

# Analysis of Inclusive Education in Myanmar

*Final Report*

July 2015



မြန်မာ့ပညာရေးမြှင့်တင်မှု  
လက်တွဲဆောင်ရွက်ရေးအဖွဲ့



Myanmar Education Consortium



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and Zin Min Htet



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Aung Pyae Phyoe and his mother, Patheingyi Township  
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*“Take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.”*

*United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, article 7*

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We hope that the findings and recommendations of this report provide MEC with ideas, evidence, and guidance on how to move ahead with inclusive education in Myanmar. We wish all those involved every success in the pursuit of an inclusive society where all children, youth and adults are provided with opportunities to prosper and succeed, and be able to live their lives with greater independence in communities who embrace and value diversity of abilities and backgrounds. All web links in the report were functioning as of February 2016.

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**Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC)** works with partners to improve education for marginalised children in Myanmar - those who are not fully served by the government system - whether due to access, language, poverty or exclusion, for instance due to disability. MEC supports complementary basic education services - community-based, faith-based and ethnic education systems - through funding to partners to deliver services and organisational support to build effective organisations. The program promotes inclusive, evidence-based policy dialogue through networking and knowledge sharing. MEC is managed by Save the Children and supported by the

Governments of Australia, UK and Denmark with a program budget of AUD 29m for the current period of 2013 – 2016.

MEC is developing a revised strategy for the period to the end of 2018. This study was commissioned to provide an evidence base and recommendations on potential strategic programming priorities to MEC. The research was done in June and July 2015 and therefore the report is out of date in some respects. The views presented in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily represent those of the MEC.

# Abbreviations

<b>AAR</b>	Association for Aids Relief	<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank	<b>KMSS</b>	Karuna Myanmar Social Services
<b>ADP</b>	Area Development Programme	<b>MCFB</b>	Myanmar Christian Fellowship of the Blind
<b>CBM</b>	Christoffel Blind Mission	<b>MCPD</b>	Myanmar Council of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CBR</b>	Community Based Rehabilitation	<b>MEC</b>	Myanmar Education Consortium
<b>CESR</b>	Comprehensive Education Sector Review	<b>MILI</b>	Myanmar Independent Living Initiative
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child	<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>CRS</b>	Catholic Relief Service	<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>DCA</b>	DanChurchAid	<b>MSWRR</b>	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	<b>MTR</b>	Mid-Term Review
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development	<b>NESP</b>	National Education Sector Plan
<b>DPO</b>	Disabled People’s Organisation	<b>NFPE</b>	Non-Formal Primary Education
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>DSW</b>	Department of Social Welfare	<b>NORAD</b>	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
<b>EU</b>	European Union	<b>SMTF</b>	Shwe Minn Thar Foundation
<b>ECCD</b>	Early Childhood Care and Development	<b>TLMM</b>	The Leprosy Mission in Myanmar
<b>ECDC</b>	Eden Centre for Disabled Children	<b>ToT</b>	Training of Trainers
<b>EiE</b>	Education in Emergencies	<b>UNCRPD</b>	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>FORMIN</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>GoM</b>	Government of Myanmar	<b>VSO</b>	Voluntary Service Overseas
<b>ICCO</b>	Inter-Church Cooperative for Development Cooperation	<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross	<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>IDDC</b>	International Disability and Development Consortium	<b>WHH</b>	Welt Hunger Hilf
<b>IDEA</b>	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance	<b>YECB</b>	Yangon Education Centre for the Blind
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan		
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organisation		





Child-led advocacy on inclusive education with KMSS Patheingyi and Patheingyi Regional Government, May 2015  
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## I. Executive summary

### Inclusive education for children with disabilities in Myanmar

The consultants' meetings and interviews in Yangon have demonstrated that there has been no large-scale inclusive education project yet in Myanmar. Small grassroots projects, mainly initiated by Eden Centre for Disabled Children (ECDC) have been implemented in Yangon and some remote areas.

Yangon Education Centre for the Blind (YECB) and the Mary Chapman School for the Deaf approach mainstream schools to include their students. This means very often that children with disabilities are accommodated in special classrooms apart from other students.

Inclusive education is still far from being the common form of education for children with

disabilities, although the Education Law, and Disability Law mention inclusive education as the approach to educate children with disabilities. The challenges are manifold:

- **Mainstream education is the domain of the Ministry of Education (MoE) while education for children with disabilities is under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR).** The MoE does not seem to be very approachable for civil society groups like Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), whereas the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) is approachable, more open to input and is seeking advice
- The DSW only has administrative structure at national and division / state level. It does not have offices on township or village



level. This makes the **socialisation and implementation of inclusive education** at school and community level a huge challenge. This leads to the situation where parents need to have ‘good personal relationships’ with the class teacher to be able to enrol their disabled child in a mainstream school

- **Teaching methodologies** in Myanmar are still teacher focused. Child-centred approaches are the topic in ongoing discussions related to education between the Government of Myanmar (GoM) and civil society. However no large advocacy has taken place
- The **number of students in one classroom** in Myanmar is large and can be up to 70 students in urban areas. Teachers struggle to effectively accommodate children in their class and are reluctant to include children with disabilities. This is also due to the fact that the vast majority of mainstream schoolteachers have not received any form of inclusion training
- The **assessment system** for students in mainstream schools is very competitive and pushes students out of the formal education system, as it demands written examinations at the end of every month. Every student has to attend a total of seven examinations of which he or she has to pass at least five
- Mainstream schools, teachers and staff seem to have very limited or no skills in **assessing students’ abilities and needs to participate** in school. Schools do not yet develop **Individual Education Plans (IEPs)** based on assessment of students, nor do they have access to referral systems that assist with assessments of learning needs
- **Assistive devices** are only available in special schools in Yangon and Mandalay.

However, a lot of work has been implemented by INGOs in cooperation with local partner

NGOs and DPOs on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and in the non-formal education sector. This work is a very strong foundation for the future of inclusive education in Myanmar and something Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC) should link up with.

Save the Children – and therefore also MEC – has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the MoE. This grants them access to primary schools and allows the development and implementation of inclusive education projects.

The Government of Myanmar (GoM) and the MoE are aware of the need for change within Myanmar’s education system. The Comprehensive Education Sector Reform (CESR) initiated by the MoE seems to be very promising and it currently looks like its results will form a strong basis for inclusive education in Myanmar. A meeting with MoE in Nay Pyi Taw has further strengthened this impression. **The Director General for Basic Education said that the MoE does not yet have the capacity to implement inclusive education but is looking for NGO and INGO partners.**

The current situation is therefore a golden opportunity for MEC to take on a coordinator role for inclusive education. MEC should work through large INGOs to start with a large roll out of:

1. **Advocacy initiatives** towards MoE and DSW on all levels
2. **Child friendly and inclusive teaching practice** including large classroom management, positive discipline, child-centred teaching (for ECCD, kindergarten, and primary school)
3. **Community involvement in schools**, drawing on community resources to make education relevant

## The twin-track-approach

**Track one** is about main-streaming good teaching practices and general inclusion.

**Track two** provides individualised support that in some cases is necessary to accommodate a child with a disability.

4. **Basic child assessment and reasonable accommodation practices**
5. **Basic curriculum adaptations** and assessment adaptations
6. **Basic physical accessibility accommodation** for students with disabilities and other special needs.

On the other hand, **MEC should contract organisations that specialise in working with people with disabilities.** Whenever a community struggles to include and accommodate a child, a specialised organisation can intervene and provide individual support to this community, school, and student. This approach reflects the internationally accepted twin-track-approach for inclusive education and puts it on a project management level.

In addition to working through civil society organisations, MEC should look into possibilities to link up with MoE to support the implementation of the CESR. Working through civil society and the GoM will generate synergy effects, increase effectiveness, and is

a guarantee of sustainability.

Disability and poverty are interlinked. According to the World Health Organisation, people with disabilities represent 15% of the world's population and more than 15% of the population in countries in the south<sup>1</sup>. A disability inclusive, long programme, coordinated and implemented by MEC, would increase the fulfilments of rights of people with disabilities, contribute to poverty reduction, and create positive impact on the education system for all children.

1. The information on disability in Myanmar's 2014 Census differs. It has four categories (seeing, hearing, walking and remembering/mental) and the degree of difficulty a respondent experienced for each type. A total of 2,311,250 people (4.6%) have at least one type of disability. This is presented in Table 10. The most common type of disability is seeing (2.5%), followed by walking (1.9%), remembering/mental (1.7%) and lastly hearing (1.3%). The disability prevalence is higher among females (4.8%) than males (4.4%). By State and Region, the highest prevalence is reported in Ayerawady (7.6%), Chin (7.4%) and Tanintharyi (7%), while the lowest is observed in Nay Pyi Taw, the administrative capital city." Department of Population Ministry of Immigration and Population (2015) The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census The Union Report Census Report Volume 2 (2015), Section 2.14

## 2. Introduction

MEC works with partners to improve education for marginalised children in Myanmar – those who are not fully served by the government system – whether due to access, language, poverty or exclusion, for instance due to disability.

MEC supports complementary basic education services – community-based, faith-based and ethnic education systems – through funding to partners to deliver services and organisational support to build effective organisations. The programme promotes inclusive, evidence-based policy dialogue through networking and knowledge sharing.

