

Implementing and monitoring inclusive education in Vietnam

Focus : Achieving Quality in Education: Strategies for Change

Topic : Low Vision

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusion, nowadays, has become the main goal in developing nations in Asia to include 90% of children with disabilities who are not having access to any education. In Vietnam, not even 8% of children with visual impairment receive any type of education.

Total number of disabled children going to school is about 87,000 ~ 7.25% (87.000/1.200.000) as per the following details:

- Nursery (from 0-3 years old) 10.72%
- Kindergarten (from 4-5 years old): 24.5%
- Pre-primary school (5 years old): 48.82%
- Primary school (6-11 years old): 93.53%
- Secondary school: 85.98%

However, children with visual impairment are about 21.600, but only 1.800 of them go to school, because there are only 40 educational centres for visually impaired children. As early intervention programmes have been started only for few individuals on pilot basis, most of the visually impaired children are going to primary schools straight away. There are over 100 visually impaired children going to high schools, and over 30 are going to Colleges and Universities. Total is 1.800/216000, which is equivalent to 8.33%.

The national plan developed in Vietnam in 2005 indicates that inclusive education should be provided to maximize the educational opportunities for children with visual impairment by 2015. Most of these children are expected to be in the educational programmes in the near future and this calls for development of proper systems to implement the concept of inclusive education and the mechanism of monitoring to ensure its effective implementation.

Some definitions of inclusion are as follows:

According to Mani (2000), "Inclusive Education means creating effective classrooms where the educational needs of all children are addressed irrespective of ability or disability."

As per the Salamanca statement, adopted at the 1994 World Conference on Special Needs Education, "Inclusive Education is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving true education for all",

"Inclusive Education is concerned with overcoming barriers to participation that may be experienced by any pupil ... It is a never ending process ... dependent on continuous pedagogical and organizational development within the mainstream". (Ainscow, 1999)

As per the educational strategy in Vietnam from 2005 to 2010, 50% disabled children could go to school and by the year 2010 it should be 70%, inclusion in all schools becomes a vital strategy to reach out. Therefore, Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam should consider the following implications to satisfy with the conditions in Vietnam suitably that supporting the implementation inclusive education.

1. Training experts and teachers of Pedagogical Colleges and Universities are required;
2. Awareness creation on the concept and implementation of inclusive education is of paramount importance;
3. Training key teachers to support inclusive education and Early Intervention, imparting knowledge and skills to teachers of visually impaired children and sensitising family members on the need of inclusive education for their children are essential components to initiate the programme;
4. Compiling a monograph on inclusion for policy makers, textbook for students and guidebook on management of visually impaired children for teachers are needed.

As a result, to meet other challenges such as: Braille textbook, large print textbook of low vision students, teaching materials, equipment and devices, Vietnam needs the following facilitating factors.

1. Uniform Braille code system;
2. Infrastructural and high-tech facilitating to prepare textbooks that can be disseminated throughout the country;
3. Systems to procure and distribute assistive devices to visually impaired children;
4. Organizing national seminars to teachers to share expertise on the method of teaching visually impaired.

For promoting implementation and monitoring of inclusive education in Vietnam, following strategies are suggested for consideration.

