

Technical Cooperation Project Completion Report

Strengthening Special Education in Afghanistan

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Project name : Strengthening Special Education in Afghanistan

Project term : From September 2006 to March 2008

1. Outline

(1) Background

Trani and Bakhshi (2006) estimate that 2.7% (550,000–650,000 people) of the entire population of Afghanistan are people (children) with disabilities, caused by damage from more than 20 years of war and land mines (Mohammad Alam Bayan, 2005) as well as natural and secondary causes. The recommendations of the “First Joint Seminar on the Development of Education for Children with Disabilities,” which was held at Kabul Education University by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 2003, led the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) to recognize the significance and importance of special needs education, and in speaking to the National Assembly the Minister of Education at that time expressed the need for urgent efforts for special needs education. Since that time, in step with the international community, there has been growing awareness in Afghanistan that special needs education is essential to raising the level of education in the country overall.

Then the MoHE acknowledged the importance of special needs education, and in 2005 approved the establishment of a special needs education department at Kabul Education University, which is the central teachers training university in Afghanistan. Thus came into existence Afghanistan’s first university department to train teachers of

special needs education.

However, there needed professional assistance to start the new department in terms of curriculum, professional knowledge, teaching materials. To improve the situation, in 2005 JICA implemented a project at Kabul Education University to improve education for children with disabilities. Although this project brought teacher training for special needs education in Afghanistan to the starting line, university instructors, curriculum, and teaching materials are still lacking, so conditions for a teacher training department have not yet been met. Kabul Education University has therefore asked JICA to continue to share with it the experiences of teacher training in Japan. Having accepted this request, and in 2006 JICA started the project “Strengthening Special Education in Afghanistan.”

(2) Objective of the project

1) Overall Goal

- a. The quality of special needs education is to be improved and more children with disabilities can receive appropriate education.
- b. Policy on special needs education is to be formulated by the concerned ministry..

2) Project Purpose

- a. Contents and teaching methods of special education at Kabul Education University is to be improved.
- b. Teachers and students at Kabul Education University are to gain proper knowledge and skills on special needs education.
- c. The problem on special needs education is to be shared by the concerned organizations and cooperation among them is to be promoted.
- d. Proposal for Policy on special needs education is to be submitted.

(3) Main activities

1) Conduct surveys on the current state of special needs education and summarize results in preparing to make policy recommendations.

2) Compile textbooks, revise curricula, develop teaching materials and aids, and give advice and guidance on instruction methods so that educational content and teaching methods are improved and enhanced.

3) Deepen faculty and student understanding by introducing special needs education in Japan.

4) Teach methods to scientifically study the characteristics of schoolchildren with disabilities.

5) Exchange opinions with related organizations, and share information with a wide range of people on the current state of and issues related to education of children with disabilities.

2. List of project achievements

(1) Developed texts and manuals

1) Teaching Materials for the Children with Disabilities in Kabul, Afghanistan (2006), Appendix 1

2) A Questionnaire Survey on Education for Children with Disabilities in Kabul, Afghanistan (2006), Appendix 2

3) Teaching Materials of Special Education in Japan I (2007), Appendix 3

4) Special Education in Japan II, Teaching Materials of Special Education in Japan II (2007), Appendix 4

5) Introduction to Special Education (2007), Appendix 5

6) Proposed Curriculum Revisions for the Department of Special Needs Education at the Kabul Education University(2007), Appendix 6

Materials: Prepared items 1–6 (Appendices 1-6)

(2) Outline of training course

1) Name of Training course: Country Specific Training “ Special Needs Education”

2) Purpose: To raise the quality of special education instructors through special education lectures, classroom observations and practical training, and workshop observations.

3) Participants: Instructors in the Department of Special Needs Education at the University of Education in Kabul.