MEC is managed by Save the Children and supported by the governments of Australia, UK and Denmark with a program budget of AUD\$29m for the current period of 2013-2016.

An independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) of MEC was undertaken at the end of 2014 to review progress and to support the evolution of the (revised) programme strategy. In response to the findings of the MTR, MEC will develop a revised strategy document for the period to the end of 2018 for consideration by donors.

This consultancy aims to provide greater analysis of services supporting inclusive education and to support the development of an appropriate programme design for MEC.

MEC is also co-chair of a Sub-Working Group on Education and Disability, established under the umbrella of the Education Thematic Working Group. This consultancy will also provide a resource to support the group in coordination and sharing of resources.

**The objectives of this evaluation are:**

**i. To provide a situational analysis on inclusive education, including:**

- A review of the policy framework
- Disability inclusion in education services
- Mapping of organisations engaged with education and disability through their current programmes.

**ii. To provide a review of available resources on disability and education including:**

- Mapping of available resources currently used in Myanmar by organisations engaged with disability and education
- A review and assessment of resources
- A comparison of available resources and global best practice, to identify gaps and opportunities to draw on practices that can inform local resource development

**iii. Based on the analysis this evaluation will identify opportunities for MEC to provide support in relation to sector planning and coordination, policy engagement, research and resource development.**

# 3. Analysis framework

## 3.1 Human rights

Poverty and disability are inherently linked:

*“A growing body of empirical evidence from across the world indicates that people with disabilities and their families are more likely to experience economic and social disadvantage than those without disabilities.”<sup>2</sup>*

Despite evidence that children and adults with disabilities are among the most marginalised and affected by poverty globally:

*“Persons with disabilities were absent from the Millennium Declaration and have remained so throughout the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) processes... the MDGs have not reached the poorest and most marginalised people.”<sup>3</sup>*

Article 23 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) focuses specifically on disability, calling for dignity, self-reliance, community participation, special care, access to education, training, health care, rehabilitation, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities for children with disabilities. The article contains caveats, however, (e.g. assistance ‘subject to available resources’) which mean

2. WHO (2011) World Report on Disability. Geneva: WHO / World Bank, p.10

3 IDDC and IDA position paper (2012) Make the post-MDG framework inclusive of persons with disabilities: [www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/disalliance.e-presentaciones.net/files/public/files/MDG%20position%20paper%20IDA%20IDDC%20Oct2012\\_0.doc](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/disalliance.e-presentaciones.net/files/public/files/MDG%20position%20paper%20IDA%20IDDC%20Oct2012_0.doc)

the CRC does not make as bold a statement about disability rights and inclusion as it could.

The more recent United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) gives governments and non-governmental organisation (NGO) partners it works with, a further and stronger impetus to:

*“Promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.”<sup>4</sup>*

*“Take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.”<sup>5</sup>*

*“Ensure that ... Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability.”<sup>6</sup>*

The 2015 World Education Forum ‘Equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030 – Transforming lives

4. UNCRPD, article 1

5. UNCRPD, article 7

6. UNCRPD, article 24

through education<sup>7</sup> was held in Korea from 19 to 22 May 2015. Its Incheon Declaration strongly emphasises the importance of inclusive education:

*“Inclusion and equity in and through education is the cornerstone of a transformative education agenda, and we therefore commit to addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalisation, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes. No education target should be considered met unless met by all. We therefore commit to making the necessary changes in education policies and focusing our efforts on the most disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities, to ensure that no one is left behind.”<sup>8</sup>*

**Within the framework of these international instruments, development and humanitarian organisations like MEC has a clear obligation to ensure that children and adults with disabilities are included in education programmes and advocacy activities, as active participants and change agents, rather than as passive recipients of charitable help.**

The UNCRPD is intended to cover people with disabilities of all ages, but in an adult-oriented world with adult policy makers, adult project managers etc, there is an ongoing risk that the convention will not always be implemented from a child-focused position. It is crucial for organisations like MEC and its partners to actively include persons especially children with disabilities and give them a voice.

7. World Education Forum 2015, <http://en.unesco.org/world-education-forum-2015>

8. World Education Forum 2015, Incheon Declaration, article 6

## 3.2 Approaches to disability

### 3.2.1 Paradigm shift to a social model of disability

Over the last decade, the perspective of people with disabilities has shifted from focusing on impairment and therefore loss of function of the body – known as the ‘medical model of disability’ – to recognising the rights of persons with disabilities and the importance of including them in all aspects of life. **Inclusion is only possible if societies, schools, governments, and others change their practices and start to identify barriers in their organisation, environment, attitudes and practices. This approach is known as the ‘social model of disability’ and is reflected in the UNCRPD of 2006.** It was ratified on 7 December 2011 by the GoM and is therefore legally binding.

**Removing barriers as the cause of disability** for people with disabilities rather than focusing on their impairment is the fundamental shift that has taken place and is known as the ‘paradigm shift’ under which ‘disability’ is conceptualised. The UNCRPD changes the perception of persons with disabilities:

*“... from viewing persons with disabilities as ‘objects’ of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as ‘subjects’ with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.”<sup>9</sup>*

9. UN Enable, UNCRPD, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150>

The UNCRPD clearly states that habilitation and rehabilitation programmes must include the areas of health, employment, education and social services.<sup>10</sup> This has been extended to health, employment, livelihood, social services and empowerment in the 2010 World Health Organisation (WHO) Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) guidelines.<sup>11</sup>

### 3.2.2 A twin-track approach to disability

The twin-track approach to inclusive education demands two approaches (tracks) to successfully include children with disabilities in the education sector.

#### Track 1 involves principle equal access and child empowerment that includes:

- Equality and valuing difference
- Identifying barriers and finding solutions
- Collaborative learning and peer support
- Differentiation and flexible curriculum and assessment
- Stimulating and interesting multi-sensory learning environment
- An anti-bias curriculum
- Child-centred pedagogy with creative and reflective teachers
- Quality education requiring rigour and effort for each child to achieve their individual potential.

10. UNCRPD, article 26.1: States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures, including through peer support, to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life. To that end, States Parties shall organize, strengthen and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programmes, particularly in the areas of health, employment, education and social services, in such a way that these services and programmes.

11. WHO (2010), CBR Guidelines. Geneva: WHO

#### Track 2 accommodates the different impairment specific needs of children with disabilities.

This will require communities (including parents, teachers, principals, school staff, government officials) to be familiar with and able to use accommodations for various conditions – see table annex 8.5.

## 3.3 Approaches to education for children with disabilities

Education through mainstream schools is organised by the MoE, while special needs education and special schools are under the MSWRR. The consultants got the impression, that **the MoE at the current stage is not yet ready for open discussion about inclusive education**. This is a challenging situation, when it comes to implementing inclusive education projects in Myanmar.

MSWRR and its DSW are more approachable and take responsibility for services for people with disabilities, including education for children with disabilities through special schools. However, **there are only 12 special schools in Myanmar, located in Yangon and Mandalay, dramatically limiting enrolment opportunities**. There are seven schools for children with visual impairment, three for children with hearing impairment, and two for children with developmental and physical impairment. Only special schools have technical, equipment and human resources for teaching children with disabilities. Mainstream schools have no access to technical and human resources.

### 3.3.1 Segregation

Segregation means the coexistence of two separate education systems within a country



## Globally there are four main approaches to participation and education for children with disabilities:

*Exclusion*

*Segregation*

*Integration*

*Inclusion*

or territory. Segregation means that children who are labelled 'fit for school' are allowed to enrol in mainstream schools. All other children labelled unfit for school – mainly children with disabilities – are sent to special education schools. The education system are not interlinked and transition from a special education school to a mainstream school is very challenging once the child has been labelled.

### 3.3.2 Integration

An integrative education system allows children with disabilities to participate in mainstream education as long as the child manages to cope with the strict rules of the mainstream education. The child needs to function well within the boundaries of the mainstream education system. Should the child fail, he or she will be sent to a special school. The families of children with disabilities usually spend plenty of time and money on extra training and rehabilitation services in order for them to be able to participate in an integrated education system.

### 3.3.3 Inclusion

Inclusive education embraces diversity, and accommodates all children by reducing and removing barriers to access, participation, and achievement in education and social life. In an inclusive education system, children of all abilities go to the same schools and are taught in the same classrooms. Teachers are aware that students in the classroom are diverse; have individual ways of learning; and need different forms of instructions and support to achieve in learning. A teacher in an inclusive school should ideally have access to a network of resources that support the teacher to find optimal support for each child.

### 3.3.4 Exclusion

In many countries – unfortunately including Myanmar – the vast majority of children with disabilities have no access to any form of formal or non-formal education. Only some children with mild physical and developmental impairments have access to education.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Literature review

A selection of documents was gathered for this consultancy. They were unofficial, partial translations of the Education Law, the Disability Law, and the Child Law, plus the opinions of the Education and Disability Working Group (EDWG) on these laws. Research undertaken by ECDC, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and The Leprosy Mission in Myanmar (TLMM) was reviewed and helped to develop a rough overview of the numbers of children and the realities they are facing in their lives. Finally, MEC documents like the disability inclusion strategy, and partner organisation proposals gave a good overview of MEC's approach towards inclusive education.

