



# Enabling Education

I S S U E 9 - J U N E 2 0 0 5



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Editors: Ingrid Lewis and Susie Miles	

## Editorial

**EENET's mission is to create conversations around the world about how education systems can support the learning of all children. This means breaking with the history of treating some children as 'special' and of separating them from others.**

It is pleasing, therefore, to note that the international congress to be held in Glasgow, 1-4 August 2005, has chosen to change its title from the 'International Special Education Congress' to the 'Inclusive and Supportive Education Congress'.

By doing this the organisers are sending out a message that inclusive education addresses the needs of all marginalised groups, not just the 'special' education of disabled learners. On page 17 of this issue of 'Enabling Education' you will find thought-provoking views on the debate about inclusive education and its connection (in the minds of many) solely with disability. Where do you stand in this debate?

EENET firmly believes in promoting a view of inclusive education that takes us beyond the inclusion of disabled learners to the inclusion of all marginalised groups. However, this does not mean that disability issues should be allowed to be 'lost' in wider debates on inclusion. Efforts to mainstream gender issues into development work have often resulted in the loss of specific projects on women's and girls' equality and empowerment. Yet the 'mainstream' work continually fails to embrace and address gender issues properly. Can we learn anything from these experiences? Can we rise to the challenge of promoting inclusive education for all, while ensuring that vulnerable groups do not become lost in the 'mainstream'? EENET believes that we can – but we also know that there is still a long way to go!

Regular readers will notice that our front page this time features a range of images – rather than the usual editorial. We did this deliberately to highlight the potential of images to promote a different way of thinking about inclusion. EENET's action research project in Tanzania and Zambia has used images to stimulate reflection and analysis among practitioners and stakeholders about the meaning of inclusive education in their context.

EENET believes that these approaches hold the key to developing a view and an understanding of inclusion that takes account of all learners. The use of photography, drawing, drama and other forms of art and non-written communication can increase the participation of marginalised groups in research activities – and so influence educational change.

As we write this editorial, a lively debate is taking place in England about inclusion and the future of special education – sparked off by Baroness Warnock. (It was the 1978 Warnock Report that began the move towards greater inclusion.) She has called for an inquiry to investigate how the current policy is operating, and has even described England's 'statementing' system as 'wasteful and bureaucratic'. The debate has polarised opinion for and against special schools. Such debates will continue – in England and around the world. And EENET will continue to contribute to them by making information available to those who need it most, and by encouraging people to think differently about inclusion.



# EENET News

## Website

Our website ([www.eenet.org.uk](http://www.eenet.org.uk)) has grown amazingly over the last few years. In March 2003 we had 153,000 hits per month. By March 2005 this had risen to 291,000. If you have any articles you want to share, then our website is the place to do it! If you are an EENET reader in a Southern country who cannot access the Internet, and you want to know if we have any documents on our website on a specific subject, please write to us.

## Readership survey

With a previous newsletter we sent a 'change of address' form. This form included a question about the inclusive education issues that most interest our readers. Responses included:

- school and classroom practice
- education systems and policies
- gender issues
- community-based rehabilitation and inclusive education
- language issues
- HIV/AIDS
- parents and families.

We invite readers to help each other. If you have experiences relating to one or more of these issues, why not write an article. We may be able to publish it in the next newsletter or on our website. If you are not an experienced writer, don't worry, we can offer you advice and support with the planning and editing of your article. We're waiting to hear from you!

## Funding issues

We are committed to providing access to free information and networking opportunities for education stakeholders in the South. But this costs money. EENET operates on a very small annual budget and we rely entirely on grants and donations. EENET urgently needs funding to ensure our activities (such as this newsletter) continue in 2006 and beyond. If you or your organisation can offer a donation or grant, to fund EENET's unique and vitally important role in supporting the development of inclusive education practice and policy in the South, please contact us.

## Kenya e-group

EENET has launched an email group for people who are living/working in Kenya or who are from Kenya. The group aims to share and discuss documents and ideas relating to education and inclusion in Kenya. If you would like to join this e-group, please contact EENET for more information.

## Events

### ISEC

We will be involved in two symposia at the international Inclusive and Supportive Education Congress to be held in Glasgow, Scotland, 1-4 August 2005. One symposium will look at 'promoting international dialogue on inclusive education'. The other focuses on 'using visual images to make sense of inclusive education'. If you plan to attend the congress then we look forward to seeing you at these symposia! Our presentations and other documents relating to these topics will be available from EENET after the event.

Presentations from the entire congress will be available on the ISEC website:  
[www.isec2005.org](http://www.isec2005.org).

### ICED

EENET has been working closely with the International Deaf Children's Society, Viataal International and Christoffel Blinden Mission in preparation for the International Congress on the Education of the Deaf (ICED), Maastricht, The Netherlands, 17-20 July 2005. Pre-congress activities have been organised to promote collaboration between international NGOs supporting work with deaf children, and networking between Southern countries. Congress information is available from:  
[www.iced2005.org](http://www.iced2005.org).

The final report about this networking event will be available from [www.idcs.info](http://www.idcs.info), or contact EENET.

## Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)

Disabled children often find their right to education is only addressed in the final phases of the 'reconstruction' process, following a conflict or natural disaster (and then only via segregated special schools). Yet post-crisis situations, such as the one following the recent Tsunami, present opportunities. Education facilities and systems can be rebuilt in a way that ensures access to quality, inclusive education for disabled and other vulnerable learners.

INEE is working with UNESCO's Inclusive Education Unit to promote rebuilding initiatives that ensure disabled children's right to education. Please contact INEE to share information, resources or experiences on inclusive education in emergency and post-emergency situations, in particular those 'forgotten' emergencies.

Email: [coordinator@ineesite.org](mailto:coordinator@ineesite.org) or [ie@unesco.org](mailto:ie@unesco.org) Website: [www.ineesite.org](http://www.ineesite.org)



# Drug abuse: a challenge to education – Egypt

Amani G. Rizk

**The abuse of drugs and other substances is a key challenge facing schools globally. It requires early and appropriate interventions because it is causing many children to drop out of school and is damaging the health and potential of the next generation. It often leads young people into trouble with the police, to use violence or behave inappropriately. This can lead to exclusion from school. Yet these children still have a future and they still have rights.**

In Egypt, hashish and bang (forms of cannabis) are often affordable and easily available to children. Some may abuse solvents and inhalants which are also cheap and readily available. Few children abuse alcohol because of the cost. The lack of supervision of pharmacies results in a circulation of medications without prescription, leading to the abuse of medicinal drugs. Although statistics are unreliable, a recent study has highlighted the fact that the use of drugs by school children and young people is becoming a serious problem in Egypt.

## **What contributes to the problem?**

### *Social issues*

- family history of dependence and abuse
- divorce and abandonment in the family
- absence of discipline at home
- peer pressure
- start smoking when young
- drug use accepted in some communities
- easy availability of some substances.

### *Factors in the education system/schools*

- poor school environment: crowded classrooms, insufficient supervision, poor toilet facilities, extreme punishments
- regular failure in exams and/or pressure to perform: children may try to 'escape' the system
- no alternatives to formal schooling for children who work or who cannot afford to go to school; they may end up in vulnerable or risk-taking situations

- school system is unable to counteract the culture of drug use in some communities
- schools reject drug abusing pupils; viewing them as criminals rather than children with health and/or emotional problems.

