Community College is a public institution located in Taft, California. It has developed the Transition to Independent Living (TIL) programme, which offers post-secondary education for adults over 18 years with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The two-year programme provides independent living-skills training and work experience to increase participants' functional, social, and career skills. The graduating class of 2018 consisted of 23 students, and 78 per cent found employment in the open labour market.

### Problems Targeted

Persons with intellectual disabilities often find it difficult to gain adequate employment due to a variety of issues including the lack of holistic education possibilities.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Taft Community College has been offering support and training for people with intellectual disabilities since 1995. The current curriculum focuses on independent living skills that support access to employment, work-based communication skills, living in the community skills (such as housekeeping and cooking), and problem solving. The programme curriculum and service models are consistently evaluated and modified to reflect best practices.

**“They teach me how to be responsible for myself without any of my parents’ guidance. It’s pretty cool!”**

A TIL student freshman

Taft is located in rural central California, and TIL students live on campus, for example, in the 32-dorm Center for Independent Living, built in 2012. Students work in organizations in the local area for six hours per week, in addition to participating in school and programme activities from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

In 2019, 52 students were enrolled; and in 2018, 19 students worked for one of 14 local employers. On average, 88 per cent of TIL graduates receive a certificate from Taft Community College for the completion of the two-year programme.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 1995

- In 2019, there are 60 students attending the programme.

Further, the TIL programme tracks the progress of graduates for ten years through an annual survey, which helps to continuously improve the model.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

TIL is funded by the Regional Centers, a non-profit private corporation that contracts with the California Department of Developmental Services to provide or coordinate services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. Total cost of the two-year programme is roughly \$85,000 per student.

TIL can be replicated and has already provided support for a non-profit organization in South Korea. Moreover, it provided the basic framework for the Pathway programme at the University of California Los Angeles and the Wayfinders programme at Fresno State University.



Graduation day after two years of the Transition to Independent Living programme.



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# A website offering instant captioning and translation

## UNITED STATES / SPEECHGEAR – STREAMER

In 2018 SpeechGear, a US for-profit company specializing in instant translation, launched Streamer – a subscription-based website that captions speech to text in real-time and also offers an option to translate simultaneously into 117 languages. The service is especially useful for deaf students or those with other hearing impairments to help them follow conversations, lectures, and seminars in educational settings. As of 2019, Streamer has 30,000 users, mostly in the United States and Canada, with users also in Australia, the Middle East, and the United Kingdom.

### Problems Targeted

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing have difficulty following conversations, lectures, seminars, and other discussions, especially in educational settings.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Streamer is a website that provides instant captioning – including full punctuation – of spoken words, suitable for use with speeches, conversations, classroom lectures, seminars, and webinars. The website also includes an option of translation into other languages, and allows the user to categorize statements or add notes to the live transcript. Users can set up a private and secure Streamer website for their own personal use or for a school, corporation or agency.

**“It is so rewarding to see the students’ reactions when they realize their listening comprehension has just been boosted.”**

Mike Massine, Classroom Consultant, Boulder, Colorado

Streamer runs on any device that uses a browser to connect to the Internet. The typical classroom configuration is for the speaker or teacher to use a wireless microphone, which is connected to a computer that is logged in to the Streamer website. Participants, such as students, log in to this virtual room to see the live captioning and adjust the language to their needs.

Many employees at SpeechGear, including the founder, are hard of hearing (HOH), and the company’s testing and user focus groups include deaf and HOH persons. The website is currently used by a range of organizations and in many different settings, with education accounting for 37 per cent of sales across 300 schools.



A group of friends in a cafe converse via streamer devices.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

Streamer was originally self-funded and is growing through individual and subscription sales. It does not have any external investors.

As a cloud-based solution, the website has already proven the ease of replicating its model by gaining users in Australia, the Middle East, and the United Kingdom, along with being used by SpeechGear’s Bengali- and Hindi-speaking development teams.

In the future, SpeechGear wants the service to be available in other countries as part of nationwide Streamer licensing agreements, which will make the website free to use for anyone in that country.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- Streamer has more than 1,000 private and secure captioning and translation rooms used by more than 30,000 people in over 500 schools.
- 37 per cent of sales comes from education, the largest market for the service.

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# Accessible eBook library with over 775,000 books in 47 languages

## UNITED STATES / BENETECH - BOOKSHARE

In 2001 Benetech, a US non-profit organization supporting people with disabilities through software, launched Bookshare – a global accessible virtual library for people with print disabilities. Available nationwide in the United States and in 87 other countries, Bookshare provides books and printed materials in five accessible formats, such as electronic Braille and DAISY synchronized text with audio, at a lower cost than traditional methods. As of 2019, Bookshare has over 775,000 accessible books available in 47 languages and is free for US students with disabilities and many other people around the world.

### Problems Targeted

People who have reading barriers encounter significant difficulties accessing books and other printed publications due to the lack of accessible formats.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Benetech's software platform renders books and other print materials into accessible digital formats, such as electronic Braille and highlighted text synchronized to audio. Users can apply for the service by providing proof of their disability signed by a qualified expert, and can then access the materials in a format that best suits their needs. Benetech's technology and publishing partnerships reduce the delivery cost of an accessible book compared to traditional methods.

“Bookshare put me in my own world, and I found out that this is how everybody feels when they read.”

Emery Lower, sixth-grade student

The organization works with 900 publishers and NGOs to improve the accessibility of eBooks and make them available to people with disabilities. Its community of user testers, staff and volunteers includes people with disabilities. It also contracts for book proofing with vendors who employ people with disabilities.

Benetech supported the World Blind Union to draft the international Marrakesh Treaty for the Blind. Additionally, the US Congress cited the availability of accessible digital books as justification to increase the budget for the national Education Technology, Media, and Materials Program in 2016 and 2017.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2001

- As of 2019, over 700,000 Bookshare users across the world have collectively read over 15 million books through the platform.
- Bookshare is used by 99 of the 100 largest school districts in the United States.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

The US Department of Education has awarded Benetech three five-year contracts for the development and use of Bookshare by all eligible students with disabilities in the United States. Bookshare also receives funding from private foundations, corporations and individual membership fees in developed countries.

Membership for eligible US students is free, while individuals from the US and other countries pay on a sliding scale up to \$50 per year. In many developing countries membership is also free.

Benetech has scaled-up Bookshare across the world by establishing partnerships. Libraries globally can include Bookshare whereby users can access the collection that Bookshare has permission to share in that country.



Bookshare users can read using a tablet, smartphone, computer, mp3 player, or assistive technology device.

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# Converting special schools into Inclusive Education centres

## ZIMBABWE / CBM – CHRISTOFFEL-BLINDENMISSION

Christoffel-Blindenmission (CBM) is an international Christian development organization based in Germany, working mainly in low income countries. In 2018, it began converting three special schools in the Zimbabwe towns of Gweru, Harare, and Kadoma into Inclusive Education centres, in partnership with the Jairos Jiri Association, the largest disability NGO in Zimbabwe. The centres teach children with physical, visual, and hearing disabilities together with children without disabilities from early childhood onwards. As of 2019, the centres teach 440 children with disabilities.

### Problems Targeted

Most schools in Zimbabwe are not equipped to teach students with disabilities and do not accept them, which often leads to a life of poverty.

### Solution, Innovation, and Impact

Each Inclusive Education centre has a specific focus – physical, visual, or hearing impairments – and offers its students accessibility devices and features such as hearing aids, white canes, Braille machines, Braille learning materials, ramps, and handrails. Additionally, the centres offer support to teachers and also parents, such as on issues of orientation and mobility.



The centres teach children with physical, visual, and hearing disabilities together with children without disabilities from early childhood onwards.

“Every day we see that together we can achieve changes for more Inclusive Education.”

Deborah Tigere, CBM Project Manager and Country Director

The centres work independently but in close coordination with each other, and they employ a large number of people with disabilities as teachers and other staff members. The schools work primarily on the standard curriculum, but they also support vocational and life skills to help integrate students into employment or into higher education following graduation. By 2019, over 200 children have been integrated into mainstream secondary schools, 40 into universities, and 80 into employment. The centres also serve as an education platform on inclusion for local governments, companies, and schools while working closely with the community.

The success of the project, along with CBM's advocacy initiatives, has led to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and a consortium of small foundations to begin drafting a national Inclusive Educational strategy.

### Funding, Outlook, and Transferability

A consortium of small foundations supports the project, which has an annual cost of €180,000. The joint funding allows the foundations to make more effective use of their resources. The consortium also contributes to efficiency in administration for CBM, since reports need only be submitted to the consortium and not to foundations individually.

Within CBM, the project is considered a model for Inclusive Education given its framework and multi stakeholder approach. The aim is for the three schools to become the leading centres for replicating the inclusive approach across the Zimbabwe school system, and for the project to reach 800 children with disabilities by 2021.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- The three schools host a total of 440 children with disabilities.
- 210 children with disabilities have been integrated into mainstream schools, 40 into universities, and 80 have entered employment.

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# Life Stories from United Arab Emirates, USA, and Zimbabwe

THE STORY OF FATIMA GULAB (18), GRADUATE OF THE MANZIL PRIDE PROGRAMME

**“As part of my training, I was given internship opportunities at various 5-star hotels.”**

*United Arab Emirates*

I am Fatima, a proud graduate of the Manzil Center. I joined Manzil in 2005 as a 5-year-old having been diagnosed with developmental delays and many behaviour issues.

At the age of 16, I joined the PRIDE vocational programme. As part of my training, I was given internship opportunities at various 5-star hotels. I was trained in different departments, such as the bakery, laundry, and food and beverage. These opportunities were crucial in helping me develop my personality as well as to learn first-hand the appropriate social skills necessary to succeed in a work setting. In November 2018, I got a full-time job as a laundry attendant at the Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel. So my training under PRIDE helped me to successfully land a job even before I graduated in May 2019. For more, see <https://www.instagram.com/p/BrhS0b-Gg-P6/?igshid=r9teh4xnI5qq>.

**i** See also the *Factsheet on the Manzil Center*, page 122.

THE STORY OF ELLEN MAPURANGA (19), A STUDENT AT JAIROS JIRI GWERU NARAN CENTRE SCHOOL

**“It enables deaf students to venture out there and mix with others who are not deaf.”**

*Gweru, Zimbabwe*



I was born and grew up in Gokwe Nembudziya, in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. Since I was born deaf, I had never gone to school before. I came to the Jairos Jiri Gweru Naran Centre School for the deaf when I was 13 years old. Word reached my father through a social worker that there is a school for the deaf in Gweru. The programme teaches learners with disabilities the life skills that enable them to fully function on an equal level with others in society.

I am currently enrolled in the vocational training programme, where I was trained in detergent making, floor polish production, hairdressing, sewing and garment construction, and culinary arts. What I like about this programme is that it enables deaf students to venture out there and mix with others who are not deaf. This is extremely important for us as we are not going to be living at the school forever. In order to expand my skillset, the school is currently in talks with the Midlands Hotel to attach me to a real work environment in order to sharpen my skills in culinary arts.

**i** See also the *Factsheet on the Jairos Jiri*, page 130.

STORY OF TULEEN AL MASRI (12), USER OF AL HUSSEIN SOCIETY PROGRAMMES

**“She now takes part in all the school’s activities, such as playing, studying, and communicating.”**

*Amman, Jordan*

Tuleen Al Masri is a 12-year-old girl with a physical disability (congenital malformation plus osteoporosis) and currently a sixth-grader at a public school in Amman, Jordan. When she was five her father submitted an application for Tuleen to attend the Al Hussein Society (AHS) school. Her grades did not allow her to join in the first grade, but she was enrolled in a preschool skills class. One year later, she got a much better grade when she re-applied for the IQ test. Tuleen was extremely shy and didn't know how to communicate with her classmates. When she first entered the preschool skills class, she used to take her sandwich and eat it without any company. But all that has changed. AHS runs classes that aim to empower all personalities, helping them to share ideas and talk with each other. After AHS, Tuleen moved to a nearby public school and now takes part in all school activities, such as playing, studying, communicating, and much more – including with friends without disabilities. All the teachers, students, and classmates love her and are very cooperative.

