

## GUIDANCE NOTE



# Criteria for the World Bank's Disability-Inclusive Investment Project Financing (IPF) in Education

Updated April 2021



**WORLD BANK GROUP**  
Education



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## CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgments .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>List of Acronyms .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I. Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>II. Key Concepts .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>III. Operationalizing Disability-Inclusive Education in New Projects .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>IV. The Four Criteria .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Criterion 1: Stakeholder Engagement .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Criterion 2: Analysis .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Criterion 3: Inclusive Project Design .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Criterion 4: Monitoring/reporting .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>V. Applying the Criteria to Projects Under Implementation .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Appendix:</b>	
<b>Disability-Inclusive Project Worksheet .....</b>	<b>21</b>

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1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433

Telephone: 202-473-1000

Internet: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CRPD</b>	<b>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</b>
<b>EMIS</b>	<b>Education Management Information System</b>
<b>ESSP</b>	<b>Education Sector Support Program</b>
<b>IPF</b>	<b>Investment Project Financing</b>
<b>IRI</b>	<b>Intermediate Results Indicator</b>
<b>M&amp;E</b>	<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>
<b>PAD</b>	<b>Project Appraisal Document</b>
<b>PDO</b>	<b>Project Development Objective</b>
<b>SDGs</b>	<b>Sustainable Development Goals</b>
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Stakeholder Engagement Plan</b>
<b>ToR</b>	<b>Terms of Reference</b>
<b>UDL</b>	<b>Universal Design for Learning</b>
<b>UNICEF</b>	<b>United Nations Children's Fund</b>



# I. Introduction

This Guidance Note is intended to assist task teams in applying the *Education Global Practice's Criteria for Disability-Inclusive Investment Project Financing (IPF) in Education*. Its goal is to help teams understand how to make projects disability-inclusive and what needs to be included in an IPF project's documentation so that the project can be coded by the Education Global Practice as meeting the criteria. The note includes answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) and relevant samples from real project documents (lightly edited for clarity).

The Guidance Note is focused on operational questions and is not intended to provide a comprehensive menu of interventions a team may wish to consider in project design. Teams engaged in project dialogue or preparation that would like more information on options to make their project more inclusive should use this document in conjunction with the *Inclusive Education Resource Guide*,<sup>1</sup> which provides more ideas and links to resources. The resource guide and other key documents are available online, at the *Inclusive Education Thematic Group* web page (which can be accessed by typing "inclusiveeducation" into the WBG browser when connected to the intranet).

This effort to formalize our operational commitment to inclusive education builds on a large body of existing work carried out both at the World Bank and externally. That work includes work on *Safe and Inclusive Schools*, part of the current *Education Approach* in the Education Global Practice of the World Bank. The criteria are also aligned with the *Environmental and Social Framework* (ESF) and its supporting documents, the *ESF Good Practice Note on Non-Discrimination and Disability*, the *World Bank Directive Addressing Risks and Impacts on Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Groups*, and the *Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework*. This last



framework is built on the guiding principles of the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*,<sup>2</sup> which has been ratified by all of the World Bank's shareholders and most of our client countries. The criteria are also aligned with the International Development Association's (IDA's) *IDA19 replenishment*, which has four cross-cutting issues: debt, disability, human capital, and technology. The criteria aim to support achieving the first corporate commitment of the *10 commitments on disability inclusive development* to ensure that all World Bank education projects will be disability-inclusive by 2025. The criteria recognize the *Human Capital Index* and early warning indicators, such as *learning poverty*, for measuring progress toward achieving the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, especially *Goal 4*. The criteria also highlight the critical role of education in disability-inclusive development.

The Regional Inclusive Education Focal Points and the global team are available to help identify inclusive approaches and answer questions about the criteria. Please contact Hanna Alasuutari ([halasuutari@worldbank.org](mailto:halasuutari@worldbank.org)), Global Thematic Lead for Inclusive Education, for more information.

<sup>1</sup> The *Inclusive Education Resource Guide* is one of the recently developed resources that provides suggestions on how World Bank education projects can become more inclusive, beginning from the project preparation and design stages.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)* and *The New Urban Agenda* for more information.





## II. Key Concepts

**Inclusive education** requires a profound cultural shift to attain *one system of education for all learners at all levels of education*—early childhood, primary, secondary, and post-secondary. This includes, but is not limited to, supports for learners with disabilities.<sup>3</sup> In this transformation toward equity and inclusion, school systems must equip teachers, school leaders, and other staff with skills, knowledge, and resources to support the learning of all students in accessible environments. These changes also require attention to the unique context of each country and a whole-of-government approach. Building one system for all learners requires actions to ensure inclusion of ethnic minorities, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, and other marginalized groups.

**Disability** has evolved as a concept over time and is now understood as a social, rather than medical, concept. Disability resides not in a person's specific impairment, but rather in the interactions between that impairment and attitudinal and environmental barriers they face. The [UN CRPD](#), adopted in 2006, recognizes persons with disabilities as those individuals “who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (CRPD, 2006, Article 1). One billion people, or 15 percent of the world's population, experience some form of disability. Most of them live in developing countries.

**Intersectionality** between disability, gender, ethnicity, language, religion, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity or other identity can result in multiple forms of exclusion and discrimination. For example, a woman with disability who is also part of an ethnic minority may experience greater exclusion than a



person with only some of those identities. A truly inclusive approach must also recognize and address inequities within the population of learners with disabilities, such as gaps in available services between urban and rural settings or between different types of disabilities. Multisectoral collaboration among the education, social protection, health, social, and other sectors to build more inclusive education systems and services, as well as more inclusive societies, is also highly encouraged. Promoting the full participation of persons with disabilities in society is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which pledges that no one will be left behind.

