

Annex: Reports on East Asia

China

According to the 2017 Regulations on the Education of Persons with Disabilities, the Ministry of Education is responsible for the education of students with disabilities at the national level and local authorities at the local level (State Department, 2017). Inclusive education is defined as integration of students with disabilities into mainstream education systems to the greatest extent possible (State Department, 2017), and flexibility in applying the curriculum and using teaching materials to teach students with disabilities in mainstream schools. The education of deaf, blind, and mute students and ‘handicapped citizens’ is ensured by Article 45 of the Constitution (Government of China, 2004).

Under the 2006 Compulsory Education Law, students with disabilities receive education in several ways (Ministry of Education, 2009):

1. As per Article 9, in special classes and/or special schools created for students with visual, hearing, or language impairment, and/or an intellectual disability
2. In different classes within mainstream schools
3. Within mainstream classes
4. Through home-schooling or distance education, particularly for students with severe or multiple disabilities

Some provinces are working well to try and increase the number of students with disabilities in mainstream schools and to shift students from home schooling to local schools with specialised supports. In Guangxi Autonomous Region, the local government plan advocates for students with disabilities to shift to regular schools and for students with severe or multiple impairments to enter school and aims to strengthen the capacity of existing special schools (UNESCO, 2021).

The 2014–2016 National Special Education Promotion Plan refers to inclusive education as equitable and high-quality education for all children with disabilities. Students with disabilities enjoy high levels of inclusive education, according to Ministry of Education data. In 2001, 70% of students with disabilities were learning in inclusive settings (UNESCO, 2021). The 2017 Regulations on the Education of Persons with Disabilities have increased school capacities to teach students with disabilities through the construction of special education resource classrooms (State Department, 2017), including mainstream kindergarten and primary schools (UNICEF, no date a). In schools with special education resource classrooms, how much time students with disabilities spend in mainstream classes versus the special classrooms is unclear.

The 2017–2020 National Special Education Promotion Plan II aims to increase special education by increasing enrolment of students with disabilities and to increase financial and administrative support and improve cooperation between sectors to create a medical education approach.

China has shown considerable support for students with disabilities. It promotes alternative and augmentative methods of communication such as Braille and sign language (OHCHR, 2010). Teaching materials in Braille and large print are provided free, and the state subsidises Braille publications.

China continues to partner with organisations to promote inclusive education. UNICEF is assisting with disability and equality training for organisations of persons with disabilities, social workers, and community workers in central and western China. A disabled people's federation is assessing the country's education plan (People's Republic of China, 2015).

In partnership with UNICEF, China is expanding and refining the child-friendly school model, a multidimensional and holistic intervention. It promotes (i) inclusivity and equality; (ii) effective learning and teaching; (iii) a protective, safe, and healthy environment; and (iv) participation and harmonisation. The initiative is part of a 5-year plan in several cities (UNICEF China, 2017). If successful, the pilot model can be scaled up nationally.

Teacher training for students with disabilities appears to be improving in China. All teachers may take courses on special education. Special education teachers can receive a subsidy. They take a major in special education during their studies or must pass an exam that is issued by a local education authority. Teachers who are involved in inclusive education programmes have the option of attending professional development training on special education. The Guangxi special education teacher training centre provides teacher training for special education schools. It also provides support for special education policies (UNESCO, 2021).

China has identification systems for students with disabilities, but not all age brackets are covered. Reliable and easy-to-use screening tools for students aged 6 and above are lacking and so are data on primary school-level students (UNICEF, no date a). At birth, stigma and a lengthy registration process requiring complex diagnosis and certification may hinder families from registering their child with a disability.

Recommendations

1. To inform national decision-making, know how many students have disabilities, improve systems of data collection at birth, preschool, and primary education levels.
2. Whilst all teachers have access to special education courses, all teachers must receive training to make the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment attainable for all learners in the classroom.

Mongolia

Mongolia does not have a reported definition of inclusive education or of special education needs, although both terms are used in their official education documents. Students with disabilities attend therapeutic pedagogic kindergartens and special schools, where exclusion and segregation, however, have been reported. Institutions are limited. The capital city, Ulaanbaatar, has six special schools: four for children with mental disabilities, one for children with visual impairments, and one for children with hearing impairments. Rural students with disabilities can attend the schools for blind and deaf students but the distance to school discourages attendance.