4) Field of study: Special education

5) Attached materials: Training schedule (Appendix 7)

3. Schedule of activities (past record)

See attachments (Appendix 8)

4. Input from Japan side

(1) Results of specialists sent to Afghanistan

1) 2006 academic year

a. Name of specialist: Toshihiro Fukushima

Field of instruction: Special education (teaching material development and teaching methods)

Period of stay: September 11, 2006 – December 11, 2006

Professional affiliation in Japan: Center for Research on International Cooperation in Educational Development, University of Tsukuba

Outline of work: Conducted a joint survey, together with Mr. Naeem of Kabul

Education University, on the teaching materials and aids used at schools for the visually and hearing impaired in the city of Kabul (Appendix 1). Mr. Fukushima regularly visited schools for the visually and hearing impaired, accompanied several teachers and students, and observed special education classrooms. He aggregated and summarized the results of a questionnaire survey on attitudes toward special education among residents of Kabul (Appendix 2).

b. Name of specialist: Hideo Nakata

Field of instruction: Special education (chief advisor and curriculum development)

Period of stay: September 11, 2006 – December 21, 2006 (25)

Professional affiliation in Japan: Center for Research on International Cooperation in Educational Development, University of Tsukuba

Outline of work: Monitored the progress in writing textbooks and making a sign language dictionary on site, while also considering plans for future activities with a representative of Prof. Bayan, Dean of the Department of Special Needs Education. To help faculty and students gain appropriate knowledge and skills on special needs education, Prof. Nakata gave a lecture in which he described special needs education classrooms in Japan (using video). He shared issues to be addressed and attempted to strengthen cooperation with relevant authorities (related government agencies, educational organizations, aid organizations, and others).

2) 2007 academic year

a. Name of specialist: Junko Nozawa

Field of instruction: Special education (teaching material development and teaching methods)

Period of stay: July 17, 2007 – September 19, 2007

Professional affiliation in Japan: Center for Research on International Cooperation in Educational Development, University of Tsukuba

Outline of work: Using Dari language versions of handmade teaching materials and tools used in special needs education in Japan (prepared at the University of Tsukuba, Appendix 3 and 4), Dr. Nozawa provided assistance and guidance in methods of developing teaching materials and tools that are appropriate to the situation and students' level of disability, in the area of education of physically and mentally disabled children. Through workshops and lectures, she provided assistance in methods for scientific study of the characteristics of children and students with disabilities (using physiological, psychological, and pedagogical methods), and instruction methods suited to the situation and students' level of disability. She also provided assistance and guidance for revision of the curriculum in the Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University. She shared information with special education organizations and related individuals.

b. Name of specialist: Hideo Nakata

Field of instruction: Special education (chief advisor and curriculum development)

Period of stay: October 29, 2007 – November 11, 2007

Professional affiliation in Japan: Center for Research on International Cooperation in Educational Development, University of Tsukuba

Outline of work: While encouraging understanding and awareness of education of children with disabilities in the Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul the Education University, Prof. Nakata prepared basic materials for policy recommendations on the future education of children with disabilities to Afghanistan's Ministry of Higher Education. He lectured on the education of children with disabilities in Japan using audiovisual aids.

c. Name of specialist: Hideo Nakata

Field of instruction: Special education (chief advisor and curriculum development)

Period of stay: March 12, 2008 – March 28, 2008

Professional affiliation in Japan: Center for Research on International Cooperation in Educational Development, University of Tsukuba

Outline of work: While encouraging understanding and awareness of education of children with disabilities in the Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University, Prof. Nakata made policy recommendations for future education of children with disabilities to the Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Ministry of Education. He gave advice on methods of scientific study of the characteristics of children and students with disabilities, and teaching methods suited to the situation and students' level of disability.

“The Second Seminar on Special Needs Education in Afghanistan” was held for the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education, Kabul Education University, special schools, and NGO by the project team (Appendix 9.1-9.7).

(2) Results of bringing trainees to Japan

Name of trainee: Assadullah Frogh (Lecturer, Department of Special Needs Education, Kabul Education University)

Field of study: Special education

Study period: December 18, 2006 – March 2, 2007

Main places of study: University of Tsukuba, University of Tsukuba-affiliated schools (school for children with visual, hearing, and other disabilities), Kyoto Kita School for the Disabled, Kyoto Murasakino Elementary School, Asukai Work Center

Outline of study: Mr. Frogh attended lectures on special education (introduction,

special studies) by faculty members of the Institute of Disability Sciences, University of Tsukuba, participated in classroom visits and practical training, and observed workshops. He also wrote an introduction to special education (Appendix 5).

