Inclusive education

for persons with disabilities

and development cooperation

INDEX

Introduction

Persons with disabilities represent about 15% out of the world population, 1 billion[1]. They are estimated to live mainly in developing Countries, in poverty and with little chance of survival.

According to the most reliable estimation, about 93 millions of children (1 out of 20 under 14 years of age) are affected by moderate or severe disabilities. In developing Countries, children with disabilities are the most neglected and vulnerable (UNICEF Report 2013 on children and disability: rights without barriers).

Italian cooperation has always been sensitive to inclusive education, as it is shown by several official documents aimed at addressing and planning inclusion. It is aware that inclusion represents one of the main factors promoting change and sustainable development.

For these reasons a great attention has been paid to inclusive approach within the Piano di Azione della Disabilità (Action Plan for Disability) of Italian Cooperation, approved in June 2013 by Directional Committee of DGCS (General Directorate for Developmental Cooperation).
The official document   based on the 2006 UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), signed and ratified by Italy, comes after the Guide Lines on disability approved by DGCS in 2006 and accounts for DGCS Minor Guide Lines.
The Plan, elaborated with the active participation of civil society, foresees five action areas:
1. Policies and strategies
2. Inclusive project planning
3. Accessibility and usability of environment, goods and services
4. Humanitarian aids and emergencies
5. Enhancement of experiences and competencies coming from civil society and enterprises.

The official document pays great attention to inclusive education, which is a core value of inclusion in society.   *"Italian Cooperation recognizes disabled minors' rights as an essential part of the basic human rights; it is strongly engaged in supporting any action fighting against social and educational marginalization concerning Minors with disabilities. This activity aims at guaranteeing disabled Minors' right to education and social, cultural, recreational participation in the Community, as well as any other child. Italian Cooperation attaches great priority in preventing all the factors determining disabilities and removing any obstacles impeding disabled children's full participation in society"*2.

Following the recommendations of the Action Plan, the work group on "inclusive education" has been formed in order to produce a work tool useful to prepare, manage and evaluate ~~of~~ the project proposals in inclusive education, taking into consideration:
a) The typology of intervention, strategies and principles of good cooperation aimed at enhancing and supporting inclusive education;
b) The promotion of human rights, including the right to inclusion and to inclusive education;

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[1] World Health Organization, The World Bank. World report on Disability. Malta, WHO, 2011
[2] DGCS (2012) "Linee Guida sui Minori 2012" in
http://www.cooperazioneallosviluppo.esteri.it/pdgcs/Documentazione/PubblicazioniTrattati/2011-12-12_LineeGuidaMinori2012.pdf, p. 52

c) The development of inclusive education in its wider meaning, that is empowering disabled persons in their life span, their families, the educational agencies and associations in the community.

This document consists in two parts: the first one defines the social and pedagogical principles of inclusive education, and identifies the main methodological and teaching strategies for its implementation; the second one offers a work tool for planning, managing and evaluating project proposals based on inclusive principles and rigorously applying the theoretical framework illustrated before.

1. Human Rights, Right to Inclusion and Right to Education of Persons with Disabilities.

Inclusive education is a process aimed at guaranteeing the right to education for all, independently from diversities, disabilities or psychophysical, socioeconomic and cultural disadvantages. The final aim of inclusive education is not limited to school inclusion, but it is the social inclusion of any person, the promotion of every person's whole development and of the society at large. On this basis, it is important to enhance interventions focused on individuals' and groups' life projects, so that the life project is developed at school as well as in the social context. The school, thus, beside granting the right to education for all (the right both to the access and to participation), would offer educational opportunities to allow all pupils to develop their potentialities and become resources for their communities.

In the following paragraphs, we will try to show how educational processes and social inclusion are strictly connected; we will also refer to current theoretical framework, to current international official documents and conventions stating these rights.

1.1 Right to Inclusive Education and Social Inclusion

The right to education is granted by inclusive education, which is for all children, no one excluded. Inclusive school system acts as a model for an inclusive community; ***thanks to inclusive education, school educates people to social inclusion.***
Inclusive education, premise as well as instrument for building up social inclusion, is a basic right and it is related to the concept of "belonging".

Persons with or without special educational needs can interact at the same level. Inclusive education allows the regular school to welcome every child, so that s/he can learn according to his/her limits and possibilities, thus participating into school life. The perspective suggested here is to consider diversity as a part of normality, as a value, not only at school but also in the social, cultural and professional life.

1.2 International Standards

Minors' right to inclusive education is already recognized at international level, in laws inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All international significant conventions concerning human rights recognize the right to education without discrimination, explicitly including disabilities and any kind of individual diversity.
The UN Convention on Children Rights since 1989 can be considered the most widely ratified legal instrument, and it establishes the standards for the protection of Minors' rights, included the educational ones.

More recently (2006) the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, which Italy signed and ratified, clearly affirms minors' right to inclusive education[3].

