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UMA VIDA POR ESCRITO (VOL. II)

Edição Fac-sililada dos textos de Ana Maria Bénard da Costa
Francisco Ramos Leitão e Isabel Amaral (Orgs.)



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1986 – Integration of visually handicapped children and youth (1^a Conférence Européenne sur l’éducation intégrée d’enfants handicapés de la vue)

1989 – Integrated education in Portugal (Seminar Helios II)

1997 – Ajuda e Apoio (texto para o Seminário de Maputo)

2000 – The inclusive school project (International Special Education Congress, Manchester)

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1984 – Contributo para o Seminário de Bolonha (UNESCO).

1994 – A evolução da educação especial em Portugal: das escolas especiais às “Escolas Inclusivas” (contributo de Portugal para o Congresso de Salamanca) (UNESCO)

1997 – Rapport de la Mission Intégrée dans le Programme National de Réadaptation à Base Communautaire (RBC) de Haut-Commissariat aux Personnes Handicapées au Maroc (Rabat - Mission Interagence - BIT, UNESCO, OMS - de Programmation)

1998 – Training workshop on special needs in the classroom and preparation of a follow-up plan to develop inclusive schools in the project area (UNESCO - Project NAM/95/MO1/NOR - Namíbia)

1999 – Inclusive school project (UNESCO)

2000 – Seminário da UNESCO no Convento da Arrábida (participação de Portugal no “Open File on Inclusive Education”)

2002 – The Enabling Education Network EENET – Learning from Difference (EENET Seminar, Portugal, Foz do Arelho)

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*In a European Education
List "Inclusive Schools in
Europe" 1995*

INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS IN PORTUGAL

Ed. David Fulton.

I INTRODUCTION

When writing an account on "Inclusive Schools", some basic questions are to be faced. Are there inclusive schools in Portugal? If so, how many are there how important is this figure in the school system as a whole, and when and where did the inclusive school tendency start? According to the fundamental principle of the "inclusive school" which is that "all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have (Draft Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, Salamanca World Conference, 1994), we have to conclude that to answer these questions is very difficult or even impossible.

If the aim of this account was to describe the "integration" of disabled students in regular schools, we could rely on the different data traditionally mentioned in this context: number of students enrolled in the different schools divided by their category of disability, number of resource teachers, existence of other professionals specially appointed to support them and different school and related support systems. The different approaches adopted till now in "integrated education" - withdrawal, remedial and mainstreaming (Ainscott, 1991) - can be described through the objective measures involved, concerning the children previously considered, as having some kind of disability or a certain educational need. But, if we try to describe schools which attempt to reach "all children", improving school organization and teaching methods in order to enable them to reach the maximum possible success, we cannot find any landmarks to facilitate our research: previous assessments and students classifications; number of hours of tutoring; number and types of support systems. In this case we are looking for pointers of a more subtle and subjective nature which are not revealed through this kind of information; we are talking about attitudes, about expectations, about teaching methods, about classroom atmosphere, about school environments. And we know that some of the most important events in this field are taking place in the intimacy of regular classrooms, unknown outside the school and the student's family environment. Only a complete and complex survey could permit an insight into this reality, and this survey has not, so far, been carried out in Portugal.

Concerning the question of timing and locations - where and when this inclusive tendency started - the difficulties in answering this are just as great. We know the dates of the more important legal measures concerning this approach and we can pinpoint the places where some innovative programs took place; but, once more, we cannot underestimate the role of so many other teachers and schools which, along the years, has permitted a successful regular school achievement to students with special needs. We have the testimony of some handicapped adults who revealed to us their experience of real inclusion, at a time times when this expression - as well as "school integration" or even "special education" - were almost unknown.

Nevertheless, attempting at least to arrive at a rough perspective on this matter, we will underline those measures which can be considered as landmarks in the long transition from an exclusive to an inclusive orientation in education in Portugal. At the risk, also, of making a very unrepresentative selection, we will choose some schools which we think are close to this inclusive approach, and will try to describe their strategies and their struggle to cope with the different individual needs of their pupils.

II. THE FIRST STEPS TOWARDS SCHOOL INTEGRATION

Since the inception of a National Educational System, and since schools moved from being intended exclusively for a restricted elite, there have been pupils with special needs - in particular, learning difficulties - in regular classes. Until the beginning of this decade the common strategy for coping with them consisted in having them repeat the grade. Very often, the difficulties persisted, and another repetition followed. The percentage of repetition was different from school to school (many studies have been published explaining the most important variables connected with this factor) but the figures varied between 20% to 40%. Most critical were the early grades and children could remain in this phase till they reached the age of 14. Then they were removed from this type of school and, in some cases, could attend a night class. If the child had some severe disability, the possibility of acceptance in a regular school was considered neither by the school directors nor by the parents themselves. There were exceptions to this attitude but these were isolated situations relying, mostly, on the direct intervention of a parent as no kind of educational support was available. The law specifically stated that these pupils could be exempted from school if their disability was testified by a doctor, and alternative educational programs were not specified.

In the mid - 60s, a first attempt to change this situation was made. A group of blind and visually disabled students were accepted into a regular secondary school and, for the first time, a resource teacher was appointed to support this integrated program. Other schools followed this initiative and, by the end of the decade, with the assistance of support teachers freshly trained in this field, many students with severe visual problems were accepted in regular classes. This program was directly supported by the intervention of the Welfare Department (which provided the support teacher and the special materials) with the Ministry of Education remaining in a very passive role.

The first legal measures in the Educational Sector concerning the education of children with disabilities in regular schools, integrated on a full time or part time basis in regular classes, were established in the mid 70's, as part of an important educational reform. Through this reform were created: at a central level, under the Departments for Compulsory and Secondary Education, Special Education Divisions; at a local level, Special Educational Teams, composed mainly of resource teachers. These Teams strove towards family, social and school integration of children with sensorial and motor disabilities, with each resource teacher supporting different students spread around different schools, sometimes with considerable distances between them.

In 1975 was published the first Decree concerning the integration of disabled students, establishing the support measures to be organized by the regular schools. The most important of these were the possibility of individual tutoring given by regular teacher

and the possibility of using special materials and different forms of communication, used either during instruction or in the final evaluation. To be entitled to these benefits the students needed a medical prescription testifying to the existence of one or more disabilities.

The different initiatives which took place during the first steps towards school integration were ruled by the following principles:

- The support was totally child-centered, aiming to remediate existing disabilities through direct intervention from the resource or the regular teacher;
- Disabled students admitted in regular schools were to be able to follow - if necessary through some special instruction methods - the common curricula, and it was clearly laid down that their presence in the regular classroom should not entail any fundamental changes or any kind of disturbance to the "non disabled" students;
- The administrative and financial measures needed were to come almost entirely from the resource teacher and the Special Education Departments; the regular school was in no way responsible for these matters.
- The parents were not asked to participate in the decisions concerning the special programs planned for their children.

During this decade, a growing number of regular schools have encountered pupils that until then had been exclusively confined to their homes or to special centers. Among others, children diagnosed as blind, deaf or hard of hearing, physically or neurologically impaired, have been enrolled in primary or secondary schools all over the country and the former negative attitudes from the school directors or from the teachers have started to change.

We can consider these first steps as signifying a breakthrough, having set in motion the debate (which is continuing today) on attitudes towards education, the role of regular teachers and the importance of mainstream education in the future social and professional integration of people with disabilities. Nevertheless, by the beginning of the 80s, the influence received from available literature (The Warnock Report, published in the U.K. in 1978, has been especially important), awareness of developments in this field during the 70s in many other countries, and, especially, the Portuguese experience itself, had contributed to some fundamental changes which led to a next phase in the process towards school inclusiveness.

III - THE SECOND PHASE: SCHOOL INTEGRATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

We can describe this second phase through some of the landmarks which have contributed, in different ways, towards the evolution of the situation mentioned above.

The following are worth highlighting:

1. The inclusion of students with moderate and severe learning problems in the group of those supported by the "Special Education Teams".

This event can be considered a major step, as it profoundly changed the existing conceptual principles. A student with this kind of educational need can not participate in a normal class - even on a part-time basis - without requiring an active intervention from the regular teacher and a curriculum adaptation. In order to "integrate" these students, measures such as the support of the resource teacher, individual tutoring or the assignment of special materials were not sufficient. Their presence questioned, in some cases, the whole school organization, from timetables to architecture, from classroom management to instruction methods, and it implied, always, the active contribution from school directors and educational staff.

On the other hand, the organization of the Special Educational Teams and the "itinerant" work of most of its members had to undergo a profound change, as a much closer link between the special-resource teacher and the schools was needed. Support teachers were asked into the regular schools on a full time basis, and their link with the school became stronger as their link with the Teams became weaker.

2. The evolution of the policy concerning school integration

The policy concerning "integrated education" which we described in the first chapter changed through the 80's moving from considering the regular school only capable of accepting students who could follow the common curriculum and from considering that only the physical and sensorial disabled students could be integrated in normal classes, once they had the necessary support, to a much broader perspective facing the right for all "special education needs students" to participate in the regular school system.

This evolution is linked with many factors:

- The integration in regular schools of students with learning difficulties (mentioned above);
- The influence of international recommendations concerning "Education for All";
- The literature concerning this approach.

The combined effect of these factors (among many others) produced a profound change in the attitude of regular school staff and of the "Special Education Services", at a central, regional and local level:

- Instead of focussing exclusively on students, previously designated as having a specific disability, resource teachers were asked to work with a much larger population, including children with "difficulties in school". The resource teacher was no longer considered responsible only for the support of those cases having a "visible" sensorial or physical problem but, also, for those who had difficulties in learning due to a great variety of reasons.
- The former strategy of the "Special Education Teams", based on a child-centered approach and functioning principally by means of intervention in a separate resource room, was called into question and, in some schools, was substituted by other methods: support inside the regular classroom, participation of regular teachers (and not only the "Special Teacher"), reorganization of some school activities, etc.
- The responsibility of regular schools concerning students with special needs increased;

3. The development in the support system of three new perspectives:

- The substitution of the medical prescription concerning the provision of special education measures by educational and psychological reports;
- The audience given to the parent's opinions concerning assessment and delivery of special educational provisions for their children;
- The establishment of "Individual Educational Plans" as guidelines for all school intervention.

4. Legislation

In Portugal, legislation governing the education of children with special needs has tended to follow, rather than initiate, new developments. its major role

has been to consolidate and strengthen the new approaches and, in some cases, to guarantee the supply of material resources.

Three important laws dating from the 80's and the early 90's are to be mentioned:

- The Basic Law for Education (1986) which mention the right of all children with disabilities to be educated and the priority given to their education in normal schools;
- The law concerning the obligation of all children, including those with severe disabilities, to be included in compulsory education;(Decree n°35/90)
- The law establishing the different measures which must be available in regular schools, in order to answer to the special education needs of their students.(Decree n.° 319/91)

This legislation permitted , for the first time, that the education of these students ceased to be "a welfare matter", and become the responsibility of the Educational Department. (The translation of those principles into real practice is still an ongoing process, far from reaching the established objectives).

Considering the importance of Decree n° 319/91 in the practices introduced in the school system in order to accomodate students with special needs, we will describe briefly, its fundamental points:

- . The school must be a "school for all", being responsible for the education of students having disabilities or learning difficulties;
- . In order to cope with the special educational needs which some students may have, the schools shall undertake different "special education measures" according to each individual situation;
- . The "special education measures" can be of an administrative, curricular or organizational nature (individual support, adapted or alternative curricula, individualized time-table, use of special equipment, utilization of special means of communication);
- . In order to be eligible for one or more special educational measure, there is the need for a proposal presented by the school psychologist and the teachers as well as a written agreement from the parents;

The special education measures must be established in an "Individual Educational Plan", which must be signed by the parents and by the members of staff related. If we compare this law with the former

legislation concerning the integration of students with special needs, we can see that it represents a major step in many fields:

- the substitution of medical prescriptions concerning the special educational measures by proposals from educational staff and school psychologists;
- the role given to the parents in the assessment and intervention process;
- the possibility of adapting the common school curriculum or of organizing alternative ones;
- the possibility of accepting into the regular school system students with severe learning problems.

This phase, which we have just briefly described, is still prevalent in most schools but a gradual transition is taking place. We will now attempt to outline the changes taking place in some schools, bearing in mind that this is a difficult task, since the symptoms of these changes have not yet been analysed and the examples of this tendency are still very limited.

III. THE EMERGING "INCLUSIVE-SCHOOLS" PHASE

As has already been mentioned, changes in educational processes and in the attitudes of the educators do not follow legislation; on the contrary, they are the prerequisites for amendments to the law. During the 90s, the presence of students with severe learning difficulties in many schools - this number has been growing rapidly each year - has produced in many school educational teams the need to rethink their teaching strategies and to reform the whole educational system. The traditional approach of "individual extra support" has started to be questioned and the role of the "special teacher" has been profoundly rethought. In some schools the support teacher has moved from the separate resource room to the regular class, working side by side with the regular teacher, with both sharing responsibility for the class in order to permit a more individualized instruction; in other schools, students with very severe or multiple disabilities have stayed based in a special class but an interaction with non disabled peers has been developed through various strategies; finally, in other situations, a fundamental change in the whole school system is being initiated which aims to permit the development of project-based and group-based activities.

In many of these schools the pertinent questions have been: "If we are doing our best to facilitate access to the curriculum to our students with severe learning difficulties, how can we accept that those having much less severe school problems are failing to learn?" and "What can we do to reach the needs of each child or youngster?"

This evolution of ideas, of strategies and of educational options is just starting, in some cases within the school environment, in other cases at a district or regional level with the support of some educational leaders. The development of this tendency faces, nevertheless, great difficulties: lack of knowhow in adopting different teaching strategies, organizational barriers, especially at post elementary level, lack of educational materials, etc. For the majority of the schools to be considered "schools for all" a great change must be undertaken in many fields: in school administration, in teacher recruitment, in educational support for teachers and, especially, in teacher training. We can say that, in Portugal, as in most countries, the "inclusive school" is still a "utopia" belonging to the future. Nevertheless we can mention some schools which are already very close to this perspective and which are progressing rapidly towards this "utopian" goal.

We are now going to talk about some of these schools. They were not singled out from a national survey; they are simply some schools among many others which try to provide the best opportunities for all the children of their community.

IV - TWO PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE CITY OF ESPINHO

Espinho is a coastal town in the North of Portugal with a population of about 23 000. It has a large beach and during summer is a popular holiday resort. Apart from tourism, its activities consist in various industries, commerce, services and fishing.

The "Marinha Elementary School" is located in one of the poorest neighbourhoods, a fishing community with very severe economical, social, cultural and moral problems and where children present a general very low school achievement. "The main difficulty was in that children did not want to come to school and that they had a very high rate of school failure", informed the school Principal.

The school has about 100 students, all of them from the surrounding area, divided into pre-school and elementary classes from first to fourth grade. In the same grade we can find children of different ages, which is explained by the high rate of failures.

In 1991/92, the director of the Local School District, together with the leader of the local Special Education Team, decided to organize a "remedial classroom" in order to permit extra educational support to children with learning difficulties. A support teacher was appointed and a special room was supplied. She started to work with students (selected by the teachers or by a school psychologist) in small groups, for some hours a week. It was supposed, at the beginning, that this remedial room would

follow the traditional pattern of so many others spread all around the country: children would go there to receive some individualized remedial help in academic matters, in the hope that, afterwards, they would perform better in the regular class.

Nevertheless, as the support teacher became aware of the children's situation, of the very deprived conditions of their lives and of their reluctance to attend school, she realized that merely to give some extra time of schooling would not be an effective solution. Children would hate to attend the resource room as they hated to attend the regular classes. "I tried to reach them through others ways: by evaluating their capacities, and the knowledge they already had, concentrating on events which they could relate to because they were near to their own experiences, and create in the space we had a homely atmosphere, different from the classroom environment", told me the resource teacher. The Principal was asked to spend more money than usual on bird cages, plants, tissues, clay, painting materials, small musical instruments, large sheets of paper etc. The starting point for the activities was always suggested by the children: a party was being prepared in the neighbourhood, a new fishing boat had just arrived; a visit to the market, etc.

At the beginning of the school year a major storm hit the coast and several fishing families' houses were flooded by sea water. This was an important event reported in the local and national newspapers and was an excellent opportunity for a collective study: newspaper surveys, interviews with people whose houses were damaged, researching in geography books on storms, etc. All this information was collected through many means (writings, drawings, collage of newspaper articles, etc) in a large dossier and was presented directly to the Mayor of the town. In reply, he visited the school and spent some time with the students. During his first year, this room was still known as the "remedial room" and only students previously selected would attend it, for some hours a week. After some time, the name changed and this change signified a change in its nature: it became the "school resource room" used by the resource teacher and the regular teachers in many ways: students, in small groups, would receive support and individualized attention, larger groups would work on different projects, and some children having other school difficulties or greater emotional problems, would come on a regular basis.

One of the most important changes to have occurred in the school has been the interaction between teachers and parents. As the projects were connected with the environment where the children lived and involved their family and neighbours, this interaction was, very often, asked for. Parents lost their distance or even their fear concerning the school and the school staff and started to consider it as a place where they could find understanding and, in many cases, support. Problems related with child neglect or, in some cases, with child abuse, did not disappear completely but, in many situations, the parent-children relationships improved considerably.

The evaluation carried on at the end of this school year showed a enormous decrease in absency and a significant improvement in learning by most of the students. These results led the shool staff to undertake another step, consisting of applying the same teaching methods in the vaticous regular classrooms. Instead of considering the activities decribed above as "free time activities", conducted side by side with the

curricular ones, this school is beginning to change traditional school methods and to adopt the educational perspective which was introduced in the school resource room.

Some of the teachers are insecure and feel that they would need training to work in such a different way to the one they are used to. Responding to this need, a time for discussion and interaction between the regular teacher and the resource teacher is planned before the start of the next school year.

This school is, certainly, not providing the best of opportunities to all students. There is still a long way to go to reach that aim. Nevertheless, it is a school that has improved immensely in this sense and where children have discovered that learning is possible, that working together can be fun and that discovering and knowing can be exciting.

Some time ago most of these children felt helpless about succeeding, faced frustration at every lesson and reacted through various forms of misbehaviour. Some space, a few materials, but, essentially, a new educational approach has made possible the profound change in their "school - life" and in the "life of the school" which we have tried to briefly describe.

The "Anta Elementary School" comprises a middle class population in a central neighbourhood of the town. It has a modern building designed for an "open school program" and, like the "Marinha School", has about 100 students from pre-school to fourth grade.

In the school year of 1991/92, the parents of one child with severe learning problems and the parents of another one with motor and mental disabilities caused by cerebral palsy, living nearby, asked for their enrolment in the school. The children had received support during a former stay in a "Day Care Center" and their files containing the result of developmental and psychological assessment was presented to the school Principal. It was the first time that this school was confronted with children with such severe problems and their first reaction was to try to send them to a special school, considering the lack of needed resources.

The Special Education Regional Office had developed a policy concerning severely handicapped students which consisted in keeping them in regular schools, sometimes in small groups with the support of special staff and with different kinds of materials and special administrative measures. Acting on to this policy, the leader of the local "Special Education Team" proposed to the school staff the organization of a "special class" for these children, assuring the collaboration of a special teacher, an assistant teacher and the cooperation of a psychologist and a physiotherapist from a local special school. This meant that other severely disabled children would be able to share these facilities.

These were the first steps in a process which, since then, is giving rise to a profound modification of the structure of this school and its educational goals. We will try to describe shortly its current policy and practice.

The "Anta School" proclaims the right for every child from its geographical area to be accepted as a student, no matter the existing disabilities he or she may have, and opens its doors to other severely disabled children from all around the city, up to approximately 10. For the moment, there are 7 students with a variety of multiple disfunctions: cerebral palsy, "Cornélio de Lange" Syndrome, microcephalia and brain damage, among others. Three are non verbal and were not toilet trained when they started school; one, at the beginning of the school year, had no form of communication and is just starting to express some forms of body communication; one girl has severe learning problems but as she is able to participate in several activities in the regular class: she will be integrated, next year, in most of the day schedule. One boy with cerebral palsy has very severe motor problems and cannot talk but has a high level of intelligence and can communicate through the computer. This student is fully integrated in the regular fourth grade, following with success the common curriculum. The class includes an extra teacher who supplies the needed support to this student and cooperates with the whole class in a more individualised approach.

In order to answer to the severe special needs of these children, the following human and material resources have been organized in the school:

- one special teacher and two assistant teachers;
- a special class with special educational materials designed to improve motor and mental development;
- specially adapted bathrooms;
- ramps in the place of stairs;
- means of transport.

The reason why I selected this elementary school is not related with the fact of the existence of a special class for severely disabled children or the fact that a pupil with multiple handicaps is in a regular class on a full time basis. We can find, nowadays, several instances of this situation all around the country. This selection is related, basically, with the particular conditions surrounding this integration, which I will try to describe next.

The presence of disabled students has been a matter for a profound reflexion for all school staff as they have assumed that the former were full time students and should be involved as much as possible in all school activities. This attitude was also adopted by most of the students and, after initial reluctance, was shared by the parents. If it was obvious that some of these students needed to spend some time in the special class and receive there some specific training, it was also decided that the school should organize different activities which could be easily shared by them. The decision was to organize, all around the school year, active participation in the national and local festivities, using them as motives for projects carried in different directions. Christmas, Halloween, the City-Saint-Day, Carnival, etc., became the themes for parties, theatrical performances, exhibitions, study visits, etc. All these activities were designed in such a

way that all disabled children could participate, when necessary with the direct help of their non-disabled peers.

Through these initiatives, educational strategies have improved considerably, with positive results for all students. Some of those having moderate learning difficulties have developed interest and motivation in school ; others with behaviour problems felt responsible for cooperation with their disabled school-mates and their attitudes have changed considerably. Between the regular and the special class a close cooperation has been established and not only do most of the disabled students spend time in the regular classes, but the special class is used by all as a resource room where they come to participate in activities such as art, computers, or home-economics.

This interchange has signified the global participation of all the members of the staff in the program, which is no longer considered as a "matter for the special teacher" or belonging to the "special education sector". The change in attitudes and of policy, from a phase which we named as the "integration of special needs" to the other considered as "the inclusive school", can be demonstrated in this school. The barriers between classes, children and staff have faded and away we can see, instead, a close and rich interaction between children and adults in a common effort to give to each one the maximum opportunities for development. In order to implement this project in the coming year, regular class teachers and the resource teacher are together looking for the best ways to respond to each disabled student, according to individual needs, and finding his or her ways to bring about their participation in regular classes.

V - THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL IN THE CITY OF S. PEDRO DO SUL

Introductory notes

Before referring to the experiment carried out in this school it is important to give some information about the organization of a "Preparatory School", in Portugal.

Preparatory Schools receive students who have finished the elementary school, and go from 5th grade until the end of compulsory basic education, at 9th grade. In these schools the system of "subject teaching" begins: a different teacher is responsible for each school subject, having classes of 50 minutes, at various times each week. At grade 5 the students start with six curriculum matters and they reach nine subjects at grade 9. Some time is left for the school to organize intercurricular project work.

According to a very recent law, repetition is to be avoided till grade 9, and the schools can organize extra educational support for those having school difficulties. As we mentioned before, a Decree published in 1991, permits that handicapped children, recognized by the school authorities as such, can follow an "alternative curriculum" and be exempted from the common evaluation tests: in these cases, instead of a Diploma of Basic Education they are entitled to a "Certificate of Basic School Attendance".

S. Pedro do Sul is a small town of 25.000 inhabitants, located in the north east of the country in a rural area. The economy of this town relies essentially on agriculture , some small industries and tourism around the existence of a spa..

Until five years ago, this region was completely lacking in any kind of special educational resources. In 1989, a private Association initiated an intervention which aimed to answer to the various needs of the handicapped population and, with the collaboration of the Ministry of Education, a Special Education Team was put into action. The policy of this Association has been oriented by the principals of integration and normalization and, regular preschool facilities and schools have been encouraged to open their doors to children with different disabilities.

One of these schools is the local Preparatory School, which initiated the integration of students with moderate learning problems during the school year of 1989/90. These students were considerably behind in their schooling: their basic academic skills were at the level of first or second grade. Nevertheless, they could all communicate verbally and had no motor problems. When these students were accepted into this school, the school Principal and the resource teacher (specially appointed to work with them) agreed that their integration would have essentially a social feature and that they could only attend regular classes in Physical Education and Arts and Crafts. Besides this, they were to participate with their non-disabled peers in all free time activities, recreation, study visits and collective project work. The other academic subjects were to be taught by the resource teacher in a space specially designed for this purpose. For

the majority of these students this meant reading, writing and arithmetic and some functional activities according to their individual needs.

After the first school year, this experiment was carefully evaluated by the school staff and the resource teacher and they concluded that the social integration of the students in question had succeeded , that they had improved their behaviour and that there was clear progress in their normalization.. For their parents it was a obvious source of pride that their children could go to a regular school like all the "others". These positive results encourage the teachers to make another step forward and to try the participation of these students in many other subjects, although with a different timetable in order to permit an individualized curriculum design. Some would stay longer in the special class; others would be oriented for a few hours a week to a vocational training, while others would participate in almost all academic subjects in the regular class. This new approach provoked a greater participation of all teachers in this program as they started to see these students as their own (like all the others) and to feel responsible for their school achievement. Simultaneously, the role of the resource teacher was reassessed, and a much closer link between the activities carried out in the regular and special classes was proposed.

During this last school year, the presence of these students has caused for a profound discussion among the school staff. " We felt the need to rethink the intentions of the

school and we realized that the school organization as it is cannot answer to the student's needs", the School Director told me. The reform proposed by the school staff has the following main points:

- The need to change the existing approach towards educational support given to students with school difficulties. The law permits that they receive extra academic support, in small groups, given by regular teachers. The experiment showed, however, that this approach was inefficient, as their learning problems were not solved by having more hours of teaching through the same methods. They have learning difficulties, mainly, because they find no meaning in school subjects, because they cannot cope with a series of 50 minutes-oral-lectures and because the rhythm of the teaching is not adapted to their own learning capacities. The teachers and the school Principal realized that the new approach towards "disbled" students was much more successful than the one used with the "slow learners" as it permitted a more individualized program including different practical activities.

- The need to avoid the distinction between the two groups - those with mental disability and those having school difficulties - and to organize a global school strategy that could respond to each individual need. The strategy proposed entailed a profound change to the school system, based on a separate subject teaching. Instead, the school staff is planning the following measures:

- . Instead of having separate 50 minutes classes for each subject, they will have long periods for different project-work activities involving different topics, connected between themselves and oriented by different subject teachers.

- . The time-schedule established for students to attain the various levels of the curriculum will be adapted to each student;

- . The resources available for the extra remedial classes will be used to complete the curriculum with activities related with arts, sports, computers, use of media, et.