Attachments: Training schedule (Appendix 7)

(3) Donated equipment and materials

List of accompanying equipment and materials (Appendix 10)

1) 2006 academic year

- a. Basic education textbooks from Iran (154 volumes)

Date of arrival of materials: October 2007

Place of storage: Within the JICA office in the Department of Special Needs

Education, Kabul Education University

Status of use: Used by teachers as needed in classrooms and study

2) 2007 academic year

- a. Teaching Materials of Special Education in Japan I (84 copies)
- b. Special Education in Japan II, Teaching Materials of Special Education in Japan II (87 copies)
- c. Introduction to Special Education (200 copies)
- d. Model of Brain (1), Model of Auditory Organ large (1), Model of Auditory Organ Small(1), and Model of Visual Organ(1)

- e. Academic books about special education (86 volumes)

Date of arrival of materials: August 2007 (a and b), March 2008 (c)

Place of storage: Within the JICA office in the Department of Special Needs

Education, Kabul Education University

Status of use: Used for teacher support, study, and lectures

(4) Local operating costs

1) 2006 academic year: 7,877 dollars, 837,000 yen

2) 2007 academic year: 7,582 dollars, 806,000 yen

Calculated at 1 dollar = 106.18 yen (controlled rate in March 2008)

5. Situation, issues, and recommendations for the implementing organization and counterparts.

(1) Organization and counterparts

1) Implementing organizations: Kabul Education University (Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE))

2) Counterparts: Three faculty members of the Kabul Education University

Department Dean Bayan, Mr. Assadullah (Lecturer), and Mr. Naeem (Lecturer)

(2) Current status at the organization

The Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University currently has one dean and four instructors. There are 63 first-year students and 31 second-year students studying in the department, which offers major courses in education for people with visual disabilities, education for people with hearing disabilities, education for people with mental disabilities, and education for people with motor disabilities. In these programs, students will start in the third year to learn the skills and special knowledge in their respective special field. Kabul Education University's Department of Special Needs Education has been assigning faculty, and with JICA's support developing its curricula along these lines, and teaching materials are being prepared accordingly. So far three faculty members have received training at the University of Tsukuba's Center for Research on International Cooperation in Educational Development (CRICED) through the JICA's projects, in which they toured

special needs education sites in Japan while also attending lectures in their field of specialty in special needs education. The reports and other materials prepared by these three faculty members have been used in university lectures upon their return to Afghanistan. With CRICED's support, an introduction to special needs education, collection of teaching aids for special needs education in Japan, and an introduction to special needs education in Japan have been compiled and are being used in classes as textbooks on special needs education. CRICED has also provided teaching materials for hearing-impaired students and others, which have been used in special needs education in Japan.

In 1993 the UN adopted the Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities, and called for the realization of barrier-free societies. In 1994 the "World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality" was held in Salamanca, Spain, and the Salamanca Statement, in which an action platform was established to promote inclusive education in the schooling of children with special needs, was released. In 2002, the Biwako Millennium Framework was adopted at an ad hoc meeting of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Ideas and goals included in this Framework are the central role played by people with disabilities themselves in efforts toward the UN Millennium Development Goals, the guarantee of human rights of people with disabilities, the promotion of early detection of disabilities and early education is promoted, and the realization of barrier-free societies.

As seen by the above, inclusive education for children with special needs is a global trend. It should also be advanced in Afghanistan. Inclusive education is a means to ensure the human rights of children with special needs, and to enable their full participation and equality in society. It also has the effect of bringing about improvements in the quality of school education overall. Afghanistan's entire education

system is currently developing, which presents an excellent opportunity—one that should be taken advantage of—to implement inclusive education in this development phase. In 2007 CRICED conducted a survey in Kabul on attitudes toward special needs education, and about 90% of the local population, school teachers, and university students approved of school attendance for children with disabilities, from which we may also infer a very high awareness in society toward disabilities (Nakata, Mohammad Alam Bayan and Fukushima, 2007).

As the JICA project of Strengthening Special Education in Afghanistan is ending successfully at the end of March in 2008, we would like to present recommendations to Kabul Education University, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), and the Ministry of Education (MoE).

(3) A summary of the recommendations

We will first briefly describe issues faced by the Ministry of Education and University of Education in Kabul, and then make more specific proposals (Appendix 9.3).

