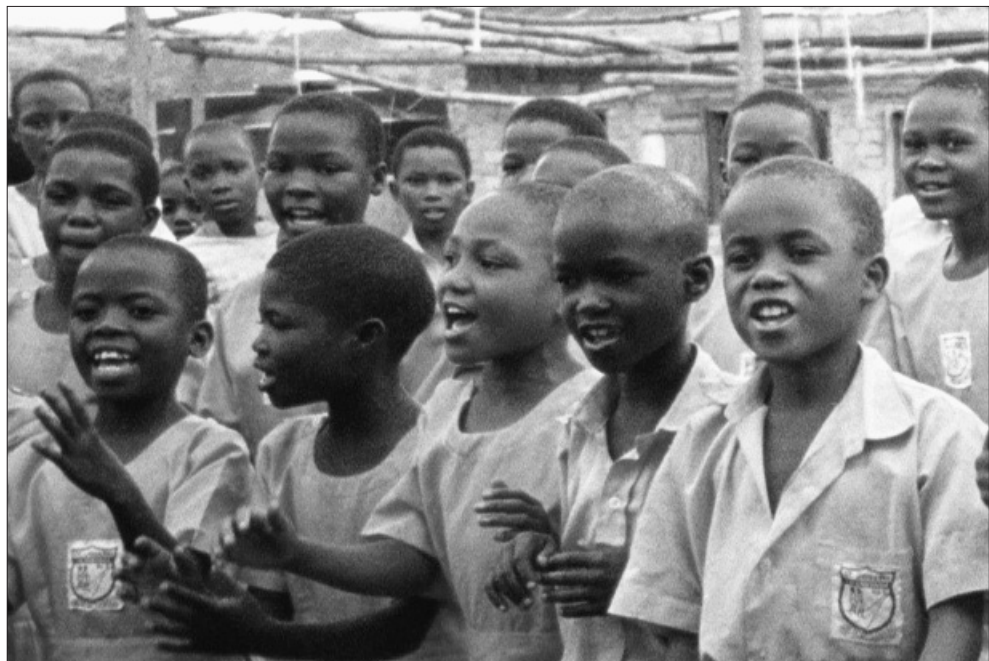




The right to education for children, young people, and adults with disabilities and special learning needs.



Main areas of Sida's development cooperation

Sida has developed
action programmes in
the following areas

- Poverty reduction
- Justice and peace
- Equality between
women and men
- Environmental care

The action programmes
can be ordered through
www.sida.se

This Reference Paper has been developed within the overall framework of Sida's Policy for Development Cooperation in the Education Sector, "Education for All: A Human Right and Basic Need" (April 2001), (Box 1).

This paper is mentioned as one of the reference papers to be developed to supplement the policy. Furthermore, it is closely linked to the Position Paper developed by Sida Education Division "Education, Democracy and Human Rights" (Box 2).

The purpose of this paper is to guide Sida staff at headquarters and in the field, as well as others involved in assisting Sida to implement its support to inclusive education. Inclusive education, as defined by UNESCO, is a process and a philosophy and should never be regarded as a project or a programme. Inclusive education implies that education systems and schools/learning centres should be adapted to meet the diverse learning needs that learners may have.

As background for the paper, a review has been made of reports, articles and other documents (see References). Of particular importance have been UNESCO's "Conceptual Paper for the Education Sector,

Who is disabled?

If you fail to see
the person but
only the disability
then who is blind?

If you cannot hear
your brother's
cry for justice
Who is deaf?

If you do not
communicate
with your sister
but separate
her from you
Who is disabled?

If your heart
or mind
does not reach
out to your
neighbour
Who has the
mental handicap?

If you do not
stand up for the
rights of all
persons
Who is the
cripple?

Your attitudes
towards persons
with disability
may be our big-
gest handicap
and yours too

- Anon

Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Education, A Challenge and a Vision” and the report “Meeting Special and Diverse Educational Needs Making Inclusive Education a Reality” published by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland¹.

A small project group has been responsible for compiling the reference paper and colleagues from Education Division, SEKA and Sida-East have made contributions to the paper. A seminar held in May 2000 with Swedish expertise, NGOs and Sida staff was the point of departure for the work and valuable ideas and experiences were shared.

I. Guiding principles and strategy for future Sida support to Inclusive Education

1. Guiding Principles

The right to education is a human right and basic need for all, children, youth and adults, girls and boys, women and men. Sida's views on the right to, in and through education are presented in the Position Paper “Education, Democracy and Human Rights” (Sida 2001). When analysing the situation from the perspective of the right to, in and through education for children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs, we find that this right is seriously neglected.