- . This educational perspective will have the flexibility necessary to include all students, from the gifted to those with learning problems.

Here ends my brief description of these three schools. The "Marinha Elementary Shool", in Espinho, through the activity developed by a resource room, found a way to reach the needs of a severely socially and economically deprived population and was able to attract the students and their parents; the "Anta Elementary School", in the same town, opened its doors to various severely disabled children and, in order to facilitate their participation in the school, broadened its methods and opened the school to the community; finally the "Preparatory School", in S. Pedro do Sul, stimulated by

the experimental integration of students with moderate learning problems, is implementing a profound change in the traditional teaching methods. The aim of all these schools is to be able to respond in the best way to the needs of all children in their community, whatever difficulties they may have.

As I said earlier, the selection of these schools was not based upon any systematic survey: they are examples chosen from many others that are following similar steps. We must say that we are very far from having, in Portugal, all schools as "schools for all". But we believe that the role played by those which are involved in this "pioneer movement", in spite of all the existing negative conditions, will spread their influence in the near future.

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Country Briefing

Special education in Portugal

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ABSTRACT

The education of special needs students in Portugal goes back to the beginning of the nineteenth century, but its major developments were initiated after the middle of this century. At the beginning of the 1960s, a movement for integration was begun that gained a considerable impetus after the April 1974 revolution and the re-establishment of a democratic regime. Since then, this movement and the inclusion of SEN pupils has grown both in quality and quantity. Portugal has shown itself to be very open to models coming from abroad and created a significant experience in this field, integrating in regular schools approximately 75 per cent of the existing SEN pupils. New challenges have appeared with the Inclusion movement that have not only changed the strict scope of the 'handicapped' population, but have acquired ambitious aims with regard to the improvement of regular schools and education for all.

KEYWORDS

Portugal, education system, special needs education

INTRODUCTION

Portugal, founded in 1143, is one of the oldest countries in Europe, with a small territory – an area of 91,985 square kilometres – and, according to the 1996 Census, with a population of 9,934,1. Portuguese is the language spoken throughout the country and the dominant religion is Roman Catholicism.

In the past 30 years, significant economic and political changes have occurred, especially after the revolution of 25 April 1974, which re-established a democratic regime. The Head of State is the President and the legislative power is vested in the Assembly of the Republic, both being elected by direct universal suffrage. The Head of the Government is the Prime Minister. Portugal became a member of the European Community in 1986.

The archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira are autonomous regions with governments and regional legislative assemblies of their own.

The administrative divisions consist of districts, which have a governor appointed by the Government and the local authorities – the Municipalities – whose members are elected by the population through direct suffrage (see Tables 1–4).

Table 1: Area and population: 1996

Area	Population	Inhabitants per km ²
91,851 km ²	9,934,1	108,1

Source: National Institute of Statistics (1996).

Table 2: Number of pupils in education: 1995/96

First and second levels			Third level	Total
Basic compulsory education (6–15 years)			Secondary education	
First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle		
586,034	326,163	442,962	474,239	305,696
				2,135,094

Source: Ministry of Education, 1996

THE GENERAL SYSTEM

The general framework and structure of the education system are based on the principle that every child has a right to free basic education. This principle is laid down in the National Constitution (1976) and is defined in the Basic Education Law (Law No. 46/86), which establishes 'a set of resources used to fulfil the right to education, expressed by the guarantee of a permanent formative action designed to encourage global development of the personality, social progress and the democratization of society, through an effective equality of opportunities of access and success in education'. The state is responsible for democratization in the development of education but is not entitled to impose any particular philosophic, aesthetic, political or religious principles.

Schools may have a different status – state, private or cooperative – but all are required to follow the guidelines and principles contained in the legislation determined by the Ministry of Education.

The intervention of the Ministry of Education is complemented, at pre-school and

Table 3: Number of pupils in pre-school education: 1995/96

Ministry of Education			Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity			Total	Pre-schooling coverage rate
Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total		
77,328	34,800	103,172	5,500	3,395	78,895	182,067	54.6%

Table 4: Total education expenditure: 1997 (PTE billion)*

Amount	As percentage of GNP	As percentage of total government expenditure
891.2	5.4	14.5†

* Does not include education expenditure by the Municipalities and other Ministries.

† This figure is calculated to include amount of Government expenditure in interests and amortizable of public debt.

pre-professional and professional levels, by the intervention of the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity, as well as by the Municipalities and non-governmental organizations.

Since 1981, there are five Regional Education Authorities (North, Centre, Lisbon Region, Alentejo and Algarve) responsible for the direct supervision and orientation of the schools (from pre-school to secondary level) but it is the role of the central services to implement the laws passed by the Parliament, to ensure the application of national decisions and instructions, to propose the national budget and to monitor the functioning of the educational services. Lately, school autonomy is being progressively implemented and the administration at regional and local level is moving to a more decentralized form as a result of a law published in 1998.

The public universities and polytechnics have administrative, financial, academic and pedagogical autonomy.

The Inspection Department of the Ministry of Education is responsible for monitoring the various teaching levels, in pedagogical and in administrative and financial terms.

The National Curriculum, both for the different levels within basic education and for secondary education, is being revised at present. The revision has three main aims: to identify, at national level, a profile of skills or competencies expected to be acquired by students at the end of compulsory education; to define the learning content considered essential at the level of each cycle, area and subject in order to achieve these competencies; and to provide more flexible and effective ways of dealing with programmes, in each school or group of schools, in order to facilitate flexible curricular projects adapted to each student's individual needs.

All along the educational route, there are several forms of evaluation of students' accomplishments, organized mostly on a continuous basis and at classroom level, but which on some occasions – at the end of the third cycle of basic education and at the end of secondary education – assume the form of national examinations.

The education system includes:

1. Pre-school education.
2. Basic/compulsory education.
3. Secondary education containing three types of courses:

- courses leading to further studies;
- technological courses;
- arts courses.

4. Higher education, including polytechnic and university education.

The education system also includes:

- (a) special education;
- (b) recurrent adult education;
- (c) distance education;
- (d) teaching of Portuguese language abroad.

In 1996, the total number of students in the first, second and third levels of education was 2,135,094. The average number of students in an age cohort at the compulsory education stage was approximately 1,355,159.

Pre-school Education

Pre-school education is recognized both as part of the educational system and as complementary to family intervention and also establishing with it close cooperative links.

This level of education is optional and is provided for children between 3 and 6 years of age through educational services which may have different status and provide different kinds of facilities. In terms of their legal status, there are:

1. State services under the aegis of either the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity, financed entirely or largely by the Government.
2. Private or cooperative pre-schools, organized on a commercial basis and financed through the fees which parents are expected to pay.
3. Private or cooperative pre-schools whose orientation is to provide social support to children and their families, financed by both the Ministries of Education and of Labour and Solidarity. They may also receive contributions from other sources, such as local authorities, private donors and the parents themselves, according to their economic circumstances. Beyond pre-school facilities, there are other forms of intervention with children in this age group, such as:
 - activity centres receiving children after their pre-school activities, as well as children attending the first cycle in basic schools;
 - various types of educational and recreational activities carried out in the communities.
4. Peripatetic pre-school education, serving the more remote rural areas.

A law of December 1996 established several measures intended to facilitate the enlargement of pre-school facilities, payment for educational programmes and the extension of timetables (occupied with different recreational activities) in order to cope with family needs. Pre-school education has become a high priority during the past few years.

Training for pre-school teachers is offered at the polytechnics ('Higher Education Schools') in a three-year course.

Basic/Compulsory Education

Basic education is compulsory for all children from 6 to 15 years of age and is free of charge in the public schools. State expenditure covers school attendance, record cards, school insurance and complementary supports in the fields of special needs, educational and psychological guidance and school health. Lower-income families are given priority in social support through concessions for meals, transport, books and educational materials.

Basic education is divided into three consecutive cycles:

1. *First cycle*, which lasts for four years (6–10-year-olds).
2. *Second cycle*, which lasts for two years (10–12-year-olds).
3. *Third cycle*, which lasts for three years (12–15-year-olds).

Participation rates in the three cycles are, respectively, 100, 91.2 and 88 per cent. Over each of the three cycles, state schools account for 91–92 per cent of total enrolment.

First cycle

This cycle is provided by an extensive network of mixed primary schools, reaching the smallest and most remote villages. There is a movement towards the amalgamation of small schools with limited population into larger units, but resistance on the part of many communities means the pace of this change is slow.

Recently, some classes of the first cycle were organized in larger 'basic comprehensive schools' (from the 1st to the 9th grades), created to facilitate communication and transition in these different phases of compulsory education.

Classes are organized according to age level of students and are generally taught by a single teacher; only in exceptional circumstances do other teachers assist in specific areas. In the normal situation (modified only by shortage of premises), the timetable includes 25 weekly hours, divided between a morning and an afternoon period.

There is a National Curriculum, established by central government, which specifies the compulsory subject areas to be covered, and extracurricular activities, which are optional and vary with each school project.

Second and third cycles

Post-elementary schools (5th and 6th grades) have developed rapidly during recent decades and vary in size and differentiation according to local conditions. Thus, there are schools exclusively providing the second cycle, schools covering the second and third cycles and, as mentioned above, schools which cover all compulsory education levels – including, in some cases, even pre-school classes. In addition, some secondary schools are devoted exclusively to the third cycle.

Both second and third cycles have a subject teacher system, which leads to a considerable number of teachers for each class and, consequently a considerable number of pupils per teacher. The negative features of this arrangement, especially at the second cycle where younger students are concerned, are being addressed and there is a trend towards teachers having a broader function.

As in the case of the first cycle, there is a national curriculum for all pupils organized in some basic areas and extracurricular, non-compulsory activities.

These cycles too have a national curriculum for each subject area, but schools are responsible for organizing their own project and for developing initiatives concerning the school and class activities, as well as extracurricular activities in recreational, sports or cultural fields.

All along these cycles there are some optional subjects, such as:

1. Foreign languages – students can choose one (compulsory) foreign language.
2. Religious education or Personal and Social Development, according to the student's choice.
3. During the third cycle, students choose between a second foreign language, technological education, and musical education.

Each school is also required to organize an 'área escola' ('school area') which has a duration of 95–110 hours per year and is aimed at enhancing learning in fields such as environment, social development, civic education and strategies for group work.

Secondary Education

After basic compulsory education, the following types of programmes are offered:

(a) Courses at secondary schools:

- regular secondary courses (providing continuing general education and/or preparation for higher education);
- vocational courses (aimed mainly at preparing students for working life);
- art education courses.

(b) Courses at vocational schools.

Vocational schools, set up in 1989, constitute an alternative to the normal education system and prepare pupils for working life, according to the regional and local needs of the labour market. Some of these schools develop training in such fields as art, music, dance and crafts. They are financed and managed via a partnership between the Ministry of Education, local authorities and non-governmental organizations. Most courses last three years and pupils who attend the full curriculum with success are entitled to a certificate of professional qualification (level III).

(c) Recurrent and adult education.

For students aged 15 or over, previously evening courses were organized in the school buildings, and both the structure and curriculum of these courses differed in some respects from the regular day courses of the same level. Recently, these evening courses have been reorganized in a programme called 'Recurrent Education' which is designed to have greater flexibility, and curricula, timetable and educational strategies are organized according to the different characteristics of the students, including age, social background, vocational aims, etc. Recurrent educational programmes may be initiated by the Ministry of Education or by different non-governmental organizations, and they may function in the official school buildings or in other types of facility within the community. The programmes lead to diplomas at different levels, equivalent to the regular qualifications.

(d) Initial vocational training.

According to an agreement between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity, there are several schemes of vocational training, at different levels, aiming to prepare young people for working life.

These vocational programmes may be altogether the responsibility of the Government or organized by private organizations with supervision and support from the state. Through the refereed agreement, the certificates of vocational aptitude are recognized as equivalent to school education certificates. Vocational training contains two levels: pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship. The overall participation rate in secondary education is 56.5 per cent.

Third-level Education

Higher education is organized in Portugal in two systems: universities and polytechnics. There are at present 14 public and 10 private universities, as well as 15 public polytechnic institutes.

Most teacher education is provided in the Polytechnic Institutes (Higher Schools of Education) which are responsible for the education of teachers both at pre-primary level and at that of compulsory schooling. University departments of education are responsible for the education of teachers at secondary level and for postgraduate education at master's and doctorate level. The duration of higher education ranges from three to five years and the master's degree is of two years' duration.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Development up to 1980

As in most European countries, the first attempts to educate children with disabilities started with those having sensory handicaps. The first school (for 'Blind, Deaf and Dumb') was founded in 1823 and, by the beginning of this century, a further five institutions had been created, four for the blind and one for the deaf.

In 1915 an organization with educational and welfare concerns for children with learning or emotional difficulties was founded in Lisbon – the Medical Pedagogic Institute – which developed significant work in the new field of research, training, assessment and education of this population. By the 1940s, and then bearing the name of its founder Aurélio da Costa Ferreira, the organization was responsible for several special classes situated next to the regular schools for the preparation of their teachers and for the publication of a review specializing in educational matters, *A Criança Portuguesa*, which gained some national and even international recognition. Meanwhile, a number of medical doctors, teachers and parents began to organize themselves into private organizations, creating schools for children with Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy and motor or visual disabilities.

By the middle of the 1960s, for the first time, the Department of Welfare became aware of the educational needs of handicapped children and, through a special department, organized several services and schools (among them a home service for blind babies, an assessment centre and several special schools) and developed a programme to provide financial and technical help to the existing private institutions.

The first attempts by the Ministry of Education to respond in a systematic way to the needs of students with handicaps were made in 1973, with the organization of a Special Education Department having as its purpose the initiation of an educational programme at national level aimed at this target population.

The 'revolution of carnations', which took place in 1974, introduced a democratic political system and had, among other major consequences in various fields, an important impact on developments in education, including those directed at children with disabilities. Two important movements marked this period:

1. The development of the integration of students with special needs in regular schools, through the support of the Special Education Teams.
2. The development of parents' cooperatives and associations which created special day schools for children with severe learning difficulties.

The objectives of the pioneer Special Education Teams were holistic: 'to promote the social, family and school integration of children with sensorial and motor deficiencies.' It was not yet the moment to expect mainstream schools to change or to make substantial adaptations in order to include those students, but the Teams aimed to prepare the students (with the help of their support teachers) for coping with the mainstream schools and classes. Nevertheless, this entrance of students with disabilities of various kinds into their neighbourhood school and into ordinary classrooms, on a full- or part-time basis, represented an important event which marked the change of the former rigid educational rules and legislation, and shook the mentality of teachers, parents and community members. Blind children began to be seen in the streets, walking with the help of their long canes; children in wheelchairs were accommodated in classrooms; and 'different children' were seen in schoolyards and playgrounds.

A law designed to sanction these new approaches was passed in 1976, and the Integration movement rapidly spread not only to the big towns, but also to small villages in the rural areas. New support teachers were trained, mostly through short, in-service training programmes; and new teams were created each year where support teachers were administratively based and where they could meet and help one another in this challenging job.

In the 1980s important international events contributed to significant change in the concepts and practices in this field. The influence of the Warnock Report of 1978, the impact of a Seminar on Integration in Lisbon addressed by OECD experts in 1980 and UN documents published during the Year of the Disabled, all represented important contributions to change in the Portuguese 'integrated system'. At the same time, the various experiments carried out in schools were creating an uncomfortable feeling with regard to the status quo. Helping some individual students with medically recognized disabilities, while not working more intensively with the whole class (where many other students had school difficulties), became a matter of growing dissatisfaction and discomfort among both ordinary teachers and the support teachers. The 'itinerant strategy' used by most of the support teachers caused them to feel separated from the school teams and, in a significant way, 'outsiders'.

A further step towards mainstream classes and the neighbourhood school – and looking in a broader way to special educational needs – was taken when a new law, inspired by these concepts, was published in 1991. Decree 319/91 established the right of children with special educational needs (including those with severe learning problems) to be educated in ordinary schools, and defined the necessary structures and measures that such schools must undertake in order to implement this aim. Another important feature of this law was that it made compulsory the elaboration of an Individual Education Programme, with the agreement of the pupil's parents. This law became a "Magna Carta" of integration in Portugal, because at the same time as it legitimized the right of all children to be in ordinary schools, it clarified the duties imposed upon the schools' services in order to make

this possible. This opening of the doors of mainstream schools to disabled children does not imply that it was now compulsory for such children to attend regular schools; parents retained the choice of sending their children to special schools, which continue to function. Throughout the country, the shift of students with special needs from the special to the ordinary school has been continuous, but uneven, because of factors such as the policy of regional and local educational authorities, the existence of pre-established special schools, the resources available in regular schools and the extent to which their programme could meet family needs.

During these years, a great number of former peripatetic teachers began to work full-time in neighbourhood schools and the support strategies varied from indirect to direct remedial instruction given in the classroom or in separate resource rooms, which became the most common form of support for students with different levels of learning difficulties.

Current Provision

As happened in many other countries during the late 1980s and the 1990s, there has been in Portugal a considerable discussion around the meaning, the aims and the role of the different educational support systems for students with special needs. The existence of a growing school population who did not succeed in getting a proper education – some of them leaving school before the end of basic education; the inability of most schools to handle problems such as cultural and ethnic differences, or students coming from deprived and violent families and backgrounds; and the anxiety of many teachers facing severe behaviour problems in their classes, all led to an urgent need to consider, in a more global way, the traditional 'special education services'. The need to introduce changes in the school system itself, in order to make it more efficient for all students, became a major concern that would affect the way special education was organized.

In order to face the issues related to the existence in Portugal of a national comprehensive curriculum for the (compulsory) first nine grades and of a high degree of differentiation between students, several projects have been developed aiming at a better response to individual needs. Among the most important are:

Table 5: Local support coordination teams (1998)

Local support coordination teams	Staff members
187	420

Table 6: Pupils with SEN in ordinary and special schools

Ordinary schools		Special schools	
No. of support teachers	No. of pupils receiving support	No. of teachers	No. of pupils
8,192	39,206	825	5,029

- The expansion and development of pre-school education.
- The Multicultural Project, aiming at minority ethnic and cultural groups.
- The Educational Priority Areas Project, aiming at the equalization of opportunities in schools in deprived areas and a closer cooperation between schools and community resources.
- The Curriculum Flexibility Project.
- The Class after 9th Grade Project, consisting of an experimental second-opportunity grade for those in need.
- The Alternative Curriculum Classes Project for students with behavioural or severe school integration problems.

In the meantime, new legislation regarding school autonomy has been passed, which has profound implications for school administration and educational supervision and which can facilitate, in different ways, a response to the needs of the individual student.

In the context of these multiple new educational developments, the system of 'integrated education', mentioned above, based on Special Education Teams and consisting of a service separated from the schools, has been profoundly challenged to modify its structure. The recognition of the central role of schools and their right to greater autonomy in the development of different strategies to become more effective with regard to all pupils, led to the need for closer integration of the resource teachers in the ordinary school context and for a change from 'special education teams' to 'support services', aiming at the coordination of all support services for children with special needs from birth to the transition phase leading to working life.

This new thinking was profoundly influenced by the Salamanca Declaration which has had wide appeal among educators and policy-makers. The translation into Portuguese of Unesco's *Teacher Training Pack - Special Needs in the Classroom*, and the various teacher workshops based on it which have been organized all over the country, also made an important contribution to this change of perspective concerning special needs education. The new perspective on the concept of special educational needs, proposed by these documents; the new roles already accepted by different ordinary schools and their teachers; the focus on new strategies to face diversity and curriculum flexibility, have all led various professionals from the universities, the ministerial departments and the schools to rethink the existing system and to study new forms capable of helping the development of real 'effective schools for all'.

These new concepts have been translated into a new law (Decree No. 105/97), phasing out the Special Education Teams and promoting the development both of support teachers as part of the school staff and of Local Support Services at a district level (Tables 5-7).

The fundamental functions of the Local Support Services are:

1. Collaboration with ordinary schools (especially with key staff) in their efforts to provide inclusive education.
2. Coordination of the different services which relate to children and young persons with special needs.
3. Coordination of the work of peripatetic teachers and specialists needed for low incidence (i.e. severe) disabilities.
4. Recruiting special resources existing in the local area (or in other areas, if necessary).
5. Dealing with the problems related to the need for special equipment and staff in-service training.

6. Organization of early intervention, parent support and transition to post-school life.

Programmes and Support Services for Students with Special Needs in Ordinary Schools

The provision of support professionals in ordinary schools is very uneven from region to region and from school to school. In some places these professionals are not available, while in others the school authorities do not give the needed priority; and in some instances, the amount of human special support services is considered satisfactory. On the other hand, the support required is directly related to the different educational needs presented by the students and, in some cases, the specific resources are not available at local level. These issues are faced, case by case, in each school with the cooperation of the Support Team, and in many circumstances, the collaboration of different community resources is requested, including the Municipalities, social and health services, private organizations and, particularly, rehabilitation centres and special schools.

The intervention programmes established on the basis of the available resources vary greatly in each situation, according to the degree and type of disability, the chronological age, the attitude both of parents and ordinary class teachers and the school policy towards inclusion. Nevertheless, it is possible to consider the following basic types of support:

1. Cooperation between a support teacher and class teacher in the same classroom.
2. Individual or group support to the student in the ordinary class or in a resource room (during some specified periods).
3. Individual support given in the family or in the community (this strategy is increasingly used because of the recent development of functional curricula with students with severe learning disabilities).
4. Intervention in special classes (used mainly with severely or profoundly deaf students or with students with very severe learning disabilities).

In spite of the growing movement of acceptance of severely disabled students in ordinary schools, for the great majority of them, there is a lack of the necessary resources, especially trained professionals (therapists, communication specialists, etc.), extra helpers to perform different kinds of task (for example, to permit a longer school daily schedule) and special programmes to help the parents at home, family respite services, transition programmes, and so on. In some regions of the country, these issues have been faced through the collaboration of former special schools, which agreed to send their students to ordinary schools and also to function as 'Resource Centres', helping the inclusion process. In these cases, many human and material resources needed in the ordinary schools were provided by the special schools. The education authorities strongly support both technically and financially this movement, and many private organizations who decided to close their classrooms continued to receive state subsidies in order to support the social and professional integration in school of disabled children and youngsters. Many of them decided to address other needs of the population with handicaps, from early intervention programmes for very young children and their parents to services aiming at transition to working life and vocational integration, or the establishment of different kinds of supported employment and group homes for adults.

Allocation of Human and Financial Resources

Until the law of 1997 (Decree 103/97), support teachers were provided by the education authorities according to lists drawn up by the Special Education Teams indicating the number of students with special needs in each school. This system was based on previous categorizations of those considered to have special needs – usually determined solely by teachers, due to the lack of specialized assessment services.

The changes which occurred in 1997 had an impact on this system. Given that each school may cope differently with students' special needs and that, in each situation, there are different possibilities of support (one of them being the existence of a resource centre in the area), and given also the importance of the school policy involving the inclusion perspective and the role assigned to class teachers and teacher helpers, it has been decided to allocate support teachers according to a school project, including different plans of action, in order to answer the needs of the pupils. These projects must take into account not only the characteristics of the students with major educational needs which, of course, is a key factor, but also other factors, such as the capacity of teachers in ordinary classes to cope with differences in their classroom, the cooperation established between teachers and other members of the school staff, the in-service training planned over the year and the extent of external cooperation from resource centres, NGOs or Municipalities.

SOME IMPORTANT FEATURES

Curriculum

In Portugal the first measures aimed at the development of a national educational system in the last century included the provision of a National Curriculum, established for the different levels of schooling. Linked with curriculum evaluation, standard rules were established and each student was required to reach, each school year, specified academic levels (translated into school marks) in order to be eligible for acceptance into the next grade. If students failed, they would stay in the same grade, and this repetition could be maintained until they reached the school age limit when, of course, they would have to leave school.

In the 1940s there occurred the first attempt to help children with learning difficulties when special classes were created (mainly in Lisbon). A special curriculum was designed for these students, aimed at achieving the level of the regular third grade. A special diploma would be given to those achieving the expected academic attainment determined for this grade. At age 15 all children had to leave school, with or without the diploma.

The first attempt to make ordinary schools and classes accessible to children with different special needs, and to make possible some adaptations to the national curricula and to the evaluation procedures, came about in a Decree of 1977 (Decree 174/77). According to this legislation, in order to be able to be eligible for these special education arrangements in ordinary schools, the students had to be previously diagnosed by a medical doctor as disabled and the adaptations referred solely to 'communication' difficulties (problems related to vision, hearing, mobility or speech). It was assumed that the students with special needs, once provided with special materials or adaptations in the expressive/receptive process, should be able to follow the fundamental aspects of the National Curriculum. In effect, this meant that students with intellectual disabilities, or those having multiple impairments, were not considered capable of being integrated.

A blind child could use braille; a motor handicapped child could write with an electric typewriter; and a deaf child could participate in a special class and be taught through specific methods of communication. However, all of these pupils were expected to learn the same fundamental parts of the general curriculum and to be evaluated according to the general criteria.

On the other hand, the special schools (most of them private and run by parents' organizations) could adopt their own curricula but their students would be unable to receive an official diploma at the end of their schooling. Some attempts were made to establish a special curriculum for special schools for intellectually disabled students, but these were not successful. Children diagnosed as having very severe or profound handicaps could be exempted from any schooling and, consequently, from following any kind of educational curricula. This situation changed in 1990 when a law established that the requirement of nine years' compulsory education should be extended to all children, without exception (Decree No. 35/90).

Decree 319/91 introduced profound changes in the concepts mentioned above concerning, mainly, eligibility for receiving special education (teachers' and psychologists' opinions substitute for those of the medical doctor) and the arrangements and adaptations which regular schools should provide in order to cope with students with special needs. This new law opened the schools to all children, introducing a large range of curricular adaptations and proposing a greater flexibility both in the individual educational plans and the evaluation procedures. According to this law, schools should include and adapt not only to those students having physical, or sensorial problems, but to all students, including those with learning difficulties of various degrees. For these latter, the possibility of following an alternative curriculum has been proposed. This alternative curriculum can be delivered in different settings: in regular classes, in resource rooms, at home or in the community.

With the collaboration of support teachers and other professionals (helpers, therapists, etc.), many schools have developed since 1991 an increasingly inclusive perspective, based on the understanding that every child within their geographical area must be accepted and educated according to his/her needs. For those having severe intellectual disabilities, this policy leads to different arrangements which aim to facilitate their participation in the activities of the regular classroom (most of the time, in a partial way) and the learning of specific functional curriculum elements necessary for their preparation for a life as independent and as socially integrated as possible.