1) Recommendations for the Department of Special Needs Education at the University of Education in Kabul and the Ministry of Higher Education

Short-term issues

1. Establish a textbook and teaching material development committee
2. Establish a career support committee
3. Establish a teaching practice committee
4. Support Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs)
5. Strengthen the research systems

Medium-term issues

1. Create a university-affiliated school in school facilities constructed using grant

aid from Japan

2. Enhance the university library
3. Increase the size of the teaching faculty

Long-term issues

1. Host international symposiums and create a special needs education association

in Afghanistan

2. Cooperate with the Ministry of Martyrs and Disability (MMD)

2) Recommendations for the Ministry of Education

Short-term issues

1. Advance inclusive education
2. Establish special classes and build special education schools for children with

moderate and severe disabilities

3. Introduce the field of special needs education into the curricula at TTCs

4. Promote cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Department of Special Needs Education at the University of Education in Kabul in the development of curricula and teaching materials for TTCs and community resource centers for disabled children.

Medium-term issues

1. Conduct national surveys and school attendance surveys on students with disabilities

2. Formulate and implement teacher training systems

3. Form groups that can exchange information with the parents of children with disabilities, and encourage their activities

4. Create a university-affiliated school in four classrooms constructed at the University of Education in Kabul using grant aid from Japan

Long-term issues

1. Promote participation in society of people with disabilities
2. Make use of existing resource centers
3. Establish small community centers and places of work
4. Invite international conferences and events

(2) Recommendations

(1) Recommendations for the Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University and MoHE

Permission was received from the MoHE in 2005 to establish a Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University. Since that time, Department Dean Mohammed Alam Bayan and other staff have worked to set up a curriculum and are developing teaching materials. However many issues remain before the teacher training system is fully on track. These include a number of issues for the operation of the teacher training system at the university's Department of Special Needs Education. We would like to discuss some major issues, including recommendations, for the three outlooks of the short term (3 years), medium term (5 years), and long term (6 years and beyond).

1) Short-term issues

(I) Establishment of a committee for the development of texts and teaching materials

Department of Special Needs Education faculty members have written introductions to education of children with hearing and intellectual disabilities, and some of these are used in lectures. Textbooks prepared with the support of JICA are also used. However, specialty textbooks for third year major students are lacking. Textbooks and teaching materials corresponding to the curriculum need to be

developed urgently. In developing these textbooks and teaching materials, it is vital that they be compiled here independently in cooperation with teachers at schools for the blind and deaf and teachers at schools implementing inclusive education. Teachers' guides needed for classroom education should also be compiled. We would like to recommend the establishment of a textbook and teaching material development committee, which would include Dean Bayan and staff of the Department of Special Needs Education, teachers at schools for the blind, schools for the deaf, and inclusive schools, and instructors at other institutions. The opinions of as many as possible of the people involved in this field should be sought, and these people should be included in the group of authors. Using actual examples of instruction in the classroom, lesson plans, and the use of teaching materials, as well as indicating specific points to bear in mind, will likely make these materials favorites of teachers for classroom use. We suggest that regular meetings of the textbook and teaching material development committee be held, and that reports on the results of these meetings be sent to the MoHE and the MoE. Textbooks reflect the situation and trends in a society, and so regular textbook revision is desirable. While reference should be made to special needs education in other countries including Japan when developing and compiling textbooks and teaching materials, they should be developed and compiled with respect for the situation and unique culture of Afghanistan (Jones, 2007). Textbooks and other materials compiled by the committee should be submitted to the MoE, and the Ministry's approval for publishing should be received. By continuously carrying out such activities, the Department of Special Needs Education will build its capacity as a central institution for universities nationwide. We believe that the independent development of textbooks and teaching materials by the people involved in special needs education in Afghanistan will form a cornerstone for

national development (Spink, 2005).

(II) Establishment of career support committee

The first graduates will leave the university and enter the working world in 2010. It will be necessary to establish a career support committee for the career development of fourth year students, and prepare appropriate paths forward for graduates of the Department of Special Needs Education. As soon as possible, the career support committee should start to create a system that can provide consultation to students with regard to their future path, and support them in career development. Promising students should be given an opportunity to study in foreign countries, and given both physical and psychological support so that they can acquire a high level of specialty at the foreign graduate school where they study. It will also be essential to look at the training of personnel who will be needed by the Department of Special Needs Education in the future. Possible career paths for graduates are employment as civil servants (MoE and MoHE), university teachers, TTC teachers, school teachers, and employees of facilities for the disabled and rehabilitation centers.

