

## **Workshop Title: Disability Inclusion**

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### **Main issues, questions discussed:**

Inclusion – our understanding

- Make spaces so that everyone can participate.
- That persons with disabilities can participate
- The more people can participate in education the more inclusive it is

Power:

- It's not simply participating it's also the power to be on the same level.
- Disability may become irrelevant if there is a power shift, and that also it affects participation.

Access:

- Means of access are crucial for inclusion, but also means of access may differ depending on the context (e.g. wheelchairs can't be pushed on every road)  
= social barriers that make an impairment a disability

Education as a human right also counts for persons with disabilities.

*To which extend can we ensure quality and inclusive education to children with disabilities?*

- Access, see above.
- If you make groups small enough in classrooms, it gets easier.
  - o But we are facing the problem of big classes. Not only in countries abroad but also in Switzerland.
  - o Youth leaders and peer tutoring: big factor of inclusive education is learning from people with disabilities. Learning from each other.
  - o In a productive classroom the children are the key and control the approach. This should be explored more so it works for the whole of the class.
- The Focus of Life Skills should include also this / communicating with each other

Challenge: Curriculum & Labour Market

- Is it necessary to adapt curriculum, to make it even possible to make education more inclusive?
- Youth employability: be careful which skills you equip them with in school, because the labour market may not demand what → if you teach children with disabilities important life skills, but then the labour market doesn't demand these, we're facing a problem (inclusive education should be the gateway to enter the labour market)
- In the labour market (speaking of Switzerland) most companies don't include persons with disabilities. → there needs to be more representation

From institution to communities:

- Society also has to stand behind the will to include, as family support is crucial
- Connect inclusive education more to community sensitisation: have children with disabilities speak to their communities and get them involved. There is a lot of stigma around disabilities. Families also need to get support, in order to provide a supportive environment → parents groups.

- The role of parents: having inclusive parent groups are very important, platforms for exchange.

How to achieve change:

- To establish laws, help to get people the incentive to do it.
- Convincing the donors is the most difficult part. Finding subtle ways to achieve inclusion into project proposals.
- Donor perspective: it is always a question of prioritizing

### **Conclusions and recommendations:**

When to adjust and make environments more inclusive:

- If we already get work done on something, plan it to be inclusive from the first step, (and then it is also not that expensive).

What we need to do as NGOs:

- Talk to organisations of persons with disabilities. They are experts, they have capacities, and they can advise/consult you. And think about the diversity of the group because persons with disabilities are not a homogenous group.
- When planning projects, include them together with OPD's, plan together from the beginning.

Learning:

- Peer learning is very important, involvement of youth leaders and parents' groups are crucial
- Changing curricula & system needs to be tackled at the level of societies.