1.3 Inclusive Education in the New Agenda for Development 2030

The centrality of inclusive education in guaranteeing the complete right to education for all has been formally recognized by UN, and considered as a basic criterion for education goal, within the UN new sustainable development goals (SDGs). The fourth SDG of the Agenda 2030 launched in New York last September[4] is meant to: "*ensure **inclusive** and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*". It gives a clear orientation to the road map, which must guide international policies until 2030, significantly accelerating the process compared to the previous Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) which accentuated more the access to education than its quality.

In the last 15 years, a significant increase in the rate of enrolment in primary school has been registered. At the same time, in almost half the Countries in the world, children's right to education is not respected. Still 124 millions of children and adolescents (6-15 years) are not enrolled in the school system [5] and great inequalities still exist (due to income, gender, disadvantages, vulnerabilities) which act as barriers towards progress in education.

According to UNESCO estimations, among the children not enrolled in school system 1 out of 3 is affected by a form of disability[6]. The gap between disadvantaged and not disadvantaged students is clear not only in terms of lacking access to school, but also in terms of different results in

learning. UNESCO indeed mentions a global learning crisis, considering that 250 million children do not have basic knowledge of reading and counting; poorer and more vulnerable children are the ones mainly hit by this crisis. Gender is a further factor of vulnerability, especially if associated to disability. Considering the data from UNESCO, on average in world population female pupils are significantly more excluded from the educational system compared to males; as disabled children are more excluded than non-disabled children it appears that disabled girls are the category most at risk of exclusion from the educational system. As UNESCO (see: Education for all. Global monitoring report, 2015) affirms the need to gather more reliable and clear data on disabled girls in school, it means that

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[3] Art. 24 della Convenzione Internazionale sui Diritti delle Persone con Disabilità.

[4] *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development*

[5] 'A growing number of children and adolescents are out of school as aid fails to meet the mark', UNESCO (2015). See: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002336/233610e.pdf.

[6] UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007: 74

even supranational agencies aimed at monitoring and leading the educational policies overlooked the issue of the female students with disability.

The World Education Forum held in Korea last May was a milestone in the final rush of the consulting process on Agenda for education in the framework post 2015. The Incheon Declaration which collects the main results from the Forum, clearly affirms the necessity to enroot the "education goal" on the principle of equity and inclusion; it also establishes that no target in this field can be considered reached if it is not reached by everyone. This will imply a change in the policies of the field and a bigger focus on the more disadvantaged categories. The Declaration mentions clearly the persons with disabilities as the more vulnerable category, which deserves more attention.

ITALIAN LEGISLATION FOR DISABLED STUDENTS' SCHOOL INCLUSION

Italian Constitution decrees (art. 3): "It is a Republic task to remove economic and social obstacles, which, actually limiting citizens' freedom and equality, prevent persons' full development and workers' actual participation to political, economic and social organization."; (art. 34) "School is open to all"; (art 38.3) "Disabled and handicapped persons have right to education and to job training".

In Italy, disabled persons' school inclusion is thus guaranteed by Constitution and further laws favour minors' presence in mandatory school, on the principle that school participation is a real value both for the acquisition of cultural competences and the entire inclusion of the child, beyond school.

The first step happened in 1971 with the promulgation of law 118. This law decrees that mandatory education for disabled pupils has to take place in regular classes in public schools, except for the more severe cases. The same law introduces several facilitations to favour disabled pupils' school attendance (for example, free transportation, removal of architectonic barriers, and so on).

Later, in 1977, law 517 established the principle of inclusion for all disabled pupils in primary and low secondary school, 6-14 years. It introduced the a~~ mandatory practice of common teaching ~~joint~~ planning among all the teachers and provided for a~~ specialized teachers for "teaching support".

In 1987, the "Corte Costituzionale" (High Court with a right to decide for constitutional matters) recognized the right to all pupils with disabilities to attend high secondary school, including students with severe disabilities. The Constitutional Court underlined the obligation for all the authorities involved in school inclusion (school administration, local administrations, Local Health Authorities) to provide for all the services to guarantee school inclusion in high secondary school as well.

Law 104/92 defined the principles for a good quality school inclusion; law 62/2000 established the obligation for "scuole paritarie" (recognized private schools) to enrol pupils with disability.

Further laws in matter of welfare, particularly law 328/2000, valued school role in social inclusion and promoted actions to inter-relate public and private organizations in order to favour and improve minors' inclusion in the educational field.

Last, it is important to mention that the laws concerning teachers' training establish that each teacher receives general knowledge and skills in inclusive education through specific courses and workshops. DM 249/2010 and further decrees establish further specific training for teachers who specialize in support teaching.

2. Inclusion and Education

2.1 The term *Inclusion* in the Educational Field.

The term "inclusione", has been drawn from the English term "Inclusion" to share a common term and concept, that is to say the choice to welcome all individuals to school. This means integration, appreciation of the differences and respect of one's right to be her/himself, with her/his own resources, motivations, expectations.

