

Companion Resource to

## **An Introduction to Inclusive Education in Emergencies: A Learning Tool for Organisations of Persons with Disabilities**

### **Section 2: Inclusive Education Frameworks**

This handout is a companion piece to the online learning tool An Introduction to Inclusive Education in Emergency. This document presents key takeaways, further reading, and the answer key associated with Section 2: Inclusive Education Frameworks. This is the second of a series of resources linked to the online learning tool.

#### **Key Takeaways**

Humanitarian workers delivering support in crisis are actioning the rights and inclusive approaches embedded in international frameworks in their day to day work - they are the bridge between human rights on paper, and the fulfilment of those rights for crisis-affected communities. But with their focus on delivery in challenging conditions, sometimes the international frameworks and standards fall out of focus - OPD partners play a key role working in partnership with humanitarian actors and sharing their expertise about the frameworks that protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

#### **The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), specifically Article 24 and its General Comment 4, are key legal frameworks that guide inclusive education. They define the rights of children with disabilities to education and outline obligations for governments and humanitarian actors to ensure these rights are met.

#### **Key Legal Instruments**

The work of humanitarian organisations delivering inclusive education in crisis is rooted in a number of key international frameworks that affirm the right to inclusive education. Often invisible to humanitarian workers on the ground, the influence of these key frameworks have helped to shape what inclusive education in emergencies looks like in practice.

- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Sustainable Development Goal 4
- Dakar Framework for Action
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights

#### **Key Ingredients for Inclusive Education in Emergencies**

The CRPD Committee's General Comment 4 sets out the core features of inclusive education, which OPDs can ensure humanitarian actors take into account in their education in emergencies work:

##### **A "whole systems" approach**

All resources are invested in advancing inclusive education

##### **A "whole educational environment"**

embedding the culture, policies and practices of inclusion

##### **A "whole person" approach**

All resources are invested in advancing inclusive education recognition is given to the capacity of every person to learn, and high expectations are established for all learners. Inclusive education offers flexible curricula and teaching and learning methods adapted to different strengths, requirements and learning styles. The focus is on learners' capacities and aspirations, rather than on content when planning teaching activities.

##### **Supported teachers**

All teachers and other staff receive the education and training they need to give them the core values and competencies to accommodate inclusive learning environments.

##### **Respect for and value of diversity**

All members of the learning community are equally welcome and must be shown respect for diversity.

Companion Resource to

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#### **Respect for and value of diversity**

All members of the learning community are equally welcome and must be shown respect for diversity.

#### **A learning-friendly environment**

Inclusive learning environments are accessible environments where everyone feels safe, supported, stimulated and able to express.

#### **Effective transitions**

Learners with disabilities receive support to ensure the effective transition from learning at school to vocational and tertiary education and, finally, to work (life-long focus).

#### **Recognition of partnerships**

The relationship between the learning environment and the wider community must be recognized as a route towards inclusive societies.

#### **Monitoring**

involves persons with disabilities and their families in the monitoring

### **Applying International Frameworks - the IASC Guidelines**

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) launched [Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#) in 2019. The guidelines set out essential actions that humanitarian actors must take in order to effectively identify and respond to the needs and rights of persons with disabilities who are most at risk of being left behind in humanitarian settings.

#### **Why does knowledge of international frameworks matter?**

Knowledge of these standards helps organisations fulfil their legal and ethical obligations to protect the right to education of all individuals, particularly those with disabilities. Additionally, familiarity with these guidelines enhances coordination with governments and other stakeholders, promoting a unified approach to inclusive education. Organisations have the opportunity to improve educational outcomes for all students, advocate for inclusive policies, and contribute to building resilient education systems that can withstand crises.

