International Disability Alliance - Inclusive Education Flagship

**Education of children with disabilities in Nepal**

Baseline Data - 2019

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# List of Acronyms

ADRAD Action on Disability Rights and Development Nepal

CBR Community-Based Rehabilitation

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

CIE Catalyst for Inclusive Education

CPAP Country Programme Action Plan

DAISY Digital Accessible Information System

DHS Demographic and Health Survey

DPA Disabled People’s Act

DPO Disabled People’s Organizations

ECD Early Childhood Development

ECED Early Childhood Education and Development

EMIS Education Management Information System

ENT Ear, Nose and Throat

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GoN Government of Nepal

GPE Global Partnership for Education

HRDC Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled Children

ICEVI International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment

ICT Information and Communication Technology

IDA International Disability Alliance

IFHOH International Federation of Hard of Hearing People

II Inclusion International

INGO International Non-Governmental Organization

LG Local government

MICS Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey

MoWCSW Ministry of Woman, Children and Social Welfare

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NLSS National Living Standards Survey

NP Nepal

OOSC Out-of-School-Children

PwD Person(s) with Disabilities

RCRD Resource Centre for Rehabilitation and Development

SDG Sustainable Development Goal

SHRUTI National Association of Hard of Hearing and Deafened Nepal

SINTEF Stiftelsen for industriell og teknisk forskning (Norwegian)

SSDP School Sector Development Plan (2016-2023)

SSRP School Sector Reform Programme (2009-2015)

STR Student-Teacher Ratio

UIS UNESCO Institute of Statistics

(UN)CEDAW (United Nations) Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

(UN)CRC (United Nations) Convention on the Rights of the Child

(UN)CRPD (United Nations) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund

WASH Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

WBU World Blind Union

WFD World Federation of the Deaf

WFHH World Federation of Hard of Hearing

# A. Purpose[[1]](#footnote-2)

The purpose of the consultancy was to collect, review and analyse the data on the status of education for children with disabilities in Nepal, produce a base of evidence for later reference and use for further planning and decision making.

In the education sector, explicit references to persons with disabilities in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide opportunities to explore connections and mutual reinforcements between SDG 4 and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Article 24. The adoption by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the General Comment on the “right to inclusive education” has been a landmark providing clarity on interpretation of rights and states obligations under Article 24 of the CRPD.

There has been a greater awareness at international level of exclusion and restriction faced by children with disabilities with regards to education with increasing visibility in international organisation reports in the frame of monitoring of Education for All and now SDG 4. At national level, there has been many initiatives led by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and /or governments seeking to make education system more inclusive, albeit too often through pilot projects or local initiatives that are not scaled up or adoption of policies not yet implemented.

There is currently a lack of evidence on what works to achieve SDG 4 on inclusive quality education by 2030 for all children with disabilities, including policy scenarios that comply with the standards of the CRPD for all groups, and adjust to the cultural, social and economic realities of low and middle-income countries. In a context of competing priorities and limited funding, it is essential that Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) come up with clear messages and recommendations, building on the evidence of what works and looking at mechanisms for taking good practices to scale for broader impact.

**Some of the issues this report will address include, but are not limited to**:

* What are the legal frameworks governing education?
* What are the provisions under current education laws and regulations supporting inclusive education?
* Is there an education information system in place (EMIS)?
* Number of out-of-school children (disaggregated by gender, disability).
* Enrolment rate for children with disabilities vis-à-vis the general enrolment rate.
* Transition rate from primary to secondary school (data disaggregated by disability, gender).
* Number of schools – mainstream, residential, and special schools (disaggregated by number of accessible schools).
* Number of children in schools (disaggregated by mainstream schools, residential schools, special schools).
* Teacher pupil ratio across from primary to secondary in the public sector and private sector schools.
* Average number of pupils per class in primary.
* Average salary for both regular and specialized teachers.
* Availability of support services for children with disabilities.

Education expenditures (public-private) to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio (disaggregated by budget allotted to special schools; budget allotted inclusive education).

# B. Methodology

This Literature Review helps to clarify the extent to which education of children with disabilities in Nepal has already been considered, documented, and studied, the scope of the available information (and gaps in data collection), the perceived importance of the subject, the main trends, and the most relevant stakeholders.

It includes a scan of legislation and policy pieces, reports, journal articles and grey literature, all within the identified scope of interest – education of children with disabilities in Nepal. It includes primary (sources cited in the text) and secondary (resources consulted but not cited – Annex 1) sources of information and results in a comprehensive Bibliography. In addition, a Dropbox data-base of consulted sources is available.

It is anticipated that this Literature Review provides a contextual framework against which the remaining research study is going to be set. It includes an historical perspective of education for all children in Nepal, as well as an historical perspective and legislation/policy frame of reference specific to children with disabilities.

The reviewed literature has been identified according to a snow-ball effect (initially identified literature leads to other literature, usually through exploring a bibliography), and included sources in English and in Nepalese.

##### LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA COLLECTION AND/OR ANALYSIS

The main obstacle with regards to data on children with disabilities in Nepal is that, simply, comparable and rigorously gathered data does not exist. Statistical data is often contradictory (as highlighted in the study below) and qualitative data is often specific to a particular geographic area (thus not nationally representative). The Local-self Governance Act (1999) provided guidelines for local governments to obtain and update data on persons with disabilities, but its impact seems limited.

Almost all main international data-sets related to education include some information on Nepal, but none include *children with disabilities* or *students with special education needs* in Nepal as discrete categories. Even in the cases where data on Out-of-School-Children in Nepal is collected (such as the case of UIS - UNESCO Institute of Statistics) quite rigorously - and despite research indications that a great percentage of Out-of-School children (OOSC) is likely comprised of children with disabilities - there is no rigorous data on out of school children who also happen to be children with disabilities – only estimates.

Below is an illustrative list of sites (in alphabetical order) where internationally comparable data on education in Nepal is stored and analysed, but no data on *children with disabilities* or *special education needs* in Nepal is included:

Education Policy and Data Center (fhi360)

<https://www.epdc.org/country/nepal>

Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

<https://www.globalpartnership.org/country/nepal>

Plan International

<https://plan-international.org/nepal/education-nepal>

Save the Children

<https://nepal.savethechildren.net/>

UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS)

<http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np>

Organizations such as UNICEF and the World Bank have invested greatly (including monetarily) in reinforcing the educational system in Nepal, including data collection[[2]](#endnote-2) and the development of skills for employment[[3]](#endnote-3). However, these efforts mostly pertain to education as a whole, including the reinforcement of the EMIS, but do not specifically mention children with disabilities[[4]](#endnote-4). The exception seems to be the implementation of the 6th Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2019, supported by UNICEF, that will for the first time include a module on children’s function abilities[[5]](#endnote-5).

Likewise, and similar to what happens in other countries, household surveys such as the Standard Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) of 2016 in Nepal do not include a module on disability-related questions. In addition, household surveys such as the DHS 2016 only collect data on household members who are 15 years old or older[[6]](#endnote-6) thus missing entirely the childhood population.

As in many other countries, Nepal is rich in foreign investment – 250.24 billion in 2016/17, between grants and loans[[7]](#endnote-7) -, and many International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) work in the country. The Association of International NGOs in Nepal[[8]](#footnote-3) counts with 140 members. Of those, 46 are listed as working in the education sector, and 6 are listed as working in the various sectors and including a disability focus.

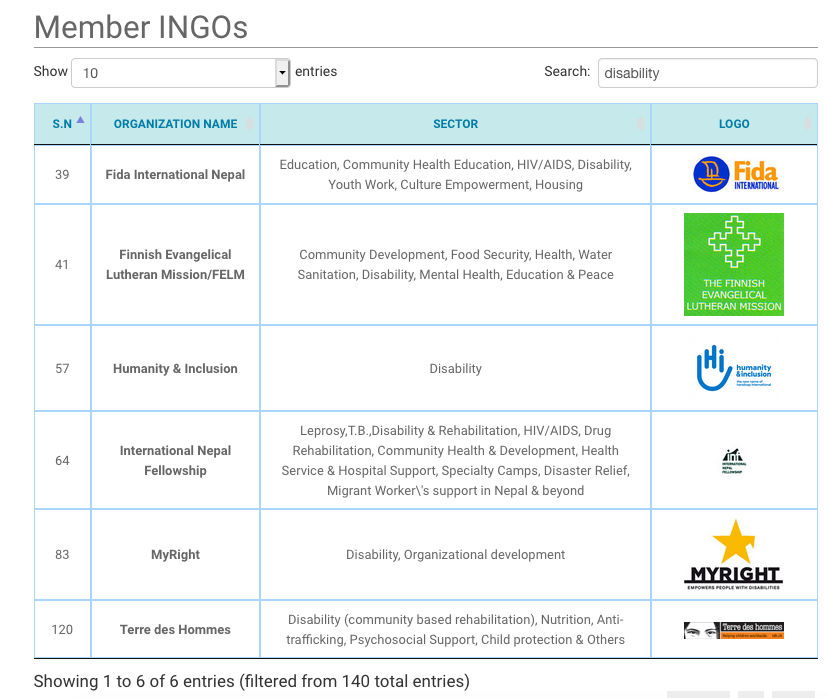
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Figure 1 - Association of International NGOs in Nepal's Member INGOs that work in disability-related issues[[9]](#endnote-8)

Figure 1 description: out of 140 total entries on the database, 6 respond to the search-word “disability”. These are the Fida International Nepal (Sector: Education, Community Health Education, HIV/AIDS, Disability, Youth Work, Culture Empowerment, Housing), Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission/FELM (Sector: Community Development, Food Security, Health, Water Sanitation, Disability, Mental Health, Education & Peace), Humanity & Inclusion (Sector: Disability); International Nepal Fellowship (Sector: Leprosy, T.B., Disability & Rehabilitation, HIV/AIDS, Drug Rehabilitation, Community Health & Development, Health Service & Hospital Support, Specialty Camps, Disaster Relief, Migrant Worker\’s support in Nepal & beyond); MyRight (Sector: Disability, Organizational development); and Terre des Hommes (Sector: Disability (community based rehabilitation), Nutrition, Anti-trafficking, Psychosocial Support, Child protection & Others)

Of those, only 2 INGOs are listed as working in both Education and Disability (Fida International Nepal[[10]](#footnote-4) and Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission/FELM).However, neither website provide data on children with disabilities and education.

# C. Background

## Country

Nepal is a landlocked nation in Asia, between China to the north, and India to the east, south and west. Kathmandu is the capital of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, home to over 29,033,914 people, who belong to over 125 ethnic groups, and who follow a variety of religions. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Fact World Book[[11]](#endnote-9), most of the population is divided nearly equally between a concentration in the southern-most plains of the Tarai region and the central hilly region and overall density is quite low, with 19% of the population in urban settings. There are 7 provinces: Province 1, Province 2, Province 3, Gandaki, Province 5, Karnali Province, Sudurpashchim Province

Nepal had, in 2016, a GDP of $2,500 per capita[[12]](#endnote-10), with an estimate of $1,004 for 2017/18[[13]](#endnote-11), and is still recovering from violent internal conflicts that left the monarchy and government in turmoil until recently, when the conflict, and the monarchy, ended and a new government and constitution was born in 2015. Nepal is a nation faced with many barriers to progress in inclusive education for children with disabilities[[14]](#endnote-12). War, political upheaval, a poor economy, and natural disaster have made the implementation of the many policies designed to not only educate the population of the country, but to integrate all persons with disabilities very difficult. The government of Nepal signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990 and ratified some of the Optional Protocols[[15]](#endnote-13). Reportedly, the country was progressing well, with efforts being made to enforce policy, and to follow the many international agreements Nepal had ratified until the earthquake in 2015 changed the focus from progress to survival[[16]](#endnote-14).

The estimate for economic growth in 2017/18 was of 5.9%, increasing from an average of 4.3% in the last decade[[17]](#endnote-15).

Almost half of the population is below age 24 with children ages 0 to 14 years making up 29.54% of the population (girls 4,198,913/boys 4,578,768) and 15 to 24 years old making up 21.52% of the population (girls 3,145,807/boys 3,250,614)[[18]](#endnote-16). The mother’s mean average age of first birth is 20,8 years old and there are on average 2 children born per woman (2018 est.).

In 2014, Nepal´s spending on health was 5.8% of GDP, and 27% of children under 5 years old were underweight (2016 est.). In 2015, education expenditure was 3.7% of GDP but only 63.5% of the population was literate (defined as persons age 15 and over who can read and write), with a much higher percentage of males (76.4%) than females (53.1%), despite a school-life expectancy of 12 years[[19]](#endnote-17).

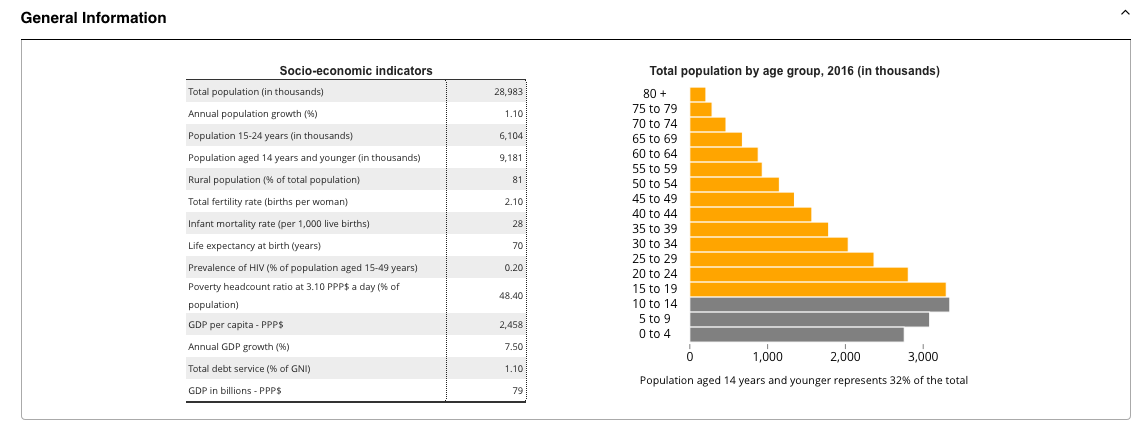


Figure 2 – General Information[[20]](#endnote-18)

Figure 2 description: the total population of the country is 28,983 thousand people, with an annual growth of 1.1%, 6,104 thousand people are between 15 and 24 years old and 9,181 thousand are 14 years-old or younger. 81% of the population lives in rural areas, the total fertility rate is of 2.1 and the infant mortality rate is of 28 per 1,000 live births. Life expectancy at birth is of 70 years, 0.2% of population aged 15-49 is HIV-positive, the poverty headcount ratio at 3.10 PPP$ a day is of 48.40% and the GDP per capita is of 2,458 PPP$. The annual GDP growth is of 7.5 %, 1.1 % of GNI is debt service and GDP is of 79 billion PPP$. The Population aged 14 years and younger represents 32% of the total, with the overall shape of the population distribution graph showing that population diminishes with age, starting from age 15

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) has made provisions to address multiple and intersectional discrimination faced by several marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities; it prohibits any form of discrimination against them and states that persons with disability shall have the right to enjoy all rights as other citizens, in equal footing. Denial of reasonable accommodation is legislatively seen as a form of discrimination. This legislation has not, as of yet, been fully enforced or produced the expected results[[21]](#endnote-19).

## Historical context (Nepalese education system overtime)

The first formal school in Nepal opened in 1853, catering to children from elite families and providing alternative to home schooling and Gurukul (Vedic schools). Until the 1950, access to school was very limited. The establishment of the Nepal National Education Commission in 1956 and subsequent Education Plan of 1971[[22]](#endnote-20), as well as the commitment to UNESCO’s Education for All initiatives, allowed the growth to over 34,000 primary and secondary schools and nine university-level institutions by 2011[[23]](#endnote-21). As of 2017, the count of higher education rose to 10 universities, 4 deemed universities (Medical) and 1 open university[[24]](#endnote-22).