The ethical and political need to fulfil the right to education for all implies to follow an inclusive approach for individuals both with disability or special educational needs and the vulnerable ones, those at risk of exclusion, due to social factors related to problematic access to school or education, beyond disability: individual, social or community-related disadvantages. In many areas in the world, this kind of condition for exclusion (deriving from social disadvantage: family poverty, gender discrimination, geographical constraints, cultural, religious, political models founded on segregation) is the most relevant phenomenon.

It means that the inclusive school, which is the education approach traditionally considered as the answer to the right of disabled children to education, is the one really able to guarantee the right to inclusion for all. (1)

The term *inclusion* was formally adopted for the first time in the educational field in the *Declaration of Salamanca*[7]. It was consequently recognized at the social and cultural level since 1994. This Declaration marked a shift from special education to be offered to diverse children in separate environments (special schools and special classes), to the diversity as a value to be recognized in the school for all. Indeed, its main goal is the accessibility and the participation of any child, no matter how severe her/his condition is, in order to diminish or avoid any possible disadvantage in the social field.

Twenty years after the Declaration of Salamanca, in June 2014, the members of the *Global Partnership for Education* gathered in Brussels and wanted to confirm and strengthen the commitment to a high quality school inclusion, and they solicited the commitment of all stakeholders called to action in support of children and youngsters with disability.[8]

2.2 Inclusive Education and ICF (International Classification of Functioning)

Inclusive education is founded on the social approach on disability, conceived in the '70s; it offers a different and innovative perspective on disability, in comparison with the bio-medical approach. The social approach underlines a difference between the biological condition (deficit) and the social condition (disability). It favours the active and direct participation of disabled persons and their families in political decisions, focuses the attention on the removal of the economic, political and social barriers that worsen the personal condition of sufferance and discomfort. The bio-medical approach is founded on an individualistic vision of the deficit as pertaining the single individual, while the social approach considers the disability as the resultant of an interaction between the individual and his/her context. It is the context, thus, to be inadequate to welcome the person with disability, from an environmental, cultural and social point of view.

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[7] The World Conference on Special Needs Education was held in Salamanca, Spain in June 1994, with the participation of 92 State Representatives and delegates of 25 International Organizations.
[8] CALL TO ACTION: http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/inclusive-quality-education-all-children-disabilities

The bio-psycho-social approach is an important contribute to the cultural models on disability. It was introduced by the International Classification of Functioning in Disability and Health (ICF), published in 2001 by World Health Organization.

ICF approach is a synthesis between medical and social model, as it highlights the dynamic and reciprocal nature of the interaction between individuals and their context. According to this approach, disability is the result of physical conditions, biological endowment and context-related factors (personal and environmental).

In international debate, it has been underlined that ICF and CRPD must be used as the two guide-line tools in the field of disability: the first one as a technical tool, the second one as a juridical and cultural tool. In this regard, some valuable experiences were carried out in the Balkans. Different cooperation initiatives introduced ICF mostly as a conceptual framework, able to give value to personal factors, context, relational perspective, and quality of educational processes and systems.

2.3 School Inclusion and the Index for Inclusion

The Index for Inclusion[9] underlines the need to go beyond the concept of "special educational needs"[10] and suggests moving forward to the concept of "obstacles to learning and participation" that focuses on the contexts limitations rather than the individuals'. In this perspective, schools are expected to become capable to welcome any child, thanks to the support of every professional actor from educational community, with the cooperation of local networks outside schools and through flexible policies and practices.

Several experiences in cooperation showed how sensitization, training, study and dissemination of the international standards significantly contribute to promote inclusive cultures. Inclusive cultures can be considered the framework for values and relationships to enhance and orient policies aimed at favouring an overall change in the school.

To enhance inclusive practices means realizing interventions which reflect inclusive cultures and policies through numerous aspects, primarily: giving value to human and material resources in school, and to students' educational experiences. They have also to promote any possible connections between the schools and their territories.

In the guidelines presented in the Index for Inclusion, it is underlined that inclusive education implies:

- To give equal value both to pupils and teachers;
- To increase pupils' participation – and to decrease their exclusion – as for cultures, curriculums, and communities in the territory;
- To promote change in the cultures, in the educational policies and in the school practices to fit pupils' diversities;

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[9] Booth T. e Ainscow M. (2002), *Index for inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools,* , Bristol, CSIE; trad. it. Dovigo F. e Ianes D. (a cura di) (2008), *L'index per l'inclusione. Promuovere l'apprendimento e la partecipazione nella scuola,* Trento, Erickson.
[10] Warnok Report 1978 was the first to introduce the concept of SEN: Special Educational Needs.