The Right TO Education: This is mainly related to lack of or inadequate access to schools or education centres for children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs. Although countries mention non-discrimination principles in legislation, education acts and policies, very few countries live up to this commitment. Estimates show that only 2% of children with disabilities have access to schools or learning centres in developing countries (UNESCO 1998). In the review made for this paper we rarely saw any references at all to programmes for youth or adults. Sida should advocate and promote the right to

basic education for youth and adults with disabilities when ever feasible.

The Right IN Education: Children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs have the same rights as other learners to quality education, to participation, to be listened to and to be met with tolerance and respect in their educational process. Lack of awareness, negative attitudes of various kinds, teachers who believe they are not competent to teach learners with disabilities are some of the challenges with regard to the right in education. Examples from Laos (box 5) and Vietnam (box 6) show that inclusive education approaches have been very successful and have benefited all learners in the schools involved. The training of school leaders, teachers and educators in child centred learning and other modern pedagogical methods are important factors for change and success. The use of sign language for learners who are deaf or have hearing impairments should be considered a right in education; equally important is the right to learn to read and write in Braille for learners who are blind.

The Right THROUGH Education: This is mainly related to expected outcomes of education in terms of changed attitudes, values and knowledge in relation to human rights, for the individual as well as for society at large. It is Sida's view that inclusive education has the potential of contributing to changing attitudes and values through the interaction of persons with different capabilities and competences in the classroom. This is to say that, through inclusive education, human rights may be further understood and applied in the classroom and outside. Linked to this is the right of all children, including children with disabilities to grow up with their families and to go to school with their sisters, brothers and friends, and to avoid social segregation and discrimination later in life.

Other considerations related to the right to, in and through education are

Note 1: Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Education, a Challenge and a Vision, Conceptual Paper for the Education Sector, UNESCO 2001. Meeting Special and Diverse Educational Needs, Making Inclusive Education a Reality, Kokkalla et al. Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland (prepared after the Dakar Conference)

the right to education is a human right FOR ALL. It is therefore very important to advocate inclusive education or similar approaches as a means to obtain the right to education for children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs when support to education reforms, sector programmes or sector wide approaches, and education strategies are discussed. Inclusive education processes/initiatives are most likely to succeed when they are planned as part of education reform and are carried out within the ordinary education/school system.

When NGOs receive Sida support for education programmes/projects for children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs, the organizations should be encouraged to avoid contributing to building parallel structures for learners with disabilities or special learning needs. One reason for this is costs and sustainability, but what is more important is to avoid social segregation and discrimination (see above).

It is very common to categorise people into groupings such as the poor, disadvantaged,

refugees, ethnic or minority groups, etc. and it should be remembered that there are children, youth and adults with disabilities in all of these groups.

2. Strategy

To ensure and promote the right to, in and through education for children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs, Sida's strategy should be as follows:

- advocate the right to education with particular emphasis on basic education for children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs,
- enhance and support access and participation of learners with disabilities or special learning needs of all ages, girls and boys, women and men, in formal as well as non-formal and informal education on the same terms as other learners,
- ascertain that non-discrimination is ensured in Sida's support to the education sector,

Box 1: In Sida's Policy for Development Cooperation in the Education Sector (April 2001) "meeting the special needs of children with disabilities, ill health or other learning problems through inclusive educa-

tion" is mentioned as one of Sida's priority concerns (Chapter 1.4 Priorities for Sida). One obstacle identified under 2.4 Obstacles to Education is "discrimination, for example, against children of minority groups, disabled

children, AIDS orphans". It is also stated that a number of critical factors affect girls more than boys and disabled and otherwise disadvantaged children more than others.

Box 2: The Position Paper "Education, Democracy and Human Rights in Swedish Development Cooperation" to which this paper is closely linked makes the following specific statements in relation to children, youth and adults with disabilities.

3. Educational content

"Children with special needs should be included in the formal education system and the curricula should reflect flexibility in teaching methods that this might require. (See box 5 on inclusive education)". Page 36.