There have been several legislations aimed at promoting the overall development of children, including the improvement of education services, such as:

* Children’s Act (1991);
* Act Relating to Children (1992) – that specifies the creation of child welfare homes and of centres for children with disabilities, where they would receive training and education;
* Education Act (1992);
* The Basic and Primary Education Master-Plan (1997-2002)[[25]](#endnote-23);
* Strategy Paper for Early Childhood Development in Nepal (2004);
* Ten-year National Plan of Action (2004/5 – 2014/5)[[26]](#endnote-24);
* National Framework of Child-friendly Schools for Quality Education (2010)[[27]](#endnote-25)
* Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Education Sector in Nepal (circa 2014)[[28]](#endnote-26)
* Policy Relating to Children (2012) – which makes specific provisions for children with disabilities[[29]](#endnote-27);
* School Sector Reform Pan (2009-2016)[[30]](#endnote-28);
* Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016) [[31]](#endnote-29);
* The Constitution of Nepal (2015), which guarantees education as a fundamental right for all citizens;
* School Sector Development Plan (2016-2023)[[32]](#endnote-30).
* Education Act, 8th Amendment (2016), which defines inclusive education as education provided under the regular system for children with disabilities, maintains special education and legislates for flexibility in curriculum, books, teaching-learning and assessment system for children with disabilities[[33]](#endnote-31).
* The Fourteenth Plan (2016-2019), to make public infrastructures, institutions and communication accessible, to establish rehabilitation centres and to strengthen Community Based Rehabilitation Programs[[34]](#endnote-32). A draft of the fifteenth paper is also available.

However, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) report of April 2018[[35]](#endnote-33) expresses some concern about the absence of clear links between policy and practice, referring some of the above-mentioned legislation as example.

Historically, special education has been defined as education imparted to *blind, deaf, dumb or disabled or mentally retarded children* (as quoted in the Education Act of 1971) and as the teaching, learning and training arrangements made through special method to meet the need of education of various types of disabled children (Special Education Policy, 1996)[[36]](#endnote-34). The later included provisions for education such as scholarships, Braille books, free materials provided by the government, setting of special schools, integrated schools and resource classes[[37]](#endnote-35).

The National Policy and Plan of Action on Disability (2006) stated that a policy would be adopted to provide free education on all levels to people with disabilities, and that residential facilities would be developed in each district for *such children*. Textbooks were to include content aimed at developing positive attitudes towards disability[[38]](#endnote-36).

In addition, the following also mention[[39]](#footnote-5) education for children with disabilities:

* Muluki Act, 2020 (1963)
* Education Act, 2028 (1971)
* Labor Act, 2048 (1991)
* Acts related to Children, 2048 (1991)
* Special Education Policy, 2053 (1993)
* Disabled Service National Policy, 2053 (1993)
* Local Autonomous Governance Act, 2055 (1998)
* Education for All National Plan of Action Nepal (2001-2015)[[40]](#endnote-37)
* Social Welfare Act, 2049 (2002)
* Education Regulation, 2059 (2002)
* Biwako Millenium Framework for Action[[41]](#endnote-38).

The National Curriculum Framework, 2007, focuses on the development of an inclusive education and created evaluation policies for children with visual, hearing and physical disabilities, though it focuses primarily on children with visual disabilities. It also stresses the importance of consultation, at every legislative level, with DPOs and parents/caretakers[[42]](#endnote-39).

The School Sector Reform Programme (SSRP 2009-15) converted the previous 4 levels of education – Primary (Grades 1-5), Lower Secondary (Grades 6-8), Secondary (Grades 9-10) and Higher Secondary (Grade 11-12) – into a two levels system: Basic Education (Grades 1-8) and Secondary Education (Grades 9-12). Pre-Primary Education/Early Childhood Development remained as a separate entity[[43]](#endnote-40) until 2016, when the School Sector Development Plan 2016-2023 (SSDP 2016-2023) incorporated one year of early childhood education on the Basic level of Education, extending education to 4-year-olds[[44]](#endnote-41). However, the education system as a whole is expected to undergo major changes as the federal system promulgated by the 2015 Constitution is implemented in the next years[[45]](#endnote-42).

The Inclusive Education Policy of 2016 identified that challenges were present in the education system, such as: a lack of awareness by family, community and schools; poor achievement of education in providing a more independent life; ineffective peer learning strategies; poor results in the teaching of skills valuable for the work life; poor data management; lack of use of ICT teaching materials; insufficient research on assessible teaching-learning procedures. In accordance, the policy established several objectives:

* for free education to be provided for all children with disabilities;
* to introduce a functional assessment on the school enrolment process;
* to adjust learning materials, infrastructures and educational environments;
* to ensure access to technical education and skills-based education for persons with disabilities;
* to provide Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) based education;
* to include children with disability in disaster risk prevention; to develop a disability related database[[46]](#endnote-43).

The most recent legislation is the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017, which: “is guided by a rights-based approach; is formulated in line with the UNCRPD and the disability-related provisions included in Nepal’s constitution; features an amended from the earlier Protection and Welfare of the Disabled Persons Act (1982) classification of disability; prohibits all kinds of discrimination based on disability, and provides actions and punishment against this; provides for equal access for individuals with disabilities to education, health, employment, public physical infrastructure, transportations and information and communication services; is developed in accordance with the federation system”[[47]](#endnote-44).

Accessible buildings and environment (within the context of providing education to children with disabilities) have been promoted by several legislative efforts, such as:

* Disabled Protection and Welfare Act (1982) – which upholds the right to education for children with special needs
* National Building Code (2005)
* National Policy and Plan of Action on Disability (2006), described by the NFDN as not having been implemented, with no allocation of budget and limited knowledge by stakeholders[[48]](#endnote-45).
* Right to information Act (2007),
* Guidelines on Minimizing Barriers for Disabled Friendly Environment (2010),
* Social Protection Programme Working Procedures (2012-2013)
* Thirteenth Plan (2012-2016)[[49]](#endnote-46).

# D. Findings

## Disability in Nepal

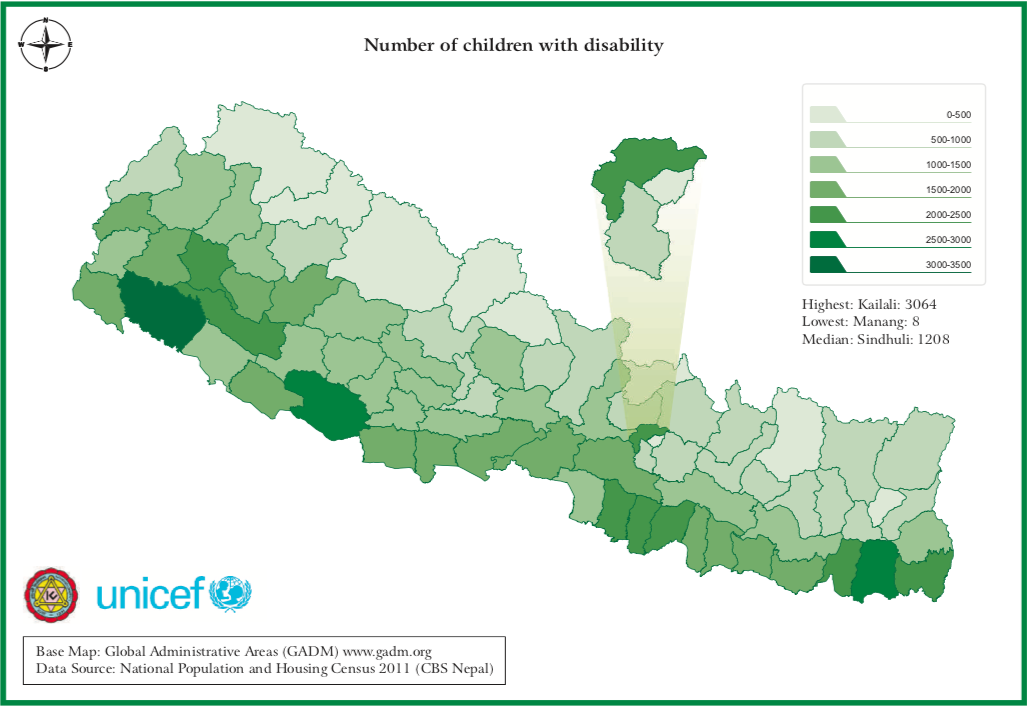


Figure 3 – Number of Children with Disability by District[[50]](#endnote-47)

Figure 3 description: “The map shows the number of children with disability in each district with different shades of color representing different number of children with disability. Morang, Kailai and Dang are the top districts in terms of total number of children with disability in Nepal. Terai region has the highest number of children with disability followed by the Hill region and Mountain region. Far western development region has slightly higher number of children with disability than eastern and central region of the country. Manang and Mustang have 8 and 27 children with disability respectively. Compared to Kathmandu and Lalitpur, Bhaktapur has very few numbers of children with disability. More than 50 percent of the districts have more than 1200 children with disability.”

Chronic factors in achieving adequate water, sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, healthcare and prevention of disease are a major cause of disability in Nepal, likely worsened by the centralization of healthcare and rehabilitation facilities (often far and having physical barriers to access), with its provision being limited to emergency care and very basic needs. Disability is, in Nepal, both a cause and a consequence of social exclusion and, as it intersects with other types of discrimination, becomes increasingly hampering of daily-life[[51]](#endnote-48).

### What is the official definition of disability?

##### Latest definitions of Disability

In 2012, the government of Nepal defined disability as: “**the condition of difficulty in carrying out daily activities normally and in taking part in social life due to problems in parts of the body and the physical system as well as obstacles created by physical, social, cultural environment and by communication**”[[52]](#endnote-49). In addition, it defined **7 categories** of disability[[53]](#endnote-50):

Physical disability – “the problem that arises in operation of physical parts, use and movement in a person due to problems in nerves, muscles and composition and operation activities of bones and joints”;

Disability related to vision – “condition where there is no knowledge about an object’s figure, shape, form and colour in an individual due to problems with vision” – is divided into “Blind: a person who cannot see the fingers of a hand by both eyes at a distance of 10 feet despite treatment(…) or cannot read the first line of Snellen chart (3/60)” and “Low vision: if any person who cannot distinguish fingers of a hand from a 20 feet distance despite treatments(…), cannot read the letter of the fourth line of Snellen chart”;

Disability related to hearing – “Problems arising in an individual related to discrimination of composition of the parts of hearing and voice, rise and fall of position, level and quality of voice” – is divided into “Deaf: an individual who cannot hear, speaks incoherently or cannot speak and who has to use sign for communication (…), who cannot even hear sound above 80 decibels” and “Hard of hearing: an individual who can hear only little but can hear little and cannot talk clearly, can only speak little, who needs to put hearing aids in the ear to listen (…), who can hear sound between 65 decibels and 80 decibels”;

Deaf-blind - “an individual who is without both hearing and vision”;

Disability related to voice and speech – “due to difficulty produced in parts related to voice and speech and difficulty in rise and fall of voice to speak, unclear speech, repetition of words and letters”;

Mental disability – “the inability to behave in accordance with age and situation and delay in intellectual learning due to problems arising in relation to implementation of intellectual activities like problems arising in the brain and mental parts and awareness, orientation, alertness, memory, language, calculation” is divided into “Intellectual disability/mental retardation: an individual having difficulty in carrying out activities relative to age or environment due to absence of intellectual development before age of 18 years”, “Mental illness: mental disability is an inability where there is difficulty in living daily life due to mental illness or weakness or deviation” and “Autism: absence by birth of normal behaviour in accordance to a person’s age, to show abnormal reaction, to keep on repeating one activity, to not socialise with others or to show extreme reaction”;

Multiple disability – “a problem of two or more than two types of disability mentioned above”.

According to an informal translation, the disability rights act of 2017[[54]](#endnote-51) defines a “person with disability” as a person who is facing difficulties in full and effective participation in the social life due: to physical, mental, intellectual or sensory related long-term impairments; functional limitation; or existing barriers. It also defines 10 categories for disability: physical disability, vision-related disability, hearing-related disability; vision and hearing related disability; speech-related disability; mental or psychosocial disability; intellectual disability; haemophilia-related disability; autism-related disability; multiple disability. It is worth mentioning that, according to the NFDN, this act excludes hard of hearing people with a hearing capacity from 26 to 64 dB[[55]](#endnote-52).

##### Severity and disability cards

The Government of Nepal distributes disability identity cards based on a classification of **severity**, with the categories of[[56]](#endnote-53):

* Profound Disability – “difficulty to perform daily activities even with the help of others”;
* Severe disability – “inability to perform daily individual or social activities without the help of others”;
* Moderate disability – “ability to perform daily activities and participate in social life if barrier free environment, appropriate training and education are provided”;
* Mild Disability – “ability to perform daily activities and participate in social life if barrier free environment is provided”.

An investigation by the Human Rights Watch in 2011 found that children with disabilities were often not getting the benefits provisioned by disability cards due to difficulty in obtaining them, and due to the possession of such a card bringing further marginalization and discrimination of both the children and their family[[57]](#endnote-54). A follow up study in 2018[[58]](#endnote-55) indicated that despite new policies, barriers to inclusive education persist, with children with disabilities continuing to face obstacles related to access, lack of support, segregation, and an unprepared teacher force.

##### Overall prevalence of Disability

According to the 2011 Census[[59]](#endnote-56), persons with disabilities represent only **2% of the total Nepali population**. The 2011 National Living Standards Survey (NLSS) disaggregates the data, on disability as does the Census[[60]](#endnote-57). A comparison of values can be found in the table below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2011 Census | 2011 NLSS |
| Physical disability | 36.3% | 29.2% |
| Visual disability | 18.5% | 22.3% |
| Hearing disability | 15.4% | 23.4% |
| Vision and hearing related disability | 1.8% | 2.4% |
| Speech related disability | 11.5% | 8.6% |
| Mental disability | 6.0% | 6.8% |
| Intellectual disability | 2.9% |
| Multiple disabilities | 7.5% | 7.3% |

**Table 1** - 2011 Census data and 2011 National Living Standard Survey

The 2010/11-2012/13 Three Year Interim Plan[[61]](#endnote-58), created at around the same time as the two above-mentioned surveys, places the percentage of total population with some sort of disability in 0.125%.

A study conducted in 2016 using the Washington Group Set of Questions found that, even in their control group (people not registered as having a disability), 8.7% of men and 35.3% of women were included in “definition 2”, i.e., answered ““Yes, some difficulty” in at least two basic actions from the questionnaire or “Yes, a lot of difficulty” or “Cannot do at all” in at least one basic action”[[62]](#endnote-59), indicating that disability tends to be unidentified and underestimated, especially in women.

This discrepancy of data is part of the problem faced by Nepal in creating better conditions and opportunities for people with disabilities (see Methodology chapter).

### 1.2 Existing Statistics on Child Disability

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics[[63]](#endnote-60), as of the 2011 census, there were a **total of 92,012 children with disabilities aged 0-14 years old, constituting 0.99% of the same-age population**, distributed by category as follows:

* From 0-4 years old.: 35.9% physical, 28.4% blindness/low vision, 6.0% deaf/hard of hearing, 1.5% deaf-blind, 13.0% speech problem, 2.1% mental disability, 3.1% intellectual disability and 10.1% multiple disabilities.
* From 5-9 years old: 36.6% physical, 12.8% blindness/low vision, 11.5% deaf/hard of hearing, 1.2% deaf-blind, 18.8% speech problem, 4.7% mental disability, 4.2% intellectual disability and 10.2% multiple disabilities.
* From 10-14 years old: 35.6% physical, 14.0% blindness/low vision, 13.8% deaf/hard of hearing, 1.4% deaf-blind, 14.7% speech problem, 6.8% mental disability, 5.4% intellectual disability and 8.2% multiple disabilities.

Not only these data are extremely low when compared to the number of children with disabilities as estimated by the World Report on Disability[[64]](#endnote-61) (approximately 5,1% of children with moderate disabilities plus 0.7% of children with severe disabilities, worldwide), but the number of children with disabilities is expected to have increased following the 2015 earthquake, although data is scarce[[65]](#endnote-62).

Still according to the same source[[66]](#endnote-63), on primary and lower secondary school aged children, the prevalence of disability was estimated to be of 1.1%. Given that the figures presented are smaller than average global rates of disability in children, it is possible that a large number of children with disabilities are unidentified in Nepal, which also limits the support they are given[[67]](#endnote-64).