Over the past three years, the Ministry of Education has been developing several projects which have in common the search for better ways to provide an effective education for all students and to respond to their social and cultural diversity, as well as to their different capacities or special needs. The projects which are having the greatest impact in this curricular field are the following:

- the project concerning the cooperation of schools in socially and economically deprived areas and the introduction to these schools of positive discrimination measures;
- the project 'Alternative Curriculum Classes' for those students who are at risk of leaving school without any diploma or preparation for working life;
- the project concerning the use of 'Functional Individual Programmes' in the provision for students with severe learning disabilities;
- the project concerning the introduction of a perspective of curricular flexibility in order to accommodate the specific characteristics of each student;
- the project concerning a 'second opportunity' for those students reaching

school-leaving age without academic certification, organized in close co-operation with pre-professional training in community work sites.

In order to develop these new curricular programmes – some of which have been criticized by the educational community – and to face the challenges they present, there is an urgent need to prepare existing and future teachers for this task and to introduce changes of various kinds in the general school administration.

Assessment

Team work among different professionals is encouraged in initial assessment of children with disabilities. The main task of assessment is obviously allocated to school support teachers in cooperation with their colleagues in ordinary classes. Other specialized teachers, psychologists, therapists and medical doctors are frequently part of the team which has to draw up the Individualized Educational Programme. According to the present laws, parents are involved in this team work.

In 1985 the Orientation and Psychology Service was created with the aim of assessing and supporting the integration process. This Service is constituted by teams that act as a second-line service to contribute towards better information and follow-up of all pupils. However, up to the present time, this service has not been fully implemented.

Early Intervention (Children up to 3 years of age)

The Basic Education Law (No. 46/86) relates to children over 3 years of age; the first stage considered is the pre-school phase, ages 3 to 6 years. Early intervention programmes concerning children between birth and 3 years of age are organized exclusively for children with disabilities or considered at risk and the official procedures upon which they are based belong to the fields connected with this special population.

In Portugal there is no 'Basic Law for Early Intervention'. Such a law might establish, at a national level, the rights of these children and their families to needed support services; and define the role of the different state Departments – Health, Social Solidarity and Education – according to their specific policy in this field. Nevertheless, despite this legal vacuum, the needs of at-risk or disabled infants and their families, came to the forefront in different communities and presented themselves as fundamental issues to be faced by the various professionals and types of existing services. In some cases, initiative for action came from the medical field, especially the paediatric departments and the intensive-care units for babies. Doctors, nurses, psychologists and other professionals involved with these at-risk or disabled babies and their parents decided to respond to the need for multi-disciplinary intervention, aimed at aiding the emergence of optimal conditions for the development of the child and the best support to parents in their parenting role. With these objectives in mind, several hospital paediatric departments in several regions organized Child Development Centres, which were designed to support early intervention projects. Medical and Rehabilitation Centres for Children with neurological problems also developed early intervention units, organized either at a Centre or at the family base.

Other sources of activity in this field have come from special schools, which organized early intervention programmes in their communities. In these cases, a link

was established with local health centres or regional paediatric hospital departments. The cases identified and provided for at first hand by the latter services are communicated to the early intervention unit, which carries on the necessary work in the educational and social fields.

Finally, a third resource for this group of children up to 3 years of age and at-risk or disabled children comes from the support teachers and Support Coordination Teams which, throughout the country, give support to this population. Some of these professionals are pre-school teachers trained to work with these children and their families and who conduct early intervention programmes, mainly on a family basis. They try to ensure the necessary cooperation with the medical staff available at local and regional level.

In 1983 a department within the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity introduced the Portage Programme and since then a greater number of professionals have used it in different contexts.

Over the past 15 years, an important shift in this field has become evident, namely a move from child-centred intervention to a family-holistic approach. In accordance with this perspective, a major emphasis is given to the empowerment of parents and other members of the family in their educational role and to the use of non-professional, natural human resources such as neighbours and members of the community.

The trend towards a family and community-based delivery of services has made necessary the development of team work in a transdisciplinary way. In this mode of working, links between professionals and non-professionals (family members and others) are established such that they permit the transmission of support and expertise from the more distant specialized team to the local, non-specialized human resources.

The absence of a national basic law for early intervention, while not preventing the developments mentioned above, has had several negative consequences, the most important of which has been the lack of a balanced distribution of services in Portugal. Thus a large number of at-risk or disabled babies and their families are not receiving any kind of needed support. With these projects being entirely dependent on the initiative of professionals, private organizations or official services – and with no agency assigned responsibility for the necessary financial support – the chances that the initiatives either do not take place at all or, once started, have no means of survival are great. This 'open door' to early intervention – in spite of the positive side which freedom of movement provides – has resulted in many projects developed under this same designation adopting very different perspectives and using very different strategies. In some cases, the medical model employed by hospital-based teams underestimates the importance of the educational component; in other cases, the pre-school teachers or the social workers carry out their work without the necessary support from doctors, nurses or therapists. Undoubtedly, the pressure of these issues is now reaching a critical point and it is expected that very soon a new framework will be approved which will clarify and, it is hoped, give new strength in this field.

The Ministry of Labour and Solidarity is responsible for some 31 early intervention programmes based on a multidisciplinary approach and including professionals from the Health, Education and Social Departments. The number of at-risk children involved in these programmes is about 800 in the country as a whole.

Special Schools

As already stated above, by the end of the 1960s, several institutions for the education of pupils with different kinds of difficulties had been founded, including the Association of Parents and Friends of Mentally Disabled Children, the Physically Disabled League, the Helen Keller Centre and the Calouste Gulbenkian Cerebral Palsy Centre. But it was really only after the revolution of 1974 that special schools were created throughout Portugal. Most of these were Cooperatives for the Education and Rehabilitation of Disabled Children (CERCI), voluntary organizations of parents and professionals who often faced many difficulties, not least regarding their building facilities. Outside the great centres of population, these cooperative schools have been the first (and only) educational resource for learning disabled children. At present, they are united in a National Federation (FENACERCI), have members from 56 institutions and have gained a considerable professional strength. They are funded by the Government and receive many other subsidies from different sources.

According to data published by the Ministry of Education, special schools run by voluntary organizations had in 1997/98 4,270 pupils and 825 teachers paid by the Government. Besides this group of special schools, there are some private, fee-paying special schools and a very few operating still under the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity.

Alongside the major thrust towards providing for pupils with special needs in ordinary schools, special schools have experienced a considerable degree of change. Indeed, many special schools have closed and the population of pupils attending existing special schools has fallen. These schools themselves have accommodated in various ways to changing circumstances. Many special schools support former pupils who are integrated into ordinary schools. In many instances, the same personnel contract with the local education authorities to act as a resource to ordinary schools, a pattern observable in a number of other European countries. Some pupils with special educational needs who are enrolled in ordinary schools also attend a special school for part of the day, in order to avail themselves of therapeutic services.

It should be emphasized that, while there has been a strong social movement towards meeting special educational needs in the pupil's neighbourhood school, some parents still choose to have their child educated in a special school. It is becoming clear that special schools have an important role to play, concerning the needs of people with more severe disabilities and their families – particularly concerning their non-academic, social, needs throughout their life span, from early intervention to the transition to adult life.

Teacher Education

The first courses for teachers of Special Education were created in 1940. Teachers working at the stage of compulsory schooling were selected to enrol in a course organized by the Institute Aurélio Costa Ferreira, that was offered until 1983. From 1942, the National Institute of Physical Education also offered the discipline of Special Pedagogy in the curriculum for teachers of Physical Education.

In 1960 the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs ran the first course for teachers of visually handicapped students, and in 1974/75 and 1976/77 the Ministry of Education organized special courses for teachers in the field of visual, hearing and

motor disabilities. These teachers (about 60 in total) were the core of the 'special education teams' and the pioneers of integrated programmes in Portugal.

In 1983 special education courses for teachers were taken over by the Polytechnic Institutes (Higher Education Schools, HES). The first courses were created in Oporto and Lisbon and since then many of the HES have created courses for pre-school, basic school and secondary teachers. In 1996, 12 of these courses in different parts of the country, and with an average duration of four semesters, were available. As a result of the development of integration policy, a law passed in 1987 on teacher education made compulsory in every initial training course for teachers a module on 'Special Educational Needs', with a minimum length of 40 hours. This module was, in some cases, an embryonic course leading to specialized training. Today there are modules and courses devoted to 'Special Education' or 'Special Educational Needs' available both at polytechnics and universities (mainly in the Faculties of Psychology and Education of Lisbon, Oporto and Coimbra).

In 1987 the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation of the Technical University of Lisbon created a graduate course in special education and rehabilitation, and in 1991 this same department created the first master's degree course in Special Education.

All public universities and polytechnics in Portugal are funded by the Government, and by student fees; in private universities and higher schools, which have recently shown a growing interest in this field, the expenses are mainly met by student fees.

In summary, we find in Portugal three different levels of teacher education regarding special needs: a first level with a component on special needs included in the initial training of all teachers; a second level leading to a specialized qualification in this field; and a third postgraduate level through to the master's degree.

OVERVIEW AND FUTURE TRENDS

All the new approaches described in this paper which are being developed in Portugal and aim to help the schools to reach, in a more effective way, all children, coping with their individual differences in heterogeneous classes, need to be subjected to experimentation; to be reinforced by continuous training of the different professionals involved; and to be evaluated. The pursuit of an inclusive school approach implies major tasks for the coming years. Better schools for all is, in fact, an ongoing mission, which will require a close cooperation of effort and full coordination of the different projects mentioned above. The challenge of special needs education in Portugal, as perhaps elsewhere, is to be integrated into the global aims of the educational system and of ordinary schools and, at the same time, taking into consideration the response to the very particular needs arising from the very specific problems of some children. It is a task to be shared by each member of the school staff while being the particular responsibility of some specialists who continue to investigate other ways to overcome the limitations of the disabling conditions. The basic challenge lies in being able to keep in mind the problems of all children and also to distinguish the unique situation of each of them.

In spite of the distance existing between these aims of an 'inclusive school' and reality, it is unquestionable that a new thinking is emerging and the concept is taking root in more schools every day. Several conferences have been held in different locations addressing the themes of curriculum differentiation, strategies for use within heterogeneous classrooms, multicultural approaches and cooperative teaching methods. The term 'Inclusive Education', which has spread rapidly among

different professionals in the educational field, does not imply solely a change of vocabulary; it is a sign of a changing process in attitudes that is taking place.

When we say that a change is taking place, we mean that we are living in a time when different situations, representing different and even opposite concepts, exist side by side. Many special schools continue to function and several voices making claims for the traditional forms of special education still fight for their cause. Several competing rules and norms continue to act as major obstacles to an inclusive approach. But in this long journey (of which this paper has provided only a glimpse), and since the time of the first institutions, there is one sign which conveys the importance of a 'school for all' concept. The fundamental actors in this process are no longer the Special Education Departments or the Special Services, for this role is now also assumed by the general education system itself through its institutions of Teacher Training Schools, General Education Department and the National Council for Education; and some of the more recent legislation in the field of education consists of attempts to address, *inter alia*, such problems as: curricular flexibility, equalization of opportunities and strategies for teaching heterogeneous classes in a better inclusive school for all.

If a major feature can be said to characterize the situation of special needs education in Portugal, it is probably its lack of precise rules and the enormous variety of actual situations caused mainly by this factor.

As has been said, from the 1970s until now, some rules and principles have been established, each of them marking different stages in the evolution of this field. Decree 174/77 and Decree 319/91, and the very recent regulations in 1997 and 1998, have determined in each of these phases the values and principles orienting this educational sector. First of all, there has been the right of some children to be integrated into regular schools according to a medical doctor's opinion; secondly, the extension of this right to all children, even those with severe learning difficulties, and the power given to teachers to take part in these decisions; and finally, the new perspective of Inclusive Education which addresses the key issue of the need to change schools in order to make them effective for all students, whatever problems or difficulties they may have.

But so far all these laws and regulations have been limited to very general and broad matters and have failed to mention precise details concerning teaching methods, the number of children helped by each support teacher and precise hours of remedial help or of therapy. The Individualized Educational Plans can describe these interventions, but it remains a matter decided by the school staff and the parents of each student. Unlike many other Western countries, there are no national or regional rules in Portugal concerning these concrete forms of special education provision. This 'freedom' has had very positive consequences, as a strong separate system of special education legislation has never been set up and still does not exist. This fact means in the context of Inclusive Education that outmoded rules do not become an obstacle to change. On the other hand, there have also been several negative impacts: there is a big gap between the principles established in the laws and the real, concrete situations of many students; parents have no means of finding better responses to their children's needs through court decisions and there is the coexistence of different educational structures with sometimes conflicting concepts and practices, with some special schools still bearing the stigma of old-fashioned institutions while some inclusive experiences can be considered as extremely advanced. There are enormous differences in the quantity and the quality of the services provided both to children with severe problems and their families. Finally, the system of allocation of special education equipment and special aids is obsolete and causes major discrepancies and lack of equality of opportunity.

To describe in a short article a situation so multifaceted as that of Portuguese special education, or to clarify what still remains unclarified, is something of an impossible task. Nevertheless, it is hoped that some basic points have been communicated: there is a clear political will to develop the educational system in order to cope with all children in the same regular schools; there is a trend towards flexibility of curricula and equalization of educational opportunities; and there is a movement to consider special educational needs as a concern of all schools and a responsibility of the whole education system. And, above all, there is the open attitude, and the will and outstanding work of thousands of professionals all around the country fighting for these ideals.

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1^{re} CONFERENCE EUROPEENNE SUR L' EDUCATION INTEGREE
D' ENFANTS HANDICAPES DE LA VUE

Barcelone, 3 au 5 juillet, 1986

Comunicação da Dr^a Ana Maria Bénard da Costa

1. I received a proposal to present the theme of the "Integration of Visually Handicapped Children and Youth" from a theoretical point of view, so as to look at its foundations, reasons and objectives.

However, before talking to you of the ideas that nowadays guide our work I would like to mention, briefly, the way we took, and the evolution of these same ideas.

It was at the beginning of the 60's that we took the first steps in the visually handicapped's integration.

At the beginning we did not have the proper legislation, and did not have prepared support teachers. The equipment was scarce. But a group of blind students was enrolled in a secondary school and their performance was well accepted. The road was open and the process begun has not stopped as of today.

Going back these two decades one has to note two big phases with different characteristics.

During the first phase the integration of the visually handicapped children (specially those using Braille) was a fact accepted by the normal school, but structured and supported practically only at an extra-school level. The student was integrated in class as long as the supporting service, "the special schooling", took all the responsibility for the total integration process, and above all else the teaching structure was not altered by this fact.

The demands made on the Class Teachers were timid and modest: one asked them for understanding, cooperation with the supporting teacher, some methodological adaptation, but all interference in this pedagogic orientation, teaching methods and work rhythm were carefully avoided.

The handicapped children, generously received by their non-handicapped colleagues, had to make all the effort to adapt to an unchangeable school structure.

In this phase, all groups that were going to be integrated were rigorously selected, and all cases that presented additional learning or behaviour problems were kept in the special schools (if not at home) and were classified as not integratable.

However, the movement towards integration moved fast, englobing the various age groups (from secondary school it went down to kindergarten) and reaching the various parts of the country..

With this growth appear the seeds for a deep change which is still in its first stage, but which we can consider as a different phase from the first:

Schools begin to accept, progressively, a larger responsibility for the integration of handicapped children, and begin to take initiatives that tend to make the schools more adaptable to their special needs.

The conscience understanding that school must be apt to receive the generality of the school population begins to spread, as does the understanding

that classes must be heterogeneous and that teaching should allow giving individualized attention to each child.

In this context, to receive handicapped children is not a favour but a duty, a function appertaining to the regular school itself.

The integration process comes to be considered as a bilateral process of adaptation in which the school cannot keep itself unchangeable.

Alterations in school buildings, timetables, in the curriculums, are proposed, making these more flexible and capable of adapting them to different situations of the students.

The regular school system teachers demand for themselves a larger preparation concerning the problematics of handicapped children and of the methods of individual teaching.

Growing demands are put forward for:

- equipment
- specialized pedagogical support
- training

On the other hand, the different community services (education, health, social security, labour) are called upon to take a part in the global process of acceptance of the handicapped, in cooperation with the families and private associations.

Direct consequences of these transformations were felt on the level of the special schooling itself, and following changes are of note:

The change of treatment totally sectorized (each group of teachers attended only one category of children) to a larger inter-communication between supporting agents acting in a smaller geographical area.

In each school or community, a supporting teacher called "generalist" begins to work. The Specialist Teacher is called upon when it becomes necessary to intervene, either helping his colleague or working directly with the child.

This attitude implies the idea of inter-professional training, and within the working Teams, a transdisciplinary perspective.

Therapists, teachers, psychologists, besides their individual activity in relation to each child, try mutual support, transmitting to each other their own knowledges and receiving their colleagues.

The work which was initially centered on the child has now been extended to the cooperation with the school, which one helps to change.

As I said a moment ago, this phase is beginning, and the implementation of these ideas and their deriving actions are not yet generalised.

In certain schools or communities it is a daily practise, in others it is

still a strange language leading to reactions and contestation movements.

However, it involves services whose activity is determinant, such as: Teacher Training Schools, Special School Department in Universities, Special Teaching Teams, Parent Association and specially many teachers of regular Schools.

2. When certain ideas and attitudes become evident to us, it becomes difficult to justify them with logical arguments. Evidence is not explainable, it just imposes itself on you.

For this reason it is not easy for me to justify the integration of visually handicapped children in regular classes.

So that this task becomes easier I will look at the theme Progressive Integration from two points of view:

- The point of view of the handicapped child
- The point of view of the regular school and the non-handicapped children.

The point of view of the handicapped child

The children that are visually handicapped present the same basic needs as any one child:

- Support, affection and family orientation;
- communication with grown-ups and other children;
- opportunity for self development, by creating relationships, and manipulation and experimentation.

Besides these basic needs, visually handicapped children have specific needs; some of these are directly or indirectly linked to their visual impairment — others exist independently of this. So we verify that if we group the visually handicapped children in a class or school, we will have made it easier to answer only one part of their educational needs, in fact it will be easier to teach them mobility or Braille or the utilization of optic helping instruments.

But, we will, in time, in that way put a stop to the full satisfaction of some of their priority needs:

In some cases the contact with the family can become less intimate and permanent, in others the relations with adults and children of their community can be made more difficult; it may happen that the day to day experiences will be less rich and demanding less their participation in their tasks at home.

On the other hand, the attendance to other specific problems of learning or development not directly occurring from their sight deficiency is not in many cases made easier with this criterion for school groups.

Creating classes of blind children or partially sighted children does not mean creating homogeneous classes. If a visually handicapped child is part of a regular class, the child is different. That same child if part of a special class can from an educational point of view present even big differences.

We can therefore ask if the special class helps the child to find the answer to its problems or helps, basically the teacher to teach special techniques,

Like any other child, the visually handicapped use in their learning — besides the adult intervention, be it from their parents, teachers, relatives or friends —

the intervention of other children. In their process of normalization, the non-handicapped children have a more important role than any adult can have. The copying of behaviour, the answer to various stimulus and challenges; the need to follow different rhythms and attitudes are decisive factors in their evolution and growth.

From this leaving together with their colleagues comes the gradual recognition of the difficulties that face them, of the limitations they cannot surpass, and also of the achievements they can obtain. It is through the constant and precocious communication with non visually handicapped children that they will understand the real dimension (neither over value neither understimulated) of the difference that affects them.

To take away from a handicapped child, throughout his schooling the chance of this daily living with his colleagues of the regular class, means taking away from him one of the fundamental instrumentals of his development and normalization.

From the moment in which children begin their school activity—be it in the pre-school or in the primary school—their life begins to take place between home and school and progressively the surrounding world. It means different worlds, under specific rules, that cause different attitudes and behaviours. It is evident that the relative weight of these life frames depends on the age of the child as it does on the cultural conditions and the social-economic and geographical situation in which the child lives. However, in most cases, their day occurs in these situations that happen in a determined order and in which each play their own role.

The visually handicapped child benefits as any other of being faced with them: waking at home, going to school, returning to the family atmosphere, and meeting the neighbours in the street, yard or garden.

Boarding special schools have tried to recreate these worlds: they separated the residential zone from the school zone, forcing the child to go between them within longer or shorter distances; they have defined special activities for the end of the day; they have tried in ways without number to activate the relations with other children of the area. But they did not substitute the family, nor the home, nor the relationship with the local children.

The variety of stimulus and the facility of communication between handicapped children and their surroundings is not the same. There is a country life where the children are in direct contact with animals and plants; and there is a city life which is insupportable and dreary; there are parents that promote their children's independence and their contacts with the outer world, others that superprotect them and close them in. It is for the educator a great responsibility to intervene properly in each case, trying to profit from positive conditions that can be found

and evaluable. But his biggest responsibility will be in contributing his most, so that the visually handicapped or partially sighted may: wake up at home, go to school, return home, and before dinner or going to bed, play with their friends. In the country, in the garden, in the yard or even in that inhospitable and dreary city that the adults built, or in the portico of a door magically transformed by their imagination.

The point of view of the regular school and the non-handicapped children

The history of pedagogy teaches us that many of the innovations introduced into the regular schooling had their origin in the special schooling. I think that as important or more important than a Montessori pedagogy or a Decroly contribution we can talk today about the push forward given to the pedagogic orientation by the entry into regular classes of handicapped children.

When it happens that schools take it upon themselves to become schools for all children, they must adopt the following principles:

- Teaching has to be individualised, taking into account the different sectors, of learning and different educational needs;
- Knowledge and the way to evaluate it must be flexible and adaptable;
- The school must be open to the external cooperation (of the supporting Teacher the Therapist, the Doctor) and to the intervention of the community's resources.

On the other hand, it has not stop being:

- selective
- segregatory
- organized in special classes, wanting to be homogeneous, separating the children into non-inter-related groups that represent, in most cases, not only different intellectual capacities, but different social-economic origins.

The entry of handicapped children, came therefore to contribute to the polemic that questioned this school structure and brought in as an alternative heterogeneous classes and individual teaching.

To adapt to the different educational needs of the children and to be able to answer, in some cases, to some very special cases that occur—such as to be able to see very badly or not at all—the teacher must use pedagogic instruments and educational equipment that permit individual work and in a group, the diversification of tasks, manipulation and experimentation, pre-teaching, planning and self-evaluation. In one sentence; active, adequate and efficient teaching.

As it is obvious, the progress of educational sciences and of technology applied to teaching are not directly dependent on the handicapped children's school integration.

However, their presence in school and in the school classes helps in many cases to introduce methods and techniques and equipment that contributed to that same educational progress.

A gifted student, without special educational problems, learns with whatever method, be it traditional or even inadequate; a student presenting those problems requires better educational conditions. If he is integrated, those better conditions will benefit all the class.

If total integration of the handicapped in society is still, in many communities and countries utopic, if the resistance to the many voices that demand their right to family, school or professional integration is so strong, we believe that one reason that justifies this is that majority of adults did not,,while children live the experience of being together with handicapped children.

Their_ our_ personality was formed, our deep attitudes in relation to the handicap was reinforced, without having had that early contact.

Children, that now participate with them in the school activities; that day to day are led to help them, and very often to request their help; that recognize their limitations and get used to accepting them, will without a doubt, during their lifetime, contribute to break that resistance and to transform into reality the utopy we talked about.

The title given to this intervention was:

"Integrated Education— a progressive option".

If the spirit of cooperation and help to each other means progress;
If the respect and acceptance of individual difference means progress;
If the right of the handicapped to enjoy the structures that society created for all individuals, specially their community school, means progress;

Integrated Education, is in fact a progressive option.

1989
Sumário

INTEGRATED EDUCATION IN PORTUGAL

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SUMMARY

In a brief overview, the first steps towards integrated education in Portugal are described. Phase one of the plan, which took place in the seventies, is then explained. On the basis of the experiences of phase one, a second phase was started. Three subgroups of students with a different types of disability are distinguished. This is followed by an account of the system's consequences for the integration of pupils with different special educational needs. The current situation is set out, including the lines of policy adopted by the Ministry of Education, integration models and the necessary modifications in regular schools.

At the beginning of the school year of 1962/63, five blind students began attending a regular class in a Lisbon Secondary School. We can consider this the first step towards the so-called 'Integrated Education'.

I had the privilege of being their support teacher and be part, in that initial phase, of this programme that has, since then, developed and expanded all over the country. As we look back into the years that have passed since these first experiences, we can distinguish, generally speaking, the following stages:

- In a first stage - which lasted more than 16 years until the eighties - mainstreaming was considered feasible only for those students who were considered capable of following the school curriculum and of adapting themselves to the existing educational structures. That is, only the physically or sensory handicapped with no mental disability were accepted in regular classes.
 - In 1980 a second stage began which included the mainstreaming of students with moderate or severe mental-emotional problems. Their integration in the regular classes was supported by remedial teaching given inside those classes or in resource rooms. For those cases for whom it was necessary to arrange a different curriculum, special classes were organized, the integration being limited to free-time and social activities.
- Through this programme new perspectives were fore seen:
- most of the itinerant teachers were located on a more permanent basis in each school
 - there was a tighter link between regular and support teacher

- the attention that initially concentrated on the student's problems, changed in focus gradually to the general student/class and student/educational situation.

- In 1984, with the amount of experience with which the integration of this type of student had provided us, we can consider another phase to have begun, which is still evolving and looking for new directions.

It is based in the assumption that the integration consists less of adapting the student to school than of transforming the educational system in order to adjust to the special needs of each child, even those presenting severe conditions that demand specific answers. This educational concept, which is not opposed to the previous ones but emerges from them, demands changes in planning and strategy in the following fields:

- the role of the regular and special support teachers and consequently their training programmes
- the school curricula and evaluation measures
- the qualifications needed by the school staff.

Briefly, the general objective is to organize special and regular education into a comprehensive system and to abandon the idea that they should be regarded as separate. We are just beginning this process which is in defiance of traditional concepts and is part of the educational reform now on the way in Portugal.

Two decades of experience in integrated education show us that we face three different groups or situations:

- students with sensory or motor disabilities, but with average or above-average intellectual capacities
- students with severe or profound mental disabilities
- students who present learning difficulties, related or not to intellectual or emotional problems.

We know that for the first group of students it is possible to provide efficient ways of support that enable them to participate in the normal classes.

If there are special educational and therapeutic professionals, adequate equipment, easy access to the school building and transportation, we can expect their integration to be successful. Some of these resources are difficult to arrange, especially concerning low incidence cases requiring a more sophisticated approach.

Nevertheless, the solutions for this group are well-known and the main problem is having the means to provide them.

In addition, the second group of students who need specific curricula (differing more and more from the regular ones as they grow older) can be part of a regular school, as long as some special strategies are implemented, i.e. special classes, special teachers, helpers, therapists and special equipment.

These students' education, even when based and organized as a part of a regular school programme, requires many out-of-school,

community activities. We all know that the development of social skills should be a very important part of their curriculum. This must take place primarily in normal social situations.

For those reasons this group does not interfere directly with the normal school system, nor with the programmes that take place in the regular classes.