## **What can we do?**

### *Primary prevention*

In Egypt there are attempts to create and adapt some early intervention programmes to be used in schools (through governmental associations or NGOs). These programmes give children information and knowledge about drugs, how to avoid becoming involved, and the results of using drugs. They aim to give children the inner strength to refuse drugs, based on a sound understanding of the issue.

### *Secondary prevention*

These programmes (provided by NGOs) find school children who are abusers (both in and out of school), and start to evaluate their situation. They offer medical treatment and psychotherapy to help them stop depending on drugs and rehabilitate them.

### *Promoting inclusive practice in education*

An important way to help prevent and deal with the issue of drug abuse among children and young people is by making our education system more inclusive and responsive to the needs and rights of all learners. This can be achieved through small steps like:

- raising awareness among school children about substance abuse

- including drug and other social issues (peer pressure, bullying, etc) in the curriculum, enabling children to talk openly
- training/informing teachers about drug issues and how to respond
- encouraging schools to accept, not automatically exclude, children with drug abuse problems
- changing people's perceptions, and training law enforcers in child rights, so that drug abusing children are not viewed/treated as criminals
- introducing flexible teaching/learning approaches, to accommodate children's rehabilitation schedules or learning problems developed due to absence from school or physical/intellectual damage caused by drugs.

I believe that if we are to tackle the problem of drug abuse and uphold the rights of all children, then the Ministry of Education should adopt these sorts of initiatives through a national strategy.

## **Amani is the Research**

**Co-ordinator for Arabic EENET, a partner of the Enabling Education Network. She is also a psychologist at the Oasis of Hope drug rehabilitation programme. Contact Amani in Egypt by email: [arabic-eenet@eenet.org.uk](mailto:arabic-eenet@eenet.org.uk), or via EENET's main UK postal address. Email the Oasis of Hope: [oasisofhp@yahoo.com](mailto:oasisofhp@yahoo.com)**

# Disabled learners in Karen refugee camps, Thailand

Aye Aye Mortimer

**UNHCR guidelines on refugee education emphasise the importance of providing education for disabled children, and UNESCO's Guidelines for Education in Emergencies clearly state the right of all refugee children to education. Moreover, the fact that refugee education is usually not under the control of any government ministry creates an opportunity to develop inclusive practices.**

## Situation overview

Myanmar (Burma) has many ethnic groups (including Karen). Tension between majority and minority groups has existed for decades. One cause is the fact that Burmese is the official language of education, leaving many learners from minority groups disadvantaged.

Civil war caused many to flee Myanmar. More than 90,000 Karen people are living in refugee camps in neighbouring Thailand; 38% of the Karen children are kindergarten age. Camp schools teach 36,000 students. Disabled children sometimes enrol, but poor teacher education and practices lead many to drop out.

Some aspects of the Royal Thai Government's policy have restricted the development of cohesive education programmes for the refugees. Myanmar opposition organisations have provided education for children from ethnic minorities in remote border areas. The Karen Education Department (KED) is one such body trying to bring cohesion to the geographically separated camp schools operated under programmes set up by international NGOs.

## Problems and solutions

The educational needs of disabled learners are being considered in some camps through a range of early intervention and school inclusion programmes, and programmes specifically for deaf and blind people. A US-based NGO, Consortium-Thailand, has helped to

develop Karen Sign Language, using video. Karen Braille teaching programmes also exist. However, at present not all camps have access to such programmes.

Some teachers in the camp schools have received 'special needs' training. They teach a range of disabled learners, and prepare individual education plans. There has been some training of mainstream teachers on multi-cultural issues, and concepts of inclusion. Training is very important if disabled children are to be included in schools and/or provided with out-of-school support. An illustrated teacher training module on inclusion has been written in the Karen language, suitable for teachers who may have little education themselves. However, teacher training is fragmented; some organisations do in-service training, while others do pre-service training.

Awareness raising among parents and community members about the needs of disabled children has taken place. NGO representatives from different sectors have met to identify roles and responsibilities in assisting disabled children. WEAVE, a local organisation, works with parent groups on child development and early identification of impairment, but lacks funding to expand its work to all camps.

A key problem is the lack of clear policy guiding NGO interventions on education for disabled learners. The KED policy focuses more on higher education and scholarships, rather

than promoting basic education opportunities for the most vulnerable. Another barrier is the lack of reliable information and statistics which could back up planning and funding processes.

## Moving forward

Following interviews and questionnaires with NGOs, teachers and disabled adults and children in the camps, the following recommendations can be made:

- incorporate disability issues and inclusion into KED policy, and into teacher training
- improve collaboration between NGOs and KED
- develop guidelines with NGOs and refugee representatives
- reform the curriculum to boost non-academic subjects/approaches
- prioritise early years work
- improve the sharing of good innovations between camps
- gather more information on disability (and other issues of difference)
- develop ways to continue inclusive education after repatriation of refugees to Myanmar.

**This article was compiled from a paper by Aye Aye Mortimer. Aye Aye is from Myanmar, and is ethnically Karen. She has lived in the UK since 2001. Contact her via EENET. See also the website of the Karen Education Partnership [www.karened.co.uk](http://www.karened.co.uk).**

# The 'Index for Inclusion' in use: learning from international experience

Tony Booth

***The Index for Inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools is a set of materials, launched in England in 2000, to support schools to review all aspects of their cultures, policies and practices so as to plan for their inclusive development. Inclusion, in the Index, is seen as a principled approach to education and society; an attempt to put values into action concerned with equity, participation, respect for diversity, community, rights, compassion, and sustainability. The Index supports a detailed investigation of what such values mean for the experience of education in classrooms, staff rooms, playgrounds, homes and communities.***

We had experience of thinking about educational development in both countries of the North and South. Discussions with colleagues in South Africa gave us confidence to talk about *the experience of barriers to learning and participation* which could arise in any aspect or at any level of the system – rather than the narrow medicalised view of educational difficulty as having to do with *the special educational needs of children and young people*.

Nevertheless when the Index was first published, we only thought about its use in England. We had aimed for a set of materials that could be used flexibly by any group of people involved in schools and adapted to local circumstances. We found, however, that our materials had far wider application than English schools. We began to receive interest and translation requests from a number of countries in the North and South. The Index has now been adapted for use in about 25 countries and translated into about 20 languages.

We thought the basic concepts, review framework and much of the suggestions for analysing school and classroom cultures, policies and practices might apply reasonably well to privileged settings (in the North or South). However, we felt that they needed to be adapted so that they could support educational development within economically poor communities, and relate to the diversity of circumstances of urban and rural poverty.

We started examining the materials, in this light, in a workshop in Mumbai, India, in 2001<sup>1</sup>. We shared investigations of the use of the Index from India, Brazil, South Africa and England. As a result, a version of the Index was produced in Arabic, with the support of Save the Children UK. This has been used in challenging circumstances in the Middle East and North Africa. A particular feature of this work has been the involvement of children in planning change in their schools. These comments give a flavour of the voices that are being heard as a result of the use of the Index.