Despite birth registration being compulsory for children aged 0-4, as planned for in the Thirteenth Plan[[68]](#endnote-65), the Ministry of Health and Population estimated that, in 2012, only 42% of children have their births registered, and only 38% have collected their birth certificate. The Three-Year Development Plan of 2010-2013 aimed to register 90% of children under 5 until 2013[[69]](#endnote-66). In addition, birth registration does not capture information on children with disabilities[[70]](#endnote-67).

A Pilot Screening Study for Early Detection developed in 2017 found that, of the 2,804 children evaluated, 26% were at risk of having one or more functional limitations, and that 9.4 % had scores indicating a 99-100% likelihood that they would be diagnosed has having a disability in the future. These findings indicate “that disability prevalence may be higher than suggested by the 2011 Census”. In addition, the number of children with possible limitations followed an upward trend as grade increased (especially in children repeating grades), with the out-of-school children screened presenting even higher numbers (70% had at least one limitation). This suggests that “the presence of suspected functional limitations and subpar learning outcomes could be related”[[71]](#endnote-68).

The SSDP (2016-2023) aims to “ensure that disaggregated data on children with different types of disabilities is in line with international standards and is collected regularly and is available to inform policy and planning processes”[[72]](#endnote-69). However, the Catalyst for Inclusive Education (CIE) scoping mission’s preliminary report identified a big lack of data on child disability, particularly that disaggregated by impairment type[[73]](#endnote-70).

A Global Partnership for Education’s (GPE) paper (2018) quotes the percentage of children with disabilities provided by Nepal on their Education Sector Plan to be 6%, a number considerably higher than those presented by other sources[[74]](#endnote-71). These discrepancies in data are common in the country, causing great concern to multiple stakeholders and making it difficult to get an overall idea of the reality[[75]](#endnote-72).

### 1.3. Legislative and implementation responsibilities

Five ministries develop and implement programs and legislation aimed at persons with disabilities in Nepal: Ministry of Woman, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) – particularly the Disability Service National Coordination Committee; Ministry of Health and Population; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction; and Ministry of Local Development[[76]](#endnote-73). Under the 2010/11-2012/13 Three Year Interim Plan[[77]](#endnote-74), NRs. 500 million were allocated to the “empowerment, livelihood income, enhancement of accessibility, and physical aids for the persons with disabilities” (pg.28), with over half being for the use of MoWCSW. During the Three-Year Plan of 2010/11-2012/13, a “Permanent Children’s Fund” of NRs 10 million was implemented, for the protection of the rights of children and emergency support for at-risk children. Its guidelines for management were developed by MoWCSW[[78]](#endnote-75).

Rehabilitation and public treatment options for mental and intellectual disabilities is even scarcer, as these are usually massively under-diagnosed, and most families with persons with disabilities cannot afford available treatment (23% of surveyed families reported having no savings)[[79]](#endnote-76).

After the Earthquake of 2015, a handful of high-quality disability-specific programs were offered, mostly supported by INGO’s and NGO’s. However, reliable data on the number of people who became disabled as a result of the earthquake is not available[[80]](#endnote-77).

## 2. Education System in Nepal

### 2.1 Current Definition of Disability in Education

In the Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Sector in Nepal, included in the SSDP (2016-2023) the term disabilities is viewed as the “**the deprivation that children who have long-term physical mental, intellectual or sensory impairment experience with regard to access to and participation in education on an equal base with others, as well as in obtaining learning outcomes**” and it is viewed as an interaction between the person’s ability and attitudinal or environmental barriers. This document also recommends that, for equity evaluation purposes, sign language is to be recognized and taken into account in the mother-tongue dimension, as it the first language for hearing impaired people[[81]](#endnote-78). Despite language that is more in line with that of the CRPD, as can be seen below (see, for example, pg. 18), this is not the definition of disability utilized in data collection in the education sector.

### 2.2 Education expenditures (public-private) to GDP ratio

The estimated GDP for 2017/18 was of $1,004[[82]](#endnote-79) and the GDP annual growth rate indicated for 2017/2018 is of 5.89%[[83]](#endnote-80).

The national expenditure on education was at around 15% of the total budget, from 2009/10 to 2013/14, decreasing to 12% in 2014/15 (another source[[84]](#endnote-81) puts it at 14%) and 2015/16[[85]](#endnote-82). The percentage further reduced in the fiscal-years 2016/17 (11%) and 2017/18 (9.9%), with a slight growth in the 2018/19 fiscal year (10.2%)[[86]](#endnote-83). Of this budget, 80% goes to school education (grades 1-12)[[87]](#endnote-84).

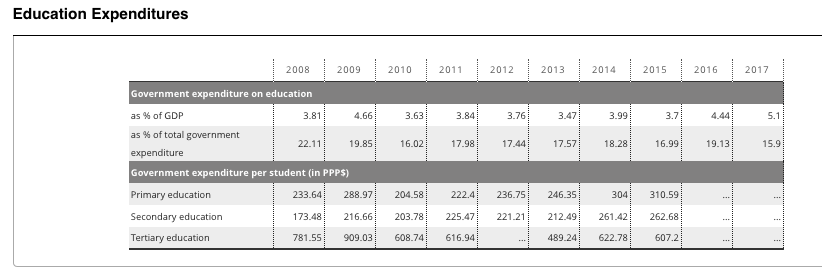


Figure 4 - Education Expenditures[[88]](#endnote-85)

Figure 4 description: the government expenditure on education was: in 2008, 3.81% of GDP and 22.11% of total government expenditure (TGE); in 2009, 4.66% of GDP and 19.85% of TGE; in 2010, 3.63% of GDP and 16.02% of TGE; in 2011, 3.84% of GDP and 17.98% of TGE; in 2012, 3.76% of GDP and 17.44% of TGE; in 2013, 3,47% of GDP and 17.57% of TGE; in 2014, 3.99% of GDP and 18.28% of TGE; in 2015, 3.7% of GDP and 16.99% of TGE; in 2016, 4.44% of GDP and 19.13% of TGE; in 2017, 5.1% of GDP and 15.9% of TGE. The government expenditure per student (in PPP$) was: in 2008, 233.64 in Primary education, 173.48 in Secondary education and 781.55 in Tertiary education; in 2009, 288.97 in Primary education, 216.66 in Secondary education and 909.03 in Tertiary education; in 2010, 204.58 in Primary education and 203.78 in Secondary education and 608.74 in Tertiary education; in 2011, 222.4 in Primary Education, 225.47 in Secondary education and 616.94 in Tertiary education; in 2012, 236.75 in Primary education, 221.21 in Secondary Education and no information is available for Tertiary education; in 2013, 246.35 for Primary education, 212.49 for Secondary education and 489.24 for Tertiary education; in 2014, 304 for Primary education, 261.42 in Secondary education and 622.78 in Tertiary education; in 2015, 310.59 for Primary education, 262.68 for Secondary education and 607.2 for Tertiary education; no information is available for 2016 and 2017.

Despite availability of funds, these are often released after the legislated date, with schools’ record keeping often delayed or containing lapses, and with certain expenditures being ineligible for fund allocation[[89]](#endnote-86). In addition, several educational funds to promote quality, inclusive education seem not to be significantly utilized[[90]](#endnote-87).

The SSDP (2016-2023) expects to maintain that “the ratio of education budget to GDP will be maintained at 4% in line with the government’s commitment to secure the right to education for all. A minimum of 15% of the national budget will be allocated for education”[[91]](#endnote-88).

This literature review did not find any information on the budget allocated to special schools and/or inclusive education.

### 2.3 What are the legal frameworks governing education?

The Constitution of Nepal (2015), safeguards in article 31: the right to education, compulsory and free of charge up to the secondary level; that the physically impaired or poor citizens shall have the right to free higher education; that the visually impaired person shall have the right to free education with the medium of Braille Script[[92]](#endnote-89), and that citizens with hearing and speaking impairments shall have free education through the provision of sign language[[93]](#endnote-90). This means that laws must be created to protect, empower and develop children, and national plans such as the National Plans of Action for Education for All (2001-2015) have been implemented[[94]](#endnote-91). The Inclusive Education Policy for the Person with Disability subscribes this, by stating that “getting education is the right of every child”[[95]](#endnote-92).

The education system was redefined by the SSRP (2009-2016) comprising two levels: Basic education from grades 1 through 8, and Secondary education from grades 9 through 12[[96]](#endnote-93).

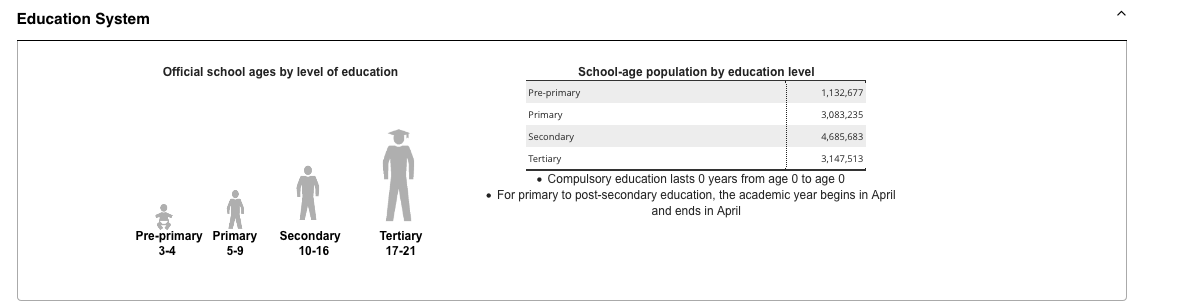


Figure 5 - Education System[[97]](#endnote-94)

Figure 5 description: Pre-primary education designed for ages 3-4, Primary for ages 5-9, Secondary for ages 10-16 and Tertiary for ages 17-21. There are 1.132.677 children enrolled in pre-primary education, 3.083.235 children enrolled in primary education, 4.685.683 children enrolled in secondary education, and 3.147.513 young adults enrolled in Tertiary education

The Nepal Government has made efforts to connect informal education schools to the formal systems, to establish baselines, quality minimums and evaluation of the training provided. Vocational and Training Education has also begun to be provided in selected secondary schools[[98]](#endnote-95), working upon the scarcity of market relevant skills afforded by education systems[[99]](#endnote-96).

The major problems that the educational system faces were, according to the Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016): the “high dropout and repetition rates at all levels of education; low pass rates; inadequate access to education among children from the poor and marginalised communities; weak management of teachers; low-quality education in community (public) schools; ineffective regulation of institutional (private) schools; poor access to and quality of technical education and vocational training; and lack of a clear policy framework for higher education”[[100]](#endnote-97).

The SSDP (2016-2023) is the program currently in place to oversee most reforms in education. Its basic education objective is to “ensure universal access to quality basic education for all 4-12-year-old children”, including one year of early childhood education/pre-primary education into the Basic Education System[[101]](#endnote-98) (there is, however, little capacity in local bodies to increase availability and to ensure the quality of this service[[102]](#endnote-99)).

Despite legislative efforts to improve the quality of education, the Appraisal of SSDP highlights the need to improve “student-teacher ratio, classroom space, set of textbooks per child per year, separate girls and boys toilets plus water, and book/learning corner in all classrooms” as well as to “nurture more critical thinking, analysis and creative skills”[[103]](#endnote-100). It is also mentioned that the rules and regulations need to be enforced at a faster pace to be effective.

### 2.4 What are the provisions under current education laws and regulations supporting education for children with special needs and inclusive education[[104]](#footnote-6)?

#### International framework

The Nepalese government has signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as some of the Optional Protocols[[105]](#endnote-101).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child[[106]](#endnote-102) expressed, in 2016, its concern with the lack of a comprehensive inclusive education policy, with the inclusion of children being mostly limited to those with physical or sensorial disabilities and with the fact that segregated education remained the norm for children with disabilities[[107]](#endnote-103).

In the CRPD report of January 2018[[108]](#endnote-104), the Government of Nepal refers to the Inclusive Education Policy of 2016 as covering issues such as: the development of teaching and learning materials, of human resources, of physical infrastructures following universal design guidelines, and of ICT sources. It also mentions that Tribhuvan University offers a bachelor’s and master’s courses on inclusive education (though most teachers do not have a university degree).

#### National framework

The 2007 National Curriculum Framework provides guidelines as to how the evaluation process should be adapted for children with disabilities, focusing primarily on the needs of children with visual disabilities but also mentioning some strategies for children with hearing or physical disabilities[[109]](#endnote-105).

The Inclusive Education Policy (2016) has, as its vision the empowerment, independence and dignified living of persons with disability, through a rights-based quality education. The document enumerated the learning opportunities for children with disabilities as community schools, resource classes and special schools, adding that residential facilities and resource teachers have been made available, as well as assessment centres present in 62 districts. The document further states that “accepting the fact that children with disabilities their own identity and special educational approach is needed for the different natured disability, special schools have been provision to the children with deaf, physical disability, blind and intellectual disability”[[110]](#endnote-106), which goes against the definition of inclusive education.

The first CRPD Report from Nepal indicates that the DPA Act provides exemption of fees to any person with a disability wanting to attend an educational institute and creates teacher training programs for teaching persons with disabilities, making arrangements for the provision of “education to the blind, deaf and feeble-minded persons”[[111]](#endnote-107). The same document reports that in 2006 the Government of Nepal “adopted an inclusive education policy” by “establishing resource classes for the children with disabilities”. These resource classes are defined as rooms inside a mainstream school where children with specific disabilities are educated, with classes for deaf, blind and intellectually disabled children. It also states that the Curriculum Development Centre has developed participatory curriculums and review text books with the help of several Disabled People Organizations[[112]](#endnote-108).

The Ministry of Education annually spends NPR400 million (US$3.74million) for the education of children of special needs[[113]](#endnote-109).

##### School Sector Development Plan (2016-2023)

The SSDP (2016-2023) program acknowledges the existence of a special and segregated education provision for children with disabilities, and aims to build capacity for the inclusive education of all children, by training pre-service teachers on “(i) the needs and abilities of children with special needs, (ii) child-centred pedagogical methods and (iii) active and participative learning techniques, instructional accommodation and activity differentiation” , by building on partnerships with non-state actors and different level ministries to respond in a concerted manner to the needs of children “with complex or severe disabilities”. In addition, the norms and guidelines that define the types of disabilities are expected to be reviewed in the first year of the programme (2016)[[114]](#endnote-110).

The Programme for SSDP refers that the number of resource centres and the number of special schools for hearing impaired children is to be maintained, while it is expected that the number of students with disabilities receiving scholarships will rise to 83,353 in 2020/21, that the number of schools with “interactive pedagogical materials for children with disabilities”[[115]](#endnote-111) increases to 50 in 2020/21, and that 40 special schools are established “with full residential and care services operating for children with disabilities”[[116]](#endnote-112).

At the secondary level, the SSDP program expects to increase the level of special schools for children with hearing impairment from 0 to 7 in 2020/21, to increase scholarships (both residential and non-residential) for children with disabilities from 11,000 in 2016/17 to 13,000 in 2020/21, and for costs on inclusive education from a “-“ value in 2016/17 to 0.13 million USD in 2020/21[[117]](#endnote-113).

The training of technical personnel “on managing inclusive education and delivering special needs education”[[118]](#endnote-114), the provision of special initiatives “to ensure that children with hearing impairments are taught by teachers knowing sign language and that children with visual impairments have access to teaching and learning materials in Braille”[[119]](#endnote-115), the strengthening of diagnostic and referral mechanisms “Including the establishment of specialized Children with Disabilities Early Childhood Education facilities and home-base support for children with complex or severe disabilities”[[120]](#endnote-116), the needs-based development of ICT educational material for children with visual and hearing impairment, and the development of a long-term inclusive education plan that would gradually turn special schools into resource centres are other strategies and objectives mentioned in the document[[121]](#endnote-117).

##### Obstacles to inclusive education

The first CRPD Report from Nepal[[122]](#endnote-118) documents that the Government of Nepal has, over time, launched several programs aimed at educating those perceived as having a disability. On this wide range of initiatives are included inclusive education programmes “which include resource classes (…) and mobile teachers for the persons with disabilities”, the establishment of scholarships and logistical support.