4. Educational process

"The principle of non-discrimination is crucial to the education process. This principle should underpin teacher attitudes toward

pupils and pupils' attitudes toward each other, the choice of language of instruction, the design and production of learning material and resources, and educational content as discussed above. The educational process should be fully inclusive, acknowledging all learners' specific needs and multiple identities. Teachers, who are trained for all learning needs, are usually better teachers and may develop a more democratic approach in the classroom. This, in turn, can create a better learning environment for the learners as they learn not only from the teachers, but also from practising in dealing with differences in the classroom. See box 5 on a concrete case from Vietnam". Sid. 37. Chapter 5 Implications for Swedish Development Cooperation "Sida should

continue to focus its efforts on basic education, without losing the perspective of life-long learning. In order to promote education for all, Sida should promote initiatives aimed at improving education opportunities for groups that do not have access to education, for example groups that are discriminated against on the basis of factors such as ethnicity, language, gender, income level and disability; groups that are outside the system due to war, displacement, and emergencies; and groups that are restrained from attending school on account of their poverty. Initiatives could take place at the level of national policy or in the form of innovative projects and programmes at local, national or regional levels". Page 44.

- ensure that education sector programmes supported by Sida include policies and/or strategies for inclusive education processes or similar approaches,
- support capacity building for planning, implementation, monitoring and research with regard to inclusive education,
- promote the inclusion of awareness training in pre- and in-service teacher training in order to reduce negative attitudes, elements of special pedagogy and/or child-centred pedagogical methods in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all children and, in particular, for children with disabilities or special learning needs,
- encourage the sharing of experience of inclusive education between countries,
- co-operate with UNESCO, UNICEF, international, regional and national NGOs towards the Education For All goals set for 2015.

II. Background

1. International Conventions and Frameworks

International conventions and frameworks of particular importance with regard to education for children, youth and adults with disabilities or special learning needs are the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, the UN Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and the Education for All, Dakar Framework (for further details see Annex 1).

2. International Experience and Trends

2.1. A Comment on Terminology and Concepts

In this paper we will not go into distinctions between handicaps, disabilities and impairments but refer to the document “Sida’s Development Cooperation for Children and Adults with Disabilities”, February 1999. It should also be noted that the WHO is currently drawing up new standards for classification and categorisation.

There are a number of concepts which are frequently used in relation to education systems, methods and approaches to teaching and learning:

Inclusive education and inclusive schools are concepts introduced by UNESCO which put emphasis on education systems and approaches and methods of teaching and learning that benefit all children and children with disabilities or with special learning needs in particular. Inclusive education is a process and a philosophy and should never be regarded as a project, according to UNESCO.

Child-friendly schools is a concept introduced by UNICEF. One of several criteria to be met is that schools are considered child-friendly if and when they welcome all learners and are non-discriminating.

The concept of Whole School Development used by the U.S.A. also has the aim that schools should welcome all children as one of a range of purposes.

Sweden and other countries use the concept “A School for All”.

All of the above-mentioned concepts refer to the development of education systems and schools to accommodate all the diverse needs of all learners.

Box 3: World Education Forum in Dakar April 26-28 2000, FINAL REPORT Strategy Session 1.3 Meeting Special /Diverse Educational Needs: Making Inclusive Education a Reality,

Concluding Comments

The development of inclusive education encourages an extension and deepening

of the conception of Education for All. It is not a parallel initiative. The fragmentation of policy initiatives around Education for All, Inclusive Education, Community-Based Rehabilitation, Health-Promoting Schools, Special Needs Education, Child-Friendly Schools, can lead to wasteful and contradictory interventions. We need to think of Education for All as a single set of inter-

ventions that remove barriers to learning and participation, and mobilise resources for the development of community-based education for all learners locally.

Other terms which are still quite common are integrated education, special education, and learners with special education needs. These terms often relate to a particular child, the placement of the child and special requirements for the child, while the terminology above relates to necessary changes in the entire school environment.

2.2. *Experiences and Trends*

UNESCO estimates that 130 million primary school age children do not attend school and that approximately 80 million of these children live in Africa. It is not known how many million of these children are excluded from education due to disabilities or special learning needs. Children and adults with disabilities often belong to the poorest and most disadvantaged groups. According to UNESCO the percentage of children with disabilities attending school in developing countries is estimated to be below 2 % and girls with a disability are more often denied access to education than boys.

In the perspective of reaching the goal of education for all by the year 2015 it is important to eliminate all barriers to learning and exclusion irrespective of the cause for exclusion or non-attendance. This paper focuses on learners with disabilities or special learning needs as there is a risk that these children, youth and adults may continue to be forgotten or left out.