The experience that we have with these students tells us that their being in school - after a sometimes difficult phase of adaptation - usually elicits a positive response from school mates, teachers and parents, which takes the form of help and solidarity.

The third group is the one faced with the greatest difficulty in the integration process. These students are supposed to participate on a full-time or almost full-time basis in the regular classes. They are supposed to be assessed by the normal standards and to take the same examinations. Having learning difficulties, emotional problems or social maladjustments, these students, who represent 30% or more of the entire school population, either face continual school failure or are sent to special programmes designed for the intellectually disabled.

We all know the research and experiences that have taken place during the last decades, in trying to compensate for these difficulties in remedial or resource settings. But, as we know also through follow-up studies, the short- and long-term results for these students are extremely deceiving.

Nevertheless, the solutions for these groups of students must be found essentially inside the classroom. If the regular classroom cannot cope with such a high percentage of students, it means that instead of trying to solve the problem 'outside' in any kind of remedial resources, we should try to solve it in the classroom itself. This means reform in teacher training, teacher resources, equipment and curricula.

The answers to this third group's problems are, in a way, the answers to educational problems in general. These students, with difficulties in basic academic skills or with behavioural problems, are the ones who put pressure on the need to change our school system.

From that day in October 1963, when I took those blind students to a regular school, until now, we have come a long way in Portugal: we have now 2000 resource teachers helping about 20,000 handicapped students in the regular schools. We have now joined the European Community, we are in the process of an Educational Reform and are satisfied to know that the way we chose long ago, in a rather isolated and insecure position, is now shared by others in Europe. This is a reason to give us the strength to continue.

Promoting Inclusive Education in Portugal¹

Paper presented at the International Special Education Congress 2000, Manchester

A – THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS PROJECT

The general objective of the Institute for Innovation in Education (IIE²) is to "promote, support, stimulate, disseminate and study innovations with a view to creating quality education for all". The UNESCO project *Special Needs in the Classroom* was therefore perfectly suited to these aims. Permission was given in 1994 for a national project, *Inclusive Schools*, based on the UNESCO initiative.

I – Overview

The implementation phase of the project was originally scheduled to last one year. In the end it spanned two school years, from 1996 to 1998.

General objectives

- To carry out experiments of an innovative nature in various schools throughout the country, encouraging the involvement of local action teams from teacher education institutions, whose role was to assist, develop and disseminate the innovative practices implemented as part of the *Inclusive Schools* project.
- To promote, with the collaboration of UNESCO, the ability of teacher educators to give impetus to local teacher education processes in which groups of teachers from the schools involved were participating.
- To develop a research project, in close co-operation with teacher education institutes, aimed at numerous schools in the areas served by these institutes and based on UNESCO's Teacher Education Resource Pack.

The IIE project therefore had two principal aims: on the one hand to disseminate the concepts and practices inherent to the inclusive schooling philosophy, as the UNESCO Resource Pack proposes, and on the other to implement a research project aimed at evaluating the effects of teacher education based on these materials on the classroom practices and on the school's practices.

¹ Adapted from Costa, Paes and Vitorino (1999) O Projecto Escolas Inclusivas. Paper presented at the *II Jornadas Necesidades Especiales en el aula*, Barcelona.

² IIE: an Institute from the Portuguese Ministry of Education.

Procedure

I. The main features of the research project were:

a) strategy/action:

- Translation into Portuguese of UNESCO's *Teacher Education Resource Pack – Special Needs in the Classroom* and the book *Special Needs in the Classroom: A Teacher Education Guide* by Prof. Mel Ainscow (UNESCO, 1996) and their publication by the IIE.
- Copying of the videos included in the resource pack and the subtitling in Portuguese of a part of one of these videos (*Inclusive Schools* – a secondary school in the UK).
- Publication of a leaflet explaining the purpose of the Resource Pack, its principles and teacher education approaches for extended dissemination in the country.
- An intensive workshop (May 1996), during five days, on the use of the resource pack, oriented by the director of the UNESCO project, Prof. Mel Ainscow. This workshop (the first of its kind in Portuguese) included forty people being five from each local team, members of the IIE staff, one staff member from each of the five regional education authorities and some education professionals from the PALOP countries (Portuguese-speaking African countries) and Brazil.
- Protocols between the IIE and five Teacher Education Institutions one in each educational region of the country, establishing the terms of co-operation for the implementation of the project.
- Creation in each teacher education institution, of an action group comprising teachers from the staff and in some cases representatives of the regional education departments (DRE) of the regions involved, plus teachers or senior teaching staff from the schools selected for involvement in the project. Each action group was led by a co-ordinator appointed by the institution from each region.
- Five regional seminars (one in each educational region), in collaboration with the respective DRE and Teacher Education Institution, whose aim was to build awareness of the project and Resource Pack among local educational leaders and administrators.
- School-centred teacher development activities implemented by the action groups and directed at the teachers from the schools selected.
- Regular meetings at IIE involving the local project co-ordinators and the IIE team in order to reflect upon the process of implementation of the project.
- Production and adaptation of instruments for evaluation of the project by the IIE team in collaboration with the co-ordinators of the local action groups, supposed

to be used by these teams with the teachers as a part of the process of implementation of the local projects.

- Presentation of a preliminary and a final report of the local project by each of the action groups of the teacher education institutions (with the collaboration of the teachers and heads of the target schools).
- Publication of a final evaluation report by an enlarged IIE team (composed by the project team and three collaborators from the evaluation departments).

b) Project participants:

1) The IIE team, comprising two staff members, acting one as project leader and the other as project co-ordinator.

2) Five teacher education institutions and the action groups they created, namely,

- Higher School of Education from the University of the Algarve, Higher School of Education of Coimbra, Higher School of Education of Portalegre, Higher School of Education of Setubal and Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences from the University of Oporto.

3) Twelve target schools,

- Schools from the various levels of basic education, from 1st to 9th level, selected by the teacher education institutions' action groups of each region. In each of these schools, those involved in the project included regular teachers, support teachers and other teaching staff.

At the end of the first year of activity a meeting was held to exchange feelings and findings on the action implemented, to assess the principal strengths and weaknesses and to put forward proposals relative to the continuation of the project in the following year. Four of the five local projects participate in this meeting, held by the University of Algarve in collaboration with IIE..

In November 1998, a final meeting was held for the evaluation of the project and the discussion of steps to be taken in the future. Professor Mel Ainscow led this meeting.

II. Dissemination of inclusive schooling in Portugal

At this stage the strategy adopted comprised:

- a) capacitation of teacher educators via skills acquirement workshops based on the UNESCO resource pack;

- b) courses for teachers, mainly administered via the in-service teacher education schools association centres operating locally in Portugal or via seminars for groups of teachers from the same school who expressed an interest in the inclusive schooling approach.

When the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack was translated into Portuguese, immediately it aroused considerable interest among teachers, head teachers, teacher trainers and various departments of the Ministry of Education.

The IIE assumed responsibility for dissemination of the resource pack, albeit in accordance with certain criteria for maximising its impact on school life. For instance, training had to be given by a qualified facilitator, and had always to involve more than one teacher in every school. The teacher education local centres were also to be involved in the process.

In the beginning, the teacher educators were those who had participated in the seminar of May 96, co-ordinated by Prof. Mel Ainscow. Later, other teacher education staff were included, qualified at seminars held under the auspices of teacher education schools associations centres and teacher education institutions in various points around the country.

At one point the central Basic Education Department (DEB) requested the IIE to take charge of teacher education for starting their own project. Four one week workshops were held in the country, organised by DEB. The DEB itself subsequently assumed responsibility for the dissemination of the UNESCO Pack, implanting a nation-wide "cascade" in-service teacher education structure targeted at regular and support teachers.

According to IIE statistics, since 1996 some 1500 teachers have been involved in this process (IIE and DEB in-service teacher education workshops around the country)

The concepts involved in inclusive schooling were also disseminated at numerous conferences and seminars held in recent years by teacher education institutions, local councils and schools. The prominence given to inclusive schooling in these events is proof that the education community is developing a real interest in this approach.

The impact of the dissemination of the inclusive schooling approach on classroom work and school organisation has yet to be studied. However, informal contact with the schools does allow us to conclude that mere participation in a seminar does not give sufficient impetus to real change: continued support is also required. This said, in some cases the teaching strategies and concepts presented were put into practice, while some teaching teams have created their own frameworks for support and continuous in-service development activities and are making considerable efforts to make their schools more inclusive.

B - EVALUATION AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Global evaluation of the project involving five teacher training institutes and ten primary schools.

The key question which evaluation of the project seeks to address is:

“What is the contribution of the project to the development of inclusive schooling?”

The answer to this question cannot yet be given conclusively, since the study of the analysis instruments used in different ways by the 5 regional teams is not yet complete. The global study, which has been completed and which is presented in summary form below, was compiled on the basis of the instruments common to the five regions, viz.:

- . collective interviews with the teachers of each school;
- . interviews with the representatives of the five action groups working under the local teacher education institutes;
- . analysis of the protocols established with each institute;
- . observation of classroom activities;
- . action plans and local evaluation reports.

The information collated was processed in accordance with the following evaluation benchmarks:

- school organisation
- classroom practices
- training and supervision
- reflection on practice
- organisation, structure and development of the project

1.1. School organisation

. How did the school organize itself for the project?

. What effects did the project have on organization?

1. The most significant measures concern the initiatives taken by teachers towards encountering *ways of working together and organising continuous training actions*;
2. Significant differences were observed from school to school: in some schools, most teachers joined the project, in others only a minority took part.

3. There was a reduction in the number of teachers involved from the first year to the second year;
4. The involvement of the head teachers was minimal, limited to facilitating the initiatives of the teachers;
5. No concrete measures were taken concerning school-family relations.

1.2. Classroom practices

. In what ways did teachers work together?

. What teaching strategies?

. What effects?

Collaboration between teachers

- . Collaboration between teachers essentially consisted of informal exchanges of information;
- . The sharing of experiences in more formal terms took place mainly at the teacher education initiatives organised by the action groups;
- . A new form of collaboration between regular teachers and support teachers was observed: the latter now worked within the classroom, taking part in all class work;
- . In some schools, teacher partnerships were formed, which entailed the sharing of pupils in certain activities.

Teaching/learning strategies

- . Strategies implemented included: *brainstorming, child-to-child approaches, group work*;
- . These strategies were not implemented on a school general basis but on the initiative of individual teachers;
- . They were shared more in 1st-cycle schools (one teacher for all subjects) than in 2nd- and 3rd-cycle schools (different teachers for different subjects).

Effects on pupils

We were unable to trace a cause-and-effect relationship between the project and pupil achievement. However, some teachers noted that certain pupils, especially those with learning difficulties, recorded improvements in terms of involvement in classroom activities, performance and behaviour.

1.3. Teacher development and supervision

. What modes and initiatives? . What implementation?
--

According to the terms governing the project, in-service teacher development is the mechanism whereby action is initiated and supervision the mechanism whereby teacher development activities are seen to be efficient. Once it had participated in a capacitation course based on the resource pack, each action group was to bring its skills to the schools and teachers involved in the project in its area of intervention.

Action consisted of the organisation of in-service teacher education actions (courses or study circles). Teacher education sessions were also an opportunity for exchange of experiences and mutual collaboration; supervision was essentially provided over the course of teacher education activity.

In the second year, in some regions, no in-service teacher education initiatives took place and supervision was minimal.

The resource pack was used in a very flexible manner to respond to the needs of each group of teachers. All teachers considered it to be an extremely potent teacher development tool.

1.4. Reflection on practice

. What modes? . What effects?

In this section we discuss the following:

- . Reflection sessions on practice (which essentially occurred during the courses sessions);

- . Self-evaluation (various instruments were used);

. The teachers felt that reflection allowed them to develop awareness of the scope of the project and of the conditions, which had to be created in the school if it was to be properly implemented.

. The most evident effect was that teachers had the chance to air their experiences and feelings to their colleagues. They questioned their own practices and let others question them too, something which until then had never occurred.

1.5. Organisation, structure and development of the project

. What model?

. What implications?

The project was structured around three levels of intervention:

. National co-ordination – for which the IIE was responsible – comprising the definition of objectives and central strategy (use of the UNESCO resource pack), general organisation of the project, its co-ordination and evaluation, conducted in collaboration with all those involved;

. Regional level: action groups responsible for training, intervention in the schools, giving support and momentum to the project and collaborating in its evaluation;

. The schools (or rather the teachers), whose task was to take part in teacher education in-service activities and take action towards introducing new strategies and trying new approaches to inclusion in their classroom practice and the school environment.

This structure can be defined as both hierarchic and flexible. The action groups played a vital role as they were the real driving forces behind the project. Their activity was approved in the protocols signed by the heads of teacher training institutes and the director of the IIE.

The most relevant aspects here are:

- The structure allowed full impact of the concepts and practice of the resource pack in the initial initiatives of school-centred teacher development via the action of the facilitators involved in the project;
- It gave local institutes the chance to act as regional resource centres for the dissemination of the inclusive schools concepts (though not all institutes assumed this function in the same way);

- It allowed for the existence of local action groups, operating in close proximity to the schools.

There were however some barriers:

- . The lack of material resources obstructed the work of the action groups (especially lack of time for work dedicated solely to the project);
- . Lack of co-ordination in the evaluation procedures employed by the different action groups;
- . Low involvement by head teachers.

2. Conclusions of the Research Project

As of the present phase of evaluation we can draw the following conclusions:

- . *Teacher education activity was the dominant strand in the project;*
- . *School supervision fell short of the objectives set, due to the lack of working conditions for the action groups, especially in the second year;*
- . *The impact of the project was different from school to school, but in all cases it produced greater co-operation between teachers involved and introduced new teaching/learning strategies in the classroom, especially child-to-child co-operation and the development of work in groups;*
- . *In many schools there was expressed an interest in the future development of the strategies proposed by the project; in some cases these strategies have now caught on in other schools.*

C - LESSONS LEARNED

1. What we learned about the implementation of the project

The findings presented above allow us to conclude that the progress made so far is merely the beginning of an extremely complex, and necessarily lengthy, process.

At different moments in the implementation of the Inclusive Schools project, we were able (either with the members of the teacher education institute teams or, more occasionally, the groups of schoolteachers) to reflect on both the barriers currently facing the implementation of an inclusive schooling project in Portuguese schools and the avenues of potential open to us.

Some of these barriers, and much of the potential, are directly related to the structural conditions of the Portuguese education system; other factors stem from the actual process of supervision of each school and its suitability for quality education for all, in terms of the conditions tried and tested in a wide variety of contexts in various countries.

The final evaluation meeting for the Inclusive Schools project, co-ordinated by Prof. Mel Ainscow, constitutes a landmark in the building of awareness of these conditions.

We can now affirm that we learned more from the experience than we could ever have imagined; we know what we should not do and, more importantly, what we can propose to schools wishing to make advances in inclusive schooling.

The most important lessons we learned over the last four years are:

a. The results of a project of this nature are only effective within the perspective of the school as a whole, with change implemented systematically, i.e. with all elements interacting: curriculum and curricular management practices, pupils, parents and community, organisational practices, teachers and evaluation.

b. We need to think, and work, in the long term if the initial professional advances made by the teachers are to be consolidated, and if the project is to be effectively *adopted* by the school. Therefore, the supervision of teachers should be reinforced throughout the launch phase – one or two school years are insufficient. The seminars on experimentation with the five principles of learning of the UNESCO resource pack are a starting point, fundamental but not of themselves sufficient; accompanying the process of change within the school requires the adoption by the teachers who set inclusion as a priority as well as by the school as a whole.

c. At the construction phase of the project, it is necessary that a substantial amount of time be set aside for the negotiation of the degree of commitment of each of the organisations involved, including government bodies. At the same time the clarification of project objectives by all those who are directly involved, i.e. teachers and senior staff of the schools, is needed. Failure to define objectives and commitment may lead to serious obstacles arising due to the complexity of the undertaking: the co-ordination of different partnerships working on the same type of project but with different ideas and purposes.

d. Another aspect directly related with the above, and which we will also examine when we come to talk of prospects for the future, is the need to give more power to the school – at all levels of the project's development, from conception to direct involvement in management and co-ordination, and to evaluation.

e. It is necessary to eliminate certain problems affecting the Portuguese education system, such as:

- high teacher mobility, with some teachers changing school every year;

- curricular rigid practices, which leads to compartmentalisation of time and space and a general conception of the curriculum as a checklist to be ticked off;
- the lack of effective leadership on the school level, caused by the traditional centralisation of power and the near total absence of school autonomy in the recent past.

These problems affect school culture and are serious barriers to the development of a project, which extends to the school as a whole.

f. The importance of exploiting the potential for innovation of the education system:

- linking different programs and projects, some internal to the school and others proposed by the Ministry of Education, as is the case of the application of the new legislation on autonomy and management and the government ruling on curricular flexibility, from the teacher development school based programs;
- giving momentum, in accordance with the needs of each school, to local structures for in-service teacher education, i.e. school association teacher education centres, to facilitate the construction and implementation of context-based teacher development programs for teachers, head teachers and other education school professionals.
- involving regional education departments in the process, thus guaranteeing effective support and securing the presence of the teachers involved in the respective schools.

2. A new project

The challenge Prof. Mel Ainscow presented to us in the evaluation meeting was taken up by the IIE. This challenge is draw on our acquired experience and on expending more time on examining the conditions likely to facilitate the effective support to schools, which express a clear commitment to the development of inclusive schooling. This means giving more *power* to the schools.

Acting under the consultancy of Prof. Mel Ainscow's team, we have decided to launch a new project in this area – *Promoting Inclusive Education*. This is a follow-up project that combines research and action, or in other words experimentation and systematic reflection on existing practice. The aim is to improve practice, by a firmly based formative assessment process, whereby all participants are both actors and authors of research.

At present three schools are involved in the project. These schools formally asked for IIE support for their school project development and expressed interest in participating in an action-research project and in negotiating a contract of collaboration with IIE. This contract covers senior staff as well as teachers. Its objective is to create the organisational conditions best suited to improve the learning of all pupils, via collaboration and reflection on practice.

The three schools were selected from a number of education communities that have hosted UNESCO school-centred demonstration workshops and afterwards requested the IIE for supporting their changing efforts towards inclusion.

The role of the IIE will be to promote suitable teacher development activities and supervision, and to guarantee the creation of a research team made up of its own staff and external consultants, Prof. Mel Ainscow and Dr. Windyz Ferreira, from the Centre for Educational Needs, University of Manchester.

This team oversees the whole research-action process, leading to the development of innovation within the school, and at the same time seeking to understand how more inclusive practices emerges and can be fostered in the Portuguese school system context.

A design of the project was outlined for the period of three years, from 1999 to 2002, based on the survey of the possibilities existing today in Portuguese educational system and the participant schools.

The first step for the school was to create a co-ordination team including the head of the school.

The preparation year was a challenging time, marked by two visits of the consultants from Manchester University, including an intensive seminar for the co-ordinators .

The process is lead by each school and based on the work with the inclusion indicators from the *Index for Inclusive Education* (2000), adapted to the Portuguese context, witch considers three dimensions of the school life – culture, policies and practices.

The project aims for the improved learning and participation of all pupils

The basic strategy is to use the relevant experience and skills previously acquired in the schools as the background on which to conduct reflection on educational practice. This know-how will be complemented with research findings from other experiments, in Portugal and abroad, on the development of quality schooling for all, particularly those projects based on the *UNESCO Resource Pack*.

Manchester, 25 July 2000

Ana Maria Bénard da Costa
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1984

Bolonha

INTRODUCTION

Par o Seminario de Bolonha (UNESCO)

In Portugal, Special Education Services, i.e. those responsible for the education of children with special educational needs, are sponsored by private associations or state departments belonging to different ministries.

Considering the difficulty of giving a complete discription of all the different programs comprehended by this Educational Sector that are connected with the "Integration of Handicapped Children", I chose one that has been operating these last 10 years and that is sponsored by the Ministry of Education under the General Direction for Compulsory Education.

So the following will not cover the "Integrated Education" in this country but, only, one program that covers at the moment, 5.000 children helped by a staff of 600 teachers.

1. In order to make understandable the kind of intervention that has been carried out in relation to handicapped children in their homes and in normal schools it is necessary to give some information that will help to situate this group in the larger context of the regular education.
 - Compulsory education has a duration of 6 years for 6 to 12 years up age;
 - About 4% do not attend elementary school (the first 4 grads) and 11% do not attend preparatory school (5th and 6th grads).
 - The children must achieve some level of knowledge in order to reach the next grade and those who do not, are allowed to remain in school till 14 years of age (some in the first or second grade).
 - Most of the children spend in school half day, as the same classrooms are used for two different groups;
 - At last, it is important to mention that the educational services are run by a very centralized system as well as pedagogically as administratively.
2. The guide-lines of a National Plan concerning the Integration of Handicapped Children.

When, in the early 70s, the Special Education Department started its activity in order to promote the integration of handicapped children, different factors have conditioned the guide-lines of the Plan that has been designed:

- The lack of financial resources.
- The difficulty of the enrolment of specialized staff;
- The need to use the existing community resources from the different fields:
 - Health
 - Social Services
 - Rehabilitation and Labor
 - and, mainly education knowing the existing needs, it was

important to use all the possible means and to improve their cooperation in a local and regional level, toward the same aim: the normalization of the handicapped child in all his life-situations.

Among these means we can mention:

- Pre-school and school-teachers available for the work as support or resource-teachers.
- A narrow net up primary and preparatory school and a larger one for pre-schools.
- Different kind of services with qualified professionals located in the towns:
 - Hospitals, Child Guidance, Assessment Centers.
 - Some services located at regional levels: Health Centers, Social Services, Special Schools.

These resources could be used on different ways, like the following:

- Assessing and guiding the children.
- Training the teachers.
- Giving medical care.

Once the situation was under three different aspects:

- Different special educational needs.
- Existing resources.
- Limits and difficulties imposed to the special programs

The guide-lines of the National Plan have been established:

- Create the necessary conditions for the integration of some categories of handicapped children:
 - visual handicapped
 - deaf
 - motor handicapped (with or without neurological impairments)

aiming not only at school-integration but also at normalization of family-life and the participation in the community-life.

- Give priority to the young children
- Use all the possible existing resources as means for this integration;
- Base this "integrational process" on the work of resource-teachers.
- Start this program in some different regions (6 regions) and let it grow and develop through a process of community interaction as motivating factors in this cooperation between different services and training a direct action in school integration.

This plan has been approved and started with a Teacher-Training course that lasted for academic two years and that enrolled 60 teachers, from the selected regions. We will explain, next, briefly the aims, the organizations and the actual situation of this project.

3. Strategy for intervention in the "Special Educational Teams"

As it has been mentioned, the complex process that leads to the "normalization" of the handicapped child has been part into action mainly through a group of "support-teachers".

These teachers, started their work in different regions and have been organized in groups that we called "Special Educational Teams".

These teams had the following tasks:

- To meet the children and direct them to an Assessment Center.
- To make an individual educational plan, in accordance with the children's needs and evaluate their progress.
- To meet the families and advise them, giving them support and helping them find answers to the various problems of the child's education.

- Help the integration of children in kindergarten and give support to parents and teachers.
- Help the integration of children in school (primary and preparatory) giving support to the teachers and to the children.
- Prepare the necessary special materials.
- Provide schools with special equipment acquired by the D.E.E.
- To teach special methods whenever required (Braille, Mobility, Bliss, etc.).
- Help integration in the community.
(local associations)
- Help integration of young people after school.

If we look in detail to the different aims assigned to these teams, we easily realize that many of these activities are not supposed to be accomplished directly by the teachers but by the different local or regional services:

- Health Centers
- Social Services
- Hospitals
- Child - Guidance Clinics

Having these services in mind the task of the teams has been, mainly to put the child in contact with the different services whose contribution was needed or to receive from their staff advise and help in order to approach the child in a more adequate way. For instance the teachers have, to send or even to accompany the child to a consultation in a Health Center or a Hospital. Other times, he can participate in meetings with doctors and therapists or get individual advice from them, concerning the children they are working with.

The "Team" as all work groups, has its own personality, its own weakness and its own strenghts. Some had a past growing process and encoraged other teams to start in other areas near-by.

Others had a concrete intervention on the community and by their pressure the apearence of other services like pre-school or Health Centers; Others had the possibility to do so, and made a more modest and local work.

One of the members is elected by the others as "Team-Leader" which implies different and heavy responsibilities.

The team has its quarters where the teachers can do their individual work, where they meet regulary, where the administration is held, and where the families, regular teachers or other members of the community can be met.

Each teacher as a teacher has a group of children they are responsible for but, it is supposed that a close inter-action take place between them in order to allow a mutual help and cooperation

4. Different work - Strategies of the Teams.

4.1. Aid to infants and pre-school children at home and at pre-school.

The children are helped as soon as their case is known by the team. Sometimes immediatly after birth.

During the first three years of age the children are helped in a home-basis, monthly indirectly through the advise and support given by parents.

At pre-school age a great effort is needed to integrate the child in a regular pre-school and then support is given to the pre-school teacher and to the child if necessary.

4.2. Aid to school age children.

4.2.1. Itinerant help.

Till now, most of our resource-teachers are itinerant, as the

/...

net of our teams is still insufficient to cover each community. Many of them must operate in areas of several units in order to help different handicapped children. They visit the schools, the homes and work with the communities.

From the total of 553 teachers, 320 are itinerant.

4.2.2. The resource room.

It is used mainly to help profound deaf-children and those with severe learning or behaviour problems.

Some resource-room teachers are assigned to only one school but most of them divide their time among 2 or 3 schools.

The resource-room is supposed to work on a close inter action with the regular class and with the whole school, and the support of the special teacher is given to all the school staff.

4.2.3. Other integrational patherns.

- Some children are helped in the so called "free-time activities".
- Some classes have an extra-teacher in order to facilitate a more individual approach to each child, including the handicapped child.
(the so called co-teaching system).
- In Preparatory and Secondary schools that have subject teachers, the handicapped children can receive extra-individual lessons given by their regular teachers.

The following chestrs will show the number of teams, their geographical distribution and their community inter-action.

II - The Team-Work on a Communal Transdisciplinary Basis.

Trying to implement the integration of handicapped children in a rigid educational system as the Portuguese one, and in schools facing the actual amount of basic needs has been through almost as an impossible task. And the obstacles were increased by the

fact that the Special Education Department could rely on the support of only pre-school or school teachers not having the possibility (as it has been mentioned) to enroll other professionals as psychologists, therapists or social workers.

After 10 years we can say that these obstacles have not been impossible to overcome and we can say that the integration of handicapped children is an existing reality from North to South, from the cities to the rural areas, from the pre-school levels to the secondary schools.

By the "expression existing reality" we do not mean that each child with special needs adequately helped in this country. We mean that we are helping some is a positive way in many different regions, countries and schools.

We think that this task is being accomplished because we could use all the existing resources and services and because our teachers have been helped and supported by them.