In theory, the government promotes an inclusive education policy, yet schools can comprise a multitude of educational levels, depending on the population they attend to, and may have inclusive classrooms, resource classrooms or have no prepared response for children with disabilities. Special schools, integrated schools and resource classes are a part of the education system[[123]](#endnote-119), designed to provide Special Education under the Special Education Council[[124]](#endnote-120), and alternative programmes can be made to ensure access to education[[125]](#endnote-121).

This appears to confirm the concerns of CRPD report of April 2018[[126]](#endnote-122), that the Government of Nepal maintains a system of special and segregated schools, with a lack of accommodation for students with disabilities in mainstream schools.

Despite the regulations and laws that support education for children with disabilities, the reality is that inclusive schools are not yet provided as dictated per the law (both national and international), and there is no consensus on the type of education to be provided, with advocates for special schooling, integrated education and inclusion[[127]](#endnote-123).

In addition, most monitoring activities related to education seem to be ritualistic in nature, with low budgets allotted and little attention paid to the efficacy of the programs, plans and the overall system[[128]](#endnote-124).

## 3. Existing data (statistical and administrative) on children with disabilities in the education system

### 3.1 Is there an education information system in place (EMIS)?

There is an Education Information Management System[[129]](#endnote-125), whose capacity has been worked upon by several legislative efforts. The Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016)[[130]](#endnote-126) had for objective that the EMIS would be strengthened and “made effective and functional”; the SSRP made additional efforts to improve it (2009-2016). The SSDP defines it as a “robust data management system”, while acknowledging that “the quality, accessibility and use of its data need strengthening”[[131]](#endnote-127). A diagram of the EMIS by the Nepali Government can be consulted in Annex I[[132]](#endnote-128).

The system is used to derive annual Flash Reports I and II, which in the school-year 2015/2016 included items such as number or students enrolled by gender, class, ethnicity, disability or district; teacher-related data such as number, training or gender; school number disaggregated by type and grades available; textbook availability; amongst others[[133]](#endnote-129).

Disaggregated data has been used to identify ten districts in need of intervention to reduce the number of out-of-school children, and interventions (supported by GPE’s fund) have been implemented that aim to reduce the numbers by 20% by 2018 (no further details were provided)[[134]](#endnote-130).

The strengthening of the collection and analysis of data on children with disabilities, the addition of data provided by parallel sources (e.g., national exam results), the implementation of independent verification of the EMIS data for more transparency and accountability, and the opening of the database to the consultation by the public, are strategies envisioned in the SSDP, to take place until 2023, to make the system more robust[[135]](#endnote-131). This was a planned investment mentioned in the GPE fund[[136]](#endnote-132).

Together with the creation of school-based integrated EMIS, the system will be able to produce the Equity Index, to incorporate Disaster Risk Reduction indicators, to allow for the tracking of the progress of individual schools (e.g., scholarships and attainment levels) and to provide better information on the disabilities and different learning needs of students[[137]](#endnote-133).

The afore mentioned Equity Index is a EMIS component meant to “identify districts for targeted support and enhance quality in access, participation, and learning outcomes”[[138]](#endnote-134), by mapping the equality the opportunities to education across different contexts[[139]](#endnote-135), and will, eventually, allow for specific interventions such as to “identify all out-of-school children, allocate funds for Braille textbooks, and make investments in accessible school construction”[[140]](#endnote-136), amongst others.

### 3.2 Enrolment rate for children with disabilities vis-à-vis the general enrolment rate.

The census of 2011 puts the enrolment rate for children 5-14-year-old on 83.5% for girls and 85.8% for boys. Age 5 - 59.2% girls and 60.9% boys; Age 6 - 75.8% girls and 78% boys; Age 7 - 84.5% girls and 86.3% boys; Age 8 - 85.2% girls and 87.4% boys; Age 9 - 90.9% girls and 92.5% boys; Age 10 - 86.7% girls and 89.2% boys; Age 11 - 90.1% girls and 94% boys; Age 12 - 87.7% girls and 90.5% boys; Age 13 - 89.6% girls and 91.7% boys; Age 14 - 85.7% girls and 88.1% boys[[141]](#endnote-137) (consult graph below). No data is provided about children with disabilities.

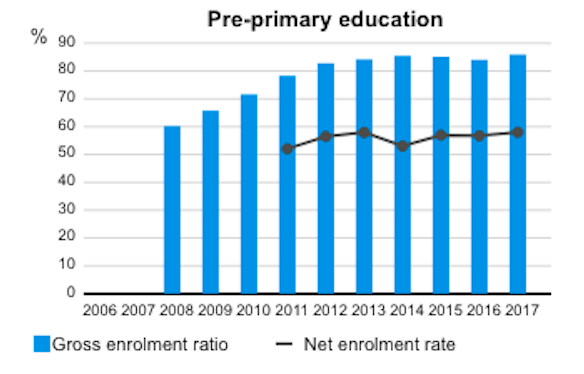
Figure 6 - General Enrolment Rate

Figure 6 description – see previous paragraph

As pertains to **Early Childhood Education** (which in the process of being included in the basic education framework), approximately 81.0% of 4 year old were enrolled in 2015, with 0.21% reporting some sort of disability: 0.06% (562) reported a physical disability, 0.07% (656) reported an intellectual impairment, 0.02% (240) reported an hearing impaired; 0.01% (51) reported a visual impairment; 0.02% (156) reported low vision; 0.00% (37) reported hearing and visually impairment; and 0.03% (332) reported vocal and speech related disabilities[[142]](#endnote-138).

Early childhood education is provided through school, community or home-based programmes, and enrolment in this type of programs (as opposed to baby-sitting) is continually growing, with 51% of children aged 3-4 attending an organized programme in 2014[[143]](#endnote-139). Nevertheless, limited attention has been given to this age group, which will impact future learning outcomes[[144]](#endnote-140). A sample survey conducted by Kathmandu University[[145]](#endnote-141) found that only 7.7% of early childhood education classrooms met minimum requirements to conduct quality education. In addition, UNICEF refers that Early Learning Development Standards have been approved by government, but not currently in use[[146]](#endnote-142), with the Appraisal of SSDP agreeing that there is a “need to improve the quality of ECED programmes and to strengthen equitable access”[[147]](#endnote-143).

The 19% of children without access to Early Childhood Education are those who would benefit the most from the stimulation and learning opportunities it provides, namely children from the poorer households, children living in remote areas and children with disabilities – rarely enrolled, as schools perceive them as a burden[[148]](#endnote-144).

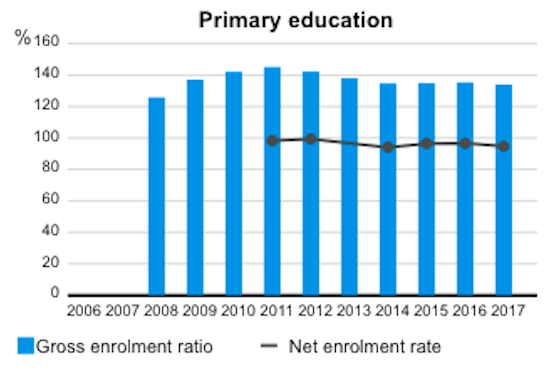
Figure 7 - Pre-primary education Gross and Net enrolment rates [6] [[149]](#endnote-145)

(Figure 7 description with precise data points: On Gross enrolment ratio, no data is available until 2008. The Gross enrolment ratio shows an upwards trend, being 60.21% for 2008, 65.77% for 2009, 71.62% for 2010, 78.3% for 2011, 82.84% for 2012, 84.2% for 2013, 85.47% for 2014, 85.17% for 2015, 84,06% for 2016, and 85.94% for 2017. On Net enrolment ratio, no data is available until 2011. The Net Enrolment ratio seems to remain stable, with sizable descents on 2011 and 2014, being of 52.05% for 2011, 56,46% for 2012, 57.93% for 2013, 53% for 2014, 56,97% for 2015, 56.73% for 2016 and 57.99% for 2017.)

The SSDP and Flash 1 Report of Education both refer that, in 2015, 6.13 million children are enrolled in **basic level education[[150]](#endnote-146)**, with 84% being enrolled in community schools and 15.6% in institutional schools[[151]](#endnote-147), and a joint publication of UNICEF and the Government of Nepal puts primary education net enrolment at 97% for the academic year of 2015/16[[152]](#endnote-148).

While UNESCO puts the net enrolment rate in primary education at 94.7% for 2017 (see figure 7), the Government of Nepal points to a net enrolment ratio[[153]](#footnote-7) of 92.3% for the same year[[154]](#endnote-149). For the year 2017-2018, the number of students enrolled in basic education was of 5.84 million[[155]](#endnote-150) but it is estimated that the enrolment level of children with disability is much lower than that for the rest of the population[[156]](#endnote-151).

Despite this growth in enrolment, the quality of basic education remains poor, with only 6.12% of schools meeting the minimum enabling conditions that were nationally established - this leads to poor learning outcomes[[157]](#endnote-152).

Figure 8 - Primary Education Gross and Net enrolment rates[[158]](#endnote-153)-

(Figure 8 description with precise data points: On Gross enrolment ratio, no data is available until 2008. The Gross enrolment ratio shows an upwards trend until 2011 and a downwards trend until 2014 and stabilization afterwards, being 125.82% for 2008, 137.22% for 2009, 142.12% for 2010, 145.13% for 2011, 142.27% for 2012, 138.07% for 2013, 134.75% for 2014, 134.94% for 2015, 135.38% for 2016, and 134.12% for 2017. On Net enrolment rate, no data is available until 2011. The Net Enrolment rate seems to remain stable, with a slight descend after 2012 and with no data on 2013, being of 98.26% for 2011, 99.39% for 2012, 94.13% for 2014, 96.53% for 2015, 96.62% for 2016 and 94.7% for 2017.)

The SSDP also refers that in 2015, 1.39 million children are enrolled in **secondary education[[159]](#endnote-154)**, 80.7% of which is at community schools and 22.4% in institutional schools[[160]](#endnote-155). While UNESCO puts the net enrolment rate in secondary education at 53.42% for 2017 (see figure 8), the Government of Nepal points to a net enrolment ratio[[161]](#footnote-8) of 43.9% for the same year[[162]](#endnote-156). As for the 2017-18 year, 1.55 million children were enrolled in secondary education[[163]](#endnote-157). The low enrolment at this educational level remains problematic[[164]](#endnote-158).

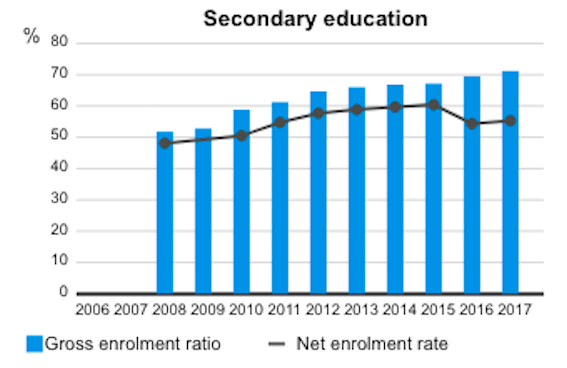
Figure 9 - Secondary Education Gross and Net enrolment rates[[165]](#endnote-159)

Figure 9 description with precise data points: On Gross enrolment ratio, no data is available until 2008. The Gross enrolment ratio shows an upwards trend, being 51.8% for 2008, 52.79% for 2009, 58.83% for 2010, 61.24% for 2011, 64.74% for 2012, 65.99% for 2013, 66.88% for 2014, 67.14% for 2015, 69.5% for 2016, and 71.21% for 2017. On Net enrolment ratio, no data is available until 2008. The Net Enrolment ratio follows a general upward trend, with no data available for 2009 and a sudden drop in 2016, being of 51.24% for 2008, 51.94% for 2010, 55.1% for 2011, 56.87% for 2012, 57.5% for 2013, 57.66% for 2014, 58.14 for 2015, 58.14% for 2016 and 53.42% for 2017.)

##### Children with disabilities

The Department of Education (2013), as cited by the CRPD-N (2015)[[166]](#endnote-160), considered that 1.0% of all students enrolled at the **basic level** of education had a disability:

* 0.4% physical impairment
* 0.3% intellectual impairment
* 0.2% hearing impairment
* 0.02% visual impairment
* 0.1% low vision
* 0.02% hearing and visual impairment
* 0.1% vocal and speech related disabilities.

The Flash 1 Report of Education (2015-16) numbers point to 1.1% of children enrolled in **primary education** having some sort of disability[[167]](#endnote-161), while on the latest Flash 2 Report of Education (2017-18), the numbers point to 1.15% in total[[168]](#endnote-162). The percentage of each type of identified disability can be found on table 1. Despite the 0.18% of children with hearing impairments presented for 2017-2018, pilot studies from SHRUTI[[169]](#endnote-163) found a prevalence of 4.38 in 2014 and of 18.36% in 2017 (evaluation made in two schools in Kathmandu and Dhanding).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Flash 1 Report | Flash 2 Report |
| Physical impairment | 0.34% | 0.36% |
| Intellectual impairment | 0.29% | 0.31% |
| Hearing impairment | 0.17% | 0.18% |
| Visual impairment | 0.02% | 0.02% |
| Low vision | 0.10% | 0.10% |
| Hearing and visual impairment | 0.02% | 0.02% |
| Vocal and Speech related disabilities | 0.15% | 0.16% |

**Table 2** - Primary education enrolment rate

The Flash 1 Report of Education (2015-16) points to numbers close to 0.89% of children enrolled in **Lower Secondary** having some sort of disability[[170]](#endnote-164), while on the latest Flash 2 Report on Education (2017-18), the numbers were close to 0.98% in total[[171]](#endnote-165). The percentage of each type of identified disability can be found on table 2.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Flash 1 Report | Flash 2 Report |
| Physical impairment | 0.36% | 0.36% |
| Intellectual impairment | 0.15% | 0.15% |
| Hearing impairment | 0.13% | 0.13% |
| Visual impairment | 0.02% | 0.02% |
| Low vision | 0.14% | 0.14% |
| Hearing and visual impairment | 0.02% | 0.02% |
| Vocal and Speech related disabilities | 0.08% | 0.16% |

**Table 3** - Lower Secondary Education Enrolment Rate

In **Secondary** level, the Flash 1 Report of Education (2015-16) numbers point to 0.74% of children enrolled having some sort of disability[[172]](#endnote-166), while on the latest Flash 2 Report of Education (2017-18), the numbers were close to 0.84% in total. The percentage of each type of identified disability can be found on table 3.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Flash 1 Report | Flash 2 Report |
| Physical impairment | 0.34% | 0.36% |
| Intellectual impairment | 0.10% | 0.13% |
| Hearing impairment | 0.09% | 0.11% |
| Visual impairment | 0.02% | 0.03% |
| Low vision | 0.12% | 0.13% |
| Hearing and visual impairment | 0.01% | 0.02% |
| Vocal and Speech related disabilities | 0.06% | 0.07% |

**Table 4** - Secondary Education Enrolment Rate

Finally, on the **Higher Secondary** Level, the Flash 1 Report of Education (2015-16) numbers point to 0.53% of children enrolled having some sort of disability[[173]](#endnote-167), while on the latest Flash 2 Report on Education (2017-18), the numbers were of 0.76% in total[[174]](#endnote-168). The percentage of each type of identified disability can be found on table 4.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Flash 1 Report | Flash 2 Report |
| Physical impairment | 0.15% | 0.29% |
| Intellectual impairment | 0.02% | 0.09% |
| Hearing impairment | 0.01% | 0.09% |
| Visual impairment | 0.03% | 0.02% |
| Low vision | 0.12% | 0.09% |
| Hearing and visual impairment | 0.01% | 0.02% |
| Vocal and Speech related disabilities | 0.28% | 0.16% |
|  |  |  |

**Table 5** - Higher Secondary Education Enrolment Rate

In addition, the GPE’s paper mentions that, in Nepal, 51,766 children with disabilities are enrolled in Primary Schools[[175]](#endnote-169).