Various strategies have been or are being developed to reach all school age children and young adults. UNESCO's approach of inclusive education and inclusive schools gained wide recognition after the Salamanca Conference in 1994. UNICEF's approach of child-friendly schools is also important,

as is the principle of a school for all children as applied by Sweden and the whole school development approach used by some other countries. All of these approaches and principles represent a shift in thinking which aims at improving and changing education systems and schools in order to reduce and eliminate barriers to learning. Although approaches and methods may differ, we believe they have the same goal of reaching education for all and enhancing the right to education of good quality for all children. As was pointed out during the strategy session on special and diverse educational needs, Dakar, there is a risk that the variety of policy initiatives may lead to contradictory interventions (Box 3).

There is also a shift in the international discussion from the focus on economic issues to issues of children's rights to and participation in education. Some countries make special reference to children with disabilities in their education legislation and/or education policies and some countries stipulate that discrimination due to disability is not allowed. In countries where basic education is compulsory, this means that all children of school age have to go to school. In countries where basic education is not compulsory but considered a right, it means that education ministries and education authorities are obliged to provide education for all children for whom education is requested e.g. by parents. It is probably only when primary education is free and compulsory that the majority of children with disabilities will have access to education.

Cost arguments are often raised as the major cause for excluding children with disabilities from school, but, as stated in UNESCO's Conceptual Paper, it is extremely difficult to

Box 4: *The study 'Financing of Special Needs Education' (Meijer, 1999) shows that countries in which there is a direct input funding model for special schools (more learners in special schools – more funds) report that this financing model, may lead to less inclusion, more labelling and rising costs. Learner-bound budgeting also*

seems to have some clear disadvantages. At times, regular schools are eager to have pupils with special needs (and their budgets), but they prefer learners (and their budgets) who are considered to be 'easy to fit in'.

The study concludes that the countries having the most attractive funding option in

support of inclusive education are countries with a strongly decentralized system where budgets for supporting learners with 'special needs' are delegated to local institutions (municipalities, districts, school clusters), and funds are based on total enrolment and other such indicators.

calculate such costs. A study of inclusion policies related to the education of learners with disabilities in 17 European countries indicated that if funds are not allocated in line with an explicit inclusion policy, inclusion is unlikely to happen in practice (Meijer, 1999), (Box 4).

Negative attitudes and beliefs may have even stronger implications than costs. It is often argued that children with disabilities need very specialised services and that specialised professional expertise is required and that this can best be provided in special schools. Others argue that schools of this type are socially segregating and expensive institutions which can only accommodate a small number of children. Sometimes, learners who are referred to special schools or specialised institutions do not receive equal opportunities in education as learners in ordinary schools and later find that they are excluded from access to further studies.

There are numerous arguments, including cost implications, against inclusive education or a school for all children, but the literature is also full of evidence to the contrary. Examples from Vietnam and Laos show that, at a very small extra cost, inclusive education programmes have been very successful in using innovative methods for teaching and learning that have benefited all children in the schools and not only learners with disabilities (see Box 5 and 6). If teachers have some elements of child-centred pedagogy or special teaching methods and awareness training in their pre-service teacher training and/or in in-service, this will also to a large extent reduce the risk of children being pushed out of school. UNESCO's "Guide for Teachers, Understanding and Responding to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms", which contains low cost methods for teachers that can be used or adapted to local circumstances, has been used in many areas.

Physical access to and inside school buildings is mentioned as an obstacle for learners with physical disabilities, but what is perhaps more difficult is getting to school. When the community/society is involved, such barriers have often been overcome

by using imaginative and simple solutions, which shows that, if there are positive attitudes and a will, there is a way.

Flexible curricula and child-centred pedagogical methods are often referred to as helpful in teaching all learners in school and in particular learners with disabilities or special learning needs. Learning materials for learners with visual impairments or who are blind can now be produced in Braille and large print at a much lower cost by using modern technology and production methods.

Learners who are deaf or have hearing impairments are often educated in special schools or special classes and the importance of sign language is increasingly acknowledged. Experiences from Vietnam also shows that inclusion of children with hearing impairments is possible when teachers, peers, siblings and parents are well trained in using a total communication approach with a focus on sign language.

To conclude, there seems to be a growing recognition that inclusive education is a process and a philosophy which aims at creating learning institutions/schools that respond to the various and diverse needs of all learners.