- To reduce obstacles to learning and to participation of all pupils, with or without special educational needs;
- To consider pupils' differences as resources to learning rather than problems to be fixed;
- To recognize pupils' right to be educated in their own community;
- To recognize school both on behalf of teachers and pupils;
- To emphasize the school role in community building and in promoting values, in addition to learning results;
- To promote the reciprocal support between school and community;
- To recognize that school inclusion is part of a more general social inclusion.

2.4 Inclusive School as Community School: Its Social Role

Inclusive education has to integrate school and extra school dimensions. At school, inclusive education is interpreted as inclusive teaching methodologies; in the extra school environment, it has to be interpreted as community education, disabled persons empowerment, empowerment of disabled persons' associations.

The school plays a relevant social role, especially in contexts where family and community present severe social disadvantages. School social role implies the development of education professionals' additional competences in order to promote the building of a welcoming, inclusive environment.

Inclusive school means school for the community. It is realized in specific territories and within the specific communities living in those territories. Through its activities, a school for the community involves and supports commitment in the community towards the right to education and inclusion. On the other hand, the school takes the community needs into consideration, promotes a common effort towards local development and social cohesion, cooperating, making alliances, subscribing agreements with local institutions, social, economic and cultural stakeholders in the community.

A school for community is social responsible. The social role of school is firstly represented by its mission: education for all, with equality of rights, respecting and valuing diversities.

According to the inclusive approach, the school needs to change its practices and to make efforts towards quality and sustainability. The school social role has to include a vision where the school is an socially committed and responsible institution, which integrates both the cultural mission and the social mission to actively promote the local community participation, all in order to overcome the obstacles

limiting the rights to citizenship, precluding social inclusion, weakening self-determination and emancipation from poverty and violence.

Box - Promotion of Inclusion and "Psychological Clinical Collusion"[11]

It has to be considered that the promotion of an inclusive culture is inspired by values and principles which can often differ from the ideological setting of the context where an intervention in carried on. In other words, supporting the "rights to education", "access to education", "equal opportunities" can be conflicting with cultural settings, which contemplate opposite principles and values, such as exclusion or disparity of rights. Such opposite principles are not necessarily explicitly claimed. Indeed, a context welcoming interventions aimed at promoting inclusion would be in contrast with any principle of inequality or segregation; however, such opposite principles can concur to organize its collusive processes. With the term "collusive processes", we mean here the set of symbolic and unconscious processes shared by the individuals belonging to a given context. The collusive processes organize the relationships among individuals inside the context, their expectancies, their attributions of meaning to relationships and events, their desirable and normative behaviours, the values that the individuals feel right. These dimensions are related to the persons' emotions, so they are noticeably critical as they can elude any process of rational analysis of the problems, possibly conflicting with the solutions that appear to be the best, the more rational solutions, thus ~~so~~ impeding their full accomplishment.

A quite useful recommendation in planning intervention of cooperation is to include in the project proposal the analysis of the collusive settings in the contexts affected by the intervention. This analysis can be based on available sources (official documents, publications, previous interventions reports, and so on) or on specific inquires and research on the field (interviews with key figures, focus groups with segments of population, or specific target groups, and so on).

2.5 Inclusive Teaching Methodologies: from the Right to Education to the Rights to Equality and Diversity.

A real inclusive school acts to guarantee the right to equality and to diversity, that is to guarantee to each individual equal possibilities to develop her/his own abilities towards the complete, personal and social, self-realization. In this perspective, the inclusive school has to remove all barriers to learning related to individual diversities, through pedagogical and teaching models aimed at individualization, respecting learning styles and conditions characterizing every person. It has to value motivations, resources, cultures related to individuals' or social groups specificities through a teaching methodological approach based on personalization. All these factors are necessary to guarantee educational quality to a huge number of persons. Such ~~s~~ teaching

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[11] " the construct of "collusion" refers to the emotional sharing of affective symbolisations of objects within a context and represents the link between individual models and cultural systems of social coexistence. By social coexistence we mean the symbolic component of human relationships based on shared rules which allows people to exchange and live together. Indeed, cultural models do not specifically deal with common sense, in terms of cognitive evaluations, beliefs or stereotypes; rather they include affective meanings which people attribute to reality or social events, and symbolic processes which regulate interpersonal relationships. In this sense, cultural models shape social representations because affective symbolisations that people experience in daily interaction and communication consent to enhance consensus and stability in representations among individuals participating within the same context. The sharing of emotional symbols, which may be either the same or complementary, allows them to relate to each other in a way that mutually satisfies their needs." Carli, R. (1990). Il processo di collusione nelle rappresentazioni sociali [The process of collusion in social representations]. Rivista di Psicologia clinica, 3, 282-296.

methodologies are addressed to everyone, protecting the specificity of anyone. Such an educational environment requires mainly:

– Structural quality of school system (times, spaces, tools);
– Professional quality of educational and administrative staff;
– Pedagogical and cultural project quality that a given society assigns to schools.

