



Inclusive Education Task Group response to the Framework for Action Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all

We appeal to ministers of education, technical advisors and civil society to raise these comments and recommendations during the discussions at the World Education Forum in Incheon, Korea, 19 – 22 May.

The [International Disability and Development Consortium \(IDDC\)](#) is pleased that the Draft Declaration and Framework for Action (EFA) 2030 includes 18 references to disability. The IDDC supports the assertion of inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning as part of the no-one left behind agenda and central to sustainable development. This response includes specific comments and recommendations aimed at ensuring that EDUCATION 2030 reflects the increased and special efforts required to reach out to the most marginalised, persons with disabilities. We feel if these recommendations are not considered it will once again be ‘business as usual’. The IDDC whole-heartedly support the WEF slogan – ‘Transform lives through education’ – as indeed a great opportunity to do so is upon us.

Comments and recommendations

1. IDDC believes that the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) should be noted in the legal agreements listed as informing the principles of the Framework (under ‘Fundamental principles’ on p.5). The UNCRPD, ratified by 154 countries, ensures the right to inclusive education for persons with disabilities at all levels of the education system and makes recommendations for achieving this. Since this is the only treaty reaffirming the right to inclusive education (Article 24) for any marginalised group and is landmark treaty in ensuring the right of persons with disabilities, we see it is as important to mention in the Framework. In addition, children with disabilities are arguably the biggest group of girls and boys out of school.
2. IDDC stands behind DFID’s suggestion to include a reference to disability in para 8 as follows: “We commit to making the necessary changes in education content, approaches, structures and funding to ensure no child is left behind, focusing our efforts on the most marginalised groups, such as those with disabilities.”
3. IDDC reasserts that the places where x% appears in present targets the “x” is replaced by “all”. If ALL is not explicitly noted, there is a danger that marginalised groups will again be left behind.
4. IDDC asserts that progress on education access and achievement for persons with disabilities will be hindered if disaggregating data by disability remains optional. Indicators should reflect political commitment, consistent with human rights obligations and should not just be technical. Under ‘Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation for Evidence-based Policies’ (p.19) we insist data must to be disaggregated by age, disability, socio-economic situation, gender and other factors of disadvantage. We are pleased by indicator 33 under ‘Means of implementation’ (‘Percentage of schools with adapted infrastructure and materials for people with disabilities’).
5. If the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) becomes the mechanism for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of SGD 4, and UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) is to continue as the global depository for education data, then both institutions need improved capacity to advise on collecting data on persons with disabilities. Data on children with disabilities in and out of school, and their educational achievement, is lacking or absent in EFA Global Monitoring Reports, UIS and State reports, making it impossible to gauge progress on equity and inclusion. The **UIS and States can draw on the Washington Group and UNICEF’s current piloting of Disability Inclusive Education Management and Information Systems**. Disability Inclusive EMIS will help obtain disability disaggregated data (by type of disability and other disadvantage factors) on standard education outcome measures such as drop-out, transition, completion rate, retention, etc.
6. IDDC welcomes that ‘Publicly-funded primary and secondary education of at least 12 years should be provided to all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, income level, language or geographical location’ (4.1), as secondary education for learners with disabilities has largely been neglected in low and middle income countries. To cement this commitment, the Strategy options need to include improving education provision for children with disabilities by making reasonable accommodations through accessible and disability responsive

teaching and learning methods, content and resources, and by improving pre-service and in-service teacher competencies on inclusive education practices and disability specific skills e.g. sign-language.

7. IDDC is extremely encouraged by the explicit reference to children with disabilities under Target 4.2 on Early Childhood Care and Education. This is a critical entry point for improving learning outcomes and social inclusion of persons with disabilities, and early detection and intervention can diminish the disabling effects of any impairment or chronic disease. We suggested the addition of a Strategy Option on the delivery of early identification (screening and assessment) and intervention programmes for vulnerable children, particularly those with disabilities.
8. IDDC welcomes the financing target but believes that in order to reach the excluded and meet the broad aims of education, the emphasis should be on the upper end of the range of 4-6 GDP and 15-20% of national budgets. In too many countries, education for children with disabilities remains largely NGO-funded, or short 1-3 year international aid projects that do not build the education workforce or consistently provide assistive technologies, or which only reach small numbers. For this reason, all education programmes funded by Overseas Development Aid (ODA) need to effectively include persons with disabilities across disability types, not just the easy to reach. Furthermore, the importance of inter-ministerial planning (health, education, social welfare, livelihood and finance) for education needs to be more explicit in the document. This would promote the development of a funding system that follows the child, which would motivate schools to enrol vulnerable children and encourage poor families to send their children to school.
9. IDDC welcome the statement on harnessing innovation and information and communication technologies (ICTs) to strengthen education systems, knowledge dissemination, information access, quality and effective learning, and more efficient service provision. Universally accessible ICTs can facilitate cost-effective access to the curriculum and up-to-date information for learners with print disabilities (visually impaired, learning difficulties). Public-private partnership in this field could be particularly useful (e.g. publishing companies making textbooks available in electronic accessible formats and improving access features on tablets used in schools). However, IDDC wishes to express caution in respect of for profit-organisations in educational service delivery.
10. The incidence of disability is higher emergency, disaster, conflict and fragile states, and persons with disabilities often do not have access to information, services and facilities. A stronger reference to this is required in the framework.
11. Each set of Strategy Options should include references to disability, as follows:
 - Target 4.3 and 4.4 e.g. “Consequently, it is imperative to increase and diversify learning opportunities and to reduce barriers to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and tertiary education, including university, and to provide lifelong learning opportunities for all youth and adults, **particularly those most marginalised with disabilities.**”
 - Target 4.5 has disability in the wording of the target and focuses on disparities and inequity, but has no strategy option explicitly mentioning disability. A point on improving disability data is needed.
 - Target 4.6 should include the phrase, ‘including persons with disabilities’, as this group is often neglected in literacy and numeracy programmes.
Target 4a needs to read “ensure schools are safe, **accessible** and free from violence”.
 - Target 4c (Means of Implementation on qualified teachers (p.12), needs to be improved with addition text in italics – “Provide all teachers with quality pre-service education and continuous professional development and support *to meet diverse learning needs of learners, particularly those learners with disabilities.*”
12. IDDC welcomes recognition of civil society’s essential role in the Framework in terms of social mobilisation and raising public awareness; developing innovative and complementary approaches; and documenting and sharing evidence. Often organisations working on inclusive education for persons with disabilities are excluded from forums where education issues are discussed, planned and reviewed. IDDC Inclusive Education Task Group would therefore like to be represented in the EDUCATION 2030 Steering Committee to contribute our extensive experience in implementing inclusive education for persons with disabilities in the poorest countries.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further clarification.

Yours in positive partnership towards inclusive, equitable quality education

The IDDC INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TASK GROUP (14 May 2015)