The work of humanitarian organisations delivering inclusive education in crisis is rooted in a number of key international frameworks that affirm the right to inclusive education. Often invisible to humanitarian workers on the ground, the influence of these key frameworks have helped to shape what inclusive education in emergencies looks like in practice. Some of these include the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Sustainable Development Goal 4, the Dakar Framework for Action, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **Further Reading**

- [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [CRPD Committee's General Comment 4 on Inclusive Education](#)
- [Inclusion International's Inclusive Education Position Paper](#)
- [How does International law define inclusive EiE?](#)
- [The IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#)

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#### **Answer Key**

The following section covers the questions from the learning tool, with the correct answers to each question.

#### **Which one of the Sustainable Development Goals is relevant for education programming?**

- a. Goal 13
- b. **Goal 4**
- c. Goal 2
- d. Goal 7

The correct answer is "b". Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4) is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." Target 4.1 associated with this goal addresses free primary and secondary education, and Target 4.5 focuses on eliminating discrimination in education which explicitly refers to persons with disabilities. SDG4 is a very important tool in addition to the other legal frameworks that help states commit to inclusive education, and it should be considered in your EiE monitoring.

#### **Which article of the CRPD is most relevant to education in emergencies?**

- a. **Article 24**
- b. Article 25
- c. Article 26
- d. Article 27

The correct answer is "a". Article 24 is a key resource for humanitarian actors. Article 24 of the UN CRPD focuses on the right to education for children with disabilities. It explains that States Parties must ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning opportunities. This means that individuals with disabilities should not be excluded from the general education system based on their disability, and children with disabilities should be able to access free, quality, and compulsory primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others.

#### **The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) distinguishes between accessibility and reasonable accommodation - both of which humanitarian organisations need to deliver in their EiE work. What is the difference between the two concepts?**

- a. Reasonable accommodation refers to making adjustments to the physical environment, while accessibility refers to ensuring that all individuals, including those with disabilities, can participate fully in society.
- b. Reasonable accommodation refers to providing support services to individuals with disabilities, while accessibility refers to making the physical environment accessible.
- c. **Reasonable accommodation is a broader concept that encompasses both physical accessibility and the provision of support services to ensure that individuals with disabilities can participate fully in society. Accessibility applies to physical and digital environments to ensure as many people as possible can access something.**
- d. Reasonable accommodation and accessibility are interchangeable terms that refer to the same concept.

Companion Resource to

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### **Section 2: Inclusive Education Frameworks**

#### **Answer Key**

(continued)

The correct answer is “c”. Article 2 of the CRPD defines reasonable accommodation a broad concept that encompasses both physical accessibility and the provision of support services to ensure that individuals with disabilities can participate fully in society. Accessibility, on the other hand, refers to ensuring that things are accessible to all. This includes features such as ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, and clear signage. While accessibility is an important component of inclusive education and matters for design of schools and curricula, reasonable accommodation builds on that to address the individual needs of learners with disabilities. It may involve providing assistive technologies, modifying curricula, or offering additional support services.

#### **Which of the CRPD Committee’s General Comments focused on inclusive education?**

- a. General Comment 1
- b. General Comment 2
- c. General Comment 3
- d. **General Comment 4**

The correct answer is “d”. The UN CRPD Committee issued [General Comment 4](#) in 2016 to further articulate the right to education for children with disabilities in a vision of inclusion. It explains that inclusive education is not just about integrating students with disabilities into mainstream schools, but transforming the entire education system to ensure it is fully accessible, supportive, and tailored to the diverse needs of all learners.

#### **Which of the following approaches to delivering and resourcing education does General Comment 4 promote as the correct approach?**

- a. **A “whole systems” approach: It means making sure that every part of education—like schools, teachers, and policies—works together to include and support all students, including those with disabilities. Instead of treating inclusion as a separate thing, it’s built into everything, so all children can learn and grow together in the same classrooms;**
- b. A “quota approach”: Resources are allocated for a percentage of classes to provide special education for children with disabilities in the same school as every other kid.
- c. A “distinct budgets” approach: Funding for education for children with disabilities is earmarked by governments and is controlled by a separate department responsible just for the education of children with disabilities.