During an interview with TLMM, a report on Myanmar's implementation of the UNCRPD was made available to the consultants.

### 4.2 Interviews and meetings

The interviews and meetings<sup>12</sup> were great sources of information. They gave the consultants an update on the current projects and initiatives of the major players in the disability, inclusion, and education sector in Myanmar.

The meetings were also used to sound out ideas for recommendations for MEC with potential future partners, and 'test' their reaction and interest.

### 4.3 Data analysis and report writing

It was crucial for the consultants to analyse (i) what has happened with regard to

12. The meetings and resources consulted can be found in annex 8.1



Htet Htet Hlaing and Daw Aye Mhone  
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disability inclusion in Myanmar, (ii) who the main stakeholders are, and (iii) what future interventions have the potential to lead to effective and sustainable change in the future. Based on this analysis, the consultants developed their recommendations for this report.

### 4.4 Constraints and limitations

The unavailability of English translations of major policy documents, e.g. the Education Law, Disability Law, and Child Law made it very challenging to get a good overview of the relevant national policy framework. It made the consultant dependent on secondary information and input from interviewees regarding policy matters.

# 5. Situation analysis

## 5.1 Data

### 5.1.1 National

According to a 2010 survey on persons with disabilities<sup>13</sup> there is a 2.32% prevalence or 1,276,000 persons with disabilities in Myanmar. Another survey<sup>14</sup> published in 2014 states a 4.6% prevalence of persons with disabilities.

The figures seem rather small compared to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) 15% estimate for southern countries, according to which with a population of 51,486,253<sup>15</sup> would translate to 7,722,937 persons with a disability living in Myanmar with limitation to their participation in family, community and political life. Approximately 30% or at least 2,316,881 of those would be school age children.<sup>16</sup> According to research published by JICA in 2013, two-thirds of children with disabilities have not been in touch with any form of education.<sup>17</sup>

The most recent research was commissioned by ECDC: **'A space to learn for all children? Inclusive education and children with disabilities in Yangon, Myanmar'**. Although it focuses only on urban areas of Yangon, it provides a very good picture of the situation

13. Department of Social Welfare and The Leprosy Mission Myanmar (2010) First Myanmar National Disability Survey 2010

14. Department of Population Ministry of Immigration and Population (2015) The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census Highlights of the Main Results Census Report Volume 2 – A

15. Ibid.

16. Estimation based on the population pyramid on page 8 of the 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census Highlights of the Main Results Census Report Volume 2 – A, 2015, Department of Population Ministry of Immigration and Population

17. JICA (2013) Data Collection Survey on Education Sector in Myanmar

of children with disabilities in Myanmar. It explains the small number of special schools only in Mandalay and Yangon and gives practical recommendations on what should be done to make Myanmar's mainstream education inclusive for children with disabilities. The report identifies main barriers to inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools:

- i. Poverty affect children's access to education. Parents are not able to pay tuition fees and school books, or cover expenses for suitable transport
- ii. Attitudes of teachers and principals prevent children with disabilities from accessing schools. The report describes that being 'on good terms' with the class teacher is necessary to enrol a child with a disability
- iii. On the other hand, principals complain of a lack of guidance from the MoE regarding inclusion of children with disabilities
- iv. Schools and the way to schools from the homes of children are often not accessible
- v. Mainstream schools do not have skills to assess children. They also do not have access to a network of specialists to get support in accessing children's abilities
- vi. The curriculum and assessment system is heavily centralised and does not allow for modifications taking into account the abilities of individual students
- vii. Teaching practices are teachers focused and not child-centred.

### 5.1.2 Global

An estimated 15% of the global population, more than one billion people, currently live with a disability and prevalence rates are set to rise.<sup>18</sup> Of these, 80% live in low and

18. WHO (2011) World Report on Disability. Geneva: WHO / World Bank

middle in-come countries.<sup>19</sup> Around 93 million children under the age of 14 years experience moderate or severe disability. Poverty, under-nutrition, poor health and a challenging home environment can all impair a child's cognitive, motor and social-emotional development and put them at greater risk of disability.<sup>20</sup>

Data from UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys across 20 countries suggest that children most likely to be disabled come from poorer households, face discrimination and restricted access to social services including early childhood education, are underweight and have stunted growth, and are subject to severe physical punishment from their parents.<sup>21</sup>

### 5.1.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings above there is a need for further research on national data related to children with disabilities as none of the current reports provide this.

There are many challenges to overcome to implement a fruitful research that delivers reliable data as a basis for future project development and implementation:

- i. A holistic definition of different impairments and conditions of children needs to be developed
- ii. Standard procedures for data collection and aggregation need to be developed
- iii. Qualified enumerators need to be identified and trained on the different standards of procedures related to data collections and aggregation.

19. WHO, Disability and Rehabilitation, WHO Director General's message on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2014 (IDPD, 2014), [http://www.who.int/disabilities/media/news/2014/idpd\\_dg/en/](http://www.who.int/disabilities/media/news/2014/idpd_dg/en/)

20. Ibid.

21. UNICEF & University of Wisconsin (2008) Monitoring child disability in developing countries: results from the multiple indicator cluster surveys. New York: UNICEF

A step towards the introduction of a coherent research framework that is easy to implement and scalable would be to use the Washington Group's six research questions. The research questions ask the interviewee if he or she has difficulties with (i) seeing, (ii) hearing, (iii) walking, (iv) remembering and/or concentrating, (v) washing and /or dressing and (vi) language.

## 5.2 Policy framework

### 5.2.1 Constitution

*“According to Article 152 of the Constitution of 1974, every citizen shall have the right to education and shall be given basic education which the State prescribes by law as compulsory.”<sup>22</sup>*

*“Article 366 of the Constitution of 2008 stipulates that every citizen, in accordance with the educational policy of the Union, (a) has the right to education; (b) shall be given basic education which the Union prescribes by law as compulsory; and (c) has the right to conduct scientific research, explore science, work with creativity and write to develop the arts and conduct research freely on other branches of culture.”<sup>23</sup>*

### 5.2.2 Education Law

One of the consultants' interviewees, Reverend Thein Lwin, Secretary General, MCFB described the MoE's approach to inclusive education for children with disabilities in the latest Education Law as:

22. 1974 Constitution of the Union of Myanmar

23. 2008 Constitution of the Union of Myanmar

***“Inclusive education through special schools.”***

The law speaks of inclusive education but wants to realise this through the development of special education and development special schools. The law lacks any definition of the terminology ‘inclusive education’. An implementing by-law has not yet been produced – so there is an opportunity to include a clear definition of inclusive education in the by-law. The law is currently once again under revision. Sources from within the MoE have indicated that inclusive education will get a more prominent position and a clear definition.

### **5.2.3 Disability Law**

The law’s definition of disability seems to concur with the understanding laid out in the UNCRPD. Education for children with disabilities shall be made available in special schools. Another article says ‘disabled persons have the right to access education, information, and health care’. Having stated this and with no special school system in Myanmar, the logical and practical interpretation is inclusive education for children with disabilities according to article 24<sup>24</sup> of the UNCRPD.

### **5.2.4 Child Law**

An unofficial translation of the Child Law of 2015 stipulates in article 72 that every child has the right:

***“... to access education without discrimination upon nationality, race, indigenous group, skin colour, man, woman, language, religion, rank, standard, culture, poverty/richness, disability, political background or belief.”***

24. See annex 8.2

Article 76 explicitly grants rights to children with disabilities:

***“a. Has basic human rights and basic freedom on the equal basis of other children including access to life, freedom to talk and take religion.***

***c. Has right to access state human resource development programmes, to take care by parents and to participate in family and community life.***

***d. Has rights to access education in public, common, private and organisational schools, trainings, science institutes, colleges and universities or private schools and private vocational training centres Including crèches and pre-schools opened for child early intervention on the equal basis like other.***

***e. Has access to disease prevention, treatment, quality health care and services.”***<sup>25</sup>

### **5.2.5 National Education Sector Plan**

The National Education Sector Plan (NESP) includes a section on inclusion of children with disabilities and children from poor backgrounds. In a meeting with CESR, the interviewee stated that the MoE is going to develop resource schools at primary level that are supported by teachers with a background in special education. These teachers serve for a cluster of schools.

The MoE is aware that these are big gaps that need to be taken care of and has plans to review teacher training courses.

25. Child Law 2015





Child-led advocacy on inclusive education with KMSS Pathein and Pathein Regional Government, May 2015  
 © Myanmar Education Consortium (Win Mrat Wai)

According to the consultants’ sources, the anticipated time-frame for the new NESP is:

- First draft: End of July 2015
- Approval by parliament including budgetary approval: August or September 2015
- Effectiveness of NESP: April 2016, when new fiscal years starts.

### 5.2.6 Conclusion

Myanmar’s current legal framework, including the Education Law and its next revision, which is in progress, as well as the Disability Law and especially the CESR set the framework for inclusive education in Myanmar. However, theory and reality in the field are not matching. The consultants were under the impression that the MoE is eager to realise inclusive education, but lacks ideas on how to overcome challenges and barriers to do so. (i) The challenge at policy level is to have coherent

laws that clarify how inclusivity shall be delivered; identify the obligations of each level of the education administration; and provide a definition of inclusive education. (ii) Capacity building for teachers: The MoE is aware of the fact that there are currently no teachers with a background in inclusive and special needs education available in Myanmar and that there are no teacher training colleges or universities that have the skills to initiate effective capacity building for teachers on special needs education.