Education is a critical component of improving human capital formation, and ensuring **disability-inclusive education** can be transformative in bringing persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups out of poverty. However, inaccessible facilities, inadequate supports, and cultural norms often limit children with disabilities' access to education.

<sup>3</sup> For references, see UNESCO's [Global Education Monitoring Report, 2020](#) and the [GLAD Network Infographic on Inclusive Education](#).

The World Bank's work in ensuring equity and inclusion in education is guided by the following key concepts:

■ **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** is an approach to teaching and learning that acknowledges that in any classroom all learners are different. Learners understand, process, and express things differently from one to the next. UDL asserts that teaching and learning should utilize a multitude of methods to support all learners, including but not limited to learners with disabilities. It involves three key principles of teaching so that it provides multiple means of (1) *engagement*, by helping students stay motivated to learn through a variety of methods; (2) *representation*, by having content presented in a variety of ways; and (3) *action and expression*, by having students show what they have learned in a variety of ways. By employing various means of these three principles, learning achievement for all students can improve.

■ The **twin-track approach** to project design means that projects can consider either a general or a targeted approach to disability inclusion, or both. The project design can (1) take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can both participate in and benefit from the project *in*

*general*, and/or (2) incorporate *specific activities* targeted to support, benefit, and empower persons with disabilities.

■ **Reasonable accommodation** means necessary and appropriate modification or adjustment, where needed in a particular case, without imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms (CRPD, Article 2).

The reasonable accommodations and considerations for accessibility or specific supports are different from person to person, depending on the type of disability and other factors. It is important that accommodations and accessibility measures be provided based on the learner's needs. Accommodations may include ensuring accessible communications and websites, considerations for adjusted levels of lighting, accessible facilities, or teaching and learning materials available in accessible language and formats for all students (e.g., Braille, audiobooks, sign language resources, large print, graphics, multimedia, and through assistive technology such as screen readers). Reasonable accommodations in assessment can include, for example, Braille testing, online access to examinations, or extra time.



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### III. Operationalizing Disability-Inclusive Education in New Projects

To accelerate global action for disability-inclusive development, the World Bank Group, together with many other stakeholders, made [10 commitments on disability inclusion](#) at the Global Disability Summit in July 2018. The systematic inclusion of persons with disabilities in World Bank operations is essential to fully achieve the World Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity.

The first of the 10 commitments is *to ensure that all World Bank-financed education projects and programs will be disability-inclusive by December 2025*. To achieve this goal, all new education projects that were at the concept note stage as of the begin-

ning of FY2021 must meet the criteria. In addition, some projects already under implementation or in advanced stages of preparation may need to take further actions if they are still being implemented in 2025 ([see page 21](#)). Active projects that will close before December 2025 are, of course, encouraged to work toward meeting the criteria as well and will be provided the same level of support.

The [Criteria for Disability-Inclusive IPF in Education](#) were developed within the Education Global Practice, guided by the Regional Inclusive Education Focal Points and Quality Review Teams of all units. To be coded as disability-inclusive, a project will need to address all of the following four criteria:

	<b>Criterion 1: Stakeholder Engagement</b>
	The stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) includes meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders, beginning with project preparation.
	<b>Criterion 2: Analysis</b>
	The Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) includes an analysis of disability and disability-inclusive education in the country context, which is briefly summarized in the Sectoral and Institutional Context of the project appraisal document (PAD).
	<b>Criterion 3: Inclusive Project Design</b>
	The project contains (1) at least one inclusive design feature in a general education activity, and/or (2) at least one specific activity targeted to benefit and empower learners with disabilities (twin-track approach).
	<b>Criterion 4: Monitoring/reporting</b>
	During implementation, the project collects and reports feedback on both process and outcomes for project beneficiaries with disabilities.



*In addition to meeting the four criteria individually, the project must take a coherent approach across criteria. It must be clear from the PAD that the consultation and analysis were used to inform the project design and that the monitoring and reporting are relevant to the inclusive features of the design.*

Although the criteria are project-focused, they are ultimately a means to the end of making the World Bank a strategic partner for governments in building more inclusive education systems. Internally, this means that we are committed to raising awareness among Bank staff and to providing more professional development opportunities so that proficiency in inclusive education is mainstreamed. Externally, this means incorporating disability inclusion seamlessly in our dialogue with clients, across different types of engagement (lending operations, analytical and advisory services, technical dialogue, and other forms of interaction).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE FOUR CRITERIA

### **FAQ #1: Should the project address one or more specific disabilities, or consider all learners as final beneficiaries?**

The project should take seriously the inclusion of all learners but also do what makes sense given the scope of the project and the country context. Stakeholder engagement (criterion 1) and analysis (criterion 2) are intended to help teams identify the best opportunities for action within the scope of the project. Teams should consider the principles of UDL in including all learners, inclusive of learners with disabilities, when designing any education intervention. As per the twin-track approach, these may be general (e.g., incorporating strategies for inclusion in school leader training) or targeted (e.g., provision of assistive devices such as hearing aids for hard-of-hearing learners).