**i** See also the *Factsheet on the Al Hussein Society*, page 91.



SECTION 4:

# Zero Project– Impact Transfer

**Scaling and replicating  
innovations in Inclusive Education**

## **10 participants**

Which 10 participants have been selected  
in 2019–2020

## **Examples of success**

Which participants of 2017–2018 and 2018–2019 are already  
growing and scaling

# The Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme

A PARTNERSHIP OF THE ESSL FOUNDATION, FUNDACIÓN DESCÚBREME, AND ASHOKA

From the hundreds of nominations for the annual Zero Project Awards, the most replicable initiatives are selected to participate in the Impact Transfer programme. Previously, 21 projects have been supported, with ten new ones joining this high-potential programme this year.

“We want to enable the Zero Project Innovators to transfer the most impactful innovations to new places,” notes Martin Essl, Founder and Chairman of the Essl Foundation. And that sums up the goal of the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme.

In 2017 the Essl Foundation joined forces with Ashoka to initiate the programme to internationalize the most innovative disability solutions for a barrier-free world. Last year Fundación Descubréme, from Chile, also joined this partnership.

## How to join the programme

Since 2018, every year ten (in 2019 there were 11) projects are selected from among the many nominations for the Zero Project Awards that have a proven impact model and the potential to scale their impact internationally. A premise, therefore, is that the project is an innovation that can be transferred to other regions, countries, or perhaps adapted for other disabilities. The organization must also be willing and able to do so, that is, replication must be part of its strategy.

“We want to enable the Zero Project Innovators to transfer the most impactful innovations to new places.”

Martin Essl, Founder and Chairman of the Essl Foundation

If these requirements are met, the selected projects go through a structured six-month programme to prepare for international replication, with five online webinar training sessions on: social entrepreneurship, impact modelling, business modelling, replication strategies, and financing strategies. In addition, a ‘mentor’ is assigned to each project to help clarify the strategy for replication, to develop a replication plan, and to provide external expert input.

Selected projects also benefit from matchmaking opportunities with potential replication partners from across the Zero Project, Fundación Descubréme, and Ashoka communities. For example, participants have the opportunity to present their projects in a dedicated session during the forthcoming Zero Project Conference in Vienna (19–21 February 2020). Additional opportunities are also provided at the Zero Project Latin America Conference in partnership with Fundación Descubréme in Santiago, Chile (June 2020). After the programme, follow-up support will help to implement the replication strategy, and the programme’s alumni community offers further options for networking and cooperation.

## Ashoka as Impact Transfer experts

Impact Transfer is an initiative of Ashoka, the leading global community of social entrepreneurs and change makers. Worldwide, 3,700 social entrepreneurs in over 80 countries receive financial and non-financial support to replicate their impact in new geographies, in new contexts, in different ways, and through different types of programmes.

The Impact Transfer initiative facilitates the cross-border transfer of solutions that generate social impacts and makes them available where they are needed and demanded by local stakeholders.



The 2019 Zero Project–Impact Transfer participants at the Zero Project Conference.

### Fundación Descúbreme as a new partner

Last year the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme welcomed Fundación Descúbreme as a new partner. The non-profit organization was founded in 2010 to promote the full integration of people with cognitive disabilities in all areas of human development. On a national level, the foundation is one of the main organizations that fosters the construction of an inclusive culture in Chile.

Internationally, Fundación Descúbreme has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council on disability issues, is a member of the Association of People Supporting Employment First, the Spanish Association for Supported Employment, and Inclusion International. In 2017, Fundación Descúbreme was awarded by Zero Project as an Innovative Practice in inclusive employment.

According to Fundación Descúbreme, the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme is very appropriate for the current needs of its region. Maria Ignacia Rodriguez Espinoza is coordinator for strategic projects and a consultant to Fundación Descúbreme. As she notes, “We are not yet on the level of the developed countries, but the connections and access to information that this programme has provided has helped us to implement what is necessary, and thus transform Chile into an inclusive country.”

“Facing the digital changes brought about by Big Data is of particular interest to Descúbreme, as it offers many opportunities to overcome barriers,” adds Rodriguez Espinoza. “Although this technology is already being used in some European countries, it is not yet being transferred to the rest of the world.”

**“The connections and access to information that this programme has provided has helped us.”**

*Maria Ignacia Rodriguez Espinoza,  
Fundación Descúbreme*

To her, innovations such as Livox, which is participating in this year’s Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme, are a clear example of how information can be collected and used to improve people’s lives, especially those of people with disabilities. In June 2020, participants in the programme from Latin America, and other invited participants, will have the opportunity to present their projects at a conference in Chile.

“We hope that all those who take part will benefit from the opportunity to share their project,” says Rodriguez Espinoza, “and that they will also be able to develop networks to grow and replicate the innovations that help people with disabilities.”

# The potential of the 10 participants

This year's participants in the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme offer inspiring ideas to make education more inclusive worldwide. Improving access to assistive technology through computer labs in schools, a father creating an app to give his daughter a voice, a university diploma for students with intellectual disabilities. At the end of each description, the Impact Transfer-team summarizes the potential that it sees for this participant (in green).

## Association for Shared Learning ELA:

### The One School for All programme

One School for All is the first whole school approach to Inclusive Education in Bulgaria. Set up by the Association of Shared Learning ELA, an education-focused NGO based in Sofia, the two-year programme offers schools a structured and systemic approach in four key areas: school leadership, teaching practices, partnership with parents, and child safety.

The programme costs a school in Bulgaria around €5,200, which covers eight training sessions, mentorship support, and printed materials. Not included are travel expenses for trainers and mentors, which in Bulgaria amount to €1,300. One School for All has begun to be extended to another three countries – Romania, Greece, and Portugal – as part of an Erasmus+ project funded by the European Commission. The project includes a training for trainers as well as the translation and adaptation of a free e-learning course “Introduction to IE,” which was developed in the model programme. In addition, ELA is looking for new possibilities to cooperate with potential partners in other countries and is also seeking new funding opportunities to do so.

*The project's existing scaling expertise and its potential application across the mainstream education system in many different countries are just some of the reasons it was selected for this year's programme.*



## Amar Seva Sangam:

### Early intervention through an app

In the Indian province of Tamil Nadu the NGO Amar Seva Sangam (ASSA) runs an Early Intervention Centre providing special education, physiotherapy, and other services to children below six years free of cost. To make this service available in more distant regions, ASSA developed a training programme for community rehabilitation workers (CRWs) and an app to provide them with ongoing support – the Mobile Village Based Rehabilitation Initiative.

Following an initial assessment of the child by a rehabilitation specialist, treatment is then provided by a CRW. In addition to providing connectivity between the CRW and the specialist, the initiative serves to document the therapy and to track progress using standardized developmental tools embedded in the app. Ideally, the frequency of visits by the specialist is reduced to once a month.

Improvements in the quality of support have been confirmed. Of the more than 1,700 caregivers who have been supported to date, 74 per cent report reduced stress and 62 per cent report improved interaction with their children. There are now plans to extend the programme to other districts of Tamil Nadu as well as to other states of India.

*The Zero Project–Impact Transfer selection panel felt this programme was a great example of using technology to scale effectively and increase access to much needed services in rural areas.*

## Nayi Disha Resource Centre:

### Educating caregivers online and offline



Based in Hyderabad, India, the Nayi Disha Resource Centre is an NGO that supports families of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Its free online platform offers a directory of verified services and information as well as an online peer support community.

To also support caregivers with limited digital understanding, Nayi Disha has established a programme that uses common tools such as WhatsApp. And for people with no digital skills or no access to the Internet, the NGO has set up an offline programme, including workshops, support groups, and family events.

The online-platform receives between 600 and 800 visits a day, mainly from parents across India. To support its expansion, Nayi Disha has started translating content into Telugu and Hindi. To replicate the offline model, the organization is working closely with parent support groups; and it has extended its programme to other cities, including Bangalore, Mumbai, and most recently Chennai. Furthermore, it aims to replicate the model in other developing countries that are positioned similarly to India.

*The selection panel were particularly impressed with the different approaches taken to ensure that families with and without digital literacy and access could still get support. They felt this could be replicable in many different contexts.*

*Interview with Loic van Cutsem*

## “There are a lot of proven social innovations out there!”

**Social innovations are said to be more difficult to replicate than business ideas. Why?**

Van Cutsem: One factor is that these entrepreneurs very often want to tackle local problems and do not necessarily intend to go global. And if they are willing, not all of them are equipped to do so. On the other hand, there is also a lack of infrastructure. Traditional enterprises benefit from business agencies, etc. We do not yet have a similar infrastructure for social innovation and we hope that the Zero Project-Impact Transfer programme will fill this gap. And then funding is definitely one of the key problems.

**What are barriers for replication?**

Van Cutsem: Not everything is replicable, and this is part of our work – to find out what can be replicated. In the inclusion and disability sector there are definitely what we call framework conditions, which differ from one country to another. But generally there are a lot of proven social innovations out there. And many of them can be efficiently adapted and adopted in a new context.

**So what are your criteria for transferable social innovation?**

Van Cutsem: The first is that there should really be enough evidence in the country of origin that it is a proven model and that it works both in terms of impact and business. Second, it should be sufficiently standardised or documented so that partners in other countries can take it up. And third, there must of course be local demand and local partners who are prepared to replicate it.

**And what is your advice for successful replication?**

Van Cutsem: One, don't replicate too soon. Also in our process, the first step is to make sure that they are ready, and if not, to identify where the gaps are and work on them before going any further. Two is that there exists a real mandate and the strategic willingness of the organization to pursue this strategy. Three is definitely about finding the right replication partners. Make sure that you define your criteria and that they fit well. And four is the question of funding. Ensure that there are enough financial resources available. It takes months or years to prepare, pilot, and then really replicate.



**Loic van Cutsem**, from Ashoka Austria, directs the Zero Project-Impact Transfer programme, so he knows very well what social innovations need to become replicable.

## Livox:

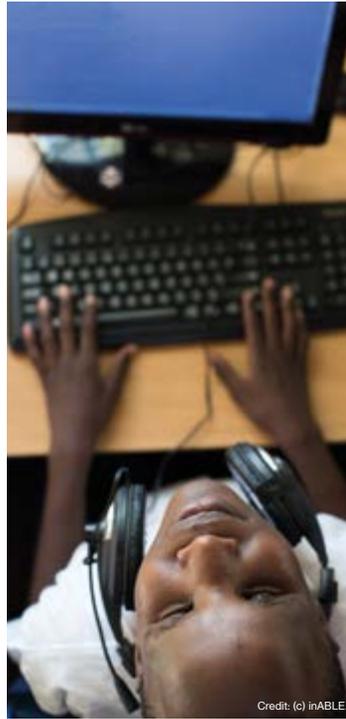
### An alternative way to communicate

Due to a medical error, Clarinha Pereira was born with cerebral palsy. As a consequence, she cannot walk and communicate verbally. To enable Clarinha to articulate her wishes and feelings, her father, Carlos, developed an app: Livox.

People who use the Livox app select virtual cards with pictures of objects, places, and even emotions and illustrated short phrases, which can be shown to others or read aloud. To adapt to individual needs, Livox uses intelligent algorithms and machine learning and can even be operated with the eyes by blinking. To allow others to talk to the user, Livox can be voice-activated, using artificial intelligence technology to help the user to answer. Livox also features a content creator that enables users to add communication cards with videos, pictures, and music. In this way, Livox can also be used by teachers to educate students with learning difficulties.

Livox has already been distributed in the Middle East and has been piloted in many countries. Currently, the app has more than 25,000 users in 11 countries, is compatible with 25 languages, and is looking to expand to other geographies.

*Livox's existing international connections and the potential for making the software available in other languages meant the selection panel felt it had a strong base for further replication.*



## InABLE:

### Technology labs for blind students

In Kenya, the US-based NGO inABLE has made it its goal to increase access to assistive technology for students who are blind or have low vision.

inABLE equips specialist schools with all the necessary infrastructure, as well as with instructors to run the programme. Once installed, the computer assistive technology lab supports students to develop technological skills, from such basics as typing to more sophisticated qualifications such as Java programming. The NGO has also developed an assistive technology computer curriculum for blind students aged 6–20 years.

Since 2009, inABLE has established eight computer assistive technology labs in six schools in Kenya. The plan is to replicate this model across Kenya's 16 special schools for the blind as well as across other disabilities and developing countries.