Adopting inclusive teaching methodologies implies promoting actions aimed at guaranteeing a learning process as a co-construction and not as the transfer of elements to implement or sum up – as commonly happens in the traditional school. According to this co-constructivist approach, inclusive teaching methodologies promote significant learning about any topics of the school subjects, about the values of solidarity, legality, participation aimed at building each individual's complete active citizenship, for disabled students and the not disabled ones, and for the gifted ones, too.

2.6 Civil Society Role

The paths to strengthen the inclusive education are strictly related to wider processes of social inclusion. The community plays a crucial role in favouring school inclusion and, more generally, a real inclusive culture beyond the school environment. A crucial contribution is thus given by the civil society organizations, included the disabled people's organizations.

2.6.1 Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs)

The Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), formed by disabled children's parents or by wider categories, can play an important role in the field of inclusive education. Firstly, they can support the identification of disabled students' and their families' needs, and contribute to the elaboration of interventions relevant and tailored to the specificity of a given context. Furthermore, they can play a crucial role in representing the persons with disabilities' requests, towards local and national authorities. They can be involved in advocacy actions aimed at strengthening inclusive and fully participative policies and practices.

A further field in which the DPOs can give an important contribution is the *awareness raising* that is increasing school communities' knowledge and awareness on disability and inclusion.

The DPOs are also a vehicle of *empowerment* and development of the disabled persons themselves. In these organizations indeed adults, youngsters and children can find numerous possibilities to enhance their personal and professional abilities, offer reciprocal support, exchange information, contacts and experiences.

Consequently, in carrying on inclusive interventions it is of great importance to involve and to cooperate with the DPOs:

- To make them participating in the interventions from the beginning to their evaluation;
- To strengthen them through capacity building actions, information, and support to their activities;
- To facilitate their creation and development in the contexts where they are not present;
- To support their network with the schools and the other organizations present on the territory;

- To carry on actions aimed at improving the legal frameworks concerning disability and the actual implementation of the laws.

2.6.2 Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

In several Countries CSOs and CBOs play a crucial role in supporting children and more generally persons with disability, offering them various services in their community. This approach, named Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR), which was initially focused mainly on rehabilitation, physiotherapy, assistance provision, and medical interventions, has then changed its orientation and included different kinds of actions aimed at favouring disabled persons' access to health, social, educational services, and other services contrasting poverty.

Community Based Rehabilitation is relevant also for inclusive education, as it represents a reference point for disabled children's families and their communities, promotes the provision of integrated support to the child thanks to the connection with the school and other services, so contributing to the activation of inclusive processes. In the international cooperation initiatives, it is important to create connections with the CBOs and the CSOs, and also to support their capacity building to enhance their competencies.

3. Inclusive Education and International Cooperation

3.1 Strategies of cooperation to promote and sustain inclusive education.

The development of inclusive education focuses on three strategic axes/areas:

1) Promoting experimentation to develop innovative actions and to qualify existing practices which will to be systematized through:

- Introducing project works in all educational fields, in schools and beyond schools;
- Disseminating documents and knowledge concerning the existing inclusive practices;
- Promoting inclusive pilot interventions and schools networks;
- Implementing daily centres and *Respite Centres;*
- Promoting family custody of disabled minors without parental care;
- Favouring work inclusion for disabled persons;
- Implementing: documentation centres for inclusive education; observatories of best practices; centres for teachers' training (for in-service training and management of blended learning training);
- Promoting the inter-institutional and inter-sectorial coordination (school, society, health);
- Promoting the elaboration of Social Plans and Agreements and Local Action Plans for inclusion.

2) To train professionals and volunteers through:

- Training workers from international and local NGOs, DPOs, CBOs to plan interventions for the development of inclusion;

- Training teachers and school personnel to inclusive teaching methodologies, to the social role of the school (schools networks, community network), to the teachers' social abilities;
- Training professionals in the social-educational field, educators and social workers, to case management, to the implementation and management of daily centres and respite centres;
- Training volunteers' trainers, parents and families to take the responsibility of the education aiming at the autonomy of the persons with disability;
- Cooperating with the Universities in order to add training competencies in special pedagogy and inclusive pedagogy as a base for every course in the educational field.

3) To invest on accessibility of the educational infrastructures for disabled minors

One factor, which often prevents disabled persons from a full participation in community life, is the presence of barriers and infrastructural obstacles that in various ways block access to places, goods and services. CRPD art. 9 demands the Nations to be committed in guaranteeing "access to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas".

To invest on educational infrastructures accessibility represents the first step to guarantee to minors with disability the right to culture, to education as granted to the others, in the perspective of Universal Design. Indeed, the Universal Design indicates the realizations of products, environments, programmes and services usable by every person, to the widest extent, without need of adaptation or specialized design.