### 3.3 Transition rate from primary to secondary school (data disaggregated by disability, gender).

In the fiscal year of 2015/2016, 76.6% of children reached grade 8, and 69.6 completed the basic education cycle, with a survival rate to grade 10 of 37.9%[[176]](#endnote-170), and to grade 12 of 11.5%[[177]](#endnote-171). The Flash 1 Report on Education places the promotion rate for grade 8 at 90.9%, with 4.4% of children repeating the grade and 4.4% dropping out[[178]](#endnote-172), in the same time frame. Although no data on children with disabilities was available, the dropout rate was estimated to be considerably higher for children with disabilities[[179]](#endnote-173).

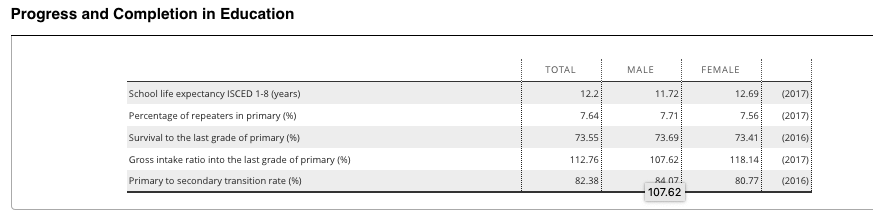


Figure 10 - Progress and Completion in Education[[180]](#endnote-174)

(Figure 10 description: In 2017, the School life expectancy ISCED 1-8 was of 12.2 years, being of 11.72 years for males and 12.69 years for females; in 2017, the percentage of repeaters in primary was of 7.64%, being of 7,71% for males and 7.56% for females; in 2016, the survival to the last grade of primary was of 73.55%, being of 73.69% for males and 73.41% for females; in 2017, the gross intake ratio into the last grade of primary was of 112%, being 107.62% for males and 118.14 for females; in 2016, the primary to secondary transition rate was of 82.38%, being 84.07% for males and 80.77% for females.)

### 3.4 Number of schools – mainstream, residential, and special schools (disaggregated by number of accessible schools).

##### Community, Institutional and Religious Schools

Schools in Nepal are usually divided between Community schools (run either by the government or a community), institutional (private) schools, and religious schools and they can run all levels of education.

At the time of the 2011 census, there were 29,063 (84,58%) Community Schools, 5,298 (15,42%) Institutional Schools; listed, there were also 2,499 (73,87%) Higher Secondary Community Schools and 884 (26,13%) Higher Secondary Institutional Schools[[181]](#endnote-175). By comparison, the Flash 2 Report (2017-2018)[[182]](#endnote-176), reports a total of 35,601 schools in the country (a decline by 2,143 schools), with 29,035 being public (a decline of 2,527 schools) and 6,566 being private (an increase of 384 schools).

In 2015, 35,991 **Early Childhood Education** classes were reported[[183]](#endnote-177), with this number rising to 36,568 in 2017[[184]](#endnote-178), 34,537 schools cater only to the **basic** level of education, with 28,082 being community schools and 5,525 being institutional[[185]](#endnote-179), and there were 9,263 schools that accommodated **secondary** level education (with two schools running only secondary education (grades 9-12), 3 schools running only the first two levels (grades 9-10), and 295 schools running only the final two years of secondary education (grades 11-12)). There were 3,183 schools that catered for **every level** of education (grades 1-12)[[186]](#endnote-180).

In the 2015/16 school year, there were 930 religious schools in Nepal: 765 Madarasa, 82 Gumba/Vihar, and 83 Ashram/Gurukul - of these, 23 provide secondary level education (14 Madarasa, 1 Gumba/Vihar and 8 Ashram/ Gurukul)[[187]](#endnote-181) - with this number rising to 1,121 in 2017-18, 907 being Mararasa, 114 Gumba/Vihar and 100 Ashram/Gurukul[[188]](#endnote-182), an increase of 191 schools, or 20%.

##### Special and Integrated Schools

The 2015 CRPD Nepal[[189]](#endnote-183) document presents **conflicting data** on the number of special and integrated schools, in one instance citing the Ministry of Education (2013) and referring the existence of 8 Special/Integrated schools for the Deaf, 11 for the Blind, 14 to those with Intellectual Disability and 1 for those with Physical Disability, for a total of 34 schools; and in a second instance referring that “there are 13 special schools for deaf children, one school for blind, 13 schools for children with intellectual or developmental disabilities and one school for children with physical disabilities. Nepal also has 5 integrated school for deaf children and 16 integrated schools for blind children”[[190]](#endnote-184).

The SSDP[[191]](#endnote-185) accounts that at the time of the report, at the **primary** level, the Ministry of Education was running 365 Resource classes, 34 special schools for hearing impaired children and 10 schools with “interactive pedagogical materials for children with disabilities”. For the overall school system this number was of 380 integrated schools with resource classes for children with disabilities, in line with the numbers mentioned in the 2016 Inclusive Education Policy. In contradiction, SINTEF (2016) references only 365 resource classes throughout the country, providing for over 4,000 students[[192]](#endnote-186).

In addition, the Catalyst for Inclusive Education, 2017, indicated that the Department of Education verbally reported on “32 special schools, 22 integrated schools and 380 resource centres, 17 schools for the deaf, 14 schools for children with intellectual disabilities and one for blind children”[[193]](#endnote-187) (pgs5-6), partially in line with the numbers of the Inclusive Education Police that mention 32 special schools and 22 integrated schools[[194]](#endnote-188), while the 2017/18 Flash Report reported 33 special schools, 23 integrated schools, 2 schools for the physically disabled and 380 resource classes[[195]](#endnote-189)

The schools can receive grants based on their classification, such as basic, special needs school and large/model school[[196]](#endnote-190).

##### School Accessibility

A study by the Human Rights Watch (2011), found that even in schools with resource classes, children were often **denied admission** due to their habits or behaviours[[197]](#endnote-191).

A 2014 Study analysing special schools in 4 districts, found that, out of the 13 schools, only 10 had separate WASH facilities by gender, and almost none were disability-friendly[[198]](#endnote-192), with the lack of “disabled friendly **WASH facilities** (being) a barrier for children with disabilities to enrol and remain in school”[[199]](#endnote-193).The same was true about classroom furniture, which in many cases was not enough for the number of enrolled students. The researchers also found that the hostel accommodation and food provided did not have the necessary quality[[200]](#endnote-194).

This situation seems to have hardly improved, as an Early Detection Program piloted from Nov-2016 to Dec-2017 found that almost every school analysed in 4 districts was **physically inaccessible[[201]](#endnote-195)**. A Human Rights Watch’s investigation in the same year further confirms this information: after interviewing several children with disabilities and their families, schools were found to be lacking physical, communication, attitudinal and curricular accessibility, with even special schools lacking ramps and accessible toilets[[202]](#endnote-196). Finally, the Committee on the Right of the Child (2016) expressed concern due to the lack of adequate physically accessible infrastructure for children with disabilities[[203]](#endnote-197).

The SSDP (2016-2013) has plans to create and utilize prototype designs that are both inclusive and hazard resistant for standard types of schools, such as large, residential and special schools. The creation of appropriate learning environments for children with disabilities is provisioned through the “establishment of resource classes in integrated schools with facilities for children with disabilities; special schools for disabled, mainly for deaf students (…)”[[204]](#endnote-198).

### 3.5 Number of children with disabilities in schools (disaggregated by mainstream schools, residential schools, special schools).

The total number of children enrolled in school in 2011 was 7,444,134 in Basic School (ages 5-14) and of 655,415 in Higher Secondary (ages 15-16)[[205]](#endnote-199).

The percentage of children in school was, according to the Annual Household Survey of 2016/2017[[206]](#endnote-200), of 70.5% for 5 year olds, 89.2% for 6-10 year olds, 93.2% for 11-13 year olds, 84.0% for 14-15 year olds, and 74% for 16-17 year olds.

Due to a lack of concrete data, the CRPD Committee to Nepal[[207]](#endnote-201) requested, in 2017[[208]](#footnote-9), specific information on children with disabilities in school. The Government of Nepal’s response was published in the CRPD 2018 report as follows: “Currently, a total of 76,470 children with disabilities have been enrolled in the school education system, out of which, 64,660 children with disabilities are in basic education school (Grade 1 to 8) while 9,746 are in secondary school (grade 9 to 12) and 2,064 children with disabilities in Early Childhood Development (ECD)”[[209]](#endnote-202).

In the report for Inclusion International, the Catalyst for Inclusive Education[[210]](#endnote-203) underlines that “there are problems with collection of data and other information about how many children attend school in Nepal regardless of how many of those children have disabilities”, which is in line with the issues reported in the SSDP[[211]](#endnote-204).

### 3.6 Teacher pupil ratio across from basic to secondary in the public sector and private sector schools.

In 2015, the Student-Teacher Ratio (STR) for community schools was 29:1, with levels ranging from highest in Terai (44:1) to lowest in the Valley (18:1). At the basic level the STR was 25:1, with this number being highest in Terai (36:1) and the lowest being in the Valley (18:1) [[212]](#endnote-205).



Figure 11 - Number of pupils-per-teacher in Pre-primary and Primary education[[213]](#endnote-206)

Figure 11 description: the pupil-per-teacher ratio for pre-primary education was of 41.29 in 2008, 38.2 in 2009, 24.89 in 2010, 24.85 in 2011, 23.43 in 2012, 23.11 in 2013, 22.68 in 2014, 22.05 in 2015, 20.76 in 2016 and 20.36 in 2017. The pupil-per-teacher ratio for primary education was 37.82 in 2008, 33,31 in 2009, 31.92 in 2010, 29.61 in 2011, 27.53 in 2012, 25.63 in 2013, 23.93 in 2014, 23.1 in 2015, 22.42 in 2016 and 20.91 for 2017.

The numbers for the 2017 Academic Session (2017/2018) are contradictory, even though the documents examined come from different branches of the same government. While the Ministry of Education presents a STR of 22:1 for basic education and 24:1 for secondary education[[214]](#endnote-207), the Ministry of Finance presents rates of 33:1 for grades 1-5, 60:1 for grades 6-8, 40:1 for grades 9-10, and 73:1 for grades 11-12[[215]](#endnote-208). To further complicate the matter, DPOs have reported that student ratio goes as high as 60 to 150 students per teacher in some schools[[216]](#endnote-209).

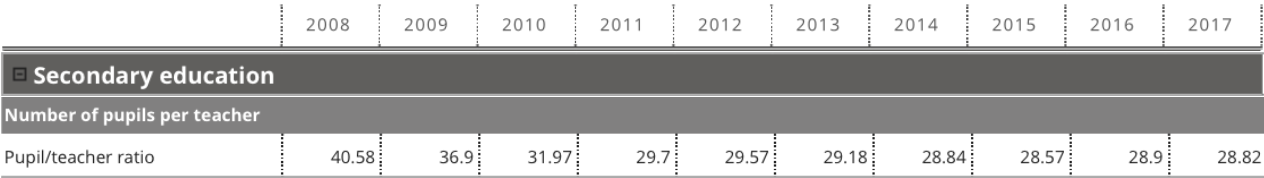


Figure 12 - Number of pupils-per-teacher in Secondary education[[217]](#endnote-210)

Figure 12 description: the pupil-per-teacher ratio for secondary education was of 40.58 for 2008, 36.9 in 2009, 31.97 in 2010, 29.7 in 2011, 29.57 in 2012, 29.18 in 2013, 28.84 in 2014, 28.57 in 2015, 28.9 in 2016 and 28.82 in 2017.

As additional data, it can be pointed out that, for the same time period, the average School-Student Ratio was of 1:176 at the basic level of education for 2015[[218]](#endnote-211) and of 1:166 in basic education and 1:165 in secondary education, for 2017-18[[219]](#endnote-212).

##### Legislation

According to the SSDP (2016-2023), “the general student-teacher ratio norm for calculating the number of teachers required is 30 in the mountains, 35 in the hills, and 40 in the Tarai [plains in the south of the country] and Kathmandu Valley”[[220]](#endnote-213).

### 3.7Average number of pupils per class in basic education.

No data found. See data on Student/Teacher Ratio.

### 3.8 Number of out-of-school children (disaggregated by gender, disability)

The Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSSIII) from 2010/11[[221]](#endnote-214) concluded that 8.7% of the 6 to 24 years old group had never attended school, due to parental decision (30%), need for at-home work (25.5%), no will to attend school (17.2%), being too young (7.2%), school being too expensive (7.3%), having a disability (3.4%) and distance to school (3.1%). Those who dropped out, in the same age group, cited reasons such as the poor academic progress (24%), need for at-home work (22%), marriage (17%), parental decision (7%) and school being too expensive (7%).

The Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2014[[222]](#endnote-215) refers that at the primary school level, 22.9% of children are out-of-school, with that number dropping to 10.7% at secondary school level.

The Ministry of Education, according to the 2011 census, considers that 770,000 children were out-of-school, of which 570,000 were aged 5 to 9 years old and 190,000 were 9 to 12 years old[[223]](#endnote-216). The SSDP[[224]](#endnote-217) document estimated that in 2015/16 10.6% of children were out of school, in the basic education level, with the Flash Report I (2015/16)[[225]](#endnote-218) for the same time period estimating that 3.4% of 5-9-year-old children being “out of formal primary schooling”. A report from the same year[[226]](#endnote-219) states that about 22% of 4-year-old children are out of pre-school, and UNICEF Nepal[[227]](#endnote-220) mentions that the high drop-out rates verified in grade 1 are the result of poor preparation of 5-year-old children for entering school.

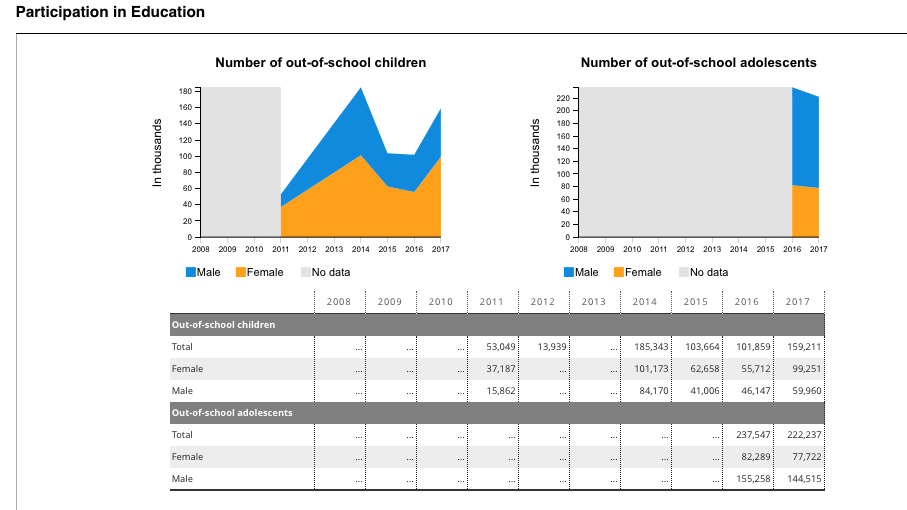


Figure 13 – Out-of-School Children[[228]](#endnote-221)

Figure 13 description: Regarding out-of-school children, no data has been collected until 2010 or in 2013. In 2011 there were 53,049 out-of-school children, 37,187 of which were female and 15,862 male; in 2012 there were 13,939 out-of-school children; in 2014 there were 185,343 out-of-school children, of which 101,173 were male and 84,170 were female; in 2015 there were 103,664 out-of-school children, of which 62,658 were female and 41,006 were male; in 2016 there were 101,859 out-of-school children, of which 55,712 were female and 46,147 were male; and in 2017 there were 159,211 out-of-school children, of which 99,251 were female and 59.960 were male. The graph shows an “up-and-down” tendency, with the gap between male and female also varying a lot. Regarding out-of-school adolescents, no data has been collected until 2016. In 2016 there were 237,547out-of-school adolescents, of which 82,289 were female and 155,258 were male; in 2017 there were 222,237 out-of-school adolescents, of which 77,722 were female and 144,515 were male. The graph shows a decreasing tendency, being more evident in males than in females.

The situation for adolescents does require some attention, says UNICEF[[229]](#endnote-222). Of the out-of-school children 10 to 12 years old, 32.7% have dropped out completely, and 44.3% are expected to never enter school. Late entry to school is also a challenge, with 35.23% of children 10 to 17 years old attending grades 1-5.