'Nobody is a failure, everybody has a talent, but we must co-operate together to know what it is' *Child member of Index co-ordinating group, Bourg el Borajnie, Lebanon*

'The slow children should be put with the faster children because they have better communication with them than the teachers' *Child member, co-ordinating group, Gouberie, Lebanon*

'We need to work together even to make the smallest change' *Child, Beirut*

'Previously we always said "this child is badly behaved" and thought all the problems came from the children. We didn't notice that the problem could be with us: the adults, or with the activity' *Teacher, Egypt*

'Before this we thought parents were the enemy. Now we see that they are on the same side, we all

want what's best for our children' *Teacher, Morocco*

'My daughter does not want to eat her breakfast because the teacher beats her' *Parent, Morocco*

Source: J. Williams, (2003), 'School Improvement for Inclusion, Mid-year Review', London: Save the Children UK, Middle East and North Africa Region

We are currently putting together a book about the Index in use in 14 countries.<sup>2</sup> We see this collaboration as an opportunity to share knowledge about the possibilities for, and barriers to, inclusive educational development. The Index is 'a work in progress' and out of this collective experience we aim to improve the materials so that they are better able to support ourselves and others, whatever their contexts, to put their values into action.

**Tony Booth is Professor of Inclusive and International Education at Canterbury Christ Church University College North Holmes Road Canterbury Kent CT1 1QU, UK Email: tjb4@cant.ac.uk**

## Notes

- 1 Booth and Black-Hawkins (2001) 'Developing Learning and Participation in Countries of the South: the Role of an Index for Inclusion', Paris, UNESCO. Available soon on EENET's website.
- 2 Colleagues from Australia, England, Eritrea, Finland, Germany, India, Middle East and North Africa, New Zealand, Norway, Wales will share a symposium about this work at the ISEC conference, Glasgow, August 2005.

# Sexual Abuse and Education in Zambia

Joseph Zulu

**Child sexual abuse harms everyone. It harms children physically and psychologically. And it harms society by holding back children's participation and achievement in education and therefore in building a stronger nation. Zambia, as a nation, is determined to eradicate the sexual abuse of children. A holistic approach to tackling the issue is showing promising results, as this article demonstrates.**



Poster on a classroom wall, Zambia

## Underlying causes

There are many reasons why children face sexual abuse; they vary between countries and cultures. The abuse may come from within or beyond the family. In Zambia, reasons include:

- belief that sex with a child can cure HIV/AIDS, and that children are 'safe', HIV-free sexual partners
- belief that sex with children can bring success to your business
- rituals like child sexual cleansing: a widow(er) has sex with a child to prevent the ghost of the deceased spouse causing trouble.

## Effects on education

Children who are sexually abused suffer psychological damage which can affect their behaviour and the way they socialise with teachers and peers in school. They may contract HIV or other sexually transmitted infections. These children are often absent from school.

In addition to ill-health, they face discrimination and even bullying by peers and teachers – because they are HIV positive and because they have been sexually active – and so they drop out of education. Abused children may lack interest in education or experience poor concentration as their minds are preoccupied with bad memories. Girls may face early pregnancy and/or be forced to accept early marriage to avoid disgracing their families. Inevitably the academic performance of these children is affected.

## Interventions through education

Inclusive education approaches can play an important role in identifying and supporting such pupils. Flexibility, open communication, acceptance of marginalised groups, and a focus on individual learners' needs will help us to uphold abused children's right to education, despite the traumas they have experienced. However, as the Zambian example shows, there needs to be a more holistic approach to tackling child sexual abuse, and the education system can play a key role.

The Zambian Ministry of Education has developed a number of programmes. It has strengthened the guidance and counselling departments in schools, where children are sensitised on the dangers of HIV and how to protect themselves from abuse. Each teacher is responsible for protecting learners and counselling them. Clubs such as the Anti-AIDS and Forum for African Women in Education have been formed in schools. Such clubs sensitise pupils on child rights and HIV/AIDS through plays, music and poetry. Since some children are more vulnerable to abuse because of the poverty they and their families face, the Ministry and some NGOs have begun to sponsor their education.

'The old man promised me a lot of money and gifts. He also warned me against revealing this to anybody. That is how he had sex with me. The sexually transmitted infection I contracted made me reveal the issue',  
*Jane, aged 14\**

## Interventions in society

The wife of Zambia's President launched the Bus Stickers Campaign Against Child Sexual Abuse in December 2004, aimed at educating the wider population. Through the national media, role models – eg, the first President, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, the Zambia Police Service Spokesperson and famous musicians – have been used to convey awareness-raising messages about the issue.

Law enforcement departments and NGOs, UN bodies and church organisations have also played a big role. Chiefs have warned their communities not to engage in abusive practices, and have also spoken against traditional practices like child sexual cleansing and marrying young girls.

## Results

Following these various interventions at different levels in society, the traditional silence about sexual abuse has been broken. Many abuse cases have been reported since the nation openly 'declared war' on this problem and abusers have received punishment under the law.

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\*Name has been changed to protect the child's identity



# Action research in North Gonder, Ethiopia

Negussie Shenkuti and Margarita Focas Licht

**The development of a low-cost approach to providing primary education to excluded groups of children in rural areas is the main focus of a pilot inclusive schools project supported by Save the Children Norway.<sup>1</sup> The project began in October 2004 and involves school communities in a reflective process to question exclusion and identify means of inclusion. Resource teachers, who have some training in special needs education, are developing their capacity to become support teachers for inclusive classrooms. They assist classroom teachers in finding ways to include excluded groups in the learning process. The pilot will provide a basis for advocating changes in policy and practice at the regional and federal level. In this article Negussie and Margarita talk about the way a set of action research guidelines,<sup>2</sup> developed by EENET, is being used and adapted.**

## Presence, participation and achievement

A number of workshops have been held with resource teachers and teachers of mainstream classes. In the first workshop the teachers were introduced to the principles and approaches of inclusive education. The concept of 'presence, participation and achievement' was also introduced. The teachers were facilitated to discuss what these terms meant to them, and to 'dig deeper' into the meanings. They then discussed who is or is not present, participating or achieving in their context.

'Presence, participation and achievement' is the idea that inclusion/exclusion is multi-layered: we need to look at who is or is not present; who is or is not participating when present; and who is or is not achieving and benefiting from such presence and participation.



## Case studies

The teachers did their own classroom observation and investigation work (into 'presence, participation and achievement') and presented case studies at the next workshop. The case studies mostly focused on individual students, with teachers' assumptions about why they are or are not present, participating or achieving. A wide range of issues was raised, including:

- children's work burden at home is a problem
- divorce of parents affects children's learning
- many married girls attend primary school and need special attention
- teachers' classroom practices determine children's learning.

The case studies also highlighted what was lacking in the schools, eg:

- information gathering from different sources
- co-operation between teachers
- focusing on every child
- involvement of the school in combating harmful traditional practices.<sup>3</sup>

Teachers continued in their schools to investigate further and see how they could take steps to address the problems identified.

## Look, think, act

At the third workshop participants were introduced to the 'look, think, act' cycle. This means looking at what we do in schools that is inclusive or exclusive; thinking about this in detail and analysing what we have found out; and then taking action to improve the situation. The cycle continues when we look at the actions and the new situation and think about how to take further action to become more inclusive. Teachers worked in groups to discuss what needs to change, how it could be changed, who would be involved, how to record the process and results, how to communicate with stakeholders, etc. They also looked at the feasibility of each other's suggested changes and at how to turn general statements into specific actions.