*The selection panel particularly highlighted the value of increasing access to technology, and the comprehensive support offered by inABLE when establishing the assistive technology labs in schools.*

## Universidad Andrés Bello:

### Vocational training at university



In Chile, Universidad Andrés Bello (UAB) has developed a social and labour training programme for students with intellectual disabilities, which is fully hosted on the university campus. The Diploma in Working Skills is a three-year programme for the development of employment skills in specific industries and also supports students in their transition to work.

UAB started the programme in 2006 with 35 students in Santiago, and since then it has been extended to the university's other campuses in Concepción and Viña del Mar. In addition, UAB has supported other universities to replicate the programme in Argentina, Mexico, and Spain, and it is looking to expand this replication further.

*The selection panel were struck by the project's clear impact, with a large numbers of graduates and a high employment rate after the programme, thus demonstrating its effectiveness.*



### Humanity & Inclusion Senegal:

## Modelling full participation in education

To make mainstream schools more accessible, Humanity & Inclusion Senegal has created “Agir pour la Pleine Participation des enfants par handicapés l’education” (Promoting the Full Participation of Children with Disabilities in Education) – APPEHL for short. The programme works at multiple levels with individual children and families, with teachers and schools, and also in influencing policy regarding Inclusive Education. For children and parents, APPEHL includes awareness-raising measures and training in how to deal with the impairment. For schools, learning materials are adapted and mainstream teachers are trained using the expertise of teachers in the specialist school system.

To date, more than 1,500 children have received assistance and 224 parents have been trained in deafness and sign language. In addition, 45 schools have been supported and the Inclusive Education training sessions have been delivered to over 2,000 teachers. As an international organization, Humanity & Inclusion intervenes in various countries, with the goal of expanding the programme to other countries through a ‘train the trainers’ solution. As Humanity & Inclusion at an international level is present in many countries, the aim is to expand the programme in other countries as a train the trainer solution.

*The project’s impact on both Inclusive Education policy and practice and its commitment to co-creation of the programme with people with disabilities contributed to its selection.*

### KVPS:

## On the Verge of Adulthood

During the life phase from 13 to 25 years new issues become especially relevant, such as study, leisure time, social interaction, and employment. To support young people with intellectual disabilities and their families during this transitional phase, the Finnish Service Foundation for People with an Intellectual Disability (KVPS), based in Tampere, has developed the On the Verge of Adulthood programme.

The main goal of the programme is to create a personal action plan on such key topics as work, housing, relationships, social activity, and further study. In a second step, On the Verge of Adulthood provides the necessary support to carry out the transition. This involves not only the young people and their parents but also local municipalities, schools, and others. Thus, KVPS establishes a steering group in which all relevant stakeholders are represented. Families receive support at regular meetings as well as from peers and other service providers. Since its launch in 2013, On the Verge of Adulthood has been replicated in 35 municipalities.



*To support further replication, KVPS intends to train more professionals to follow the model and will further formalize its processes. KVPS’s existing documentation of the tools used in the programme and the clear structure meant that the selection panel felt there was good potential for scaling their methodology.*



Credit: (c) Jasper Graetsch.

### capito Mecklenburg-Vorpommern:

## Inclusive ways to experience art

Information in museums is seldom accessible to people with disabilities, and so capito Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, an Austrian-German NGO, together with the Staatliches Museum Schwerin (State Museum of the City of Schwerin) developed a training course for people with disabilities to conduct art tours. The training not only teaches art history but also teaches skills in communicating with different visitors and in handling difficult situations.

Since the project started in 2017, ten training workshops have taken place and seven trainees have been qualified as museum guides. More than 500 people have taken part in one of their 25 guided tours. In October 2019, relevant institutions in Germany agreed on a job description and training profile for people with disabilities as museum guides, and other countries and other museums have expressed great interest in the project. Capito MV therefore wants to expand the offer of training materials, especially in Easy Language formats and a read aloud function. In addition, the materials will be translated into additional languages to support replication in other countries.

*The selection panel were impressed with the approach to making education inclusive in the cultural sector, where it could easily be implemented in other museums, galleries, etc.*

### Manzil Center:

## Inclusive Education and job readiness

Supporting children and young people with disabilities on their way to an independent and self-determined life is also the aim of the Manzil Center, based in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Focused on Inclusive Education and employment, the NGO has developed the PRIDE programme. PRIDE stands for “People Receiving Independence and Dignity through Empowerment” and offers a wide range of services, including educational programmes, vocational training, integrative employment, and post-employment support.

The training programmes range from pre-education for children aged 4 and up to vocational training for students aged 14 and over. The employment programme ranges from job assessment and job placement to accompanying the onboarding process. Participants in the PRIDE programme can either attend the Manzil Educational Center on a full-time basis or take individual programmes on a part-time basis. The fee for full-time students is approximately \$10,000 per year.

Manzil intends to further develop the PRIDE programme and to replicate elements of the programme both inside and outside the UAE.

*The comprehensive programme offered by Manzil, and the diverse and effective partnerships they have developed to deliver it, made it a strong candidate for the Zero Project-Impact Transfer programme.*



# Creating social impact globally

## RECENT SUCCESS STORIES OF THE ZERO PROJECT-IMPACT TRANSFER PROGRAMME

Many social innovations have the potential for global replication, and the Zero Project-Impact Transfer programme supports its participants to do so. A number of success stories already have been reported, and new ones are being added continuously.

With the ten new participants selected this year, there are now 31 projects from around the world that, as alumni of the Zero Project-Impact Transfer programme, are working to make their social innovations accessible in other parts of the globe. And a number of them have already been successful. For example, last year we reported that capito Austria was working with Escola de Gente to establish their easy-language news service, called Top Easy, in Brazil. Another example is Enable India, which is already replicating its mobile phone-based information sharing service, Enable Vaani, in other countries.

**“The VL2 Storybook Creator of Gallaudet University, a Zero Project Awardee of 2018, is now cooperating with Boğaziçi University in Turkey.”**

### **Gallaudet University is partnering in Turkey**

Started as a school in Washington, DC, in 1857 and founded in 1864 by an Act of the US Congress, Gallaudet University is still the only university in the world in which all programmes and services are specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard of hearing students.

In 2018, Gallaudet University was awarded at the Zero Project Conference and also took part in the Impact Transfer programme with a storybook application that provides a bilingual reading experience through high-quality storytelling in both sign language and printed text. Known as the VL2 Storybook Creator, it has been expanded to a number of partners in the United States as well as in other countries.

Currently, Gallaudet is cooperating with Boğaziçi University in Turkey, where two bilingual children's stories in Turkish and Turkish sign language are being prepared. Also, sample lesson plans are being created so that teachers can use the stories in their classrooms.

### **FlashSonar reaches out to new countries**

For Daniel Kish, an Ashoka Fellow, the Impact Transfer programme has been sustainably worth it. Blind since he was 13 months old, Daniel has learned to 'see' using a form of echolocation. Kish calls his technique FlashSonar, and he founded World Access for the Blind (WAFTB) to teach it to others. WAFTB is a non-profit organization based in the United States and that operates entirely on donations. In 2018, WAFTB was awarded at the Zero Project Conference and participated in the Impact Transfer programme. In order to export the FlashSonar technique worldwide, "Visioneers" was founded as a division of WAFTB. Two offshoots have already been founded in Austria and Norway by and with the support of local partners. Furthermore, the project has expanded internationally through a training-of-trainers model, so that Visioneers are currently providing their services in more than 40 countries.



“Visioneers” was founded as a division of FlashSonar, and is already active in two countries: Austria and Norway.



Credit: (c) Sozialhelden e.v.

Based in Berlin, Greta & Starks has developed the free GRETA mobile app to make cinema screenings more accessible to people with visual and hearing disabilities. In 2019, Greta & Starks participated in the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme. As a result, the company attracted social impact investor Joachim Schoss as a funder for future scaling.

The project is made possible by the Sabanci Foundation, which provides the necessary funding via the Association of People with Hearing Impairment of Turkey.

Founded in 1974, Sabanci is one of the largest family foundations in Turkey, contributing in many ways to the educational, cultural, and social development of the country. Each year four types of scholarships, including for students with disabilities, are given to 400 new students and a total of nearly 1,500 students. Inclusion is therefore a major goal of Sabanci, which the foundation tries to achieve through scholarships, joint partnership programmes, seminars, and other activities. “As Sabanci Foundation we are glad to be a partner of this systematic matchmaking process through the Impact Transfer Programme. We are expecting to connect the initiatives chosen as a part of the Impact Transfer Program with local actors in Turkey, and to support the replication of the solution

throughout the country”, says Nevgül Bilsel Safkan, General Manager of Sabanci Foundation.

### **Greta & Starks finds funding from Joachim Schoss**

Based in Berlin, Greta & Starks is a technology-based social business that has developed the free GRETA mobile app to make cinema screenings more accessible to people with visual and hearing disabilities. To do so, film distributors provide Greta & Starks with an audio description and subtitles for films that are currently showing in cinemas. The company uploads these to the mobile app, which people can then use in cinemas without needing special equipment. Users use their own headphones for the audio description and can adjust the size of the subtitle text on their smartphone screen. The app also works in open-air cinemas and with DVDs, video-on-demand services, etc.

In 2019, Greta & Starks was awarded at the Zero Project Conference and participated in the Zero Project–Impact Transfer programme. As a result, the company attracted the well-known social impact investor Joachim Schoss, founder of the Scout24 group and MyHandicap Foundation. Going forward, Schoss will support the company in implementing and promoting its social franchise model to make the innovative technology available in even more countries and languages.

#### **IMPACT TRANSFER ONLINE**

To find out more about all these projects, please visit:  
<http://impact-transfer.org/zero-project/>

## “There was only a lack of money for a faster scaling up ...”

**In general, what is more convincing to you as an investor, an idea or a team?**

Schoss: The younger an enterprise is, the more important the team is. A mediocre team will have little success with the best idea, while an excellent team can turn the worst idea into a good one quickly.

**And what was it at Greta & Stark that convinced you to become involved?**

Schoss: Seneit Debes (CEO and founder of Greta & Starks) is a highly motivated person, a down-to-earth entrepreneur in the best sense of the word. Her social enterprise is already running well in Germany and improves the quality of life of many people with disabilities. There was only a lack of money for a faster scaling up.

**Are you just an investor or also a mentor and consultant for Greta & Stark?**

Schoss: Before my commitment, I intensively studied the existing business. Of course, this also gives rise to new ideas and opportunities to contribute in terms of content. For example, together we have developed a new, more tailor-made way of financing than the one originally envisaged by Greta & Starks.

**What would you consider the social equivalent of a business angel?**

Schoss: A term that comes to my mind would be Active Impact Investor, that is, someone who gives money not only to achieve a financial but also a social goal and

who also personally contributes, in a moderate way, to support the achievement of these goals.

**Financing is the biggest barrier when it comes to expanding social innovation. How can this be made more attractive for private investors?**

Schoss: One possibility would be public support through direct financial funding or through appropriate legislation, either in favour of the social enterprise or in favour of the investor. Unfortunately, in my experience this is rather unrealistic, especially for social innovations. Small, positive exceptions are Social Impact Bonds. A modern approach would be impact point trading.

**How does "impact point trading" work?**

Schoss: There is a growing expectation on the part of companies not only to generate a return in money but also achieve a positive impact. If the company does not manage to do this out of its own business model, it could buy Impact Points from a social enterprise or a foundation and adorn itself with its impact. In return, the social enterprise gains access to a new capital market. For social enterprises this would also lead to a stronger focus on actual impact.



**Joachim Schoss**, founder of Scout24 Group and MyHandicap Foundation, supports Greta & Starks, an alumnus of the 2019 Zero Project-Impact Transfer programme, both financially with a Social Impact Credit and as a mentor.