### **FAQ #2: Who will decide if a project meets the criteria or not?**

The process will consist of a combination of self-reporting and spot verification. With the support of the unit's Regional Inclusive Education Focal Points and Quality Review Teams, each project team will report on how the project meets the four criteria. To be

recognized as disability-inclusive, a project should address the four criteria in the project documents and complete Disability-Inclusive Project Worksheet (see Appendix). Teams can reach out to the Education Global Practice Inclusive Education Thematic Group and/or engage with expert consultants for support, as needed. The Global Inclusive Education Guidance Team, including the Global Lead for Inclusive Education, will review a random sample of projects (1–2 projects in each region per year). The process will be reviewed and revised based on lessons learned after 18 months of implementation.

### **FAQ #3: Are projects already under implementation required to meet the criteria if they are still under implementation in 2025?**

Yes, any project that is active on December 31, 2025, and thereafter is expected to meet the criteria. While most projects by then will have met the criteria during preparation, projects that are already under implementation can be “retrofit,” as described later in this document. In this sense, the criteria differ from the Gender Tag, for which projects are evaluated once and for all after Board approval. Teams may want to consider the midterm review as an opportunity to begin a dialogue with clients about disability inclusion in projects that do not already have an inclusive design.



## IV. The Four Criteria

### Criterion 1: Stakeholder Engagement

*The SEP includes meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders, beginning with project preparation.*

The main objective of the first criterion is to understand the disability-inclusive education landscape in the country context. The SEP is already part of the Environmental and Social Framework, which should include meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders. The project team should engage from the beginning of project preparation—for example, with students with and without disabilities, parents of students with and without disabilities, general education teachers, organizations representing persons with disabilities, and other civil society organizations involved in inclusive education activities in the country context. Another aim of this criterion is to build the commitment of local stakeholders by including them in meaningful consultations.

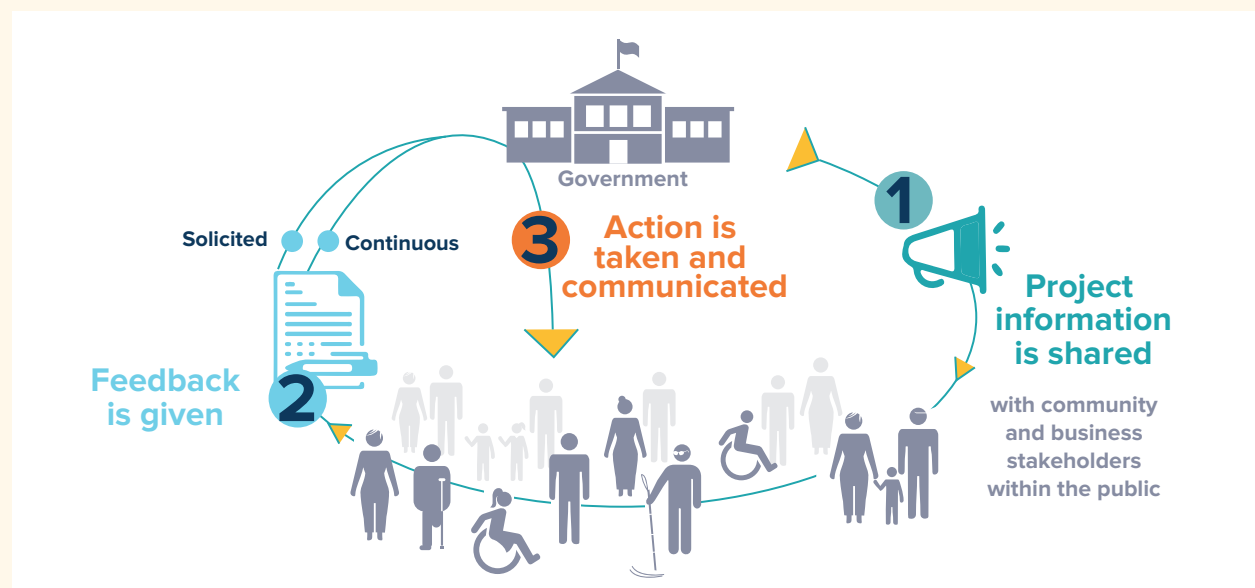
These consultations should be led by the government, the Ministry of Education, and/or another ministry responsible for the education sector with

the World Bank team's support. Through consultations, barriers to education and learning for persons with disabilities and other persons in vulnerable situations can be identified, and this in turn can inform project planning. It is critical to identify diverse stakeholders and consider their roles and resources in supporting inclusive education planning and implementation.

Stakeholder engagement is a two-way interaction between stakeholders and the government's implementing agencies that gives everyone a voice. This feedback can then be used to improve the intermediate and final development outcomes of the intervention (see Figure 1). and contribute to empowerment of project beneficiaries.

The PAD should reference the key outcomes of the consultations that help inform the design of the project.

**Figure 1. Feedback loops created between government and stakeholders**  
(Modified from Sierra Leone Free Education Project SEP)



Finally, stakeholder engagements should themselves make reasonable accommodations to ensure participation of persons with disabilities. This may include, as appropriate, presenting information using multiple/differentiated measures and accessible formats (e.g., Braille, large-print or easy-to-read formats, sign language), beginning with project preparation and throughout the project life. In-person consultations should be held at accessible venues. Additionally, it is vital to implement accessible grievance redress mechanisms (GRMs). Governments should be encouraged to draw on the experience and resources of local groups to assist in making the consultations and GRMs accessible.