It would be possible to have a multidisciplinary team to contact each child. It would be too expensive, most of the children are living too far away; the hospitals are in many cases difficult.

But it has been possible to establish a cooperation - chain linking the specialists based on the big cities and the teachers working all over the country in order to demonstrate that they could help the children in the best possible way.

The use of all the local, regional and national resources their close cooperation toward the integration of the handicapped children has been our main "tool", and we think that the chance for future success relies in this "Transdisciplinary Communal Work".

III - Perspectives of Evolution

The "Teams" started their work 10 years ago. A profound change in the policies concerning "Special Education" occurred since then all over the world. The impact of three changes reached our country and added to our own experiences produced a change in our own policies and shattered our precious beliefs.

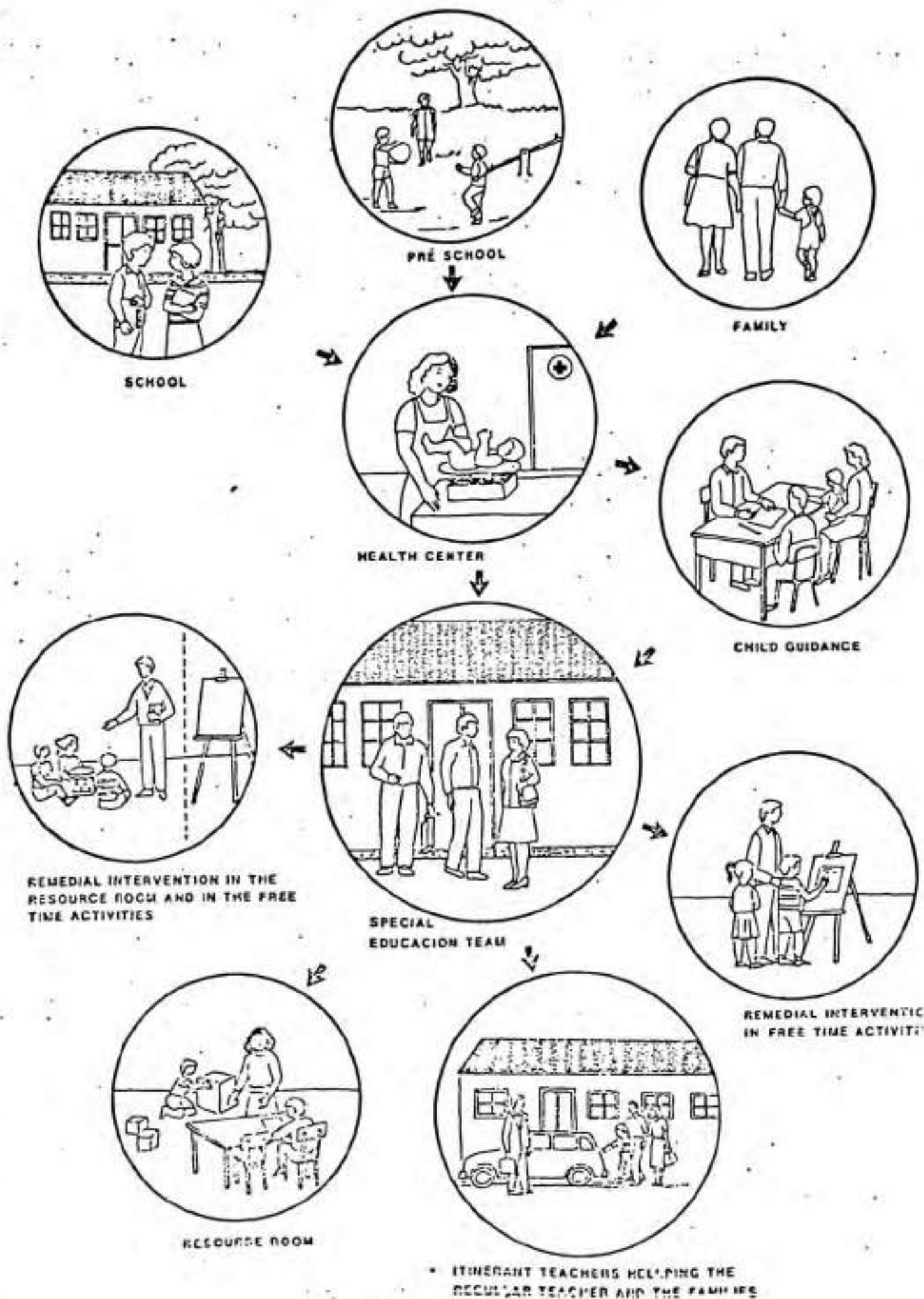
This moving process can be explained as follow:

- A larger responsibility on the part of regular education for those handicapped students within its domain, i.e., those educational problems associated with the handicapped began to be viewed as problems of the school, rather than problems beyond its jurisdiction which must be solved without the school's interference.
- A gradual integration of the resource teacher into the regular structure of the school so that he might be viewed as part of the school itself, not alien to it.
- An increase in the attention paid to the problems of all the children in the classroom and not just to those who are officially classified as or considered to be handicapped.
- A need for greater versatility on the part of the support teacher as he concentrates his work on fewer schools (sometimes working only in one) and shifts his effort to work in greater detail on those cases which cause the greater difficulties in the classroom.

In a short run, this evolution is leading to a "fusion" of those sectors which heretofore were separate - motor handicapped and mentally handicapped - which in turn is creating a pool of trained resource teacher who will be available to assist children with their problems be they intellectual, neurological, or motor in nature, be they of an effective or behavioral order. It is anticipated that it will continue to be necessary to rely on specialists to assist the blind or severely or profound deaf children but the greatest part of the educational resources will be directed toward those children with the problems mentioned above.

It is acknowledge that in the relatively near future, the borders separating regular teaching from special teaching will weaken and that the structure established to encourage this integration, i.e., the Special Education Teams, will integrate itself into the regular system of teaching. In order for this to become a reality, however, we still have a long way to go and deep change in attitudes is being about.

THE WORK OF THE S.E.T. IN THE COMMUNITY



1983-84

- ▲ DEAF. DEP.
 ☆ MENTALLY H. DEP.
 □ MOTOR H. DEP.
 ○ VISUAL H. DEP.



artigo por o Prof. Bello
P. Campos. referido por o G. G. G.
de Lisboa
junho 1994

A EVOLUÇÃO DA EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL EM PORTUGAL: DAS ESCOLAS ESPECIAIS ÀS "ESCOLAS INCLUSIVAS"

1. EVOLUÇÃO DOS CONCEITOS

As primeiras experiências de apoio a alunos com deficiência tiveram lugar na década de 60 e a sua iniciativa partiu do então Ministério da Saúde e Assistência.

Com apoio técnico da "American Foundation for the Overseas Blind", foram criadas as condições que permitiram que alunos cegos frequentassem classes regulares em algumas escolas Preparatórias e Secundárias do país.

Após uma fase inicial, em que a experiência se restringiu a três Escolas cujos Directores se mostraram especialmente interessados e cooperantes, a integração desta categoria de alunos foi-se difundindo a diferentes regiões e aumentaram os recursos de apoio, quer humanos quer materiais.

No entanto, o facto deste programa não estar directamente dependente do Ministério da Educação e o facto de não existir qualquer base legal que favorizasse estas medidas, levaram a que a chamada "Educação Integrada" só se viesse a implementar após a reforma educativa de 1973 que criou o primeiro Serviço vocacionado para a Educação Especial.

Podemos considerar que em meados dos anos 70 se inicia, assim, uma nova fase caracterizada pela criação de "Equipas de Educação Especial", destinadas a apoiar a integração dos alunos com **"deficiência visual, auditiva ou motora"**.

A orientação que, nesta época, se imprimiu ao ensino integrado pode explicitar-se do seguinte modo:

- O apoio estava a cargo de professores especializados, agrupados em Equipas que actuavam de forma itinerante. Estes professores atendiam crianças residentes em diferentes localidades, numa área vasta (abrangendo um ou mesmo mais distritos) e a sua acção visava a integração, não só a nível pre-escolar ou escolar, mas também a nível familiar e social.

- Para além de uma actuação directa, os professores de apoio constituíram-se como "pivots" da intervenção dos diferentes recursos existentes a nível local ou regional: Centros de Saúde, Hospitais, Centros de Reabilitação, organizações privadas e Autarquias. As Equipas exerciam, assim, uma acção multifacetada, de modo a poder responder às diferentes situações das crianças, das famílias, das escolas e das comunidades em que residiam.

- O apoio escolar era então dirigido, essencialmente, ao aluno havendo, mesmo, a expressa preocupação de não interferir no trabalho do professor regular e no funcionamento da sala de aula ou da escola.

- Toda a responsabilidade da resposta às necessidades especiais dos alunos reacia no professor de apoio e na Equipa, mantendo-se a escola regular numa atitude passiva, que denotava o lugar secundário que estes alunos ocupavam: eram mais tolerados do que verdadeiramente integrados.

De acordo com esta perspectiva, é fácil compreender que unicamente os alunos com deficiências do foro físico fossem integrados: de facto, era condição para a sua frequência da classe regular conseguirem obter aproveitamento escolar, ou seja, serem capazes de aceder ao currículo normal.

No anos 80, esta situação foi profundamente alterada. Por influência de novas concepções transmitidas através da literatura e através de Seminários e Congressos, e, sobretudo, pelo acumular da experiência e das reflexões por ela suscitada, o Serviço de Educação Especial e muitos dos professores de apoio sentiram a necessidade de alterar o *statu quo* e de reformular as concepções que acima referimos.

Esta reformulação baseou-se nos seguintes princípios essenciais:

- A escola não se destina prioritariamente a alunos "sem problemas" mas devia estar aberta a todas as crianças, constituindo a escola especial um recurso último para casos especialmente graves;
- A educação especial não deve ter como ponto de partida a classificação dos alunos por categorias médicas (cegos, surdos, paralíticos cerebrais, etc) mas, antes ter em vista as **necessidades educativas especiais** de cada criança;
- A acção de apoio, embora dirigida essencialmente ao aluno, não dispensava a colaboração activa do professor regular, devendo este adequar a sua intervenção às diferentes necessidades dos alunos.

Com base nestas concepções, a acção da Equipa modificou-se:

- passou a abranger a generalidade dos alunos, incluindo os portadores de deficiência mental ou multideficiência;
- os professores de apoio dos alunos com problemas cognitivos ou de comunicação mais graves passaram a estar fixos numa escola e a exercer funções em "salas de apoio";
- as escolas regulares passaram a sentir uma maior responsabilidade pelo atendimento dos alunos com necessidades específicas.

Durante a presente década, os princípios acima enunciados persistem no espírito da grande generalidade dos professores - sejam do ensino regular seja do ensino especial - mantendo-se a existência de inúmeras salas de apoio e mantendo-se a existência das Equipas de Educação Especial.

No entanto, é fundamental reconhecer que a Reforma do Sistema Educativo, com as novas perspectivas que lançou, abriu novos rumos a esta problemática.

Ao lermos os dois documentos-base do Congresso de Salamanca, compreendemos que algo do que está implícito no conceito das "Escolas Inclusivas" já está a ser aplicado entre nós, embora só em algumas escolas e sem que estejam disponíveis todos os recursos que esta nova concepção educativa implica.

As transformações a que temos assistido nos últimos anos dizem respeito, essencialmente, ao seguinte:

- Progressiva responsabilização da escola pelo atendimento de todos os alunos, incluindo os que apresentam problemas mais graves;
- A conseqüente inserção dos professores de apoio no quadro docente regular, considerados, não como até aqui, como especialistas externos, mas como elementos integrantes da escola;
- A crescente preocupação com os alunos que, não tendo qualquer deficiência detectável, apresentam dificuldades no acesso ao currículo ou no convívio com os colegas ou professores;
- A procura de respostas diversificadas de apoio destinadas a promover o sucesso escolar;
- A alteração das formas tradicionais de avaliação e o abandono do recurso sistemático à repetência como resposta às dificuldades dos alunos.

Não podemos considerar, no entanto, que estão criadas em Portugal as condições para podermos denominar a generalidade das escolas como "Escolas Inclusivas". Para tal, é necessário que os professores de apoio deixem de estar colocados em Equipas e passem para o âmbito das escolas e é necessário que se disponibilizem os inúmeros recursos humanos e materiais que ainda faltam: sejam colocados terapeutas e auxiliares, se garantam os transportes especiais de que muitos alunos necessitam, se assegurem as refeições, se conte com ajudas técnicas e com materiais de compensação.

É, ainda, fundamental, que todos os professores recebam a formação necessária para serem capazes de lidar com a "diferença" na sala de aula e se comprometam activamente na transformação das escolas em "Escolas Inclusivas", para o que será necessário contar com processos eficazes de formação inicial e contínua e com serviços de supervisão e de apoio (Centros de Recursos ou outros).

Antes de terminar este capítulo, é fundamental referir que a existência de "Escolas Inclusivas" não dispensa, de forma alguma, a necessidade de Serviços especialmente vocacionados para a problemática dos alunos com deficiência. O atendimento de uma criança ou de um jovem com uma deficiência sensorial, motora ou mental, com uma multideficiência, ou com problemas graves de comunicação, exige uma multiplicidade de cuidados, que vão desde o apoio às famílias e aos serviços de saúde ou de reabilitação, até às medidas da área da formação profissional e do emprego, e todas elas têm de ser intimamente articuladas com a acção de âmbito educativo.

A actuação que tem lugar em cada escola tem de se coordenar intimamente com todas estas dimensões da vida da criança ou do jovem e tal exige a existência de **Serviços de Educação Especial**, capazes de garantir a permanente actualização das medidas a tomar e a efectiva coordenação interdepartamental.

2. EVOLUÇÃO DA LEGISLAÇÃO

As evoluções dos conceitos relativos à Educação Integrada, é acompanhada de uma evolução legislativa.

Assim:

- Correspondendo às concepções que tiveram lugar nos anos 60, encontramos diversa legislação do âmbito do Ministério da Saúde e Assistência a que se contrapõe um vazio quase absoluto, no sector da Educação.

- Nos anos 70, deparamos com um diploma que regulamentou a integração de alunos com deficiência nas escolas regulares - O D.L. 174/77 de 2/5 - em que estão patentes as concepções vigentes nesta época :

- . a necessidade de classificação dos alunos como "deficientes" para poderem usufruir de apoio educativo;
- . a dependência da decisão sobre o apoio a prestar de uma prescrição médica;
- . a centralização do poder sobre esta matéria (cabia ao Director Geral autorizar as medidas de apoio);
- . a ausência de participação dos pais.

- Nos anos 80, a Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo vem consubstanciar os novos princípios que se difundem nesta década, determinando o direito a todas as crianças - mesmo deficientes - a beneficiarem de uma educação e estabelecendo que esta educação se deve processar, essencialmente, nas estruturas regulares de ensino, devendo ser garantidos os recursos e as medidas especiais necessárias a cada caso.

Trata-se de um passo em frente de importância fundamental que ainda hoje constitui uma referência para a qual caminhamos e que estamos longe de ter atingido.

- A evolução dos anos 90 - a que fizemos referência - tem a sua expressão legal, essencialmente, nos seguintes diplomas:

- D.L. 35/90 de 25/1

Determina que todas as crianças - incluindo as portadoras de deficiências graves - estão sujeitas a uma escolaridade básica obrigatória.

Com este Diploma desaparece a "dispensa de escolaridade" que tinha constituído uma medida discriminatória que deixava estas crianças sem qualquer recurso educativo, a cargo exclusivo das respectivas famílias.

- DL 319/91 de 23/08..

No preâmbulo e no articulado deste D.L. encontramos todas as orientações que caracterizam esta fase do processo de integração escolar.

Ou seja:

. Substituição da classificação dos alunos por grupos de deficiências pela noção de "necessidades educativas especiais";

. Responsabilização da escola pela intervenção junto de todos os alunos;

. Atendimento de todos os alunos no "meio menos restritivo possível";

. Individualização das respostas educativas, apresentando-se diversas "medidas do regime educativo especial".

. Reconhecimento da necessidade do parecer dos pais sobre as medidas de avaliação e de intervenção no âmbito do regime educativo especial.

- Legislação do âmbito da Reforma, nomeadamente:

. O D.L. 43/89, relativo à autonomia das escolas;

. O Despacho Normativo 98-A/92, relativo à avaliação dos alunos

. O Despacho Normativo 178-A/ME/93, relativo ao apoio pedagógico

Estes Diplomas consagram o papel da escola regular na procura de uma igualdade de oportunidades no acesso ao currículo, no apoio às necessidades educativas especiais e na "inclusão" dos alunos com deficiência.

No entanto, não se pode considerar que esta legislação corresponda de forma totalmente adequada ao conceito de "Escola Inclusiva". O simples facto de se publicarem, em separado, medidas destinadas aos alunos com deficiência e aos que tendo problemas escolares não apresentam qualquer diagnóstico preciso, leva a concluir que ainda se pretendem separar estes dois grupos. De facto, em muitas escolas, tem-se verificado que os problemas dos primeiros são relegados para os professores de apoio, e que a atenção dos professores regulares e dos corpos directivos se centram nos segundos.

A legislação desejável para os anos 90 está ainda por elaborar. Quando existir, esperamos que o esforço de transformação das escolas em "Escolas Inclusivas" e que a Educação Especial em todos os seus vectores, recebam um novo e decisivo impulso.

3. EVOLUÇÃO NUMÉRICA - 1982 - 1992

(Dados relativos ao Continente)

(Ver Quadros anexos)

Algumas considerações sobre os dados numéricos

3.1. O número total de alunos atendidos por recursos de educação especial é de 38.800 o que, relativamente à população escolar, (1.595.323 alunos em 1992/93) corresponde a uma percentagem de 2,4%.

Comparando estes dados com os dos restantes países da Comunidade Europeia em que a média se situa em cerca de 10%, verifica-se que em Portugal há ainda uma grande percentagem de alunos sem o apoio especial de que carecem.

3.2. De entre os 38.800 alunos apoiados, 27 354 estão integrados em escolas regulares e 11 446 frequentam escolas especiais.

Considerando que, de acordo com a política educativa para o sector, só os casos muito graves deveriam recorrer a escolas especiais, considera-se que a percentagem dos que não frequentam as escolas regulares é ainda muito elevada.

A falta de recursos educativos e, sobretudo de apoios extra-escolares (transportes, refeições, cuidados terapêuticos) destas escolas, constituem a fundamental justificação deste facto.

3.3. De entre os profissionais que actuam no Ensino Integrado, encontram-se 2 519 docentes e unicamente 62 técnicos. Considerando o papel que representam os terapeutas e os psicólogos na Educação Especial, este dado revela uma grave carência neste sector.

3.4. Dos 2 519 docentes que exercem apoio a alunos integrados unicamente 705 são especializados, o que corresponde a 28% do total.

Esta situação é preocupante pois significa que a maior parte dos docentes não está preparada para exercer as funções que lhe está cometida. Por outro lado, verifica-se que a percentagem dos não especializados tem vindo a acentuar-se nos últimos anos (em 1987 a percentagem dos docentes especializados era de 32%), o que constitui um factor igualmente grave.

3.5. Estão integrados em escolas regulares 5 399 alunos com deficiência mental, o que constitui um número significativo se se considerar que só a partir de meados dos anos 80 se iniciou a integração destes alunos.

3.6. Na última década verificaram-se aumentos significativos no número de alunos atendidos, e, especialmente, no número dos atendidos em escolas regulares.

**Rapport de la Mission Intégrée dans le Programme National de
Réadaptation à Base Communautaire (RBC) du Haut Commissariat
aux Personnes Handicapées au Maroc**

Mission Interagence (BIT, UNESCO, OMS) de Programmation

Rabat, 29 Septembre - 8 Octobre

Ana Maria Bénard da Costa

1. Introduction

La Mission au Maroc qui m'a été confié par l'UNESCO, et qui a eu lieu entre le 29 Septembre et le 8 Octobre 1997, s'inscrit dans le cadre du développement d'un Programme de Réhabilitation à Base Communautaire (RBC), crée par le Haut Commissariat aux Personnes Handicapés (HCPH), avec la collaboration des différents départements gouvernementaux, des représentants des personnes handicapés et de la société civile.

Après un premier contact entre le Haut Commissariat et le BIT, un plan de coopération conjointe - BIT, OMS et UNESCO - ayant la participation d'une ONG Française, "Interaction pour le Développement", a été proposé et la mission interagence dont j'ai fait part a été mise en place.

2. Objectifs de la Mission

2.1. Objectifs globaux de la Mission interagence:

- Connaissance du développement du programme RBC dans les trois communes qui avaient désignés comme locaux cibles: Settat, Khémisset et Salé;
- Présentation de ce programme à d'autres Agences tel que le FNUAP et l'UNICEF, de façon à suggérer leur coparticipation financière et technique;
- Présentation des lignes fondamentales du programme aux Ministres de l'Education Nationale, de la Santé Publique et de la Formation Professionnelle;
- Elaboration, en collaboration avec le HCPH, du document final relatif au "Projet de Coopération Technique", à être présenté au PNUD.

2.2. Objectifs spécifiques de ma Mission, dans le volet "éducation":

- Connaître les plans préalablement établis par le HCPH, en collaboration avec le Ministère de l'Education Nationale, concernant le développement de l'intégration dans les communes cibles.
- Contacter différents départements du Ministère de l'Education, quelques ONG qui travaillent dans le secteur de l'enfance et de la jeunesse, des écoles spéciales et des écoles ordinaires, ayant de l'expérience dans l'intégration d'élèves handicapés, afin de pouvoir acquérir une compréhension plus concrète sur la situation de l'éducation en général et sur les initiatives déjà existantes dans le cadre de l'intégration scolaire.
- Sensibiliser les responsables du HCPH et des départements du Ministère de l'Education Nationale contactés sur la perspective de l'école inclusive, selon les recommandations de la "Déclaration de Salamanque";
- Participer à l'élaboration du document final relatif au "Projet de Coopération Technique", et proposer la rédaction du chapitre concernant l'éducation, selon les perspectives que, d'après les informations obtenues au cours de cette Mission, me sembleraient plus adéquates.

3. Activités préalablement développés dans le cadre du "Projet RBC" et du Projet "Ecoles Intégrées et Programmes de Soutien Communautaires"

En 1995, le HCPH a initié, avec la collaboration de différents départements ministériels, un Programme National de Réhabilitation à Base Communautaire (RBC). Une structure de coordination de niveau national, régional/provincial et local a été établie et trois communes ont été choisies comme locaux cibles pour une première phase expérimentale: les communes de Settat, Khemisset et Salé. Un Comité National du Programme RBC a été mis en place, sous la présidence de Madame le Haut Commissaire aux Personnes Handicapées, comprenant des représentants de la plupart de ministères, des représentants des personnes handicapés, ainsi que ceux de la société civile.

Suite à une requête du Haut Commissariat, une Mission du BIT a eu lieu en Juin 1996, en vue à l'élaboration d'un "Document de Projet" visant le renforcement du programme RBC, à soumettre au PNUD pour financement. Dans le cadre de ce Projet, diverses actions de formation et de sensibilisation sur le Programme RBC ont été organisées et, sous le patronage de l'UNESCO et dans le cadre du Projet "Ecoles Intégrées et Programmes de Soutien Communautaires", un Séminaire a eu lieu du 31 Mars au 4 Avril 1997. Dans la continuation de ce Séminaire, ont eu lieu des actions de sensibilisation et de formation, au profit des instituteurs des 8 classes intégrés et des jardinières d'enfants qui accueilleront des enfants handicapés.

En Septembre 1996, un accord de partenariat a été signé entre le HCPH et la ONG "Interaction pour le Développement", dirigée par Madame Brigitte Goutron, ayant pour but un appui technique et financier au Programme RBC.

Au début du mois d'Octobre de cette même année, le HCPH a signé une convention avec le Ministère de l'Education Nationale, concernant l'éducation des élèves handicapés mentaux ou sensoriels qui impliquait la création de 8 "classes intégrées" dans des écoles situés dans les communes cibles du programme RBC, et la formation des respectifs enseignants.

4. Données sur la Situation de l'Education des Elèves Ayant des Besoins Educatifs Spéciaux

Le taux de scolarisation des enfants de 6 à 13 ans est estimé à 60%, selon une estimative nationale, mais seulement à 40% dans les milieux ruraux. Néanmoins, selon la loi, l'enseignement est obligatoire de 7 à 13 ans et le Ministère de l'Education est responsable pour l'éducation préscolaire, l'éducation fondamentale de 9 ans et l'éducation secondaire.

Concernant les enfants ayant des besoins éducatifs spéciaux, pendant mon séjour au Maroc il ne m'a pas été possible obtenir de données précises sur tous les types d'handicap et dans les diverses régions du pays. Les seules références disponibles sont celles inscrites dans le "Document de Projet", ci-dessous:

Enfants et jeunes handicapés physiques:

6.000 fréquentent une école ordinaire, dont:

- 80% des écoles primaires
- 20% des écoles secondaires
- 90 des collèges techniques
- 900 des institutions spécialisées.

Enfants et jeunes déficients visuels et auditifs:

. Selon le texte du "Document de Projet", seulement un faible pourcentage a accès à l'école dont la plupart fréquente des institutions spéciales. Seulement quelques élèves déficients visuels fréquentent des écoles ordinaires, au niveau secondaire ou post-secondaire.

Enfants et jeunes handicapés mentaux

- 1600 fréquentent des institutions spéciales
- un nombre très limité fréquente des classes nommées "intégrés", basés dans des écoles ordinaires.

A travers les contacts et les visites que j'ai pu réaliser pendant mon séjour à Rabat, je me suis aperçu que l'éducation des enfants et des jeunes ayant des besoins spéciaux se peu caractériser, d'une façon générique, par :

- . manque d'un département au MEN qui puisse orienter ce secteur éducatif.
- . manque de ressources éducatives, surtout dans les milieux ruraux;
- . existence de plusieurs institutions privées d'éducation spéciale (fonctionnant dans un système d'internat ou d'externat);
- . manque de formation actualisée du personnel éducatif de ces institutions.
- . existence d'un grand intérêt - de la part et du Haut Commissariat et de quelques dirigeants du MEN - à promouvoir une profonde réforme des programmes éducatifs existants et à développer l'éducation intégrée. Dans ce contexte, le programme RBC avec les appuis financiers et techniques qui sont prévus, pourra constituer un facteur décisif dans un renouvellement de l'éducation dans la perspective de l'école inclusive.

5. Plan de la Mission

Le Plan de la Mission des consultants du BIT et de la Directrice de l'Agence "Interactions pour le Développement" a été organisé préalablement à la planification de la Mission concernant les deux consultantes de l'UNESCO (Miss Sai Vayrynen et

moi même) et la coordination entre les deux plans a été faite sur place, après mon arrivée, ce qui a créé, au début, une certaine difficulté.

