Writers’ Workshop:
Manual on Guidelines for Action to Include Children with Disabilities in Schools Systems and the EFA Monitoring Process

Terms of Reference

I. Background

Education is a basic human right for all children, including children with disabilities. This right is mandated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the World Declaration on Education for All, the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals. The Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by all countries in the Asian-Pacific region.

In spite of continuing progress towards the achievement of EFA goals for non-disabled children, the education of children and youth with disabilities remains a serious challenge for Governments in the Asia-Pacific region. Evidence from the review of national progress in the implementation of the Agenda for Action for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons suggested that less than 10 per cent of children and youth with disabilities from developing countries have access to any form of education (ESCAP, 2002). Evidence presented by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (1999), Jonsson and Wiman (2001) and Jones (2001) suggest that the figure may be even lower. This situation compares with an enrolment rate of more than 70 per cent in primary education for non-disabled children and youth in the region.

Barriers to the full participation of children with disabilities in education are many. Children with disabilities have never been emphasized as a priority target group in EFA processes, in contrast to girls and children with HIV/AIDS. Few countries have included them in national EFA plans, budgets and implementation processes. To do so, countries must develop EFA monitoring and assessment procedures, mechanisms and indicators to require and ensure that children with disabilities are reflected in EFA outcome data. National data collection on persons with disabilities is limited, and even more so for children with disabilities. They are seldom specifically represented in national statistics on educational attendance and attainment. This lack of information, combined with discriminatory attitudes towards persons with disabilities at all levels of society, contributes to the continued neglect of their rights to education and explains in part the minimal rate of progress that has been made towards their enrolment in schools and their participation in the education process.
Some countries in the region have taken steps to include children with disabilities in their education policy, planning and implementation process. Documentation and analysis of the process, problems, solutions and outcomes used in these case studies would provide valuable information on the lessons learned and the steps required to achieve the goal of including children with disabilities in the EFA process. A comprehensive set of guidelines is necessary.

Such a document would provide a base of information which could be used in advocacy awareness-raising and capacity building for educational policy makers and administrators.

II. Objectives

The overall purpose of the workshop is to develop guidelines for action to include children with disabilities in the education system. National participants will develop collaboratively a set of comprehensive guidelines around the following themes:

- Policy, legislation, budget and financing
- Implementation strategies, administrative procedures, education providers
- Education system structures
- Monitoring and evaluation, statistics and definitions
- Teacher training
- The role of disabled peoples organisations

III. Organisers

Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics Unit (AIMS), UNESCO Bangkok

IV. Participants

The participants of the workshop will include:

- National officials from relevant ministries and departments
- National statistical officers
- Teachers
- School administrators
- Parents and community leaders
- Representatives of Disabled Peoples Organisations
- International resource persons
V. Preparatory Work by Participants

To participants: In this workshop, various categories of participants have been invited to propose guidelines useful for the respective stakeholders to promote the education of children with disabilities. As you have real-life experiences and lessons in this subject area, you have been specially selected and invited to propose such guidelines. We would appreciate your contribution to the workshop in the following ways:

a. Critically review the draft case study report(s) on your country and, additionally, other countries

b. Be prepared to present (orally and/or in writing)
   i. Your critique, comments and suggestions to improve the draft reports
   ii. List the most important subject areas and types of advice and action that should be included in a manual on “Guidelines For Action to Include Children with Disabilities in Schools Systems and the EFA Monitoring Process”
   iii. List good and/or bad practices with regard to the way learning needs of the children with disabilities are commonly treated in the following areas:

   1. Government education policy, laws, budget and financing
   2. Admission rules, regulations, forms, procedures, financial assistance, etc. as really practiced in primary and secondary schools in your neighborhood/ district
   3. Facilities, equipment, services, teaching-learning aids, in government financed pre-school, primary and secondary schools
   4. Methods of teaching and learning, organization and management of mixed classes, teacher training on special needs education, etc.
   5. Availability of information, definitions, statistics, reports on monitoring and evaluation of provision of education to the children with disabilities
   6. The role of disabled people’s organisations

iv. List the most critical changes needed to make a significant impact and, to bring about such changes, list who should do what to improve access to and quality of education for the children with disabilities, illustrate with examples. (eg., governments, lawmakers, schools, teachers, parents, associations, etc.)

v. What can a group like yours do, should do or have done to improve the situation? – illustrate with success or failure stories.
c. Be prepared to take active part as a writer, a speaker, a discussion leader, an editor, a rapporteur, etc.

d. Please let us know any requirements, such as services, facilities and equipments that you may need for your active participation.

e. Please send us your brief CV (a few paragraph(s), at most half a page) and a photograph to be included in the information on participants in our programme booklet.

**Time and Venue**

*Time:* 6-10 June 2005

*Venue:* Windsor Suites Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

**VI. Tentative Workshop Programme**

**Proposed topics:**

- Policy, legislation, budget and financing
- Implementation strategies, administrative procedures, education providers
- Education system structures
- Monitoring and evaluation, statistics and definitions
- Teacher training
- The role of disabled peoples organisations

**Modalities:**

- Plenary discussions/small group presentations
- Group work
- Field visits
For further information, please contact:

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Further details will follow upon your confirmation. I look forward to your presence and contributions.

Yours sincerely,

Sheldon Shaeffer
Director
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Enclosures