Teachers raised issues such as:

- different approaches are needed to address presence, participation and achievement with different children
- parents' involvement will ensure success
- this approach has made us realise 'research' is not difficult
- the approach is a way of creating knowledge for teachers to improve practice.



### Teacher mobility

At this workshop a common problem hampered progress a little. Many teachers had been re-assigned to different classes or schools, and so this affected the investigations and presentations. In Zambia the redeployment of teachers on a regular basis has also, at times, interrupted the development of a consistent, ongoing cycle of action research. This is something that is beyond the control of practitioners or supporting NGOs. It needs to be addressed by decision makers if ongoing improvements are to be supported – or if inclusion and school improvement is to be sustainable.

### Supporting disabled children

At the fourth workshop there was a development in positive thinking about supporting disabled children. One group of teachers reported the efforts they had made to register the disabled children. They had submitted a proposal to the school administration to mobilise resources for their inclusion. These changes in teachers' attitudes led to requests for specific training on disability issues for mainstream teachers, which will be built into future workshops. At this workshop teachers also began to express an understanding of the need to involve children in addressing exclusion.

### The challenge of writing

The teachers' written reports have improved since the project started but they are not used to writing. Often what they presented orally was quite different from what had been written. A specific writing workshop was planned to address this. The project will also build on EENET's experiences with image-based action research methods to

develop non-written ways of capturing and presenting inclusive education ideas and experiences (see pages 10-11).

### Research

The workshops produced some encouraging surprises. For example, the facilitators had not used the term 'research' to describe the processes they were taking the teachers through. However, during the workshops the teachers began to talk in terms of research. They commented that it is not complex, but is something that anyone can do to improve their work.

**'We used to think that when children weren't learning it was their fault. Now we know that it may be because of a problem they have, that we can do something about'**  
*Teacher, North Gonder*

### Disability and inclusion

The facilitators did not talk about inclusion in terms of disability. This was a deliberate strategy in order to encourage the teachers to think broadly about all issues of marginalisation. While disability was raised, so were plenty of other issues. This helped the teachers to see inclusive education as a process of system change to benefit all learners, not just as a way of assisting disabled learners.

### Teachers working together

Moves towards teacher collaboration have been witnessed – in an environment where teachers have always worked in isolation! For example, teachers have discussed large class sizes.



This is not a problem they should have to struggle with alone, but should work together to solve.

In May 2005, a team from Ethiopia visited Mpika, Zambia, where school communities are also using action research approaches in their school improvement work. The Ethiopian team was able to observe classroom practice, talk with teachers, and participate in image-based action research activities with children. They learned new ideas from, and were able to share their ideas with, the Zambian teachers. The visit enabled them to reflect in more depth on their own situation in Ethiopia.

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#### Notes

1 In collaboration with Chilga District Education Office under an agreement with the Amhara Regional Education Bureau.

2 See 'Useful Publications' for details.

3 Such practices include early or forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

# Visualising Inclusion

Ian Kaplan

**Working with students to take their own photographs as a way of exploring their school and its culture is gradually gaining acceptance amongst NGOs, academics and policy makers. It is increasingly seen as a valid and ethical way of conducting research in schools.**

My colleagues and I have been using this approach with students as part of more traditional research projects in schools for several years now. However, this participatory method of engagement and expression deserves to have a more substantial role in educational research. It has inspired and influenced our recent work with students in the UK, and in Zambia as part of EENET's action research project. In response to government pressure in the UK for service providers to engage with the perspectives of service 'users', these approaches are invaluable.



Photo by secondary school pupils in North West England

## The power of images

The power of images is very real, but is often overlooked or little understood in education. Images have the potential to 'represent, engage and influence' – and can include photographs, drawings, video and maps. Images are accessible to many who find it difficult, or even impossible to access text.

Images can enable those at risk of marginalisation from education

(children, people with learning disabilities, and those who have limited literacy skills) to engage with ideas and information. Perhaps they cannot or do not want to read text. Images also have the power to engage those who produce and use text all the time, such as school managers, policy makers and academics.

## Participatory photography

Traditional research approaches (eg, questionnaires and interviews) can be limited in their ability to engage students and represent their perspectives. Participatory photography and arts-based approaches can offer a more engaging and relevant alternative. Child participation is a fundamental part of inclusive education and any school which aims to be inclusive. Students can use cameras to take their own photographs as a way of considering their perspectives about school and inclusion. Their photographs can be a form of evidence, but also a means of reflecting on and sharing their experience of school and education: a way of making their 'voices' heard.

Participatory photography has the potential to be an important part of action research which involves students directly in the process of school change and improvement. Students can use their photographs and commentary to help other educational stakeholders (eg, teachers, school managers, parents) to consider their perspectives. The images can also be used to promote more inclusive learning environments. Students who are directly involved and consulted in the running of a school gain a sense of

ownership and participation in their own education: they become more than just 'receivers' of knowledge.

## What does inclusion look like?

Photographing evidence of a concept as complex as inclusion is not easy. Many photographs that are intended to be examples of what inclusion looks like show people with white sticks or in wheelchairs in mainstream classes. There is nothing wrong with picturing this type of inclusion, but disability is not always visible and many people without disabilities are also excluded from education. Photographs which reduce inclusion to the physical presence of learners with obvious impairments in mainstream classrooms have limited value, if left unchallenged. But they can be much more valuable when used to provoke debate about inclusion. They do not have to be literal to have meaning, but can be both the product of, and means of, promoting imagination and critical thinking.

For example, an image that does not at first appear to be about inclusion can get people thinking about inclusion. The photograph below is an example of this.



Photo by primary school pupil, Mpika, Zambia

An image of a blue plastic chair may not seem to relate to inclusion until we consider that the student who took the picture wanted to show the desirability of this chair, the only one in the class. This chair was the teacher's. The students, who sat on broken benches or the floor, also wanted chairs like this to make their learning environment more comfortable and inclusive.



Photo by primary school pupil, Mpika, Zambia

Photographs can be a very good way of showing evidence of the things that make educational inclusion and engagement difficult, such as unsafe toilets and bad quality windows.



Photo by primary school pupil, Mpika, Zambia

On the front page we presented a selection of photographs of windows, taken by children in Zambia. What did you think of these images? What messages do you think the children who took the photographs were conveying about inclusion or exclusion in their schools? How do you think these windows might positively or negatively affect the inclusion of children? Are windows an issue affecting inclusion in your own context?

#### School geography

Geography is sometimes a subject taught at school; but a school also has a geography of its own. How are buildings, classrooms, play areas and school grounds in general designed and organised? What about issues of safety and space? All these factors affect the learning environment and overall inclusiveness of a school. Students' photographs and commentary can be a great way of exploring the geography of a school.

Children in Zambia, were asked to create maps of their school. They worked in groups to discuss the places, things and people that made them feel welcome or unwelcome in school. They represented this information on a map. One further adaptation would be to add photographs to the maps. The activity helped them to develop group-work skills and to negotiate their opinions with others. It also led to lively debates: the children saw their familiar school environment through new eyes, and learned to analyse problems and suggest solutions. Their teachers have even adopted similar ideas in their day-to-day teaching.