Ainsi, le programme de mon séjour a été le suivant:

Lundi, 29 Septembre:

Séance de travail avec les partenaires impliqués dans le Programme RBC.

Séance de travail avec les responsables du Programme RBC du Haut Commissariat aux Personnes Handicapées.

Mardi, 30 Septembre

Séance de travail avec Mr. le Ministre de l'Education Nationale, ayant la participation d'autres dirigeants ministériels, tel que Mr. le Directeur de l'Enseignement Primaire.

Séance de travail avec Mme le Représentant Régional de l'UNESCO.

Mercredi, 1 Octobre

Séance de travail avec le Représentant du FNUAP à Rabat.

Séance de Travail avec un Dirigeant de l'UNICEF.

Séance de travail avec les Responsables du Haut Commissariat.

Jeudi, 2 Octobre

Audience avec Mme le Haut Commissaire aux Personnes Handicapées.

Présentation aux membres du HCPH et aux autres consultants d'un premier draft du chapitre "Education" du "Document de Projet de Coopération Technique" et discussion sur les actions proposées.

Vendredi, 3 Octobre

Séance de travail avec le Représentant Résident du PNUD à Rabat.

Visite de l'Association Marocaine de Soutien et d'Aide aux Handicapés Mentaux (AMSAHM).

Elaboration du texte final concernant les actions proposés pour le volet "Education" à inclure dans le "Document de Projet de Coopération Technique"

Séance de synthèse avec les responsables du HCPH.

Lundi, 6 Octobre

Visite de l'école de Bellevue, à Rabat, où fonctionne une classe intégrée pour des élèves porteurs de la trisomie 21.

Réunion à la Délégation Scolaire de Salé avec la participation d'un dirigeant du HCPH, de Mr. le Délégué Scolaire, de Mr. l'Inspecteur, et des enseignants qui iront travailler dans les classes intégrés dans des écoles de la commune de Salé.

Mardi 7

Visite de L'école de Temara pour élèves déficients visuels, sous l'administration de l'Organisation Alouite pour la Protection des Aveugles au Maroc.

Séance de travail avec Mr. le Directeur de l'Enseignement Primaire, avec la participation d'autres membres de ce Département du MEN et d'un dirigeant du HCPH.

Séance de synthèse" avec les responsables du HCPH, sur les actions proposés dans le volet "Education".

6. Informations Recueillis Concernant le Développement du Projet "Education Intégrée".

En arrivant au Maroc j'ai eu connaissance des documents suivants:

. Plan d'Action National pour l'Insertion des Personnes Handicapées - (chapitre 4.2. "l'Education et l'Enseignement", page 2)

. Rapport Provisoire sur l'état d'avancement des activités du Projet "Ecoles Integratrices et Programmes de Soutien Communautaires".

. Document de Projet de Coopération Technique (MOR/97): Renforcement du Programme de RBC.

. Synthèse des actions menés dans le cadre du Programme RBC.

. Rapport Final des "Journées de Réflexions et Orientation" organisées dans le cadre du Projet de l'UNESCO "Ecoles Integratrices et Programmes de Soutien Communautaire".

La lecture de ces documents, les visites à une école spéciale, une école ordinaire et une ONG (L'A.M.S.A.H.M.), le contact avec les Bureaux Régionaux de l'UNESCO, de l'UNICEF et du FNUAP, l'échange d'idées avec les dirigeants du HCPH et la participation dans les différentes réunions de travail qui ont eu lieu pendant cette Mission, ont permis d'établir les conclusions suivantes:

1. Une programme pour le développement de l'éducation intégrée, dans le cadre du Programme RBC, avait déjà été établi et un Accord avait été signé entre le HCPH et le MEN.

L'orientation globale de ce plan est la suivante:

. La stratégie adoptée pour permettre l'intégration des élèves handicapés dans les écoles ordinaires sélectionnés dans communes - cibles du programme RBC implique:

- . l'identification préalable des enfants ayant des handicaps sensoriels, physiques ou mentaux;
- . la sélection d'un nombre limité d'écoles, dans chaque commune où seront organisés des classes dites "intégrées" où seront inscrits les élèves handicapés;
- . l'organisation de ces "classes intégrées" tant que des "classes spéciales" ou, dans certains cas, comme des "classes de ressources";
- . la participation de quelques élèves à des activités dans les classes régulières, avec l'appui de l'instituteur de la classe intégrée.

. Le nombre de classes intégrées prévue est de 8 /9 classes pour les trois communes cibles, jusqu'à 1997/98 et, à partir de cette année, au nombre de 15 nouvelles classes par an;

. Des actions de sensibilisation et de formation pour les instituteurs des classes intégrées et pour les directeurs des écoles ont déjà eu lieu et d'autres actions sont prévus mais ne n'ont pas été programmés;

. L'intégration des enfants handicapés dans des jardins d'enfants n'a pas encore été clairement établie.

. Un facteur considéré essentiel pour l'ouverture de ces classes consiste dans l'acquisition d'équipement éducatif spécifique pour les différents types d'handicap.

2. Le Directeur de l'Enseignement Primaire s'est montré très intéressé par les perspectives de "l'école inclusive" et dans le développement d'un travail de coopération entre les enseignants ordinaires pour résoudre, au sein de la communauté éducative, les problèmes relatifs à l'enseignement/apprentissage;

3. Les dirigeants du HCPH se sont montrés très engagés au développement de l'intégration scolaire dans la perspective de l'RBC;

4. Les réunions avec les représentants de l'UNICEF et du FNUAP nous ont permis de conclure que ces Agences sont disponibles à inclure la problématique des personnes handicapées (enfants, jeunes ou adultes) dans leurs programmes et qu'ils pourraient rendre disponibles des fonds pour des programmes de "Information, Education, Communication"(IEC), ayant pour but la sensibilisation du publique.

5. Les responsables de la Délégation Scolaire de Salé, les Inspecteurs et les enseignants présents dans la réunion qui a eu lieu dans cette commune, se sont montrés ouverts à la perspective d'une école ouverte à tous les enfants (incluant les handicapés) et à une fonction polyvalente des classes intégrées, ayant des fonctions de "classes de ressource" pour toute l'école.

6. L'expérience d'intégration d'élèves trisomiques à l'école de Bellevue nous a démontré qu'il y a déjà, au Maroc, un chemin qui a été parcouru dans ce domaine et qu'il sera très important d'utiliser toute l'expertise existante;

7. La visite à l'école des enfants déficients visuels de Temara m'a permis de vérifier, d'autre part, qu'il y a un grand besoin de formation actualisée des enseignants (même de ceux qui ont déjà eu une formation spécifique) et qu'il serait très important d'établir des programmes pilotes d'éducation intégrée pour ces élèves, au niveau élémentaire, dans le cadre du programme RBC et même hors ce cadre, dans d'autres régions du pays.

8. Recommandations

Recommandations d'ordre générale:

1. Le plan d'action sur le volet "Education" à établir dans le cadre du Programme RBC devra partir des programmes préalablement établis et être conçu comme une *amélioration* de ces programmes et un *élargissement* de son intervention;

2. Les expériences d'intégration qui sont sur place et les enseignants qui ont déjà participé à des actions de formation dans le cadre de la perspective intégratrice constituent des supports très importants, à tenir en considération dans les activités à développer dans le cadre de ce programme.

Recommandations d'ordre spécifique:

Les actions à entreprendre que nous recommandons, dans le cadre du Programme RBC et qui visent le chapitre "Education", font partie du draft du Document de Programme qui a été soumis au HCPH par le Mission interagence.

Ces recommandations sont les suivantes:

1. Elaborer un plan d'action global, à niveau national, ayant pour but le développement de l'éducation intégrée et un plan concret pour les écoles pilotes des communes cibles.

2. Modifier la stratégie, préalablement adaptée pour la promotion de l'intégration, qui consistait dans la création de "classes intégrés", en introduisant le concept de "école intégrée", considérée comme "école pilote". Dans chaque commune cible les "écoles pilote" seraient celles où il était déjà prévue la création des "classes intégrés".

3. Créer des "équipes d'appui" qui incluraient, entre autres, les enseignants qui étaient prévus préalablement pour les classes intégrées et qui auraient différentes fonctions d'aide aux enseignants, aux élèves et au développement de l'école. (Voir fonctions à l'Annexe 1).

4. Proposer, *en les considérant prioritaires*, des actions de formation pour les enseignants, en diversifiant différents types de formation en rapport avec différents niveaux d'intervention:

- . introduction de la perspective de l'école intégratrice dans la formation de base de tous les enseignants (action à être réalisée par phases);

- . formation d'ordre globale pour les différents enseignants et directeurs des écoles pilotes dans les communes cibles (cette formation devrait être réalisée à travers un Séminaire basé sur le matériel de l'UNESCO "Les besoins éducatifs dans la classe";

- . formation plus spécialisée pour les enseignants qui composeront les "équipes d'appui" (utilisant la formule de modules suivis par des périodes de travail pratique dans l'école);

- . recyclage (ou formation de base) des enseignants d'élèves déficients visuels et déficients auditifs (ceux qui ont été désignés pour les classes intégrées et d'autres qui seraient sélectionnés dans les écoles spéciales existantes);

5. Développer des "centres de production et de diffusion de matériel" dans le cadre de chaque école pilote, orientés par les enseignants des "Equipes d'Appui" et par d'autres enseignants et dirigeants de ces écoles;

6. Equiper les écoles pilotes avec les matériaux spécifiques nécessaires à l'éducation des élèves déficients visuels et des matériaux qui peuvent contribuer à une éducation active, coopérative et diversifiée;

7. Etablir une grande coopération entre les différents volets du Programme RBC, de façon à permettre une liaison étroite entre les actions qui auront lieu au sein de l'école et les actions qui visent (a) l'identification des enfants handicapés, (b) l'intervention près des familles et des enfants des premiers âges, (c) l'intégration dans les jardins d'enfants, et (d) les programmes de formation des jeunes pour la vie active.

8. Rentabiliser le travail des consultants externes et nationaux de façon que les différents agents engagés dans le Programme RBC (assistantes sociales, instituteurs, agents RBC, formateurs dans le volet professionnels) puissent en profiter tant que possible.

Annexe 1 - Texte du chapitre éducation du Document de Projet de Coopération Technique

Objectif immédiat 3 - Education

Le Ministère de l'Education Nationale aura un plan d'action et des compétences nécessaires pour assurer une scolarisation, en milieu ordinaire, des enfants présentant des besoins éducatifs spéciaux dans les communes cibles du programme RBC.

Responsables: HCPH, Ministère de l'Education Nationale, UNESCO.

PRODUIT 3.6.

Une planification globale de niveau national et un plan d'action concret pour les communes cibles, dans le domaine de l'éducation intégrée.

Activités.

3.6.1. Elaborer un Plan Global, de niveau national, visant l'éducation intégrée depuis la phase préscolaire jusqu'à la fin de l'enseignement secondaire, en collaboration avec le Ministère de l'Education, le HCPH et les Associations de parents d'enfants handicapés.

3.6.2. Elaborer un programme de formation sur l'école intégratrice et la stratégie RBC qui sera introduite dans la formation de base des enseignants.

3.6.3. Elaborer un Plan d'Action Concret, suivant l'orientation de Plan Global, visant le développement d'écoles intégrés - considérés comme écoles pilotes - dans les communes cibles, en collaboration avec les services régionaux et locaux du Ministère de l'Education, le HCPH, les Directeurs des écoles concernés et les Inspecteurs.

Produit 3.7.

Un Plan de Formation visant les différents agents éducatifs intervenant dans le Plan d'Action dans les communes cibles.

Activités:

3.7.1 Organiser des séminaires de formation de courte durée, utilisant le matériel de l'UNESCO "Les Besoins Educatifs dans la Classe", visant tout le personnel éducatif des écoles pilotes.

3.7.2. Organiser la formation d'une "Equipe d'Appui" pour chaque commune cible, composée d'éducateurs et d'instituteurs qui auront les tâches suivantes:

- appuyer les éducateurs et instituteurs des écoles pilotes à diversifier les stratégies éducatives et à être capables de répondre aux besoins éducatifs de leurs élèves;
- établir des liens entre les écoles, les ressources disponibles dans la communauté et les familles;
- collaborer dans la production, adaptation et diffusion de matériel didactique et aider les écoles à reconnaître les besoins des élèves en termes d'aides techniques et à trouver les moyens de se les procurer;
- promouvoir la formation continue des enseignants des écoles pilote, selon les principes de la formation/action, basée à l'école.
- intervenir, à travers une action éducative directe, auprès des élèves des écoles pilotes, ayant des problèmes éducatifs complexes, selon des différentes stratégies (travail dans une classe spéciale, dans des salles d'accueil, dans la classe ordinaire), ou auprès d'autres élèves handicapés intégrés dans d'autres écoles voisines.

3.7.3. Organiser des recyclages pour les enseignants qui travaillent avec des élèves déficients sensoriels, handicapés mentaux ou ayant des graves problèmes de communication.

3.7.4. Organiser un "Centre de Ressources" dans chaque commune cible, responsable par la production, l'adaptation et la diffusion de matériel pédagogique, ainsi que par l'appui aux enseignants des écoles pilotes, dans cette matière.

Annexe 2 - Rapport sur l'Association Marocaine de Soutien et d'Aide aux Handicapés Mentaux (AMSAHM)

L'Association Marocaine de Soutien et d'Aide aux Handicapés Mentaux que j'ai eu l'occasion de visiter a été constituée par des professionnels qui travaillaient dans des écoles spéciales et qui ont voulu développer une action en faveur de l'appui aux enfants et jeunes handicapés mentaux, dans leur famille et dans le cadre de l'école ordinaire. Pour le moment, tenant compte de la limitation de ressources financières existantes, l'Association a limité son activité aux personnes porteuses de trisomie 21.

Moyens

L'AMSAHM est siégré dans un immeuble où fonctionnent les consultations, l'accueil des parents, les actions de formation et une bibliothèque. Dans un autre immeuble fonctionnent des ateliers pour des adultes.

Les activités sont financées par divers moyens, notamment: Coopération Française, le Haut Commissariat aux Personnes Handicapées, Municipalités et contributions privées.

L'équipe technique est composée par 3 instituteurs, 3 orthophonistes, 2 kinesithérapeutes, 2 psychologues et 1 chef de service.

Activités

Cette association développe des actions dans les volets suivants:

- . service de consultation, comprenant: observations, diagnostic et orientation psychopédagogique et aide aux parents;
- . intervention précoce aux familles et aux enfants des premiers âges;
- . rééducation thérapeutique;
- . appui à l'intégration des enfants trisomiques dans des jardins d'enfants, dans deux écoles ordinaires où fonctionnent des "classes intégrées", et dans d'autres écoles où les enfants fréquentent les classes ordinaires.
- . appui à la formation professionnelle faite dans des Centres de Formation qui appartiennent au Ministère de l'Artisanat;
- . orientation d'ateliers pour adultes.

En plus, L'AMSAHM oriente des actions de formation (cours, séminaires), maintient une bibliothèque spécialisée et développe actions de recherche sur le handicap mental.

Annexe 3 - Rapport sur L'école de Bellevue

L'école de Bellevue est une école élémentaire (de la première à la sixième classe) fréquentée par 560 élèves et incluant une "classe intégrée" où sont inscrits 5 élèves à temps partiel et 4 élèves à temps complet. Cette classe a été mise en place avec la collaboration de l'AMSAHM qui sélectionne les élèves, se charge de leur rééducation et garantit la formation de l'instituteur.

Chaque élève a un "plan éducatif individuel" et l'instituteur collabore avec les collègues des classes ordinaires que quelques élèves fréquentent à mi-temps.

L'école semble avoir de bonnes conditions de fonctionnement: des installations adéquates, existence de différents matériaux pédagogiques, un nombre limité à 25 élèves par classe et une atmosphère accueillante.

L'instituteur a été formé au Maroc et en Belgique (il connaît la méthode Fierstein) et semble très intéressé par le programme d'intégration. Ces conditions nous ont donné l'idée que cet instituteur et cette école pourraient avoir un rôle important dans le futur développement des programmes d'éducation intégrée au Maroc.

Annexe 4 - Rapport sur L'Ecole d'Enfants et Jeunes Déficients Visuels de Temara

L'Organisation Alouite pour la Protection des Aveugles au Maroc (OAPAM) dirige 12 écoles spéciales pour des enfants et jeunes ayant cet handicap, dans les diverses régions du Maroc et l'école de Temara est une d'elles.

Cette école a été initiée il y a 6 ans et a une population de 123 élèves du niveau élémentaire et secondaire. La plupart des élèves sont dans un régime d'internat.

Moyens matériels

L'école a de très bonnes installations, composés par différents édifices et des espaces ouverts. Le financement de l'école est assuré par des fonds officiels et des fonds privés. À part les installations de l'internat et les salles de classe, il est à signaler l'espace où fonctionnera, brièvement, un service de "Livre Sonore" avec des salles d'enregistrement et d'audition.

Les livres Braille existants sont produits dans une imprimerie qui fonctionne à Casablanca.

Orientation pédagogique

Il semble que le programme pédagogique se limite, dans la plus grande partie, à l'apprentissage du programme scolaire ordinaire dans des classes de 10 à 12 élèves. L'unique matériel spécifique disponible est la tablette pour l'écriture du Braille et de quelques cubaritmes pour l'arithmétique. Les élèves ayant des résidus visuels lisent et écrivent en Braille (il n'y a aucun matériel d'aide visuelle) et les aveugles n'utilisent pas la canne pour se déplacer. On n'a pas observé des classes d'éducation physique et il n'y a pas d'ateliers pour la formation pré-professionnelle. Il ne semble pas exister aucun entraînement pour la vie dans la communauté.

Les espaces ouverts n'ont aucun matériel susceptible d'être utilisé par les élèves ce qui contribue au manque d'activité dans les temps libres.

Il me semble qu'il y a un besoin urgent de recyclage pour les enseignants des enfants et jeunes déficients visuels et il serait très important de développer des programmes d'intégration dans les diverses régions du pays.

Project NAM/95/M01/NOR

**TRAINING WORKSHOP ON SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE CLASSROOM
AND
PREPARATION OF A FOLLOW-UP PLAN IN ORDER TO DEVELOP
INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS IN
THE PROJECT AREA**

23 February - 3 March 1998

NAMIBIA

Report by

Ana Maria Bénard da Costa

UNESCO

I INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the Mission

The mission was undertaken within the framework of the inter-agency project 'Human Resources Development for Community-Based Rehabilitation for People with Disabilities' (ILO, UNESCO, WHO and NAD, Norwegian Association of the Disabled). UNESCO's role in this project is to bring technical input in the field of education focusing on the development of conditions which will make possible a better education for all students and the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular schools and regular classes.

The first target area covered by this Project has been the constituency of Tsandi, in the Northern Omusati Region belonging to the Educational Administration of Ondangwa West region. This area is a remote one, composed of small villages far from the main towns and distant from each other. Quoting Mrs Anupam Ahuja and Mrs Annie Robson's report of the 1996 UNESCO Mission, "there are around 250,000 learners in the two regions of Ondangwa, East and West, served by 6,500 teachers, 2,735 of whom have not been trained (42%)".

In the town of Oshakati there is a Teachers Resource Centre where initial and in-service training takes place. In the pilot area of Tsandi one "resource teacher" has been appointed by the Ministry of Education, and who is based in the CBR office. In the region there is one special residential school - the Eluwa School for Deaf and Blind - and a training centre - the Engela Training Centre.

In 1996, the UNESCO consultants mentioned above carried out the following activities within the framework of the Project:

- * A five days teacher training workshop;
- * A one day workshop for Higher Education personnel, lecturers at Teachers Colleges and Universities, Education Officers and parents organisations.

This second teacher training workshop was planned to be as a continuation of the 1996 workshop, and a consolidation of the knowledge acquired then.

2. Objectives of the Mission

The Mission had two objectives:

- * To carry out a workshop for the training of education personnel for inclusive education (following the 1996 workshop);
- * To assist the local resource team to plan follow-up activities.

As regards the former objective, the Consultant planned the programme in such a way that it could reinforce and complement the programme presented in 1996, selecting the Units from the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack 'Special Needs in the Classroom' to suit this purpose. Upon arrival the Consultant found out that most of the participants had not attended the first workshop and that this workshop was their first experience with training based on the UNESCO Pack, so some adjustments had to be made.

The Consultant was requested to advise on follow-up activities after the training of a core team. The suggestions were discussed with the Senior School Counsellor, Mrs Anna Nghipondoka, and shared with the Project Advisor, Mr. Olav Strand.

3. Profile of the participants

The workshop was attended by 22 participants, from 11 different schools, and representing the following professions:

- * 12 school teachers
- * 7 school principals
- * 1 resource teacher
- * 1 Senior School Counsellor

Only 5 teachers had attended the 1996 workshop.

(List of Participants in Annex 1)

4. Comments on the Preparation of the Workshop

As mentioned before, the programme was planned according to the following:

- * The need to complement the workshop in 1996, avoiding overlapping and reinforcing some fundamental issues;
- * The importance of selection of different working strategies and group activities to present the participants with a broad variety of substantive knowledge as well as methodological approaches;
- * Using supporting texts which could facilitate later the participants' future work;
- * The careful planning of their own practical demonstration of a workshop session.

Throughout the proceeding of the workshop, and taking in account the characteristics of the group, several modifications were introduced in order to facilitate the understanding and to maintain the participants' level of interest and engagement. Some discussion materials, were shortened or substituted by brief explanations; the timing was adjusted when necessary; and the theme for the practical demonstrations was prepared in a more simple way.

II MISSION OBJECTIVE 1: To lead a workshop for the training of Educational personnel for inclusive education

1. Workshop Programme - Special Needs in the Classroom -Summary (Details in Annex 2)

24th February	25th February	26th February	27th February
1. Introduction to the Workshop	1. Co-operative learning	1. Concept of "Help and Support"	1. Practical workshop sessions by 2 groups
2. Linking with the 1996 Workshop and presentation of its impact by its participants	2. Classroom factors in effective teaching	2. Problem solving strategy at the school level	2. Preparation of a follow-up plan by teachers and by principals
3. Evaluation strategies to be used	3. Co-operation at school level: role play	3. Planning for practical sessions	3. Final evaluation
4. Introduction to "learning"			
5. Introduction to the concept of "special needs"			

Workshop activities were carried out from 8.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m., with a break of 15m in the morning and the lunch break. Each session was followed by a written and oral evaluation.

2. Participants' evaluation of the workshop

The participants were asked to evaluate the workshop in two phases without mentioning their names. First, they did their own open evaluation, wrote it on a paper and put it on

the wall to be shared with the group. In the second round, each participant was asked to answer to an open-end questionnaire and return it to the Consultant.

In the open evaluation the most common observations were:

The Seminar has been: "Well planned; well organised, enjoyable; smooth"

It was important because: "I got more information / more knowledge; I shared ideas; Acted as a group; I was encouraged to work with disabled"; participants learned from each other; could understand how to use groups; learned how to help learners; learned how to solve problems".

Proposals: "There should be a workshop each month"

Negative aspect: "When we get back we will still lack materials"

Answers to the questionnaire in Annex 3.

3. Consultant's evaluation of the workshop

The general evaluation of this workshop is clearly positive. This statement is explained by the following reasons:

Introduction to different learning/teaching strategies

During this Workshop participants have been exposed to several learning/teaching strategies such as: group work (in pairs, small groups, large groups); brainstorming technique; role-play; individual evaluation; sharing of individual reflections; making different presentations of conclusions (transparencies, posters); poster tours; short lectures, individual learning through reading.

These strategies could not all be used as planned before, as some proved to be too difficult or not suitable to the participant's concrete working conditions. Nevertheless, after some adaptation and with the necessary support, these new ways of working together have been reasonably mastered and accepted with great interest. Throughout the workshop, most of the participants showed high level of engagement.

Learning of different contents

As described in Chapter I, the following contents were selected: learning; concept of "special needs", co-operative learning at the classroom level and at the school level; classroom strategies; integration of disabled children; parent co-operation. According to

the outputs from the group activities, these different concepts have been reasonably understood, and there was a general acceptance of their educational implications.

General atmosphere during the workshop

An important factor for the success of the workshop was the friendly atmosphere of the group and the intensive rhythm of the activities: pressure and support went side by side thus creating very positive impact in the group work.

This enthusiasm which was felt specially during the practical sessions lead by the participants themselves, and during the discussion which followed them, is an important element to be taken into account when planning for the future of this Project. If teachers and principals have been introduced with new concepts and new strategies and if they have responded to them in a positive way, it is important to pursue this action with some kind of plan; otherwise, there is a risk that enthusiasm generated can easily turn into frustration and disillusion.

Difficulties encountered

Firstly, there were clear language difficulties: verbal communication was not always easy and this had to be faced with the Consultant slowing down her talking pace, repetition and searching for feed back.

Secondly, it was not possible to use some of the "discussion materials" of the Pack: it was very difficult and even impossible for the participants to read them in their free time (after workshop hours) and it would have taken too long to read them during the session. This problem was solved by substituting the texts by summaries or by oral presentations.

Thirdly, it was difficult for most of the participants to make their individual reflection and evaluation, and to write their learning journals. It was obvious that these activities needed more time to be internalised before becoming a part of the teachers/principals repertoire. This fact had to be accepted and handled in a very smooth way.

Finally, it was clear that the texts and schemes of the Pack were somewhat far from the educational context of Tsandi Region. In order to solve this difficulty, it was necessary to explain these differences and to show how the adaptation to their own situation could be made.

Concerning the Action Plan, prepared during the last Session on Friday 28th, lead by Mrs. Nghipondoka, there was not sufficient time to finalise its presentation in a written form. The guidelines of this plan (presented in next section) were prepared, during the following week, by the Consultant and were discussed with the Educational Counsellor.

As a final conclusion, the Consultant is convinced that the Workshop was an important step in the development of the majority of the participants, opening their minds to the

concepts related to inclusive education, and giving them some new perspectives about learning and new teaching strategies. But, in such a short time, this input is not enough to introduce real changes in the participants' professional lives. For this change to happen it would be necessary to organise some kind of more permanent follow up and support.

II OBJECTIVE 2: To assist the local resource team to plan follow up activities

1. Visit to Tsandi Region

In order to get a better understanding of the CBR Project, Mrs Nghipondoka organised a visit to Tsandi. The idea was to visit some schools and to contact the CBR team. Due to difficulties in telephone communication, the team could not be previously informed about the visit and their office was closed. The Tsandi School could not be visited, as the children were not there upon arrival, and other schools, outside Tsandi, could only be reached with a 4x4 vehicle, which was not available. During the visit we contacted the Resource Teacher who had been in the Workshop, and we could realise how difficult it is to support the work of teachers: she has no special training; she has no transport to move around; she has no materials or ways to produce them. In spite of these obstacles, the visit was not in vain, as the Consultant could experience directly the concrete situation of the schools and the teachers: the immense difficulties of communication; the lack of transport; the time consuming travel. These are concrete facts which have to be taken into account when planning any kind of follow-up plan.