(III) Establishment of teaching practice committee

Students who want to become teachers need to go through teaching practice at special needs schools or inclusive schools. Establishment of a committee to investigate the selection of schools for this teaching practice as well as the practice curriculum, practice methods and time period, evaluation, and similar matters is an urgent task. The MoHE and the MoE should give full support to teaching practice, and fulfill their responsibility to train high quality professionals who can respond to the needs of children with disabilities.

(IV) Support for Teacher Training Colleges (TTC)

It is anticipated that graduates of Kabul Education University will be able to

teach as professional educators at TTCs, which are under the jurisdiction of the MoE. Considering this, Kabul Education University should start work on creating a system to support TTCs in cooperation with the MoE. That support may include providing lectures in the field of special needs education conducted at TTCs, and the development of texts, teaching materials, teachers' guides and other materials for use at TTCs. An urgent task for Kabul Education University is to produce graduates who have acquired the competence to give lectures and guidance to students at TTCs. In addition, the MoE, in cooperation with Kabul Education University and TTCs, should actively provide training for in-service teachers.

(V) Strengthening research systems

A review needs to be made of the research topics that are essential to advancing special needs education in Afghanistan. The Department of Special Needs Education should consider what topics need to be studied and what kind of research and study needs to be conducted. It should then set annual targets, and hasten to create a system for joint research. As a first step it would be advisable to hold regular research or study meetings within the department, in order to improve the research capability of faculty. The first issue to be taken up by such a study group is the compilation a glossary or dictionary related to special needs education and disability. English technical terms should be accurately translated into local languages, and the terms should be given in English and local languages together with a brief description. These terms should be consolidated as the official terms in special needs education in Afghanistan. The Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University should be responsible for compilation, and the glossary will need to be disseminated nationwide. Subsequent projects are fact-finding surveys and research on children with disabilities; fact-finding surveys on disabled children enrolled at inclusive schools; surveys on the educational

results and support systems of inclusive schools; surveys and research in conjunction with doctors on autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), learning disabilities, and learning difficulties; surveys of employment among people with disabilities; and surveys and research on the possibility of early detection of disabilities and early education. Coordination with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disability (MoLSAMD) will be essential in conducting these studies. Long term, it would be advisable to create developmental tests in collaboration with clinical psychologists, educational psychologists, and medical professionals. Precise research plans should be formulated before executing these surveys and studies. Applications should be then made to the relevant government agency and efforts should be made to obtain research funds.

2) Medium term issues

(I) Creating a university-affiliated school with school facilities constructed using grant aid from Japan

Kabul Education University has school facilities constructed with a grant aid from Japan. Currently, some of these facilities are being used as the Department of Special Needs Education. In the near future we look forward to seeing another part of these facilities developed as a university-affiliated inclusive school, which will be used as a teaching practice school while also serving as a model inclusive school for Afghanistan. To do this it will be necessary to consult with the MoE and discuss the possibilities for such a school, including facilities and equipment, staff, school buses, and a dormitory.

(II) Enhancing the University Library

The current library collection is estimated to be several thousand volumes. This collection is dominated by out-of-date technical books, and provides a poor

learning environment for students. It will be essential to discuss and negotiate with the MoHE to try and purchase up to date books, academic journals, and audiovisual equipment based on a medium term outlook and plan. The MoHE should respond in good faith to the requests of Kabul Education University, as the major education university in Afghanistan, and comply with them wherever possible.

(III) Increasing the size of the teaching faculty

Special needs education covers not only visual disabilities, hearing disabilities, motor disabilities, and intellectual disabilities, but also autism, ADHD, learning disabilities, PTSD, and multiple disabilities. It is a diverse academic field with respective medical, psychological, educational, sociological, and welfare-related aspects associated with each of these disabilities. To further advance special needs education, early detection of disabilities and early education is essential. The Department of Special Needs Education, in conjunction with the MoPH, hospitals, and local communities, needs to develop a concept for an early detection system for children with disabilities, and to establish an early education system. Under this concept, Kabul Education University should strengthen its cooperation with the MoPH and try to have at least one doctor and one clinical psychology specialist assigned to the Department of Special Needs Education while working to enhance the field of clinical education.