STRATEGIES FOR VIETNAM

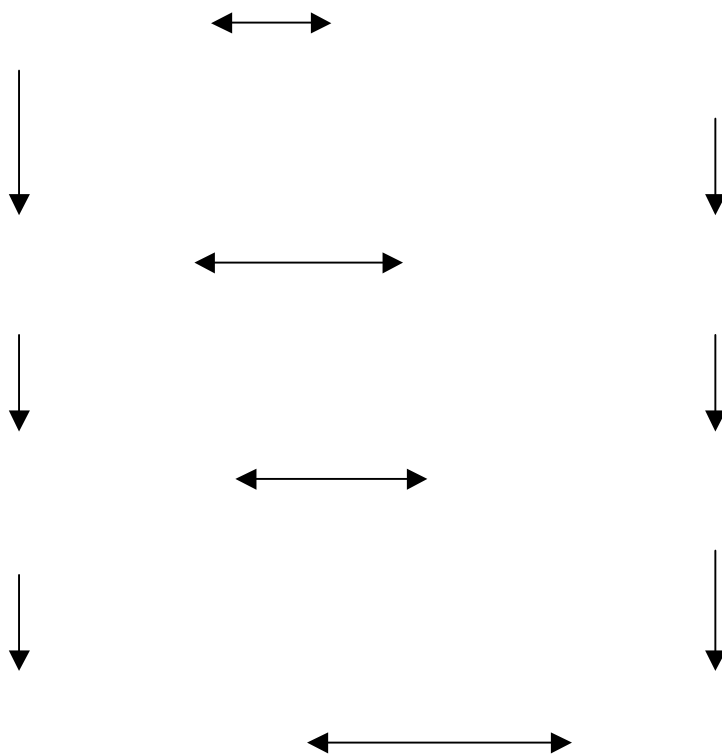
1. Suggested organogram of Inclusive education implementation in Vietnam

A comparison of model of management system of human resource development between India and Vietnam for implementing and monitoring inclusive education is considered. According to that, India is so enormous with Government system is governing to 27 states; while the Social

Republic of Vietnam is a unified country. Therefore, the implementation is directly governed through a highly centralized system. Similarly the Ministry of Education and Training is also working as a surveying compass from high level to lower level directly. For this reason, the suggested organogram for implementing inclusive education in Vietnam may be as follows:

Picture 1.1

Organogram for implementing inclusive education in Vietnam



2. Establishing Cluster Resource Centres

With the support of Government, cluster level Resource Centres may be established. The purpose of the Cluster Resource Center is to provide necessary training, assessments, and educational guidance to the disabled children, parents of the disabled and regular teachers. Though all children with disability covered under the programme will not utilize the cluster resource center, the children who are in need of continuous training such as children requiring pre-school skills, children with severe disabilities, multiple disabilities, and those who are in need of play therapy, physiotherapy may be attending this centre. The activities of the children with disabilities in the cluster Resource Centers are to be carried out under the supervision of special educator.

Table 2.1

List of Teaching Materials and Equipments suggested for the Cluster Resource Center are as follows:

Sl. No	Type of Disability	Materials Required
1.	Visually Impairment	Braille slate & stylus (2 set) Braille machine - One Abacus - 2 Taylor Frame - 1 Mobility Cane - 1 Tape Recorder/ Cassette Low vision aids Tactile diagrams (Material) Geometric kit - 2 E-Chart/ Snellen chart,

		<p>Low vision chart</p> <p>Rattle Ball</p> <p>Skipping Ropes</p> <p>Magnetic Chess Board</p>
2	Hearing Impaired	<p>Auditory Kit (Drum, Whistle, Jalra, Calling Bell, Horn and Music Instruments)</p> <p>Maps & Globe</p> <p>Mirror</p> <p>Auto Scope</p> <p>Speech Box -</p>
3	Mentally Retarded	<p>Material for Motor coordination - (both fine motor / gross motor skills)</p> <p>Material for teaching Concepts</p> <p>Shapes, Size, Texture, Colour, Number, Language concepts</p> <p>Charts on fruits, animals, vegetables, vehicles, alphabets</p> <p>charts on stories</p> <p>Peg boards, Puzzle games</p>
4	Physiotherapy Equipments	<p>ADL Training Board, Dummy Eler</p> <p>Pegs Board - Various Shapes</p> <p>Finger Dexterity Peg Board</p> <p>Posting Box</p> <p>Tower Set</p> <p>Invalid Walker With Crutches - Children</p> <p>Cerebral Palsy Walker - Junior</p> <p>Crawler - Adjustable</p> <p>Supinator & Pronator Unit</p> <p>Finger Grip Exerciser With Base</p>