2. Planning a follow up with Mrs. Nghipondoka

In order to facilitate this planning, the Consultant had prepared in advance some guidelines for further action, which were discussed with Mrs. Nghipondoka. As a result of this meeting, the following was prepared:

ACTION PLAN FOR FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES FOR THE PROJECT NAM/95/M01/NOR

I - Action plan feasible within the existing resources

A - Short-term Activities

1. Establishing a network of the teachers/principals who attended the UNESCO Workshop, aiming at:
 - Setting up meetings, including either the entire group or divided in small groups, according to transport facilities. These meetings should be held on a regular basis and should facilitate:

- Continuation of the training, using the UNESCO Pack;
 - Discussion about its different contents and procedures;
 - Interchange of information about each other's work.
2. Setting up a first meeting for all participants, aiming the planning of activities to take place in a short term.
 3. Developing a closer relationship between teachers/principals and the CBR team members. (A first contact could be established during the first meeting mentioned above).
 4. Setting up workshops for the teachers of the 11 schools represented in the Workshop. These Workshops should be planned and lead by 2 teachers or 1 teacher + 1 principal of each school.
 5. Introducing some educational strategies presented in the Workshop in the classrooms.
 6. Survey by the CBR team, in co-operation with the resource teacher, on disabled children staying at home and not attending school to study the possibility of their school integration.
 7. Meeting of the leaders of the CBR team and the leaders of Special Education at the National and Regional level, aiming at a closer and more efficient-co-operation between these two services.
 8. Meeting between the regional and national leaders of Special Education to discuss further co-operation of the Eluwa Special School with this Project.

B - Medium / Long Term Activities

1. Expanding the Pack-workshop into other schools within the project region. These Workshops should be lead by teachers/principals who attended the last Workshop, after having acquired experience in their own schools.
2. Setting up a "Resource-Centre", at Eluwa School, aiming at the development of co-operation for the integration of learners with visual or hearing impairments. (See the Action Plan for this Resource Centre in Annex 2).
3. Training of the teachers in the Project region on "production of educational materials". This training could be organised in the "Teacher Training Centre" of Oshakati with the leadership of a National Consultant.

II - ACTION PLAN REQUIRING EXTRA RESOURCES

1. Training of a small team of teachers from the Project region (including the existing resource-teacher) in order to create a "Resource-team".
This training could be organised at a local level, using the facilities of the "Teacher Training Centre" of Oshakati, and could be led by consultants from another country from the African region, such as Kenya or Uganda. (See objectives of the resource team and guidelines for its training in Annex 5).
2. A study visit for these team members to integrated programmes for disabled learners in some other country of in the Southern Africa region.
3. Setting up a "Resource Centre" in Tsandi, with needed special equipment, means for production of educational materials and with books, reviews and texts, to be used by the teachers.
4. Reinforcing the know-how of the Senior School Counsellor by providing means for her further studies.
5. Long term assignment of a consultant in the field of integrated education for Tsandi Area.

III - Discussion about the Action Plan with the Chief of Special Education, Mr. J. Kahikuata and Mr. Dokkie Nel

The Consultant had the opportunity to present and discuss the draft Action Plan mentioned with the Chief of Special Education.

- Reservations were expressed concerning Inclusive Education in the Tsandi Region, due to the total lack of resources and facilities in this area; the integration of disabled children should have been initiated in the city of Oshakati where better facilities are available; another integrated programme could be organised in Windhoek.

- No concrete response was given to the Consultant's suggestions concerning channelling more human and material resources to the Tsandi Region to facilitate the educational input of the Project.

- The Consultant proposed studying the possibility of using the Eluwa school as a resource Centre for the integration of students with visual and hearing disabilities.

Conclusion:

1. The Consultant's impression is that it will be very difficult to get more support from the Special Education Directorate to the Project in Tsandi. Perhaps support could be more easily available if other schools (from Oshakati or from other town in the Region) are included.
2. The Consultant agrees that it would be positive to develop other plans concerning integration of disabled students in some other areas with more resources. This could yield positive results, and facilitate to influence ministerial policy concerning special needs education.

IV - Discussion about the Action Plan with CBR Programme Advisor, Mr. Olav Strand

The Consultant presented the CBR Project Advisor with the Action Plan and the discussions which followed were constructing. He agreed with the general guidelines and presented the following suggestions:

- The education Action Plan should include other areas, preferably areas where other CBR programmes are in place.
- It is important to look for some success experiences of school integration, which could be used as incentives to the officials and to other schools.
- It would be very important to have a replacement for Mr. Kofi Hademe in the Tsandi region, perhaps someone from Uganda with experience in integrated education.

During this meeting the Consultant stressed the need for a closer integration of the educational personnel, specially the resource teacher, in the CBR team and the need of a more effective sharing of the existing facilities (material, transport, etc.).

ANNEX 3

Answers to the questionnaire

Questions	Answers
1. The most useful part of the course was...	The majority mentioned "Learning how to deal with disabled learners in the classroom"
2. I liked...	One fourth mentioned "Learning how to organise group work". Some mentioned "Learning about role-play" and "learning how to conduct a workshop"
3. I did not like...	Only two answered to this question, mentioning: "The short duration" and "Working alone"
4. I felt the methods were...	"Correct; well planned; successful; interesting; useful; applicable"
5. The content of the course was...	"Good; well introduced ; achieved its goal; very up dated; interesting; well explained; enjoyable"
6. The materials we used were...	"Good; well prepared; motivated the teachers; useful; I can use them in the next workshop; excellent"
7. As a result of this course...	"I learned how to deal with learners with special needs; I will apply it all; I am more informed and motivated; I will use all my effort; learned many methods how to teach; learned to use materials".
8. I also feel that...	Most of the participants answered this point saying they wanted to have more time or more workshops.

ANNEX 4

OBJECTIVES AND COMPOSITION OF THE RESOURCE TEAM

A - OBJECTIVES OF THE RESOURCE TEAM

1. Co-operate with the CBR team in the identification of children with disabilities and in the planning of their school integration;
2. Help regular teachers to be able to respond, in an effective way, to the needs of all their pupils, including those with disabilities;
3. Work directly with learners with disabilities who need an individual intervention, teaching them specific skills such as:
Braille, sign language, language skills, etc.

(This intervention can take place inside regular classrooms, in separate "resource rooms" or both).
4. Introduce to the staff of regular schools the policy of "Inclusive Education";
5. Prepare (or bring from services where available) the needed special materials;
6. Participate in school activities (including, if possible, teaching regular classes in part time) ;
7. Promote necessary actions to facilitate the integration of the disabled children in their family and their community.
8. Co-operate actively in the continuous training of the school staff.

B - COMPOSITION OF THE RESOURCE TEAM

The composition of the resource team must be defined by National and Regional Educational Leaders, taking into consideration the concrete conditions of the community where the Project will be implemented.

In the case of the Tsandi Region, the great obstacle for the work of a resource team is the communication difficulties between the staff in the different schools. The schools are very distant from one another and there are no regular means of transport available. Consequently, in order to support the regular teachers in the schools, for the improvement of their skills to include all children, we need to select one of the two options:

- To train one or two teachers from each school as resource teachers and use them in their own school (and, at most, in other near neighbourhood school), working in this resource task some hours a week and continuing to be in charge of regular classes;

Or

- To train a small group of "resource teachers", working as such most of their time, and making available to them an adequate transport which enables them to visit a considerable number of schools in a regular basis.

Considering the conditions of the Tsandi Region my opinion is that it would be preferable to start with 2 or 3 resource teachers, being well trained and having the task to promote the skills of several school's staff teams. In order to be able to move around, these teachers should have a vehicle or should be entitled to use the CBR vehicle.

ANNEX 5

GUIDELINES OF THE TRAINING NEEDED FOR THE RESOURCE TEAM MEMBERS

1. *General features of the training*

- The training should link closely practical experience in the schools and classrooms, and learning through Workshop sessions;
- Workshop sessions should take place in the main city of the Region where the teachers belong and should be held in a place with reasonable facilities;
- It is preferable to organise different Workshop Modules (followed by practical experience in the schools) instead of having a single long training Workshop.
- Training should be multi-oriented in order to prepare the teachers to cope with children with different kind of disabilities;
- In order to permit the multi-oriented training a minimum of three intensive Workshops of 2 weeks each, during one school year, is required. One or two follow up Workshops in a second school year, would be of great importance.
- Training in general educational skills, led by the principles of Inclusive Education should be part of the resource teachers training;
- The "general training" should focus on skills related to (a) co-operative work with other teachers, other professional, parents and other community members, (b) social and community development, (c) the CBR concept and practice, (d) schools development strategies, (e) production of educational materials.
- The more "specific" Modules should prepare the teachers to work with children with different disabilities, and to fulfil the tasks of "resource teachers" as defined above.

2. *Training leaders*

- National and External leaders should be used for this training and these last ones should be selected in countries from the Southern Africa region where integrated education is already in place.

3. *Participants*

- Different kind of participants could participate in the different Modules of this training.

For example:

The Module aiming at a general understanding of the Inclusive Education concept and its educational approaches could be participated by the future resource teachers as well as other regular teachers, Principals, Inspectors, School Counsellors and Educational Advisors;

The Modules concerning education of disabled children should be participated by future resource teachers, and some subjects could integrate members of the CBR team.

- Concerning the future resource teachers, they could be selected not only from the Project Region - Tsandi - but also from all the Ondangwa Region, to facilitate the effective use of the investment in this training. The total number of these teachers could be around 25/30.

INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS PROJECT

In 1995, the Institute for Educational Innovation (IIE) started a Project named "Inclusive Schools", based on the UNESCO Teacher Education Pack, which had the following objectives.

- To promote the development of innovative educational experiences, based on the Pack approach;
- To prepare, in co-operation with Teacher Training Institutes (TTI), teams of teacher trainers to be used in the different regions as leaders of "Pack" workshops;
- To develop a research work, during 2 school years, with close intervention of the Teacher Training Institutes, aiming the use of the Pack in a school-based teacher development process.

This Project started with the selection of 5 TTI and the organisation, by each of them, of a regional team who would be in charge of the Project at the local level. This team selected the schools and the teachers to be involved in the research and a first Pack workshop has been carried in May, 96, enrolling 30 participants, being among them teacher trainers, school directors, teachers and members of the Department of Basic Education.

After this workshop, an agreement has been establish between the IIE and each TTI in order to determine the mutual responsibilities in the Project and its evaluation procedures.

Therefore, during the school years 96/97 and 97/98, the Project followed as planned and two main general goals have been pursued:

- *To disseminate the inclusive approach throughout the country*, with the use of workshops based on the Pack and with the leadership of trainers previously prepared for this task;
- *To carry on a "Research Project"* with the co-operation of teams leaded by 5 TTI, involving *10 schools and 154 teachers*, and to evaluate it according to the following fields:
 - organisation of the research process at national, regional and local level;
 - quality of the training and school support given by the TTI teams to the school's staff;
 - impact of the teacher training/support upon the school management, the teachers co-operation and the work in the classroom;

The scheme of the Project was organised on the following basis:

There were established three levels of intervention: (i) a national co-ordination level, carried by the Institute for Educational Innovation; (ii) a regional level (5 regions) each based in a Teacher Training Institute; (iii) a local level, based in 10 schools. In each level, there was a Project leader and, at the regional level, teams have been organised with professionals from each TTI and from the "Regional Departments of Education". The schools had a group of teachers directly involved in the Project, having one of them a co-ordination task.

Brief evaluation of the Project

First goal: Dissemination of the Inclusive Approach based on Pack workshops

Immediately after the edition by the IIE of the Portuguese translation of the UNESCO "Teacher Education Pack", there has been a great interest in these materials coming from schoolteachers and school administrators. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the use of the Pack, this Institute established some norms concerning the running of workshops: these training experiences should be leaded by a person already prepared for this task; they should involve always more than one teacher from each school and should give priority to workshops proposed by the existing "Local In-service Training Centres. During a first period, the trainers were chosen among the participants who attended the first workshop (oriented by Prof. Mel Ainscow in June 96), and after some time, the country could rely on other trainers prepared through different workshops runned by the IIE. At some time the "Department for Basic Education" assumed, too, this dissemination role and supervised a "cascade" training project, all around the country, for regular and support teachers. The number of teachers involved by this training, carried by the IIE or by the Department of Basic Education, since the school year 95/96 has been around

The dissemination of the concepts concerning the inclusive education has been spread, also, through many Conferences and Seminars organised, during last years, by several institutions such as Faculties of Education, Teacher Training Institutes, Departments of Education (Regular and Special), Local Authorities and schools. The high incidence of this theme focused in those events shows that a real interest around inclusion is growing in the educational community, which hopefully will be put into action in the near future.

The study of the impact of this dissemination of the inclusive approach in classroom work and in school organisation has not yet been done. Nevertheless, the informal contact with the schools suggests that a participation in a workshop is not enough to improve a real change in the schools and that a continuous support is essential. Anyhow, in several cases, some educational strategies and concepts passed into practice, and the schools teams developed, by their own, different forms of an ongoing training and evaluation of their work, aiming a more effective education for all.

Second goal: To carry on a research Project with 5 Teacher Training Institutes and 10 schools

As a preliminary note, it is important to mention that the five TTI had a considerable autonomy in the way they could run the Project, according to the specific conditions of each region. Because of that, the evaluation procedures have different in each region which lead this research to focus separately on each region, and to present 5 "case studies", giving only a few general conclusions applicable to all situations.

The focal points to be examined were the following:

a) The process

- . The way the Project was organised at three levels (national regional and local);
- . The work developed by each TTI in terms of training and continuous support of the school's staff;
- . The work developed in each school in order to facilitate the Project

b) The training

- . Evaluation of the training workshops
- . Evaluation of the continuous-school-based-training
- . Evaluation of the strategies implemented to facilitate the co-operative work among teachers
- . Evaluation of the school leaders role

c) Impact of the Project in the development of an inclusive approach in the schools, at the school organisation level and at the work in the classrooms level.

The final evaluation report is not yet ready but it is possible to tell, by now, the following conclusions:

1. According to "the process", it has been considered very positive to involve TTI and to give to them a great part of the responsibility in the leadership at regional level. This made possible an impact of the project in initial teacher training, and contributed to develop in these Institutes the role as "Resource-Centres for Inclusion" in their own region.

Several weak points can be appointed to this "process", such as the lack of inter-regional co-operation (due to lack of material conditions and lack of time of the regional team members for this task); changes in the school's teams, lack of local leadership. But it is important to stress that the work conditions have been very different from region to region (and even from school to school) and that it is impossible to generalise these remarks..

2. According to the training, the results of the research study suggest that this has been the strongest point of the project. In fact, the training workshops have been the major factor for introducing change at school and classroom level and all the evaluation procedures focusing the Pack and the workshops have been

extremely positive. Some schools expanded the training to other schools, when requested to do so.

3) *According to the impact of the Project in school's organisation and classroom work*, the situation in the different regions varies immensely. In some schools it was possible to verify real changes in the teaching strategies, in the teachers co-operation, in the changing of the role of the support teachers (they became much more linked with the regular teachers and more responsible for the work with all children) and, in a general way, in the attitudes towards the inclusive approach. In other schools, on the contrary, this impact has been much weaker, and it has been noticed a real difficulty to put in practice the new ideas proposed by the Pack workshops.

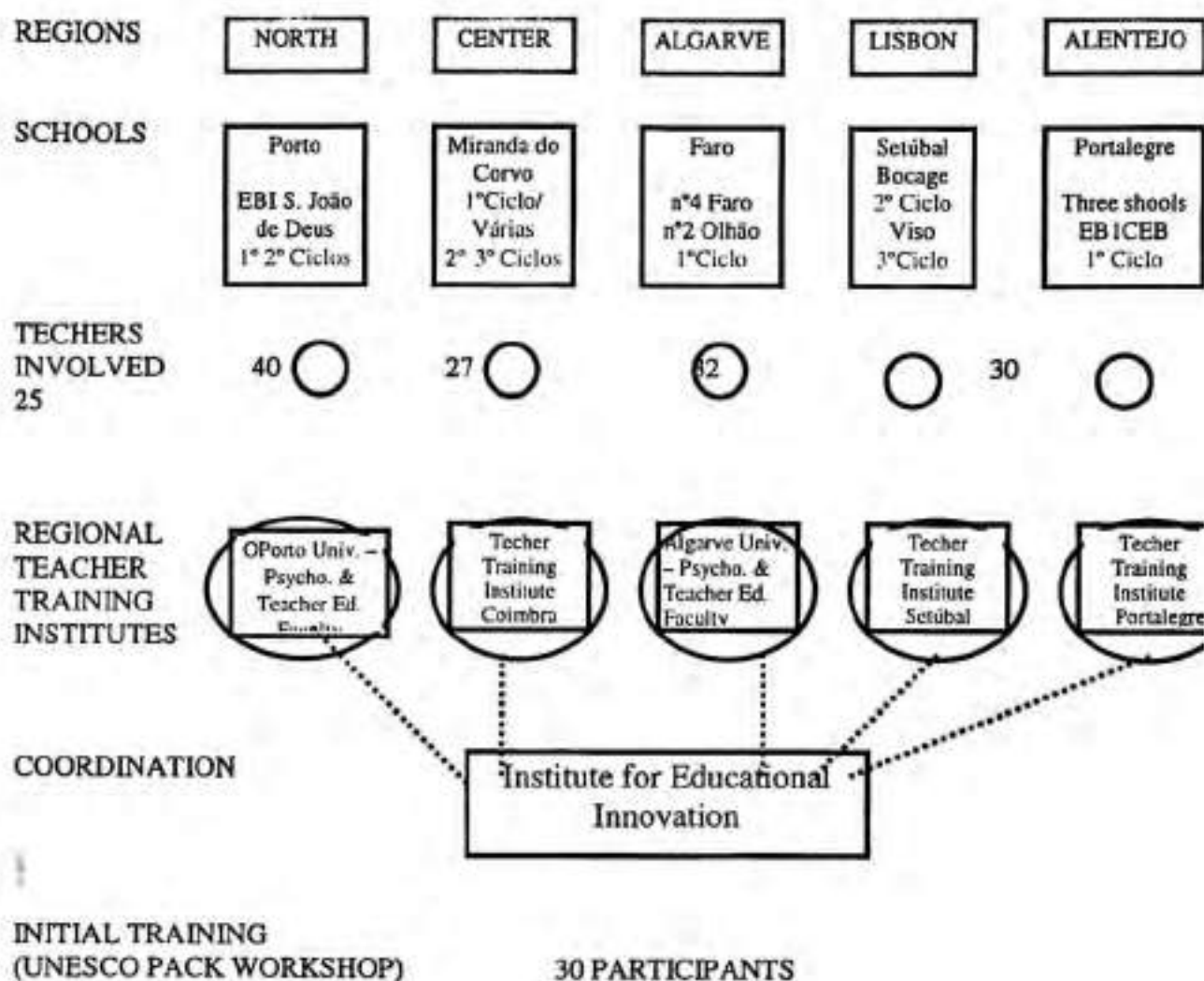
The cause for this different response seems to rely on the kind of continuous support given to the different schools by the ITT teams. This impact has been noticed in the schools which received a continuous support during the two school years, and it failed in those which receive very little support, specially during the second year.

The major conclusion of this research Project is:

- d) The pack is a very powerful instrument for teacher training aiming the inclusive approach;
- e) It is essential to established a long term support system to guarantee the impact of the training both at school and classroom level;
- f) The role of a school leader in this field is crucial;
- g) The major impact of this approach has been the development of teacher co-operation (either between regular teachers or between regular and support teachers) and the development of school-based training/evaluation strategies.

Table 1

Inclusive Schools Project



Para Anjo
6/6/2000

2000?

SEMINÁRIO DA UNESCO NO CONVENTO DA ARRÁBIDA

Passados alguns anos sobre a divulgação, a nível mundial, da "Declaração de Salamanca" e sobre publicação pela UNESCO do "Conjunto de Materiais para a Formação de Professores", diversos países, interessados em desenvolver os conceitos e as práticas educativas consignados nestes documentos, solicitaram àquele organismo internacional que lhes proporcionasse mais informação capaz de os orientar nesse processo de mudança, quer em contextos nacionais quer em contextos regionais ou locais.

Procurando responder a estes pedidos, o Departamento de Necessidades Educativas Especiais da UNESCO assumiu a elaboração dum documento que intitulou "*Open File on Inclusive Education*", o qual visa abordar a forma como "as políticas educativas, a nível nacional e local, podem promover o desenvolvimento de práticas mais inclusivas nas escolas, realçando o papel dos professores na elaboração dessas políticas". Como linha orientadora, adoptou a definição de inclusão definida na Declaração de Salamanca, ou seja, "a promoção das oportunidades educativas através do desenvolvimento das escolas regulares nas quais todas os alunos devem ser educados em conjunto, independentemente das suas diferenças". São visadas todas as crianças que não têm tido acesso à educação, ou que foram marginalizadas pelos sistemas educativos.

Pretende-se que este dossier se possa adequar aos países das diferentes regiões do mundo e que responda a questões colocadas por diverso tipo de profissionais situados aos diferentes níveis: pessoal dos departamentos nacionais de educação, gestores, supervisores ou administradores da área educativa, formadores, directores de escolas e dirigentes de movimentos associativos e de organizações de pais. Tendo em vista esta grande abrangência, a preparação deste documento foi realizada de modo a incluir a colaboração activa de diversos intervenientes provenientes de diferentes países, cabendo ao Professor Alan Dyssen, da Universidade de Newcastle, a coordenação deste trabalho.

Assim, foram definidos os seguintes temas que constituem os capítulos do documento:

- A organização da transição para uma educação inclusiva
- desenvolvimento profissional visando a educação inclusiva
- A avaliação em sistemas inclusivos
- A organização do apoio em sistemas inclusivos
- Os pais e as comunidades em sistemas inclusivos
- currículo e as escolas inclusivas
- A procura de recursos e de financiamento para as escolas inclusivas
- A transição dos alunos ao longo do sistema educativo inclusivo

- O Trabalho com as escolas .

Para a redacção de cada um destes capítulos foi pedida a colaboração de diversas pessoas através do envio de textos e de exemplos concretos dos seus próprios países. A contribuição portuguesa incidiu sobre os capítulos seguintes: "O currículo e as escolas inclusivas", "A transição dos alunos ao longo do sistema educativo inclusivo" e " O trabalho com as escolas . Foram enviados textos em que são abordados estas temáticas numa perspectiva conceptual e em que são dados exemplos retirados de situações vividas no nosso país. Com base nestas contribuições, foi realizada pela equipa coordenadora uma primeira versão do "*Open File*", sendo de seguida solicitado a diversas outras pessoas um comentário crítico a cada capítulo.

Foi neste contexto que se realizou o Seminário no Convento da Arrábida, nos passados dias 10 a 14 de Maio, tendo sido convidados a participar as pessoas que participaram neste trabalho. Como tarefa a desempenhar foi estipulada a produção duma nova versão do documento, tendo por base os comentários previamente elaborados e os consensos obtidos em cada um dos diferentes grupos de trabalho em que os participantes se dividiram.

Estiveram presentes representantes dos seguintes países: Portugal, Índia, Reino Unido, Chile, Dinamarca, Suécia, Espanha, Laos, Jordânia, Palestina, USA, França, Uganda e Roménia. A representação Portuguesa foi assegurada por dois elementos deste Instituto e uma colaboradora externa, ligadas ao Projecto das Escolas Inclusivas.

Os trabalhos realizaram-se como previsto e, ao longo dos três dias de Seminário, foram revistos os oito capítulos (assim como a Introdução e a Conclusão), ficando concluída uma segunda versão que, em alguns pontos, se afastou consideravelmente da primeira. De facto, foi considerado pela generalidade dos grupos que os textos se concentravam em demasia na problemática dos alunos com deficiência (em vez de abarcarem as diferenças entre todos os alunos) e, em alguns casos, foi alterada uma tendência para se sobrevalorizarem os recursos externos à escola. Embora estes não fossem esquecidos, procurou-se que se propusessem como medidas essenciais as que podem ser realizadas no âmbito das escolas, baseando-se nos recursos que podem ser encontrados em todas as regiões do mundo: alunos, professores, pais e comunidades.

Ter participado neste Seminário, liderado pelo Prof. Alan Dyssen, pode ser considerado um privilégio, quer pela riquíssima troca de experiências com pessoas de regiões tão diversas, quer pela eficácia do trabalho desenvolvido nos grupos de trabalho que se traduziu na produção de um vasto documento no prazo de três dias, quer pela demonstração prática de uma liderança exemplar e de um trabalho de grupo orientado para a produção de um produto final.

Esperamos que a participação do IIE no "*Open File on Inclusive Education*" não termine aqui mas que venha a ter um papel relevante na sua disseminação entre nós e nos debates que a sua aplicação irá, certamente, proporcionar. De facto, trata-se de continuar a intervenção que este Instituto tem desempenhado na disseminação da educação inclusiva que começou pela edição da Declaração de Salamanca e da obra da UNESCO "Conjunto de Materiais para a Formação de Professores" e que tem

continuado a través de colaboração em Seminários baseados neste materiais e na realização de projectos que se centram nesta mesma problemática.

Learning from Difference EENET seminar

Foz do Arelho , Portugal
May 20-21 2002

Background

This seminar was EENET's first formal consultation with national and regional partners, and represented an important step along the road towards the regionalisation of EENET's work and the reaching of those who are hard to reach. It is by learning from difference that we will become a more effective network. Our difference is arguably our greatest resource.

It was agreed at EENET's annual steering group meeting in 2000 that we should adopt a gradual approach to regionalisation. As a first step we have encouraged agencies to become Friends of EENET, by entering into a working relationship with us. We agreed that our regionalisation policy should aim to encourage as many different agencies to become involved in each region. In this way we hope to avoid a possible situation, where one organisation feels that it has the monopoly on carrying out EENET's activities. By creating 'regional gangs' of southern networks, we will also avoid investing in only one regional partnership.

It has become clear that regionalisation and language issues are closely linked. Already the links with the Portuguese agency, the Institute of Educational Innovation, and EdTodos in Brazil, have focused on translating materials into Portuguese and networking between Portuguese-speaking countries, and ultimately with Spanish-speaking countries.

We have had informal discussions with colleagues in the Middle East about devoting a section of EENET's web site to the provision of materials in Arabic. An organisation in Cameroon has offered to provide a bilingual service to reach both the English and the French speaking countries of Africa.

Since January 2002 EENET has received additional funding from its Norwegian funders to consolidate its efforts to regionalise its work. EENET's coordinator has done a series of interviews with other coordinators of international networks, which share similar principles and goals. So far this has included the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), Elimu and Initiatives (on Deaf Education). Discussions have also been held with Leonard Cheshire International (LCI), the Child-to-Child Trust, and the Internet Learning Trust, which is a virtual organisation with no office facilities or staff costs, only consultants. The purpose of this preliminary 'research' is

to examine the lessons learnt already by these other agencies in order to avoid making the same mistakes.