## EXAMPLE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### Saint Lucia

#### Human Capital Resilience Project (P170445)

The project included consultations with the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities during preparation and as part of its SEP. In line with these consultations, project activities include technical and vocational education and training (TVET) providers to address bias against persons with disabilities and strategies to promote greater inclusion. In addition, the project will ensure that students in all five special schools will have access to at least one TVET qualification linked to labor-market needs, as part of one of the Disbursement-Linked Results (DLRs).



GPE/MARCELLUS ALBERTIN

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### FAQ #1: Is there any guidance on respectful and inclusive language for education project documents?

“People-first” language is recommended for education project documents. People-first language is based on the idea that a person should not be identified by their disability. For example, “children with visual disabilities” is preferred to “blind children” or “the blind.” Note that individual people with disabilities have different preferences when referring to their disability, and this might vary among different country contexts, with some individuals preferring identity-first language (e.g., “Deaf person”). For persons with disabilities and for documents, however, people-first language is preferred at this time. In addition, avoid using discriminative terms such as *special needs* or *students/learners/children with special needs*. *Students/learners or children with disabilities* is a recommended term. Some education systems still use *special educational needs* or *students/learners/children with special/diverse educational needs* as well.

### FAQ #2: What are best practices for engaging with organizations of persons with disabilities?

The first criterion, stakeholder engagement, enables teams to involve the representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities along with other key stakeholders at the beginning of their projects. Teams should find out about the organizations of persons with disabilities active at the local, national, regional, and international levels. Listening to the experience of persons with disabilities and partnering with organizations of persons with disabilities who have experience in education-sector activities or broader social inclusion is useful when designing and implementing disability-inclusive education projects. Organizations of persons with disabilities could support education projects, for example in community sensitization and outreach, as well as aid in identifying persons with disabilities.





## Criterion 2: Analysis

***The Environmental and Social Assessment includes an analysis of disability and disability-inclusive education in the country context, which is briefly summarized in the Sectoral and Institutional Context of the PAD.***

The PAD should discuss the parts of the analysis that provide a technical rationale for the inclusive activities and/or inclusive design feature(s) in the project. The relevant analysis will differ from project to project. For example, the analysis could include disability-disaggregated data in the beneficiary population who will be served by the project, if available. It may also include a discussion of inclusion-focused sectoral policies or plans that the project will help the government implement, where relevant.

In situations where elements of an inclusive system are missing—for example, if there are no disaggregated data on disability or no longer-term planning on inclusive education system development in the country—the context section can discuss this omission, if applicable, and outline how the World Bank or other partners will assist the government in conjunction with the project. These examples are not exhaustive, and other types of analysis may be relevant if they support the actions taken in the project to make education more inclusive.

### EXAMPLES OF ANALYSIS IN PADS

#### The Gambia

#### Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) (P162890)

Since good data on students with disabilities in the Gambia are not available, support to these students is limited. The Gambia has a twin-track approach to providing access for students with disabilities and/or special educational needs. Students with more severe disabilities go to one of three special schools in Banjul. As a matter of policy, students with moderate disabilities are accommodated in mainstream schools wherever possible, but specialized equipment (e.g., hearing aids, glasses, Braille reading materials, lamps, wheelchairs) or adequate learning support is rarely available, and the provision of teacher training to support inclusion and learning of students with disabilities is not widely available either. As part of the ESSP, the government has committed itself to inclusive education and aims to enhance support to students. Disability-disaggregated data collection and the development of inclusive Education Management Information System (EMIS) are part of the activities.



GPE/JIM CHAM

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANALYSIS

### **FAQ #1: What are potential sources of data on the prevalence of disability?**

Two good places to look for data are surveys, such as Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) or Surveys of Living Conditions; and data contained in EMIS. The [Profiles Enhancing Education Reviews \(PEER\)](#) part of the [2020 Global Education Monitoring Report](#) describes laws and policies on inclusive education, including the collection of data, in most countries.

### **FAQ #2: There do not seem to be any data related to disability in the country context. What should I do?**

In this case, teams are strongly encouraged to discuss with clients the possibility of building the collection of disability-disaggregated data into the project activities or M&E framework and upcoming education sector surveys. The [Washington Group Short Set on Functioning \(WG-SS\)](#) and the [Washington Group-UNICEF Child Functioning \(WG-CFM\)](#) are highly recommended for their simplicity and international comparability. The WG-SS was developed, tested, and adopted by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics for use in censuses and surveys. The brevity of the module—six questions—makes it well suited for inclusion in a variety of surveys to disaggregate outcome indicators by disability status. Questions focus on difficulties people have seeing, hearing, walking or climbing stairs, remembering or concentrating, self-care, and communication (expressive and receptive).

The WG-SS can be applied to children, with a knowledgeable proxy respondent providing the information, but it was designed for adults and excludes key aspects of child development important for identifying disability. The WG-CFM provides a set of questions designed specifically for children. The [Washington Group website](#) and its [Question Sets](#) contain sets of questions suitable for early years, general education, and skills (labor force) settings. There is also supporting documentation, including information for translation, cognitive testing, question specifications and interview administration guidance, and analytic guidelines, including SPSS, SAS and STATA syntaxes. See also the World Bank publica-

tion, [Disability Measurement in Household Surveys](#), which supports the implementation of the Washington Group Short Set (WG-SS) in multi-topic household surveys, towards improving the collection of disaggregated disability data.

### **FAQ #3: How can we ensure that the disability-inclusion is properly addressed in the social assessment and other analytical work of the project?**

Disability inclusion in education requires a multisectoral and multi-professional approach. It is critical that the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the social assessment and any other analytical work explicitly mention the need to cover disability from the social and educational perspectives.