### ALL PARTICIPANTS 2018 – 2020

Country	Participants 2018	Country	Participants 2019	Country	Participants 2020
Austria	Top Easy, Capito and apa	Austria	kinderhände	Brazil	Livox
India	Eanble Vaani, Enable India	Botswana	Solar Ear	Bulgaria	Association for Shared Learning ELA
India	Jaipur Foot	Brazil	Accessibility Promotion Agents, Escola de Gente	Chile	Universidad Andrés Bello
Indonesia	The Suryakanti Foundation Centre	Colombia	Profamilia, ASDOWN Colombia, LICA, and PAIS	Finland	KVPS
Israel	Friendship Parks, Beit Issie Shapiro	Germany	GRETA app, Greta & Starks	Germany	Capito Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
Nepal	Inspire2Care, Karuna Foundation	Israel	Seeds of Wellness, Enosh – The Israeli Association of Mental Health	India	Amar Seva Sangam
USA	Flashsonar, World Access for the Blind	Italy	Mirrorable, Fightthestroke	India	Nayi Disha Resource Centre
USA	Museum of Modern Art	Lebanon	Empowerment Through Integration	Kenya	InABLE
USA	Understood.org, National Center for Learning Disabilities	Mexico	Unidos Somos Iguales (Unidos)	Senegal	Humanity & Inclusion Senegal
USA	VL2 Storybook Creator, Gallaudet University	USA	DanceAbility International	UAE	Manzil Center
		USA	Pathways to Justice, The Arc of the United States		



# ICT supporting Inclusive Education

**Mobile services and apps**

**Cloud-based technologies**

**Training courses for  
parents and teachers**

**Content libraries**

**Digital literacy**

**Games, sports, and  
the performing arts**

# An analysis of technology supporting Inclusive Education

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE ZERO PROJECT NOMINATIONS THAT USE ICT

Information and communication technologies are a key driver in innovative solutions in the field of Inclusive Education. The Zero Project asked Martin Morandell, an academic expert in assistive technologies, to analyze the nominations this year, what technologies are most importantly used and what conclusions to draw. We are grateful to him for this section of the Report.

Information and communication technology (ICT) became an important component of special and Inclusive Education in the early 1990s, although diverse assistive technologies, such as hearing aids or the Optacon device for people who are blind, had been used earlier to support access to education. Technology can enhance learning on different levels, from very individualized solutions, such as the use of assistive technology to make specific adaptations for people, to wider approaches that offer a learning experience that aims to be universally accessible to as many people as possible. Consequently, a broad range of solutions exist.

“Low-tech solutions can lead to significant impact when they are available and affordable in rural areas, or if they do not need access to the Internet.”

Martin Morandell

The megatrend of “digitalization” will have an effect on all aspects of our lives, including the way we learn. The possible impacts of digitalization on Inclusive Education are diverse. As with all digitalization processes, there is a huge opportunity to break down barriers for people with disabilities when accessibility and design for all principles are taken into account from the very beginning. This is proposed in the new European Standard EN 17161:2019 ‘Design for All – Accessibility following a Design for All approach in products, goods and services’. Additionally, new developments, such as cloud computing, Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, and mobile services, offer huge potential for new innovative solutions for people with disabilities.

This raises the question: Which technological developments are making an impact on Inclusive Education? This section analyses potential impact drivers based on the nominated and shortlisted nominees of the Zero Project.

### Digitalization as a driver for Inclusive Education

Of the 469 nominated Practices and Policies, a shortlist of 169 Innovative Practices was created, which served as the basis for this analysis. For 60 of the 169 nominations, the use of ICT was identified (there might be even more practices in which ICT is used, but were not described in the nomination forms).

In a first step of analysis in this section, a commonly used clustering approach was applied. The European Union currently uses a system of “digitalization scorecards” to measure improvements in digitalization, based on nine clusters (<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/dem/monitor/scoreboard>). The Zero Project tried to identify how these nine major areas of digitalization were represented in the shortlisted nominations. Interestingly, only 22 nominations could be allocated to these clusters, with several of them fitting into more than one cluster, and with the majority being either mobile services or cloud technologies:

- Mobile services (17)
- Cloud technologies (7)
- Artificial Intelligence (3)
- Social media (2)
- Internet of Things (2)
- 3D printing (1)
- Cybersecurity solutions (1)
- Robotics and automated machinery (0)
- Big data and data analytics (0)

## Mobile services and apps

Most mobile services within the nominations develop or use apps for smartphones. But also low-tech solutions in this field can lead to significant impact. This makes them available and affordable in rural areas with no or little access to the Internet.

An example is the mobile phone-based training “Teachers start-up” from India (shortlisted, but not selected (<http://icevi.org/the-startup-mobile-phone-curriculum/>)). It offers mobile phone-based training in countries where no specialized training on the specific needs of visually impaired and blind children is available. Interestingly, the training can be accessed via text-messages only, allowing teachers to attend the training on any mobile phone in rural areas and at little cost. Another example is the start-up EduClick from Cameroon (page 66, <https://kamerbigbang.com>), which provides quality mobile phone-based education for those unable to access formal learning, such as people with disabilities, refugees, or people in conflict zones.

Some modern smartphone operating systems have great accessibility features built in. When app developers follow the guidelines for accessibility, they can provide a great benefit for people with disabilities. Apps are also one possible way to interact with cloud-based services.

## Cloud technologies are becoming more accessible

The use of cloud technologies is becoming more common, in particular in the field of “Software as a Service” and “Platforms as a Service.” Cloud technologies can provide several benefits, such as availability and scalability. Many interfaces for the cloud are web based. Designed following common accessibility standards, these can be used by people with disabilities. Cloud computing also typically includes other up-to-date technologies, such as mobile services, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, or Internet-of-Things (IoT).

One example is the cloud-based service Microsoft Immersive Reader (<https://educationblog.microsoft.com/en-us/tag/immersive-reader>). It offers great accessibility features for Inclusive Education, including special settings for people with dyslexia, making it

*Interview with Prof. Klaus Miesenberger on the future usage of Artificial Intelligence*

**“Artificial Intelligence will be used in avatars, in personalized symbol sets, in speech and picture recognition.”**

### Which great innovations do you see in AI for people with disabilities?

Miesenberger: AI will be applied in many assistive technology solutions. For example, sign language avatars will be available for many applications in this area, thanks to AI, machine learning, and quality assurance by professionals. Contrary to the past, the high quality and universal availability will make them accepted by the target group, and they will not be perceived as a risk, but as an enabler for sign language use.

### And in more personalized services?

Miesenberger: An era of really good assessment tools is coming that will apply AI for very individualized settings and assistance. This will improve the provision of personalized assistive technology, like personalized symbol sets to enhance the understanding of written texts.

### What do you expect in media and social media?

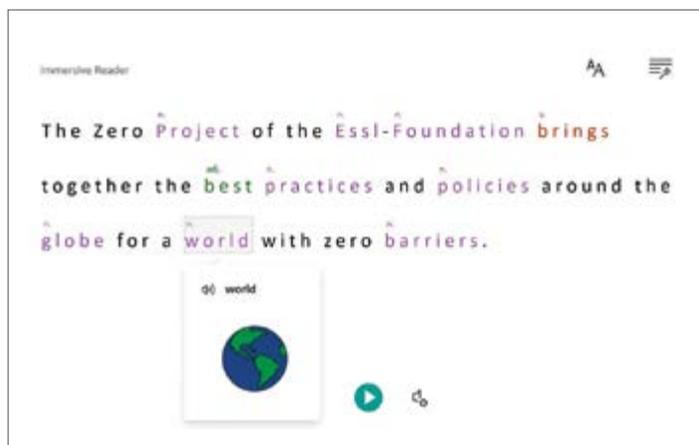
Miesenberger: AI for speech and picture recognition will be available as a black box for new services. Its potential is already shown by the high quality of close captioning of YouTube videos or automatic image descriptions for alternative texts.

### Will AI be everywhere?

Miesenberger: Even though technology can enable people in many ways, assistive technology is and will remain primarily a service model, in particular in the domain of Inclusive Education.



**Prof. Klaus Miesenberger**, head of the Institute Integriert Studieren at the Johannes Kepler University Linz/Austria, believes in the power of Artificial Intelligence as a driver for Inclusive Education.



An example of the Microsoft Office 365 Immersive Reader.

easier to grasp grammar structures; and it provides pictograms for certain words that might need explanation. Additionally, it highlights words currently being spoken aloud when speech output is enabled. The use of technology was identified in 38 of the shortlisted nominations, but no direct classification to one of the nine clusters could be made. This might be because there was no specific request to describe ICT use in the Zero Project nomination process. Therefore, many nominations described other aspects of their work, even though they apply solutions driven by these digitalization trends. Nonetheless, two general conclusions can be drawn:

1. Impact in Inclusive Education is not driven yet by the most recent digitalization trends.
2. Inclusive Education needs many gears working together; ICT on its own cannot be a solution, it always needs a service behind it.

To learn more about the technologies applied, the Zero Project tried to work out the applications areas of ICT enhancing Inclusive Education.

### Clusters of ICT solutions

After taking a closer look at the shortlist, our own clustering system was created. Every practice where the use of ICT was identified was associated with one of the following clusters:

- Online courses for parents and teachers (9)
- Online materials and libraries (9)
- Digital literacy and access to assistive technology (8)
- Assistive technology development (6)
- Online courses for people with disabilities (5)
- Online courses for professionals (5)
- Gaming, sports, and performing arts (4)
- Life-long learning (3)
- Language, reading, writing, and math (3)

- e-Accessibility awareness and standards (2)
- General access to education (2)
- Communication platforms and social media (2)
- Independence and access to environment (1)
- Other (1)

### Online courses show high impact

The clustering revealed an interesting insight given that the focus of the shortlisting process was on selecting projects with the highest impact. Almost half of the tech-driven shortlisted nominations (27 of 60) are within the area of “Online courses and online learning materials”. Courses targeted at parents and teachers seem to be very applicable for informing, training, and educating. With online courses, many people can be reached. Furthermore, a scaling and even an expansion to other geographical or topic areas becomes easier. Subsequently, offering online courses is a promising way to achieve an impact by reaching a high number of people.

### Training for parents and teachers

Four of the nine online courses for parents and teachers were not focused on one specific disability group. Four courses focused specifically on the needs of children with intellectual disabilities, and one focussed on teaching blind pupils. One example is the ELPIDA e-learning platform (page 78, <http://course.elpida-project.eu>), which provides information for parents and caregivers of children with intellectual disabilities. The main goal is to empower family members, providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills to better support children of all ages with intellectual disabilities.

One of the advantages when attending a course, compared to relying on information from other sources, is quality control. When relying solely on Internet search results, domain knowledge and a fair level of digital literacy is required to assess the quality of the information. Thus, lowering the barrier to access evidence-based material and best practices in Inclusive Education is definitely a good way to drive impact.

AFIRM, Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules, (<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules>) offers evidence-based practices that can be applied by practitioners who work with children with autism. The DIVERSA platform (<https://institutorodrigomendes.org.br/en/>) from Brazil offers articles, experience reports, accessible pedagogical materials, and case studies in all regions of Brazil and at various levels of education, as well as in other countries. The Open Doors project from the same organization shows how an online course helps to reach all kinds of stakeholders and to raise awareness for the need and paths towards inclusive sports education.

Some online courses were identified that focus on a particular profession, such as the Rick Hansen Foundation, which offers architects a virtual reality training on accessibility. The European Tourist Association provides an online course for tourguides to improve the service for people with learning disabilities.

### Accessible online courses

Designed in an accessible way, online courses can be a very good base for enhancing Inclusive Education. Accessibility needs to be guaranteed at the various levels. For example, the platform itself has to be accessible, meaning that users with disabilities can navigate, operate, and contribute to its content. The content in the different formats needs to fulfil the distinctive accessibility requirements as well, and exams must also be organized in an accessible way. Three of the five nominated online courses for people with disabilities are designed to meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities. For example, the barrier-free distance learning courses provided by Turkey's Association of Barrier-Free Access ([www.engelsizerisim.com](http://www.engelsizerisim.com)) aim to offer education for blind students in more remote and rural areas of the country, while the EduClick course described above is following a more universal approach.

### Content libraries for people who are visually or hearing impaired

In contrast to the broader approach of the online courses, the nominated online libraries and other forms of online content have a strong focus on educational materials for blind and visually impaired people. The reason for this might be that the blind and visually impaired can access digital content through Braille and speech output. Notably, material for learning Braille, such as the ONCE Braiitico course (<https://educacion.once.es/braiitico>), is among the offerings. Online libraries offer resources in a variety of formats, including DAISY books, audiobooks, and musical notes. The world's largest accessible e-book library is Bookshare ([www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)), offering 783,000 accessible e-books in 47 languages. Similar platforms exist for people who are hearing impaired, such as VideoLibros ([www.videolibros.org](http://www.videolibros.org)), offering stories and books in sign language.

Digitalization will increasingly transfer teaching and learning methods towards online and blended learning courses. Hence, the goal of Inclusive Education must also be strengthened in this field, as called for in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Therefore, all online courses and materials should be created and offered in a way that follows the universal learning design.