The main aim of the seminar is to consult more widely on the issue of regionalisation and to develop a clearer action plan together with potential regional partners or affiliates, and to establish the common ground from which we are working and the philosophy on which we are basing our work. EENET's philosophy and values are an important starting point. The objectives of the seminar can be summarised as follows:

- To bring together potential partners from all the regions of the world;
- To listen to partners' views on the principle of regionalisation in their particular region;
- To outline key activity areas, such as newsletter production, the collection of materials in appropriate languages for the web site, regional networking etc;
- To consider the issue of language access and translation with each regional representative;
- To develop a plan for each region for the next 3 years.

Expectations of regionalisation

- The quality and quantity of newsletter and web site articles from southern contributors will increase;
- The number of people on the mailing list will increase, and in the long-term the mailing list will be regionalised;
- EENET's focus will broaden beyond disability and 'special educational needs' into other issues of marginalisation;
- Training materials will be developed, appropriate to each region, and in different languages;
- 'Southern Voices' will be increasingly 'heard' in international debates, conferences and literature.

1. What is EENET?

EENET is an information-sharing network which supports and promotes the inclusion of marginalized groups in education worldwide. It is also a catalyst for the development of inclusive practice and a clearing-house for easy-to-read information which promotes inclusion. EENET's starting point was to network with those programmes which promote the inclusion of disabled children, however, in the long-term EENET is promoting a more comprehensive approach to issues of discrimination in education. Gender, poverty, ethnicity are some of the issues which cause exclusion, but which are also related to disability.

"The fundamental principle of EENET is to ensure that the voices of marginalized people are heard."

EENET is based in the department of Educational Support and Inclusion at Manchester University. It has a co-ordinator who is supported by an international steering group, and has just appointed a part-time Research and Development Worker. It has been funded by European NGOs since its inception in 1997. EENET was established to serve the information needs of individuals and organizations, primarily in countries of the South. It aims to redress the imbalance in the flow of information which has tended to go from North to South, by promoting South-South, and South-North communication.

EENET produces an annual **newsletter** and disseminates it to almost 1500 individuals and organisations on the mailing list in over 120 countries. The newsletter is available from the **web site** in English, Portuguese, Spanish and French (Issue 4 only). Transcriptions are available in English Braille and audio-tape. EENET also provides information on an individual basis through correspondence and acts as a referral agency on a wide variety of disability, education and development issues.

Values and principles

EENET:

- believes in the equal rights and dignity of all children;
- prioritises the needs of countries which have limited access to basic information and resources;
- recognises that education is much broader than schooling;
- acknowledges diversity across cultures and believes that inclusive education should respond to this diversity;
- seeks to develop partnerships in all parts of the world.

In conducting its work EENET:

- adheres to the principles of the Salamanca Statement;
- believes that access to education is a fundamental right;
- recognises the intrinsic value of indigenous forms of education.

EENET is committed to:

- encouraging the effective participation of key stakeholders in inclusive education;
- engaging with the difficulties caused by the global imbalance of power;
- encouraging a critical and discerning response to all information and materials circulated.

"EENET is not a post office"

We intend to encourage dialogue and to create conversations which go in every direction, rather than simply disseminate information. But making this happen is really difficult.

- How can we ensure that people from the South participate?
- What is a network?

"The medium is the message"

In everything we do, we try to apply the principles of inclusion. We aim to work in as participatory way as possible. We use the slogan 'the medium is the message' to emphasise the importance of participation, accessibility and inclusion in our actions, not only in our words ie in publications, the newsletter and the web site etc.

2. What do we mean by regionalisation?

"Regionalisation is a means of increasing the participation of people in the South in EENET".

Regionalisation comes from a perceived need. It is not an imposition. We are not trying to create an empire. The essence of regionalisation is not only about geography, or country boundaries, but also about linguistic and ethnic regions. There are some regions with which we have very poor contact, such as North Africa and the Arab States. We need to consider the processes, mechanisms and structures which need to be put in place for regionalisation to be successful.

Expectations

Windyz led an ice-breaking session which involved participants having a conversation with somebody they hadn't met before and discussing with them their expectations and contributions.

Expectations

- Learn from participants about IE
- Find out how EENET works
- Hear about rich experiences of social inclusion worldwide
- Examples of good practice
- Creating networks

- Enabling increasing communication
- Effective ways of sharing information
- Keep an open mind
- Don't lose the essential quality of EENET
- A clear sense of how regionalisation is going to work
- How to put theory into practice.

"Keep fish swimming upstream"

Contributions

- Awareness of problems in Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa
- Keeping silent, listening, sharing, clarifying
- Being a critical friend
- Parents' perspectives
- Suggestions about information-sharing
- How networks were created in India and Portugal
- Experience in Hong Kong and Zambia
- Professional links with China
- Knowledge of inter-cultural education
- Learners' voices.

3. Presentations

Guiding Questions: Mel

The participants were divided into regional groups: Southern Africa; Hong Kong, China; Brazil and Portuguese-speaking Africa; and India, South Asia. They were given a short time to prepare regional presentations using three guiding questions:

- How are ideas and experiences about inclusive education (IE) shared in your country?
- What resources do you have to make this happen?
- What barriers do you face?

3.1 Southern Africa

Presenters: Palesa Mphohle and Albert Tembo
Facilitator: Susie Miles

Palesa, Lesotho

I am a member of LSMHP, an organisation for parents of children with mental disability in Lesotho. When we started in 1992, the government already had a policy on IE. We needed training to understand our role as parents in relation to the Ministry of Education and its policy. We also needed to empower the parents and raise their awareness about the rights of disabled people. We brought parents

together and made them aware of government policy. We have children with disabilities already in schools, but the teachers are not trained. We gained knowledge from a parents' network called the 'Parents Mobilisation Resource Group' (PMRG) which consisted of parents from: Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tanzania, Jamaica and Mauritius. These organisations were funded by the Norwegian organisation, NFU. We also had links with FEPAPHAM, a Pan-African Federation of parents linked to Inclusion International. We have realised, though, that networking is not always easy and it involves responsibility and commitment.

One of the barriers we have faced is the inaccessibility of meetings about inclusive education. We have participated in regional meetings on inclusive education, mostly in South Africa, where policy makers and politicians have made presentations at a very high level in inaccessible language. Parents from the grass-roots have not benefited from these meetings. We need to have separate meetings as parents. These large seminars do not respond to the needs of parents, children and teachers. They do not have a format that encourages full participation, yet they claim to be consulting with stakeholder groups. It seems to be the donors' policy to 'involve the stakeholders', but just getting everybody together is dangerous and doesn't necessarily change anything. The professionals don't seem to care whether the views of marginalised groups are represented.

One of the solutions would be to empower the grass-roots to make use of available resources such as radio, TV, internet and seminars to tell their stories and raise awareness. We need to promote a culture of writing, and could start the process of regionalisation with the Writing Workshops idea (see p13). We could produce training material which could help those at a higher level. We could also try to produce a newsletter in a small way and send it to the professionals. We can also run our own presentation and communication skills workshops to train people in writing and documenting. In this way information-sharing can be spread to other countries. We could use the EENET logo to influence change. We have already contributed to the EENET publication, 'Family Action on Inclusion in Education'. This tells the story of parent groups in all regions of the world which have lobbied for change in the education system on behalf of their disabled children.

Albert Tembo, Zambia

There are a number of IE projects going on in the country, which is divided into educational zones. There are three colleges which are trying to promote IE in schools by giving teachers methods to cater to the needs of all children and by merging the special and the mainstream teacher education courses.

The main barriers we face are that schools are spread over a huge distance, children with physical disabilities find it difficult to access schools, which are a long way from their homes; teachers are overloaded; infrastructure is poor; classes are large (50 to 60 children); there is a lack of transport; and a lack of communication devices, such as the internet, telephone, fax and computers.

We have the following donors involved in promoting IE: FINIDA, DANIDA, UNESCO and Irish AID. We share ideas through seminars. We use the community-based resources of the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Education Zone coordinators and parents.

3.2 Hong Kong, China

Presenters: Vivien Heung

Kenneth Sin

Facilitator: Ana Maria

In Hong Kong we do not suffer from a lack of information - we have too much information. But knowledge about IE needs to be disseminated. Since 1997 there has been lots of change in the education system. In 1997 a Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities was introduced and, in 2001, 'Educational Reform'. Although there has been an integration policy for the last 20 years, inclusion as an ideology has not been put into practice. The number of children who are segregated has increased, as has the number of labels put on children. We don't have a problem with distance as Hong Kong is densely populated, but this means we can segregate children more. We place a very high value on academic results, and all children are expected to reach the same level.

We can only promote integration and inclusion if we can integrate ourselves in teacher education. The Institute of Education, which is becoming a university, University, has been re-structured to facilitate the training of both special and mainstream teachers together in the Department of Educational Psychology, Counselling and Learning Needs. The Centre for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (CSNSIE) was set up in 1998. It is self-funded and therefore has greater freedom to support parents and schools towards inclusion. We have adopted a human rights framework for our work.

We are interested in networking with international agencies because we want to disseminate our knowledge and experience. The Hong Kong Education Department initiated a pilot project in 1997 and approached schools to join in. Only 9 schools joined in at the beginning. By 1999 21 schools had joined; by 2000, 40 schools; and by 2005 there will be 100 schools involved. The resources available for the project are very promising: there will be additional funding and training for teachers. Educational integration is restricted to 5 groups of children - all of them have mild-impairments.

We adopt a whole-school approach. We run school-based workshops, staff development programmes, promote peer-tutoring and peer-support, and develop school-based policies. We conduct local research to show how integration works in schools by developing case studies of successful experiences to show people how they can 'travel the journey'. We have moved from teacher-centred to child-centred

teaching methods and we try to change teacher attitudes. The main obstacle we face in the schools is that the teachers claim they are not prepared.

We have compulsory education, therefore, in theory, there are no marginalized or excluded groups. Some children are excluded from the mainstream, however, and they are referred to different units, classes or schools. There are 640 schools with special classes.

How do we share information?

In Hong Kong we use a question and answer format in chat rooms and we develop and disseminate training packages, but there are so many that teachers have no time to read them. This is why we feel that a school-based is most effective. In China they claim to have 100% inclusion. The philosophy in China is that every child must be equal, and this makes inclusion easier. We have a lot of networking opportunities with Chinese schools. We have a lot to learn about different teaching methods. Our Chinese colleagues have developed several software packages. The sharing has been fruitful.

Overcoming Barriers

There is a teacher education programme to prepare teachers to support special needs in the classroom. But we are concerned with teacher competence. Those working in mainstream schools claim they have no training and do not know how to cater for children with special needs. They struggle with the different levels of ability, the provision of learning support and the co-operation between teachers and learning assistants. In 1999 we started a project called, 'Making Integration Successful (MIS)'. We developed resource packages, including CD Roms.

Parents have been very supportive of the pilot project and we value them a lot. But they don't want to be engaged in school matters and they do not work with us as partners. Peer support for parents of children with and without disabilities is very important, as parents often reject their children with disabilities. Recently, the 'Supporting Group on Integrated Education' (SGIE) has been set up by a parent who is in a very influential position. This group is likely to bring about many changes.

3.3 Portuguese-speaking countries

Presenters: Windyz Ferreira
Ana Maria Benard da Costa
Ana Costa
Facilitator: Mel Ainscow

Windyz, Brazil

On my return to Brazil from studying in Manchester, my colleagues and I established a Brazilian NGO known as 'EdTodos', based on EENET's example. EdTodos has a double meaning in Portuguese. It means Education for All and 'It is for all'. EdTodos

is not a franchise. It has its own distinct way of working, inspired by EENET, but not dictated by it. Raising awareness of the UNCRC has been a central focus of our work and we have focused on race, gender and disability. EdTodos organised an international conference in Joao Pessoa in the North-East of Brazil in December 2001, and it has launched a journal.

EdTodos is run on a voluntary basis. I am employed in the Federal University of Paraiba in Joao Pessoa, and have been able to involve my students in the running of EdTodos and the Congress. Since the Congress I have become more involved in national policy discussions about special and inclusive education, and am in a position to influence change.

The North-East of Brazil is the poorest part of Brazil, and has the highest percentage of children who do not attend school. In Brazil the Portuguese term for 'marginalised' is not used, instead we use 'vulnerable, disadvantaged or at-risk'. EdTodos has plenty of work to do if we simply focus on the needs of the Brazilian population of 160 million people, rather than trying to cover the whole of Latin America. The scale of Brazil is enormous – it is 8000 kilometres from North to South.

The most important thing is to bring people together and to share ideas. EdTodos is keen to establish a formal relationship with EENET and to make better use of internet links to help us overcome the geographical barriers in Brazil. Already the national parents' organisation in Brazil, which is linked to Inclusion International, has disseminated information about EdTodos and EENET through its extensive email network.

Ana Maria, Portuguese-speaking Africa

I will be retiring in October 2002 from the Institute of Educational Innovation in Lisbon. I intend to work together with a colleague who has set up an NGO called 'Citizens of the World'. This NGO is already focusing on AIDS-related issues in the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. There is enormous potential for us to extend this work to Education for All issues. I have many contacts in Mozambique and Angola, and have also visited Brazil.

My first instinct would have been to set up a post office because of the severe shortage of materials written in Portuguese! But after today's discussions I need to re-consider! I have been translating EENET's newsletter since it was started in 1997, and am prepared to continue. There is a need to translate many more documents into Portuguese and to begin collecting experiences in the Portuguese-speaking countries.

Ana Costa, Guinea Bissau and Timor

I work for a Portuguese NGO called CIDAC, a Centre of Information and Documentation. I travel regularly to Guinea Bissau and have the opportunity to make links between my colleagues there and EENET. Until I attended this seminar I had

no idea that there was such interesting work going on in Mozambique. I would like to make links between practitioners in the Portuguese-speaking countries.

This week East Timor has gained its independence. We have a unique opportunity to become involved in the early stages of the re-building of the country. Most of the schools, including many special schools, were destroyed during the fighting. Timor has decided to adopt Portuguese as its national language, so the Portuguese government and many Portuguese NGOs concerned with Timor will be providing a lot of support. Already teachers of Portuguese have been sent to the country to provide language training for the teachers.

3.4 India, South Asia

Presenters: Sunita Zacharia and B. Venkatesh

Facilitator: Sue Stubbs

Sunita, Enabling Inclusion

There are 1 billion people living in India, and huge numbers of children have either dropped out of school, or are not attending. There is a huge amount of discrimination on the grounds of gender and caste.

The Disability Act (1995) has a clause about integrated and inclusive education. But there is no formal or informal body for sharing information. IE is happening in different parts of the country, but the experience is not shared. Enabling Inclusion is an NGO which is trying to create a national network. We have contacts with organisations dealing with child labour, caste and gender, as well as disability. We try to address everything together. There is a real gap in networking - a lack of contact between development NGOs. We are aware of the National Resource Centre for Inclusion, which is based in Bombay which is creating resource materials on inclusive education, and of the CBR Network in Bangalore run by Indumathi Rao.

The St Joseph's Service Society (SJSS) set up an inclusive school as a result of the discussions that took place at the Agra seminar. (Initially the intention was to set up a special school). The school has 400 children, 100 of whom are disabled. Most of the teachers in the school are special educators, but they are teaching in the regular classes. We have a development worker who is making contact with other organisations at the grassroots and documenting their experience. Enabling Inclusion is an information network run by SJSS. We have translated EENET and other materials into 5 different languages: Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Delagu and Kannada. All the policy and research publications are produced in English. We are trying to produce a newsletter.

Venky

I am not working exclusively in inclusive education. I use Freirian methods to train social workers to work with disabled people to help them understand the link between poverty and disability. 68% of India's population lives below the poverty line

on less than US\$1 per day. Disabled people are over-represented in this group. Less than 5% of disabled children have access to primary education.

I was involved in training government teachers in a rural area of Ethiopia to become more aware of disability, ethnicity, language and economic issues. As a result of the training the teachers went into the community and brought children with disabilities to the schools. They developed teaching aids using local materials.

There are different levels of inclusion:

Family Level: inclusion has to begin with the family. The shame, anger and guilt has to change to acceptance and early childhood stimulation.

Community Level: accommodation within the community, attending school, and gaining employment opportunities. I am working on a new scheme to create playgrounds for disabled children and non-disabled children which are under the control of the disabled children is a new scheme.

School Level: Children are able to be with their peers in learning groups.

4. Reflection

Each participant spent a few minutes noting down the learning that had taken place during the day. The reflections have been organised into: personal; education; networking and information-sharing.

"For me, the most interesting thing today was..."

□ Personal reflections

- The importance of meeting face-to-face;
- It is moving to listen, to be together and to share experiences;
- Together we can support each other to overcome barriers;
- The enormous influence that the Agra seminar has had upon practice;
- A world of experience brought into a small room in Portugal;
- EENET is about swimming against the tide;
- It is a conscientisation process and we need to move from individual to collective learning. As Freire said, 'Go beyond';
- Hong Kong is a window to China;
- Before this seminar I was aware of differences between East and West, now I know more about differences between South and North!
- The problems in Portugal seem small compared to those in other countries.

□ Education

- Learning from difference: the enormous variety of situations, regions, needs and responses - different ways of developing inclusive education (IE). EENET needs to respond to these diverse contexts;

- Alternative ways of implementing IE: from the bottom-up, as in Lesotho, and top-down, as in Hong Kong;
- Inclusive education tends to mean the education of disabled children.
- Inclusion is not only confined to schools and formal education. It should be a full part of community life;
- Inclusion and education start in the family and in the community;
- Education cannot be seen as being separate from life;
- Link between inclusive education and human rights issue.

□ **Networking**

- There is a need for two-way communication, so that local experiences can be disseminated;
- It helped to clarify what resources are available in the regions;
- The challenge of networking is the same everywhere despite different levels of resources;
- Despite enormous differences between countries, basic human needs are common across cultures;
- Cultural attitudes have consequences for developing information;
- Sharing and creating conversations amongst peers, eg parents and children, is often more effective, than bringing lots of different groups together at first;
- We need to form small groups in each context, and then widen the network;
- The role that one key person can play in starting to network and disseminate information - rather than an institution or organisation;
- Need to work with organisations that are linked to local, national and regional levels;
- It helped to reflect upon the way information on IE is being disseminated currently in my country;
- Linking with existing organisations working in different contexts/issues.

□ **Information-sharing**

- Some countries have too much information, others too little, and in others there is very little sharing of information;
- We need to improve the use of Internet access for disseminating information and collecting feeding back;
- The need to make documents available on websites in different languages.
- Increased awareness of how much each of us can do at different levels if we share information and believe that it is possible;
- How can we use this group for providing stories for EENET's newsletters, and raise different issues to stress diversity;
- The role of universities in sharing information;
- Collecting data and writing up.

4. Writing Workshops

"Understanding Community Initiatives to Improve Access to Education": an EENET action-learning project Susie Miles & Mel Ainscow

'Writing Workshops' is a small-scale project linked to the overall aims of EENET, and relevant to the regionalisation process. It is funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) for a two-year period and it aims to help people who are involved in inclusive education to:

- learn from their experience of inclusive practice;
- document it;
- share it with other people.

One of EENET's core beliefs is that some of the most interesting and pioneering practice on making education accessible for all is happening in countries of the 'South'. But there are many barriers that prevent people in other projects and cultures from learning about these experiences.

Research questions include:

- How can people with very different types of knowledge, skills and perspectives be helped to think about, document and learn from their experience to improve access to learning for all?
- What needs to happen to make this process empowering particularly for practitioners and people from marginalised groups?
- How can the particular experiences of one community speak to a wider audience and at the same time remain authentic?
- How can 'outsiders' and 'insiders' best work together to improve practice?

We prefer to use terms such as 'action-learning' and 'reflective practice' because we believe that everyone, no matter what their level of formal education or literacy, is capable of being helped to think about and communicate their own experience. This project should give added value to what people are already doing in the course of their work. However there are some very real tensions and challenges associated with this project which are directly relevant to EENET's regionalisation process, for example:

- ❖ the relevance of learning across cultures;
- ❖ bridging the gap between oral and literacy-based cultures;
- ❖ collaboration and power issues between South and North;
- ❖ exploring how participatory processes can be fully inclusive.

When EENET put in the bid for the research grant, our project was the only one out of a total of over 130 projects which linked disability and education. Most of the projects were about AIDS, gender, caste, and computer access. Yet the themes of

the research bids were inclusive education and education for all. Originally we intended to work in Brazil, Zambia and Romania, but DfID asked us to focus on sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, so we opted for Tanzania, Zambia and India. The potential project in India did not work out, however, so now we are only working with Joseph Kisanji in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, and Paul Mumba in Mpika, Zambia.

The project began in April 2001, and in July we had a meeting in Tanzania. Two colleagues came from Zambia and Mel and Susie, from EENET, UK. We visited schools and ran a workshop. We simplified the concept of the project into the following key principles:

- using existing knowledge
- building on experience
- collecting information
- listening to different voices
- working together
- creating conversations.

There is a detailed report of the visit to Tanzania on the Action-Learning section of EENET's web site. We have also begun to collect other action-learning experiences on the site from Portugal and Romania. It is open to contributions.

Capturing the authentic voices of community members as they reflect on their community's experience of promoting inclusion is a process that takes a lot of time and is very complex. It involves a new way of thinking, questioning and reflecting. It supports teachers to review their own practice.

In order to demonstrate the type of work which is being done in Zambia as part of the research project, Susie told a story about overcoming girls' absenteeism. Following the workshop in Tanzania, Paul Mumba began to use the 'What, How and Who' framework developed at the workshop to encourage the teachers he works with in 7 schools to identify the barriers they face and develop strategies to overcome them.

One of the teachers has an all-girls class – as a result of a UNESCO-led project to raise girls' achievement. As many as 15 girls were regularly absent from this class. The teacher decided to ask the children to carry out a survey in the community to identify the reasons for their absenteeism. The main reason was the girls' heavy domestic workload. A meeting was called for the parents of the absent children to meet with the whole class to discuss ways of tackling this problem. This meeting was recorded on video and reflective discussions with the class teacher have been recorded on audio-cassette. On Paul's recent visit to the UK, we documented this experience under the following headings: purpose of the activity, processes and methods used, evidence of impact, lessons learned and further challenges. On his return to Zambia, Paul 'negotiated' this account with the children, parents and their teachers to ensure that the final version of the activities reflected the voices of the key stakeholders.

We need to remember that Paul Mumba is an extra-ordinary human being and the rest of us are only ordinary human beings!

We aim to have a set of draft guidelines for the running of writing workshops ready by September 2002. We would welcome comments and feedback from practitioners who may wish to try out the guidelines. We need to give some more thought to the way the guidelines are going to be disseminated and whether they need training to accompany them, like the UNESCO pack!

Another EENET project which is relevant to the regionalisation process is the 'Family involvement in inclusive education' project which began collecting stories from parent-led advocacy groups in 7 different countries in 1999. The stories were placed on the web site in 2000. Since then, Susie has been working on a publication which tells the story of the way advocacy organisations develop and can grow into organisations which campaign for inclusion. The publication, which is in its final draft form, draws heavily on the original stories. It should be ready for publishing in July 2002.

5. Action Plans

"How could we develop EENET activities in our part of the world, bearing in mind the many different contexts, situations and needs which require different approaches?"

Participants were divided into regional groups with the following facilitators:

Mel Ainscow:	Hong Kong
Andrew Preston:	Africa
Sue Stubbs:	South Asia
Susie Miles:	Portuguese region

And were asked to address the following questions:

Developing a plan for EENET activities in your area

- What should be the main emphasis?
- What should be the key strategies?
- How can we create appropriate leadership?
- What resources are needed?
- What is the area?
- How will the plan connect to EENET?

5.1 Enabling Inclusion, India, South Asia Becoming an Associate

Area: The main focus will be in New Delhi and Bangalore, but Enabling Inclusion (EI) is open to queries from other South Asian countries; Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Strategies: Produce a newsletter at a very local level; conduct campaigns in schools to raise awareness of inclusive education; establish small groups at local level with parents, children and teachers; facilitate conversation between different groups, not only disability, and set up a think-tank; create resources by collecting experiences and translating them into key South Asian languages; make use of the already existing web site.

Relationship with EENET: There will be a two-way flow of information. EI will collect stories, which will feed the local newsletter and the EENET web site. EI is prepared to disseminate the newsletter for EENET in South Asia.

Leadership: Enabling Inclusion will take the lead together with practitioners working in the field of integration. Enabling Inclusion will retain its own identity, and will not use the EENET logo.

5.2 Southern Africa: Becoming an Associate

Area: Lesotho, Zambia, South Africa,

Leadership: Representatives of NGOs will decide who can assume this role. A key person will be identified who will maintain contact with EENET.

Strategies: To adopt a bottom-up approach by developing community groups interested in sharing information; identify key people; create a nucleus of one or two countries; and create consensus around issues of inclusive education. This will be done by:

- **Networking** using the existing structures or coalitions: Ministries of Education, CBR, NGOs, regional federations of disabled people.
- **Dissemination of information** from the higher level to the local community to develop a common language – bring together the professionals and practitioners/community documenting and disseminating the successful experience in this country.

- **Discussion of inclusive education:** Network members will help to make the inclusive education debate meaningful at the community level by discussing it in their regular work at community level.

5.3 Portuguese language network: Working towards a partnership

The language network will include: Portugal, Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Timor.

Leadership: Ana Maria, Citizens of the World; CIDAC; Teacher Training College; and schools' network, Portugal; and EdTodos, Brazil.

Emphasis: Translation, dissemination and exchange of ideas; website in Portuguese language linked to EENET.

Resources: Need to set up an infrastructure with a co-ordinator and secretary, a computer and an office. Apply to national foundations, government and civil society for funding. It may also be possible to approach international donors eg Comic Relief, Finnida.

5.4 EdTodos, Brazil: Partnership - Becoming an 'Arm' of EENET

Emphasis: Dissemination and documentation

Strategies: Website: Brazilian in Portuguese language
Journal 'Inclusive Perspectives in Inclusive Education'
Action Research project on inclusive education
Contacts with other Latin American countries to establish a connection with EENET.

Existing human resources: Windyz Ferreira and Josiana da Silva, members of the Board of EdTodos; students and professionals already linked to inclusive education work and trained in both action research and the UNESCO Resource Pack.

Need for material resources: office with computer and internet, a small payment for university students to run the office, and the cost of publishing documents.

5.5 EENET GOES CHINESE, CSNSIE, Hong Kong Becoming a partner

2002

Sept Setting up a steering group in Hong Kong (HK) as a Focus of leadership
Volunteer co-ordinator and involve students

Oct Seminar at the Institute, Mel Ainscow will attend