### **FAQ #4. What should be taken into account when considering the analysis of and planning for effective mechanisms for financing inclusive education systems?**

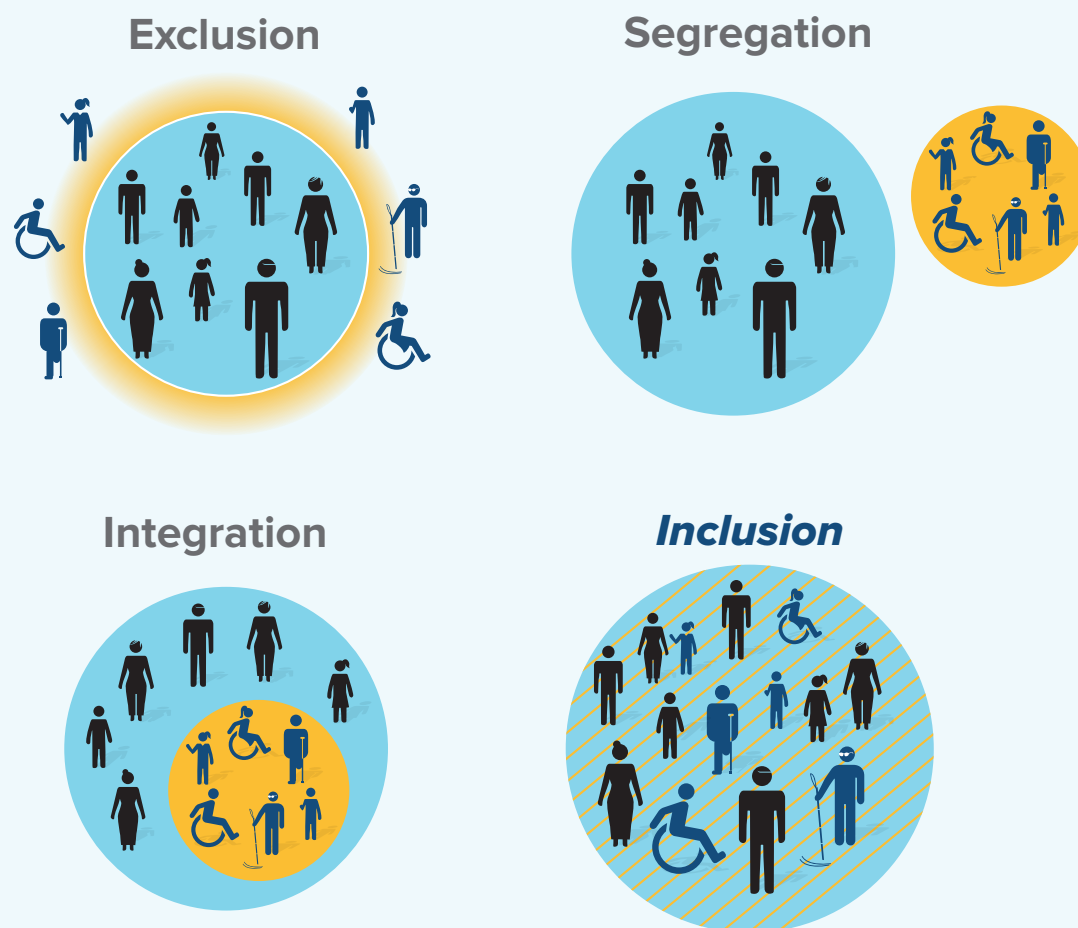
Effective mechanisms for financing inclusive education systems require the provision of additional funding and resources that encourage mainstream schools to develop inclusive education policies, as well as innovative and flexible learning environments that meet a wider range of learners' academic and social needs and requirements. Successfully implementing inclusive education policies depends on the way funds are allocated and to whom the funds are addressed. There are different approaches to financing inclusive education, and the challenge of different sectors sharing responsibility for supporting groups of learners needs to be addressed. Some funding mechanisms might encourage the labeling of some learners in order to achieve reasonable accommodation and/or support service. Labeling students should be internal to a tracking system and not visible to them or their peers. Disability-responsive budgeting can support the strategic use of existing resources and the development of formulas that account for the costs of including learners requiring reasonable accommodation and/or specific support services. More resources and ideas are in the [Inclusive Education Resource Guide](#) support services.

**FAQ #5: How should we address special schools and out-of-school children in project operations?**

Separate, segregated schools for children with disabilities are no longer considered best practice, and the World Bank's partnership should encourage countries to move progressively toward [inclusive education systems](#) (see Figure 2). This acknowledges that the shift, for example from segregation to inclusion, does not happen overnight but requires both shorter- and longer-term plans to support general education systems to change so that they can include all learners, inclusive of learners with disabilities. Exclusion (e.g., keeping children with disabilities out of school) and

segregated learning environments (special schools or institutions) are a reality in many of the World Bank's client countries, and it is essential to plan the best ways to support access, participation, and learning of persons with disabilities in different levels of education during the life cycle of a project. Teams are encouraged to use the project dialogue as an opportunity to discuss these issues with clients, share the benefits of more inclusive education systems, and discuss the new roles of special schools and/or specialized personnel in building inclusive general education systems and support structures (see [Inclusive Education Resource Guide](#) for examples).