#### Community involvement

Exhibitions and community meetings can be a forum for students' images (and perspectives) to be shared with a wider audience, such as parents, teachers, school managers and government officials. However exhibitions and meetings do not happen spontaneously; they need careful planning and facilitation to avoid students' perspectives being lost, ignored, or misrepresented.

We helped organise an exhibition of pupils' photography and drawings in Mpika, Zambia in the hope of getting parents and teachers engaged with student perspectives. However this exhibition was not straightforward. We assumed too much prior experience among participants and placed too much emphasis on informality. We were inevitably faced with a group of confused parents and children who did not know what to do after looking briefly at the displays. They were not used to the idea of spontaneously analysing and discussing what they saw in the exhibition. A lively discussion about what the images meant to the children and the community was only possible in a more formal session. Interestingly, the children who are already experiencing education within an inclusive school were more confident about analysing and discussing each other's images than their parents were!

**Ian Kaplan is a research associate in education at the University of Manchester. His particular interest is image-based research and its potential for enabling the 'voices' of marginalised groups to be heard. Contact: [ian.kaplan@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ian.kaplan@manchester.ac.uk) or via EENET.**



# Using the 'arts' in inclusion, Cambodia

**Katie MacCabe**

**Epic Arts, a UK-based trust, runs arts programmes for people of all abilities and disabilities. In 2003 Katie, the Co-ordinator of Epic Arts, moved to Cambodia – a country recovering from many years of civil war. Here she explains the importance of art and how it can promote inclusion.**

It was an interesting beginning and we were a challenging group, to say the least! Four dancers and a guest choreographer. We were working with three different languages, Khmer, English and Khmer Sign Language, and two extremely different cultures. We soon realised that words would hold us back. We needed to find a new language – the universal language of creative play – to listen and speak with our bodies using the language of trust and interdependence.

**'Through "art", our small isolated lives ... can be joined...'**

Jane Wagner

Over the last year we have created performance pieces with 'dis'abled and 'able' youth and adults from a variety of 'dis'advantaged backgrounds. We have taken performances to schools, conferences and theatres. It has been exciting as the idea of inclusion is still in the early stages. The concept of bad Karma means that people with disability are often seen as outcasts: their disabilities reflecting sins in previous lives.

Dance is a powerful visual tool for celebrating our differences and demonstrating our abilities. It challenges society's perception of 'dis'ability. So often, people are 'dis'abled by society's views of them. They grow up believing that they 'can't'. We hope that through workshops we can encourage people to discover that they 'can'.

Epic Arts works from the principal of joining lives: using arts for integration and inclusion. My father

was disabled so I was brought up with disability as the norm, but found I knew no one of my age with disability. This troubled me, and the idea came that 'art' is a good way to bring integration. In 1998 I saw an inspiring performance by 'dis'abled and able-bodied members of Candoco Dance company, who tour internationally and run workshops on integration. The two founders of Candoco include a former professional dancer who had an accident on stage. They were an inspiration to me, and I trained with them for about two years. In 2000 the idea of Epic Arts was born after chatting with two colleagues, one of whom had a sister with Down's Syndrome.

In the UK we link children from mainstream schools and schools for children with disabilities and special needs. They work together for a week and develop a creative movement performance. The results are profound every time. Children from the mainstream school sit in a huddle, wide-eyed, as some children are wheeled in, others are on crutches. We push all the metal aside and start to work; meeting as people, as friends. By the end of the week, there is no longer distance between the two groups, but hugs and tears when it is time to part. Through art everyone can find a common language. Creating a performance together brings with it a sense of unity and togetherness.

'There is no disability in art,' said someone who saw a performance recently. It is exciting seeing people who are usually stared at with pity, being watched with awe as proud

performers. Using the arts can help promote inclusion by:

- learning to work together and to trust each other, as a performance is developed
- challenging and changing the attitudes of those watching.

**The photograph shows two Epic Arts performers, Nhin Sophara, a deaf performance artist, and Kim Sathia, a former professional dancer. Since Sathia became paralysed after car crash seven years ago, she has not danced. Last month she returned to the stage, and we hope there is a lot of dancing still to be done. She is a strong role model for young disabled Cambodians. She has not let her disability stop her from integrating back into the arts world.**



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# Challenges in Paradise: Inclusive Education in the South Pacific

## Rebekah McCullough

**There are many challenges in the islands of the South Pacific: isolation, lack of access, little or no resources, lack of information and training. However the focus on Education for All is a goal that cannot be ignored now that accurate and useful information is being gathered, shared and used to benefit adults and children with disability.**

Since 2001, a project called 'Disability in the Pacific' (initiated by Inclusion International with funding support from NZAID) has been conducting individual surveys to identify adults and children with disabilities in Cook Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Local people have been trained to identify types of disabilities and then assisted to conduct individual interviews throughout the country. The people who volunteer, or are recruited, often include people with disability, parents of children with disability, local teachers and health workers. The training enables them to learn identification and interview skills as well as how to run community awareness workshops. This has raised awareness and the visibility of children and adults with disability. The surveys are also showing some of the real challenges regarding education for all!

In many Pacific countries, children with disabilities have been supported by NGOs who have tended to set up 'special schools'. Typically, these are in the main urban areas and do not reach those in rural areas or outer islands. However, inclusive education is now being discussed and in some places is beginning to be implemented as the most efficient and effective way of including children with disabilities and other 'at risk' children into school life.

Inclusive education is mainly understood as a way to include children with disabilities into their local schools. This is still a very important goal as they represent the highest number of children not going to school. However, inclusive

education is beginning to be understood to include those children who are 'at risk' because of issues such as needing to work, inability to pay the school fee, chronic illness, etc.

As more information is gained and shared about the numbers of children not attending school, some wonderful local initiatives are happening. For example:

A student who uses a wheelchair found the path to the local school was too bumpy: he couldn't get to school. The principal and teachers used their initiative. Now two boys from the school rugby team take turns to carry him and his wheelchair to and from school each day. If the student and his wheelchair don't show up at school, rugby is called off for that day!

In Samoa, all teacher trainees now take a compulsory course in inclusive education. There are another five courses for teachers who want to specialise in working with students with special needs. The survey information is used to identify areas (both location and type of disabilities) where the special needs teachers can be placed once they graduate.

Parent groups have been established in Samoa and Kiribati. They meet to support one another and to advocate for educational and other rights for their children. They have been assisting with the survey and community awareness training.

In Vanuatu, an inclusive education project is being developed to find out how to make the school experience more meaningful for students with special needs. This information will be used to help



Parent support group in Kiribati

teachers in primary schools develop better ways to teach and include all children.

A number of children with epilepsy were identified in the Samoan survey as not being allowed to attend school. The teachers were often frightened and did not know what to do when students had seizures. A brochure was developed to help teachers understand and cope with students with epilepsy.

In Kiribati, special training courses are being developed for young women with disabilities by Te Toa Matoa, the local disabled people's group. The tutor for one of the Women with Disability groups is a disabled woman and a wonderful role model.