3) Long-term issues

(I) Hosting of international symposiums and creation of a special needs education association in Afghanistan

Taking a long-term view, it would be advisable for the Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University to hold regular international symposiums, actively conduct research exchanges with international society, and

make these results known throughout Afghan society. The Department should also create a domestic “Afghan Special Needs Education Association” (provisional name) and start work to build a system to support inclusive education while promoting scientific research on disabilities with the assembled wisdom of universities nationwide.

(II) Cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disability (MoLSAMD)

The Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University should cooperate with the MoLSAMD to promote the social participation of children and adults with disabilities. The MoLSAMD considers cooperation with the Department of Special Needs Education at Kabul Education University to be an important activity (Turmusani, 2006), and the two parties should join together in actively working out an action plan to promote social participation of people with disabilities.

(III) Establishment of a disabled student support center

A center to support students with disabilities who are enrolled at the university; specifically a disabled student support center that is set up on campus, is another thing that needs to be considered. The MoHE should actively promote university admission of students with disabilities, and develop a concept to build a system that can support these students in their study and daily lives, in accordance with their situation and the severity of their disability.

(2) Prospects for the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE)

It is strongly hoped that the MoHE will listen to the voices of parents of children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, as well as the MoE, MoLSAMD, and MoPH, and work with each of these ministries to promote special needs

education. Looking back historically, we see a trend in countries around the world, including Japan, for special needs education to be placed in an inferior position behind regular education, always receiving low priority and given secondary status. Today Afghanistan has a wonderful opportunity to act in line with the Salamanca Statement and other declarations for the proper development of its special needs education.

(3) Recommendations for the Ministry of Education (MoE)

1) Short-term Issues

The Ministry of Education, in its national education strategic plan (2007), announced the creation of 35 resource centers for children with disabilities by 2011. In this announcement, they said that not all children with disabilities would attend school at those resource centers, and that it was necessary to improve the physical environment of regular schools so that, to the extent possible, children with disabilities could attend regular schools. At the same time, special training for the teachers of these children and the preparation of appropriate curricula are needed. A point that should be noted is that the Ministry is planning to make it so that children with severe disabilities, for example total blindness, deafness, or multiple disabilities, can study at the resource centers. To do that they are planning to assign teachers who have received special training. Even if this plan is realized, however, the school attendance rate of children with disabilities is predicted to be 45% of boys and 30% of girls by 2011. Plans for the construction of 35 resource centers and assignment of appropriate teachers seems generally reasonable looking only at present conditions, but from the viewpoint of the government's fiscal situation one wonders about the feasibility of these plans.

Meanwhile, the establishment of 18 coeducational teacher training colleges (TTC) with dormitories to train teachers who will staff the resource centers is being

planned nationwide. Together with this, construction of 364 in-service teacher training facilities and 36 buildings to house administrative offices is being planned. For the resource centers and teacher training centers to function properly, not only financial support but also the support of the Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University will be essential. The Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University will fulfill a huge role in developing the curricula and teaching materials for these two centers, and providing lectures. Because universities are under the jurisdiction of the MoHE, they should not be excluded from the future conception of school education, and the MoHE together with the Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University should investigate the future overall conception of special needs education. In addition, subjects on special needs education should be included as required subjects in the curricula designed at the TTCs, so that all TTC students take them. If this is done, TTC graduates will have a better understanding of inclusive schools to which they may be assigned after graduation, and will be more likely to serve as driving forces for inclusive education. The MoE should place the field of special needs education on the same level as other fields in TTCs, and with the support of the Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University dedicate efforts to training teachers with a high level of expertise. With regard to the MoE's plan to set up resource centers and TTCs, started in 2007, it will be difficult to train quality teachers with high levels of expertise by 2011 without the cooperation of the MoHE and the Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University. This is a short-term plan, and therefore these organizations and corporative frameworks should be studied immediately.

2) Medium-term Issues

In the medium term, a national survey of students with disabilities and a survey

on school attendance should be conducted by the MoE together with the Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University, the MoPH, MoLSAMD. Because proper teacher placement can be investigated based on the results of these surveys, it would be a good idea to plan for the establishment of a committee to conduct these surveys cross-sectionally across organizations. A teacher training system should also be planned for teachers who have graduated from a TTC, and an annual budget should be allocated. Training will be conducted for teachers with teaching experience of 3, 5, and 10 years by the staff of the Department of Special Needs Education in Kabul Education University. This accumulated training will help to raise the quality of teachers. Moreover, the MoE should encourage parents of children with disabilities to form and be active in groups that can share information beyond community or place. Encouraging these kinds of support and activities will help to raise understanding and awareness of disability in society.

