Agenda Item 6

Discussion on Early Intervention and Education of Children with Disabilities

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Incheon Strategy Goal 5: Expand Early Intervention and Education of Children with Disabilities

Goal 5: Expand early intervention and education of children with disabilities

- **Target 5.A** Enhance measures for early detection of, and intervention for, children with disabilities from birth to pre-school age
- **Target 5.B** Halve the gap between children with disabilities and children without disabilities in enrolment rates for primary and secondary education
Supportive Policies

- High ratification rate of the CRPD: of the 49 ESCAP member States in the region, 44 ratified and 4 signed the CRPD
- Inconsistencies remain between the CRPD and most national policy frameworks
- Most countries are in the planning phase to develop EII legal frameworks, more efforts are needed
- IE is generally supported by national education laws, laws on the rights of persons with disabilities and IE specific laws
- The enactment of EII and IE policies remains low, due to a lack of clear implementation strategies and budgeting
Most countries developed disability identification procedures and tools; there are however major inconsistencies which affects accurate data collection and challenges policy and programme development.

When EII services are available, they are mainly located in urban areas and have a very limited scope.

There are promising practices with community- and home-based initiatives who collaborate with CSOs to provide EII services in hard-to-reach areas.

Multisectoral collaboration is crucial in providing holistic support, but remains low in the region.
Considerable efforts are made across the region to increase access to education for children with disabilities; gaps in educational access between persons with and without functional difficulties remain.
Educational Access of Children with Disabilities

- All countries maintain a dual approach and offer both inclusive and special education. GC4 requires countries to gradually phase out any form of segregated education.

- In some countries, alternative education systems fill the gap in education provision for children with disabilities. There is however very limited quality control and often no certification.

- School closures due to COVID-19 have widened the already existing education gap between children with and without disabilities. Remote learning programmes are often not accessible and families with children with disabilities have less access to devices and internet.
In most countries curricula reforms are ongoing and integrate UDL principles. This is often not yet translated into practice.

The EFA framework is in most countries well anchored in national policies, leading towards support for learner-centred pedagogy.

Assessment remains largely rigid and unresponsive to the needs of students with disabilities.

Assistive devices are not commonly available in the region. When they are available, it is often limited to special schools and to support children with sensory disabilities.

Partnerships with OPDs and CSOs help to increase access to inclusive learning materials and assistive devices.
Supported Teachers and Service Providers

- Capacity building of EII service providers is not well-established in the region.
- Many countries are reforming pre-service teacher training curricula to include inclusive education.
- There are IE in-service teacher training initiatives across the region. Some countries show promising practice of school-based teacher development.
- Many initiatives remain donor-initiated and funded, with limited contextualization.
- Teachers across the region continue to feel unprepared to teach in inclusive settings.
Accessible and Safe Learning Environments

- In some countries, less than 20% of the schools indicate they have accessible infrastructure and learning materials.
- There are limited data on gender sensitive infrastructure.
- Bullying and violence at school remains a risk throughout the region. Children with disabilities and especially girls with disabilities have a higher risk of experiencing bullying and violence.
- In many countries, the child-friendly school model forms the framework for creating accessible and safe learning environments.
- Some countries began to develop policies and programmes to address discrimination and bullying in schools.
Parent collaboration for school improvement and IE is becoming more common and is established in national policies in the region.

There are promising practices to increase student involvement, but it remains limited.

OPDs have been powerful agents of change towards disability-inclusive services.

Where provision lacks, OPDs and CSOs have established programmes to provide services. There is however little monitoring of the quality of such services and there is a risk of sustaining segregation.

Inter-ministerial collaboration for IE is increasing in the region, it is less common for EII.
Data and Monitoring

- Disability data collection remains inconsistent and inaccurate
- Continued subscription to a medical model of disability leads to underreporting
- The use of the Washington Group questions can address issues on disability assessment and internationally comparable data. Only a few countries started to use tools based on the WG questions
- While there are promising practices, early childhood development monitoring and studies often overlook disability
- Some countries started to disaggregate data by disability in EMIS
- School-self assessment processes are used in some countries to monitor the progress of IE
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