Gender is also a factor that needs to be taken into account when looking at out-of-school children, as 52.2% of out-of-school girls are expected to never enter school, compared to 32.7% of boys. In addition, dropout rates are also slightly higher for girls than for boys (35.2% vs 31.0%)[[230]](#endnote-223). In addition, children living in rural areas are more likely to be out-of-school, especially those who have a disability[[231]](#endnote-224).

The SSDP (2016-2023) aims to strengthen the collection of data on out-of-school children, in particular by connecting data from the EMIS with data from different districts and municipalities and to reduce the overall percentage of out-of-school children from 10.6% in 2015/16 to 7.5% within 3 years, 5% within 5 years and 0% within 7 years[[232]](#endnote-225).

##### Children with disabilities among oosc

The 2011 Census[[233]](#endnote-226) refers that amongst the identified children with disabilities, 30% were not attending school, whose access was restricted by “long distances to schools, lack of mobility and parental attitudes”[[234]](#endnote-227).

The Joint Evaluation of SSRP[[235]](#endnote-228) is in agreement, saying that “there is still a considerable group of out-of-school children (…) as well as an unknown percentage of children with disabilities”, limiting the creation of targets for their inclusion in education. The Appraisal of the SSDP plan reinforces this idea, by saying that there is “large and persistent number of out-of-school children facing multi-dimensional barriers”, with a need for information on children with disabilities[[236]](#endnote-229). According to the SSDP (2016-2023), children with disabilities are amongst those with the biggest challenges to access and participate in education, with “only limited data on education outcomes”[[237]](#endnote-230).

In 2015, the National Federation of Disabled Nepal considered that more than 80% of out-of-school children were children with disabilities[[238]](#endnote-231). A 2016 survey[[239]](#endnote-232) found that a “higher proportion of PwD children were not attending schools at all compared to non-PwD children”, with children with multiple disabilities or mental disabilities being considered, by UNICEF[[240]](#endnote-233), to be much more likely to be out school, when compared to other types of diagnosis. Social stigma is one of the factors that hinders both children and their families[[241]](#endnote-234), and a 2018 policy review adds that, not only are many children with disabilities out of the education system, but they are often forced to adapt and adjust to the existing school environment, as to simulate a system of “inclusive” education[[242]](#endnote-235).



Figure 14 - Differences in access to education of children aged 5-14 years with and without disability by gender and location[[243]](#endnote-236)

Figure 14 description: In both urban and rural areas, girls and children with disabilities have lower access to education, with the difference between children with and without disabilities being more noticeable in rural environment. Children in rural areas also have lower levels of access to education, overall. In Urban context, access to education is of 96.6 for boys and 95.3% for girls without disabilities; 90% for boys and 84.6% for girls with disabilities. In Rural context, access to education is of 94.1% for boys and 93.1% for girls without disabilities; 79.7% for boys and 69.1% for girls with disabilities.

## 4. Teachers

### 4.1 Teacher preparation for disability/special needs

##### Overall Teacher training

The Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016) stipulated that “training opportunities will be provided to enhance the capacities of teachers at all levels”[[244]](#endnote-237).

The Flash I Report on Education states that in 2015, of the total 243,520 teachers at basic school level, 224,012 (92%) were trained, 6,747 (2.8%) were partially trained, and 12,761 (5.2%) were untrained teachers. For community schools, the numbers were of 95.5% trained teachers, 2.4% partially trained teachers, and 2.2% untrained teachers. Looking at the secondary level, 87% of teachers were trained, 4.0% were partially trained and 9.0% were untrained[[245]](#endnote-238).

##### Specialized Teacher training

As for teachers working in special schools and resource classes, the government provides a one-month to 45 days training program in special education, of which not all teachers benefit, and that lacks, for example, instruction in sign language, a factor constraining the quality of education of deaf students. The Human Rights Watch’s (2011) report underlines that “there is also a lack of motivation and awareness amongst special education teacher”[[246]](#endnote-239) (pg.48) and, while teachers are usually respected members of the community, special education teachers are subject to discrimination and abuse by their community. Their contracts are also provided differently from regular teachers, as the government does not include them in the pension benefits awarded to their colleagues[[247]](#endnote-240).

Lamichhane (2015)[[248]](#endnote-241) argues there are no specialized institutions providing standardized professional training to resource teachers, and that the available programs are administered by NGOs and the Ministry of Education. However, these institutions do not attribute licenses. In addition, a 2017 study found that 47.33% of the 150 primary school teachers inquired had “inadequate knowledge” and 0% had “adequate knowledge” regarding learning disabilities[[249]](#endnote-242).

In summary there is, overall, little support for teachers, with many having no preparation to teach multi-grade or utilise multi-level teaching strategies, having no training in how to ensure learning for children with disabilities, or in signalizing children with difficulties for further screening. In addition, a curriculum that is either too specialized or too general does not assist them in supporting children with disabilities; there is a lack of resources and capacity to provide coherent and sustainable services[[250]](#endnote-243). Many teachers feel that the trainings they have received in Inclusive Education are not adequate[[251]](#endnote-244).

The Appraisal for the SSDP Plan refers that there is a need to improve the number and quality of teachers and teacher-learning resources, and to ensure that the required training days are provided to all teachers[[252]](#endnote-245).

### 4.2 Average salary for both regular and specialized teachers.

According to the SSDP (2016-2023), the majority (70%) of the school education budget is spent on teachers’ salaries, although no reference numbers could be found to estimate teacher salaries[[253]](#endnote-246). The salaries may also vary depending on the professional category, as there are 5 reported categories: Permanent Teacher, Temporary Teacher, Relief Teacher, Per-Child-Funding Teacher, and Local Teacher[[254]](#endnote-247).

One of the main strategies to improve teacher development included in the SSDP (2016-2023) is to introduce a career path for the profession, with the promotion of the teachers that reach higher levels. This is expected to establish clearer standards for teacher remuneration[[255]](#endnote-248).

## 5. Support services in and around education

### 5.1 Availability of support services for children with disabilities.

Assessment centres in each district are responsible for providing diagnostics, allocating grants to schools, informing families of children with disabilities of their rights and aid them in procuring schooling for their children[[256]](#endnote-249).

Although there are some government-run programs, most support services rely on DPOs, NGOs, INGOs and specialized private facilities such as hospitals and health centres[[257]](#endnote-250).

#### In Education

According to the Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016) special needs education, inclusive education, free assistive devices, and scholarships are attributed to children with special needs, depending on level of disability, in addition to provisions for a 5% quota in government-run vocational programs to be reserved for students with disabilities [[258]](#endnote-251). In the 2014 Disability Resource Book, services like: educational scholarships; free education; special education, scholarship in technical education and training; extra time in exam; and helper (writer) in the exam are listed as available (promised) services [[259]](#endnote-252).

The SSDP (2016-2023) expects to provide extra assistance, in terms of education expenditure, to schools serving children with special needs[[260]](#endnote-253), in the form of scholarships which are meant to cover medical expenses, transportation, aids, books and learning materials[[261]](#endnote-254). The strengthening of resource centres is a key component of Nepal’s Strategy, mentioned by the GPE fund, to support not only teachers “but also help mainstream students”[[262]](#endnote-255).

##### Scholarships

On the one hand, the Government of Nepal’s expense with scholarships for children with disabilities in grades 1-8 has steadily increased from the 2008/09 Fiscal Year to the 2011/12 Fiscal Year. On the other hand, the expense with scholarships for children with disabilities in grades 9-10 was very high in the 2009/10 Fiscal Year, when compared to the two following years[[263]](#endnote-256). For the Fiscal Year of 2017/2018, 31,247 “units” of scholarships to the differently able students in the basic level (non-residence) plus 6,029 “units” (residence) were handed to local levels of government. For grades 9-10, 6,120 (non-residence) plus 956 (residence) “units” were handed to local levels of government[[264]](#endnote-257).

In the CRPD document of January 2018[[265]](#endnote-258), there are several scholarship types mentioned: residential, device and support, transportation, and motivational. In addition, it is referenced that the University Grant Commission provides scholarships to female students with disabilities who are enrolled at university level.

##### Segregated settings

Most children who are enrolled in resource classes or special schools commonly stay in the school’s residential facilities, being looked after by one government-paid caretaker that does not receive any formal training for the effect. The Human Rights Watch 2011 report notes that “while on the one hand, this system [residential living] gives children living in rural areas an opportunity to attend school, it requires children with disabilities to live separately from their families”[[266]](#endnote-259).



Figure 15 - Children attending HRDC School[[267]](#endnote-260)

Figure 15 description: The graph shows that the number of children attending the HRDC school has risen through the years, from 238 in 2014 to 968 in 2017, with the number of boys being consistently higher than the number of girls.

Distance is also a barrier when seeking medical treatment, and protracted treatment often leads to long stays at the hospital. The HRDC (Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled Children) opened a school in 2014 so as not to interrupt the education of children admitted for treatment, being in addition the first access many had to schooling. In addition, the school delivers parent education classes on how to prevent disability and overcome social stigma[[268]](#endnote-261).

#### Health and (Re)habilitation

According to the Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016) several support services are in operation, such as community-based rehabilitation and institutional development grants[[269]](#endnote-262). In cooperation with several partners and NGOs, the Government of Nepal had expanded CBR centres to 65 districts, in 2013[[270]](#endnote-263).

In the 2014 Disability Resource Book, services like: free healthcare service; reservation in hospital beds; and free medicine are listed as health-related available (promised) services and: custom exemption in assistive devices; right to assistive devices; and disability allowance for red and blue card holders. The establishment and operation of orphanage and centre for persons with intellectual disability is cited as the available (promised) service related to rehabilitation[[271]](#endnote-264).

The Eradication and Prevention of Disabilities Program was implemented in 2007, trying to address issues of prevention, early detection, interventions and referral of cases at local level[[272]](#endnote-265). In addition, the systems for early detection of developmental delays, impairments and disabilities are expected to be strengthened and connected to the sectors of care and rehabilitation, under the 2018-2022 CPAP between the Government of Nepal and UNICEF[[273]](#endnote-266).

#### Mobility and accessibility

The 2014 Disability Resource Book lists as available services related to mobility: a 50% discount in Air Fare; 50% discount in public transportation fare; seat reservation in public transportation; custom exemption in special vehicle. It also refers the physical accessibility in public buildings as a service promised by the Government of Nepal[[274]](#endnote-267).

#### Empowerment and Social security

In this area, the Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016) identifies as being in operation: awareness-raising audio-visual materials, inclusive policies, and social security allowance[[275]](#endnote-268).

The 2014 Disability Resource Book promises as services for empowerment and social security: the production of awareness raising programme in TV; problem identification, research and support programme for youth with disability; and help programme at central and local level for youth cooperation[[276]](#endnote-269).

##### Disability Cards

The attribution of the majority of support services is dependent on the attribution of disability cards[[277]](#endnote-270). The petition for the attribution of a disability card needs to be made by the person or a representative, and it is the person that must claim a certain category of disability[[278]](#endnote-271). Over 200,000 of these cards (which according to the study represents around 40% of all persons with disability in Nepal) have been attributed[[279]](#endnote-272).

#### Other services

The Thirteenth Plan planned to broaden sports and entertainment programs that promote the health of persons with disability, as well as programs that use sign language[[280]](#endnote-273). The 2014 Disability Resource Book refers the Paralympics and sports programme for youth with disability as promised services in the area of sports and entertainment[[281]](#endnote-274).

In the Revised Contingency Plan for Education, of 2018, provisions are made to ensure that children with disabilities are taken into account during disasters or other crisis situations[[282]](#endnote-275).

### 5.2 Constraints in the use of support services

Several government officials reported to the Human Rights Watch that the assessment centres are not able to effectively identify and aid families with children with disabilities[[283]](#endnote-276), having insufficient resources. In addition, referral mechanisms are not-existent in Nepal, limiting the number of children who can access service providers for diagnosis and treatment[[284]](#endnote-277).

#### In Education

The 2016/2017 pilot study developed by RCRD-Bhaktapur states the need to develop capacities on all levels for an inclusive education, focusing on schools and teachers as well as the need for resource classes to include all kinds of children with disabilities[[285]](#endnote-278). The GPE’s paper reinforces this idea, by mentioning that “inadequately resourced schools [are highlighted by Nepal] as an obstacle to improving education access for children with disabilities”[[286]](#endnote-279).

In line with this, principals of two local schools visited by the Catalyst for Inclusive Education[[287]](#endnote-280) in 2017 acknowledge that teacher training (both pre and in-service) is not sufficient to prepare teachers to respond to individual children and their particular needs or preferences, this being especially noted in the lack of available training to teach children with disabilities[[288]](#endnote-281). UNICEF’s information reinforces this idea, by stating that “not every child has access to a quality, learning environment, and not every child in school is learning “[[289]](#endnote-282).

##### Scholarships

The attributed scholarships do not seem to be sufficient to cover educational expenses of children with disabilities, as they or their families are frequently required to buy learning materials such braille paper, listening devices and audio books[[290]](#endnote-283). However, a 2018 study found that the scholarship for children with disabilities was one of the few to be considered, by teachers, students and families, as relatively impactful both in terms of needs and of the amount given, even if problems still subside (e.g., transparency, amount, information)[[291]](#endnote-284).

##### Segregated Settings

Special schools / resource classes are not attributed with flexible/alternative or inclusive curriculums, which leads many teachers to completely ignored the defined curriculum and base the education provided on their own lessons on special education, or to implement similar pedagogy to engage with all students. The frequent change of the official curriculum also poses challenges, as adapted materials such as braille books take longer to arrive due constraints in translation, printing and distribution - these constraints also apply to the accessibility of other educational aids[[292]](#endnote-285). Contrary to this information, GPE’s report (2018) states that “In Nepal, teachers are supported to make relevant changes to the curriculum by providing them with resources and strategies to include out-of-school children in classrooms, including children with disabilities”[[293]](#endnote-286).

#### Health and (Re)habilitation

A lack of capacity is also felt on community-based rehabilitation centre, as its workers are provided with a three-month training that is deemed insufficient to provide quality community-based rehabilitation services and raise effective awareness about disability at district level[[294]](#endnote-287).

#### Empowerment and Social security

The attribution and distribution offices are not equipped to determine the type of disability and level of impairment, with the same being true to most health posts and many hospitals, thus making accurate identification difficult (especially for “intangible” disabilities)[[295]](#endnote-288). This attribution is also is limited due to long distances to district administration offices, high transportation costs, inaccurate diagnostics and fears of further discrimination, amongst others[[296]](#endnote-289).

In addition, card data is not consolidated due to an incomplete digitalization of data and to high numbers of human error on data management[[297]](#endnote-290).

#### Other services

The Thirteenth Plan acknowledges that facilities for persons with disabilities, programs focusing on specific types of disability and on the capacitation for future employment are very limited[[298]](#endnote-291).

On the wake of the earthquakes, households with persons with disabilities (of all ages) reported an increased difficulty in getting relief distribution, and both state and non-state actors failed to acknowledge that this (amongst others) vulnerable group required target interventions - few programs distributed materials to persons with disabilities, and only a few of these distributed “specific items to help counter disabilities”[[299]](#endnote-292). Likewise, the representation of persons with disabilities that are Dalit or Indigenous in the reconstruction phase is of paramount importance, so that the needs of these “minorities within minorities”[[300]](#endnote-293) are addressed.

##### Donors lack focus on children with disabilities

In spite of efforts by NGOs, DPOs and INGOs, most of these services and programs are still unable to tackle the difficulty felt by persons with disabilities when accessing public services[[301]](#endnote-294).

Nepal benefits from a large number of international donors[[302]](#footnote-10)[[303]](#endnote-295), some of which provide funds towards education. However, specific funding, year-marked for inclusive education and/or the education of children with disabilities in inclusive settings, was not found. The prevalence of investment in segregation and the nation-wide belief that resource centres and special schools provide a response to the fulfilment of the education rights of children with disabilities make it hard to find evidence that any of the funds will be specifically invested in inclusive education of all children, including children with disabilities and those who were left disabled by the earthquake of 2015. Specific mentions, such as those of the Government of Australia that focus on GPE’s investment that is meant to ensure that “more children, particularly girls and children with disabilities, participate in school for longer and acquire the skills they need to build their future”[[304]](#endnote-296) are seldom found in the literature.