**Rebekah McCullough**  
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# Education for All, Serbia

Anupam Ahuja

**Historically, children with disabilities in Serbia have been segregated. An alarming number of these children are not included in any form of public education. A recent UNICEF analysis of the overall educational system in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia shows that only one per cent of pre-school children with disabilities are actively included in any form of education.**

A key goal in Serbia today is improving the educational outcome for all children. Ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for all is an essential part of the national policy. The Serbian Plan of Action for Children, a strategic document of the Government, is designed to help eliminate any kind of discrimination against children. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) plans special measures to support enrolment and reduce drop-out rates. It also aims to increase the percentage of children from the Roma population and children with development difficulties completing primary education by 2007.

The special education system operates in parallel to, and without co-ordination with, the general education system. The Commission for Classification (a medical assessment) decides on educational placement and possible institutionalisation of children with disabilities. Parent participation is limited.

The main tool for determining a child's educability is IQ testing, which does not identify a child's strengths. Children with socio-emotional and behavioural challenges are taken care of by school psychologists, but there is no organised follow up in the wider school environment. Negative attitudes towards students with disability prevail. Children are placed in residential institutions and receive poor-quality education, or none at all. Minority groups, especially Roma, are grossly over-represented in these special schools and classes. Education of

special educators is mainly based on the medical model of disability. Accessibility in general, and access to information in particular, for students with disabilities is limited. The current legislation relating to children with disabilities is seriously inadequate. Vocational training and higher education of persons with disability is overlooked in both legislation and practice.

Despite the policy and practical challenges in realising quality education for all children, there has been a shift from institutionalised, segregated care towards more inclusive and responsive educational practice. This has been due to the recent education reform movement, the need to fulfil international obligations, and pilot programmes promoting inclusive practice. In addition individual success stories, such as Danijela's, have provided inspiration and encouragement.

### **Capacity building to support IE practice**

Save the Children UK (SC UK) is supporting the national and local efforts through a combination of practical work, research, advocacy and direct policy involvement. In March 2005 SC UK ran a five-day training, using the UNESCO 'Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom'. Participants included staff from MoES, universities, pre and elementary schools, special schools, health centres and SC UK, as well as psychologists and defectologists.

The methodology focused on problem solving and experience sharing, which are fundamentally

linked to inclusive education philosophy. A variety of active learning methods was used to demonstrate the changes needed when addressing individual needs and planning for the whole class.

It was decided that the trainees would form a core team and support innovation at the school level. There will be a small innovation fund for the pilot schools. The core team and the school staff of the SC UK pilot programme in Subotica will give each other collective support.

**Anupam Ahuja is a freelance consultant who has worked recently with SC UK in Serbia. She is a founding member of EENET Asia. See p16 for contact details.**

### **A Kindergarten Fit for All Children: Inclusive Programme in Pre-school Institutions in Kula and Novi Pazar. Final Report 2003 – 2004**

SC UK has been implementing projects aimed at children with disabilities in Serbia and Montenegro since September 1996. This report discusses project implementation, difficulties encountered, and suggestions for future work.

To obtain this report please contact:  
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# Danijela's story

**Danijela Vukovic, a counsellor in the Ministry of Education and Sports, describes her journey through the Serbian education system.**

My birth was very hard and strenuous; long hours of labour pain and struggle. The medical staff dealt with a complicated and risky delivery, and I came through with lifelong consequences – cerebral paralysis. The consequences became evident to my parents when I was two, through the way I spoke and walked. However, as I grew older they saw I was quick at grasping new ideas, analysing situations and had a good memory.

Aware of my mental capabilities, my mother (a teacher) insisted on my inclusion within the community and studying with children without special needs. I was enrolled in a regular kindergarten. Of course this was preceded by numerous discussions with the school head master, psychologist and educators. This complicated procedure was not required for my younger brother who was, according to them, 'a healthy child'. This implied I was unhealthy... but how, I never really understood.

As far as I remember I liked very much going to the kindergarten and I felt at ease there. I fully participated in the learning and sang and recited at school parties. My parents maintained very close contact with my teachers and I never felt that my slow speech and walk (my so-called disabilities) bothered the other children. My playmates knew me well and always gave me a role in our plays; I participated in all the activities on an equal footing.

As primary school approached my parents had to put in additional efforts to persuade the authorities to allow me to attend regular school. Again I was lucky that my mother was a teacher. She was

familiar with the terms, procedures and ways of tackling issues of children who are different. I was tested, diagnosed, and subjected to what seemed endless check-ups. My mother tried to handle all the opinions and questions: 'Is she seeing a speech therapist? Will she be able to handle things on her own? Other children will be... Maybe the other parents will...'. All this in order to find a teacher who would accept me in his or her class.

In grammar school I studied, wrote, drew and did all my learning exercises like the other children. Of course my low grades in physical education were directly linked to my motor difficulties. It depended on the good will of my teachers how they would tolerate this and let me show my skills in other areas. I faced situations like:

- 'Do not sing, you sing falsetto, be silent!'
- 'Walk fast, I do not have all the time in this world!'
- 'You always have to go to these therapies – always have an eye on the watch!'
- 'Go away I do not want to look at you any more!'
- 'Yes I have always given you lower grades because your mother works in the school, so the other children wouldn't be jealous of you.'

There were teachers who appreciated my efforts and ability to persevere. And there were people who felt pity for me and didn't mix with me except when they had to: they never got to know my abilities and skills.

By high school I had grown accustomed to the unequal conditions of schooling: my good exam performance made some

classmates proud of me while others envied my grades. I was now capable of finding ways to establish communication. I learned that actively participating in class using short sentences helped me to show my understanding and knowledge. This provided my teachers with regular feedback about my learning and helped them evaluate and support me for my exams. The untimely death of my father weakened my stamina and will, but I completed high school with top marks.

With the university admission tests and subsequent exams I once again faced having to prove my capabilities and that I should be allowed to study with other students. The Commission, after a lot of persuasion, made only one provision and allowed me to take one final graduation exam orally.

Although I was eager to continue my training, I did not want my schooling to depend any longer on my constant efforts to prove my abilities and on the 'kind consideration' of the authorities. I hated hearing: 'Your case has been put to the Commission and now they...' Why was I always a case for them, I wondered!

Following my graduation, I made a decision to end my education. My life goes on and I witness stories of unequal living conditions for people like me. People with challenges are still striving to adjust to those not challenged and to fit into their world. And – you have to admit – it is not an easy task.

**Contact Danijela Vukovic by email: [daniela\\_gpp@yahoo.com](mailto:daniela_gpp@yahoo.com)**

## Regional News

### EENET Asia

A new regional network – EENET Asia – has been established for Central, South and South East Asia. It aims to further develop EENET's vision of inclusive education and promote the sharing of accessible information between practitioners and stakeholders regionally.

An e-group has been set up to facilitate conversations and debates. EENET Asia's first regional newsletter will be published in mid-2005. The network is translating this into various languages (Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia and Hindi are planned so far). It will also be produced in electronic and printed versions, as not all readers will have Internet access.

EENET Asia invites readers to contact them if they have any sponsorship ideas to cover printing and mailing costs.

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### Middle East and North Africa

Arabic EENET is a partner of the Enabling Education Network. It promotes the sharing of information about inclusive education within the Middle East and North Africa region, via Arabic language documents. It is currently hosted by Save the Children in Egypt.