## 5.3 Government services

### 5.3.1 Ministry of Education – non-formal primary education

Over recent years, the MoE has been through a radical change process. The number of departments within the MoE has been



reduced. The departments for basic education (DBE1, DBE2, and DBE3), which administered different geographic regions have been merged into one single department. According to the information available to the consultants, the MoE consists of the following departments:

- Departments for Basic Education (kindergarten to level 12)
- Department for Higher Education (College and university)
- Department for Examinations
- Department for Research
- Department for Planning
- Department for Manpower
- Department for Teacher Education.

The Education Law has been debated for quite some time in Myanmar and amended several times. It seems that as of now, it is being amended again and that inclusive education is given a stronger foundation including a definition. In addition to this, the GoM is working on four additional laws related to education:

- i. A compulsory primary Education Law<sup>26</sup>
- ii. A private Education Law<sup>27</sup>
- iii. A law on technical vocational education and training (TVET), as well as
- iv. A law on private schools.

Myanmar has 21 teacher training colleges, which provide diploma degrees, as well as three education universities which provide bachelor, masters and postgraduate degrees. The colleges are implementing pre-service and in-service teacher training. However, **no courses or modules for inclusive education or disability related issues have been developed.**

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26. Primary education includes kindergarten and primary school

27. Basic education includes kindergarten until upper secondary school

In the past, the MoE has produced three booklets for teachers on inclusive education. It is advisable to review these before use.

During a meeting with the consultants, Dr Tin Nyo showed them a translated Myanmar version of UNESCO's Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments<sup>28</sup>, which the government prints and distributes.

### 5.3.2 Ministry of Education – Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR)

Dr Win Aung explained the government's NESP with regard to inclusive education. According to him, the current understanding of inclusive education, as mentioned in the Education Law, will be revised. Initially, inclusive education will focus on two groups of children:

- i. Children with disabilities
- ii. Children from financially poor backgrounds.

Ethnicity and language will become cross-cutting issue for both sectors on inclusive education. Inclusion of children with disabilities shall be implemented through a 'cluster school' approach. One school per cluster will be a resource school and have extra teachers with a background in special needs education. These teachers are based at the resource school, but also support other schools in the cluster. For children from financially poor backgrounds, scholarships and school feeding programmes<sup>29</sup> will be introduced at national level. To further promote the enrolment of children from financially poor backgrounds, the GoM plans to introduce free primary and lower secondary education. In a later step higher secondary education shall be free as well.

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28. UNESCO Bangkok (2004) Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for creating inclusive, learning-friendly environments. Bangkok: UNESCO.

29. The current name in the NESP is 'Food for Education'

In 2016, the MoE in cooperation with JICA and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), will start a curriculum reform project. JICA will primarily work on the primary school curriculum and ADB on the curriculum for lower secondary schools. The reform will hopefully provide teachers freedom to adapt the curricula.

### 5.3.3 Ministry of Education – Department of Basic Education

The Deputy Director General of the DBE, U Soe Win and his officials stated during the meeting that the MoE does not currently have the capacity to implement inclusive education for children with disabilities and depends on the support of NGOs and INGOs. The MoE would like to act as a coordination body.

This statement further strengthens the finding that MoE will soon reach out to NGOs and INGOs and seek their support.

### 5.3.4 Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement – Department of Social Welfare

Daw Yu Yu Swe, Director of DSW and Deputy Director, U Swan Yayra stated during a meeting that DSW has no inclusive education programme and currently only supports some primary schools in providing examinations for students with disabilities. The DSW referred to ECDC and other organisations as providers of education for children with disabilities.

### 5.3.5 Conclusion

The MoE seems to be aware of the fact that it needs to restructure the national education system. The CESR is a huge step in the right direction and seems to indicate positive change in the future. However, to include children with disabilities, several aspects need to be addressed:

- i. **Capacity building and awareness for teachers:** The MoE is aware that there are currently no teachers with a background in inclusive and special education in Myanmar available and that there are no teacher training colleges that have the skills to initiate effective capacity building for teachers on special needs education. To successfully include children with disabilities, teachers need to be provided with basic skills on general inclusive practices as well as basic knowledge of impairments. Teacher training should ideally be implemented pre-service in teacher training colleges as well in-service for those teachers who are already in schools
- ii. **Development of a support and referral system to support mainstream teachers:** The MoE should supply mainstream schools with teachers who have a strong background in special education as a resource base for assessment and developing individual education plans for students with disabilities. In addition to this, mapping is needed of services providers for assistive devices, Braille books and augmented communication. In-depths assessment of children is also needed
- iii. **Advocacy on attitudes of parents of children with disabilities:** Parents of children with disabilities are still reluctant to send their children to school because of negative traditional beliefs related to disability. The MoE should implement advocacy strategies through mass media (TV, radio and newspapers) to sensitise parents and make them aware of the importance of education for their children as well as their children's right to education
- iv. **Capacity development and institutional development:** For the MoE to bridge the gap between the high technical demands of an inclusive education system and the current capacity of the MoE.

## 5.4 Non-governmental service providers

There are a large number of different kinds of organisations present in Yangon. They can be roughly placed in the following categories:

Category	Name of organisation
DPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Myanmar Council for Persons with Disabilities</li> <li>Myanmar Independent Living Initiative</li> </ul>
INGO (general focus on children and education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burnet Institute</li> <li>Catholic Relief Service</li> <li>The International Committee of the Red Cross</li> <li>Save the Children</li> <li>Voluntary Service Overseas</li> <li>World Vision</li> </ul>
INGO (special focus on children and persons with disabilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handicap International</li> <li>The Leprosy Mission in Myanmar</li> </ul>
NGO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eden Centre for Disabled Children</li> </ul>
Special school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mary Chapman School for the Deaf</li> <li>Yangon Education Centre for the Blind</li> </ul>
UN agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF</li> </ul>
GoM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoE</li> <li>MSWRR</li> </ul>

The overview of potential MEC partner organisations shows that there are generalist



School conditions make it difficult for children with disabilities to attend © Myanmar Education Consortium (Win Mrat Wai)

organisations (see no. 2 in the table above) and organisations specialising in working with and for people with disabilities (see no. 1, 3, 4 and 5 in the table above). This offers the opportunity to roll out large general advocacy interventions on inclusive education through generalist INGOs. Very often, these generalist INGOs are reluctant to work with children with medium and severe disabilities because they are lacking expertise. More specialised organisations could offer support where necessary through an on-call basis and therefore make projects accessible for and inclusive of children with disabilities. This idea has been carefully sounded to some potential partners and the consultants received positive feedback on the idea. The following organisations have indicated strong interest in working with MEC in the future. On the generalist side there are World Vision, CRS, and Save the Children. On the specialists side there are local organisations ECDC and MILI and international organisation Handicap International.

A more detailed description of the potential MEC partner organisations follows.

### 5.4.1 Yangon Education Centre for the Blind

<b>Address:</b>	165, Baho Road, Ward (2), Mayangone Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	1977
<b>Students:</b>	149
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	Primary special school for children with low vision and those who are blind. Boarding school.
<b>Financial support:</b>	Christoffel Blind Mission (CBM) and DSW

YECB is a primary special school for children with low vision or who are blind. It is organised under the Myanmar Christian Fellowship of the Blind (MCFB). The school was initiated in 1977 as a training centre for blind adults. In 1979, a secondary school was added for students who pass primary level at Kyimyindine School for the Blind<sup>30</sup>. The school changed its location due to space limitations several times until it reached its current home. The school is supported financially by CBM and DSW.

The school's compound consists of several buildings including the school, dormitories for boys and girls, accommodation for staff, and a massage parlour. The school is a boarding school from primary level to high school. Currently 149 students are enrolled in the school, which employs 26 teachers. Students age five to 25 of all Christian denominations and ethnic groups are welcome to enrol at the school.

For students who did not have the opportunity to enrol at the age of five or those older than 25 years, the school offers adapted education courses that allow them to enrol in the school and learn according to their capacity. The school supports inclusive education by preparing its students to transition to mainstream school during the five years of

30. Special school for the blind established 1914

primary education. With support from the school management, some students managed the transition from the special school into a mainstream government school.

The school has a small-scale Braille production facility to make schoolbooks and recreational reading material for the school's library. Talking books are produced in the school's studio and available to the students as MP3 files along with low cost MP3 players<sup>31</sup>. The school recently carried out training on low vision assessment and invited a specialist from the Penang School for the Blind in Malaysia.

To promote education for children with low visual impairment and low vision the school developed several advocacy strategies:

- i. Two musical troupes that travel the country to raise awareness and funds
- ii. Information in local newspapers
- iii. Quarterly bulletin on Myanmar television.

Transition from formal education into the labour market is still a major challenge for people with visual impairment. The majority of graduates pick up so called 'traditional' jobs for people with visual impairment such as massage therapists or bamboo workers.