3. Sida's Experience of Support to Special Needs Education and Inclusive Education

3.1. Experience from Sida's bilateral cooperation in the Education sector

Sida supported what was then called special education already in the 1970s as part of its bilateral education programme to at least one country (Tanzania) and also UNESCO's Special Education Unit. During the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s this type of support increased both in terms of number of countries and in financial terms. For several years elements of support to what was then called integrated education were part of Sida's cooperation in the education sector in five countries (Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia, Sri Lanka,

Box 5: Case study Laos

Inclusive education in Lao PDR started as a pilot project in one primary school in 1993. In 1995, the project began to expand as “The Lao Integrated Education National Experimental Programme”. By early 2001 there were at least a few schools in each Lao province. This rapid expansion has been achieved with minimal inputs. The goal for the second phase is to reach all districts by 2005.

The project is a partnership between Save the Children, UK, and the Lao Ministry of Education, MoE. Save the Children UK financial support has ranged from USD 10.000 to USD 20.000 per year. In addition, an international technical adviser (during phase one) and a part-time project officer have been supplied by Save the Children (UK). The Lao MoE provides all staff. The Lao MoE has built IE into its policy documents and Ministerial Decrees. IE has become part of the Lao government’s response to its commitments to EFA and the CRC. For the second phase, the name of the programme has been changed to “The Lao Inclusive Education Programme” in recognition of the effect the project has on other marginalised groups and children who would otherwise experience repeated failure in school.

The project builds on the knowledge that most disabled children can study in the ordinary school and that the barriers to this are not primarily because of the disability but because of the methodology in use in

the school and the organisation of the education services. These same barriers affect other marginalised groups – those who cannot understand the language of instruction (ethnic minority children), those who need changes in pace and content (children below average in ability) etc. In addition a child-centred approach benefits all children.

The success of the project so far is a result of the following factors:

equal emphasis on the teaching and learning environment and management of schools; equal emphasis on the learning of children facing difficulties and the learning of all children in the class; the use of a process in which changes in teachers’ behaviour come through supported practice rather than through reliance on formal training and theoretical models; the establishment of a National Implementation Team (NIT); the establishment of similar teams at provincial levels (PITs); highly consistent monitoring and support for schools from the NIT at the early stages and then by the relevant PIT; consistent data gathering and year by year planning by the NIT; participatory styles of working; the active involvement of families and communities; cooperation with other sectors; clear achievable goals based on an understanding of the real situation in Lao schools and an understanding of the essential principles underlying inclusion.

The project has had good side effects. By actively looking for non-enrolled disabled children, schools take on a more active role

in the enrolment process and become much more aware of other children not in school. Under these circumstances it is more difficult for families to neglect the enrolment of their girls. General enrolment rates are improved in IE schools. General achievement rates are also improved as teaching learning is child-centred and solutions to facilitate the learning process for each child are sought. Most IE schools become “leading” schools in their district within two years of joining the programme. The teacher’s creativity is developed by trying to find solutions and by making local teaching materials. Children learn that we all are different and to accept these differences. Efforts are made to ensure that there are no negative effects on any group of children. Care is taken to ensure that teachers are not overwhelmed by an unrealistic workload. Limiting teacher workload is vital if the education of all the children is to be safeguarded. The number of disabled children in each class is therefore kept to a realistic number.

Lao PDR is one of the poorest countries in the world. The IE project in Laos has been shown to be very cost effective. The Lao education system is supposed to be able to bear the ongoing costs of inclusion once it is well established in a school.

Source: Save the Children (UK) Project Proposal for Phase II Inclusive Education in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, 2001

Box 6: Inclusive Education in Vietnam

The aim of the programme of Inclusive Education supported by R dda Barnen (Swedish Save the Children) in Vietnam is to integrate children with disabilities in the regular education system. Discrimination of children with disabilities is counteracted through raising the awareness of decision-makers at national and local level, capacity building of national resource persons, teacher trainers, principals and teachers. Teachers are looked upon as key agents for change. To achieve effective inclusion, the development of skills and attitudes of teach-

ers are given high priority.

The programme has shown that teachers become better teachers when they are responsible for all children. In assuming this responsibility teachers become more active, innovative and creative and learn to see the needs of individuals. Interviews with children show how education can counteract their isolation and feeling of being different. Inclusive education in Vietnam is developing. The focus is not on “sameness” and making children similar, but about a world where children are different.

Education that welcomes all children

focuses on how to learn together and live together with each other. The programmes in the schools in the pilot areas are supported by community support teams that involve parents, health personnel, retired individuals and different local mass organisations. The strategy has facilitated the assumption of responsibility and community building in the communes where inclusive strategies have been built.