The AFIRM webpage offers practices that can be applied by practitioners who work with children with autism.



The Videobooks webpage offers stories and books in sign language.

### Digital literacy and access to assistive technology

Living in a world where digital services become an increasingly integral part of your life raises the need to be able to use digital technologies. For people with disabilities, accessible ICT and assistive technology have become an important tool for inclusion, self-determination, and independence. To really be able to derive a personal benefit from ICT use, a fair level of digital literacy is needed; and for people with disabilities, competence in using assistive technologies is often required. These skills can be critical to accessing Inclusive Education. Consequently, practices in those fields nominated for the Zero Project can demonstrate a real impact. Notably, eight technology-driven nominations were associated with the field of “digital skills and access to assistive technology.”

Being able to operate assistive technology can bring many benefits – from early childhood onwards. The Australian start-up Sonokids ([www.sonokids.org](http://www.sonokids.org)) provides accessible games to help young children improve their digital and assistive technology skills. Having access to assistive technology is often crucial for being able to navigate everyday life independently. Assistive technology labs are important places to assess individual needs, try out technology, and get assistance in the acquisition, adaption, and adoption of assistive technology.



A young student works on a PC with Ballyland at his school. (Photo credit: Andrew Thurtell)



Children in Kenya who are blind or sight impaired learn in assistive technology labs supported by InAble.

Assistive technology labs often take over this role and act as knowledge and experience hubs. As such, they are crucial to enable Inclusive Education. However, the number and capacity of such labs varies greatly from country to country. In Kenya, inABLE (<https://inable.smugmug.com/>) is expanding the number of assistive technology and computer labs in schools for the blind, helping these students to grow their digital skills and thus be able to study and work more independently.

As individual needs vary, it is important that the existing solutions are adapted in the right way. Sometimes, even individualized developments are needed. The Instituto Profesional Duoc UC in Chile is working with the CERES special school to offer such individualized services, specializing in assistive technology solutions that do not exist on the market.

With digital literacy, people with disabilities often have the ability to become experts in their own right regarding the breaking down of barriers and the use of digital technologies. Subsequently, they can act as peers, trainers, and respected experts in this domain. Within the PIKSL projects (<https://piksl.net/>), people with intellectual disabilities learn to become ICT trainers for a peer-to-peer course, mostly offering courses for senior citizens. This project narrows the digital divide on several levels, offers life-long learning, and creates new job perspectives for people with disabilities.

### **E-accessibility awareness and standards**

Most of the assistive technologies can only be applied in digitally accessible environments. For continuous improvements in digital accessibility, international standards, certification, and continuous research and

development are needed. The International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP) (<https://www.accessibilityassociation.org/>) shows how this can be achieved, offering a certification programme on Accessibility Core Competencies and for Web Accessibility Specialist.

Raising awareness on the urgent need to create e-accessible learning environments is increasingly important, and several of the previously described online courses take these aspects into account. For example, China's Zhejiang University offers a dedicated staff training to raise awareness on accessible ICT. The importance of raising this awareness on different levels can be seen by the achievements of Light for the World in north-east India. Broad partnerships between education/government bodies and local NGOs were created to develop a path towards a "Universal Design for Learning" approach, which also fosters the awareness and use of accessible ICT ([www.light-for-the-world.org/north-east-india](http://www.light-for-the-world.org/north-east-india)). This best practice nomination highlights the potential of universal learning design approaches as well as its high acceptance rate due to the potential benefits for all.

International standards that not only take accessibility into account but make it a priority are an important key for universal design for learning. For example, in Montenegro, DAISY books were introduced as part of a UNICEF project and are now used in more than half of all primary schools. This drives Inclusive Education by allowing children with and without disabilities to learn together and even use the same learning materials (<https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/stories/daisy-textbooks-more-self-contained-learning-children-reading-difficulties>).



Providing individualized assistive technology solutions in Chile.



A tactile relief of the famed "Der Kuss" (The Kiss) by Gustav Klimt.

### Games, sports, and the performing arts

Playing games, taking part in sports, or participating in the performing arts, such as dance and theatre, are important activities for personal development. Gamification processes are applied in many areas of education for all age groups, but not always with accessibility and design for all in mind. Designing games in inclusive settings can help to increase awareness of the importance of accessibility. At the same time, working together can help to improve the imagination and creativity of students both with and without disabilities. The Brazilian University of Itajai Valley applies the "I've made my game" approach, where students design, develop, and evaluate their own digital games. SciFY from Greece is developing games for people who are blind and makes them available for free (<http://gamesfortheblind.org>) and even as open-source, allowing the games to be easily adopted and translated.

Tanzelarija from Bosnia & Herzegovina is offering a silent dance project for deaf people, applying vibro-tactile, rhythmic stimulation (<http://www.tanzelarija.eu/produkcije/sd.html>).

### Inclusive life-long learning

Outside school and university settings, inclusive learning does not yet seem to be a main topic. However, the educational goals of museums and the media offer good opportunities to drive the inclusive learning agenda. One example is the ARCHES project, offering enhanced museum experiences through an accessible app, incorporating sign language, and providing an innovative way of creating 3D reliefs of art pieces (<https://www.vrvis.at/research/projects/arches/>). AKIM Israel has a practice that aims to make museums a more accessible educational space,

in particular for visitors with learning disabilities. Sign Media from Kenya broadcasts a 24/7 TV channel in sign language with voice as an override. The programme aims to ensure that economic literacy and information is adequately articulated to people with disabilities (<http://signsmediake.com>).

### Conclusion

Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 – "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all" – involves many steps. The examples above demonstrate how ICT plays an important role in achieving this SDG. Creating awareness about the needs, overcoming barriers by creating accessible solutions, and especially raising the level of digital skills are all key to creating greater access to education.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Martin Morandell**, CEO of Smart in Life e.U., is an academic expert in assistive technology. He has been active in the research, application, and teaching of assistive technology and e-accessibility for 20 years, with the aim to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and older adults.



# SDGs and Data

## Measuring and monitoring disability-inclusion in education policies

**193 countries**

Six Legal Indicators to comparatively measure and analyze policy-making

**SDGs**

An effort by the WORLD Policy Analysis Center to advance the SDGs

# Global Policy Data to Advance the SDGs

The WORLD Policy Analysis Center is leading efforts to comparatively measure and analyze disability-inclusive policy-making. This section is provided by Prof. Jody Heymann and Willetta Waisath.

From 2000 to 2015, achieving universal primary education was at the center of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – an initiative that galvanized the global community on an unprecedented scale and halved the number of out-of-school children of primary school age. Despite this achievement, children with disabilities still attend school at substantially lower rates than their non-disabled peers, and evidence shows that the disability gap in education outcomes has in fact increased – rather than decreased – over time.

*“By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.”*

SDG Goal 4, Target 4.5

When the global community adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, they pledged to resolve and expand on the unfinished work of the MDGs and “leave no one behind.” In education this means ensuring that at primary and beyond, the fundamental right to education is affirmatively extended to the most marginalized – including persons with disabilities.

## Measuring and monitoring disability-inclusion in education

While gathering data on education outcomes (such as enrollment, attendance, and literacy) for children and youth with disabilities is critical, this data is not the only form of monitoring that’s possible or useful in support of the 2030 Agenda. Realizing global inclusion as articulated by the SDGs relies on individual countries passing and effectively implementing well-developed disability-inclusive policy frameworks at the national level. Measuring and monitoring the strength of legal commitments to Inclusive Education is feasible now, and an important complement to disaggregated data on education outcomes.

WORLD’s quantitatively comparative measures of national commitments to Inclusive Education (outlined in the following pages) support the 2030 Agenda by informing the policy and research efforts of a range of stakeholders working to dismantle persistent barriers to education, including:

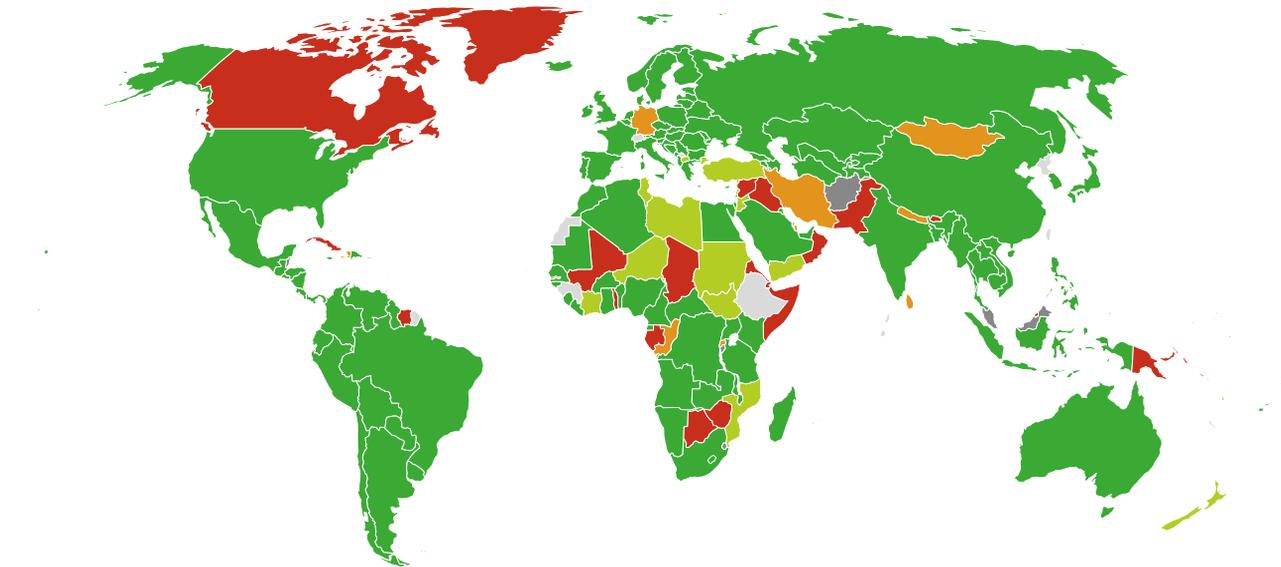
- Policy makers seeking information on what steps are feasible and effective at the national level in similar country contexts;
- Citizens committed to working for change and ensuring their governments are as effective and accountable as possible;
- DPOs and civil society using comparative data to support evidence-based improvements in their communities and countries; and
- Researchers analyzing the link between policies and outcomes to refine our collective understanding of disability-inclusive policy design.

## ABOUT THE WORLD POLICY ANALYSIS CENTER

With the aim of advancing equality and inclusion for all people, the WORLD Policy Analysis Center (WORLD) examines social and economic laws, policies, and national constitutions to improve the quantity and quality of global policy data available. Developed over the past fifteen years, WORLD’S unique, interactive data resources now capture over 2,000 policy measures of health, education, childhood, gender, global development, equal rights, and poverty, among others. WORLD’S commitment to rigorous policy research is accompanied by a deep commitment to ensure these findings are broadly translated to advance evidence-based change in all countries.

*“Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.”*

SDG Goal 4, Target 4.A



### The methodology of the WORLD databases

WORLD databases are developed and maintained by an international, interdisciplinary team of multilingual researchers. Researchers review and systematically analyze laws in their original language or translation to an official UN language, and convert these lengthy documents into a consistent and comparable set of quantitative indicators for all countries.

Policy dimensions are prioritized for analysis based on a range of factors, including: global consensus on their value, research evidence that demonstrates their importance, articulated needs of civil society partners, and feasibility. Once a policy area is prioritized, a set of indicators is carefully developed to consistently assess policy features while still capturing the full variety of approaches taken by countries. This framework is tested on a diverse subset of countries to refine and strengthen indicators before they are systematically applied to all 193 countries. To ensure accuracy, data for each country are coded independently by two analysts, and their results compared. Full details on WORLD methodology, including database-specific policy sources and approach to quality control can be found at [www.worldpolicycenter.org/methodology](http://www.worldpolicycenter.org/methodology).

### 22 rights indicators across 193 countries

From 2017 to 2019, WORLD worked to significantly expand the evidence base on steps all countries are taking to realize equal rights and full inclusion at school and equal rights and reasonable accommodation at work for persons with disabilities. With

the advice of a 19-member Steering Committee of global leaders from disabled persons organizations, academia, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, and philanthropy, WORLD measured national approaches to advance equality and inclusion in education laws, labor laws, equal rights laws, and constitutions – producing a unique dataset with more than 20 rights indicators across all 193 countries.