**Figure 2. From exclusion, segregation, and integration toward inclusion**







## Criterion 3: Inclusive Project Design

***The project contains (1) at least one inclusive design feature in a general education activity, and/or (2) at least one specific activity targeted to benefit and empower learners with disabilities (twin-track approach).***

To meet this criterion, a project can take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can both participate in and benefit from the project in general, *and/or* the project can include specific activities targeted to benefit and empower persons with disabilities. This is known as “twin-track” approach (see [Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework](#), page 4). An example of the first approach would be including sensitization and training on the needs of children with autism spectrum disorder in a general teacher training. An example of the second approach would be a training targeted to parents of children with autism spectrum disorder on strategies to support their children’s learning at home.

The disability-inclusive activities under the project should construct the approach based on stakeholder consultations and analysis. The track(s) the project follows should be driven by the client’s and team’s technical judgment about which approach will best meet the identified needs. Teams are encouraged to consult the [Inclusive Education Resource Guide](#) for ideas and suggestions. When evaluating whether projects meet the criteria, *quality* counts: particularly for the “general” track under the twin-track approach, reviewers may not consider the criterion to have been met if the inclusive intervention appears to be a perfunctory addition to the text for the purpose of meeting the criteria.

Architectural design, furnishings, and infrastructure for new schools and other educational facilities should follow guidelines for safety, accessibility, and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. They need to be safe and support an inclusive learning environment in a flexible way, based on local conditions. This means including spaces and furniture that allow a variety of teaching and learning practices in an inclusive setting to protect students from hazards and all other potential forms of harm.



*While this criterion defines a minimum standard, teams are encouraged to design education projects to be as thoroughly disability-inclusive as possible, with the aim of helping clients meet the needs of all learners.*

Inclusive school infrastructure should take into account:

- Physical access to the school;
- Accessibility of all areas and services within the school (including classrooms, cafeterias, and WASH facilities); and
- Appropriateness of the visual and acoustic environment for all learners.

Infrastructure design can be enhanced by consulting with persons with disabilities and accessible design experts during the design phase, and by providing training or technical assistance on accessibility and usability of the built environment.

As part of project preparation, teams should identify whether building accessibility standards, policies, and regulations that promote inclusion already exist in the country. If so, teams should reference these in procurement documents, such as bidding documents and contracts. If not, the concept of universal access should be embedded in these documents. Teams are also encouraged, where possible, to use the opportunity of dialogue with client countries to encourage establishing national or regional standards for accessibility.

**COVID-19.** The COVID-19 pandemic has brought an extraordinary and unprecedented challenge for governments, teachers, and parents in their attempt to ensure continuity of quality learning. Briefs and papers that may be important resources when considering disability-inclusive project design during and after the pandemic include [UNESCO Policy Brief: A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19, May 2020](#) and the World Bank's COVID-19 Issues Paper, [Pivoting to Inclusion: Leveraging Lessons from the COVID-19 for Learners with Disabilities](#) are important resources when considering disability-inclusive project design during and post COVID-19 pandemic. As countries work toward managing learning continuity while protecting the safety and well-being of learners, learners with disabilities, and particularly those living in poverty often stand the risk of further marginalization.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING INCLUSIVE PROJECT DESIGN

**FAQ #1:** In the country where I work, school buildings are desperately needed, and this may be perceived as an unaffordable “extra.” How should we respond to this?

Designing and building accessible buildings from scratch is a better alternative for all and less expensive. Universal design and accessibility principles can also be implemented economically and innovatively for school buildings, where they can also make the learning environment better for all learners.

**FAQ #2:** Is having ramps in the school sufficient?

In addition to the ramps, universal design principles should be used to facilitate physical access to school buildings and *all* areas and services at the school, including classrooms, cafeterias and WASH facilities.

**FAQ #3:** How do we make sure to address challenges of different types of disability in a project when considering utilizing UDL?

It is important to support learning of each student the best possible way and encourage for individualization when necessary. It is also critical to consider heterogeneity of disability and work for example in collaboration with inclusive education experts representing specific disability groups and organizations of persons with disabilities. Table 1 includes some examples of challenges, based on types of disability, that can be addressed in general education when utilizing the principles of UDL.

**FAQ #4:** How do we plan and implement disability-inclusive teacher education in in-service programs?

It is critical for teachers to learn inclusive pedagogical strategies, which are based on good teaching and learning practices (see, e.g., the [Teach](#) open-source classroom observation tool). Enriching and adapting teaching strategies (such as structured lesson plans utilizing the principles of UDL for students with different readiness to learn) is recommended for training general education teachers. In addition, resource teachers who work in collaboration with general education teachers should receive more specialized training in supporting the learning of students with various kinds of disabilities in inclusive classrooms.