The Arabic section of EENET's website has been running for over a year. In late 2004, Arabic EENET conducted a small user survey. Most users felt the quality was good and the web pages were easy to find, download and read, but there was not enough material available. They wanted more articles about disability, gender, poverty and quality education, among others. We therefore encourage readers from this region to send articles on these issues. Users also felt that the pages would help develop networking between organisations, but would probably not do much to change policy or community attitudes. We therefore challenge readers to help Arabic EENET develop its web pages so that they *do* contribute to regional policy and attitude change.

In the last few years there have been great developments in the Middle East and North Africa, bringing to life the vision of inclusive education for all. The *Index for Inclusion in the Arabic World* was published in 2003, and is now in use in eight countries in the region (see page 6 for more information). Save the Children's work in the region is beginning to bear fruit. The Egyptian ruling party adopted inclusion as its second priority within the education section of its platform. The Ministry of Social Affairs is distributing inclusion guidelines for use in Egypt's kindergartens and pre-schools. Activities of various Ministry offices in Morocco show that inclusion is now recognised as a priority within

the promotion of 'la vie scolaire'. The Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education, and sections of the service provider for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) are now talking about inclusion as one of their goals. A national conference was held, after countrywide consultations in Lebanon, to draw up recommendations on developing educational inclusion to put before the new government.

The very word for inclusion in Arabic was virtually unknown before Save the Children started its initiatives in 2001. Today the term, and at least some of the concepts, have become part of the daily educational debate in the region.

J.R.A. Williams, Education and ECCD Advisor, Save the Children MENA

Contact Arabic EENET: [arabic-eeenet@eenet.org.uk](mailto:arabic-eeenet@eenet.org.uk), or via EENET's UK postal address.

### Researching Inclusive Education in the Caribbean

Inclusion International's members, the Caribbean Association for Mobilizing Resources and Opportunities for People with Developmental Disabilities (CAMRODD), and the Canadian Association for Community Living were recently involved in a World Bank initiative to research inclusive education in the Caribbean. The project is part of a broader strategy to study the status of inclusive education in the Latin America and Caribbean region, and to identify areas in which the World Bank can support governments in these efforts. A workshop was held in April to discuss the research which had taken place in St Lucia, but also in Suriname, St Kitts and Jamaica.

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# Talking point: Disability, inclusion and education

**In August 2005 a meeting will take place at the United Nations in New York to discuss the Draft Convention on the 'Promotion and Protection of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities'. Article 17 proposes that children should have the right to segregated education. This challenges the possibility of ensuring a universal right to inclusive education. The debate is intensifying! At the same time there is another debate about the need to make inclusive education a reality for all children – not just for those identified as having disabilities. Els Heijnen and Richard Rieser put forward their views....**

## **Inclusive education is not only about disability!**

*Els Heijnen*

Inclusive education should never be limited to looking for, or at, learners with disabilities or 'special needs' (which is increasingly becoming a new negative label).

It seems that in the West (where I am originally from) inclusion only deals with disability issues. Are those the only children marginalised, stereotyped, left out, excluded, *from* or *in* the system, due to lack of inclusive or responsive equal rights-based education opportunities?

I am against segregation and do not really believe in special education. But we should also realise that there may be children who do not want to be included in mainstream education and this right to choose should also be respected. It seriously worries me that we need a UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities... Is that what inclusiveness is about? Is this not misplaced and segregating advocacy? Including all people, irrespective of their differences or diversity, implies that they are part of mainstream national and international laws. Should we not challenge existing conventions and help develop those into more inclusive and equal human rights based conventions – including difference and diversity in human kind?

I refuse to believe or accept that inclusive education is about disability. I have seen too many

other children marginalised, stereotyped and excluded. In South Asia there are many different groups of learners excluded from the mainstream system. Or when they are 'in', they are not included in terms of equal rights and opportunities to participation and optimal learning.

I have worked with organisations such as UNESCO, Save the Children, Action Aid, UNICEF, and in co-operation with ministries of education. In my experience some of the following groups face exclusion from and in education: girls (and increasingly boys as a group), working children, children living on the streets, children from very poor families (rural/urban), children from remote areas, children of migrant families, children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, children of sex-workers, children of gypsy families, children from sweepers' colonies, children of different castes, social class, ethnic or language minority group, etc.

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## **The Global Alliance for Inclusive Education**

*Richard Rieser*

This new alliance was set up at the 3rd North-South Dialogue Conference on inclusive education in New Delhi in March 2005. It was the culmination of a number of years work between the National Resource Centre for Inclusion in Mumbai, India, CIDA Canada and UNICEF. The Alliance brings

together disabled people, parents, education professionals and academics to exchange the practice and implementation of inclusive education.

The Global Alliance and the three conferences have always seen inclusive education as including all excluded groups. However the largest group of children systematically excluded from education are disabled children. Therefore the Alliance believes it is important that those with the experience of exclusion are in the leadership of the inclusion movement.

The choice of segregated education is an illusion. In a truly inclusive system the barriers are systematically removed to meet the needs of all learners. Because disability is one of the great exclusionary forces in the world we need a UN Convention that lays down the same rights for disabled people that exist for everyone else. The draft convention, and Article 17 in particular [which focuses on education], cannot offer segregation as a human right when it is a denial of human rights!

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For information on the proposed UN Convention, see [www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/adhoccom.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/adhoccom.htm)



## The EENET Interview



**Twenty-two years ago a determined young man was born into a family of seven in Walvis Bay, Namibia. Here, Paulie Nanyeni describes becoming deaf in late childhood, how he succeeded in higher education, and why he supports the development of inclusive education in his country.**

### **What was your experience of education before you became deaf?**

I started primary school in the North of Namibia aged 11 when I still had normal hearing. In 1997, having passed primary school with brilliant marks, I was admitted to senior secondary school. It was a boarding school and life there was really good.

### **When did you lose your hearing?**

Life in this school was short-lived. On the last day of the holidays I contracted malaria. My face swelled up and I started to hear people as if speaking from a distance. There was something wrong in my left ear – it sounded like a fly, but it never came out! The next morning there was no more sound. I lived optimistically: my hearing would be restored and I would go back to school. But slowly I realised I had to live my entire life with no more hearing and I started to adapt.

### **How did you adapt?**

I learned lip reading, which was simple and fun. At home, I followed my mother in the fields. When she asked me to do something, I repeated the whole statement. Learning sign language was not as interesting. I hated it – and the deaf children! It took time to accept the language. Finally I am happy with it. The second semester passed and I still did not attend school: this was very frustrating! I wanted to go back, but had to wait until the next year to attend Eluwa Special School!

### **What was it like learning with other deaf children?**

The competition between learners was very strong. But having been hearing for over 15 years, I knew how to use the English language. I completed grade 10: the only candidate to pass from the school since 1999! I was ready to face the challenge of grades 11 and 12, but found myself at home; there is no higher education for hearing impaired learners in Namibia. This taught me to be as tough as I am today. I don't let anything stand in my way.

### **How did you manage to complete your schooling?**

In 2001, with help of the Inspector of Special Education, I gained admission to my former secondary school, but without special preparation being made for me. I took notes, used lip reading and confronted teachers after every lesson! The atmosphere at the school was excellent and this was reflected in my results. I am still the only hearing impaired person with a grade 12 certificate.