We would also like to make one more recommendation for the medium term outlook. That is for the effective use of classrooms in the four buildings constructed at Kabul Education University with grant aid from Japan. Currently, some of those classrooms are being used as lecture rooms for the university's Department of Special Needs Education. The remaining classrooms should be approved for use as a university-affiliated school that can support education as a model school for all of Afghanistan. This university-affiliated school should be equipped with advanced facilities and assigned high quality teachers to serve as a model for inclusive schools nationwide. The lesson plans, instruction methods, and teaching materials that are developed at the university-affiliated school can be made available to teachers nationwide, and the lessons themselves made open for observation, so that the school serves as a place of shared resources. Students of the university will also

be able to practice teaching in the school, and university faculty can conduct joint research together with teachers in the classrooms. It is advisable that a university professor serve concurrently as the principal of the affiliated school. Japanese teacher training universities have affiliated schools, and close cooperative relationships are built between the university and school classrooms with a university faculty member also holding the position of school principal.

In addition, there are also children with moderate or severe disabilities that prevent them from receiving inclusive education. To provide schooling for children with moderate or severe disabilities, we would like to propose to the MoE that special schools be constructed. Special needs education does not consist of inclusive education only. In this sense, the construction of special schools for children who are excluded from inclusive education is essential. If school construction is difficult, the Ministry should consider using one classroom of inclusive schools as a special class for the schooling of children with moderate or severe disabilities, and assign specially trained teachers to those classes. Inclusive education should not be rigidly understood as placement in a regular class; the new method of special classes should be added to the Ministry's list of items to be considered.

3) Long-term Issues

In the long term there is a need to consider, in conjunction with the MoPH and MoSLAMD, measures to promote participation in society by people with disabilities. To enhance resource centers so that they meet the needs of the community, it will be necessary to give existing resource centers additional functions as vocational education sites, rehabilitation centers, and centers for early detection of disability and early intervention counseling with staff physicians. They should also have small-scale community centers or workshops for people with

disabilities after they graduate from school, to assure them a path forward after graduation. Here again, cooperation with the MoLSAMD will be needed. To attract international attention to policies for people with disabilities in Afghanistan, it will also be necessary to invite international conferences and other events related to people with disabilities, to make people around the world aware of the situation of people with disabilities in Afghanistan, as well as examples of improvement.

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Education in Afghanistan has greatly improved since the Taliban were overthrown in late 2001. According to recent estimates from Afghanistan's Ministry of Education, more than 5.4 million children are enrolled in schools today, nearly 35% of them girls[1]. Even though many arguments have been made criticizing the status and rate of development of the educational system in Afghanistan; and despite efforts by the Taliban to burn and shut down many schools, especially for girls. in the South and East, more Afghans now attend school or receive some sort of education than ever in its modern history The Afghan education system includes primary education, secondary education, higher education, vocational education, teacher training, and religious education. The Education Law of 2008 mandates nine years of compulsory education (primary education and lower secondary education). Free education through the bachelor's level is a constitutional right in Afghanistan. However, capacity is lacking in public institutions, and in the last decade or more, dozens of for-fee private institutions, most of them also for-profit, have sprung up to absorb young Afghans' growing demand for higher education. See education data for Afghanistan and learn about GPE programs, grants, results and progress. Supporting accelerated and remedial "make-up" classes for students who have fallen below their grade level, with special attention to IDPs and students at risk of being stigmatized or abused. Public schools - especially those in COVID-19 high-risk provinces - are tracked, assessed and ready for re-opening with the resources, information and materials they need to welcome children, and keep them and their teachers physically safe. Strengthening education sector planning capacity and transparency. Technical assistance and capacity building. Afghanistan Center at Kabul University. International School of Kabul. Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan (CW4WAfghan). National Science Center. Afghanistan Technical Vocational Institute. This activity provides a broad range of support to institutions and civil society organizations working in Afghanistan's education sector. Website: <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/fact-sheets/strengthening-education-afghanistan-ii-sea-ii>.