BOX- guidelines on accessibility standards for buildings financed by DGCS

Coherently with *art*. 9 of the UN Convention and with the Action Plan for Disability of Italian Cooperation, the DGCS approved last July the "Guidelines on accessibility standards for the buildings financed by DGCS". The documents provide with standards to be reached for new or renewed buildings financially supported by DGCS, with the aim to allow everyone, with no discrimination, the access to services and to infrastructures realized by DGCS. Particularly, the Guidelines on accessibility push the DGCS, every time it is involved in building or renewals, thus including educational infrastructures - to comply with the national or local laws on accessibility foreseen by the host Country, (and, when these norms do not exist, to apply the principles affirmed in the art. 9 of UN Convention, starting with the "Universal Design" principle.

3.2 Principles of Good Cooperation for Inclusive Education

Based on the experiences realized so far - at different levels and in different situations - in the field of inclusive education, we would like to focus on these principles of good cooperation for the implementation of inclusive processes:

- The entire educational community is involved: school network, families, local institutions, social and health services, associations. Inclusion indeed has to be promoted patiently and shared with the social context, not only at the level of educational centres.
- Enrolment of disabled professionals within the educational system is favoured and supported, so that their educational competencies contribute to a radical change of the stereotypes on their capacities, beginning from the educational contexts.
- Integrated policies oriented to social inclusion are promoted at the local level, through the proclamation of laws and administrative documents, and through experimentation implemented bottom up, supporting inter-sectorial policies.
- A bottom-up perspective is preferred, in order to enhance the activities of local partners' resources, and to facilitate the direct responsibility in inclusive processes on the part of local administrators, teachers, social workers, and common citizens involved in associations.
- Action-researches are encouraged, and positive field experiments and project proposals containing innovative practices, not necessarily formalized and institutionalized, are supported.
- Long-lasting projects (4-6 years) are supported, in order to allow the innovative practices to be tested, evaluated and systematized.
- Social-educational innovative practices are promoted in order to highlight significant experiences which fulfil everyone's needs, independently from gender, age, special needs, and culture.
- Statistical data collection and mapping are encouraged in order to reach a greater knowledge concerning minors/students with disability, to gather aggregated information on the context of intervention and on the impact of the implemented actions. These activities are in line with local policies in matter of statistics, and realized in synergy with the accountable offices. At the same way, it is important to support these research activities in cooperation with universities and public or private institutions.

Sustainability of the intervention is granted by the capacity of the initiative to produce and reproduce benefits over time, on the financial, economical, institutional, socio-cultural, environmental, technological areas of intervention.

4. The Work Tool

The following work tool is designed as part of a process aimed at qualifying cooperation interventions in the inclusive education field.

The tool refers to the promotion of "adequate practices" for promoting disabled persons' school and social inclusion, taking into account the specificities of the context of operations.

With the tool described below, annexed to this document, we recommend the analysis of the three basic life phases of a project: i) the project proposals; ii) the processes activated during implementation; iii) the results. The tool is presented according to a complete and coherent framework of criteria in the cultural, political and operative dimensions as showed in paragraph 2.3.

Considering the current scientific international debate on the procedures and the instruments of assessment in social field, qualitative and quantitative indicators have to be integrated.

Specifically, this tool can be used by specialized professionals and by operators involved in social inclusion processes. It serves the purpose to:

a) Analysing a cooperation intervention supporting inclusive education through the assessment of the project proposal, of the processes implemented, of the reached results;

b) Providing a guideline to launch initiatives of cooperation promoting inclusive education.

Annex 1 – Analysis and evaluation table

PHASE of the project cycle	WHAT should be reviewed	CRITERIA	TOOLS
Formulation of project proposal	Project document	• Political aspect • Cultural aspect Operational aspect *related to inclusive education*	Annex 1 (guidance for the writing and analysis of the project proposal)
		Partnerships foreseen	Annex 2
Project implementation	Implemented processes	• Political aspect • Cultural aspect Operational aspect *related to inclusive education*	Annex 1 (monitoring of implemented activities in relation to the objectives and expected results)
		Partnerships implemented	Annex 2
Conclusion of the project	achieved results	• Political aspect • Cultural aspect Operational aspect *related to inclusive education*	Annex 1 (assessment of achieved results and overall impact of the initiative)
		Partnerships consolidated	Annex 2

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

COUNTRY:	
PROJECT TITLE:	
SUMMARY:	
MAIN PARTNER (institutional or local):	
STAKEHOLDERS:	
DURATION (number of months, start and end dates):	
MODALITY OF IMPLEMENTATION:	
FUNDING (budget and source):	
OVERALL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:	
EXPECTED RESULTS:	
MONITORING AND EVALUATION (how is it carried out and existing reports):	
SUSTAINABILITY:	

FIRST CRITERIA: POLITICAL ASPECT

Indicators	Yes	No	Qualitative information	Quantitative information
The project foresees:				
1. Alignment of the intervention with existing local legislations and policies promoting inclusion in education, health and social sector; *E.g. The planned interventions aim to strengthen the implementation of inclusive education policies.*			If yes, which local legislations and policies?	
2. Creation and/or use of formal consultation mechanisms with institutional and civil society stakeholders relevant to the issue of inclusion; *E.g. Realization of inter-institutional round tables and/or national observatories on inclusive practices in school or extra-school settings.*			If yes, what kind of consultations and with which stakeholders?	N° of institutional stakeholders:
3. Innovations that after being positively evaluated are generalized at system level and			If yes, which innovations?	