In addition, funds allocated seem to take a considerable amount of time to be put into use – as example, the Government of Nepal stated that, as of 2018, only 20% of the amount committed to post-earthquake (2015) reconstruction had been spent[[305]](#endnote-297).

## 6. DPO’s in Nepal

### 6.1 The 2nd Inclusive Education Workshop

Information about day-to-day reality of DPOs in Nepal was gathered during the 2nd Inclusive Education Workshop, from the 11th to the 14th of March 2019, with members from World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), World Blind Union (WBU), Inclusion International (II), National Association of Hard of Hearing and Deafened Nepal (SHRUTI), International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and WFHH[[306]](#endnote-298). During the Workshop, the present members were asked to complete a questionnaire on their organization’s contributions to inclusive education. The answers of Inclusion International (II)[[307]](#endnote-299), the International Council for Education for People with Visual Impairment / Action on Disability Rights and Development Nepal (ICEVI/ADRAD)[[308]](#endnote-300) and the National Association of Hard of Hearing and Deafened Nepal (SHRUTI)[[309]](#endnote-301) are reproduced below.

#### What type of data on children with disabilities has your organisation collected?

SHRUTI mentioned that their efforts of data collection have been related to people with hearing loss, particularly by organizing hearing assessments in schools and communities, while ICEVI/ADRAD collects data on students with visual disabilities who use accessible Information and Communication or DAISY books.

#### Who are your members who have been most involved in data collection?

SHRUTI mentioned that for their assessments (main data-collection programme, see above) professional Audiologists and ENT Doctors are assisted by the organization’s staff, who then analyse the data. As for ICEVI/ADRAD, the district-level community development workers are those more engaged with data collection.

#### What are the main challenges you face in data collection?

For SHRUTI, the unreliability of conducting hearing assessments in an ordinary room sometimes presents problems, usually mitigated by observation and conversational notes. ICEVI/ADRAD mentions as their major difficulty the fact that ICT-based data collection (e.g., through Google’s platform) is challenging for their constituents (people with visual impairments).

#### Do you train your members on data collection?

The organization SHRUTI gave a positive answer to this question, albeit saying that it was insufficient at the more professional levels, due to a lack of human resources, as did ICEVI/ADRAD, mentioning the provision of orientation about the data collection tools.

#### Do you provide support to your national members on how to collect reliable data on education and children with disabilities?

Inclusion International mentioned they conducted a workshop for their members about data collection, as well as other relevant issues, and ICEVI/ADRAD provides technical support with questionnaire development (indicators and thresholds), while the organization SHRUTI claims not to have the resources needed to do so.

#### How many of your national members have collected reliable data on education and children with disabilities later used for decision-making?

Inclusion International mentioned that the federation of groups of parents has analysed the available data for this purpose, the organization SHRUTI mentions that their findings are used for decision-making, but also for raising awareness on hearing loss and for advocacy purposes, and ICEVI/ADRAD claims that three of its members are engaged in various studies and surveys.

#### How many of your national member have programmes/activities that focus on education and children with disabilities?

Inclusion International mentioned that one of their national members, a federation of groups of parents, has education as a high priority. The organization SHRUTI mentions they have conducted several programs such as the development of educational manuals, teacher training for mainstreaming inclusive education, promotion of awareness campaigns, parental counselling groups, amongst others. In addition, they often participate in programs conducted by the government, I/NGOs and DPOs, providing them with information and suggestions on how to children with hearing impairments. Finally, ICEVI/ADRAD mentions that seven of their members are concerned with data collection regarding children with disabilities.

#### How many of your national members have been sensitized and/or trained on issues related to monitoring and reporting progress towards the CRPD or the SDGs?

The SHRUTI organization reports that, despite having conducted basic training for its members on both the CRPD and the SDGs, it has not had the opportunity to provide training related to their monitoring and/or reporting. ICEVI/ADRAD states that three of its members are trained to monitor the human rights of persons with disabilities, with two of them having participated in the state report review conducted by the CRPD Committee in Geneva (2018).

#### How many of your national partners have been sensitizes and/or trained or issues related to monitoring and reporting progress specifically towards Article 24 of CRPD and SDG4?

The organization SHRUTI has conducted over 40 sensitization programs related on article 24 or the CRPD and provided basic training to 148 school teachers, focusing these sessions on their constituency’s (hard of hearing children and adults) identification and support, while ICEVI/ADRAD reports having two major partners trained on the monitoring of disability inclusive practices in inclusive education, in line with both Article 24 of the CRPD and the SDG 4.

#### Does your organisation have members who represent children with disabilities? If so, how many such members are there?

Inclusion International mentioned they have a member that represents children with disabilities, a federation of groups of parents. The SHRUTI organization mentioned having more than 25 members who represent children with disabilities, and ICEVI/ADRAD as 124 members under the age of 16, being associated members but not having voting rights.

#### What percentage of the entire constituency are children with disabilities (or their families)?

The SHRUTI organization mentioned to have no data available on this matter, and ICEVI/ADRAD mentions that 21% of its constituency are children with disabilities.

#### How are children with disabilities represented in your advocacy efforts?

Children with hearing loss and their families mostly visit SHRUTI to obtain information on prevention and intervention, being provided with counselling, support on mainstream enrolment (including follow-ups and assistance to parents and school teacher) and information regarding barrier-free environments (home/school), hearing aids and their suppliers, doctors and therapy. The children supported by ICEVI/ADRAD utilize the android devices provided by it to read accessible books, pushing schools to provide digital talking books in the library and participate in the ADRAD-organised delegation.

##### Does your DPO have children or youth groups or groups of parents of children with disabilities?

The organization SHRUTI mentioned having members of all the above groups, and ICEVI/ADRAD mentioned that ADRAD has a department for youth with disabilities.

##### What type of work does your DPO do in relation to access of children with disabilities to education?

The SHRUTI organization develops observation, advising and monitoring of the children in their constituency, providing assistance for the parents and the school/teacher if barriers are found to their mainstream education. As a pilot program, 10 children will be closely monitored on their education for one and a half years (project starting soon). As for ICEVI/ADRAD, they production of digital talking books, provide Android devices to students with visual impairments and invest in research concerning inclusive and accessible ICT.

##### What other kind of work with children with disabilities does your DPO do?

SHRUTI also provides hard of hearing children and their families with information and counselling about heath and therapy professionals and Hearing Aid suppliers if needed, and ICEVI/ADRAD organises sports competitions, recreational activities (such as adventure activities), quiz competitions and music consorts.

##### Does your DPO engage in advocacy on the right of children with disabilities to education?

The SHRUTI organization answered affirmatively to this question, adding that they mostly advocate for the governmental provision of disability identity, accessibility services, assistive devices and health care facilities. ICEVI/ADRAD puts advocacy as their major task – for inclusive education and for support services directed towards children with disabilities.

##### If so, what are your advocacy actions focussed on a particular group of children with disabilities?

SHRUTI’s advocacy is focuses on children with hearing impairments, organizing programs, workshops and seminars in collaboration with government agencies, in order to advocate for an early identification of impairments and subsequent intervention, as well as for the creation of a disability identity. For the particular group of persons (including children) with disabilities, ICEVI/ADRAD advocates for the ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty, for the adoption of accessible curriculum and textbooks and for web accessibility.

##### What are your advocacy actions focused on children with disabilities generally?

For SHRUTI, these actions entail the promotion of mainstream learning, teacher counselling and training, information services on reasonable accommodations that may be needed for children with hearing loss, and of parent-teacher interaction programs. ICEVI/ADRAD’s efforts are directed towards the allocation of local resources for early identification and intervention efforts.

##### How does your DOP collaborate with others?

By organizing joint programs, SHRUTI has collaborated with other DPOs, the human rights commission and several government agencies. As for ICEVI/ADRAD, the active participation in civil society movements, their involvement on police intervention plans for disability inclusive development and their engagement during the development of the 15th National Development Plan are examples of collaboration not only with civil society organizations but also with governmental entities.

##### What are your main funders on children with disabilities and education activities?

For SHRUTI, the main founders are: Disability and Development Partner (UK), MyRight (Sweden), Royal Dutch Kentalis, IDA/IFHOH and Australia Aid; and for ICEVI/ADRAD they are: the DAISY Consortium, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the Open Society Foundation.

##### How is your DPO consulted by government/ donors/ INGOs on education programmes?

The SHRUTI organization has been invited to attend interaction, discussion and workshop programs, and ADRAD (ICEVI/ADRAD) participated in drafting the Inclusive Education Policy, the Act concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other legislative acts. In addition, ICEVI/ADRAD is a member of the inclusive committee of the Curriculum Development Centre.

##### How satisfied are you with the quality of consultations?

SHRUTI expressed the concern that, although they provide feedback if required, this is sometimes not included/taken into account; ICEVI/ADRAD’s dissatisfaction focusses on the time of their consultation, that is, that they are not consulted during the planning phase, but during the execution phase (of various legislative documents).

#### Are advocacy efforts related to children focused on a particular group of children (organization’s constituency) or conducted on behalf of more/all children?

Inclusion International mentions that the major focus of their members is on children with intellectual disabilities (their constituency), adding however that as they belong to a larger federation that their work benefits all children. SHRUTI echoes this position, by stating that although the majority of their advocacy efforts related to children with hearing impairments, some actions are taken on behalf of all children. As for ICEVI/ADRAD, their efforts aim to advocate for all children with disabilities, focusing on inclusive education, support services and accessible technology.

#### Do your organization, your members and the disability groups you represent share a common position/vision on education for children with disabilities?

For SHRUTI and its members, accessibility is the key point to be addressed; however, the position on inclusion may vary depending on the different disability groups. As for ICEVI/ADRAD, a childhood disability service research was carried out to reach a common understanding with the adoption of a child-friendly good governance strategy.

#### What percentage of your overall budget is spent on programmes/activities that focus on children; and what percentage on education?

The SHRUTI organization reports that, although funding may vary depending on the programs being developed at the time, 5-10% of their budget is always allocated to the support of children with disabilities; for ICEVI/ADRAD, 34% of the budget is allocated for children with disabilities, particularly for the distribution of accessible books and Android devices, amongst others.

#### Please list all the programs/activities that focus specifically on education of children with disability.

ICEVI/ADRAD mentions the following:

* On legal framework and policy: helping the drafting of the Inclusive Education Policy, the Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2017), the Education Act and the Childhood Disability Strategy, amongst others.
* On governance and finance: helping the drafting of the Child Protection Policy.
* On curricula and learning materials: the production of accessible books in DAISY and Epub formats, and their free distribution
* On teachers, school leaders and education support personnel: teacher training and training of staff for the production of DAISY books, amongst others
* On schools: the participation on the Welcome to School campaign and the support of schools libraries, for accessibility and provision of DAISY content.
* On communities, parents and students: the research and monitoring of the status of disability inclusive development efforts and of accessible ICT, amongst others.

#### Out of the constituency made up of children in your association:

##### How many of them are of school age? And how many attend school?

ICEVI/ADRAD mentions 54,000 children with visual impairment, being that close to 9500 attend school.

##### What types of school do they attend? DO they have certified teachers? Are they provided with reasonable accommodations and individualized instruction?

The SHRUTI organization reported their constituency attended mainstream schools and that, despite having certified teachers, almost no child was provided with reasonable accommodations or individualized instruction. As for ICEVI/ADRAD’s constituency, they attend integrated and inclusive schools, having general certification teachers (that do not have disability related training) and having, in some instances, accommodation for assessment moments (writer provision). However, no other individual support or reasonable accommodations are registered.

#### What is the biggest obstacle in collecting data on children with disabilities?

The SHRUTI organization cites the lack of disaggregated data on several types of disability, particularly on the different levels of hearing impairment, on the information collected by the government. The exclusion from the “disability category” of hard of hearing people is also a subject that concerns this DPO. ICEVI/ADRAD focuses on the lack of financial resources and of priority given to research on children with disabilities – which leads to research mostly being project based. In addition, the non-taking of recommendations made to the government and the lack of consultancy with Nepalese experts hinders this organization’s efforts.

#### What do you need to be able to overcome the obstacle(s)?

SHRUTI mentions that the legal recognition of hard of hearing as a disability by the disability law of Nepal and the disaggregation of data in the national census would be particularly helpful. The advocacy of DPOs for data accuracy and for the training of enumerators and other human resource are also mentioned. As for ICEVI/ADRAD, the focus in on the allocation of adequate budget and the prioritization of research on children with disabilities; the sustainable use of research and the consultancy of local knowledge by the international community are mentioned as necessary.

### 6.2 United Commitment

To further the commitment on Inclusive Education and to present a unified strategy to achieve Inclusive Education, the participants of the workshop on the 1st Inclusive Education on 6-7 of December, 2018, – including DPOs, INGOs, NGOs, civil society, international rapporteurs and members from the government – presented a commitment paper as a practical guideline for all levels of the state to implement equitable and inclusive quality education for children with disabilities. This document called upon Federal, Provincial and Local governments to uphold 40 commitments, which if followed would guarantee quality inclusive education for all children. This commitment can be consulted in more detail in Annex 3.

### 6.3 Current constraints for Inclusive Education

Inclusion international expressed its concerned for the high numbers of out-of-school children with intellectual disability, stating that this affects the majority of children with this diagnosis. Distance to school is often an issue, as anecdotal evidence shows that some children walk for a rather long time (sometimes over 2hours) to get to school, exacerbating the barriers to education for children with disability that may not be able to walk/travel that distance[[310]](#endnote-302).

##### Data-related

Inclusion International put into evidence the discrepancies in disability-measurements in Nepal, even within the government, by stating that the number of people with intellectual disabilities as per the 2011 census is lower than the number of red disability cards (the highest level) attributed to persons with intellectual disability[[311]](#endnote-303).

The need for stronger data is also underlined by the Deafblind Association of Nepal[[312]](#endnote-304).

##### Procedural issues

Inclusion International states that many children with intellectual disabilities are denied disability cards due to the lack of adequate assessment processes. This assessment is made by a district assessment coordinator, that is government/politically-appointed and usually untrained in the assessment of children (and adults) with disabilities[[313]](#endnote-305).

When children with intellectual disabilities complete the resource class curriculum, and if they are directed towards a mainstream class, they are guaranteed no continuation of support[[314]](#endnote-306).

The taking up of allotted budget is limited, as few schools are willing to accept children with disabilities or to take the required steps to become model schools. For the later, government budget aims to fund 1000 schools that undergo the process, but so far very few have done so[[315]](#endnote-307).

The decentralisation of power is meant as a way to bring back power to the local authorities, but this shift seems not to yet be benefitting children with disabilities, as most local authorities may be unaware of the needs of children with disabilities, and therefore not conceptualize their need to be considered a priority group[[316]](#endnote-308)

### 6.4 Positive Points on inclusive education

In resource classes for children with intellectual disability and autism, the curriculum is different - a preschool curriculum developed by the CDC - and by the 5th year the child is either integrated into regular school or directed towards a vocational stream[[317]](#endnote-309).

An effort is being developed by the Kathmandu University to undergo and publish research on the education of children with disabilities, opening doors to stronger advocacy[[318]](#endnote-310).

### 6.5 Advocacy Points

The major points identified by the Inclusion International Partners in Nepal, that need to be addressed to allow for the Inclusive Education of children with intellectual disabilities by 2030 are: raise policy awareness, especially with local governments; give guidance to schools and to teacher training at a national level; encourage the usage of government funds available; advocate with parents to raise their beliefs in the value of education for their children; upgrade infrastructures; and identifying and assessing educational efforts, by involving DPOs and the overall society[[319]](#endnote-311).

The need for stronger advocacy is also mentioned by the Deafblind Association of Nepal[[320]](#endnote-312).

### 6.6 DPO’s impact on the lives of Children with Disabilities

The National Federation of Disabled Nepal has recently, and in cooperation with the Australian Embassy in Nepal, run a project called “Let us Go to School”, that includes a focused School Enrolment Campaign and the attribution of educational materials to a Secondary School for students with hearing disabilities[[321]](#endnote-313). As can also be seen in section 6.1., DPOs are often a bridge above the gap of legislation and practice, advocating for education, training teachers, collecting data, providing informational services and much more.