Source: Box 9 from Position Paper Education, Democracy and Human Rights in Swedish development co-operation, April 2001

Zimbabwe). The support was given for policy development and activities with the purpose of creating an enabling environment in ordinary schools, e.g. pre- and in-service teacher training, curriculum development and teaching and learning materials, Braille production, technical equipment for children with hearing impairments and sign language development (for more details, see annex 2).

Since the mid 1990s there has been a decrease in terms of earmarked funding for support to inclusive education activities within Sida's cooperation in the education sector with partner countries. In 2001, support to inclusive education is part of two bilateral agreements on support to education (Laos and South Africa). There are a number of contributing factors to this decrease, many of them outside the control of Sida's Education Division (Sida support has been phased out of a particular country (e.g. Botswana) or phased out of a specific sector in a country (e.g. Zambia and Sri Lanka), or demands for concentration to fewer activities within a sector have to be met (e.g. Tanzania)). However, it should also be noted that Botswana and Sri Lanka have continued the development and implementation of their inclusive education strategies. It should also be emphasized that education sector programmes which Sida and other donors jointly support sometimes include strategies for inclusion of learners with disabilities (e.g. Mocambique, and in Cambodia through UNICEF). This is a way forward and should be given special attention in Sida's assessment, dialogue, capacity development and follow-up within the framework of sector programme support.

3.2. Sida Support to NGOs for Education Projects for Learners with Disabilities

With the aid of a block grant system, Sida's Department for Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations and Humanitarian Assistance, (SEKA), supports approximately 200–300 Swedish

NGOs annually in accordance with their own priorities. The grants are distributed through a system of umbrella NGOs for different groupings of organisations, such as the labour movement, the Christian churches and others. Amongst these NGOs, the number of activities focusing on persons with disabilities varies.

For SHIA, Swedish Organisation of Disabled Persons International Aid Association, the main purpose is to strengthen the rights and opportunities of persons with disabilities. Even though many of the projects are oriented towards organisational development of local NGOs rather than towards direct education and training, the latter can be found partly as a project objective as such, and partly included in general community based rehabilitation, CBR-programmes.

Swedish Save the Children is an NGO, which has taken a clear stand on the issue. The organisation gives priority to three well-defined target groups, of whom children with disabilities is one. Save the Children is also an active spokesperson for inclusive education.

Other organisations which should be mentioned are Star of Hope, and SOIR (The Swedish Organisation for Individual Relief).

The Pentecostal Churches'– Aid Organisation, PMU, is supporting children with disabilities in Eastern and Central Europe. The purpose is often to change attitudes and to train staff working with children with disabilities.

3.3. Sida-East

It is estimated that more than 600 000 children live in state institutions in the Russian Federation, of which 60% are children with functional or mental disabilities. In general, children who are diagnosed with various minimal dysfunctions and impairments do not receive appropriate psycho-social treatment or rehabilitation. Instead, parents are often encouraged to give up their children to

residential care, where access to care and support is basically non-existent. Moreover, children in institutions do not attend public schools and are isolated from participating in public life. When children turn 18, they are automatically transferred to similar adult institutions with poor contact with the outside world.

Negative attitudes and discrimination towards people with developmental disabilities prevail in many parts of Central and Eastern Europe. Since the mid 1990s, Sida East has supported educational training programmes and supervision for health care practitioners and social workers in early intervention for children with disabilities. The aim is to provide better care and appropriate rehabilitation and treatment for young children at an early stage. Much focus is put on the child's abilities as opposed to its disabilities and to create a close relationship between parent and child. The long-term

objective is to do away with institutionalised care and develop methods to integrate disabled people in society, including children with special needs.

3.4. UN Agencies

Sida has supported UNESCO's Special Education Programme, including the preparations and follow-up of the Salamanca Conference, for many years, but at present there is no agreement in this area with UNESCO.

UNICEF is receiving Swedish support for a project entitled Child Protection through Education. The main objective of the project is to develop and implement models of improved educational responses to children in need of special protection measures. Children with special education needs are mentioned as one group to be reached by the project.

Annex 1

1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted in 1989 and has been signed by 191 countries. The Convention focuses on children with disabilities in particular in one article (Article 23). Articles 2, 3, 6, 28 and 29 are especially important in relation to the right to education. One of the fundamental principles on which the Convention is based is that all children have equal rights and that no child shall be discriminated against. This means that all the articles also apply to children with disabilities.

Article 23

1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.
2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.
3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's

achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

2. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action

In June 1994, the World Conference on Special Needs Education was held in Salamanca in Spain, with 92 governments and 25 international organisations participating. The participants agreed, *inter alia*, that every child has the right to education and that children with special needs have the right to participate in education within the ordinary school system. Furthermore, the Conference recognised that integration in ordinary schools is an effective means to combat discrimination and to change attitudes to persons with disabilities.

