

Organisation of Provision to Support Inclusive Education



ORGANISATION OF PROVISION
TO SUPPORT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



Background

- This area of work was a high priority in the 2010 Agency country survey
- Following discussion and consultation, the final project plan was agreed in November 2011
- The project aimed to gather information on how countries organise and evaluate systems of provision for learners with disabilities



Project focus

- How are systems of provision organised to meet the needs of learners identified as having disabilities?
 - UNCRPD definition of disability
 - learners in mainstream - compulsory school sector



Points to consider...

- The development of positive models that re-configure mainstream provision rather than fitting learners into existing systems (optimal learning environment for all)
- Consideration of local contexts in understanding factors that influence policy and practice
- Monitoring and evaluation – what is considered to be achievement/success - academic focus vs wider outcomes? What can be ‘measured’? What qualitative information is needed?
- Practical implementation, management of change – critical success factors/key areas for review



Methodology

- RBs/networks to gather country information and examples of practice for analysis and investigation
- Agency staff, Project Advisory Group, External Consultants undertake analysis and activities (reduced demand on RBs/country nominees)
 - Review of existing Agency work and recent literature
 - Research on UNCRPD implementation and monitoring
 - Analysis of country information
 - Investigation of 5 case study sites –, Essunga, Flensburg, Ljubljana, Valetta, Vienna
- 5 seminars held at these sites to explore key themes



Literature Review

- Conceptual framework
- Inclusion as a process of change
- Strengthening the capacity of mainstream settings - systems of support
 - Community, school, individual
- The role of special schools in a policy climate of inclusion
- Resource allocation and approaches to funding



Conceptual framework

- .Supports the need for system change to move from a deficit (needs-based) model to a model that considers rights **within** education, including the right of the learner to participate and to express a view.
- .Moves from compensatory approaches and organisation of provision in terms of individual support to how systems of support can be organised to build the capacity of all schools. Barriers seen as within school system/practices not individual learners.
- .Places increasing emphasis on preventing failure rather than remediation and developing resilience to empower learners and schools.
- .Emphasises co-operation between agencies/families to support active participation across settings, recognising importance of social context and learning for life



Outputs

- Literature Review
- Country reports and examples of practice – updated national overviews
- Reports from 5 selected case study sites
- Reports from 5 thematic seminars
- Project final overview report
- Practical tool to support decision makers



National and European Context

- UNCRPD (and UNCRC)
- EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- EU Disability Strategy
- ET 2020



Legislation and Policy

- Many countries undergoing change
- Focus on legal entitlement to attend mainstream school, parental right to choose school, appropriate education
- Examples of separate legislation for SEN, general legislation or focus on equality
- Few mentions of UNCRPD/UNCRC – rights-based approach
- Moves to early intervention
- Common practice examples – resource centres, more flexible learning communities, teacher education



Changing role of special schools

In most countries, special schools are:

- becoming resource centres/mainstream schools
- developing closer links with mainstream schools
- working within wider networks or becoming regional centres of expertise

Change driven by low numbers in special schools, access to wider curriculum and work with peers, 'planned' inclusion – retaining expertise, professional development for mainstream through collaboration



Organisation of Provision

- Teaching approaches – additional time, small group/individual input, structure, LSA, co-teaching, team work with other disciplines
- Aids/adaptations – IT, mobility aids, communication systems (e.g. Braille, sign), physical environment
- Curriculum flexibility
- Assessment - focus on support needs, not labels and on-going assessment for learning.



Organisation and management

Leadership is critical....

- ◆ School culture and relationships - team work at all levels
- ◆ Support for teachers and their on-going development - focus on learning for all and 'valued' achievements
- ◆ Taking account of learner views
- ◆ Flexible organisation
- ◆ Parental involvement
- ◆ Collaboration with community and other agencies



Community support

Support from

- local politicians, administrators (peer support for school leaders re: mutual priorities)
- parents/others – engagement with young people
- specialist services – building capacity
- multi-agency services – building consistency through co-operation



Governance and funding

- Central funding, some devolved to local authorities or both
- Funds for additional staff, specialist equipment, transport
- Some countries provide additional funding for 'vulnerable' learners, reduce class size if learners with disabilities included
- Most link funding to assessment/formal decision



Governance and funding continued

- Moves to include some 'support' as part of general education
- Funding may follow learners – but on what basis?
- Most funding models are not responsive to changing support needs and some models reward lack of success
- Need to move to early support and prevention and improving capacity of schools – focus on quality not quantity



Summary of key areas

- Legislation
 - part of the general system
 - should recognise rights of children with disabilities to (early) support, quality education (without discrimination), access to and full participation in all educational activities, inclusion in community
- Increasing the capacity of all schools
 - develop role of specialist settings in providing support
 - support initial teacher education and on going professional development through collaboration and networking
 - Provide training for LSAs to support all learners



Summary of key areas

- Curriculum
 - increase flexibility, develop 'transferable' skills
- Assessment of needs
 - consider alternatives to categories, focus on support needed to access educational opportunities(full participation)
 - co-ordinated inter-agency approaches may support a move away from a 'medical' model (with learners/family involvement)
- Assessment for/of learning
 - national tests etc designed to allow access to all
 - on-going assessment and feedback to support further learning



Summary of key areas

- Leadership
 - distributed or shared
 - an ethos of inclusion
 - support for teachers
 - focus on learning
 - self-review, use of data/information for improvement
 - collaboration/networking with range of stakeholders, parents, community
- Funding
 - delegated, responsive – rewards success, increases capacity
 - inclusive accountability



Questions to consider:

- Is the right to mainstream education the 'right right'? How can UNCRPD/UNCRC be used to enable participation and develop quality support systems?
- What are the key steps in moving to a resource centre model? How is expertise best used to develop the capacity of mainstream schools?
- What are the main professional development needs for former special school teachers; for mainstream teachers; LSAs? How can expertise for more complex support needs be maintained?
- How are LSAs best deployed?
- How can curriculum flexibility be introduced? What adaptations work well?