become part of national norms and procedures; *E.g. Piloting of new solutions that can be possibly scaled up and become institutionalized.* *Use of innovative methodologies, tools and approaches that were piloted in other contexts.*		
4. Promotion of DPOs initiatives, demands and priorities; *E.g. Involvement of DPOs in consultation and coordination round tables on inclusive education policies.*	If yes, through which actions?	
5. Synergies with other inclusive education and social inclusion programs active in the country; *E.g. Presence of coordination mechanisms with donors, institutional stakeholders and local organizations involved in the sector.*	If yes, which synergies? Which are the methodologies?	
6. Strengthening of intersectorial initiatives and policies in favour of educational and social inclusion. *E.g. Promote action plans bridging social, education and health policies.*	If yes, which ones and how?	

		N° of training/education programs:
7. Development of programs at national level aimed at giving competences to socio-educational staff on inclusive education and social inclusion; *E.g. Collaboration with the Ministry of Education and local Universities in the design and set up of pre-service and in-service courses and curricula for teachers, social workers, etc.*	If yes, which training/education programs?	
8. Contribution to reviewing, strengthening or development of laws, policies and action plans on inclusive education; *E.g. Development of national action plans for removing infrastructural barriers.*	If yes, which policies? Which are the methodologies?	
9. Support to local or national authorities in the allocation or better distribution of resources in favour of inclusive education; *E.g. Revision of municipal budgets dedicated to schools and identification of resources to be used for strengthening inclusion.*	If yes, at which level and how?	

SECOND CRITERIA: CULTURAL ASPECT

Indicators	Yes	No	Qualitative information	Quantitative information
The project foresees:				
10. Awareness activities on issues related to diversity and inclusion targeting local communities; *E.g. Realization of thematic cine-forums on inclusion for the local communities.*			If yes, what kind of activity?	N° of activities: N° of beneficiaries:
11. Dissemination of international standards underlying all inclusion processes, like CRPD, ICF, CRC, CEDAW, Index for Inclusion etc.; *E.g. Production and dissemination of child-friendly versions of the CRPD and CRC in different formats, to schools and other local institutions and organizations.*			If yes, which ones?	N° of copies and Formats:
12. Involvement of local media for the realization of awareness campaigns on the rights of persons with disabilities in schools and community; *E.g. Involvement of local radios in school projects fostering inclusion with the participation of teachers and students.*			If yes, which media? Which are the methodologies?	People expected: N° of radio/TV broadcasts: N° of articles in print and digital media: N° of audio-visual products:

13. Employment of human resources with competences on the issue of inclusion in the overall coordination and management of the project; *E.g. The members of the operations unit and other project management structures have previous professional experience and/or knowledge related to these issues*	If yes, what kind of previous professional training and experince?	
14. Realization of training activities on issues related to inclusion for the staff coordinating and managing the project; *E.g. Training dedicated to members of the operational unit and project management staff.*	If yes, what kind of training?	N° of hours of training: N° of courses/sessions:
15. Activities in line with international reference standards[12]; *E.g. Project activities promote the right to education for all as stated in the CRPD and CRC. The initiative supports an inclusive education system also through the gradual closure of special school/classes.*	If yes, which standards? which are the methodologies?	

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[12] International standards refer here to documents, legislations, declarations, conventions and classifications adopted at international level orienting the approach and implementation of interventions in support of persons with disabilities in different contexts. The main standards to be mentioned are: ICF (International Classification of Functioning) (OMS,2001), CRDP (Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) (ONU,2006), Index for Inclusion (Booth, Ainscow, 2002), Salamanca Declaration (Unesco, 1994), Madrid Declaration (UE, 2002).

16. Critical adaptation of the overall inclusion issues to the specific context. *E.g. Involving special schools in the inclusive process without pretending their immediate closure in case the minimum preconditions for sustainability do not exist at policy, cultural and practical level.*		If yes, which are the methodologies?