### 5.4.2 Mary Chapman School for the Deaf

<b>Address:</b>	2, Thantaman St, Dagon Township, Yangon.
<b>Established:</b>	1920
<b>Students:</b>	387 students (220 from outside Yangon, in the school's dormitory).
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	Special school offering education for children who are hearing impaired or deaf

31. The price of the MP3 players is K 6,000 – approximately USD\$5.30

<b>Financial support:</b>	DSW, private donations and endowment fund
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Established in 1920 by Mary Chapman, the school offers education for children who are hearing impaired or deaf until grade 7. The school currently has 387 students of whom 220 are from outside Yangon and are therefore accommodated in the school’s dormitory. Students continuing to grades 8, 9, and 10 have to attend a nearby government mainstream high school.

A teacher interviewed by the constants sees the language barrier as the main reason why inclusion of hearing impaired and deaf children is difficult. She believes that inclusive education cannot work, as long as mainstream schools do not offer sign language interpretation. According to the teacher’s experience, it takes longer to teach children with hearing impairments or deaf children than children without impairments. Therefore the school decided to adapt the national curriculum and leave out about 10% they felt was not relevant. Curriculum adaptation however is not mentioned in Myanmar’s Education Law. According to the teacher, there are several factors that have an excluding impact on students with a hearing impairment:

- i. **No sign language interpretation available.** Mainstream teachers have not received formal training on how to include children with hearing impairment and are therefore not able to teach them effectively
- ii. **High school language of instruction is English.** Students transitioning from Mary Chapman School to high school had very limited exposure to English language compared to other teenagers their age through music, television, and internet. They mainly use sign language, which is grammatically different to standard

Myanmar or English

- iii. The mainstream school curriculum includes a **written assessment at the end of every month**. Students have to do seven written assessments every year. They have to succeed in at least five of them to be able to advance to the next grade.

The school has a unit to assess residual hearing and offers speech therapy to young children with a cochlear implant<sup>32</sup>. The unit consist of five rooms – one room for assessment of residual hearing with an audiometer, one room for speech therapy, one sound-proofed room for speech therapy, one storage room and a waiting room.

It is challenging for people with a hearing impairment to find decent employment. Again the language barrier is seen as the main reason for this. Common jobs for people with a hearing impairment are masseurs, kitchen assistants, and low-level IT / computer operators.

### 5.4.3 Voluntary Service Overseas

<b>Address:</b>	146/E-2, Sandar Thiri Lane, 8½ Miles, Mayangone Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	Present in Myanmar since 2014
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	INGO providing teachers training (teaching methods and English) through professional international volunteers
<b>Financial support:</b>	British Council and DFID

32. ‘A cochlear implant is an electronic medical device that replaces the function of the damaged inner ear. Unlike hearing aids, which make sounds louder, cochlear implants do the work of damaged parts of the inner ear (cochlea) to provide sound signals to the brain.’ (from: <http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/au/home/understand/hearing-and-hl/hl-treatments/cochlear-implant>)



VSO's education unit is currently managing a project in education colleges and universities on general teaching methods and skills and English language proficiency. VSO volunteers are based in three universities of education: (i) Yangon, (ii) Sagaing, and (iii) UDNR and in 15 education colleges: (i) Bogalay, (ii) Dawei, (iii) Hlegu, (iv) Hpa'an, (v) Lashio, (vi) Mawlamyine, (vii) Meiktila, (viii) Monywa, (ix) Myaung Mya, Myitkyina, (x) Patheingyi, (xi) Pyaw, (xii) Sagaing, (xiii) Taunggyi, (xiv) Taungtha, and (xv) Thingangyun – Yangon. The British Council and DFID fund the project. They have no project on inclusive education or disability related issues at the moment.

VSO's education programme manager mentioned that VSO works with education colleges and universities developing modules on (i) basic impairment assessment skills for teachers, and (ii) management of diverse classrooms.

#### 5.4.4 Myanmar Independent Living Initiative

<b>Address:</b>	17, Thar-Yar-Aye Street, 3-Quarter, Thamine, Mayangone Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	2011
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	DPO
<b>Financial support:</b>	Nippon Foundation, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), Agenda from Indonesia, and Nippon Foundation supports with assistive devices

MILI has a network of 20 independent branch offices at different level of development. MILI Yangon supports the branch offices financially, through capacity development, and help with networking.

MILI's main financial supporters are the Nippon Foundation, IDEA and Agenda from Indonesia.

MILI is implementing several programmes on advocacy, capacity development, and income generation for people with disabilities:

- i. Educational leadership for young adults aged 18-25 years old. The training is being held in Yangon
- ii. Broadcasting radio shows on disability, related news and information, which are also an advocacy tool for society. The weekly radio show is produced at MILI's own studio and broadcast twice a week on five private and one government radio channel
- iii. MILI's 'Business Incubation Centre' supports persons with disabilities with establishing businesses, supports product branding, offers computer training, and English language courses. The English language courses are offered in house. Should a candidate live too far away or have no means of transportation, MILI cooperates with an English language school that is close to the beneficiary's home and covers the course fees
- iv. An election accessibility project since 2012, which includes supporting the government to develop accessible election procedures for the 2015 general election
- v. MILI organised the 2014 National Disability Arts Festival that featured national and international artists
- vi. Two university student scholarship programmes are in place. Students enrolling in distance learning programmes receive US\$500 per year to support their studies. Students enrolling in regular universities receive USD\$150 per month
- vii. A 'zero interest' student loan programme enables students with disabilities to purchase laptops and other assistive devices. The students are expected to



pay back the loan one year after their graduation.

MILI has produced an easy-read version of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and a booklet on the election process. Four advocacy videos are available on:

- i. Attitudes of family members of persons with disabilities
- ii. Removal of barriers to participation
- iii. Access to education
- iv. Social inclusion had been produced
- iv. Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction.

#### 5.4.5 Myanmar Council for Persons with Disabilities

<b>Address:</b>	51, Nyaung Done Street, Sanchaung Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	2014
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	Umbrella DPO
<b>Financial support:</b>	Financial support: USAID Technical support: World of Learning

The Myanmar Council for Persons with Disabilities (MCPD) was established only one year ago in 2014. It is an umbrella organisation for people with disabilities. The main goals are:

- i. To make persons with disabilities aware of their rights as established in the UNCRPD and the national Disability Law
- ii. Proactively advocate about disability rights towards policy makers
- iii. Reduce stigma within the society towards persons with disabilities.

The organisation lobbies the DSW to implement a cash transfer programme for persons with disabilities. At the same time the MCPD highlights, that:

*“Just giving money is not enough. It is about suitable and appropriate rehabilitation programmes, participation, and equal rights.”<sup>33</sup>*

MCPD currently holds the Vice President Chair of the National Disability Rights Council. It also produces the shadow report for the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities because the GoM has not submitted an official report since 2013.

MCPD receives financial support through USAID and technical support through World of Learning.

#### 5.4.6 Burnet Institute

<b>Address:</b>	226, 4th Floor, 226 Wizaya Plaza U Wisara Road, Bahan Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	Present in Myanmar since 2003
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	INGO
<b>Financial support:</b>	MEC

The Burnet Institute is one of the three founding organisations of MEC. Its education projects support monastic education in Myanmar through four project components:

- i. Capacity building on school administration
- ii. One month capacity building on teaching child-centred approaches, teaching methods and skills
- iii. A WASH component focusing on healthy environments
- iv. Including parents and the community in the education of children and school development.

33. Nyunt Aung, Secretary General, MCPD, 25.6.2015



School boy from Pathein © Myanmar Education Consortium (Myint Maung Maung)

Component one and two are implemented by the Monastic Education Development Group (MEDG), component three is implemented by Burnet Institute, and component four is jointly implemented. Component three involved the construction of toilets including accessible toilets for monastic schools.

#### 5.4.7 Catholic Relief Service

<b>Address:</b>	290/A, Room 10, 4th Floor, Pyay Road, Myae Ni Gone (North) Ward, Sanchaung Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	Present in Myanmar for more than 10 years
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	INGO

CRS plans to implement an inclusive education programme in Myanmar. CRS will build on its experience from Vietnam and Cambodia, where they have successfully implemented inclusive education in cooperation with government partners.

In Vietnam CRS's experience was that provincial level of government administration was very approachable and did a lot of advocacy work at national level to convince them to implement inclusive education. In Cambodia the challenge was that national government insisted that there were not many children with disabilities and that inclusive education was therefore unnecessary. CRS was able to convince the government that inclusive education is beneficial for all children – not only children with disabilities – and

that good achievers without disabilities can achieve even better through inclusive education.

CRS's experience so far in Myanmar is different from Vietnam and Cambodia. The MoE does not yet show a lot of interest in inclusive education. However, the DSW does and CRS can envisage working on a CBR approach at village level that later expands to inclusive education for mainstream schools. CRS plans to begin with a grassroots approach at village level that includes:

- i. CBR including self-help groups for parents of children with disabilities
- ii. Health screening
- iii. Identification of barriers to education and other relevant services for children with disabilities
- iv. Preparing schools for inclusive education
- v. A WASH component
- vi. Involvement of parents of care-givers
- vii. Assistance to victims of land mines.

For teacher training, CRS gained good experience with a pre-service approach, where CRS provides relevant modules that could be integrated into existing teacher training courses. For in-service teacher training, CRS is taking with a Training-of-Trainers (ToT) approach.