### **Why did you decide on a university education, despite the difficulties?**

I'm a third year student of education at the University of Namibia. I'm doing this for my country, and for all learners who are hearing impaired. I feel very proud to have attained this high level of education. My life has completely changed! It is really good for me, and I plan to work for my government, which made these things possible for me. I have never felt the same from the day I entered the university.

### **What role did your family play?**

A vote of appreciation goes to my family, especially my late father. My mother ensured that I had school uniform and regular meals. My brother helped me with multiplication every weekend, and friends were always ready to answer my questions.

### **What support have you had?**

The Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education provides me with support. One of the staff members, Ms February, is my personal tutor and has taken up a sign language course so that we can communicate more effectively. If I had a laptop I could download lecture notes and use class time to lip read the lectures.

### **How do you see your future?**

After graduating I will work in the Ministry of Education, where I will focus on the innovation and upgrading of special education. I want to provide future generations with a better education. I also want to see myself in parliament within five years so that I can influence my comrades to take up the issues of deaf people to the fullest. My dream is that the whole world will be able to recognise me for myself, and not just as a person who is deaf!

**Paulie is Chairperson of the Windhoek Deaf Association, and vice-chairperson of the Namibian National Association of the Deaf.**

**Email: [pauliesmail@teenmail.co.za](mailto:pauliesmail@teenmail.co.za)**

## Your letters/emails

### HIV/AIDS and inclusion

As child rights campaigners we have noted that in rural areas children who are orphans are more likely to leave school than those whose parents are still alive. Due to stigma associated with HIV/AIDS the traditional social fabrics that used to hold families together are no longer there. We have situations where children have to leave school to nurse their sick parents, then see them die and remain alone struggling for survival. Such children become traumatised and vulnerable to abuse.

Children whose parents have died from HIV/AIDS often face discrimination in schools. Children have been transferred from one school to another in the process of trying to find someone to keep them. As a result of not being accepted children have ended up being street children.

The question is how do we create an inclusive society in the midst of this crisis?

We must ask ourselves, how can teachers become better role models in the creation of an environment where all children feel loved and accepted, and how can we all provide for the needs of these children without stigmatising them.

We welcome contact with anyone who is interested in working with us on these issues.

**Boswell Mboози**  
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### Information request

Greetings. The special edition of EENET's newsletter 'Salamanca Ten Years On' is an excellent collection of articles. The contribution of CBR to promote inclusive education is significant. Kindly publish articles on CBR projects in developing countries which have a special focus on inclusive education.

**Indumathi Rao**

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### Thank you

I am really thankful for sending me some articles and reading materials on inclusive education. It made my heart leap with so much joy upon receiving the mail. I believe that we can work hand-in-hand in advocating education to every child regardless of their disabilities. In this manner, many children will benefit and become great leaders in the future. Words are not enough to describe the happiness you brought in my life.

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### Inclusive education: An approach that is 'all-people-oriented'

When the Special Education Tutor first taught me about inclusive education as the new global trend in education – during my recently completed (2003) Initial Teacher Training – my initial opinion was that either our government in particular had no capacity to build special schools or else the quality of education in Uganda was deteriorating (like the common talk of our grandparents).

My re-orientation has only been through experience of school culture. But I felt compelled to start 'Esepaf'. Esepaf is an NGO trying to address inclusive education in Uganda. Our efforts revolve around active involvement of school children, teachers and parents in awareness creation. This is to curb the negative attitudes towards disadvantaged children and the general conditions and customs that make particular groups unwelcome, not supported or even derided.

I find the concept of inclusive education accommodates the participation and advocacy of *all* people (who may in some way affect the lives of others) more so than a few trained practitioners in special schools can.

The addition of Esepaf on EENET's mailing list has brightened the purpose and direction of our work. We are proud of joining the sharing of experiences and ideas with EENET.

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**We invite readers to respond to the issues raised here**

## Useful Publications

### **Inclusive Education for Children at Risk: Good Practice Guide**

Online resource available from the website of the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies. It has 6 sections: rebuilding for inclusiveness; towards full participation; gender equality; adult ex-combatants and child soldiers; children in especially difficult circumstances; persons with disability.

Available online:  
[www.ineesite.org/inclusion/default.asp](http://www.ineesite.org/inclusion/default.asp)  
Contact INEE:  
c/o UNESCO  
ED/EPS  
7 Place de Fontenoy  
75007 Paris France  
[coordinator@ineesite.org](mailto:coordinator@ineesite.org)

### **Inclusive Play: Practical strategies for working with children T.Casey (2005)**

This book makes practical suggestions and uses tried-and-tested approaches to show readers how to help children feel included and involved in play opportunities.

Available from:  
Paul Chapman Publishing  
1 Oliver's Yard  
55 City Road  
London, EC1Y 1SP, UK  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7324 8600  
ISBN 1-4129-0243-6  
Price £18.99

### **Tape and Braille documents**

EENET has produced Braille and audio cassette versions of newsletters 7 and 8, and the book 'Schools for All'. Please note we have distributed most of our Braille newsletters already, but the other items are still available. We contracted the African Braille Centre in Kenya to produce the Braille newsletters. For information about their service, email: [maina@nbnet.co.ke](mailto:maina@nbnet.co.ke) or write to: ABC, PO Box 27715, Nairobi, Kenya.

### **Index for Inclusion: Developing learning, participation and play in early years and childcare T.Booth, M.Ainscow, D.Kingston (2004)**

A detailed set of materials to help support early years and childcare settings to increase the participation of all children and young people in learning and play.

Available from:  
CSIE  
New Redland, Frenchay Campus  
Coldharbour Lane  
Bristol BS16 1QU, UK  
Fax: +44 (0)117 328 4005  
[www.csie.org.uk](http://www.csie.org.uk)  
Price: £26.00

### **Learning from Difference CD-ROM EENET (2004)**

A set of guidelines for practitioners wishing to use an action research approach for improving inclusion in education. The interactive CD-ROM includes further reading, photos, drawings, video clips. A printed version of the guidelines will be available at the end of 2005.

Available from EENET

### **Mainstreaming Disability in Practice: The case of inclusive education Disability Knowledge and Research (2005)**

The discussions at this third 'roundtable' meeting held in Cambodia aimed to increase participants' understanding of

inclusive education and its role in mainstreaming disability. The three days included a question and answer session with children from a local inclusive school as well as visits to schools for children with disabilities and mainstream schools. It was an opportunity for parents, teachers, government workers, disabled people's organisations and donors to swap stories and see how they can work together.

Report and roundtable papers available online:

[www.disabilitykar.net/events/cambodiaroundtable.html](http://www.disabilitykar.net/events/cambodiaroundtable.html)

Contact the Disability KaR Programme:

Bernard Trude  
Healthlink Worldwide  
56-64 Leonard Street  
London EC2A 4JX, UK  
[trude.b@healthlink.org.uk](mailto:trude.b@healthlink.org.uk)

### **Researching our Experience EENET (2003)**

A collection of accounts by primary school teachers in Zambia about their struggles and successes in making their schools more inclusive. Due to the popularity of this document it has been reprinted in 2005.

Available from EENET

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Please tell us about any publications you have produced or that you would recommend to other EENET readers. If you have trouble obtaining any items listed in 'Useful Publications', please contact EENET.

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