The Salamanca Statement urges both governments and the world community to promote inclusive education and to include special teaching methods as a component in all teacher training. UNESCO was assigned particular responsibility for this area. NGOs were encouraged to develop cooperation with governmental authorities and to involve themselves in education for people with special needs.

3. The UN Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

The first paragraph of “Rule 6 Education” of the UN Standard Rules stipulates:

“States should recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system. ”

Rule 6. Education

- General educational authorities are responsible for the education of persons with disabilities in integrated settings. Education for persons with disabilities should form an integral part of national educational planning, curriculum development and school organization.
- Education in mainstream schools presupposes the provision of interpreter and other appropriate support services. Adequate accessibility and support services, designed to meet the needs of persons with different disabilities, should be provided.
- Parent groups and organizations of persons with disabilities should be involved in the education process at all levels.
- In States where education is compulsory it should be provided to girls and boys with all kinds and all levels of disabilities, including the most severe.
- Special attention should be given in the following areas:
 - Very young children with disabilities;
 - Pre-school children with disabilities;
 - Adults with disabilities, particularly women.
- To accommodate educational provisions for persons with disabilities in the mainstream, States should:
 - Have a clearly stated policy, understood and accepted at the school level and by the wider community;
 - Allow for curriculum flexibility, addition and adaptation;
 - Provide for quality materials, ongoing teacher training and support teachers.
- Integrated education and community-based programmes should be seen as complementary approaches in providing cost-effective education and training for persons with disabilities. National community-based programmes should encourage communities to use and develop their resources to provide local education to persons with disabilities.
- In situations where the general school system does not yet adequately meet the needs of all persons with disabilities, special education may be considered. It should be aimed at preparing students for education in the general school system. The quality of such education should reflect the same standards and ambitions as general education and should be closely linked to it. At a minimum, students with disabilities should be afforded the same portion of educational resources as students without disabilities. States should aim for the gradual integration of special education services into mainstream education. It is acknowledged that in some instances special education may currently be considered to be the most appropriate form of education for some students with disabilities.
- Owing to the particular communication needs of deaf and deaf/blind persons, their education may be more suitably provided in schools for such persons or special classes and units in mainstream schools. At the initial stage, in particular, special attention needs to be focused on culturally sensitive instruction that will result in effective communication skills and maximum independence for people who are deaf or deaf/blind.

4. Education for all, Dakar framework

The urgency to address the needs of learners who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion through responsive educational opportunities was also pointed out in the Dakar World Education Forum in April 2000:

“The key challenge is to ensure that the broad vision of Education for All as an inclu-

sive concept is reflected in national government and funding agency policies. Education for All ... must take account of the need of the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic

minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs..." (Expanded commentary on the Dakar Framework for Action, para 19)

Annex 2

Sida's Experience of Support to education for children with special needs

An area where Swedish development cooperation has had an impact is education for girls and boys with special needs. The purpose is to contribute to the creation of conditions that enable children with disabilities to participate in the ordinary school system. Exceptions include deaf children, for whom other education measures have been supported. This cooperation has sometimes also had the aim of creating or improving supportive teaching for children with learning difficulties.

Since the middle of the 1970s, Sida has supported efforts of this type in Portugal 1976–1980, in Tanzania 1976–1993, in Botswana and Sri Lanka since 1983, in Zimbabwe since 1984, in Zambia 1980–1992, and also in South Africa since 1995. This support has generally comprised a combination of teacher training (e.g. training of special teachers and in-service training of class teachers in special teaching methods), production of teaching/learning materials (e.g. books in Braille, large print and on tapes), assistive technical equipment (e.g. hearing aids) and the development of national sign languages. Support has also been provided for policy development in the area and for curriculum development. For several years, the aggregate support for these efforts amounted to more than SEK 10 million per annum. During 1995/1996, the support to Botswana, Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka amounted to approximately SEK 7.5 million. Support for policy development and coordination is included as part of the framework of the education support to South Africa.

It is difficult to draw any definite conclusions about Sida's support to education programmes for children with disabilities as only a few studies have been conducted. One general impression is that the number of children with disabilities with access to education has increased considerably, but statistics are unreliable. From the cost viewpoint, the programmes of develop-

ment cooperation with Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka have been more effective than with Botswana, mainly due to the fact that Botswana has a comparatively small population.