		Static Cycle - Children Pedo Cycle Wobble Board
5	Special Educator Kit Bags (Carry Bag 2)	
6	VCD Player (Optional) CD (Optional) Television & Cassette (Optional) Computer (Optional) Toys and Games	
TOTAL		

3. Suggested training for regular classroom teachers

In order to make the inclusion successful in general schools, regular teachers have to be trained with skills to deal with various learning styles of children with disabilities. In-service training for a duration of 5 working days may be organized to orient the general teachers with the following content areas. While the orientation programme may provide a bird's eye view of the following areas, retraining may focus on specific skill areas covered in this content.

Table 3.1

Content for in-service courses

Content for in-service courses	
UNIT 1	
Definitions and learning behaviors of children with disabilities	
1.1	Concept of impairment, handicap, activity limitation and disability.
1.2	Definitions of disabilities as per the Government policies
1.3	Incidence and prevalence of disability categories
1.4	Learning characteristics of children with disabilities

UNIT 2

Assessment, educational planning and psychological Implications of disabilities

- 2.1 Stages of development with reference to children with disabilities.
- 2.2 Assessment for intervention and educational planning
- 2.3 Impact of various disabilities on personality - an overview
- 2.4 Theories of learning with reference to special-needs children and their application in special education - an overview.
- 2.5 Educational Options for children with disabilities

UNIT 3

Plus curricular activities and teaching strategies

- 3.1 Special skills necessary as a result of various disability conditions
- 3.2 Learning stage - sensory motor, concrete operation and abstract thinking (logical operations)
- 3.3 Compensatory instruction for concept development and learning.
- 3.4 Methods of teaching various academic subjects to children with disabilities - an overview
- 3.5 Role of functionaries - head masters/principals, special teachers, class room teachers, parents and peers in the education of children with disabilities

UNIT 4

Assistive Devices and adaptation of teaching-learning materials

- 4.1 Types of assistive devices
- 4.2 Use of technology in educating children with disabilities
- 4.3 General principles of material preparation: duplication, modification, substitution and omission.
- 4.4 Use of adapted instructional material for teaching and learning subjects like mathematics, science, social science, etc.
- 4.5** Creative arts and adapted physical education activities

UNIT 5

Role of family, peer-group and community and Achievement evaluation

- 5.1 Awareness of development programmes in the community
- 5.2 Attitudes of parents, teachers, siblings, peer group and attitude modification
- 5.3 Role of multi-purpose rehabilitation workers, para-professionals, and linkages between education and rehabilitation professionals
- 5.4 Techniques of guidance and counselling with reference to various disabilities
- 5.5 General strategies to evaluate the curricular and co-curricular activities

4. Special teacher expectations at the cluster level

- 4.1. At the cluster level, the special teachers should represent a mix of specialization areas. For example, it is desirable to have one specialist in each area of disability.
- 4.2. Once the children with disabilities are enrolled, the special teacher of the cluster should prepare profiles of the students categorizing them as those who need services frequently, those who need occasional assistance, those who can manage with the regular teacher assistance in academic areas, and those who require assistance in assistive devices only.
- 4.3. The timetable of the special teacher should be prepared on the basis of the assistance required by these children.
- 4.4. In order to spend more time with disabled children, the special teachers may be advised to submit weekly timetable with clear indication of his/her place/school of availability during the working days.
- 4.5. The special teachers, when visiting the regular school should sign the specially maintained attendance register and get the counter signature of the head every week. The teachers should also get the signatures of the heads of schools visited by them in their daily log book.

4.6. In addition to teaching children with disabilities in the cluster, the special teachers are also required to acquire training and assessment skills as they are expected to train teachers on handling children with disabilities, and also assist the authorities in the assessment of these children.