#### 5.4.8 Save the Children

<b>Address:</b>	224, U Wisara Road, Bahan Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	Present in Myanmar since 1996
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	INGO
<b>Financial support:</b>	Kindergarten transition project: NORAD + IKEA Foundation Kindergarten project: FORMIN + IKEA Foundation

Due to government restrictions, Save the Children did not work in the formal education sector until 2015, when they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the MoE. This allows Save the Children to work in kindergartens, primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary schools.

Save the Children's work in the non-formal education sector consists of three main components:

- i. Parenting education focusing on parents and caregivers of children age 0-3. Among other things, this component includes behaviour change, positive discipline, learning through play and hygiene
- ii. Establishment of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centres. The ECCD centres offer daily services and are run by the local community with initial support from Save the Children specialists. Their services include a revolving fund loan mechanism, social and emotional development programmes for children, motoric development of children
- iii. Teachers training for primary school teachers, advising them on how to include children with disabilities.

The new Education Law introduced a new grade 0 or kindergarten class for five year olds. Save the Children is planning to work with VSO to include modules on inclusive education in several of Myanmar's teacher education colleges, to advise future teachers on how they can manage the transition from kindergarten to grade 1 in primary schools.

Save the Children receives funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) for its new kindergarten transition projects and funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (FORMIN) for the ECCD and kindergarten project. The IKEA Foundation is funding both projects.

### 5.4.9 Handicap International

<b>Address:</b>	Hledan Centre 4th Floor apt 407, Corner of Pyay Road and Hledan Road, Kamaryut Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	Present on Thai Myanmar border since 1984. Permanent office in Myanmar since 2013
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	INGO
<b>Financial support:</b>	EU

Handicap International (HI) has a long history in Myanmar. Being involved in emergency response, HI had already entered and left the country eight times. It has had a permanent office in Yangon since 2013.

HI currently has no projects focusing on inclusive education. HI had been working as a technical advisor for MILI in their MEC project, which was stopped for technical reasons.

HI's programme portfolio in Myanmar consists of:

- i. Creating access to public services for persons with disabilities. This project is implemented through local DPOs and NGOs like MILI, Shwe Minn Thar Foundation (SMFT)<sup>34</sup> and ECDC
- ii. Supporting mine victim survivors
- iii. Developing a pool of trainers promoting social inclusion, and inclusive disaster risk reduction (DRR).

Together with CBM and TLMM, HI submitted a proposal to the European Union (EU) for a project to empower DPOs in southeast Myanmar and to develop their research capacity on community based research methods.

34. NGO founded by Myanmar businessman in 2008

### 5.4.10 Eden Centre for Disabled Children

<b>Address:</b>	56, War Oo 4th Street, Phawkan Quarter, Insein Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	2000
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	NGO
<b>Financial support:</b>	Association for Aids and Relief-AAR-Japan, Welt Hanger Hilfe (WHH), European Union, Lillian Foundation

ECDC was established for physically and intellectually disabled children under 18 years and received training opportunities from abroad for professional development on physiotherapy and special education. The director has a master's degree in Disability Studies from the University of Leeds. From late 2006, ECDC promoted awareness on disability through various training in partnership with TLMM. ECDC produced Myanmar translations of UNCRPD, the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and other disability related resources. ECDC also started a CBR project supported by AAR-Japan and the EU. In cooperation with the University of Wolverhampton, ECDC and other special education organisations could organise training courses on special education ToT training, with approval from the DSW.

In 2007, ECDC started an inclusive education project with financial support from WHH, which included capacity development of ECDC staff. It is now supporting 140 disabled students in 42 schools within 10 townships of the Yangon region. Most of the students have a physical impairment, while some students have a visual or hearing impairment. Project activities are:

- i. Supporting stationary and others for the target students
- ii. Counselling for family members

- iii. Awareness training for teachers, parents and community leaders, township MoE and DSW officers
- iv. Conducting workshops for senior officials with resource persons from MoE.

#### 5.4.11 The Leprosy Mission in Myanmar

<b>Address:</b>	Pyi Thu Lane, 7 Mile, 12/K, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	Present in Myanmar since 2008
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	INGO
<b>Financial support:</b>	CBM, DCA, DFID, EU, ICCO, Tearfund, The Leprosy Mission international offices

TLMM conducted the first National Disability Survey collaborating with DSW from 2008-2009 in 120 townships in Myanmar. TLMM is implementing several projects for disabled people. TLMM has developed 17 resource centres for people with disabilities that support CBR programmes. With the support of several INGOs and bilateral donors, TLMM implements health, livelihood, rehabilitation, and self-help groups in Myanmar.

#### 5.4.12 World Vision

<b>Address:</b>	16, Shin Saw Pu Road, Ahlone Township, Sanchaung P.O. Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	Present in Myanmar since 1991
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	Special school offering education for children who are hearing impaired or deaf
<b>Financial support:</b>	DSW, private donations and endowment fund

World Vision Myanmar implements its Area Development Programme (ADP) in many

townships in Myanmar. The ADP focuses on child development, education, health, livelihood, micro-finance, water and sanitation. For its education component, World Vision develops community based centres for ECCD and non-formal education. Karuna Myanmar Social Services (KMSS) is the main provider of qualified trainers for the implementation of the project.

#### 5.4.13 The International Committee of the Red Cross

<b>Address:</b>	2C-5, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, 8th Mile, Mayangone Township, Yangon
<b>Established:</b>	1863
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	INGO
<b>Financial support:</b>	Contributions to the Geneva Conventions (governments); national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies; supranational organisations (e.g. EU); and public and private sources

According to HI, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) operates an orthotic and prosthetic workshop in Bagan. The ICRC is currently in the process of developing three additional workshops, operational by 2016.

#### 5.4.14 Conclusion

To implement a twin-track approach to inclusive education, MEC needs to work with two kinds of organisations:

- i. Generalist INGOs and NGOs that have the capacity to carry out a big project geographically
- ii. INGOs, NGOs and DPOs that specialised in education, rehabilitation and support services for children with disabilities.



It became apparent in meetings with the consultants that some organisations seemed more eager to work with MEC than others. Among the three large INGOs that have the experience and capacity to roll out large programmes, World Vision showed the greatest interest in expanding its projects focus to inclusive education. However, it was mentioned that there is not currently the technical capacity within the organisation to work with children with disabilities and support would be needed. CRS was very eager to work with MEC. CRS has already gained experience in implementing inclusive education in Myanmar, and in the region (Cambodia and Vietnam). Save the Children showed interest but to a lesser extent.

Among the specialist organisation, local DPOs MILI and MCPD showed interest in working with MEC and are recommended for advocacy and training related to inclusion and disability. HI, through its headquarters in Lyon, has strong technical expertise on inclusion of children with disabilities. Handicap International would be a strong partner to accommodate children with severe disabilities that need individualised support to be able to attend inclusive mainstream schools. ECDC has strong expertise in special needs education, inclusive education, and advocacy making it a suitable partner for track two of the project approach.

## 5.5 Donors and UN

### 5.5.1 UNICEF

<b>Address:</b>	23-A, Inya Myaing Road Shwe Daung Gya Ward 2, Bahan Township
<b>Established:</b>	Present in Myanmar since 1950
<b>Kind of institution:</b>	UN agency



Access roads to schools can be barriers to education for children with disabilities © Myanmar Education Consortium (Myint Maung Maung)

UNICEF is currently working on two relevant projects:

- i. A situation analysis of children with disabilities in Myanmar
- ii. Developing national Sign Language for Myanmar in partnership with the University of Melbourne. Unfortunately, the consultants were not able to receive further information from the meeting with UNICEF.

## 5.6 Network and working groups

The **Education and Disability Sub-Working Group** is an effective forum to share information among non-government stakeholders. However, it does not have information sharing capacity. There is no centralised archive that allows users to search for background information, data, legal documents, reports, research etc.

The consultants' meetings with NFPE and CESR supported the perception that the MoE is very serious about reform and renewal. MoE staff and consultants should be given the opportunity to participate in the working group.



## 5.7 Useful publications for inclusive education

The consultants were able to identify very limited amount of available publications.

### UNESCO Bangkok ILFE Toolkit<sup>35</sup>

The MoE's NFPE has translated UNESCO Bangkok's 'Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments' (ILFE Toolkit) booklet 0-6 into Myanmar Language. MEC should look into possibilities of working with MoE on further adapting the translation and also translating and adapting the specialised booklets, especially specialised booklet 3 on teaching children with disabilities. The ILFE toolkit consists of seven core booklets and four specialised booklets— see annex 8.6.1.

### MILI's advocacy tools

MILI has produced two types of advocacy tools. A guide book and videos: 'Inclusion Made-Easy: Guidebook on Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction', this book mainly describes the key concepts of disability and disaster risk reduction and how to effectively link among these two components for inclusive DRR approach for disabled people. The (draft) booklet refers to the Hyogo Framework for Action, ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, Myanmar Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction 2009-2015 etc. and on implementing methodologies.

Four advocacy videos on:

- i. Attitudes of family members of people with disabilities
  - ii. Removal of barriers to participation
  - iii. Access to education
  - iv. Social inclusion etc
- are further available resources that are more

35. UNESCO Bangkok (2004)

effective advocacy tools rather than printed/ mass advocacy materials.

It is recommended for MEC to support MILI in further development of additional advocacy tools based on MEC's needs.