Botswana: The programme of support to Botswana was included as part of a sector support programme. It has comprised institutional cooperation between the University College for Teacher Training, the Institution for Special Pedagogy (Stockholm), and the Central Resource Centre for Special Education. The programme aimed at supporting the Resource Centre in building up its work. After making an assessment of the needs of a child, the task of the Centre is to propose suitable forms of schooling, arrange in-service training for teachers in ordinary schools, provide advice about teaching aids and ancillary equipment, make support visits, etc.

In Botswana's Education Policy of 1993 it was stated that children with special needs should attend ordinary schools-, to the greatest possible extent. The division of responsibility between central and local authorities was laid down. Furthermore, a national disability policy was adopted.

The important functions of the Resource Centre have been formulated in a policy document. Despite a difficult initial period, it is now considered that the Centre has sufficient capacity to fulfil its tasks. After assessment, the Centre has provided a large number of children and parents with advice on schooling, teaching/learning materials and technical aids. Within the framework of the programme of institutional cooperation a small production unit has been established for the production of teaching material and textbooks in Braille and large print. Further, Swedish consultants have been engaged in a successful effort to develop a national sign language. The programme of institutional cooperation, which was concluded in December 1996, has also indirectly contributed to the policy work that has been conducted. Swedish assistance has amounted to approximately SEK 1 million per annum over the past few years.

Sri Lanka: Support to Sri Lanka is part of the education sector support programme. It mainly consists of institutional cooperation between an institute for teacher training in Sri Lanka and the Department for Special Pedagogy at Gothenburg University, and comprises support for the development of a curricula for teacher training and in-service teacher training, as well as for staff development at the Institute. A relatively high percentage of children with disabilities attend school in Sri Lanka, the majority in ordinary schools, but placement in special classes or special schools is also common.

An evaluation conducted in 1996 concluded that Swedish development cooperation had been of importance for the programme. The Swedish assistance amounted to approximately SEK 1 million per annum.

Zimbabwe: Support to education for children with special needs is part of the support to the education sector. Zimbabwe's policy is that children with disabilities should, as far as possible, attend ordinary schools. In a number of schools, there are so-called resource rooms with special teachers for support teaching. Children who are deaf or have hearing impairments are taught at special schools or in separate classes in ordinary schools. Children with intellectual impairments are usually taught in special classes. More than 100,000 children with disabilities attend school, which is a uniquely high proportion for a developing country. There is good collaboration in Zimbabwe in the disability field between various ministries, organisations of persons with disabilities and other actors.

Sida's assistance has been used for in-service training of teachers and other staff, for support visits conducted by mobile teams, and for equipping resource rooms. It has been used to purchase technical aids (including hearing aids), to develop national sign languages, to establish a hearing technology laboratory and a unit for the production of teaching materials and textbooks for children who are blind or visually impaired. The Swedish contribution has, since 1987–1988, amounted to between SEK 4 and 5 million per annum.

The preliminary conclusions from an

evaluation conducted in 1996 indicate that the programme's 'goal – achievement' has been good and that the Swedish assistance has been used effectively. According to the study, the Ministry is sufficiently competent to implement the programme, but there are still problems to be resolved, such as in the production of teaching material in Braille and large print, in the supply of hearing equipment and in the repair of hearing aids. One interesting observation made in the evaluation is that the number of children with disabilities in ordinary schools is greater in districts that have CBR programmes than in other districts.

One general conclusion from the programme of support is that children who are in the school system have a considerably better situation. This can, to a large extent, be explained by the fact that various activities have had a reinforcing effect on each other. Efforts to improve knowledge at authorities, and among decision-makers and staff at all levels in the school system have been important, as have measures that have raised the status of special teaching.

In conclusion: considerable resources have been supplied to children in school, while children outside school, pre-school children, older children, and adult women and men have not been assigned priority. As the majority of children with disabilities do not attend school, these efforts need to be supplemented with other measures. All girls and boys with special needs should be given an opportunity to develop, the knowledge of parents' – and local communities' needs to be improved, and values and attitudes have to be influenced. Rehabilitation and special teaching should go hand in hand. In this regard Zimbabwe provides an interesting example.

With very few exceptions, cooperation between ministries is not particularly common. It should be possible for CBR to act as a link, but it has seldom worked that way.

Experience indicates that girls with disabilities are discriminated against more than boys. Consequently, the situation of girls should be given more attention.

Source: Sida's Development Cooperation for Children and Adults with Disabilities (February 1999)

Annex 3

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