5. Records to be maintained in educational programmes for disabled children suggested guidelines to teachers

Schools should maintain a few records to monitor the progress of children with disabilities. Maintaining records should not be treated as paper work and it should be linked with the process to monitor to assess the child with disability for planning proper intervention services. The following records need to be maintained for each child and it is better to keep them in the schools under the custody of the heads instead of keeping them in the Cluster Resource Centre. The list of records to be maintained for each disabled child and the corresponding uses of the records are described as follows:

Medical assessment record describing the extent of disability of the child, intervention strategies necessary, etc.,

- 5.1. School attendance record is necessary to see the rate of retention of the child in the school.
- 5.2. Monthly progress reports on academic and scholastic activities may be necessary.
- 5.3. Performance Record on Plus Curricular Activities and use of assistive devices may be maintained by the special teacher.
- 5.4. Individualized educational plan in the case of children with mental retardation.
- 5.5. Record to note down the activities like daily living skills in the case of severely disabled children

The teacher of the disabled child should consider it a part of his work. For a true teacher, educating children with disabilities is 'more than a job'. A cumulative record of all students may be maintained in the block.

6. Enrichment training for special teachers

Special teachers should undergo enrichment training from time to time. As inclusive education deals with all disability categories, it is vital to orient the special educators too to all categories. The retraining of these teachers may focus the following areas from time to time. Necessary content areas may be included in the retraining depending on the duration available for training.

Table 6.1

Content for enrichment training

SI. No.	Topic	No. of sessions (1.5 Hours each)
1	Historical Development of Services for Persons with Disabilities	1
2	Policies on education	1
3	Policies related to disability	1
4	Policies related to visual impairment	1
5	Schemes of Assistance for Manpower Development Programmes	1
6	Inclusive Education - Models	1
7	Community based rehabilitation services	1
8	Case Histories of important persons with disabilities	1
9	Vocational Rehabilitation	1
10	Technology in the Education of Persons with Disabilities	1
11	Family involvement in services for Persons with Disabilities	1
12	Need and nature of Inter-sectoral collaboration	1
13	Barrier Free Environment	1
14	Concessions for Persons with Disabilities	1
15	Tools for assessment of children with disabilities	1
16	Aids and Appliances in the services for persons with disabilities	1
17	Research in Disability Areas	1

18	Definitions and classifications of visual impairment	1
19	Identification and assessment of visual impairment	1
20	Anatomy and Physiology of the Eye.	1
21	Causes of visual impairment	1
22	Educational and Psychological Implications	1
23	Educational Service Delivery Systems for visually impaired persons	1
24	Definitions and Classifications of hearing impairment	1
25	Etiology of hearing impairment	1
26	Identification and assessment of children with hearing impairment	1
27	Learning styles of hearing impaired children	1
28	Educational services for hearing impaired students	1
29	Definitions and Classifications of mental retardation	1
30	Identification and assessment of mental retardation	1
31	Nature of Cognitive Development	1
32	Psycho-social development of children with mental retardation	1
33	Educational services for mentally retarded students	1
34	Nature of children with cerebral palsy	1
35	Nature of children with autism	1
36	Definitions and categories of learning disabled	1
37	Identification of Learning Disabilities Children	1
38	Educational Service Delivery Systems for Learning Disabilities Children	1
39	Current Practices in learning disability	1
40	Educational and Psychological Implications for learning disabled children	1
41	Definitions and classifications for multiple disabilities	1
42	Skills development of multiple disabled children	1
43	Educational and Psychological Implications of multiple disabilities	1

44	Current Practices and approaches in multiple disabilities	1
	Total	44

CONCLUSION

There is no programme that is suitable for all children at all times, so inclusion has emerged not out of option but it is a result of the emerging need in special education. This paper attempted at developing a model inclusive education in Vietnam for teachers and policy makers to follow, in order to realize the goals of education for all. The author believes that the strategies suggested, when put into action, may open better educational opportunities for disabled children in general and children with visual impairment in particular.