**Table 1. Challenges and educational accessibility considerations for reducing barriers for persons with disabilities**

Type of Disability	Challenges in Accessing Education and Schools	Accessibility Considerations to Reduce Barriers
<b>Physical</b> (mobility, dexterity, and physical strength)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Navigating uneven, unstable, narrow, steep, or slippery surfaces with or without an assistive device</li> <li>▪ Traveling long distances</li> <li>▪ Inaccessible transportation</li> <li>▪ Opening, closing, and latching doors, fences, closets, trunks (for possessions, if boarding)</li> <li>▪ Having difficulty squatting over pit latrines, balancing, and needing to sit</li> <li>▪ Holding, lifting, and carrying learning materials</li> <li>▪ Needing incontinence aids, such as diapers or feminine hygiene products</li> <li>▪ Being unable to afford the costs of schooling, for example, for school fees, uniforms, and school supplies; toiletries (if boarding); adaptive devices; and assistive technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Slip-resistant, smooth surfaces, ramps, and elevators to ensure access to all spaces in the school</li> <li>▪ Larger door frames</li> <li>▪ Support and/or grab bars along walls</li> <li>▪ Free, accessible transportation provided to students who require it</li> <li>▪ Access to incontinence aids</li> <li>▪ Financial support for persons with disabilities to access schools</li> </ul>
<b>Visual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Having difficulty avoiding holes and obstructions around the school property, including the classrooms, dining areas, common areas, toilets, and schoolyard spaces</li> <li>▪ Having difficulty in accessing learning materials displayed on the board or around the classroom or relayed through print, text-only information on video-based programs, or signing print-based documents and forms</li> <li>▪ Navigating new surroundings when all signage is in text</li> <li>▪ Entering, navigating, and using new physical spaces</li> <li>▪ Being unable to distinguish between colors (for example, to differentiate between the wall and door of a classroom) due to low vision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Incorporation of contrasting colors and safety mechanisms into all classrooms</li> <li>▪ Information (including alerts) in audio format (including sirens, recorded messages, beeps on phones, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Learning materials available in accessible electronic formats on USB drives, websites, and through e-mail</li> <li>▪ Screen readers, Braille displays, magnification software and devices, voice recognition software and audio descriptions</li> </ul>
<b>Hearing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Having difficulty accessing information given orally</li> <li>▪ Understanding video learning programs that lack captions or interpretation</li> <li>▪ Straining to hear sirens and other sounds that alert them of scheduling, emergencies, etc.</li> <li>▪ Facing barriers in communicating and interacting with teachers, students, staff, and administration that do not know local sign language</li> <li>▪ Relying on others to express their views and needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SMS text messaging or print as a way of accessing important information in the community</li> <li>▪ Flashing lights to alert students to scheduling (class changes, lunch times, breaks) or emergencies</li> <li>▪ Local sign language interpretation or alternative forms of communication available for community meetings and consultations</li> </ul>
<b>Speech</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facing barriers in communicating and interacting with teachers/students/staff/administration</li> <li>▪ Relying on others to express their views and needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alternative formats provided for communicating and participating in classes and other extracurricular activities, such as through text or written form and alternative methods of conducting activities</li> </ul>
<b>Cognitive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Having difficulty in communicating learning needs</li> <li>▪ Needing information in alternate formats (such as visual, audio, tactile, etc.) to increase comprehension</li> <li>▪ Needing incontinence aids, such as diapers</li> <li>▪ Needing navigation and memory aids in finding, accessing, and using school spaces</li> <li>▪ Relying on others to express their views and needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing information in alternative formats, including visual or simplified language, or providing tactile learning opportunities</li> <li>▪ Allowing for alternative forms of participation</li> <li>▪ Providing aids for personal hygiene, incontinence and assistance as well as for creating alternative teaching and learning materials</li> </ul>
<b>Psycho-social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experiencing social isolation and exclusion, which impedes interaction with classmates</li> <li>▪ Having difficulty in communicating needs for learning.</li> <li>▪ Needing navigation and memory aids in finding, accessing, and using school spaces</li> <li>▪ Relying on others to express their views and needs in educational settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alternative formats provided for communicating and participating in classes and other extracurricular activities, such as through text or written form</li> <li>▪ Clear, plain-language, and high-contrast signage added to all school spaces</li> </ul>





## Criterion 4: Monitoring/reporting

***During implementation, the project collects and reports feedback on both process and outcomes for project beneficiaries with disabilities.***

To meet the fourth criterion, the PAD must include a clear explanation of how monitoring and reporting will assess both process issues (e.g. participation, satisfaction) and outcomes for project beneficiaries who are persons with disabilities. To a first approximation, all projects should include in the results framework at least one disability inclusion-related indicator, and/or disaggregate at least one indicator by persons with disabilities. Teams are encouraged to think creatively about ways that considerations of disability could be incorporated into the Project Development Objective (PDO) indicators or Intermediate Results Indicators (IRIs).

Recognizing that in some cases data limitations may make it infeasible to include a disability-related indicator or disaggregation in the Results Framework, the project may propose alternative, equally informative monitoring and reporting measures if these limitations are adequately explained in the PAD.

Teams can consider the following as potential sources of information:

- Beneficiary surveys
- Focus group discussions
- Process evaluations (including considerations of disability in a more general process evaluation)
- Impact evaluations (including considerations of disability in a more general impact evaluation)
- Analysis of EMIS data
- Disaggregation of PDO indicators or IRIs, such as by persons with and without disabilities or by students in special schools.

Some of these sources can be used to capture both process and outcome information (e.g., EMIS data, surveys), but the PAD should specify that both types of information will be collected in this manner as both must be present to fulfill the criterion.

Once again, the project should consider accessibility and reasonable accommodation for in-person or remote activities related to monitoring and reporting.

### EXAMPLE OF MONITORING/REPORTING

#### Vietnam

#### Quality Improvement of Primary Education for Deaf Children Project (P160543)

The outcome indicator for the project will be that the grade pass rate of participating students with hearing loss will be at least equal to 60 percent of that of students without disabilities in the same province.

