

Statement of Action

Accelerate Equitable and Quality Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Disabilities

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We commit to support nations and communities to realise inclusive education and call on other partners and actors to significantly step up action and show their commitment to deliver on the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals to ‘leave no-one behind’. We aspire for:

A world where all children, including children with disabilities, have equal access to quality inclusive education, which is differentiated to support their learning needs and learning outcomes across each stage of the learning cycle and enables them to lead a fulfilling and independent life.

The Sustainable Development Goals have placed a spotlight on the importance of improving access to inclusive, quality education for individuals with disabilities. This is crucial given that approximately one third of out of school primary school children are those with disabilities². Children with disabilities continue to be the most vulnerable. At school they show lower rates of enrolment and higher rates of attrition, with poor levels of attendance, progression and learning. As such, children with disabilities often do not have the opportunity to learn even the basics, and few are able to make the transition to higher levels of education and training.

Girls and boys with disabilities often face barriers to their education due to discriminatory social attitudes, physical barriers, resource constraints and lack of support in classrooms and the wider community. Removing these barriers require targeted strategies that also address other dimensions that compound exclusion, such as gender, poverty, language and location. As a global community, we are committed – now and in the future – to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals. Equitable and inclusive quality education is a right for all children. We need a shared vision for a world where persons with disabilities have opportunities for lifelong learning to equip them with skills and knowledge to lead fulfilling lives.

Five interlinked actions can help achieve transformational education for children with disabilities. These are:

- 1 Generate and use robust data and evidence for inclusive planning, programming and for ensuring accountability.**
- 2 Develop, train and support a professional education work force that responds to inclusive education and encourages teachers with disabilities into the profession.**
- 3 Achieve targeted financing and ensure national systems promote the implementation of inclusive education.**
- 4 Reduce barriers to inclusion by adopting a cross-sectoral and life course approach.**
- 5 Involve people with disabilities, their families and Disabled People’s Organisations in partnership with development actors to further the inclusive education agenda.**

1. This statement was generated through a consultative process at the “Pre-Global Disability Summit Workshop on Inclusive Education” hosted by the REAL Centre, University of Cambridge and the Impact Initiative, with support from the ESRC Impact Acceleration Award, 26-27 April 2018.

2. Towards a disability Inclusive Education, *Background paper for the Oslo Summit on Education for Development* (July, 2015).

5 Inclusive Education Actions

1 Generate and use robust data and evidence for inclusive planning, programming and for ensuring accountability

- Support efforts to improve inclusive data collection, analysis and reporting of disaggregated data, using standardised methodologies and tools, such as developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics³, in population data and Education Management and Information Systems.
- Promote research which focuses on what works and looks at sustainable and scalable solutions for achieving inclusive education.
- Support the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data to develop better understanding of the lived realities of people with disabilities in order to address the challenges they face in accessing, quality education.
- Engage teachers and communities in generating evidence, and making it accessible to help them make informed decisions.

2 Develop, train, and support a professional education workforce that responds to inclusive education and encourages teachers with disabilities into the profession

- Undertake teacher education both at pre- and in-service levels for fostering inclusive classroom practices by strengthening teacher training institutions.
- Develop effective support models, which are financially viable and sustainable, for mainstream teachers, such as whole school inclusive development programmes, leadership training, and deployment of itinerant teachers.
- Develop the understanding and capacities of local education managers and school heads to support inclusion.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for persons with disabilities to be part of the workforce.
- Support teachers and learners through the development of accessible, alternative and additional learning and teaching materials.
- Make curriculum and textbooks more inclusive, both in content and accessibility.

3 Achieve targeted financing and ensure national systems promote the implementation of inclusive education

- Promote the inclusion of children with disabilities in national laws and education sector analysis and plans, within a broad, socially inclusive approach.
- Ensure that programmes are properly financed and resources are available at the school level to achieve policy objectives.
- Ensure that accountability measures are in place for budget tracking both at national and school level.
- Broaden engagement with private sector and non-traditional donors to support the implementation of inclusive education.

4 Reducing barriers to inclusion by adopting a cross-sectoral and life course approach

- Strengthen partnerships with health, social protection and rehabilitation services in local and national contexts.
- Ensure good quality early childhood education and development for children with disabilities, so they have better future life chances.
- Promote accessibility and universal design in the school environment, infrastructure, services and products.
- Support identification and assessment at different points in the education system and strengthen provision to respond to varying needs through strong referral systems.
- Support transitions throughout the entire life course and opportunities for complementary education and skills acquisition.

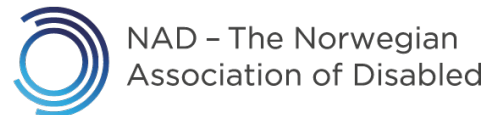
5 Involve people with disabilities, their families and Disabled People's Organisations in partnership with development actors to further the inclusive education agenda

- Voices and choices made by children and youth with disabilities need to be listened to and supported.
- As parents of children with disabilities are partners in the inclusive education process, working with them to support their child is essential.
- Build the capacity and actively seek the involvement of Disability People's Organisations and parent associations in partnership with development actors to further inclusion.
- Harness the implementation experience of international non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations who have led on inclusive education on the ground.

3. See <http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>

We commit ourselves to this Statement of Action

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