Mongolia does, however, have strong equity legislation against discrimination against persons with disabilities. It ensures equitable access to education and health and social protection (Government of Mongolia and JICA, 2017) and is the basis for policies to support access to education for students with disabilities. In 2004, the Child-Friendly School Policy was adopted to provide special support and assistance, including learning modules on equal opportunity and the importance of a learning-friendly environment in local schools and on national training (UNESCO, 2021). However, Mongolia lacks broader legislation that ensures students with disabilities receive education in inclusive settings (UNICEF, 2020).

Mongolia is reviewing and revising the assessment systems so that they include all learners (UNICEF, 2020). In 2018, the governments of Mongolia and Japan and Save the Children began a project to promote inclusive education, focusing on students often left behind. The project aims to bring inclusive education systems into mainstream schools, improve coordination mechanisms, and reach students who are out of school (UNESCO, 2021). To make curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment accessible and more inclusive, policy reform is necessary. Some progress has been made, such as improving programmes for inclusive kindergarten and helping students with disabilities better transition to primary school.

Mongolia has mixed reports on teacher training. The 2006–2015 education sector plan recognises the importance of training teachers to work with students with developmental disabilities. The main pre-service teacher training universities offer courses on inclusive education, but the training reportedly lacks quantity and quality (UNESCO, 2021). Most training programmes do not include training on sign language or sign language interpreters. Basic sign language is taught only in a few provinces, even though Mongolian sign language is recognised as the mother tongue of persons with hearing impairments and Braille is the standard writing system for those with visual impairments under the Law of Mongolia on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities (OHCHR, 2018; UNICEF, 2018).

A partnership between UNICEF Mongolia and the Mongolian Association of Sign Language Interpreters has helped create an audio-visual dictionary, which is integrated into teacher training on inclusive education created by UNICEF Mongolia and Mongolian State University of Education (UNICEF Mongolia, 2018). Government-led training on inclusive education remains lacking. Braille resources are limited and produced only by the Mongolian National Federation of the Blind with the help of donations (UNESCO, 2021). Through partnership with UNICEF, the Asian Development Bank, and Save the Children UK, teachers have received training on special needs and inclusive education, specifically for learners with disabilities (UNESCO, 2021).

After the revision of the pre-service curriculum, a foundation was laid for a fully inclusive education system aligned with the UNCRPD (UNICEF, 2018). Before the revision, curriculums were separate according to type of disability.

Data tracking of students with disabilities depends on their grade. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sports is responsible for collecting data on students with disabilities in preschool and secondary school. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is responsible for

data on persons with disabilities receiving education services by age cohort. Data on students with disabilities are limited and no systematic and coordinated body centralises data.

Recommendations

1. Create a standard definition of disability, inclusive education, and special education needs. Consistent language is needed for reliable and systematic data collection to create equity-based plans and programmes and to shape policy.
2. Pilot easy-to-use screening tools that use a functional or social approach to disability to understand barriers to learning in the classroom. Address the barriers by continuing to include courses on inclusive education in pre-service teaching programmes locally and nationally.

Appendix A

Targets and Core Indicators of Goal 5 of the Incheon Strategy

Target 5.A

Enhance measures for early detection of and intervention for children with disabilities from birth to preschool age

Target 5.B

Halve the gap between children with disabilities and children without disabilities in enrolment rates for primary and secondary education

Core indicators

5.1 Number of children with disabilities receiving early childhood intervention

5.2 Primary education enrolment rate of children with disabilities

5.3 Secondary education enrolment rate of children with disabilities

Supplementary Indicators

5.4 Proportion of pre- and antenatal care facilities that provide information and services regarding early detection of disability in children and protection of the rights of children with disabilities

5.5 Proportion of children who are deaf that receive instruction in sign language

5.6 Proportion of students with visual impairments that have educational materials in formats that are readily accessible

5.7 Proportion of students with intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, deaf, blindness, autism and other disabilities who have assistive devices, adapted curriculums, and appropriate learning materials

Source: United Nations (1995), *Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, Adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women*. (Accessed 3 March 2022)