# E. Analysis of existing data

##### Issues related to (overall) data collection

In addition to the obstacles highlighted in the constraints in completing this assignment above, there are several obstacles to reliable data collection on children with disabilities and children with disabilities in education in Nepal.

* It is very difficult to know the number of children with disabilities in Nepal when there is no accurate register of the Total number of children in Nepal. Taking into consideration that in 2012, only 42% of children had their births registered, and only 38% have collected their birth certificate, even if an account of children with disabilities in Nepal was taken in the very near future based on an existing list of registered births, it would only account for 42% of the entire population (see Rec #1).
* Likewise, data from 2011 Census is unreliable, taking into consideration the earthquake of 2015 and various population shifts that took place since 2011. It is very likely that the population of Nepal today (composition and geographic distribution) is quite different from that which was represented in the 2011 Census.
* Census data on disability is incomplete and the available data is not well presented in reports at disaggregated level. Enumerators are not well trained to screen persons for disability (NP).
* In addition, according to UNESCO[[322]](#endnote-314) data on children with disabilities in Nepal did not originate in a full nationally representative sample. It was “Based on an *analysis of 15 per cent of unit level data of Census 2011* that were available, only 1.9 per cent of the total population and around 1.1 per cent of the population in primary and lower secondary school age have some kind of disability in Nepal”[[323]](#endnote-315). The most frequently used number when referring to prevalence of disability in Nepal (1.9%) may not be based on a nationally representative sample.
* Disaggregation of data is lacking and made more difficult by constantly changing data-gathering categories. For example, due to the shift in the way the education system is set up (from primary, lower secondary, upper secondary to Basic and Secondary) and because data disaggregated by grade level are not publicly available, it is almost impossible to look at trends overtime. Likewise, a disability management information system that could be developed and regularly updated with the help of local governments, and is accessible to them, does not exist
* Quality and equity in education remain challenging and, although they are mentioned in the SSDP, they will continue to go unchallenged: “The SSDP identifies altogether 11 policy directions and 20 implementation strategies under equity, quality, efficiency and relevance to achieve the objectives and 31 key results. For most of these, there are no specific targets or indicators”[[324]](#endnote-316).
* Of late, there is an increase in the number of private and religious schools, and a decrease in the number of community schools, as well as a shift in the number of students enrolled, moving from community to private schools. This may lead to a more fragmented picture of the education system, including further difficulties in gathering data on children with disabilities, because many of the private/religious schools may not necessarily identify with the social model of disability, and not be obliged to report according the same regulations imposed on community schools in the SSDP.
* Data reviewed for this report emphasizes enrolment rates and has little information on survival rates. However, research leading to the UNESCO UIS OOSC Global report indicates that gathering data on enrolment rates alone masks inequities, as many families are compelled to enrol their children in school but communities lack mechanisms to ensure children attend and learn.

##### Specific issues related to children with disabilities

* It is important to understand the challenges faced by children with disabilities in Nepal within the context of the existing challenges faced by ALL children in Nepal. While in some countries there are high quality systems who present with challenges in including children with disabilities (i.e. Germany), in Nepal, the challenges are often system wide and affecting ALL children.
  + There is an overall lack of data on education, among which there is a lack of disaggregated data on children with disabilities;
  + While it is true that children with disabilities are facing obstacles of access and participation, a great proportion of children are out of school (including, but not exclusively made of children with disabilities)
* There is an overall lack of visibility of issues related to disability and issues related to children with disabilities
  + the issues related to children with disabilities are often described and dealt with in conjunction with other groups of *vulnerable children (dalit children, children with disability, girls, domestic child labor, street children, conflict affected children, HIV infected children, highly marginalized and engendered indigenous children)* which has several consequences:
    - children with disabilities are not seen as a specific group of children, with specific needs; rather they are seen as part of a more elusive population for whom a generalized policy response might be sufficient. For example:  *The report shows 10 to 15 percent school age children are still out of school system and majority of these children are from the vulnerable category like children with disability.*
    - because they are not seen as a specific group of children with specific issues, the need for accurate data is also seen as less urgent;
  + even within the literature developed by DPOs themselves, children with disabilities and issues related to their education are seldom identified and/or addressed. This is highly problematic because, as evidenced in other countries (i.e. BiH and Kosovo) the lack of visibility within the DPO community is used by government officials and donors as justification for lack of visibility within government policies and donor activities.
* It is very likely that data gathered on children with disabilities in education (see pages 20-22) only includes children with moderate disabilities. The categories of disability used by the GoN do not include learning disabilities/difficulties, and there is no mention of mild disabilities in the literature.
* The common understanding of inclusive education (feasibility, cost, benefits, types, levels) is totally lacking in Nepal. Studies to understand the conceptual and contextual clarity with regard to these issues is highly in need (NP).

##### Other issues

* “vague policies, open to arbitrary interpretations and partial implementation” (related to inclusive education); “barriers at socio-cultural level include social values, belief system (…) and prejudices of society at large (…) are equally responsible for least effective practices of inclusive education in Nepal” [[325]](#endnote-317) “families may be obliged (…) to choose which of their children can get an education and often favour those children without disabilities as a result of their attitudes towards disability[[326]](#endnote-318)
* “the importance of expenditure tracking is also without doubt essential for enhancing the effectiveness of the programme”, with this tracking not being effectively done[[327]](#endnote-319); an overall lack of monitoring in both educational and rehabilitation procedures, with no establishment of baselines, previous assessment of needs or evaluation of program’s results[[328]](#endnote-320).

Data Gaps identified by national researcher (based on in-country experience and not necessarily based on collected data for this assignment) :

1. The available studies are too generic in nature and do not cover deeper understanding analysis of specific types of disability.
2. Disability such as Deaf-blind, Intellectual and mental disability poses special challenge for inclusive education in terms of access and learning outcomes. There is significant data and research gap in this area.
3. Chronic disease induced disability have not become part of the data or research in Nepal.
4. Studies regarding learning outcomes of children with disability disaggregated by types and associated challenges is also totally missing in Nepal.
5. Studies on use of ICT and learning aids for different types of disabilities is not found in the literature. This could be one area of study.
6. Studies regarding investment on inclusive education for children with disability and its rate of return is totally missing in the literature.
7. Studies on human resource development (teachers) for children with disability is also not available.
8. Role of mother (parents) and social inclusion on education of children with disability is also needed.

# F. Recommendations for future data (leading to an analysis of the system)

##### Overall data gathering recommendations

This set of recommendations is not entirely original. While there is articulation of specific recommendations for children with disabilities, the overall recommendations have been given by others, in the course of the last decade. For the most part, recommendations have been ignored.

1. Support the Government of Nepal in carrying out a Population Census to include a module on disability (according to the recommendations and guidelines of the Washington Group of Statistics)
2. Adopt a human-rights based approach to disability[[329]](#endnote-321) that can be used to track functional limitations in the entire population
3. Prioritize the collection of data on children with disabilities and develop an efficient system for diagnosing disability[[330]](#endnote-322)
   1. EMIS is a locally developed database in Nepal that has been improving every year. By strengthening the EMIS, the quality and frequency of data on children with disability can be improved. Since this is developed through schools’ participation, teachers’ role in screening children for disability has to be highlighted. Teachers training in this regard could be very important.
4. Establish an Early Identification/Early Intervention system, including a referral system for services. Health centres, ECD centres and education professionals can be trained to provide services and collect accurate data at the community level (to feed into a national database).
5. Strengthening local government (LG) could be an important step as they are both the suppliers and users of the data. LGs can enhance their targeted intervention only if they have access to disaggregated and quality data they need.

##### Data needs within the context of this report

1. Visibility - it would be useful for all IDA members with a presence in Nepal to identify and devote human and financial resources to gathering data on children with disabilities that is specific to their constituency and making children with disabilities a visible part of their advocacy work;
2. Quantitative vs. qualitative data - while case-studies and community/geographic-specific studies are important to illustrate barriers and opportunities, they do not provide needed information on the magnitude of the obstacles faced by children with disabilities when accessing and participating in education.
3. Amplify existing data - collect data that proves/disproves that the type of disability influences the likelihood of being out of school taking into consideration existing data on out-of-school: children with multiple disabilities (52.5%), mental impairments (47.1%), intellectual impairments (38%) and voice and speech disabilities (33.2%) are more likely to be out of school compared to the national average. Investigate the likely barriers children in each of these groups encounter in accessing school;
4. Include children in all data collection:
   1. Collect data related to accessibility that is specific to children with disabilities
   2. When engaging in data-collection related to employment, investigate the ways in which (the lack of) education opportunities have impacted employment of persons with disabilities
   3. Collect data related to ICT, teacher capacity and education materials specific to your own constituencies
5. Collectively:
   1. consider undertaking a gap analysis of meeting the learning needs of children with disabilities in Nepal to serve as reference as baseline for monitoring
   2. agree on what are the most pressing data needs related to children with disabilities and press donors and government officials to report on it

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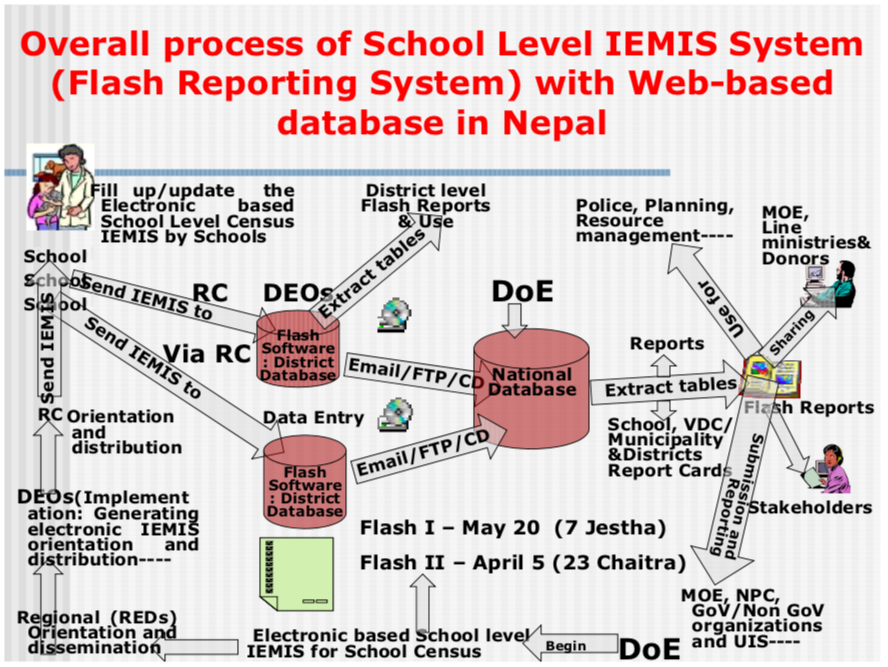
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# Annex 2 – EMIS Diagram



# Annex 3 – Inclusive Education Commitments Paper – 6/7 Dec. 2018

**Inclusive Education Commitment Paper**

We, the participants of the workshop on Inclusive Education, from DPOs, international development partners (INGOs), national development partners (NGOs), Civil society, international rapporteurs, including members from Governments working on inclusive education meeting here in Kathmandu on 6th and 7th December, 2018 as a part of celebration of International disability day have agreed to the following statements and call the state to commit to the following:

Appreciating the Government of the Federal Republic of Nepal, in particular the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens for organising the workshop in collaboration with NFDN and supported by CBM, Save the Children..........................; we emphasise that this commitment paper is a practical guideline for all levels of the state to implement: equitable and inclusive quality education for children with disabilities.

Recognising the inherent dignity, equal and inalienable rights of all human beings, to experience non-discrimination, protection, full accessibility and effective participation in decision making processes, equalisation of opportunities, individual autonomy and independence of persons with disabilities,

Recognising the right of quality education for all and the right to receive quality education in one’s local community,

Acknowledging that inclusive quality education for children with disabilities is based upon collaborative approaches, shared values and a common concern for those who are disproportionately deprived of quality education,

**We Recall**

1. UN Declaration on Human Rights 1948
2. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), in particular, Article 24 on inclusive quality education.
3. The commitments to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes Quality Education, Goal 4.
4. The right guaranteed by the constitution of Federal Republic of Nepal, article 31 and the commitments to the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
5. Incheon Strategy for Education 2012-2022
6. Act related to the rights of persons with disabilities 2018.
7. School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) 2016-2023.
8. Free and Compulsory Education Act 2018.
9. Inclusive Education Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2017

**The Commitments:**

WE CALL ON GOVERNMENTS, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL; NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS; PRIVATE/MULTI SECTOR; DPOS; CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER RELATED STAKEHOLDERS TO:

**Federal**

The federal government is expected to provide technical assistance to prepare the local government to implement these commitments

All national legislative measures are the responsibility of the federal government; therefore, the appropriate acts, rules and regulations are to be prepared at the federal level and technical capacity to be transferred to the local government

**Provincial**

The provincial government is to monitor and follow up on the implementation of the commitments outlined in this document.

The provincial government to act as the bridge to facilitate dialogue/discourse between the federal and local government.

**Local**

The local government is to proactively seek assistance from upper level governments and to take initial initiatives to implement the commitments outlined in this document.

**Commitments Outline**

* Link between resource classes and schools in each catchment areas to promote school outreach activities to encourage school attendance of the child with disabilities and if the child is unable to attend school, outreach activities to facilitate home-schooling environment.
* Capacity strengthening by introducing multiple disability awareness and skill training to the resource class workforce to include all forms of disabilities
* If and where this is not possible, referral mechanism to ensure inclusion of all children with disabilities
* Rigorous Audits and Follow up of resource classes to ensure quality standards
* To introduce Teaching Assistants and special education needs coordinator in schools, each local government and private education facilities including pre-schools
* 1:5 or less teacher to student ratio to ensure children with disabilities get fair attention and engagement with the teachers.
* Gender balanced and multi-disciplinary teaching team to be provided to all children with disabilities
* Provision to store and administer child’s regular lifesaving materials and maintaining medication at every education facility so the child does not have to miss school because of her/his condition
* Quality and accessible resources, education and accommodation, where provided, to be available at all education facilities
* Before school- early identification and intervention mechanism to ensure children with disabilities get all preparatory support before they start school in mainstream education.
* Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens education to liaise with multi sector and partners collaboration to raise disability awareness during pregnancy- doctors, nurses, midwives, and all other health workers can play role here
* Inclusion of disability screening activity in growth and overall development monitoring mechanism from birth to five years.
* Age appropriate development screening, rehabilitation and habilitations once the child starts school
* Counselling to parents, families and career of the child diagnosed with disabilities
* Pre-service and on the job training to all teachers and other school staff
* Every education facility to insure individualised teaching and learning plan on the basis of child’s needs
* All facilities in school to be all disability friendly: physical accessibility to create enabling emotional, social and cultural environment
* Alternative and need specific subjects
* Continuous assessment system and timely M&E of it
* Appropriate and alternative means of examination and questions papers as per types of disability
* Providing extra time, simple language and support system for children with profound disabilities
* Parents, teacher and student unit to evaluate education materials, facilities and services provided
* Safe and appropriate facilities, including ICT, for children with learning disabilities
* Alternative education: home-based learning, vocational training based on capacity and distance form home
* Door to door programmes and Home visits to community/ homes with children with disabilities
* Awareness and accountability training to Local government staff
* Door to door data collection to build capacity and bridge data gaps
* EMIS and CMIS
* Training to parents and teachers on inclusive education
* Include children with disabilities in children groups and clubs
* Peer education for children with disabilities
* Children groups or clubs to design disabilities inclusive activities
* Ensuring the rights of children with disabilities in Child safeguarding policies
* Awareness against bulling and violence against children with disabilities through radio, child clubs and other mediums
* Functional PTA for complaint mechanism and handling in the case of violence cases to children with disabilities
* Policy against persuading for religion conversion for services provided to children with disabilities in the name of education
* Children with disability need to be prioritised during Search, Rescue and Recovery during disaster/emergencies in educational settings
* Inclusive Emergency Evacuation plans, preparedness drills and resources in all educational settings for individual disabilities
* The concept of DiDRR need to be adopted by all schools and trained to teachers
* Continuous and effective assessment system and disability audits in all educational settings

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