The full report and dataset linked to this initiative is available at: [www.worldpolicycenter.org](http://www.worldpolicycenter.org)

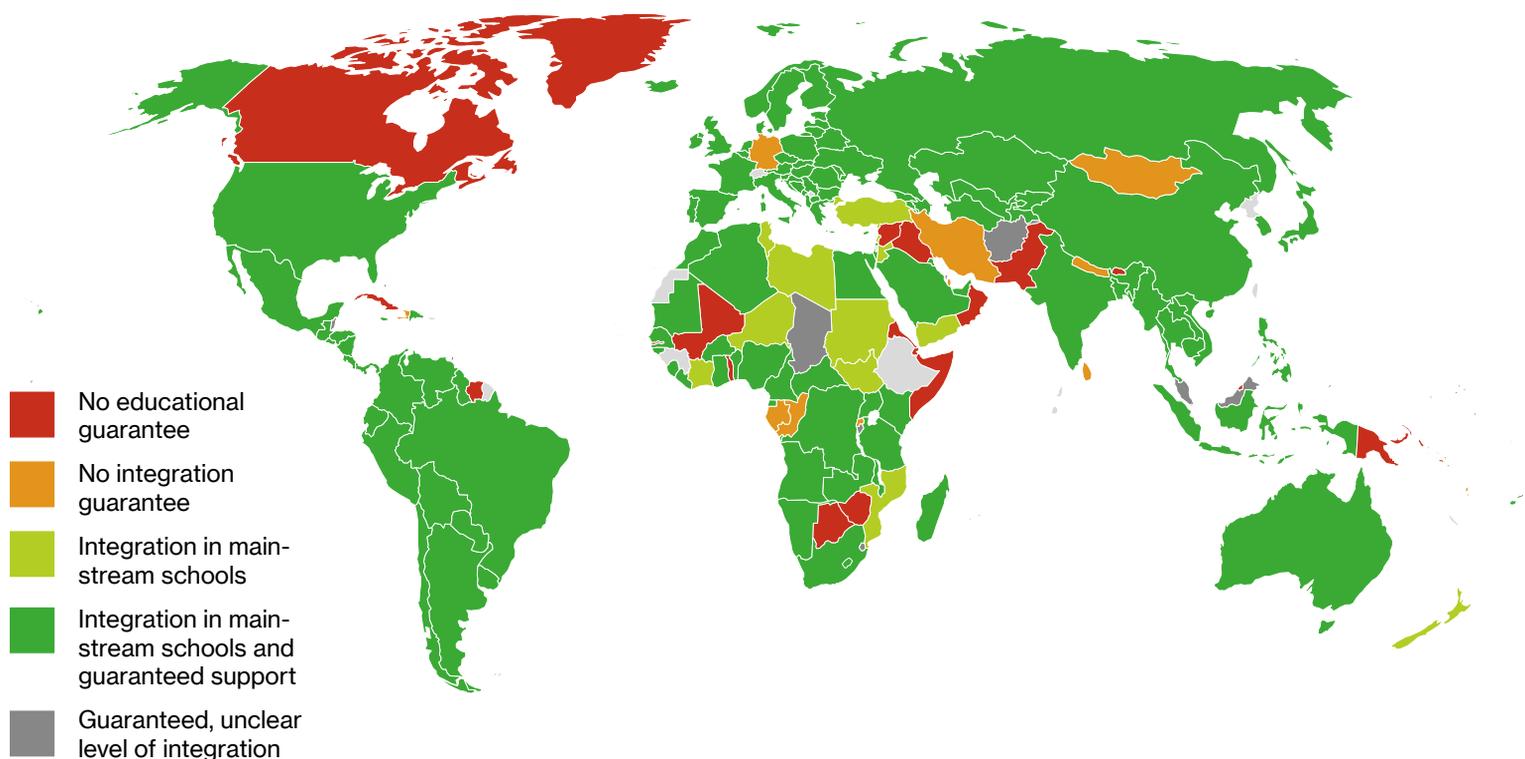
### GLOBAL DATA TO ADVANCE THE GLOBAL AGENDA: MEASURING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE POLICY-MAKING

Grounded in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 24), General Comment No. 4 defines inclusion as “involve[ing] a process of systemic reform, embodying changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education to overcome barriers.” This indicator measures two of many important aspects of inclusion: legislative guarantees to promote integration of mainstream education environments; and guarantees to provide individualized accommodations and supports for students with disabilities. On a global basis, these are the areas for which policy data is available. Ultimately, more is importantly needed to fully evaluate policies surrounding Inclusive Education.

# National laws must affirmatively guarantee Inclusive Education to children with disabilities

Globally, 74 per cent of countries take an important first step to advance inclusion by guaranteeing children with disabilities access to education alongside their peers in mainstream schools.

**Q:** What is the guaranteed level of inclusion in primary education for students with disabilities?



While laws guaranteeing children with disabilities access to public education is not enough to ensure access in practice, they are a critical first step. Our global analysis finds that a majority of countries (88 per cent) explicitly guarantee children with disabilities access to public education in primary education.

Previous educational models primarily provided schooling for children and youth with disabilities in segregated, separate schools within the education system. This analysis finds that

a majority of national legal frameworks are aligned with the global demand for integrated education.

Seventy-four per cent of countries commit to providing children with disabilities education in at least partially integrated, mainstream environments during primary school, by guaranteeing that children have access to the same schools as their peers. Successful follow-through may remain an issue in many of these settings.

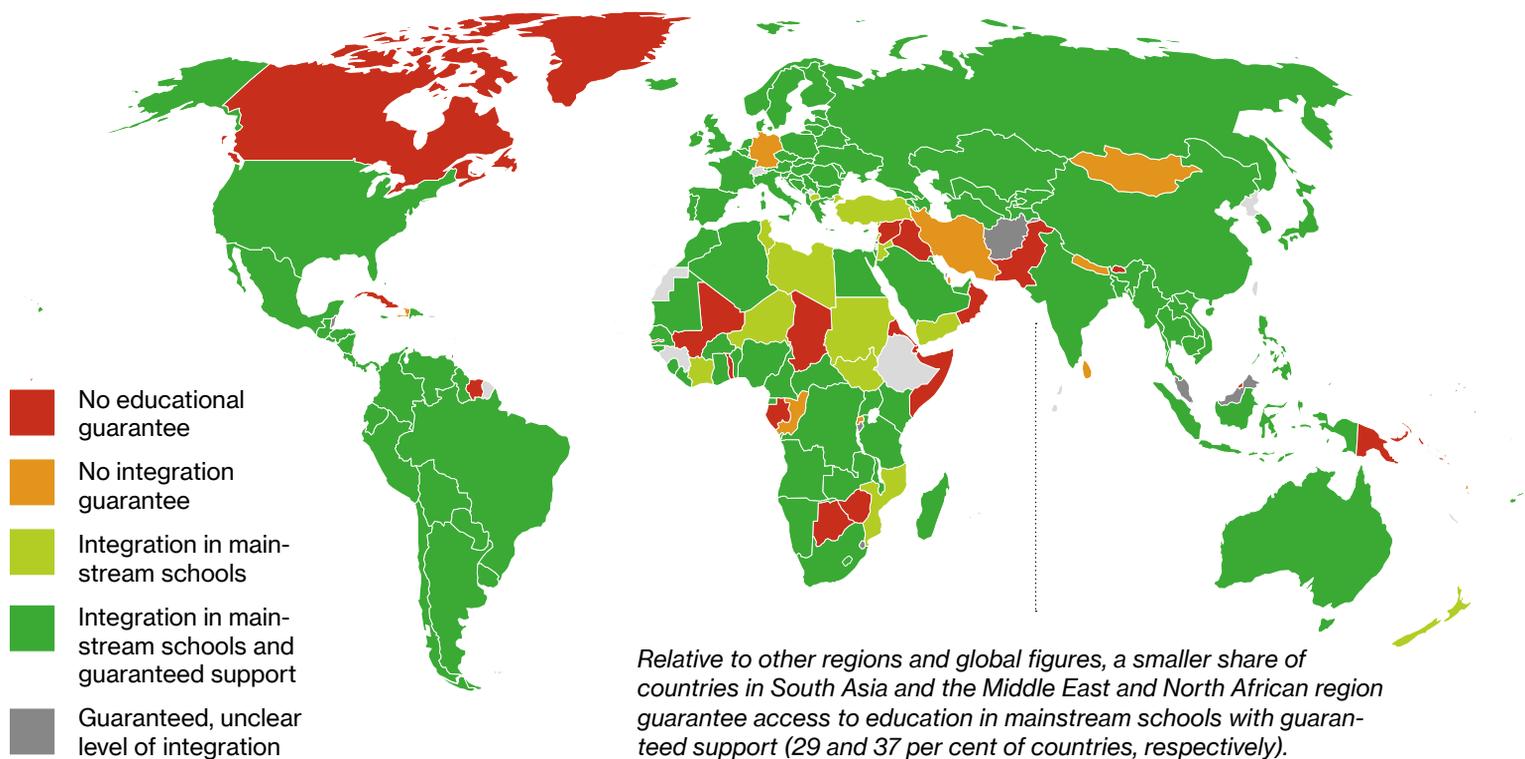


An interactive version of this map is available online here: [www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-in-education-for-students-with-disabilities/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-in-primary-education-for-students-with-disabilities](http://www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-in-education-for-students-with-disabilities/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-in-primary-education-for-students-with-disabilities)

# Advancing inclusion requires that national guarantees support the diverse needs, strengths, and experiences of all students with disabilities

Access to individualized supports is a key element of Inclusive Education; 65 per cent of countries guarantee students with disabilities access to individualized support and accommodation in integrated education environments.

**Q:** What is the guaranteed level of inclusion through the completion of secondary education\* for students with disabilities?



A commitment to integration must be paired with strong guarantees to provide adequate individualized supports and accommodations for all students with disabilities.

Supports and accommodations in the education setting can take the form of assistive devices, curricular adaptations, and adjustments in exams, among other approaches. Above all, it's critical that these be provided by the public school system, without a family obligation to pay.

Nearly two-thirds of countries (65 per cent) have importantly paired legislative commitments to integrated education in mainstream environments with explicit guarantees to individualized support and accommodation for students with disabilities through the completion of secondary education.

*\* Findings at the upper-secondary level largely correspond to findings at the primary level—with the exception of eight countries where guarantees linked to compulsory education are weaker or absent.*