Since this is an output-based financing project, key results used as project disbursement indicators will include:

- 1,200 primary education students taught in Vietnamese Sign language (VSL) and able to use it;
- 300 secondary education students taught in VSL and able to use it;
- 200 teachers trained in deaf education and VSL and using it in their teaching;
- A library of VSL videos based on the Math and Vietnamese curriculums for primary and secondary;
- Ministry of Education and Training's learning management system; and
- The list of VSL signs, including an additional 4,000 signs for a total of 6,000 signs, made publicly available.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING *MONITORING/REPORTING*

### **FAQ #1: Is it enough that the GRM is accessible for persons with disabilities?**

The project Grievance Redress Mechanism should be accessible for persons with disabilities, but this alone is not sufficient to meet this criterion.

### **FAQ #2: What are some possible results framework indicators related to disability?**

Please see below some ideas and examples of general and education specific indicators for disability inclusion.

#### GENERAL INDICATORS:

- Number and frequency of women and men with disabilities and ODPs (Organizations of Persons with Disabilities) consulted during project design and implementation; and
- Access of girls and boys with disabilities to support services (transport, mobility aids, and equipment) that help them attend school and/or educational facilities.

#### EDUCATION-SPECIFIC INDICATORS:

- Number of teachers, administrators, and stakeholders trained in implementing disability-inclusive education practices (specify as per project);
- Percentage of trained teachers, administrators, school leaders, and stakeholders in the project self-reporting increased knowledge of ways to make schools and/or educational facilities more inclusive and accessible for children with disabilities;
- Number of pre-service teacher education institutions including a disability-inclusive education module/course as part of the general teacher education program;
- Number of legal/policy instruments proposed, drafted, or adopted to promote disability-inclusive education at the national or subnational level;
- Percentage of school-going population at each level of education using accessible educational facilities, disaggregated for children with and without disabilities;

- Percentage of school buildings and facilities meeting relevant standards on accessibility and usability of the built environment;
- Percentage of schools and/or educational facilities with UDL infrastructure, including adaptive WASH facilities, for students with disabilities;
- Percentage of students with disabilities having access to accessible remote learning and using accessible devices;
- Percentage of direct beneficiaries that rate their access to educational services as having improved.





## V. Applying the Criteria to Projects Under Implementation

Although the criteria were written primarily with the project preparation process in mind, teams are highly encouraged to bring considerations of inclusion into projects at any stage, and **projects already under implementation can be recognized as meeting the criteria if appropriate actions are taken**, as discussed in this section.

Projects can be “retrofitted” to meet the criteria at any point, but teams may find opportunities to bring inclusion of persons with disabilities into the discussion at any of the following junctures in the project life cycle:

- Midterm reviews provide an opening for dialogue on inclusion as part of a broad-based project stock-taking, both with clients and with organizations of persons with disabilities and other stakeholders involved in disability-inclusive education at the country level.
- Additional financing and restructuring can introduce new activities and results indicators relevant to disability inclusion.
- Revisions to the procurement plan, especially when a project has available resources, can also be an opportunity to add new activities relevant to disability inclusion.
- Technical dialogue with clients can support adding inclusive features to more general activities, such as in developing ToR for a consultancy.
- In some cases, clients may also wish to undertake their own activities as part of the project, even if not financed by the World Bank; this would also count toward the project meeting the criteria.

In cases of restructuring or additional financing, the project documentation should address the four criteria in the same manner as described throughout this Guidance Note. All project teams are asked to document the project's alignment with the criteria using the Disability-Inclusive Project Worksheet (see [Appendix](#)).



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## Appendix:

# Disability-Inclusive Project Worksheet

*This worksheet provides an overview of the information requested from task teams for self-reporting on the criteria, both for projects under preparation and for those under implementation. An Excel-based version of the worksheet is available [here](#).*

<b>Criterion 1: Stakeholder Engagement</b>	<i>Notes on compliance</i>
a. Describe consultations held with relevant stakeholders, such as students with disabilities, parents of students with disabilities, general education teachers, organizations representing persons with disabilities, and other relevant civil society organizations. Please indicate specific stakeholders consulted.	
b. Describe measures to ensure accessibility of in-person or virtual consultation sessions for persons with disabilities.	
c. Briefly summarize key outcomes from the consultations.	
d. For projects under the ESF, confirm that consultations have been incorporated into the stakeholder engagement plan (SEP).	
<b>Criterion 2: Analysis</b>	<i>Notes on compliance</i>
a. Briefly summarize the team's analysis of disability and disability-inclusive education in the country context, based on available data, policy documents, stakeholder consultations, and other sources of information.	
b. Indicate source for summary (e.g., Environmental and Social Assessment, Sectoral and Institutional Context of PAD, consultancy output).	
<b>Criterion 3: Inclusive Project Design</b>	<i>Notes on compliance</i>
a. Describe how learners with disabilities are supported in a general education activity/component utilizing principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and/or	
b. Describe specific activities targeted to benefit and empower learners with disabilities, and/or	
c. If the project includes infrastructure: Explain how the infrastructure investments use universal design principles to facilitate physical access to school buildings, including all areas and services of the school (e.g., classrooms, cafeterias, and WASH facilities).	
<b>Criterion 4: Monitoring/reporting</b>	<i>Notes on compliance</i>
a. Indicate any instances in which disability inclusion is reflected in the results framework, including specific indicators/targets or disaggregation by disability status or special schools. If there are no relevant indicators in the results framework, describe the data limitations.	
b. Describe how the project captures and reports on process (e.g. participation, satisfaction) for beneficiaries with disabilities.	
c. Describe how the project captures and reports information on project outcomes for beneficiaries with disabilities.	
d. Describe measures to ensure accessibility of the GRM and other in-person or virtual monitoring and reporting activities.	