THIRD CRITERIA: OPERATIONAL ASPECT

Indicators The project foresees:	Yes	No	Qualitative information	Quantitative information
17. Collaboration of various local stakeholders during the formulation phase, ensuring a shared vision of the concept of inclusion; *E.g. Realization of focus group discussions, interviews, field visits, etc.*			If yes, how?	N° of stakeholders:
18. Promotion of welcoming attitudes and practices towards all students, regardless of their abilities, in regular public schools; *E.g. Awareness activities targeting all school staff involved in the project in order to remove cultural barriers to educational inclusion.*			If yes, through which actions?	N° of schools:

19. Participation of families to education projects proposed by the school or other non-school educational entities, with particular attention to families of children with disabilities; *E.g. Planning of awareness activities that foresee an active role of families (with and without children with disabilities).*	If yes, through which projects?	N° of families:
20. Support to school initiatives involving local communities in teaching and/or educational planning, with particular attention to groups or individuals at risk of exclusion; *E.g. Involvement of representatives of local communities in teaching activities or realization of open days in target schools.*	If yes, which ones?	N° of schools: N° of community representatives:
21. Introduction in schools of innovative teaching methodologies fostering inclusion; *E.g. Pilot activities based on cooperative learning, peer education, practical laboratories, individualized educative projects, etc.*	If yes, which are the innovative methodologies?	N° of schools:

Item	If yes question	Count
22. Actions in favour of accessibility of schools at structural and infrastructural level (art 9 CRPD); *E.g. specific interventions on school infrastructure; organization of school spaces; provision of materials and furniture; etc.*	If yes, which kind of actions?	N° of schools:
23. Activation of support staff for students with disabilities in schools; *E.g. Introduction of staff to support inclusive education through the involvement of psychologists, teaches, social workers, volunteers, parents, etc.*	If yes, which kind of support staff? With which role?	
24. Promotion of social volunteering in favour of inclusive processes inside and outside the school; *E.g. Involvement of NGOs and volunteers associations in round tables and networks that develop inclusive projects.*	If yes, who is involved in volunteering activities and with which role?	N° of volunteers:
25. Assessment of initial competence levels of stakeholders involved in eventual training and/or technical assistance on inclusion; *E.g. Realization of a preparatory baseline assessment to training activities in order to evaluate knowledge on inclusive pedagogy and teaching methodologies of the participants .*	If yes, which assessment activities?	N° of reports:

26. Capacity building activities on inclusion and disability directed to: • national and local institutional stakeholders; • key stakeholders from school system; • social and health workers; • civil society; *E.g. Realization of specific training courses on the basics of inclusive education, early detection, etc..* *experience exchanges regional and/or international level.*	If yes, which are the topics of the activities of capacity building? Which are the methodologies of implementation?	Number of courses/sessions and length: Number of participants to trainings: Number of participants to exchanges:
27. Cooperation among schools, health and social services (public and private day care centres, DPOs and civil society associations); *E.g. Development of protocols of actions shared among the different services in target areas; creation of interdisciplinary groups; etc.*	If yes, what forms of cooperation?	N° of protocols/agreements: N° of coordination round tables:
28. Participation of people with disabilities and their organizations in the different phases of formulation, implementation and evaluation of the project.	If yes, which are the methodologies?	

Activity	If yes...	N°
E.g. The scientific committee of the project foresees a representative from DPOs.		
29. Participation of children beneficiaries to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of project activities. *E.g. Consultations with children through interviews, focus group discussions, etc.*	If yes, which are the methodologies ?	
30. Promotion and/or strengthening of local services, even self-managed, that persons with disabilities and/or social disadvantage and their families can refer to; *E.g. Activation of local resource centres fostering social inclusion of children with disabilities or in social disadvantage, in synergy with social, health and education services; Activation of respite centres, day care centres, summer camps for children with disabilities or in a situation of social and cultural disadvantage.*	If yes, what kind of services?	N° of services:
31. Promotion of preparatory activities to employment of persons with disabilities, also in collaboration with reference public institutions and private sector; *E.g. Experience exchanges with the private sector; provision of grant-assisted jobs; internships with local enterprises; etc.*	If yes, which ones?	N° of enterprises: N° of internships: N° of grant-assisted jobs:

32. Realization of mapping and data collection activities; *E.g. Data collection on the presence of children with disabilities in schools; technical assistance for statistical activities related to social inclusion; development of IT systems in support of data collection and disaggregation.*	If yes, which ones?	N° of publications: N° of data base:
33. Research activities related to educational inclusion of persons with disabilities; *E.g. Financing of researches and studies on inclusive education; provision of scholarships for researchers; realization of focus group discussions.*	If yes, which ones?	N° of reports: N° of scholarships: N° of national researchers: N° of international researchers:

NOTES – *Highlight any other strengths of the project that were not mentioned in the assessment grid.*
Provide additional details and comments in relation to the items that you answered with "No", specifying the indicator number.

Annex 2 - Chart for the identification of stakeholders

Chart for the identification of stakeholders	
Type of Stakeholders foreseen	**Role of stakeholders foreseen** (for each type mention the specific actors, functions, institutions) *Feel free to add lines as needed*
Local institutions *E.g. Representatives of social and health services, representatives of education services, municipalities, local registration authorities, etc.*	
National institutions *E.g. Representatives of the Ministries of Education, Social welfare and Health, Ministerial focal point for disability, etc.*	
Universities *E.g. Professor of special needs education of local university*	
Civil society *E.g. DPOs spokesperson at local level*	
Other *(Feel free to add lines as needed)*	

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