The following publication is relevant for Myanmar's development of inclusive education. It should be translated and briefly adapted to local circumstances without losing on the core messages.

### Promoting Inclusive Teacher Education: Advocacy Guides

This is a set of five booklets from UNESCO Bangkok<sup>36</sup>:

- i. Introduction
- ii. Policy
- iii. Curriculum
- iv. Materials
- v. Methodology.

The guides discuss challenges and barriers to inclusive education in different areas of teacher education and offer related strategies and solutions for effective advocacy towards more inclusive practice. The guides are aimed at anyone working on advocacy to improve pre-service teacher education, including: policy-makers, managers and staff in teacher education institutions, NGOs, teachers and student teachers, learner and their communities.

## 5.8 Conclusion

Myanmar has a good policy framework in place for inclusive education. However the vast majority of children with disabilities have no access to education. If they have access, they are pushed out of schools due to rigorously implemented curricula and assessment

36. UNESCO (2013) Promoting Inclusive Teacher Education. Bangkok: UNESCO

systems. Some children with disabilities have access to education through special schools in Yangon and Mandalay. Many of them have to stay in the boarding facilities of the special schools, far away from their homes and families.

Internationally enforced through the UNCRC and UNCRPD, children with and without disabilities must have access to inclusive mainstream schools within their neighbourhood. Teachers in these schools would ideally have access to a resource teacher with a strong background in special education. The resource teacher would support other teachers in assessing the students' needs and abilities. Based on the assessment, the teachers would draw up an individual education plan for all children who are temporarily or permanently unable to follow the standard curriculum.

Teachers would have the freedom to adapt the curriculum based on the assessment results within these individual education plans and monitor progress. Parents or other caregivers should be involved in the education of their children. They should be updated about the progress their children are making and how they can support them at home. Very often parents of children with disabilities do not know how to support their children.

International experience and practice has proven that even the smallest step in including children with disabilities in mainstream schools can change their lives and that of their parents or caregivers forever. Many children start to blossom, learn and develop in a way that parent and caregivers have never thought possible.

However, Myanmar still lacks many practical elements to implement inclusive education.

There are currently no GoM services that proactively support inclusive education. Many GoM services are charity focused and do lack an empowerment component.

Stakeholders from the local NGO and DPO sector lack the capacity to bridge gaps created by this lack of GoM services. Local NGOs and DPOs are in need of capacity development.

Due to strict restrictions on INGOs intervention in Myanmar, INGOs have had limited opportunities to intervene and support the GoM in developing suitable, quality services for children with disabilities. However, the consultants' meetings with MoE gave the impression that the situation is changing in Myanmar and that the GoM is looking forward to working more closely with INGOs to implement the results of the CESR including inclusive education.

## 6. Strategy & recommendations

### 6.1 Strategy: Inclusive education programme implementation concept

*“Inclusive education orients education policies, practices and cultures to address the challenges of education for all and to welcome the diversity of all learners. It seeks to promote the right of every child, young person and adult, to education. Inclusive education is also concerned with all modalities, levels and areas of education, from pre-school to higher education and lifelong/adult learning, across formal and non-formal education, including academic, vocational and extra-curricular activities.”<sup>37</sup>*

Inclusive education is a very complex field of work. It is not just about integrating children with disabilities into mainstream schools. It means a holistic education system change that benefits everyone, including children with disabilities. The challenges are many and include:

- i. Changing the **general perception of students** including those with disabilities
- ii. Making schools, and transportation to schools **physically accessible**
- iii. Changing **attitudes** towards people with disabilities of all ages
- iv. Developing a **support system for teachers and school staff** including the development of resource centre for inclusive education
- v. Developing a **referral system** for proper assessment and access to assistive devices and support services for students with

- vi. Planning and implementation of effective quality **in-service teacher training** through a whole school approach that introduce teachers to ‘inclusion’, ‘good teaching practices’, ‘diversity’, ‘disability’, ‘positive discipline’, and ‘large classroom management’
- vii. Reforming existing **pre-service teacher education institutions**, making them aware of the diverse needs of students and include courses on ‘inclusion’, ‘good teaching practices’, ‘diversity’, ‘disability’, ‘positive discipline’, and ‘large classroom management’ into the pre-service teacher education curriculum
- viii. Advocating for the **revision of three existing laws** relevant to inclusive education: the Education Law, Disability Law, and Child Law. Make sure that they are in congruence with the UNCRPD.

Implementing such a substantial programme is challenging through a conventional project approach. Rather than having one contractor implementing the programme, MEC should consider contracting at least two contractors. Reflecting on the **‘twin track approach’** outlined in chapter 3.2.2 means that in **track one** a large INGO with existing structures and connections in townships would roll out an education programme focusing on general inclusion and child friendly education. In **track two**, NGOs specialising in disabilities, inclusion and experience with education projects would provide targeted support. This would be when the INGO in track one was not able to include a child due to the severity of his or her impairment; parents were reluctant to send their child to ECCD or education programmes; or due to the refusal of schools and education authorities.

37. UNESCO (2013), Guide 1, p4

To achieve sustainable and effective change the project should embed resource persons/ teachers within communities or school clusters<sup>38</sup>. Communities including parents, teachers, and education authorities need practical support and the resource person/ teacher must be accessible and be able to discuss challenges. The resource persons/ teachers would have a duty to facilitate attitude change, teaching practices and inclusiveness of schools and communities.

The GoM and especially the MoE does not currently have the technical capacity to run or support such an ambitious project. However, MEC could flagship the implementation of inclusive education based on the design outlined above. It is important that it work with the MoE and provide them with access to quality capacity development and institutional development components. This would place the MoE in a position to replicate similar approaches.

### Staging and scale of the project design

From CRS, Save the Children and World Vision, MEC could work with one generalist INGO partner for track one and start on a 'pilot basis'. Ideally, this partner would already be established in the target area and 'add' inclusive education to its current projects. The following list can be used as a guideline for implementation and staging of a pilot with such an approach:

1. Implement baseline study on children with disability within pilot implementation area
2. Advocate to MoE on inclusive education
3. Identify and suitable resource persons/ teachers for cluster schools
4. Identify potential resource services and develop resource services
5. Develop and provide in-service training workshops on inclusive education, targeting

38. This supports the MoE plan mentioned in chapter 5.3.2

mainstream teachers who are already working in schools

6. Provide capacity and organisational institutional development workshops for DPOs
7. Develop and implement advocacy initiatives to change attitudes among parents with disabilities.

When the pilot project approach seems to be successful and fruitful, MEC should consider contracting another generalist INGO operating in different geographical region until the whole nation has been reached. To scale up the project, MEC should replicate the points mentioned above in other geographical areas and in addition:

1. Provide holistic capacity and institutional development workshops for MoE
2. Support MoE in developing guidelines on how to implement inclusive education
3. Develop and implement pre-service mainstream teacher training modules on inclusive education for universities and colleges
4. Advocate toward the Ministry of Health to develop rehabilitation services for children and adults with disabilities<sup>39</sup>
5. Develop accessible and safe wash rooms and toilets for students<sup>40</sup>
6. Document and disseminate good practice for replication in other areas
7. Advocate towards the GoM to include the Washington Group research questions into the next national census.

In a next stage and in the long term, MoE should implement inclusive education in new geographic areas with limited support from MEC.

39. The ICRC is developing orthotic and prosthetic workshops in Myanmar and could be linked up to this.

40. The Burnet Institute has experience in Myanmar with construction of accessible toilet facilities.

## 6.2 Recommendations for MEC

### Recommendation 1: Inclusion as a cross-cutting issue

Make disability inclusion a cross-cutting issue for MEC priority areas and projects.

- Early childhood care and development
- Complementary basic education
- Policy engagement and advocacy
- Out of school children and alternative education
- Education in emergencies
- Construction of education facilities (schools, playgrounds) and public buildings (e.g. toilets)
- Public transport, especially transport to schools
- Teachers education and teacher training.

Make sure that all projects are disability inclusive. DPOs can be good sounding walls for projects planning and could be part of a projects proposal review board.

There is currently a large number of DPOs in Myanmar. MEC should assess the strengths and weaknesses of the DPOs to identify suitable partners for projects with different focuses.

Emergency preparedness, management, and response interventions must be inclusive to persons with disabilities as they are often the most vulnerable in emergency situations. Disaster preparedness can be implemented through schools in areas prone to cyclones, earthquakes, flooding, volcanic eruptions etc.

School, toilet, and playground construction must be carried out with the principles of accessibility and universal design in mind.

### Recommendation 2: MEC's capacity on inclusive education

*“Practice what you preach!”*

A whole school capacity-building strategy<sup>41</sup> demands that all MEC staff member are aware off the basics of inclusion, both theory and practice. It is therefore highly recommended that MEC invest time and money into internal capacity building for all staff.

- Disability models: moral, charity, medical, and social
- Education systems: exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion
- Twin-track approach
- Impairment versus disability
- Barriers to participation and removal of barriers
- Rights based approach (Salamanca Statement, WEF 2000 & 2015, MDGs and SDGs, UNCRC and UNCRPD, etc).