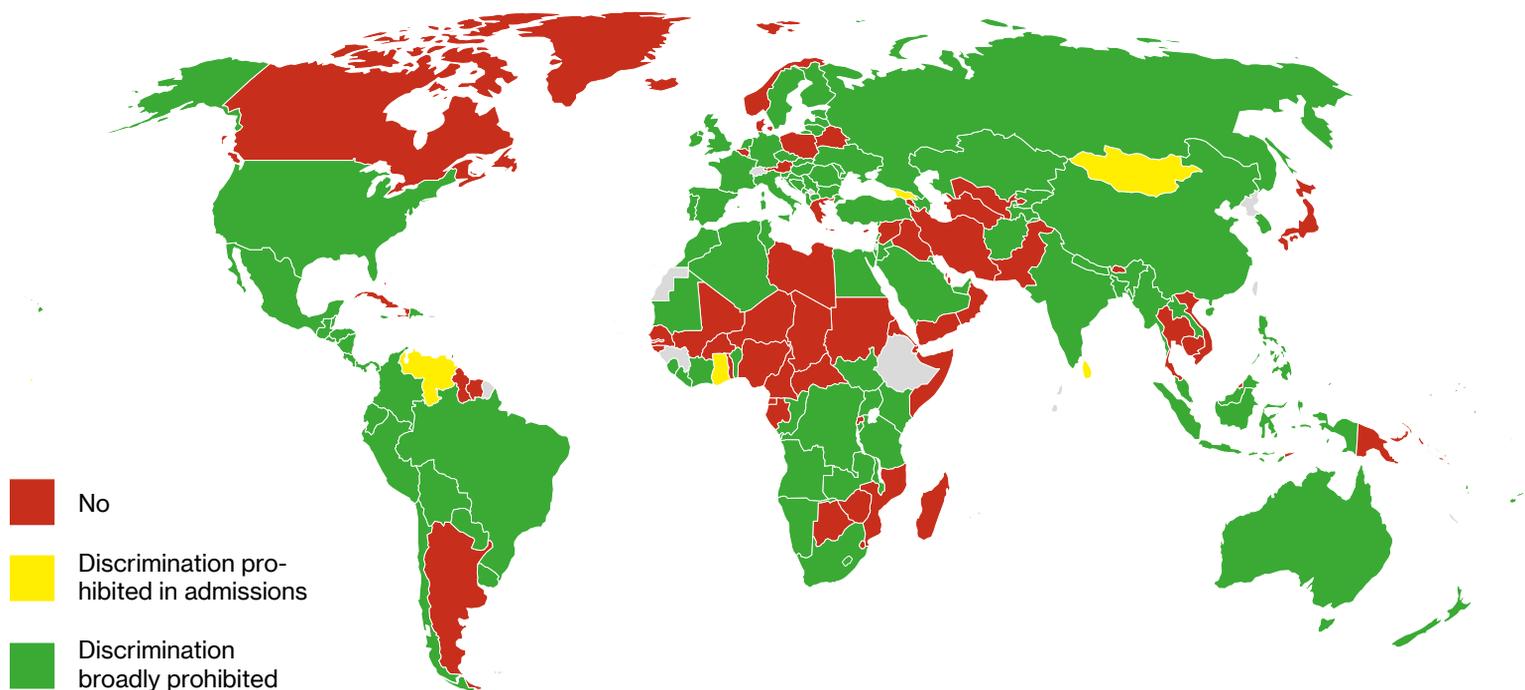


An interactive version of this map is available online here: [www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-in-education-for-students-with-disabilities/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-through-the-completion-of-secondary-education-for-students-with-disabilities](http://www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-in-education-for-students-with-disabilities/what-is-the-guaranteed-level-of-inclusion-through-the-completion-of-secondary-education-for-students-with-disabilities)

# To dismantle persistent barriers, legislation must prohibit all forms of disability-based discrimination at school

Access to equal educational opportunities can ensure a strong foundation for a lifetime, yet only 54 per cent of countries prohibit disability-based discrimination through the end of secondary school.

**Q:** Is disability-based discrimination prohibited through the completion of secondary education?



Disability-based discrimination in the education environment can take many forms – from affecting inclusion in programs to evaluation to disciplinary measures – and strong guarantees to non-discrimination can help ensure that youth with disabilities can access education on an equal basis with others. However, only about half of all countries (54 per cent) broadly guarantee non-discrimination in education on the basis of disability through the completion of secondary education.

While countries at all income levels have taken important steps to advance equality by prohibiting discrimination, there are notable gaps in this foundational protection in every region, ranging from guarantees in 39 per cent of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to 69 per cent in Europe and Central Asia.

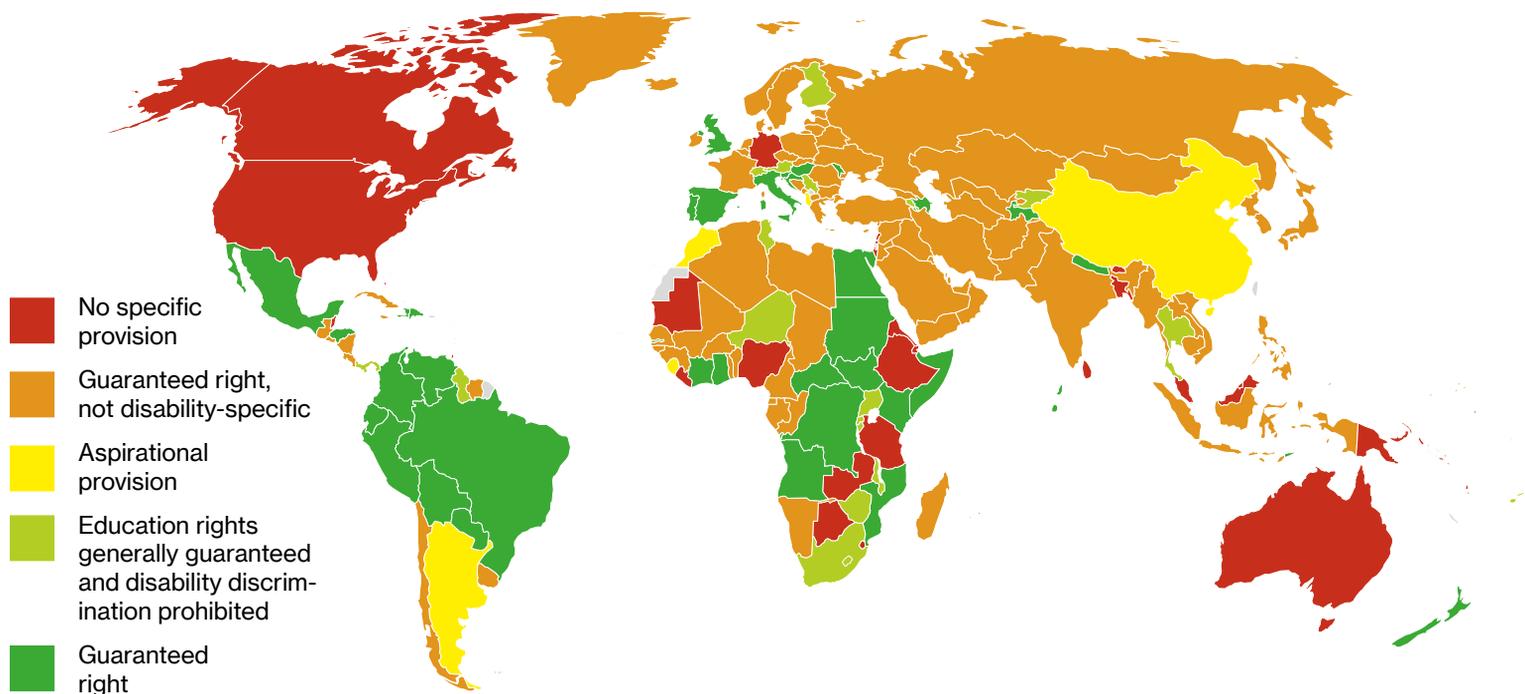


An interactive version of this map is available online here: [www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/is-disability-based-discrimination-prohibited-in-education/is-disability-based-discrimination-prohibited-through-the-completion-of-secondary-education](http://www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/is-disability-based-discrimination-prohibited-in-education/is-disability-based-discrimination-prohibited-through-the-completion-of-secondary-education)

# Rights guarantees in national constitutions can powerfully advance and protect Inclusive Education

Globally, 28 per cent of constitutions explicitly guarantee the right to education for children and youth with disabilities – providing advocates and policy makers with an important tool to reverse and reform discriminatory laws, and to support implementation of laws and policies that advance inclusion.

**Q:** Does the constitution explicitly guarantee the right to education for children with disabilities?



Constitutional guarantees to equal rights are powerful tools for reversing discriminatory laws and policies, and for supporting the effective implementation of laws and policies that promote equality for persons with disabilities. Further, in periods of political and social change, constitutional equal rights protections can also guard against the weakening of legislative commitments to equality and inclusion.

Beyond their instrumental value, constitutions play a large normative role. Rights and values enshrined within national constitutions can powerfully shape societal norms towards inclusion in education and beyond.

Around the world today, only 28 per cent of countries enshrine the right to education for children and youth with

disabilities in their constitutions. However, these guarantees have become more commonly included in constitutions over time. While this explicit guarantee was only included in 13 per cent of constitutions adopted before 1990, it was included in 67 per cent of constitutions adopted between 2010 and 2017.

A small number of countries take further steps to dismantle persistent barriers to equality in education by making explicit references to accessibility and integration in their constitutions. Globally, seven constitutions address the integration of students with disabilities into the public school system, and four constitutions require that schools and other educational institutions be physically accessible.



An interactive version of this map is available online here: [www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/does-the-constitution-explicitly-guarantee-the-right-to-education-for-children-with-disabilities](http://www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/does-the-constitution-explicitly-guarantee-the-right-to-education-for-children-with-disabilities)



# Summary in Easy Language

A summary of this Report, simplified

# About the Zero Project

The Essl Foundation  
started the Zero Project in 2008.

The mission was to work  
for a world without barriers.

Zero stands for zero barriers.

This means a world  
where people with disabilities  
are not prevented from doing the same things  
as people without disabilities.

To do this,  
the Zero Project relies on the UN CRPD.

**UN CRPD** is short for

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.**

The Zero Project works on innovations  
for persons with disabilities.

Part of their work is to inform others  
about these innovations.

The Zero Project has a big network  
of experts with and without disabilities.

The members of the Zero Project  
come from 180 countries.

The Zero Project team finds  
Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies.

These are great innovations  
that support persons with disabilities.

The Zero Project works together with different persons  
and organizations around the world.

Then they inform others  
about these Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies.

The Zero Project works according to 4 principles.  
These principles are explained on pages 8.

# The research of the Zero Project

Every research cycle of the Zero Project lasts 4 years.  
This year the topic is Education.

During one full cycle, approximately 300  
Innovative Practices and Policies are worked on.  
Next year a new research cycle will start.  
The topic next year will be Employment.

This year, the Zero project selected  
75 Innovative Practices and 11 Innovative Policies.  
These Practices and Policies  
are on the topic of Education.  
They are presented in the Zero Project Report.  
These Practices and Policies are also presented

- on the Zero Project website at [www.zeroproject.org](http://www.zeroproject.org)
- on Social Media
- at the Zero Project Conference in February 2020 in Vienna

## The Zero Project Conference

The Zero Project Conference  
is a meeting point of people with ideas.  
It takes place every year  
in the Headquarters of the United Nations in Vienna.  
Around 700 participants from more than 90 countries  
take part every year.  
During the Conference, people present  
Innovative Practices and Policies.

The winners of the Zero Project Award receive their prize at the Conference.  
Also, people with a lot of influence  
and people who can make important decisions  
present different topics and ideas.  
These people come from many countries  
and from all sectors of society.

# The Essl Foundation

The Essl Foundation MGE gemeinnützige Privatstiftung was established in 2007.

Martin and Gerda Essl founded the Essl Foundation in Klosterneuburg in Austria.

The focus of the foundation lies on research and donations.

The Essl Foundation has created the Zero Project.

Today the Foundation funds and organizes the Zero Project with a team of professionals, based in Vienna in Austria.

## Partnership with Fundación Descúbreme

In 2019, the Essl Foundation and the organization Fundación Descúbreme from Chile have started a partnership.

Through this partnership the Zero Project's mission is also available for all Spanish-speaking people.

## The Essl Foundation and Zero Project in Austria

The Essl Foundation organizes the “Zero Project Unternehmensdialoge” and the “Zero Project Branchendialoge”. This is a series of conferences in Austria. In these conferences, the members work on different topics:

- promote Innovative Practices in inclusive employment
- publish newspaper supplements on accessibility and inclusive employment
- organize local awards for creating employment for persons with disabilities.

# **Innovations, Networks, Communication, and the Zero Project Conference**

The Zero Project has 3 important tasks:

- Select Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies
- Have an active network
- Present results and inform others at the Zero Project Conference

## **What are Innovative Practices?**

Innovative Practices can be:

- Projects
- Programmes
- Products and services
- Social enterprises
- Business strategies

Innovative Practices are usually organized by:

- Organizations and foundations
- Private companies
- Universities

## **What are Innovative Policies?**

There are public policies on different levels:

- Policies for several countries at once
- Policies for 1 country
- Policies for a big or a small region

Public policies are usually enforced by

- laws,
- regulations or
- standards.

# **Innovations found in 2020**

For 2020, the Zero Project selected 75 Innovative Practices and 11 Innovative Policies. These Practices and Policies should improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

This year's research focus is education. There are different areas for education:

- Early childhood, kindergarten, and preschool
- Primary school and secondary school
- University
- Vocational education and job training
- Non-formal education – for example, private courses or workshops
- Digital education for using computers, tablets, or smartphones

## **Patterns of Solutions**

The Zero Project also looks into “Patterns of Solutions.” These are groups of similar solutions for a problem. This year the Zero Project has identified 11 patterns of solutions.

### **Solution Number 1:**

To make early childhood support more accessible in less developed countries, care providers have to get educator training and have access to cheap learning materials.

### **Solution Number 2:**

To create more inclusive schools it is important that children and parents get individual support.