The correct answer is “a”. General Comment 4 promotes a “whole systems approach.”

In a whole systems approach, inclusion is not treated as a separate responsibility - it is embedded into every part of education - from school policies to teacher training to individual supports.

Companion Resource to

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A Learning Tool for Organisations of Persons with Disabilities**

**Section 2: Inclusive Education Frameworks**

**Answer Key**

**Which of the following approaches to supporting individual students with disabilities in their education does General Comment 4 promote as the correct approach?**

- a. A “whole person” approach: recognition is given to the capacity of every person to learn, and high expectations are established for all learners. This results in the provision of flexible curricula and teaching and learning methods adapted to different strengths, requirements and learning styles;
- b. A “forced integration” approach: Integrating children with disabilities in mainstream schools without support because they need to catch-up with the rest of the class and follow the main school curriculum
- c. A “simplified teaching” approach: A curricula for learners with disabilities is developed and they are taught the separate, easy curriculum with individualised support to make better use of scarce resources.

The correct answer is “a”. General Comment 4 promotes a “whole person approach” in delivering inclusive education. Everyone is capable of learning and gets the support they need to succeed.

**Which of the following statements best captures the approach to inclusive education in emergencies explained in the IASC Guidelines?**

- a. The guidelines recognise that in emergency contexts, humanitarian actors may not always be able to deliver on inclusive education. The guidelines provide no guidance on inclusive education specifically.
- b. The guidelines affirm that all children have a right to inclusive education, but do not give any clear directives for actions humanitarian actors should take.
- c. **The guidelines set out a number of “must do” actions for ensuring inclusive education is available for people with disabilities in emergencies.**
- d. The guidelines do not mention inclusive education.

The correct answer is “c”. The IASC Guidelines go into great detail about barriers to inclusive education in emergencies, and set out a number of “must do” actions that humanitarian organisations need to undertake when implementing inclusive education programming. These must-do actions are across a number of different categories - they range from removing participation barriers to developing partnerships with OPDs, from building capacity of teachers to data collection. The full list of must-do actions can be found in Chapter 12 of the [IASC Guidelines](#).

## Companion Resource to

**In the IASC Guidelines' definition of inclusive education systems, they identify some areas of the education system where delivery must always be fully inclusive. In which of the following areas are humanitarian actors mandated by the guidelines to deliver on inclusion?**

- a. Teaching and curricula
- b. School buildings
- c. Classrooms
- d. Play areas
- e. Transport
- f. Toilets
- g. All of the above

The correct answer is "g". The IASC Guidelines say that inclusive education systems are about including all students and welcoming and supporting them, regardless of background, capacities or requirements. The definition of inclusive education systems used in the IASC Guidelines specifically mentions that teaching, curricula, school buildings, classrooms, play areas, transport and toilets must all be appropriate for all children at all levels.

**Which of the following are must-do actions for humanitarian actors when delivering inclusive education in emergencies?**

- a. Incorporating disability inclusion into education sector plans and strategies.
- b. Providing accessibility and reasonable accommodations, as well as appropriate assistive technologies and learning materials.
- c. Training teachers and education personnel on inclusive education practices.
- d. Providing psychosocial support to children with disabilities and their families.
- e. Adapting teaching methods to cater to diverse learners.
- f. Promoting inclusive classroom practices that foster collaboration and respect.
- g. Involving persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in decision-making processes related to education.
- i. All of the above

The correct answer is "i". All of the above answers are key guidance points from the IASC Guidelines. The [IASC Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action Include](#) a practical checklist on pages 88, 89, and 90 that will provide you with specific steps to implement inclusive education in humanitarian settings.

**If you received this document from a colleague and want to test your own knowledge of inclusive education in emergencies, the tool and its accompanying resources are available to access for free online. Scan the QR code to access [An Introduction to Inclusive Education in Emergencies: A Learning Tool for Organisations of Persons with Disabilities](#).**