### Recommendation 3: Develop an updated MEC inclusion policy

MEC should work on developing a new inclusion policy for internal use. The new policy should reflect on the UNCRPD, the twin-track-approach and inclusive education. It should raise the inclusive philosophy and make it a cross cutting issue for all MEC programmes including EiE, non-formal education, monastic education, and projects that involve construction of schools and other facilities.

### Recommendation 4: Yangon Declaration on Inclusive Education

Organise a workshop with the aim of developing a ‘Yangon Declaration on Inclusive Education’. MEC should host the workshop

41. See recommendation 1





Pathein regional government officials attended an IE advocacy event held by KMSS Pathein in May 2015  
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together with MoE and invite high ranking government officials, as well as teachers, and DPO and NGO representatives with the purpose ensuring that all stakeholders are working in the same direction.

The declaration should ideally be based on existing international agreements, conventions, regulations, and treaties, including the Incheon Declaration of the 2015 WEF, the Sustainable Development Goals which will be finalised later this year, the UNCRPD, the UNCRC. It will be a tool that is locally developed and people can identify with.

### **Recommendation 5: Education and Disability Sub-working Group**

Translate key policy documents into English  
Establish a cloud-based knowledge hub  
Government representatives should participate in meetings of the sub-working group

Many important policy documents are currently not available in English. MEC and the education and disability sub-working group should develop (un)official translations of key documents. These would tremendously help developing partners to familiarise themselves with the legal background.

The education and disability sub-working group should seek an online platform for sharing relevant documents in a centralised and accessible way. Google drive offers 15 gigabyte of free storage space, works like an online hard disk or folder, and can be made accessible to multiple users in decentralised locations.

The working group should consider inviting government representatives to the meetings. Should permanent government staff be reluctant to attend meetings, the working group could invite local consultants working for the government and ask them to share information on recent developments.

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## 8. Annexes

### 8.1 Field work schedule

Time	Organisation	Participants
Monday, 22 June 2015	MEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craig Nightingale, Director</li> <li>• Alte Bester, Capacity Development Director</li> <li>• Naw Olive, EiE Capacity Development Manager</li> </ul>
Tuesday 23 June 2015	YECB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reverend Thein Lwin, General Secretary</li> </ul>
Tuesday 23 June 2015	Mary Chapman School for the Deaf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naw Lily Htoo, Teacher</li> <li>• Nyunt Nyunt Thein, Principle</li> </ul>
Wednesday 24 June 2015	VSO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Marian Cadogan, Education Programme Manager</li> </ul>
Wednesday 24 June 2015	MILI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nay Lin Soe, Founder &amp; Programme Director</li> </ul>
Thursday 25 June 2015	MCPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nyunt Aung, General Secretary</li> </ul>
Thursday 25 June 2015	UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jane Davies, Education Specialist</li> <li>• Shwe Zin Hla Shwe, Child Rights Monitoring Specialist</li> <li>• Ilene R. Zeitzer, Consultant</li> </ul>
Thursday 25 June 2015	Burnet Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aung Ko Ko, Education Project Manager</li> </ul>
Thursday 25 June 2015	CRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sanda Rithman, Sub regional Country Representative (Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Thailand)</li> </ul>
Friday 26 June 2015	Save the Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Philippa C Ramsden, Thematic Advisor Education</li> <li>• Lu Sam, Program Manager Education Program</li> </ul>
Friday 26 June 2015	Handicap International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yann Faivre, Programme Director</li> </ul>

Saturday 27 June 2015	ECDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch workshop of ECDC's research on inclusive education for children with disabilities</li> </ul>
Saturday 27 June 2015	ECDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tha Uke, Managing Director</li> </ul>
Saturday 27 June 2015	TLMM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Zaw Moe Aung, Country Director</li> </ul>
Monday 29 June 2015	MEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on the findings in MEC office</li> </ul>
Tuesday 30 June 2015	MEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craig Nightingale, Director</li> <li>• Alte Bester, Capacity Development Director</li> <li>• Naw Olive, EiE Capacity Development Manager</li> </ul>
Tuesday 30 June 2015	MoE, NFPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Tin Nyo</li> </ul>
Wednesday 1 July 2015	Handicap International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• - Caroline Guerin, Inclusion Projects Coordinator</li> </ul>
Wednesday 1 July 2015	World Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Si Si Myint, Protection Department Manager</li> <li>• Zaw OO, Protection Specialist</li> </ul>
Thursday 2 July 2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and Disability Sub-working Group Meeting</li> </ul>
Thursday 2 July 2015	MoE, CESR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Win Aung</li> </ul>
Thursday 2 July 2015	MEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craig Nightingale, Director</li> <li>• Alte Bester, Capacity Development Director</li> <li>• Naw Olive, EiE Capacity Development Manager</li> </ul>



## 8.2 UNCRPD article 24

1. States Parties recognise the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning directed to:

- a. The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
- b. The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
- c. Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:

- a. Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
- b. Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
- c. Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
- d. Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
- e. Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:

- a. Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;
- b. Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
- c. Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deaf-blind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.

4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

### 8.3 Accommodation of conditions and impairment

Condition	Accommodation
Students with a visual impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braille and large print</li> <li>• Tactile maps and plans</li> <li>• Accessible IT</li> <li>• Mobility and orientation training</li> <li>• Vision assessment and aids</li> <li>• Auditory environment and talking instruments</li> </ul>
Students with a hearing impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign Language taught</li> <li>• Sign Language interpretation</li> <li>• Hearing assessment and aids</li> <li>• Visual and acoustic environments</li> </ul>
Students with physical impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible infrastructure, toilets and washrooms</li> <li>• Furniture adjustments, equipment</li> <li>• Prosthesis</li> <li>• Use of personal assistance</li> <li>• Accessible transport</li> <li>• Medication</li> </ul>
Students with a speech and communication impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitated communication</li> <li>• Augmented communication [high and low tech]</li> <li>• Communication boards</li> <li>• Information grids</li> </ul>
Specific Learning Difficulty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coloured overlays &amp; background</li> <li>• Easy read</li> <li>• Tapes and text to talk</li> <li>• Spell-checkers</li> <li>• Concrete objects</li> </ul>
General Cognitive Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictograms</li> <li>• Small steps curriculum</li> <li>• Easy read</li> <li>• Makaton</li> <li>• Use of symbols &amp; information grids</li> <li>• Concrete objects</li> </ul>
Students with mental health and behaviour conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling and personal support</li> <li>• Differentiated behaviour policy</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Quiet chill-out space</li> <li>• Circles of friends</li> <li>• Collaborative learning and structured day</li> </ul>

## 8.4 Useful publications

### 8.4.1 UNESCO ILFE Toolkit

#### **Introduction: Becoming an Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environment (ILFE)**

Through the Toolkit, users will learn what an ‘inclusive, learning-friendly environment’ is, and how their school and classrooms can create such an environment.

#### **Booklet 1: Becoming an Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environment (ILFE)**

Through the Toolkit, users will learn what an ‘inclusive, learning-friendly environment’ is, and how their school and classrooms can create such an environment.

#### **Booklet 2: Working with Families and Communities to Create of ILFE**

Users will learn how very important families and communities are to the whole process of creating and maintaining an inclusive, learning-friendly environment, as well as how to involve parents and community members in the school, and how to involve children in the community.

#### **Booklet 3: Getting All Children In School and Learning**

Users will learn what barriers exclude rather than include all children in school, how to identify those children who are not in school, and how to deal with barriers to their inclusion in school.

#### **Booklet 4: Creating an Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom**

Users will learn how to create an inclusive

classroom including why becoming inclusive and learning-friendly is so important to children’s achievement, how to deal with the wide range of different children attending the class, and how to make learning meaningful for all.

#### **Booklet 5: Managing an Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom**

Users will learn how to manage an inclusive classroom including planning for teaching and learning, maximizing available resources, managing group work and cooperative learning, as well as how to assess children’s learning.

#### **Booklet 6: Creating a Healthy and Protective ILFE**

Users will learn ways to make the school healthy and protective for all children, and especially those with diverse backgrounds and abilities who are more prone to becoming ill, malnourished or victimized.

After some years advocating for the use of the ILFE Toolkit, UNESCO Bangkok became aware of the need of more specialised booklets for certain topics – among others a specialised booklet on how to include children with disabilities. Here is an overview on the specialised booklets.

#### **Specialized Booklet 1: Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom**

Users will learn how to utilize methods for positive discipline in the inclusive, learning-friendly classroom, build positive student-teacher relationships and create supportive learning environments.

### **Specialized Booklet 2: Practical Tips for Teaching Large Classes**

Users will get practical tips for how to create inclusive, learning-friendly environments in large classes, how to teach effectively and how to evaluate learning in large classes.

### **Specialized Booklet 3: Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings**

Users will learn how to overcome barriers to learning, development and participation for learners with disabilities, and how to use universal design to accommodate diverse needs. Users will also learn more about particular challenges and opportunities related to common impairments.

### **Specialized Booklet 4: Practical Tips for Teaching Multigrade Classes**

Users will learn how to successfully teach groups across grades and manage inclusive, learning-friendly classrooms containing children with diverse backgrounds and abilities. Users will also gain practical approaches to maximizing use of available resources, planning appropriate teaching and learning strategies, developing materials, and assessing learning.



School girl from Pathein © Myanmar Education Consortium (Myint Maung Maung)

*“Promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.”*

*United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, article 1*





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