### **Solution Number 3:**

To make schools in low and middle income countries more inclusive teachers have to get quality training. Teachers can be trained in dedicated centres or universities.

### **Solution Number 4:**

To get more children into school in low and middle income countries, parents must be visited and informed at their homes. Then the families get individual support for their needs.

### **Solution Number 5:**

To make universities more inclusive they have to open up and be more accessible for people with intellectual disabilities. University training and degrees can make it easier to get a job.

### **Solution Number 6:**

It is important to have good transition models for the stages from training to a real job.

### **Solution Number 7:**

Architects and city planners need to be trained to make cities more accessible and barrier free. Successful training methods include free online courses and certifications.

## **Solution Number 8:**

Using digital skills in a playful and creative way is a good way to train skills like creativity and communication.

## **Solution Number 9:**

A lot of solutions for digital accessibility are based on “digital clouds.

With digital clouds you can easily organize and share information through the Internet.

For example, you can share digital libraries and directories that are organized in a way that is user friendly, accessible, and free of charge.

## **Solution Number 10:**

Cloud-based solutions can also be used for online courses and to exchange information with others.

For example, you can use clouds for teaching Braille.

## **Solution Number 11:**

There are many ways to use digital solutions to support communication.

### **For example**

- a programme that automatically writes out spoken words
- a programme to change text design to make it easier to read
- a programme that makes it easier to use touch-based features on tablets

# Dictionary

## UN CRPD

**UN CRPD** is short for

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.**

The United Nations is an international organization.

The UN CRPD is a treaty

that was signed by many countries around the world.

The treaty says that every government should protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

## Innovation / Innovative

Things or ideas are called “innovative” if they are new and creative.

An “innovation” is something that no one has done before.

It can also be an idea that no one has had before.

## Inclusion / Inclusive

If something is “inclusive,” it means that everyone can take part.

This means that people with disabilities

can participate in the same way as people without disabilities.

All people in our society

must have the same opportunities and rights.



# Annex

**The Zero Project  
Network 2019–2020**

**Acknowledgements**

**Guidelines for  
Conference Accessibility**

**List of Acronyms**

# Conference Accessibility Guidelines

The Zero Project, jointly with Escola de Gente and other trusted partners, has published the Zero Project Conference Accessibility Guidelines, summarizing all that the Zero Project has learned on the journey towards an inclusive and accessible conference. While the Guidelines will be updated on a regular basis, we are pleased to offer here a list of important accessibility measures to ensure that your next conference will be as successful as possible.

## 1 Preparing for the conference

- 1.1 What to look for when selecting an accessible venue
- 1.2 Promoting the event and inviting people to attend
- 1.3 Collecting details about additional support needs at registration
- 1.4 Effectively communicating the accessibility of your conference
- 1.5 Providing contact details to offer additional support with registration and booking
- 1.6 Arranging travel transfers for participants with limited mobility or other support needs
- 1.7 Making additional support available to individual participants during the conference
- 1.8 Supporting personal assistants to attend
- 1.9 Ensuring your whole team is ready to support participants at the conference
- 1.10 Supporting speakers to make their presentations fully accessible
- 1.11 Communicating the content of the conference in advance to help participants prepare

## 2 Making written and video material accessible

- 2.1 Providing large print versions of printed materials
- 2.2 Providing alternative text for images
- 2.3 Creating accessible electronic documents
- 2.4 Making information on websites accessible
- 2.5 Making written materials easy to read
- 2.6 Using QR codes to provide information in an alternative format
- 2.7 Creating accessible video content

## 3 Orientation at the conference venue

- 3.1 Creating an accessible registration area
- 3.2 Providing clear signage so people can navigate independently
- 3.3 Providing tactile flooring at the conference venue
- 3.4 Offering a sensory break room

## 4 Participatory and inclusive conference sessions

- 4.1 Ensuring speeches and presentations are accessible
- 4.2 Captioning speeches
- 4.3 Providing sign language interpretation
- 4.4 Providing audio descriptions of video content
- 4.5 Using graphic facilitation to convey information in an alternative format
- 4.6 Making audio induction loops available
- 4.7 Providing a live web stream to increase remote access

## 5 Communication after the conference

- 5.1 Making materials available after the conference
- 5.2 Collecting feedback from participants on the conference experience

### CONFERENCE ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES

A new Zero Project publication is ready for download at [www.zeroproject.org/resources](http://www.zeroproject.org/resources)

# Acknowledgements

The Zero Project would not have been possible without the broad and continuous support of many individuals and organizations over the last five years. It is difficult to highlight only a few individuals out of a network of more than 5,000, but some have been of particular help to us last year.

We are especially grateful to the following individuals for their contributions to the nomination, shortlisting, and selection process of this year's Innovative Policies and Practices, with our newly appointed Zero Project Ambassadors in the lead: Klaus Hoeckner, Michal Rimon, Susan Scott-Parker, Caroline Casey, Rupert Roniger, and Luk Zelderloo. But there are many more who are continuously supportive whenever we need them, like Judy Heumann, Kathy Guernsey, Jody Heymann, Luis Gallegos, and so many others! In addition, Nora Wolloch and Kordian Bruck provided incredible support in establishing the IT-platform for the nomination and selection processes.

For contributing to a successful Zero Project Conference 2019, we extend special thanks to the Permanent Mission of Austria to the UN in Vienna; to the United Nations Organization of Vienna, which served as an excellent host; and to Dennis Thatchaichawalit and Linto Thanikkel of the United Nations Office in Vienna.

We are, from our very early beginnings, indebted to Caroline Casey, as always, for her incredible energy and inspiration as Conference moderator. Claudia Werneck and her team at Escola de Gente contributed enormously to the Zero Project Conference Accessibility Guidelines.

The Zero Project Conference would not continue to grow without the ongoing support of its partners, including Access Israel, Kathy Johnston, HRH Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan, Fundación ONCE, Fundación Descúbreme, Hilfs-gemeinschaft, Microsoft Inc., Special Olympics, atempo and capito, PIKSL, Institut fuer Inklusive Bildung Germany, Nippon Foundation, Sabanci Foundation, European Network on Independent Living, Leonard Cheshire, Sightsavers, and many more.

We are proud that we could establish permanent relations with various organizations from all parts of society and with their leaders, such as Daniela Bas, Akiko Ito, Eric Zhang, and everyone else from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs–Division for Inclusive Social Development; and we are grateful for the opportunities to present Zero Project research at the Conference of State Parties at UN Headquarters in New York. We are also grateful for the opportunity to share our research at the meetings and conferences of the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities, International Labour Organization, Agenzija Saport of Malta, G3ICT with M-Enabling Summit in Washington and M-Enabling Europe, Harkin Summit and Humanity & Inclusion in Paris, Access

Israel, Sabanci Foundation, Kessler Foundation, respACT, Trieste Mental Health – all of which greatly contributed to accomplishing the mission of the Zero Project.

It is also an honour to be part of the Disability Thematic Network of the European Foundation Centre, and to work with all its members. A special thanks in this regard to Jaroslaw Ponder, Roxana Widmer-Iliescu, and many others at ITU, with whom we have started a promising cooperation to jointly develop an ecosystem of ICT innovators.

In Austria we are thankful to Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian Parliament, for his continuous support, and for co-organizing an event on Inclusive Education in the Austrian Parliament. Also in Austria, we are grateful to our growing network and all partners who join us in producing the Unternehmensdialoge (business dialogues with leading Austrian companies), the Accessible-IT Academy project, supplements in *Die Presse*, and other activities designed to create a world without barriers. Special thanks to our trustworthy partners, such as the various ministries and the many NEBA (Netzwerk Berufliche Assistenz) organizations, the team from *Die Presse*, and all our friends from the philanthropic community at the House of Philanthropy in Vienna and at Sinnstifter and Sinnbildungsstiftung.

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The Austrian Ministry for Europe, Integration, and Foreign Affairs has supported the Zero Project in many ways, both in Austria and abroad. For example, for co-sponsoring our side events at the UN Conferences, we very much wish to acknowledge the help provided by Ambassador Jan Kickert and his team at the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nation in New York. Finally, we wish to acknowledge the former and current Ministers of Social Affairs, who have supported the Zero Project and the Zero Project Austria Conference, as have the Ministry's Manfred Pallinger, Andreas Reinalter, and Max Rubisch.

# Zero Project Research Network 2019–2020

List by country of all peer-reviewers, voters, questionnaire respondents, and people with active roles in this year's research cycle, from May 2019 to February 2020. Some 700 experts with and without disabilities from 108 countries contributed.

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<b>Afghanistan</b>		
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<b>Argentina</b>		
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Juan	LÓPEZ MACCIO	Videobooks
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## The Zero Project Research Network 2019–2020 (continued)

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# List of Acronyms

	Contact		
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	IOS	Operating System of Apple smartphones
ADHD	Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder	iPad	Tablet Computer, Trademark of Apple Computers
Android	Operation system of smartphones	ISL	International Sign Language
ANED	Academic Network of European Disability	ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder	IT	Information & Technology
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ASL	American Sign Language	LFTW	Light for the World
AT	Assistive Technology	LLC	Limited Liability Company
CBM	Christoffel Blind Mission	Ltd	Limited (registered company)
CBR	Community-based rehabilitation	MEP	Member of the European Parliament
CBS	Community-based services	MoE	Ministry of Education
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	MP	Member of Parliament
CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	NFC	Near-Field Communication
CV	Curriculum Vitae (resumé)	NGO	Non-governmental organization
DAISY	Digital Accessible Information System	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
DPO	Disabled people's organization	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
e.V.	eingetragener Verein (registered Association)	ONLUS	Organizzazione Non Lucrativa Di Utilità Sociale (Non-Profit Organization, Italy)
EAA	European Accessibility Act	PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
EASPD	European Association of Service Providers	QR Code	Barcode for Scanning (Quick Response Code)
EC	European Commission (part of the EU)	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ECI	Early childhood intervention	TVET	Technical, vocational, and educational training
EEA	European Economic Area	UAE	United Arab Emirates
EFC	European Foundation Centre	UD	Universal Design
ENIL	European Network for Independent Living	UEB	Unified English Braille Code
Erasmus+	EU grant-funding programme	UK	United Kingdom
EU	European Union	UN	United Nations
G3ICT	Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs	UN CRPD	see CRPD
FC	Football Club	UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GPS	Global Positioning System	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
HI	Humanity & Inclusion	UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
Horizon2020	EU grant-funding programme	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
HR	Human Resources	US, U.S.	United States of America
HTML	Hypertext Marker Language (Computer language used for websites)	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ICT	Information and communication technologies	VET	Vocational and educational training
IDA	International Disability Alliance	W3C	World Wide Web Consortium
IL	Independent Living	WBU	World Blind Union
ILO	International Labour Organization	WCAG 2.0	Accessibility Standard for Web applications
Inc.	Incorporated (for-profit organization in US, UK and other countries)	WHO	World Health Organization
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies		

**Zero Project –  
for a world without barriers.  
Zero barriers.**



## QUOTES AND FINDINGS FROM THIS REPORT

**Countries with the most Innovative Practices and Policies in this Report: United States, Brazil, Australia, India, Israel, Austria, Spain, and Kenya.**

*See page 12.*

**Individualized support – on the child/parent level or on the school level – is key for Innovative Policies and Practices to create more inclusive schools.**

*One of the 11 Patterns/Solution in innovations 2019–2020. See page 15.*

**A number of success stories of the Zero Project–Impact Transfer have already been reported, and new ones are being added continuously.**

*From Section 4. See page 134.*

**“All together it made our government adopt the programm and aim for the development of a disability-inclusive society.”**

*A quote from the Impact-Survey. See page 28.*

**“The game creation helped me to work as a team and to strengthen friendships.”**

*From the Life Story of Igor Kuehn Ferreira (9), student at Univali School of Application, Brazil. See page 77.*

**Globally, 74 per cent of countries take an important first step to advance inclusion by guaranteeing children with disabilities access to education alongside their peers in mainstream schools.**

*Data from the WORLD Policy Analysis Center. See Section 6, page 152.*

## Facts & Figures

More than 5,000 experts from all sectors of society are part of the Zero Project Network.

580 Innovative Policies and Practices have been awarded from 2013 to 2020.

More than 4,000 people have participated in Zero Project Conferences since 2012.

## Join the Zero Project Network!

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